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The Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956:
a Difficult Path to Signing,
a Difficult Fate after Ratification

A. N. Panov

Abstract. The article aims to study the process of formation and evolution of the territorial problem in the relations between the Soviet Union and Japan after the end of WWII up to the conclusion of the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956. Under consideration are the agreements of the Allied Powers over the postwar territorial limits of Japan.

The author insists that the position of the U.S. towards the territorial provisions of the 1945 Yalta Agreements was repeatedly altered before and after signing the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Changes took place, on the one hand, because of the deterioration in the U.S. relations with the USSR, and, on the other hand, in correlation with Washington’s aim to “protect” itself from Tokyo’s demands to return Okinawa. It is noteworthy that Japan’s attitude to the problem of South Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands was from the very beginning not immutable either and has undergone multiple corrections.

The paper gives a detailed examination of the process of the Soviet-Japanese negotiations on the normalization of bilateral relations in 1955-1956, providing an analysis of the reasons for the Soviet leadership’s readiness to hand over the Habomai islands and Shikotan to Japan. The author assesses the significance of the conclusion and the ratification of the Joint Declaration of 1956 for both the Soviet Union and Japan, as well as the attitude of both the Soviet/Russian leadership and the Japanese government to the possibility of the implementation of its territorial article.
After Prime Minister Abe had stated in November 2018 that the Japanese side is ready to hold negotiations on the basis of the territorial article of the 1956 Joint Declaration, Russo-Japanese negotiations on the conclusion of the Peace Treaty were launched. However, compared to the Japanese side, for which the pivotal aim is to fix an agreement on the ownership of the islands and the borderline, much more important in the Russian motivation is to acquire Japan’s recognition of the legality of the Russian possession of the Kuril Islands, to obtain guarantees that the Japan-U.S. security alliance would not be aimed against Russia’s interests, as well as to lay a base for a broader development of bilateral relations with Japan. Against the background of the unwillingness of the public opinion of the two countries to accept the 1956 Declaration as a base for resolving the territorial problem, the possibility to achieve a Peace Treaty in the foreseeable future is seen as unrealistic.

**Keywords:** territorial problem, the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the South Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, the Habomai islands and Shikotan, the Soviet-Japanese negotiations of 1955-1956, the visit of Prime Minister Hatoyama to Moscow, The Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956

**San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan: the Birth of the Territorial Problem between Moscow and Tokyo**

As we know from the history of mankind, wars not only solve territorial problems, but also create them. After the defeat in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05, Russia ceded Southern Sakhalin to Japan. Due to its participation in the war with Japan in August 1945 at the final stage of the World War II, the Soviet Union, in compliance with the agreement between the allies, the United States and Great Britain, regained Southern Sakhalin and obtained the Kuril Islands, which had belonged to Japan under the Russo-Japanese Treaty of 1875. However, the Peace Treaty with Japan concluded in San Francisco in 1951 has not determined in favor of which state they were alienated, although these territories have been withdrawn from the Japanese sovereignty.
That was a paradox of the international legal practice, giving birth to the territorial problem between Moscow and Tokyo, which remains on the agenda of Russo-Japanese relations at present.

The Peace Treaty with Japan was concluded in the Cold war era, when the recent allies, the USSR and the United States, became irreconcilable rivals. In its initial geopolitical calculations with regard to Japan, Washington mostly sought to transform through radical reforms the authoritarian and militaristic state into “a country of democracy and a bulwark of anti-communism in the Asia-Pacific region”. Accordingly, Japan was to be turned from the U.S. enemy into an American ally, and to be “brought up” as a barrier against the spread of the Soviet influence in the region.

The Soviet Union assumed that a defeated and weakened Japan would not pose a military threat to Moscow in the foreseeable future, and that a broad Japanese democratic movement which had developed in the post-war period could be used, among other things, for weakening the American domination on the Japanese Archipelago. The Soviet Union also faced the need for a legal fixation of its sovereignty over the territories obtained due to its participation in the war against Japan.

The struggle between Washington and Moscow “for Japan” became particularly obvious in the period of preparation and conclusion of San Francisco Peace Treaty.

Clashes between the Soviet leadership represented by Stalin and the American political and military elite headed by President Truman over the territorial provisions of the Yalta agreement had sparked even before signing of the Act of surrender of Japan. Moscow assumed that the Soviet Union’s acquisition of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands had been “legally guaranteed” by this document of the three Allied powers, while Washington believed that “the final solution” of the territorial problem should be reached at a peace conference.

On August 15, 1945, President Truman transmitted to Stalin a telegram with the text of his General Order №1, which distributed the zones where Japanese troops were to surrender to either the American or the Soviet armed forces. It stated, in particular, that Japanese troops
should surrender in Southern Sakhalin, but did not mention their surrender on the Kuril Islands.

It was already on August 16 that in a reply telegram to the American President Stalin demanded that in accordance with Yalta agreements all the Kuril Islands should be included in the Soviet zone of accepting the surrender of Japanese troops [FRUS 1945a]. Truman agreed with this request, but in a message to the Soviet leader on August 25 he explained that although President F. Roosevelt had agreed to support the Soviet claims on these islands, this issue should be finally resolved by a separate agreement [FRUS 1945b].

Undoubtedly, this explanation of the American position was perceived in Moscow as a signal that Washington had no intention to comply with the Yalta agreements concerning the Kuril Islands. In January 1946, Vice Secretary of State Dean Acheson stated that the Yalta decisions regarding the Soviet occupation of the Kuril Islands were not to be treated as the final territorial settlement [New York Times 1946].

The victory of the Communist party in China in 1949 and the outbreak of war in Korea in 1950 prompted Washington to speed up preparation of Peace Treaty with Japan. Japan was to be secured on the pro-American positions and to be guaranteed from falling under the communist influence of the USSR and China.

It should be emphasized that the U.S. position on the territorial provisions of the Yalta agreements and, accordingly, on the problem of the Kuril Islands changed several times before and after the signing the San Francisco Peace Treaty, evolving along with the deterioration of relations with the USSR and with the growing need to “protect itself” from the claims of Japan for the return of its territories occupied by the Americans [Rozman 2000, pp. 15-29].

In September 1950, the State Department prepared a draft of Peace Treaty that focused on Japan’s involvement in the American legal strategy of confrontation with the Soviet Union [FRUS 1950]. After receiving the draft, Moscow spoke out against the conversion of the Ryukyu Islands and the Bonin archipelago into an American military base and the deployment of American troops on the Japanese territory,
and drew attention to the fact that the draft allowed Japan to pursue a policy of remilitarization. The Soviet side was not satisfied with the lack of a clear definition of the Soviet Union’s ownership of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, as was defined by the Yalta agreement. Finally, Moscow voiced its protest against the exclusion of the PRC from the Peace Treaty negotiation process. Soviet Union consistently maintained this position until the conclusion of the Peace Treaty with Japan. However, Moscow’s failure to elaborate its own draft of a peace treaty put it in the “defending” position.

In Japan the conservative majority of politicians, led by Yoshida Shigeru, one of the most influential political figures of 1940-s and 1950-s, believed that the only chance for Japan to gain independence was to link its security interests to the American foreign policy strategy, and advocated signing the Security Treaty – the military and political alliance with the United States, while maintaining the presence of the American troops on the Japanese territory. At the same time, Japan insisted on regaining its sovereignty over the territories of the Ryukyu Islands and the Bonin archipelago that had been put under the U.S. administrative control by San Francisco Treaty. Meanwhile, it was considered that the path of reviving the armed forces and increasing the military production, which many American politicians and the military had insisted on the final stage of occupation in the late 1940s, does not fit Japan’s interests. The decision was made to focus on the economic revival of Japan, while shifting the responsibility for its security on the United States. This position gave birth to the Yoshida doctrine, which became known by the name of the Japanese Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru.

It is important to keep in mind that initially Japan’s position on the problem of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands was also not coherent, undergoing numerous changes and adjustments. For example, on March 8, 1951, Prime Minister Yoshida stated in Parliament that, in the opinion of the Japanese government, the Habomai Islands should be returned to Japan, since they are not a part of the Kuril Islands. It was for the first time that Japan officially made an open claim for the return of the Habomai Islands. No other territorial claims were mentioned, but
a number of Members of Parliament tried to prove that the Island of Shikotan belongs to the Habomai Islands. At that time Japan did not try to prove that the Islands of Iturup and Kunashir are not included in the geographical name of the Kuril Islands [Hara 1998, pp. 31-32].

According to the U.S. Secretary of State John Dulles, who had a meeting with Prime Minister Yoshida at the San Francisco Peace conference, the latter requested the United States to declare that the Habomai and Shikotan Islands are not part of the Kuril Islands. At the same time, he did not mention Iturup and Kunashir [Hara 1998, p. 32; FRUS 1955-1957, pp. 208-209].

In January 1951, J. Dulles paid a visit to Tokyo as Special Counselor to the State Department, and after his talks with Prime Minister Yoshida a preliminary (provisional) Memorandum was concluded. Dulles did not agree with the Japanese side’s demand for the return of Japan’s sovereignty over the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands. But the document noted that the Peace Treaty should clearly record the return of Southern Sakhalin to the Soviet Union. As for the Kuril Islands, they should be transferred to the Soviet Union only after determining their geographical borders by a bilateral agreement or by some other legal procedures of dispute resolution to be defined by the Peace Treaty. Moreover, Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands should be transferred to the Soviet Union only if it signed the Peace Treaty [FRUS 1951a].

On March 23, 1951, the United States finished drafting the Peace Treaty. Under Article 5, Japan was obliged to return Southern Sakhalin and to extend the Kuril Islands to the Soviet Union. In this version of the draft, the USSR is still preserved as the recipient of territories from Japan. However, in its Article 19, the draft does not provide for any right, title or claim to countries which have not signed it. And Article 20 of the draft prohibited Japan from granting a state which is not a signatory of the present Treaty “greater advantages than those provided” by the Treaty [FRUS 1951b; Slavinsky 1996, p. 161].

After consultations with London, the U.S. – British draft of Peace Treaty was elaborated by June 14. According to article 2, Japan renounces all right, title and claim to the Kurile Islands, and to that
part of Sakhalin Island and the Islands adjacent to it over which Japan acquired sovereignty as a consequence of the Treaty of Portsmouth of September 5, 1905. The article did not contain any geographical definition of the Kuril Islands and did not specify to which state they should be transferred. Under the same article, Japan renounced all right, title and claim to Formosa and the Pescadores, the Spratly Islands, and the Paracel Islands.

Washington deliberately constituted this article in such a way as to create a number of territorial problems that would in future “surround” Japan and “restrain it”. They were later manifested in Tokyo’s relations with Moscow, Beijing, Taipei, Seoul, and Pyongyang.

At the same time, the U.S. “secured” itself by article 3. It does not contain any time frames for Washington to exercise full administrative, legislative and judicial authority over the territories and inhabitants of the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands and a number of other smaller islands.

Article 25 was formulated in such a way that if the USSR (like any other state) decided not to sign and ratify the Treaty, it would not be able to use its provisions, i.e. it would not be a beneficiary of Japan’s renunciation of the Kuril Islands. (Southern Sakhalin became part of Japan as a result of Japanese aggression against Russia, while the Kuril Islands belonged to Tokyo on “legal grounds” under the Russian-Japanese Treaty of 1875). While formulating this article, American lawyers clearly “overreached it”. The Soviet Union’s signature to the Treaty did not mean its acquiring sovereignty over the listed territories. The mechanism of such acquisition was also not determined.

Article 26 appeared in the text of the Treaty as an additional tool of “super-insurance” in the context of the U.S. intention to create problems for the Soviet Union with Japan. It stated that “within a three-year period after the entry into force of the Treaty, Japan would be ready to conclude a Peace Treaty with any state that was at war with Japan but did not accede to the San Francisco Treaty, under the same or substantially the same terms as provided for in it. Should Japan make a peace settlement or war claims settlement with any State granting that State greater advantages than those provided by the present Treaty,
those same advantages shall be extended to the parties to the present Treaty” [Treaty of Peace with Japan 1951].

It follows from this text that after a three-year period Japan was entitled to conclude peace treaties with foreign countries at its discretion and on terms agreed with those countries. On the one hand, the Americans set a relatively short time period for the limitation of Japan’s freedom of action, because they believed that the longer this period was, the more time Moscow would have to “change its mind” and join the Treaty.

On the other hand, Dulles, who was already serving at that time as Secretary of State, did not have any strong counter-arguments to the statement Japanese Foreign Minister Shigemitsu at their meeting on August 24, 1956, that the validity period of Article 26 of the Peace Treaty is limited to three years. The Japanese side later insisted that the time limit mentioned in Article 26 meant that they could now conclude any agreement with the USSR without being obliged to give similar or equal privileges to the signers of the San Francisco Treaty [Elleman 1998, p. 501].

It should be noted that during the period of validity of San Francisco Treaty, while its expiration date was not set (and at the same time its perpetuity was not determined), its provisions, especially those relating to territorial issues, were repeatedly ignored. Japan concluded treaties with other countries without making any amendments or additions to the Peace Treaty.

In 1972, the U.S. were compelled to extend full sovereignty over the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands to Japan, bypassing the “intermediate stage” provided by Article 3 – the initial transfer of these territories “under the UN trusteeship system, with the United States as the sole administering authority”.

In 1952 Japan signed a Treaty with Taiwan (Formosa), recognizing its independence as sovereign state. 20 years later, the heads of government of Japan and the PRC, Tanaka Kakuei and Zhou Enlai, signed a statement in which Japan recognized the government of the PRC as the only legitimate government of China and expressed “full understanding and respect” for the PRC statement that Taiwan is an integral part of
China’s territory. In 1972, the United States passed over the Senkaku archipelago to Japan as part of Okinawa Prefecture, which created for Japan a territorial problem with China and Taiwan.

All these cases can be viewed as examples of direct ignoring the provisions of the San Francisco Treaty. Consequently, not convincing is Japan’s argument that it is not entitled to recognize Russia’s sovereignty over the Kuril Islands, which have been renounced by Japan under the San Francisco Treaty.

On June 14, the U.S.-British joint draft of Peace Treaty was released among the countries invited to the conference, with the instruction to provide their comments by August 13. This project was severely criticized in the Soviet press. But for unknown reasons the Soviet side did not issue an official statement or propose any amendments. This was, undoubtedly, a wrong decision.

Russian researcher Boris Slavinsky, examining documents in the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, discovered a Soviet project of the Peace Treaty with Japan, which was to be presented at the Peace conference in opposition to the U.S.-British project. It consisted of 10 parts, including the provision of Article 7 by which Japan recognized full sovereignty of the USSR over the Southern Sakhalin with all adjacent Islands and the Kuril Islands, renouncing all right, title and claim to these territories [Slavinsky 1996, p. 172-173].

However, initiating a draft proposal was seemingly too late at that moment, so it was decided not to submit it to the conference, but to put forward the amendments to the U.S.-British project. On July 20, the United States and Great Britain sent the Soviet side an official invitation to the San Francisco Peace conference, which was convened in September 1951. When the invitation was extended by the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow, it was stressed that the conference is convened exclusively for the ratification of the US-British draft of the Treaty and that no additions or amendments are permitted.

Apparently, the American side proceeded with such formulation of the invitation, i.e. that the participation of the Soviet Union in the conference was provided purely for the aim of its signing the Treaty,
under the premise that Moscow would refuse the invitation. However, the Soviet leadership decided to participate in the conference, and sent a delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko.

The San Francisco conference was held on September 4-8, 1951, with the participation of 52 countries, including the USSR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Three countries – India, Burma and Yugoslavia – did not accept the invitation. On September 5, Gromyko criticized the project of Treaty at the conference, and proposed eight amendments. Of particular importance was the amendment of article 2, which was proposed in the following way: “Japan recognizes full sovereignty of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics over every part of Sakhalin Island and the Islands adjacent to it, and the Kuril Islands, and renounces all right, title and claim to these territories” [Gromyko 1951]. Other additions included provisions for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Japan, the issue of reparations by Japan, further democratization and the prohibition of fascist and militaristic organizations in Japan, restrictions on the Japanese armed forces, free passage of all merchant ships through the Soya, Nemuro, Tsugaru and Tsushima Straits, and the exclusive passage right through these Straits for warships of the countries bordering the Sea of Japan.

The Soviet proposals were not discussed at the conference on the grounds, as was stated by the American chair of the meeting, that this was not on the agenda of the conference. As a result, the Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia did not sign the Peace Treaty with Japan. Meanwhile, China, India, Burma, and Yugoslavia did not participate in the conference.

Thus, the state of war between Moscow and Tokyo was not terminated formally, and a base was laid for the Russo-Japanese territorial problem, designed by the United States so insidiously and skillfully. Besides, for Japan there remained unresolved issues, such as the repatriation of the prisoners of war, Japan’s membership in the United Nations which was blocked by the Soviet veto, and the Japanese fishing rights in the economic zone of the Soviet Union.

Dulles, addressing the conference on September 5, stressed that the limits of territorial sovereignty of Japan are defined by the Potsdam
conference, and that the Yalta agreements do not have a binding effect on either Japan or any of the Allied Powers. As for the Habomai Islands, in the opinion of the United States, they are not included in the geographical name of the Kuril Islands, but this is the matter of consideration by the International Court of Justice [Dulles 1951]. It is obvious that Dulles did not mention the Island of Shikotan deliberately, leaving the United States a space for further playing the “island card” in the Soviet-Japanese contradictions.

The speech of the head of the Japanese delegation Yoshida at the conference is especially noteworthy. First of all, he denied that the Kuril Islands and Southern Sakhalin had been captured by Japan as a result of aggression. Of particular attention is Yoshida’s complete disregard for the fact of Japan’s gaining Southern Sakhalin at war. In his words, this allegedly happened not after Japan’s aggression against Russia in 1904, but because Japan in 1875 had ceded Southern Sakhalin to Russia in order to settle the territorial dispute. Following the logic of his speech, under the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905 Japan simply “recovered” its sovereignty over Southern Sakhalin. Yoshida argued that Habomai and Shikotan Islands are not part of the Kuril Islands, but are a constituting part of Hokkaido [Yoshida 1951].

Anyway, Japan was deprived of South Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands by the Peace Treaty. There were not many opportunities for the Japanese leadership to defend its position. Tokyo emphasized that Habomai and Shikotan Islands had never been “a part of the Kuril Islands”. At the hearings in the Japanese Parliament on the ratification of the Peace Treaty, and later in his memoirs, Yoshida confirmed his thesis that Kunashir and Iturup are part of the Kuril Islands that have been renounced by Japan, but the Japanese claims on the Southern Kurils are sufficiently justified by the provisions of the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda and the 1875 Treaty of St. Petersburg [Yoshida 1962, p. 256].

Subsequently, the Japanese side began to argue that the term Kurils in the 1875 Treaty of St. Petersburg includes 18 Islands from Shumshu in the North to Urup in the South, and that neither Iturup nor Kunashir, like the Islands of Shikotan and Habomai, are included in the geographic
name of the Kuril Islands. This argument is easy to parry. Article 2 of the St. Petersburg Treaty refers to the cession of not all the Kuril Islands, but only “the group of Kuril Islands that he (the Emperor of Russia) currently owns”. And it is well known that, according to the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda, Japan acquired ownership over the Islands of Kunashir, Iturup, Habomai and Shikotan.

When the U.S. Senate ratified the San Francisco Peace Treaty in April 1952, it was stated that the Yalta agreements do not provide a legal basis for the Soviet occupation of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands.

The United States were mostly concerned about two things. First, how to deprive the Soviet Union of its sovereign rights on Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands in international legal terms. The US position was that “the sovereignty of the Kuril Islands and Southern Sakhalin can only be determined by a future international agreement”. At the same time, a special importance was attached to ensuring that Japan, in case of its restoring diplomatic and other relations with the Soviet Union, should not do anything that could be interpreted as its recognition of Moscow’s sovereignty over the Kuril Islands and Southern Sakhalin. To prevent such development, articles 25 and 26 were introduced in the Peace Treaty. In other words, if Japan recognized the Soviet Union’s full sovereignty over the Kuril Islands, the United States could claim its full sovereignty over the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands. At the same time, the U.S. assumed it could not argue that Japan had not renounced the Kuril Islands, since such statement could be interpreted as its intention to support Japan’s claims to other territories mentioned in the Peace Treaty. The U.S. Secretary of State Dulles, speaking at a meeting of the National Security Council on April 7, 1955, warned against mentioning of the illegality of the Soviet occupation of the Kuril Islands and Southern Sakhalin on the grounds that the Soviet claim to these territories “was substantially the same as our claim to be in the Ryukyus and the Bonin Islands” [FRUS 1955-1957, p. 43].

There are well-founded questions: why did the Soviet Union refuse to sign the San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan, and how would events have developed if it had joined it? The first question seems easy
to answer – the Soviet argument was presented in the speech delivered at the Peace Conference by the head of the Soviet delegation Andrey Gromyko. However, did the Soviet leadership calculate the pros and cons of such decision when analyzing the consequences of non-adherence to the Treaty? It seems that at that time the Soviet leadership, and first of all Joseph Stalin himself, did not attach any serious importance to Japan. Its arguments on the Japanese issue, apparently, were as follows.

The Americans have taken Japan into their own hands firmly and consistently, so in the foreseeable future they will not let it out of their control. This is an obvious disadvantage for the Soviet positions in the Far East. But this disadvantage is not so serious. After the defeat, Japan is decisively weakened, first of all, economically, and it will not be able to play any significantly independent role in the balance of power in the region. And the American military bases on its territory will have to be accepted as an inevitable evil. As for the territorial issue, that is, the issue of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, they are in Soviet possession, with or without a peace treaty, and it is impossible to deny this fact, no matter what the Americans and the Japanese say. In addition, the Peace Treaty clearly states that Japan renounces these territories, and all their Japanese residents have already been moved by the Soviet authorities to Hokkaido.

The main thing is the victory of the Communist party in China. The Soviet-Chinese alliance can more than compensate for any disadvantages from the lack of fair relations between Moscow and Tokyo.

It was not accidental that on August 12, 1951, the Soviet Ambassador to Beijing N.V. Roshchin received a telegram from Moscow with the request to inform the Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China Zhou Enlai that the Soviet delegation would participate in the San Francisco conference and raise the issue of the mandatory invitation of the PRC. A Peace Treaty with Japan should not be concluded without the participation of the PRC [Panov 2010, p. 55].

The directive instructions to the Soviet delegation at the San Francisco conference, approved by the CPSU Central Committee on August 20, 1951, emphasized the following: “The Delegation should
focus its main attention on the issue of inviting People’s Republic of China to the conference” [Slavinsky 1996, p. 174]. This position leads to the following conclusion: Moscow would not have signed the Treaty in the absence of China even if the Peace Treaty had confirmed that Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands belong to the Soviet Union.

Khrushchev emotionally criticized the Soviet position at the San Francisco conference in his memoirs, written at the time when he was already retired: “If we had previously given a correct assessment of the situation after the defeat of Japanese militarism and had signed the Peace Treaty drafted by the American side without our participation, but with due respect to our interests (apparently, Khrushchev referred to the “territorial” provisions of article 2 of the Treaty – A.P.), we would have immediately opened a representative office in Tokyo, and would have an Embassy there”. Khrushchev laid the blame for the absence of peace treaty with Japan on Stalin, who “never asked anybody’s advice, and always decided what to do by himself” [Khrushchev 1999, p. 94-95].

Later some Japanese political analysts concluded that Moscow’s refusal to sign the Peace Treaty with Japan only reinforced the belief of most Japanese that the world was indeed divided into two camps, and that the Japanese government had taken the right choice in seeking Japan’s independence on the basis of an alliance with the United States.

Officially, the Russian side would give a positive assessment of the San Francisco Peace Treaty only five decades after its signing. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a relevant statement on 4 September 2001 [V svyazi s 50-letiyem 2001].

So, let’s sum up. First, after the signing and ratifying the San Francisco Peace Treaty Japan fully restored its sovereignty and entered the sphere of international relations as an independent state.

The Soviet Union did not establish diplomatic relations with Japan and did not maintain any official contacts with it. Since the occupation period there has been a Soviet representation in Tokyo, where the acting Trade representative A. I. Domnitsky, the Second Secretary of the USSR Foreign Ministry A. S. Chasovnikov, and four technical workers have been staying without any official recognition from the Japanese side. After
September 1951, they remained permanently in the pre-war building of the former Soviet Embassy, because if they left for the Soviet Union even for a short time, they would be denied the re-entry to Japan. The Soviet representatives, even though they were not recognized by the Japanese authorities, nevertheless had certain contacts with the Japanese and sent information to Moscow about the situation in Japan. This information for obvious reasons could hardly be detailed and sufficient enough to shape comprehensive and deep understanding of the domestic political processes in Japan.

Secondly, by not signing the Peace Treaty with Japan, the Soviet Union failed to join the international treaty, i.e. the highest form of international legal practice, which provided for Japan’s renunciation of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands. This Treaty is undoubtedly much more significant than the Crimean agreement. This was the starting point for the territorial problem in Soviet-Japanese and then Russian-Japanese relations, which has not been resolved yet.

**Start of Negotiations on the Normalization of Soviet-Japanese Relations**

**First Round**

On October 18, 1954, the USSR and China issued a statement of their readiness to normalize relations with Japan. It should be noted that it did not mention the “revision of Japan’s relations with the U.S.” (in 1951 Tokyo and Washington concluded a military alliance) as a precondition for starting negotiations.

In December 1954, Hatoyama Ichirō replaced Yoshida as Prime Minister, and on December 11, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu Mamoru signaled Tokyo’s desire to start negotiations with Moscow. On December 16, the Soviet Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov also confirmed Moscow’s readiness for negotiations. Compared to Yoshida, who considered normalization of relations with the Soviet Union not only unnecessary, but harmful, Hatoyama sought to provide Japan with a
more independent diplomatic course than the one simply following the position of the United States. Hatoyama’s position was supported by his closest ally, Kōno Ichirō (together with Hatoyama he had founded the Democratic party, which was in power at that time, and in the new government he took the post of Minister of Agriculture and Forestry).

However, Yoshida remained to be a fairly influential politician, controlling many high-ranking employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Shigemitsu Mamoru (who served as Foreign Minister in Hatoyama’s Cabinet) shared Yoshida’s views on relations with the USSR.

In the Soviet leadership there was also no unanimity on the “Japanese question”. N. Khrushchev, N. Bulganin, G. Malenkov, and A. Mikoyan were in favor of concluding a Peace Treaty with Japan as soon as possible, but V. Molotov was still committed to the “Stalinist anti-Japanese line” and believed that there could not be any peace treaty with Japan as long as Tokyo maintains the Security Treaty with Washington.

In December 1954 – January 1955, the parties repeatedly exchanged statements about their readiness to launch the normalization process. However, neither Moscow nor Tokyo sent each other any official invitation for the talks. It seemed that the parties were looking for an acceptable form of invitation to negotiations in the absence of diplomatic relations.

The Soviet side took the initiative, and this was done in quite an unusual way. In January 1955, Acting Trade Representative of the USSR Domnitsky repeatedly tried to contact the Minister of Foreign Affairs Shigemitsu for extending him a letter with the offer to start negotiations in Moscow or Tokyo and to appoint representatives to the talks. Yet Shigemitsu refused to accept a letter without a date or a signature and from the Soviet representative whom the Japanese government did not officially recognize. This was a convenient excuse for Shigemitsu not to hurry with the negotiations.

Since the Japanese Foreign Minister had not accepted the letter, Domnitsky, acting through Hatoyama’s closest friends who were in favor of normalizing relations with the Soviet Union, delivered the letter to the Japanese Prime Minister at his private residence. The meeting of the Soviet representative with Hatoyama was organized in a curiously
detective style. As Hatoyama writes in his memoirs, he asked Domnitsky to proceed to the house through the kitchen, so that the Japanese journalists could not to follow his arrival and raise a fuss [Hatoyama 1957, p. 64]. The meeting took place, and the Japanese Prime Minister accepted the letter. Domnitsky confirmed that the letter was of official nature and was issued by the Soviet government [Panov 2010, p. 62].

On February 4, 1955, the Japanese government decided to start negotiations with the Soviet Union on normalizing interstate relations. To head the Japanese delegation at the negotiations, the government appointed Matsumoto Shun’ichi, a former diplomat who had held several high positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including the Ambassador to Britain, and who was a Member of Parliament elected from the Democratic Party in February 1955. He supported Hatoyama’s policy and advocated the conclusion of the peace treaty with the Soviet Union as soon as possible.

The Soviet delegation was headed by the Soviet Ambassador in London Y. Malik. He was an experienced diplomat familiar with Japan – in the late years of the war, in 1942-1945, he served as the Soviet Ambassador to Tokyo. The instructions issued by the Japanese government to the delegation led by Matsumoto at the London talks included the following main points:

- to obtain the consent of the Soviet Union for Japan’s admission to the UN (until that, the USSR had been vetoing Japan’s admission);
- to ensure the return of all Japanese citizens detained in Soviet camps (at the start of the talks, there remained 1,016 prisoners of war and 357 civilians serving sentences for war crimes and crimes committed while in detention);
- to reach an agreement on the resumption of trade relations;
- to obtain the consent of the Soviet side for Japan’s fishing of salmon that spawned in rivers on the territory of the Soviet Union.

Anticipating hard clashes on the territorial issue, the Japanese side developed a three-stage strategy for conducting talks. At the first stage, the Japanese delegation was to demand the transfer of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, including Habomai and Shikotan Islands.
If the Soviet side refused to meet such a clearly assertive position, which could be hardly called realistic even by the Japanese themselves, it was prescribed to limit the territorial claims to Southern Kurils, which implied the Islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashir and Iturup. And, finally, if this requirement was not accepted, to limit the claims to the Islands of Habomai and Shikotan. Thus, according to these directives, the “return” of these Islands was considered sufficient for the conclusion of the Peace Treaty [Hasegawa 1998 p. 108-109; Hara 1998, p. 65-66].

The directives (and this is confirmed by numerous publications of Japanese participants in the London negotiations, including Matsumoto, as well as diplomats, authors of the directives and political analysts) were drawn up in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and therefore not true are all subsequent statements by the Japanese side according to which the Japanese principled position from the very beginning was to seek the reversion of the Islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashir and Iturup. Moreover, Japanese negotiators believed that it would be extremely difficult to obtain even the Islands of Habomai and Shikotan. Yoshida and his supporters, including diplomats, insisting that directives should include the demand for the “return” of the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, based their position on the assumption that the Soviet Union would not agree and, consequently, the Peace Treaty would not be concluded, which was in their interests.

The Soviet-Japanese Peace Treaty talks started in London on June 3, 1955. At the second meeting of the heads of delegations on June 7, Matsumoto handed Malik a Memorandum, which the Japanese side proposed to take as a basis for further negotiations. It introduced the following items as the main conditions for the normalization of relations:

- transfer of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands to Japan;
- return to Japan of the Japanese prisoners of war detained in the Soviet Union;
- positive resolution of issues, related to the Japanese salmon fishery in the Soviet waters;
- the support by the Soviet Union’s for Japan’s admission to the UN.
At the following, third meeting, the head of the Soviet delegation presented for consideration the Soviet project of the Peace Treaty with Japan. It contained, in addition to provisions on ending the state of war between the two countries and restoring official relations, and Japan’s recognition of the Soviet Union’s sovereignty over Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, two other items that were clearly unrealistic.

First, it was proposed to fix that Japan would not enter into alliances directed against the Soviet Union. This meant that Japan would have to abandon the Security Treaty with the United States. Second, Japan was to commit itself to allowing free passage of military vessels through the Japanese Straits only states to bordering the Sea of Japan, which meant that the Soviet military vessels could use the Straits, while the American ones could not. The authorship of this item can be traced back to Molotov’s hand. The Soviet promotion of these provisions gave the Japanese delegation an excuse for not discussing other articles of the draft unless the Soviet side ceased to put forward proposals aimed at revising the Japan-U.S. alliance. Third, it was proposed that the problem of Japanese prisoners of war would be resolved only after the conclusion of the Peace Treaty.

Having analyzed various documents, materials, and memoirs of the negotiators, the Japanese researcher Hasegawa concluded that Matsumoto, realizing the flexibility of the Soviet position, made it clear to Malik that it was possible to solve the territorial problem on the basis of the return of Habomai and Shikotan Islands to Japan. This option was provided as the minimum territorial requirement in the instructions he received [Hasegawa 1998, p. 110].

The negotiations were interrupted because in July Malik went to Moscow for consultations and new instructions. On August 9, 1955, when negotiations were resumed, Malik informs Matsumoto that the Soviet government is ready to meet the “wish” of the Japanese side for the transfer of the Habomai and Shikotan Islands to Japan, on the condition that the territorial issue between the two countries would be finally settled when the Peace Treaty is signed. He also said that the Soviet side did not treat as a precondition for normalizing relations and concluding
the Peace Treaty Japan’s renunciation of obligations arising from the existing international treaties (obviously this was the indication of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan. Subsequently, the two above-mentioned “Molotov points” were removed) [Tikhvinsky 1996, pp. 53-54].

The territorial concession announced by the Soviet side was more generous than the Japanese side could have expected. Matsumoto would later write in his memoirs that when he heard about it from Malik, he “could hardly believe his ears”. He immediately reported the conversation to Tokyo [Matsumoto 1966, p. 44].

However, Matsumoto’s telegram prompted the opponents of normalizing relations with Moscow to take countermeasures against the early conclusion of the negotiations. Shigemitsu and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs classified this telegram so strongly that even Prime Minister Hatoyama did not know about it. Shigemitsu sent Matsumoto the instruction to adhere to the position that the reversion of only Habomai and Shikotan is not enough, that Kunashir and Iturup Islands have been the Japanese territory since ancient times and are not part of the Kuril Islands renounced by Japan under the San Francisco Treaty, and that the matter of sovereignty of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands should be decided at the international conference.

This position was presented by the Japanese side at the meeting on August 30. Some participants of the meeting recall that after receiving the Japanese reply, Malik turned white and strongly condemned the Japanese side for the lack of good will to reach an agreement. Repeating the proposal concerning the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, he stressed that the Soviet government would never agree to an international conference on the territorial issue and would never change its position on the Kunashir and Iturup Islands.

Thus, it was for the first time that Japan combined the Habomai and Shikotan Islands together with the Kunashir and Iturup Islands as a minimum requirement, and for the first time that Japan separated these Islands from the geographical name the Kuril Islands.
In connection with the events described above, two main questions arise: why did Malik announce the territorial concession at a fairly early stage of negotiations and why did the Japanese side not accept it. According to the testimony of Sergey Tikhvinsky, who was a member of the Soviet delegation at the talks and served at that time as Councilor at the Soviet Embassy in London, the Soviet delegation had a reserve position on the territorial issue approved by the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, which was released by Malik to the head of the Japanese delegation [Tikhvinsky 1996, p. 53-54].

But what made him do it so hastily? There is an opinion that, while staying in Moscow in July 1955 at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Malik could have met with Khrushchev and received appropriate instructions from him. It is well known that Khrushchev was dissatisfied with the slow progress of the London talks and repeatedly spoke about this. Indeed, it is hard to imagine that such an experienced diplomat as Malik could have used this position, which was essentially a basic one, on his own initiative, without consulting with Moscow.

It is also obvious that after receiving such an important concession from the Soviet side, without giving anything in return, the Japanese side came to the conclusion that, since it had already regained the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, why not try to return of the Kunashir and Iturup Islands as well.

The new instructions received by the Japanese delegation from Tokyo, of course, led to a delay in the negotiations. To what extent the Prime Minister Hatoyama, who was in favor of concluding a peace treaty with the Soviet Union as quickly as possible, was aware of them? The first explanation, which seems quite reasonable, is that the head of the Japanese government did not receive any detailed information about the progress of the London negotiations. Shigemitsu and his Ministry were constraining his interference in the process. In his memoirs Hatoyama wrote: “I suggest that the details of the negotiations were reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but it did not pass this information to me, although I often asked them to do it. What I received were nothing more than general telegrams...” [Hatoyama 1957, p. 177].
It’s hard to believe it, but this was the real situation. Hatoyama was practically removed by the Foreign Ministry from the London negotiations, and Shigemitsu took a particularly hard line in it. In August, he publicly stated that “if the negotiations do not lead to agreements acceptable to Japan, we should even be ready to break them”. Speaking at the National press club in Washington at the end of August, he assured the American leadership that “the Japanese-Soviet negotiations do not mean Japan’s desire to establish friendly relations with the Soviet Union, and the main goal is to technically end the state of war between the two countries” [Hara 1998, p. 68].

The second explanation for the Japanese side’s refusal to accept the Soviet territorial concession and for Japan’s tightening its position on the territorial issue addresses Japan’s domestic politics. In the summer of 1955 negotiations were held about merging the Democratic Party and the Liberal Party. Hatoyama had to negotiate with Yoshida, whose tough position towards the Soviet Union was very well known. Problems of normalization of relations with the Soviet Union were discussed by the leaders of both parties, since the unified party was to develop a consolidated position. Many Japanese researchers come to the conclusion that Hatoyama, seeking the establishment of a unified party, the LDP, compromised and went along with hardliners on the issue of Peace Treaty talks with the USSR. This version is also supported by the fact that after the creation of the LDP on November 15, 1955, the Japanese position in the negotiations became tougher.

On November 12, the leaders of the Democratic and Liberal parties approved a political document titled Rational changes in the position in the Japanese-Soviet negotiations, according to which the purpose of the negotiations was the return of the Southern Kurils (Kunashir and Iturup Islands) and the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, while the fate of other territories was to be decided by the international conference.

London talks reached a dead end and were interrupted on September 23.
Second Round

The second round of the Soviet-Japanese negotiations started on January 17, 1956, and continued until March 20. The delegations agreed on a number of articles of the Peace Treaty that were not so crucial. Yet differences remained on major issues, including the territorial one. The head of the Soviet delegation presented proposals confirming the promise to transfer the Habomai and Shikotan Islands to Japan with clear understanding that there would be no more territorial concessions. In response, Matsumoto put forward a Japanese counter-proposal. Since the Japanese side considered the issue of Habomai and Shikotan Islands resolved, it was about the Islands of Kunashir and Iturup.

It was assumed that until Japan returned these Islands, Tokyo would be recognized its “potential sovereignty” over them, which would allow the Soviet residents of these Islands to remain on them for this period, and Soviet military and commercial vessels would have the right of free passage through the Straits between these Islands, which would be demilitarized [Hasegawa 1998, p. 121].

Malik rejected these proposals, and the negotiations were interrupted. On the day after the end of the second round of the London talks, i.e. on March 21, 1956, the resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR About the Protection of Resources and Regulation of Salmon Fishing in the Open Seas and Areas Adjacent to the Territorial Waters of the USSR in the Far East was published. According to the resolution, salmon fishing was restricted in the Sea of Okhotsk and the Western part of the Bering Sea, for both Soviet and foreign organizations and citizens. Fishing was allowed only under special permits, and each vessel was set a fishing quota.

The resolution caused shock not only among Japanese fishing circles, but also in the general Japanese public. At the time when the consequences of the devastating war had not yet been overcome, salmon was more than essential for the food supply of the Japanese people. In a number of Japanese studies of Japanese-Soviet relations it is believed
that the Soviet government, through this decree, tried to put pressure on the Japanese side to make it more flexible at the Peace Treaty talks.

But the Soviet press had warned of the possibility of adopting such a resolution as early as February 11, i.e. before the failure of the second round of London talks, and subsequent events have shown that those were the Japanese politicians advocating the speedy normalization of relations with Moscow who took advantage of the “fishing crisis” for overcoming the resistance of the opponents of the agreement with the Soviet Union.

The Japanese side offered to hold negotiations on fishing issues separately from the Peace Treaty talks. Such negotiations were held in Moscow from April 29 to May 14. The Japanese delegation was headed by the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Kōno. As Kōno later recalls in his memoirs, when sending him to the Soviet capital, Prime Minister Hatoyama admonished him with the following words: “Anticommunism and the restoration of interstate relations are two different things. Is there any other state today that continues to be at war with another state just because it doesn’t like it? Having settled our relations with the Soviet Union, we can achieve the release of the Japanese who are still in captivity in the USSR, and then, when the Soviet Union withdraws its objections, Japan can become a member of the U.N. ... Of course, fish is an important matter, but it’s time to resolve the main issue, the issue of normalizing relations between the two countries. Therefore, I will also probably have to go to Moscow. That is why I would like you to go now to the Soviet Union and find out the Soviet position and all the circumstances on the spot” [Kōno 1965, p. 26].

Fishing talks were proceeding with difficulties. Shigemitsu even tried to sabotage their start. Hatoyama had to intervene directly to make them go ahead. As a result of the negotiations, the Soviet-Japanese Convention on Fishing in Open Seas in the North-Western Pacific was signed on May 14, 1956, the day before the start of the season of salmon fishing, and the salmon quota for the Japanese fishing vessels was determined. During the negotiations, on May 9, Kōno requested a meeting with the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Nikolai Bulganin,
to which he came without any escort, including the Japanese interpreter
who was a career diplomat in the Japanese delegation. Thus, he showed
that he did not share the position of the Japanese Foreign Ministry in
the Peace Treaty talks and did not trust its employees. Kōno proposed
that when signing the fishing convention, the parties should make a
joint statement that it would enter into force on the condition that
the normalization talks would be resumed no later than 31 July, 1956.
At the same time, he asked to make it look like the Soviet initiative.

Thus, the Japanese Minister sought to put pressure on the forces in
Japan that were trying to delay the London talks. Kōno and Mikoyan
signed a corresponding communique about the resumption of talks
between the two countries by the end of July. This agreement on the
restart of negotiations was sharply criticized by the Japanese Foreign
Ministry. Kōno was even accused of allegedly making some concessions
on the territorial issue at a meeting with Bulganin. However, the territorial
issue was not discussed at that meeting. But the head of the Soviet
government suggested that the Japanese side should consider using
the Adenauer formula in the Peace Treaty negotiations [Tikhvinsky
1996, pp. 93-95]. On September 13, 1953, the Soviet Union and West
Germany reached an agreement to restore diplomatic relations without
resolving territorial problems between the two countries, the settlement
of which was postponed until signing a peace treaty. The formula of
German Chancellor Karl Adenauer in relation to the Soviet-Japanese
negotiations implied the normalization of relations without signing
a peace treaty with the provision on territorial delimitation.

After Bulganin’s proposal, Hatoyama began to think of accepting
this formula, given that he had previously considered this option
[Hasegawa 1998, p. 122]. As for Shigemitsu, he was the adversary of
the Adenauer formula. He believed that after the official termination
of the state of war with the Soviet Union, Japan could lose all prospects
of the return of not only the Southern Kurils, but also of the Habomai
and Shikotan Islands.
Third Round

The third round of the Peace Treaty talks was held not in London, but, by the suggestion of the Soviet side, in Moscow, and lasted from July 31 to August 14. It should be noted that the domestic political struggle in Japan on the issues related to these talks was very acute on the eve of their resumption and did not always develop in favor of those who advocated the early normalization of relations with the Soviet Union, especially Hatoyama and Kōno. After signing the fishery convention, Sergey Tikhvinsky arrived in Tokyo as the head of the Soviet Union’s Mission for the Implementation of the Agreement on Fishing and Rescue Operations in the North-Western Pacific Ocean, with the rank of the USSR’s Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. In fact, the Japanese government recognized the post-war Representation of the USSR in Tokyo, although under a different name. According to Tikhvinsky, the Japanese opponents of normalizing relations with the Soviet Union began to act more actively, in a coordinated manner, and to warm up the anti-Soviet sentiment in broad circles of the public. A leading role was played by Yoshida and his faction in LDP, as well as acting and retired diplomats.

The public was being intimidated by the “communist threat”, which would allegedly appear after the arrival of Soviet Embassy staff in Japan and undermine the internal security of Japan [Tikhvinsky 1996, pp. 96-97].

Opponents of normalizing relations with Moscow have succeeded in appointing “their person”, the Foreign Minister Shigemitsu, as head of the Japanese delegation to the Peace Treaty negotiations. He himself sought to lead the delegation, believing that his firmness and assertiveness would allow him to get additional concessions from the Soviet side. He did not even object to holding the third round of talks in Moscow, hoping to get direct access to the Soviet leaders and convince them of the correctness of the Japanese position. Still Hatoyama managed to send his supporter to Moscow. Matsumoto was the plenipotentiary representative under the head of the delegation.
At the talks with Foreign Minister Dmitry Shepilov, the Japanese delegation removed the issue of holding an international conference for determining the ownership of Southern Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, but continued to insist on the transfer of the Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashir and Iturup Islands to Japan [Hasegawa 1998, p. 123].

Negotiations have again reached an impasse. Shigemitsu’s hard line did not work, and the Soviet leaders did not accept it. Then Shigemitsu comes to a conclusion that no one expected from him. He informs the members of the Japanese delegation that it expedient to sign a Peace Treaty on the Soviet terms – the transfer of only the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, without including a provision for passing the border between Kunashir and Hokkaido. The course of the negotiations and the Soviet position on them, he argued, indicate that otherwise Japan may not get even these islands.

On August 12, Shigemitsu Mamoru announced his “radical” proposal to Tokyo. Moreover, he is voicing his position in the press [Hara 1998, p. 71]. But the situation in the Japanese ruling circles, including the one created by Shigemitsu’s own previous efforts, was not in favor of its adoption. The head of the Japanese delegation receives instructions from Tokyo to continue insisting on the same position as before. Moscow talks are interrupted.

The U.S. Position on the Japanese-Soviet Negotiations

Hatoyama’s intention to achieve full normalization of relations with the Soviet Union was perceived in Washington with jealousy or, speaking more precisely, with great concern. In addition to its reluctance to give their junior partner more freedom of hands in diplomatic affairs, the Americans also had specific selfish calculations. In Washington’s perspective, if a rapprochement between Tokyo and Moscow took place,

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1 See also Asahi Shimbun 1956, August 13.
Japanese nationalism could be turned against the United States, since the Japanese would demand the reversion of the Ryukyu and Bonin archipelagos. The U.S. State Department predicted that the Soviet Union could use the Kuril Islands issue as a “bargaining chip” and create tensions between Japan and the United States [Hara 1998, p. 43]. Besides, the Americans feared that after the normalization of relations with the USSR Japan might start negotiations with the PRC to establish diplomatic relations.

On February 26, 1955, Dulles sent an instruction to the U.S. Ambassador in Tokyo J.J. Allison to inform the Japanese side on the position of Washington in connection with the Soviet-Japanese Peace Treaty negotiations. Speaking in detail, Tokyo’s agreements with Moscow should not undermine the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and should correspond to the San Francisco Peace Treaty (in this regard, American support for the Japanese position that the Habomai and Shikotan Islands are not part of the Kuril Islands was confirmed) [FRUS 1955-1957, p. 20-22]. At that time Washington believed that Japan’s claim to Habomai and Shikotan Islands would be enough to disrupt the Soviet-Japanese Peace Treaty talks.

The Soviet proposal to hand over the Habomai and Shikotan Islands to Japan was perceived in Washington as creating an opportunity for concluding the Soviet-Japanese Peace Treaty. In this regard, the United States changed its position. Now support was provided for Japan’s claims not only to the Islands of Habomai and Shikotan, but also to Kunashir and Iturup. The United States began encouraging Japan to demand the “return of Kunashir and Iturup Islands” as territories not included in the name of Kuril Islands, regarding this as an additional obstacle for the conclusion of the Soviet-Japanese Treaty [Hasegawa 1998, p. 120].

On August 19, 1956, Shigemitsu met with Dulles in London and informed him about the progress in negotiations with the Soviet Union. Along the way, he noted that Moscow wants to draw the border line north of the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, and asked the Secretary of State’s position on the legitimacy of such a border from the standpoint of the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Dulles spoke out quite definitely.
According to the records of the conversation made by the American side, he stressed that “the Kuriles and Ryukyus were handled in the same manner under the surrender terms” and that “while the United States had by the peace treaty agreed that residual sovereignty to the Ryukyus might remain with Japan, we had also stipulated by Article 26 that if Japan gave better terms to Russia we could demand the same terms for ourselves. That would mean that if Japan recognized that the Soviet Union was entitled to full sovereignty over the Kuriles we would assume that we were equally entitled to full sovereignty over the Ryukyus” [FRUS 1955-1957, p. 202].

The State Secretary suggested Japan might tell the Soviet Union of the tough line of the United States – that if the USSR were to take all the Kuriles, the United States might remain forever in Okinawa, and no Japanese Government could survive [FRUS 1955-1957, p. 203]. In almost all studies of Japanese, American, Soviet, and at present Russian historians and political scientists, these statements of Dulles are interpreted as Dulles’ threat (Daresu no dokatsu), which ultimately impeded signing the Soviet-Japanese Peace Treaty. Linking the Kuril Islands to the Ryukyus and Bonin Islands rendered a shock effect on the Japanese public. Although the Dulles’ statements only implied that Japan should not recognize the Soviet Union’s sovereignty over the Kuril Islands, they were perceived as a threat not to return the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands to Japan otherwise. At the same time, virtually unnoticed was the fact that Japan’s refusal to claim the reversion of Kunashir and Iturup was in no way connected with the issue of its recognition or non-recognition of the Soviet sovereignty over them.

In order to reassure the Japanese public, on September 7 the U.S. State Department sent an aide-memoire to the Japanese government explaining the American position. It stated that the Government of United States believes that the state of war between Japan and the Soviet Union should be terminated, that the Yalta agreements still do not provide a legal effect in transferring territories, that the San Francisco Peace Treaty did not determine the sovereignty of the territories renounced by Japan, and that Japan does not have the right to transfer
sovereignty over the territories renounced by it therein. It was noted that “after careful examination of the historical facts”, the United States concluded that the Islands of Etorofu and Kunashiri, along with the Habomai Islands and Shikotan, have always been part of Japan proper and should in justice be acknowledged as under Japanese sovereignty [FRUS 1955-57, p. 226]. It is not difficult to find contradictions in this statement. On the one hand, Kunashir and Iturup are recognized as part of the Kuril Islands, which have been renounced by Japan, and on the other, Japan’s position that they have always been an integral part of Japanese territory is supported.

In any case, the United States voiced its position of unequivocal support of the Japanese demands to the Soviet Union for the “return of the four Islands”, which had been stated by Dulles to Shigemitsu at their last meeting on August 24, 1955.

**Moscow High-level Talks**

The situation around the Soviet-Japanese negotiations was becoming more and more alarming. They were at the brink of a total failure. For Hatoyama and his supporters who adhered to Japan’s independent foreign policy, it became increasingly clear that it would not be possible to find a way out of the current impasse without a direct interference of the head of the Japanese government.

On August 19, the Japanese government publishes a statement about the Prime Minister’s possible trip to Moscow. That was a courageous decision of Hatoyama, who was facing strong opposition from within the ruling party, the rightist and nationalistic organizations, and even a number of business structures focused on the American market. Washington also did not stay away. Hatoyama was coming to the conclusion that since it was not possible to conclude the Peace Treaty together with the solution of the territorial problem, it was necessary to reach at least an agreement on the restoration of diplomatic relations.
According to recently declassified documents from the Politburo archives of the CPSU Central Committee, the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee sent a coded telegram to the head of the Soviet mission in Japan, Tikhvinsky, stating that they were ready to receive Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama and Minister Kōno in Moscow in the second half of October. The purpose of the visit was to “establish personal contact and to exchange views on the prospects of the Soviet-Japanese relations”.

It makes sense to present this document in full in view of its great significance, since it sets out Moscow’s principled position on the normalization of bilateral relations. The Soviet government “intends to sign the Peace Treaty with the territorial article envisaging the transfer of the Habomai and Shikotan Islands to Japan, as it is set out in the Soviet project of the Peace Treaty. The position of the Soviet Government on the territorial question is final and cannot be changed. If the Japanese government is not ready to sign the Peace Treaty, the Soviet government gives its consent for the restoration of diplomatic relations without the Peace Treaty with subsequent exchange of ambassadors and the declaration of the end of the state of war, while leaving the territorial status-quo unchanged.

This position of the Soviet government, as is known, has already been stated during the meeting of N. Bulganin and N. Khrushchev with the Japanese parliamentary delegation on September 21, 1955, as well as in the conversation of N. Bulganin with I. Kono on May 9, 1956. This position of the Soviet government remains unchanged at present. One should pay attention to the fact that Bulganin in his conversation with Mr. Kono on May 9 spoke in the same sense, but not as it is stated by Kono, who claims that Mr. Bulganin spoke in favor of signing the Peace Treaty without a territorial provision.

If the Japanese side agrees to any of these options for normalizing Soviet-Japanese relations, the Soviet government is ready receive Mr. Hatoyama, Mr. Kono and their accompanying persons in Moscow in the second half of October this year” [Maksimenkov 2019].

On September 11, Hatoyama sent a message to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR Bulganin, expressing his readiness to
start negotiations on normalizing relations between the two countries, if the Soviet Union agreed to the following provisions:
- end of the state of war between the two countries;
- exchange of embassies;
- immediate repatriation of Japanese citizens detained in Soviet camps;
- entry into force of the Fishery Convention;
- the Soviet Union’s support for Japan’s admission to the UN.

It was also proposed to approve at the upcoming negotiations the items that had already been agreed upon at the previous talks in Moscow and London. As for the territorial issue, it was noted that the Japanese side would be satisfied with the promise of the Soviet side to continue discussing it in future.

Positive response from the Soviet side followed immediately. On September 13, Bulganin sent a message to Hatoyama where he expressed his consent with the Japanese position over the agenda the talks to be held in Moscow and his readiness to immediately resume the talks on the normalization of relations without concluding a peace treaty.

Thus, at that moment the parties did not plan to conclude a peace treaty. The Japanese side only proposed that the consent of the Soviet government to continue negotiations on the conclusion of the peace treaty, including the territorial issue, after the restoration of diplomatic relations, should be made in written form. On September 29, the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Gromyko and Matsumoto exchanged relevant letters.

However, opponents of normalizing relations with the Soviet Union did not let up. On September 20, the LDP held an extraordinary general meeting to approve the party platform for the upcoming talks in Moscow. The Japanese negotiators were required to insist on the immediate return of the Islands of Shikotan and Habomai, on continuing negotiations on the Islands of Kunashir and Iturup after the conclusion of the peace treaty, and on following the spirit of the San Francisco Treaty with respect to other territories.
The LDP decision contradicted the agreement already reached between the parties to postpone negotiations on the territorial issue. Of course, it tied Hatoyama’s hands in the negotiations and led to their complication.

The high-level talks in Moscow began on October 13. On October 15, the head of the Soviet delegation Bulganin and Hatoyama confirmed at their meeting what they had agreed in their letters – normalization of relations together along with postponing negotiations on the territorial issue. Hatoyama repeated the position set out in his letter from September 11 to Bulganin.

But Bulganin made an important addition. He suggested signing a Joint Declaration, subject to ratification by both sides, rather than a joint communique or a memorandum, as the final result of the negotiations. Hatoyama agreed. After the meeting, the Soviet side submitted a ten-point project of Joint Declaration. The tenth paragraph stated that the parties “will continue negotiations on the conclusion of a peace treaty, including the territorial issue, after the normalization of relations” [Maksimenkov 2019].

Everything was seemingly clear and predictable. After some technical work, the parties could sign the document whose provisions had already been agreed upon. But an unexpected thing happened. Kōno, who was a member of the Japanese delegation, requested a meeting with the First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Nikita Khrushchev, and received an audience with him on October 16. Why did Kōno do this instead of Hatoyama, who was the head of delegation?

A possible explanation is that Hatoyama (he was 73) at the time was already seriously ill, having arrived in Moscow in a wheelchair – because of the effects of a stroke he was not able to conduct lengthy, complex discussions. Another version is that Hatoyama wanted to quickly complete the negotiations without fulfilling the party’s instructions from September, 20. He had already announced his intention to step down as the head of Cabinet and to retire from big politics after normalizing relations with Moscow. As for Kōno, he was contemplating about his political future and got Hatoyama’s consent to put forward the territorial
issue before the Soviet leadership, but not at the negotiations, but directly to the “chief person in the USSR”.

One more interpretation refers us to the traditional Japanese negotiating tactic, according to which the head of delegation does not go into details, while one of its members is a master of behind-scenes deals and actually conducts real negotiations. This tactic is called among Japanese negotiators *haragei* (hidden game). Of course, Kōno coordinated with Hatoyama all his meetings with Khrushchev.

Kōno began the conversation with the Soviet leader by describing in detail harsh activities of the Japanese opponents of the normalization of Soviet-Japanese relations. He argued that in this situation, in order to neutralize them, it is extremely important for the Japanese delegation to return to Japan with the Islands of Habomai and Shikotan. Khrushchev reacts to this irritably, recalling quite reasonably that the Soviet government has twice offered to transfer these Islands to the Japanese side, but Tokyo has twice rejected this offer.

“The Soviet government,” he continues, “wants to come to an agreement with Japan as soon as possible and does not use the territorial issue for bargaining. But I must again state very clearly and categorically that we do not accept and should not accept any territorial claims from Japan other than the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, and refuse to discuss any proposals on this issue”. [Soglashayetsya na peredachu 1996, p. 118].

At the same time, the Soviet leader sets two conditions under which these territories can be transferred to Japan. The first condition is that the Peace Treaty must be concluded before their return, and that along with the transfer of the Islands the territorial issue must be considered to be resolved completely and definitively. The second condition is that these Islands will be transferred only after the U.S. return to Japan Okinawa and all other Japanese territories that they currently possess.

For the first time Khrushchev linked the problem of the Habomai and Shikotan Islands to the problem of the Ryukyu and Bonin archipelagos. In doing so, he tried to play the territorial card in the anti-American game just as the Americans played it in the anti-Soviet one. After Khrushchev’s
presentation of this position, Kōno continuously and persistently tried to refocus attention on the territorial problem.

At the same time, he tried to “challenge” Khrushchev’s thesis about the analogy between the issues of Habomai and Shikotan Islands and Okinawa. In his reply, the Soviet leader, increasingly irritated by Kōno’s insistence, said the following: “We do not want to have inequality with the United States on this issue. Why can one demand that we extend to Japan territories that belong to us, while the United States hold Japanese territories in their hands and build there military bases which are directed against us? This is not fair. We protest against such discrimination”. [Soglashayetsya na peredachu 1996, p.119-120].

Kōno continued trying to raise the territorial question even in hypothetical terms. He asked Khrushchev, whether he thought that the U.S. would ever return Okinawa to Japan. The latter replied that it would happen one day. Then Kōno embarks on a clearly provocative question – when the U.S. revert back Okinawa, will the Soviet Union be ready to return Kunashir and Iturup. Clearly tired of the Japanese “interrogation”, the Soviet leader notes: “I did not know that the Japanese are so persistent. They hit the same point all the time”. [Soglashayetsya na peredachu 1996, p. 120]. Khrushchev decisively rejected the possibility of transferring Kunashir and Iturup, although, according to his assessment, these Islands do not have any economic value. On the contrary, they bring complete loss and are a huge financial burden for the Soviet government. But, he stressed, “the crucial thing is the country’s prestige, as well as the strategic side of the problem”. [Soglashayetsya na peredachu 1996, p. 120].

After the meeting Khrushchev sent a note to the members of the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee with the text for including in the Joint Declaration, which stated that the Soviet Union, desiring to meet the wishes of Japan and taking into consideration the interests of the Japanese State, agrees to transfer to Japan the Habomai Islands and the island of Shikotan. The actual transfer of these islands to Japan will take place after the conclusion of a Peace Treaty between the USSR and Japan and after Okinawa and other Islands currently under U.S.
administration are returned to Japan [Soglashayetsya na peredachu 1996, p.121].

Late in the evening, this text was delivered to Kōno. But the meetings between Kōno and Khrushchev did not end there. One should know the Japanese negotiators – they tend to squeeze the maximum possible concessions out of any situation. At a meeting on October 17, Khrushchev explained to Kōno that the Soviet Union’s willingness to extend Habomai and Shikotan to Japan was primarily motivated by its desire to help Japan get back Okinawa. But if Japan does not want mentioning Okinawa in the text of the declaration, then it is possible to make an oral statement on this issue or not to link the transfer of Habomai and Shikotan Islands to the return of Okinawa and other territories [Soglashayetsya na peredachu 1996, p. 123].

At the third meeting on October 18, Kōno resorted, borrowing the words of a famous Japanese historian Hasegawa Tsuyoshi, to a “snake attack”. The Japanese delegation asked the consent of the Soviet side to publish, after signing the Joint Declaration, the letters that Gromyko and Matsumoto had exchanged on September 29, before the start of high-level negotiations, i.e. when the issue of signing a Peace Treaty or a Joint Declaration with the territorial article had not been on the agenda. The aim of the trick was to create an impression that the Joint Declaration and the exchange letters were integral parts of one and the same thing, and that the Soviet Union had allegedly agreed to discuss in future the problem of the Kunashir and Iturup Islands when negotiating the Peace Treaty.

Of course, this trick could not convince the Soviet side of what it had not promised, but it helped Hatoyama and Kōno to present the matter upon their return home as if they had fulfilled the “party mandate” and had defended Japan’s position on the Islands of Kunashir and Iturup. Subsequently, Japanese politicians, diplomats, and political scientists interpreted the publication of the Gromyko-Matsumoto letters in this way. Moreover, from the very beginning the exchange letters were not binding the Soviet government, and all the more, they did not contain any specific mentioning of the territorial problem.
Khrushchev, when he was already removed from power, was reproached for promising to hand over the Habomai and Shikotan Islands to Japan. Let’s try to grasp the reasons for his decision. First, and this has already been mentioned, he wanted to normalize relations with Japan as soon as possible, especially since differences of views on fundamental issues with the Chinese leaders were already taking shape.

Second, Khrushchev was convinced that these Islands were a small loss to the Soviet Union. In his conversation with Kōno, he even said that these Islands do not matter economically, on the contrary, they are a huge financial burden for the Soviet government. In his memoirs, Khrushchev notes: “At that time, we had a long discussion in the Soviet leadership and came to the conclusion that we should meet the wishes of the Japanese and agree to the transfer of these Islands (I do not remember their names now), but on the condition that Japan signs a Peace Treaty with the USSR and American troops are withdrawn from the Japanese Islands... We considered that such concession was not so great for the USSR. These are deserted Islands that have been used only by fishermen and the military... But friendship that we wanted to win from the Japanese people, our mutual friendship would be of tremendous importance. Therefore, territorial concessions would be excessively compensated with the new relations that would have developed between the peoples of the Soviet Union and Japan” [Khrushchev 1999, p. 644].

Third, he probably assumed that the Japanese side would eventually be satisfied with the cession of the Habomai and Shikotan Islands, and against the background of the refusal of the United States to return the Ryukyu and Bonin archipelagos to Japan, it would be possible to try to push Japan away from the Americans and even towards proclaiming neutrality – something like the Austrian version. One can consider such approach as utopian. However, in the late 1950s, when receiving Japanese delegations to the Kremlin, the Soviet leader, being asked when would the USSR hand over the Islands to Japan, invariably answered – only after the United States return Okinawa back to Japan.
Finally, on October 19, 1956, after more than a year and a half of negotiations, the parties signed a Joint Declaration, the main provisions of which were as follows:

The state of war between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan shall cease on the date on which this Declaration enters into force;

Diplomatic and consular relations shall be restored;

All Japanese citizens convicted in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be released and repatriated to Japan;

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics renounces all reparations claims against Japan;

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will support Japan’s application for membership in the United Nations.

Article 9, which dealt with the issue of the Peace Treaty, stated: “The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan agree to continue, after the restoration of normal diplomatic relations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan, negotiations for the conclusion of a Peace Treaty. In this connection, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, desiring to meet the wishes of Japan and taking into consideration the interests of the Japanese State, agrees to transfer to Japan the Habomai Islands and the Island of Shikotan, the actual transfer of these islands to Japan to take place after the conclusion of a Peace Treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan” [Joint Declaration 1956].

On the Soviet side, the Joint Declaration was signed by Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR Nikolai Bulganin and Foreign Minister Dmitry Shepilov (Khrushchev was not present at the signing ceremony), on the Japanese side – by Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichirō, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Kōno Ichirō and Member of Parliament Matsumoto Shun’ichi.

On November 27, 1956, the House of Representatives of the Japanese Parliament ratified the Declaration (70 members of the Yoshida faction boycotted the vote), and on December 5, the House of Councilors of the Parliament followed suit. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR ratified the Declaration on December 8, 1956. The exchange of instruments of ratification was made in Tokyo on 12 December 1956.
As we know, in Japan there were many opponents of normalizing relations with the Soviet Union, but the number of supporters of establishing normal relations with the great neighboring state was growing. According to the memoirs of Tikhvinsky, upon their return on November 1, 1956, Prime Minister Hatoyama and members of the Japanese delegation were met by an enthusiastic crowd in Tokyo – over 14 thousand people. In general, the Japanese press also gave a positive assessment of the results of Moscow talks. But there were still threats, including that of physical violence against Hatoyama, from ultra-right groups. Statements were heard in the Parliament demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister [Tikhvinsky 1996, pp. 118-119].

Yet, Hatoyama has achieved the goal. Despite the resistance from within the ruling elite, and the overcoming pressure from Washington, he committed an act of historical significance – the postwar settlement of Japan’s relations with the Soviet Union, which allowed Japan to solve a range of problems that were important for its national interests.

Nakasone Yasuhiro, one of the prominent figures of the LDP who is considered to be nationalistic, many years later assessed signing the Joint Declaration in his book “Politics and life. My memoir” in the following way: “We were successful at the talks in Moscow. Japan joined the U.N., the prisoners returned home, the sphere of diplomatic activities was expanded, which laid the cornerstone of further development” [Nakasone 1994, pp. 178-179].

Although the two countries failed to sign a peace treaty, the Joint Declaration of 1956 eventually resolved all the issues which are resolved by a peace treaty, with the exception of the problem of territorial demarcation. The fact that in the present-day Russian-Japanese relations the problem of territorial demarcation has not been resolved yet, confirms its extreme complexity.

As Hatoyama had promised, in 1957 he resigned as head of the Cabinet. But he did not lose interest to the relations with the Soviet Union. On June 29, 1957, he was elected the first Chairman of the Japan-USSR Society at its founding Congress. The society launched energetic activities to establish diverse friendly relations between the public of the two countries.
Soviet-Japanese Relations  
after the Joint Declaration of 1956

The differences between the Soviet Union and Japan, and now Russia and Japan, on the issue of the Peace Treaty are rooted largely in the fundamentally different perception of the outcome of the Soviet-Japanese war at the final stage of WWII. The Soviet policy towards postwar Japan was determined by the victorious defeat of the Japanese armed forces and the undisputed territorial gains in compliance with the Yalta agreements of the Allied Powers. This motivation is still valid at present. Japan was ready to accept its defeat in the Pacific war, but viewed the war declared by the USSR against a state with which it had the Neutrality Pact, as an “unjust action” taken at a time when Japan’s defeat was already predetermined. Therefore, the main task for the Japanese, both in the past and in the present, is not to recognize the results of the “unjust war”, especially in terms of the loss of territories.

The Joint Declaration, which is essentially a Peace Treaty, because this document settled all post-war problems, except for the territorial ones, contributed to an active development of Soviet-Japanese relations. Trade has been rapidly growing, cultural contacts and political consultations were initiated.

But the Soviet leadership’s assessment, that the promise of territorial concessions and the support of left-wing Japanese opposition movements opposed to the conclusion of a new Japan-U.S. military alliance in the late 1950s could drive a wedge into Tokyo’s relations with Washington, was wrong. The more obvious was the failure of attempts to encourage Japan to take the path of neutrality, something similar to the Austrian one, and this idea was massively broadcast to the Japanese public by the Soviet propaganda machine, the tougher became Moscow’s position towards Tokyo. It culminated in a series of political memorandums, as well as one diplomatic note and one declaration issued by the Soviet Government in early 1960 in the last desperately-irritated attempt to prevent the ratification of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty signed in January 1960.
The first memo was sent to the Japanese government on January 27, a week after signing of the Treaty. It argued that the conclusion of the new treaty actually deprives Japan of independence and provides for stationing foreign troops on the Japanese territory, which makes it impossible for the Soviet Government to extend the islands of Habomai and Shikotan to Japan. It stated also that since the new military treaty signed by the Japanese Government is directed against the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China, the islands of Habomai and Shikotan will be handed over to Japan only if all foreign troops are withdrawn from Japan and a Soviet-Japanese peace treaty is signed.

It is noteworthy that the Soviet side did not refuse to fulfil article 9 of the Declaration, but put forward an additional condition for its implementation – the withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Japanese territory. It’s worth reminding that at the early stage of negotiations on normalization of relations, this condition was mentioned as one of the points of the Soviet position, but then it was removed.

The Japanese government responded on February 5 with its Memorandum, which noted that it is the right of any sovereign state to determine its security policy and stressed that the revised Security Treaty does not pose a threat to third countries. It was further stated that Japan-U.S. Security Treaty which is valid indefinitely already existed and foreign troops were present in Japan when the Joint Declaration by Japan and Soviet Union was signed, and that the Soviet side has no right to unilaterally change the contents of an international document which has been ratified by the highest organs of both countries [Sovmestnyj sbornik 1992, p. 46-47]

In the Memorandum, Japan went further than simply requiring the Soviet Union to comply with the Joint Declaration and demanded the reversion not only of the islands of Habomai and Shikotan but also of the “other islands which are inherent parts of Japanese territory”. The Soviet government responded to this document on February 26 by accusing Japan of “revanchism”, and on April 22 declared that it considered itself free from the obligation to transfer Habomai and Shikotan and considered the territorial problem solved. Thus, as a result
of the exchange of these statements, it became obvious that the Soviet Union had actually renounced article 9 of the Joint Declaration. This position was maintained by the Soviet Union and then Russia until the election of Vladimir Putin as President of Russia.

But it should be noted that in 1972 the Soviet leadership made it quite clear to the Japanese government that it was ready to return to the implementation of article 9 of the Declaration. This was announced by Foreign Minister Gromyko during his visit to Tokyo in January 1972 to Prime Minister Satō Eisaku and Foreign Minister Fukuda Takeo. There are evidences of participants in those negotiations, both from the Soviet and Japanese sides [Troyanovsky 1997, pp. 287-288]. Thus, it was already at that time that the Soviet side has effectively disavowed its position as set out in the memoranda and notes of the Soviet government in 1960.

Moreover, in the era of Perestroika under Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet side actually recognized the existence of a territorial problem in Soviet-Japanese relations. Thus, it renounced the 1960 Memorandum of the Soviet Government declaring that there was no territorial problem in bilateral relations. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian leadership confirmed the position that in the relations between Moscow and Tokyo there remains a territorial problem.

However, even while acknowledging the existence of the territorial problem in bilateral relations, neither the Soviet leaders, including Gorbachev, nor President Yeltsin believed that article 9 of the Joint Declaration “is still valid”. They proceeded from the fact that “it’s time had passed”.

It was only Vladimir Putin, after being elected President of Russia, who for the first time began to argue during his first visit to Japan in September 2000 that the Joint Declaration is the only document in bilateral relations ratified by the legislative bodies of the two countries and therefore legally obliges the Russian side to follow its implementation in its entirety. However, he explained that article 9 does not mention the terms of the transfer of Habomai and Shikotan to Japan, as well as the content of the Peace Treaty, and therefore appropriate negotiations were to be held. Whereas before that the Japanese side had persistently
sought recognition from the Soviet and then Russian sides of the validity of Article 9 of the Declaration, after the mentioned Putin’s statements it insisted that Japan’s “principled position” was to seek the return not only of the islands of Habomai and Shikotan, but also of the islands of Kunashir and Iturup, and simultaneously. In view of this position, the Russian side did not find it possible to seek an agreement. Although in the first and the early second decades of the 21st century both sides held discussions and even conducted consultations and negotiations on the peace treaty, it did not lead to any progress in resolving the territorial problem.

The situation changed radically when Prime Minister Abe, reacting to Vladimir Putin’s proposals at the Vladivostok Economic Forum in September 2018, declared at a meeting with him in Singapore on November 14, 2018 his readiness to negotiate a Peace Treaty between Japan and Russia on the “basis of the territorial provisions” of the Soviet–Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956. This statement, in fact, meant that the Japanese side for the first time in more than 60 years does not set the task of demanding “the return of the Islands of Kunashir, Iturup, Habomai and Shikotan”, and is ready to “limit itself to the return of the last two”.

As a result, in January 2019 negotiations on a peace treaty between Russia and Japan were started. However, even at the early stage of the negotiation process there appeared serious difficulties, apparently related to the parties’ different views on the content of the treaty. Whereas the Japanese side assumed that the main thing is to fix the matter of sovereignty of the Islands and draw an agreed border line, the Russian side implied that the Treaty would be filled with a diverse content, solving a number of problems important for Moscow – Japan’s recognition of the legality of Russian ownership of the Kuril Islands, guarantees of non-targeting of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty against Russian interests, broad development of bilateral ties, and confidence-building measures in the military sphere. Therefore, it was assumed that the peace treaty, in accordance with its name, should lay a foundation for the radically renewed Russian-Japanese relations.
Moreover, even before the start of negotiations, in Japan, and to a greater extent in Russia, there had developed a fairly broad public movement against the resolution of the territorial problem on the basis of the 1956 Declaration. Initially forecasts were made about the possibility of concluding a Peace Treaty as early as 2019. Yet, they are not currently considered realistic. Apparently, we have a lengthy and intense negotiation marathon ahead.

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Japanese Prisoners of War in the USSR: Facts, Versions, Questions

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Abstract. The capture of servicemen of the Kwantung army by the Soviet troops in Manchuria in August 1945, their further detention in labor camps in the USSR, as well as their repatriation to Japan, which dragged on for nearly ten years, are among the most difficult and sensitive issues in relations between the USSR and Japan. They were not written about or discussed in the Soviet Union for many years until the early 1990s, when access to previously classified documents was opened. It was at that time that the issue became a matter for scholarly research by historians of the two countries and then put on the agenda of political negotiations at the head-of-state level. This first happened during the official visit to Japan of the first Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev, in April 1991, and then this mission was taken over by the Government of the Russian Federation. However, there are still questions that absorb the attention of researchers and the public and that still need to be fully answered.

Key words: Japan, the Soviet-Japanese War, the Kwantung Army, prisoners of war, internees, the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956, the Potsdam Declaration, the State Defense Committee, Joseph Stalin, Harry Truman.

The first half of the 20th century saw frequent military conflicts between Russia and Japan, including the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the intervention of Japanese troops in Siberia and the Far East in
1918-1922, the armed conflict on Lake Khasan in 1938, the 1939 local war on the river of Khalkhin Gol, and also dozens of armed cross-border incidents in the late 1930s and the early 1940s. The entry of the Soviet army into the war against Japan in August 1945 was the lightning-fast end of World War II and, at the same time, the last military clash between the two countries. The consequences of this war, however, are still keenly felt today. Actually, the two main problems that resulted from the events of 1945 are the notorious territorial dispute and the non-compliance by the Soviet Union with a number of important legal norms regarding former soldiers of the Kwantung army captured by the Soviet troops in Manchuria and taken for forced labor to the USSR. But whereas the first issue is an object of constant public interest in both countries, the second one has been publicly discussed mainly in Japan. Despite a large number of studies on this theme, the Russian public knows it rather superficially. Hereafter we will try to highlight the most complicated questions faced by researchers and put forward a few assumptions on them.

**Decision to Send Japanese Prisoners of War to the USSR**

One of the main questions in the history of what the Japanese call the “Siberian captivity” comes down to the following: what made Stalin violate the Potsdam Declaration and decide to immediately send several hundred thousand Japanese prisoners of war to the USSR for forced labor?

As known, Article 9 of the Potsdam Declaration, to which the USSR acceded on the day when war was declared on Japan, stated that “The Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return to their homes with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives” [Potsdam Declaration 1945]. Following their allied commitments, on 16 August 1945, the Soviet leadership, represented by Lavrentiy Beria, Nikolai Bulganin and Alexei Antonov, sent Marshal Vasilevsky an encrypted telegram which clearly defined that “prisoners
of war of the Japanese-Manchu army will not be taken to the territory of the USSR”. It also indicated that POW camps should be organized, whenever possible, in places of the Japanese’s disarmament according to the orders from the front commanders, allocating the necessary number of troops for guarding and convoying POWs. Food for the POWs was to be given in accordance with the norms that existed in the Japanese army located in Manchuria. To organize and manage the containment of POWs in the camps, NKVD (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) sent there the head of the NKVD Main Directorate for Prisoners of War, Lieutenant-General Mikhail Krivenko, with a group of officers [TSAMO 1945a].

No sooner had this order entered into force than on August 23, the State Defense Committee, headed by Stalin, adopted Decree No. 9898-ss classified as “top secret” and entitled “On Reception, Placement and Labor Use of the Prisoners of War of the Japanese Army”, which described in detail the sending of 500,000 Japanese prisoners of war to forced labor in the Soviet Union, determined their distribution among the country’s economic facilities and established measures to organize their work and life. The document was signed by the Chairman of the State Defense Committee Joseph Stalin [TSAMO 1945b].

Thus, within a week, the Soviet leadership radically changed its approach to this issue, deliberately violating its allied commitments stated in Article 9 of the Potsdam Declaration. What were the reasons for such an unexpected turn of events?

To give an answer to this question it is necessary to find in the Russian archives documents that would make it possible at least to understand the whole range of opinions and arguments that the Soviet leaders had in this respect. For the time being, we have only the text of the Decree of the State Defense Committee. Direct acquaintance with the document allows us to advance, if only a little, in our knowledge of the events of that time.

First of all, an important thing is the signature of Stalin which, as it has now turned out, was made in green pencil. The color of the resolution is believed to have been significant to the Soviet leader. He signed the most important political documents in red ink, less
important papers – in blue, while green pencil was used rarely enough and mostly in documents related to orders in the economic sphere. This observation is so far just a stroke in our thinking on the theme, since it is quite obvious that the decision was caused not only by the economic factor but by a whole set of other factors, including military, political, ideological, and simply personal ones.

Long before the Yalta Conference, Franklin Roosevelt thought it possible to satisfy the territorial demands of the USSR after the war in return for the Soviet leadership’s consent to enter the war with Japan. According to the US plans of occupation, the Soviet troops were to occupy vast territories of the Japanese Empire including the Kuril Islands, Hokkaido, and the entire northeast of the main island of Honshu.

However, by the time these plans were to be implemented, the relations between the USSR and the USA had already begun to change. The American side started to change its position after Roosevelt’s death. It is known that, during the summer of 1945, Stalin and Truman carried on extensive correspondence on the details of the surrender and capture of the Kwantung Army. On August 15, the Soviet Union was offered “General Order No. 1” prepared by the Americans, according to which all the ground, naval, air, and auxiliary forces located in Manchuria, Korea north of 38 degrees north latitude, and also the Karafuto Governorate (Sakhalin) were to surrender to the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet armed forces in the Far East.

Stalin approved this order, but proposed two substantial amendments to the text of the document: “1. To include in the area of the surrender of the Japanese armed forces to the Soviet troops all the Kuril Islands which, according to the decision of the three Powers made in the Crimea, are to pass into the possession of the Soviet Union. 2. To include in the area of the surrender of the Japanese armed forces to the Soviet troops the northern half of the island of Hokkaido that is adjacent in the north to the La Perouse Strait located between Karafuto (Sakhalin) and Hokkaido. The demarcation line between the northern and southern halves of the island of Hokkaido is to be drawn along the line running from the city of Kushiro on the eastern coast of the island to the city of Rumoi on the
western coast of the island, including the mentioned cities in the northern half of the island” [Perepiska Predsedatelya Soveta Ministrov SSSR 1958, pp. 263-264]. Raising the issue of the occupation of the northern part of Hokkaido, Stalin provided arguments from history: “As is known, in 1919-1921, the Japanese occupied the entire Soviet Far East. Russian public opinion would be seriously offended if the Russian troops did not have an area of occupation in any part of the actual Japanese territory” [Perepiska Predsedatelya Soveta Ministrov SSSR 1958, pp. 263-264].

On August 16, 1945, Moscow sent the command of the Soviet troops in the Far East a cipher telegram saying that the servicemen of the Kwantung Army who had surrendered would not be taken to the territory of the USSR. On the same day, however, Truman signed the SWNCC 70/5 directive on the new conditions of Japan’s occupation. The document cancelled all previous agreements with the allies and primarily the USSR on the division of Japan according to the “German formula” into several occupation zones, according to which Hokkaido and the northeastern regions of Honshu were to come under the control of the USSR, as well as part of Tokyo, which had previously been supposed to be divided into four sectors – American, Soviet, Chinese, and British [Katasonova 2005, p. 46]. According to the latest directive, the entire territory of Japan was to come under the sole control of the USA.

Eventually, the American side arrived at the idea of not giving the USSR an occupation zone on Hokkaido. In his memoirs, Douglas MacArthur commented on these events as follows: “The Russians commenced to make trouble from the very beginning. They demanded that their troops should occupy Hokkaido, the northern island of Japan, and thus divide the country in two. Their forces were not to be under the control of the supreme commander, but entirely independent of his authority. I refused point blank.” [MacArthur 2001, p. 306].

As a result, the operation to land Soviet troops on the island of Hokkaido, scheduled for August 23, 1945, was suspended the day before, on August 22. The Soviet ships that had practically sailed to the island had to turn back. And immediately after that, on August 23, Stalin decided to take revenge for the USA’s refusal to give the Soviet
Union an occupation zone in Japan, which he perceived as a political defeat. He signed the Decree of the State Defense Committee on the use of Japanese POWs at economic facilities in the USSR.

**Analysis of Data on the Number of Japanese Prisoners of War**

One of the first figures published in the open Soviet press appeared in the final report by the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Forces in the Far East, Marshal A. M. Vasilevsky, as of September 1, 1945, according to which the Soviet Army took prisoner 573,984 Japanese soldiers and officers, including 110 generals [Efremov, Mukhin, Andronnikov, Grebenyuk (ed.) 1997, p. 371]. The report of the Pravda newspaper of September 12, 1945 stated that Soviet troops captured 594,000 Japanese soldiers and officers and 148 generals, including up to 20,000 wounded servicemen. Out of this number, 70,880 people were released right in the combat zone.

Another official source is *World History* in ten volumes, and Volume 10 mentions 594,000 servicemen of the Kwantung Army captured by the Soviet troops [Vsemirnaya istoriya 1965, p. 545]. The same number of prisoners is indicated in the articles by Army General M. A. Gareev, a participant of the 1945 events and a well-known military historian [Gareev 1991, p. 48]. The same average number is upheld in Japan. For instance, this opinion appears in the books by Saitō Rokurō, the late president of the All-Japan Association of Former POW (Zenkoku yokuryūsha hoshō kyōgikai 国抑留者補償協議会) [Saitō 1995, pp. 208-209].

However, this point requires some clarification. The most reliable information on this issue is contained in a document found in the State Archives of the Russian Federation. This is the “Statement of the number of prisoners of war of the former Japanese army captured by the Soviet troops in 1945” prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and sent to N. S. Khrushchev, N. A. Bulganin and A. I. Mikoyan on October 18, 1956, i.e.,
the day before the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration was signed. This statement determined the number of the Japanese military personnel captured during the war in 1945 at 639,776 people, including 609,448 Japanese servicemen and also 30,328 Chinese, Koreans, Mongols, etc. The Japanese repatriated from the USSR between 1945 and 1956 numbered 546,752, including 112 generals and 25,728 officers. The number of deaths in captivity was 61,855, including 31 generals and 607 officers. At that time, 1,030 people convicted by the Soviet judicial authorities remained on the territory of the USSR, and 713 Japanese people lived in the USSR without national passports but on residence permits due to their refusal to return home [GA RF 1956].

These data coincide with the conclusions of one of the first researchers of this problem, Doctor of Law V. P. Galitsky. With reference to the archives of the General Directorate for Prisoners of War and Internees (GUPVI), he gives virtually the same figure, maintaining that, during the war with Japan from August 9 to September 2, 1945, 639,635 Japanese soldiers, officers, generals, and civilians were registered as prisoners of war. Out of this number, 65,245 people were released directly at the fronts and 12,318 people were transferred to Mongolia before December 1945, while 15,986 people died in front-line camps and at army reception centers (mainly from wounds, concussions, and diseases). In summary, based on these figures, he states that “there were 546,086 prisoners of war in the territory of the USSR, including 170 generals, headed by Army Commander Yamada Otozo, and 26,345 officers. As early as by March 1949, 418,152 people had returned to their homeland, whereas 62,068 Japanese servicemen did not return from captivity to their homes. But this number includes 15,986 people who died in front-line camps and reception centers. In the territory of our country, 46,082 people lost their lives” [Galitskiy 1991, p. 69].
Issue of the Legal Status of the Japanese Military in Soviet Captivity

The Soviet leadership’s political decision to send captured Japanese soldiers and officers to forced labor in the USSR was based on the argumentation developed in determining the future of German prisoners of war. This argumentation is clearly seen in the text of one of the directives of the Soviet leadership sent to the representative of the USSR in the European Advisory Commission (EAC), which commenced work on January 14, 1944. The directive prescribed: “Unlike the British and Americans, who intend to demobilize the armed forces immediately after the signing of an armistice and disarmament, the Soviet project requires that these forces be declared entirely prisoners of war. If this demand meets with the opposition from the Anglo-Americans, who can refer to the absence of such precedents in history, you should insist on this demand as arising from the principle of unconditional surrender, for which there are no precedents either” [Semiryaga 1995, p. 203].

Naturally, the issue of the future of German prisoners of war caused debate in the European Advisory Commission. The US and British representatives emphasized that the Germans who would receive the POW status would have to be treated in accordance with the norms of international law, and this would require substantial material costs, since each POW would have to be provided with normal housing, good food, decent clothes, etc. [Semiryaga, 1995, p. 203]. The Soviet side insisted that capturing enemy soldiers was a right and not an obligation of the victor and therefore the Allies were free to treat the surrendered Wehrmacht servicemen as they deemed necessary.

As for the soldiers and officers of the Kwantung Army, during a confidential conversation in early September 1945, V. M. Molotov directly asked US Secretary of State James Byrnes why the Americans were sending Japanese POWs to their homeland instead of using them as labor force as the USSR did. Thus he announced the recent decision of the Soviet top leaders, thereby showing their future plans. One of the decisive factors in this issue was the war-ravaged national economy of the USSR,
which suffered enormous material damage and many millions of human casualties, and therefore was desperately in need of labor. However, the Japanese POWs did not completely resolve the problem of insufficient workforce, although it played a certain role in the compensation for the losses inflicted by the war. Japanese POWs were used in various sectors of the Soviet national economy – from Vladivostok to Tbilisi, but mostly in Siberia and the Far East.

The legal status of these soldiers and officers, however, has been perceived by the Japanese side differently than it was in the USSR. In Japan, there is a widespread concept – “Siberian internment” (Shiberia no yokuryū シベリアの抑留). In relation to the category of people who were kept in Soviet camps, the public and political quarters most often use not the term “prisoner of war” (horyo 捕虜), but “internee” (yokuryūsha 抑留者). The Japanese judicial authorities also question the lawfulness of using the definition “prisoner of war” in this particular case. Instead, they use the terms “persons surrounded by the enemy” (teki ni hōi sareta hitobito 敵に包囲された人々) or “disarmed armed forces” (busō kaijo sareta gunjin 武装解除された軍人).

In justifying the term “internee” in regard of Japanese prisoners of Soviet camps, emphasis is placed on the fact that most of the Kwantung Army servicemen were captured not during hostilities, but as a result of Japan’s complete and unconditional surrender, which was announced in the emperor’s rescript. Surrender was in most cases voluntary: when laying down arms, the Japanese not only obeyed the emperor’s order, but also counted on the USSR’s compliance with Clause 9 of the Potsdam Declaration providing for immediate return to their homeland. Moreover, it is emphasized that the former servicemen of the Kwantung Army were taken prisoner in the territory of a third country, Manchuria, and “interned” in the USSR after the bilateral agreement on cessation of hostilities was signed on August 19, 1945.

However, according to the logic of the Soviet side, in international documents, the concept of “internee” is used mainly in relation to civilians. And the internment regime is governed by the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, as well as the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949 relative
to the protection of civilians in time of war. The rights of “prisoners of war” are established by the same Hague Conventions and by the 1929 Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war, which determine the rules for their treatment, the procedures for payment of compensation for work in captivity, etc. However, the Soviet side preferred to be guided not by the norms of the international documents, but by the course of bilateral agreements between the USSR and Japan.

Later on, there arose the objective issue of the low economic efficiency of the POW labor and the stranded costs of their maintenance, but even despite this, the Soviet leadership was in no hurry to return them to their homeland. In the note sent to Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov on September 15, 1946, Deputy Foreign Minister Ya. A. Malik wrote the following: “From the point of view of the national economic interests of the USSR it is desirable that the period of using the labor of the Japanese prisoners of war be extended as long as possible. On the other hand, proceeding from international political considerations, especially in the light of the upcoming negotiations with the allies on a peace treaty with Japan, it would be beneficial for us to begin partial repatriation of Japanese prisoners of war and civilians from the USSR right now. For the time being, the repatriation of Japanese prisoners of war should be carried out in such proportions that cannot significantly interfere with the implementation of our national economic plans...” [AVP RF 1946].

Unprofitability and inefficiency of forced labor always was a significant flaw in the Soviet economy, and the Japanese prisoners of war also became hostages of this system, which fact was also complicated by the uncertainty of their legal status.

Problem of the Japanese Military’s Repatriation

The fates of these people often became a subject of numerous political clashes between the former Allies in the anti-Hitler coalition – the USSR and the USA. It would be sufficient to recall the numerous
wars of words in the Allied Council for Japan and tense discussions at the UN and its Special Committee on Prisoners of War.

Practical solutions to issues related to the detention of the Japanese in Soviet camps and their repatriation were the subject of negotiations between the USSR and Japan, first, at the level of the two countries’ Red Cross organizations, and later at the level of state bodies and heads-of-government. In this case, we are talking about the Soviet-Japanese negotiations of 1955-1956, the purpose of which was to conclude a peace treaty between the two countries, but which ended, as is known, in signing the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration providing for the end of the state of war and for restoration of diplomatic relations.

According to Article 5 of this document, the Soviet Union pledged to release and repatriate to Japan all convicted Japanese citizens and also to continue search at the request of the Japanese side [USSR-Japan Joint Declaration 1956]. All other issues arising from the international conventions and related to the protection of the rights of POWs were omitted. The Soviet side was simply not interested in addressing these issues, since this would have required a number of measures to correct the legal mistakes made with regard to the Japanese POWs, which was not done in the Soviet system, and, besides, would further drag on the long-drawn negotiation process. The issues included compensation for work in captivity, rehabilitation of people erroneously convicted in the camps, etc. It is possible that the Japanese side intended to raise them again later, because, according to the experience of the Russo-Japanese War, all issues related to the treatment of prisoners of war were included as a separate clause in the Portsmouth Peace Treaty.

However, after the signing of the Joint Declaration on October 19, 1956 and the subsequent repatriation on December 23, 1956 of the last group of Japanese prisoners of war who were serving their sentences in the USSR, these issues were removed from the agenda of Soviet-Japanese relations for a long time. More precisely, the Soviet leaders, considering their obligations to the Japanese prisoners of war carried out from a formal point of view, hurried to issue an order to transfer
all the materials to the central and regional archives, classifying them as “top secret”.

From that moment, all requests from Japanese citizens about their relatives who had not returned from Soviet captivity were answered with formal replies to the effect that Soviet authorities did not have this kind of information. Shortly after, according to the established practice, they completely stopped answering letters from Japan.

**Political and Academic Aspects of the Problems of Japanese Prisoners of War**

The two countries returned to discussing the problems of prisoners of Soviet camps only in April 1991, during the visit of the USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev to Japan. Then, for the first time in many years, the Japanese side was given lists of 27,800 Japanese prisoners who had died and been buried in the USSR and their relatives were offered condolences and given permission to visit the graves. But probably the main result of this visit was the signing of an interstate agreement on detainees in POW camps [Soglasheniye mezhdu pravitel’stvami 1991]. In the same year, as part of the general process of rehabilitation of victims of political repressions, the USSR started to review the court rulings in respect of Japanese citizens illegally convicted while in Soviet captivity. All these humanitarian actions were further continued and developed by the Russian Federation, which is the legal successor of the USSR. Finally, in October 1993, Russia admitted the antihuman treatment of Japanese POWs on the part of the Stalin regime, which was announced by President Boris Yeltsin during his official visit to Japan.

At the same time, the theme of Japanese prisoners of war began to be given broad coverage in the Russian media. The journalists should be given credit for being the first to identify the range of problems related to military captivity and help to attract the attention of both the general public and professional historians to these problems. Since then, these
issues have been actively studied by Russian scholars, whose efforts introduced a large array of declassified archival documents into scientific circulation. There appeared serious scientific works, including the book by an Irkutsk historian S. I. Kuznetsov *The Japanese in Siberian Captivity* [Kuznetsov 1997], the documentary study by V. V. Karpov *Prisoners of Stalin. Siberian Internment of the Japanese Army in 1945-1956* [Karpov 1997], works by E. L. Katasonova *Japanese Prisoners of War in the USSR: A Great Game of the Great Powers* [Katasonova 2003], *The Last Prisoners of World War II: Little-Known Pages of Russian-Japanese Relations* [Katasonova 2005], etc. Also, recent years saw the publication of several large collections of archive documents with academic commentary, including a large work *The Japanese Prisoners of War in the USSR: 1945-1956* [Gavrilov, Katasonova (ed.) 2013]. The process of clarifying the fate of former Japanese POWs is also continued by young Japanese researchers, as evidenced by A. Kobayashi's monograph *Siberian Captivity* (*Shiberia yokuryū*), published by the Iwanami Shoten publishing house [Kobayashi 2018].

**Conclusion**

“Siberian Captivity” is a landmark notion in Japan. It has become an everlasting part of the historical memory of the people, becoming associated with a tragic chapter of the Soviet-Japanese war. At the same time, there is every ground to believe that the parties will overcome the remaining stereotypes with regard to each other and bring the resolution of the existing problems to the practical level. Resolving the humanitarian issues regarding the Japanese POWs in this context will be an additional factor in strengthening trust between Russia and Japan, which is one of the main preconditions for signing a peace treaty between our countries based on the results of World War II.
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Collective Memory and Politics: ‘Comfort Women’ in Current Relations between South Korea and Japan

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Abstract. The article analyzes how the “comfort women” issue influences current relations between the Republic of Korea and Japan. In the early 20th century, Japan annexed Korea, and the memories of colonial-era humiliation are vivid in Korean collective consciousness. As a result, issues of the past often sour bilateral relations even today. Recently, Seoul has been actively pressing the issue of sexual slavery in Japanese military brothels, and differences over this seemingly irrelevant issue have impeded political and military cooperation.

Articles on former sexual slaves (also called wianbu in Korean) have resurfaced time and again in Korean press throughout the 1940-80s, but the problem internationalized only in the 1990s, when a broad public discussion started. Although Japan maintains that the 1965 bilateral normalization resolved all issues of the past, Tokyo has several times offered official condolences and compensations to the victims, however Seoul found these steps or the tone thereof unsatisfactory. Most recently, in 2015, Abe Shinzō and Park Geunhye signed an agreement to close the wianbu issue, but the document irritated South Korean public and opposition, so Seoul abandoned it. President Moon Jaein, who came to power in 2017, continued this course and added pressure on related

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historical problems, such as Korean forced laborers in imperial Japan. As the crisis deepened, Tokyo introduced economic sanctions against South Korea (technically on unrelated grounds).

Conflicts stemming from collective memory are a characteristic feature of North East Asian political culture. They are a popular tool in foreign and domestic policy of many countries. This, coupled with the irrational nature of nationalism and imperfection of regional security, makes issues of the past a very real threat to the present.

**Keywords:** collective memory, “comfort women”, Japan, relations between Japan and South Korea, Republic of Korea, wianbu.

**Introduction**

In the collective memory of the Korean people, the period of Japanese colonial rule in 1910-45 has remained as a time of oppression and national humiliation. Inevitably, this influenced the perception of Japan in Korean society. Not only the immediate witnesses of the colonial era, but also their present-day grandchildren and great-grandchildren retain this negative view of Japan. It also seems that the emotional attitude to the neighboring country is affected by the economic and cultural competition with it, which has been growing since Japan and South Korea became the leaders of regional development in the late 20th century. At the same time, Tokyo and Seoul are highly dependent upon each other. There is large-scale mutual trade and investment, while, in the military-political dimension, both nations are in the American “camp” as allies of the United States, which “destines” them to cooperation.

Notably, the difficult issues of the past not only influence the public opinion, but also find their expression in politics, defining the statements and actions of the authorities. One can provide the example of the territorial dispute over the Liancourt Rocks (the Korean name is Dokdo, the Japanese one is Takeshima), which also has historical roots. Korea condemns periodical “pilgrimage” of Japanese politicians to the
Yasukuni Shrine, where members of the Japanese military who died in conflicts of the late 19th – early 20th centuries, including those who were convicted as war criminals in the aftermath of World War II, are worshipped as kami deities. Often, Korean politicians of different levels demand compensations and apologies for various historical episodes. In the years of the presidency of Park Geunhye, the Republic of Korea started to actively use in politics the problem of sexual exploitation of Korean women in Japanese field brothels in the 1930-40s. The differences with Tokyo on this issue, which, seemingly, had remained in the past, frequently hampered political and military cooperation.

**Brief Historical Overview**

The system of military brothels ("comfort stations", as they were officially called) appeared in the Japanese military in the 1930s. By means of them, Japanese authorities tried to tackle the issue of rape, so as to reduce the number of conflicts between servicemen and the population of the occupied territories. Besides, the “comfort stations” were supposed to maintain the morale of the soldiers, and the control over the women working there excluded the possibility of espionage through prostitutes and allowed to protect the men from sexually transmitted diseases [Piper 2001, p. 161]. Girls aged 15 to 20 from countries dependent on Japan were taken to the brothels. Exact data on their number and nationality are impossible to obtain; the estimates present in the literature vary from several tens of thousands to almost half a million of women [Kim 2014, p. 83]. It is believed that the majority of workers were Korean women. There were also Chinese and Filipino women, as well as women from Indonesia (including Dutch women) [Kim 2014, p. 83]; some Japanese women worked there too.

In Japanese, the girls working in the stations were called ianfu (慰安婦), which is usually translated as “comfort women”. The Korean reading of the same characters is wianbu (위안부), and this became the established term in the Korean studies literature. Interestingly,
the same euphemism was eventually applied to prostitutes whom
the American servicemen stationed in South Korea visited [Lee 2015,
p. 344].

The ways by which the “comfort women” were taken to the stations
varied. A part of them, seemingly, the smallest one, took on the work
voluntarily, fully understanding its nature. Most girls were deceived,
accepting the offers of high-paid work in the metropole. There were also
cases of forced “recruiting”, or girls being sold by their families [Varga
2009, p. 289].

It is rather difficult to compose a general picture of the conditions of
life and work in the stations. It seems that these varied depending on the
military unit. Many witnesses describe prison-like conditions combined
with brutal treatment and beatings; in such stations, the girls were
essentially property of the military, and they were treated accordingly.
According to other surviving wianbu, their work was strictly regimented,
but they had free time, were given money for personal expenses, etc.
However, in all cases, medical examinations were conducted regularly,
and in the case of being diagnosed with sexually transmitted diseases, the
women were given medical aid, albeit with primitive means. The main
reason for this was, of course, not care about the welfare of the “comfort
women” themselves, but the need to secure their “working capacity” and
the care about the health of the servicemen. Soldiers and officers paid
for attending the brothels and, theoretically, the girls were supposed to
receive wages for their services, but, in reality, it happened in far from
all cases, and, apparently, the management of the station often kept the
money [Howard (ed.) 1995, p. 200].

The conditions of recruitment, work, and life of the wianbu were
understandably deteriorating as the war went on. The “comfort women”
had essentially no possibility to quit their work. Even if the superiors
“permitted” a girl to leave, she would have nowhere to go, because, as a
rule, the stations were far from their homes. As a result, only a minority
of them survived: after the capitulation of Japan, nobody evacuated the
“comfort women”, many could not return home and went missing, and
some of them were killed by retreating troops.
One of the goals of creating the stations was the desire to lower the degree of animosity towards the Japanese in the areas of their stationing by means of reducing contact between the military and the local population. Ironically, after many years, it was the problem of the *wanbu* that became one of the key factors of anti-Japanese sentiment forming and becoming self-sustaining in the region.

It is believed that the “comfort women” issue became a socio-political problem only in the early 1990s. The publication of the memoirs of one of the *wanbu*, Kim Haksun, in 1991 is usually pointed out as the turning point. After her, other women told about their experience. A natural question arises: why did they keep silent for so long? Usually, the explanations involve the burden of traditional morals and the patriarchal system of Korean society [Lee 2015, pp. 347-348]. After all, blaming the victim is not infrequent in discussions of sexual violence even today (and not only in Korea).

The perception of the *wanbu* issue as a relatively new phenomenon is widespread not only among the general public, but also in the literature, but this is not exactly correct. Indeed, until the early 1990s, the issue was not discussed by politicians, but this does not mean that no information about the “comfort women” could be found before that.

The memoirs of Yoshida Seiji, published in 1977 and 1983, where he described the system of “comfort stations” and his participation in their organization, gained a certain infamy. Even though, in the 1990s, these publications laid the ground for discussion and drew the attention of Korean and Japanese public, soon, multiple factual mistakes and inconsistencies were discovered in the memoirs [Nozaki 2005]. In response to this, the author stated that his books were rather works of fiction. Due to this confusion, the Japanese right-wingers consider the *wanbu* a myth created by Yoshida, and his confession – a proof of invalidity of claims against Tokyo [The Asia-Pacific Journal 2015].

Nevertheless, the Korean society still knew about the problem before the 1990s, and it was even regularly mentioned in newspapers. For instance, a researcher Yoshikata Veki found 23 mentions of “comfort women” in South Korean central press from 1945 to the 1960s (primarily
in the 1960s), and in 1970s-80s the number rose to approximately 300 [Yoshikata 2015].

The fact that the wianbu issue became pronounced exactly in the early 1990s had concrete historical reasons. In the late 1980s – early 1990s, the South Korean society only began its democratization processes. The nascent feminist movement could use this problem to assert themselves in the time when criticizing domestic issues was not an easy thing to do [Asmolov 2017]. After gaining the attention of the state, the issue ceased to be purely humanitarian or historical. Incidentally, Japanese feminists were generally sympathetic to the complaints and demands of the Korean women, thus showing ideological, rather than national solidarity [Wöhr 2006, pp. 68-71].

Internationalization of the Issue and the Political Conflict Around It

Therefore, in the early 1990s, the wianbu issue gained the attention of the general public and was quickly becoming an international political problem. In 1991, soon after the memoirs of Kim Haksun were published, three former Korean “comfort women” brought a case to a Japanese court against the nation’s government. Tokyo was forced to react. The government started an investigation, and, as a result of it, the Cabinet Secretary General Kono Yohei made an official statement. He said that Japan recognized the existence of the problem and the fact that the recruiting and service of the girls were, “as a rule”, not voluntary. Tokyo also apologized to the former wianbu and promised not to turn away from historical facts. Kono’s statement claimed that the wianbu were usually recruited by private individuals, but that, “in some cases”, the civilian and military authorities were also involved in the process [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 1993].

In 1995, the Asian Women’s Fund was established to provide compensations to the victims. The funds were partially provided by the Japanese government, and through it, former wianbu could receive
approximately 5 million yen each. However, both a certain evasiveness of Kono’s statement and the format of the compensations did not satisfy the South Korean side. The public and the authorities had the impression that Tokyo wanted to distance itself from them problem and to evade responsibility by creating a non-state fund [Kim 2014, p. 89].

A principled and permanent element of Tokyo’s position is the statement that all disputed historical questions were closed during the normalization of Japan-South Korea relations with the signing of the 1965 Agreement on the Settlement of Problems Concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Co-operation [Lobov 2015, pp. 118-119]. The agreement stated that all problems “concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals [...] [were] settled completely and finally.” [Gukga beomnyeong jeongbo senteo 1965].

The Republic of Korea, aiming to draw wide international attention to the wianbu issue, tried to take it beyond the framework of bilateral relations and often succeeded in that. For example, in 1996, the UN Human Rights Committee prepared a report in which it condemned the system of Japanese field brothels and, despite Tokyo’s protests, qualified it as sexual slavery [United Nations Commission on Human Rights 1996]. For a long time, Seoul lobbied in the US Congress the resolution on “comfort women”, calling for Japan to recognize its responsibility for the situation [Kim 2014, p. 90]. The political meaning of such an approach is obvious: the US is the ally of both nations and frequently influences the foreign policy of both Seoul and Tokyo, so South Korean and Japanese elites sometimes see Washington as an authoritative arbiter. When the US parliament eventually adopted the said document [United States House of Representatives 2007], this naturally became a symbolic moment for the Republic of Korea.

The “domestic” factor of maintaining the relevance of the issue was a 2011 decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Korea. It said that the authorities were not protecting the national interests on the wianbu issue actively enough and that such passivity ran counter to the Constitution [Heonbeop jaepanso 2011]. The document was not an
international one, but it also contained a response to Japan’s objections: the South Korean court declared references to the 1965 agreement inappropriate. According to its opinion, because the problem of “comfort women” was not widely known at the time of signing, one must not deprive the victims of the right to receive compensations based on this agreement.

However, the increasing international pressure and emotional intensity produced a result contrary to the one expected: Japanese elites were increasingly irritated by the unceasing demands of the Koreans. In 2006-2007, and later in 2012, Abe Shinzō came to power. He holds nationalist views and does not believe that Japan must continue its public repentance for events that happened more than half a century ago [Hein 2016, pp. 447-448]. The South Korean public is quite concerned about his views, statements, and actions, and the very fact of his being a prime minister seems to be a reason for suspecting Japan of insincerity on the wianbu issue.

Japanese right-wing politicians are generally not prone to seeing the “comfort women” situation as a unique one, or one worthy of attention. It is usually portrayed as a part of reality of any war, or a military variant of prostitution under state supervision (such a system appeared in Japan in the 19th century) [Toloraya (ed.) 2015, p. 176]. On the other hand, the decentralized nature of the phenomenon is often spoken about: the existence of the stations is recognized, but their establishment is not seen as a state policy, which is crucial for the Koreans. Private businessmen are named as the organizers and beneficiaries, and it is claimed that the girls themselves were receiving a considerable remuneration, which means that it was not slavery, but voluntary prostitution.

The 2011 decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Korea, seemingly, gave new life to the fading discussion of the problem. Of great impact was the initiative of South Korean activists to create monuments to the wianbu. The first of them appeared in Seoul in front of the Japanese embassy, and it was placed in such a way that the diplomats going to work had to pass by it. The monument presents a girls sitting on a chair in a tense, silently accusing posture, as if expecting apologies.
The empty chair nearby is a symbol of the dead “comfort women”. The monument immediately became the object of intense attention: in winter, the monument is dressed in warm clothes, and periodic displays of disrespect towards it are generally condemned.

In 2013, Park Geunhye was elected president of South Korea. Despite the constant and active nature of Japan-South Korea cooperation, the new leader did not strive to establish dialogue with Tokyo, naming the worry about Abe Shinzō’s right-wing views and the controversial position of his administration on the wianbu issue among the reasons for this.

The United States had to intervene in the situation once again. The consolidation of pro-American powers of the region would have been beneficial for Washington, but it was the “comfort women” issue that at multiple occasions disrupted military-political agreements between its closest allies in North East Asia.

By 2014, the US diplomacy had managed to persuade Park Geunhye and Abe Shinzō to meet. Nevertheless, Japan remained evasive on the wianbu issue: there were periodical statements on the need to revise the 1993 Kono statement or the 1996 UN committee report. South Korean public was highly irritated by the Japanese leader’s statements were he claimed that the existence of the forced system of wianbu had not been proven, or mentioned the “comfort women” in the context of the calamities of war of the entire world history [Hein 2016, pp. 454-455], which the Koreans perceive as an attempt to justify the crime.

The “comfort women” issue remained central to the bilateral consultations, and, by late 2015, the sides managed to achieve a mutually acceptable decision. Tokyo made additional apologies, and Seoul took on the obligation to remove the controversial monument from the Japanese embassy. At the same time, the Republic of Korea established a fund to pay compensations to the former wianbu, and the Japanese government contributed 1 billion yen (ca. 10 million US dollars) to it. Japan stated multiple times that, with the achievement of this agreement, it considered the issue to be completely settled [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2015]. The compromise nature of the document paradoxically set the ground for its failure. The opposition in
both nations did not accept the agreement, as the leaders were accused of betraying national interests. Unsurprisingly, the realization of the agreement eventually stalled.

In the summer of 2016, activists from the Korean diaspora almost simultaneously placed the copies of the Seoul monument in several cities of the world (for example, in Sydney and in one of the neighborhoods of Los Angeles). In the first days of 2017, Tokyo recalled its ambassador in Seoul after another monument appeared in front of the Japanese consulate in Busan. In September 2017, another, more “international” monument was installed in San Francisco, portraying three women, a Korean, a Chinese, and a Filipino, standing on the pedestal holding hands, and in front of them in deep reflection stands the author of the first memoir of wianbu, Kim Haksun. Soon, as a protest, the mayor of Osaka declared the cessation of sister-city relations with the American city [Time 2018].

In the Republic of Korea, the logic of inter-party struggle does not imply any compromises: the opposition rejects many policies of the ruling party as a matter of principle. For example, the center-left forces, which opposed the Park Geunhye administration and won a coalition majority in parliament in 2016, fiercely criticized the signed document [Lee 2016]. Eventually, when Park Geunhye was removed from office before the end of her term as a result of a large-scale political scandal and imprisoned, the reputational damaged that accompanied these events also affected the popularity of the initiatives linked to her name. During the presidential elections of 2017, all five candidates vowed to revise the 2015 agreement.

Moon Jaein, an opposition politician who became president, could not support the wianbu agreement for a number of reasons: the unpopularity of the “deal” in society, party solidarity, and the spoiled image of Park Geunhye, who was the Korean initiator of the agreement. He did not openly break it, trying to avoid the deterioration of relations with Japan, but the Korean side was not hurrying to implement it. For example, the work of the fund that was established according to the 2015 agreement did not go as planned. The South Korean government reimbursed it the
compensations that had been payed, so as not to use the Japanese money and send it back instead. At the same time, civil society activists opened their own “competing” organization with similar goals. Eventually, Moon Jaein declared the “inevitable withering” of the joint fund [Choe 2018], and, in July 2019, it was closed against the background of protests from the Japanese side.

During the presidency of Moon Jaein, the “Seoul format” statues stopped appearing, even though, in 2018, some countries (the Philippines, Taiwan) followed suit and installed their own monuments to honor the women from their countries (the Philippine one was soon removed). However, the wianbu monument in the Korean capital did not disappear.

At the same time, the new government of the Republic of Korea was actively using sensitive historical problems and related disputed issues in its foreign policy. For example, during the visit of the US president Donald Trump to Seoul in 2017, at the welcome dinner, one of the former “comfort women” was introduced to him, and in the menu, there were shrimps from the sea around the disputed island of Dokdo (Takeshima). The South Korean media seemed triumphant as they showed the photos of Donald Trump’s embrace with the elderly woman and reported the resulting protests of the Japanese Foreign Ministry [Chosun Ilbo 2017]. The appeal to Washington had a double-sided hidden meaning. On the one hand, the US is the “senior” ally of both South Korea and Japan, and both nations have to take into consideration its opinion. On the other hand, it was America who would have been the main beneficiary of the unrealized settlement.

Furthermore, during the presidency of Moon Jaein, South Korean leadership and society were mounting pressure on Japan on a different issue linked to the shared history. In the autumn of 2018, and in the summer of 2019, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea satisfied several claims against Japanese companies concerning their use of forced or low-payed labor of Koreans during the years of colonial rule (1910-1945). Notably, this issue became an instrument of not only foreign policy, but also of domestic politics of the Republic of Korea. The previous
administration of Park Geunhye was accused not only of inaction on this issue, but also of corruption-related delaying of the litigation [Arrington 2019]. The case of the workers soon gained a “practical” aspect: after the Japanese companies, backed by Tokyo, refused to satisfy the claims for compensations, their assets in the Republic of Korea were arrested.

Japan’s irritation about the collapse of the 2015 “final” agreement being accompanied by a new painful issue resulted in steps that were seemingly suggested by the logic of the US-China trade war, which was unfolding at the same time. Citing the danger of leaks of sanctioned materials to the DPRK, Tokyo restricted the import to South Korea of a number of chemicals necessary for the production of semiconductors, which was bound to severely affect high-tech industries and the economy as a whole [Kim 2019].

The Reasons and the Results of the Politicization of the “Comfort Women” Problem

One can easily see that, as the history of the wianbu issue unfolded, a steady growth of its presence in the public discourse in general and in the Japan-South Korea relations in particular was visible. The first newspaper publications of the 1940s – 1980s did not draw sufficient attention, even though their number was growing over time. In the 1990s – 2000s, the compensations to the “comfort women” and the protection of their rights were mostly on the agenda of civil society organizations and activists, and it was mainly due to their pressure that the Kono statement was made.

In the 2010s, the civil society organizations switched to “actionist” work. For example, it was them who initiated and conducted the installation of the wianbu monuments. One cannot but notice that their actions are “synchronized” with the position of the state, with the “slumps” of their activity coinciding with the maneuvering of the government (incidentally, a similar dynamic can be noticed in the work of groups using balloons to send propaganda materials from the South
to the DPRK). It is probable that the South Korean authorities delegate to civil society groups some questionable steps, from which they can distance themselves, should the necessity arise.

Generally speaking, recently, the wianbu issue, as well as other problems of the historical past, has turned from a second-rate conflict topic of the South Korea-Japan relations into a powerful force defining the entire agenda of bilateral interaction. From the military-political point of view, Japan and South Korea are elements of the rigid American security system. The elites of both nations are virtually unanimous in believing this choice to be right and strategic, but Seoul and Tokyo also compete for regional influence and markets. In this sense, the historical issues are, on the one hand, a “valve” for regulating conflict tension, and, on the other hand, an effective instrument of reputational and even sanction-related struggle within accepted boundaries set by their alliance affiliation.

Though the wianbu issue has so far exerted such a strong influence upon the South Korea-Japan relations, its history testifies that the approach to solving it has to be broader, while solving it completely within the bilateral framework will not be possible. For example, it is obvious that a potential solution found by Seoul and Tokyo will hardly satisfy Pyongyang, which is also vocal about the issue. Moreover, in addition to Korea, the “comfort women” were also recruited in China and in South East Asia.

The conflicts based on the difficult issues of shared history are a characteristic feature of the political culture of North East Asia in general. Though, in some cases (for example, in that of Korea and Japan), these conflicts are more salient, every nation of the region has historical grievances, ranging from moral to territorial, against its every single neighbor. As a rule, the more justified grievances become actively politicized, but the logic of some of these is sometimes not bound by facts, and there are enough grievances in store to bring them up should the relations deteriorate.

Besides, historical issues often become a tool of domestic politics. The South Korean and Japanese cases show that the “negligence” of the authorities in defending the historical honor of the nation is
often exploited by the opposition. On the other hand, the authorities themselves often address the painful problems of the past to “redirect” the discontent of the masses originally aimed at themselves [Dyachkov 2013, pp. 105-106].

The stability and inexhaustibility of historical issues is to some extent caused by their political “functionality”: having been raised once, they are seldom finally closed and are regularly used to solve current problems. In this sense, one must point out the intransigence of Seoul, which time and again finds faults in Tokyo’s position, be it the lack of precision of statements, the ambiguousness of confessions, or the incompleteness of apologies. On the other hand, both in the Republic of Korea and in Japan, from a certain point the elites became hostage to the situation that they themselves had caused to overheat: the pressure of the electorate and the logic of escalation deprive the politicians of direct control over the conflict.

This, together with the irrational nature of nationalist sentiments, as well as the imperfection of the system of regional security, makes the issues of the past a real threat to stability in the present.

**Politicization and Historiography**

As far as purely academic aspects are concerned, one can say that the *wianbu* issue has gained little coverage in Russian scholarly literature and is potentially interesting for a non-political study, but a historian studying it inevitably faces a number of difficulties.

First, the range of available sources is almost exclusively limited to the memoirs of the *wianbu* themselves. No relevant documents, both from the central Japanese government and the local military and civil authorities, are available. In many cases, these documents just did not survive to this day (colonial archives were being deliberately destroyed after the capitulation), and the ones that still exist may remain classified due to obvious political reasons. The memoirs of the women describe more or less the same variant of organization of the stations, which
permits one to assume a centralized nature of the phenomenon. However, it is impossible to clarify this crucial question by referring to documents.

The accounts of the “comfort women” leave much to be desired as a historical source. The surviving victims of these events are extremely few, and all of them are older than at least 85. It is difficult to compose even a somewhat coherent picture of the phenomenon based on their recollections. There are no stations described in two different accounts, and factual inconsistencies or later “additions” are not infrequent. One cannot rule out the possibility of the public discussion and the eventual international scandal influencing the contents of the testimonies in this way or another.

The literature did not escape the same fate. A large number of publications on the wianbu (including ones in English) are not fully academic in their purposes, but rather serve to reinforce the political position of this or that side. A hypothetical neutral study would most likely satisfy neither opponent and would be interpreted by them as a propaganda diversion or an attempt to taint the national honor. One must point out that the researchers who approach the issue not from national, but more general ideological positions (for example, from the point of view of gender), are notably more balanced in their approach.

The sensitivity and the complexity of the problem are exacerbated by the presence of related or parallel issues. For example, after the liberation from Japan, in the years of the Korean War (1950-53), the South Korean army had “special comfort units” (which were probably preserved as a remnant of the Japanese system) [Soh 2008, pp. 215-216, 224]. As has already been mentioned, later, a local “industry” of sexual services existed around American military bases [Moon 1997], and these businesses and their workers were called the same way in Korean – wianso and wianbu. A similar phenomenon was also present in Japan in the years of American occupation [Wöhr 2006, p. 68]. Furthermore, in Vietnam and in Korea there are currently more than a thousand people of mixed Korean-Vietnamese origin (a common if politically incorrect term is Lai Dai Han) [Moon 2015, p. 18]. A significant number of them were born during the Vietnam War (1964-1973)
as a result of South Korean servicemen raping Vietnamese women, as well as prostitution, which probably had organized nature [Gil 2015]. The objections of the Korean side (the denial of the centralized character of the phenomenon, claims of its “naturalness” for wartime, etc.) resemble the Japanese position on the wianbu issue.

Despite all the named difficulties, only a complex historical study of such problems is able to determine, rather than construct the truth, becoming a true monument to the victims and a testimony of crimes. Korea and Japan are not the only two nations divided by shared history. The same difficulties have been faced, for example, by Russia and Poland – and, to overcome them, the Group on Difficult Matters was established, which, after several years of work, produced a landmark book “White Spots – Black Spots” [Torkunov, Rotfeld (eds.) 2010]. The communication and the work of scholars can help to find the truth together and to reconcile the peoples with each other and with their common past better than any political agreements.

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United States House of Representatives 2007 — United States House of Representatives (2007) *A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Forces’ coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as “comfort women”, during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II. July 30, 2007.* https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-resolution/121/text (accessed: 25 July 2019).


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Conceptualizations of Natural Habitat’s Influence on the Formation of the People’s Character in Japan: *Jinkokuki* and *Shin Jinkokuki* Texts’ and Studies’ Analysis

S. A. Rodin

**Abstract.** The article is mainly based upon the analysis of two Japanese texts, *Jinkokuki* 人国記 (*Records of the People and the Provinces*, 16th century) and its later revised version *Shin Jinkokuki* 新人国記 (*New Records of the People and the Provinces*), created by the Confucian scholar and cartographer Seki Sokō 関祖衡 in 1701. *Shin Jinkokuki* is often considered to be one of the first Japanese atlases, as Seki not only revised and enlarged the original text, but also added maps to the descriptions of all of the Japanese provinces. Both texts are valued by Japanese scholars as fruitful sources for studies in the history of environmental psychology, or geopsychology, and a careful study of their content provides some new information on the ideas and concepts of natural habitats’ influence on the formation of behavioral models and personal qualities typical of the inhabitants of certain areas within Japan in the 16th – 18th centuries. In the first half of the 20th century, some Japanese authors, many of them playing leading roles in the introduction of Western science into Japan, were obsessed with the idea of formulating a typically Japanese way of thinking and behaving that would not only differentiate the Japanese from others, but also make the nation consider itself better than others. The search for roots of *yamato-damashii* and Japanese uniqueness in terms of relations between the Japanese people and the country’s nature, just as an attempt to make some certain values of the samurai class nationwide, revitalized interest in *Jinkokuki* and *Shin Jinkokuki,*
which were used as an instrument of state propaganda. The second part of this article analyses works by Watanabe Tooru, a psychologist who issued the first scholarly publication of these texts and whose academic career seems to be one long road to the “Records of the People and the Provinces”.

**Keywords:** Jinkokuki, Seki Sokō, Watanabe Tooru (Tohru), geopsychology.

**Introduction**

Texts on geographical themes describing and comprehending space hold a special place in the history of Japanese literature. Way back in the Nara period (710-794), by the decree of Empress Gemmei, on the 2nd day of the 5th moon of the 6th year of Wadō (713), detailed notes were made on natural conditions, customs, and legends of various provinces that made up the territory of the state: “Express in writing the names of the kori and sato of the Home Provinces, the seven circuits and the various provinces with pleasant Chinese characters. Record individually the silver, copper, dyestuffs, flora, birds, fauna, fish, insects, etc., that are produced within [the various] kori. Also record whether the soil is fertile or not, and the origins of the names of the mountains, rivers, plains and grasslands. Also record in history books the old tales and strange events related by the elders” (translation by Edwina Palmer) [Palmer 2007, p. 224]. These notes were called *fūdoki* (Lit. “notes of wind and earth”, in modern Japanese the combination *fūdo* is used in the meaning of “natural conditions”). The full description of the five provinces has ultimately survived until our days – Izumo, Hitachi, Harima, Bungo, and Hizen. As for other texts, only fragments are available. For a long time after the 8th century, the Japanese government did not make any attempts to implement such large-scale projects.

Undoubtedly, the mentioning of place-names in texts of any genre – from official chronicles to the *waka* Japanese language poetry – constitutes a significant part of the cultural code fitted into the piece of work and is subject to deciphering; yet, such data are of solely a
fragmentary character within a single text. Thus, for example, an itinerary describes only those provinces and places where a poet or a pilgrim has been. Official chronicles shift the accent on recording the events of national significance in a particular region – draught, high water, poor harvest, famine, rebellion, and happy harbingers [Meshcheryakov 2001; Simonova-Gudzenko 2016]. No monument of the ancient and early medieval Japanese literature contains a description of all Japanese provinces providing characteristics of natural conditions and customs of the people inhabiting this very territory.

The first text of this type was probably *Jinkokuki* (Notes of the People and the Provinces, 16th century), where two scrolls contain a description of all 66 provinces and two islands of medieval Japan. In 1701, the Confucian scholar and cartographer Seki Sokō (1659-1728/33) edited and complemented this text as well as made a geographical map for each province description. This publication was adopted by the scholarly circles under the name of *Shin Jinkokuki* (New Notes of the People and the Provinces). Both versions maintain the idea of an interconnection between natural, climatic, and geographical conditions typical of this territory, on the one hand, and morals, customs, and behavioral patterns of its inhabitants, on the other. Thereby, these texts can be of interest to researchers studying the development of medieval Japanese views on nature, experts in humanitarian geography, and psychologists. The Records of the People and the Provinces have so far been insufficiently studied. There are two academic editions with comments of *Jinkokuki* and *Shin Jinkokuki* [Watanabe (ed.) 1948; Asano (ed.) 1987]; independent amateur attempts were also made to translate them into contemporary Japanese [Jinkokuki zakkuri to gendaigoyaku 2016]. However, the number of academic articles and comments in specialist literature tends to zero. In Japan, Records of the People and the Provinces are studied mostly by researching psychologists [Ukiya, Ōmura, Fujita 2008; Ukiya, Ōmura, Fujita 2014]. There is not a single special study devoted to *Jinkokuki* in the English language literature; there are only single comments. Thus, for example, Karen Wigen refers to *Shin Jinkokuki* by Seki Sokō just for the purpose of analyzing the map of the Shinano province.
that he made, but without discussing the text per se [Wigen 2010, p. 86], while Fabian Drixler, in his detailed study of historical demography and infanticide in Japan of the 17th and the first half of the 20th century, refers to the fragment of the Mutsu province description that narrates the barbarian custom of killing children starting from the third one in the families of those regions [Drixler 2013, p. 196-197]. In the Russian language Japanese studies, Alexander N. Meshcheryakov alone referred to the Records of the People and the Provinces; he analyzed political reasons present in Seki Sokō’s preface to this work [Meshcheryakov 2014, c. 222-223]. In this connection, what is quite surprising is a moderate, yet sustained interest towards the literary monument on the part of ordinary Japanese readers who make note of the medieval author’s shrewd observations and draw parallels with contemporary manners and morals of people in different prefectures located in the territories of former provinces. An important role in drawing attention to the Records of the People and the Provinces has lately been played by the Japanese mass media, Nippon Television Corporation in particular.

Since 2007, they have been broadcasting a weekly entertaining program Himitsu kenmin (Mysteries of Prefectures’ Inhabitants) that describes specific features of prefectures and the “character” of their inhabitants in an easily understood manner. The Jinkokuki descriptions are also easily subjected to stereotyping. The unification of characteristics and the exclusion of a historical approach in considering the realities described become an instrument of local identification, which, in its turn, may be used for populist purposes – to laud the qualities of the people of one territory and humiliate those of the other. Until the early 20th century, Japanese scholars and writers willingly cited the fragments of the text that brought out the worst in the inhabitants of provinces unloved by them. For example, a famous artist and rangakusha scientist of the Edo period (1603-1868), Shiba Kōkan (1747-1818), writes about people from the Tango and Inaba provinces, not without a jest and referring to Jinkokuki, that if there are skillful and talented ones among them, they are sure to be stupid, and if there are knowledgeable people, their human qualities leave much to be desired [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 53].
In the first half of the 20th century, *Jinkokuki* was firmly established in the arsenal of advocates of a special “Japanese spirit” and served as one of the instruments for mass propaganda.

*Old and New Records of the People and the Provinces: Nature of Texts and Nature in Texts*

Although both versions of the *Records of the People and Provinces* took part in the informational turnover in Japan of the 18th and 19th centuries (nearly 70 versions of the manuscripts and publications are known), the origin of the authentic text, the author’s name, and the date of its creation are not known for certain. The tradition attributes the authorship to the fifth *shikken* from the Hojō family, Hojō Tokiyori (1227-1263). Most of the surviving versions have a note added to the indication of the copyist’s name at the end that this text had been written by the one embarking on the road from the Saimyōji temple during a secret wandering across all provinces [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 100]. Historians characterize the reign of Tokiyori as the period of utmost flourishing of the *shikken* system, while the politician himself is referred to as a skillful manager and a good diplomat who managed to improve relations between the Hojō clan and the Emperor’s palace [Yamamura (ed.) 1990, p. 129]. Tokiyori formally left this high post in 1256, became a monk of the Zen temple Saimyōji and took the monastic name of Dōsū; however, he did not give up politics and played a major role in the shogunate until his death in 1263 [Sansom 1990, p. 413-417]. The image of a wise ruler wishing to help people overcome their hardships, improve governance, and understand the real state of affairs in the provinces first hand is attributed to Tokiyori in several legends; these say that, after he took his monastic vows, he set on a secret journey through all Japanese lands to get to know the people’s sentiments and see the work of provincial functionaries with his own eyes [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 16-17]. The preface to the *New Records of the People and the Provinces* by Seki Sokō starts with a rendering of this legend, according to which, in ancient
times, a *zenko* from the Saimyō-ji temple secretly visited all the provinces, revealed the wealth hidden by provincial functionaries, listened to inferior people’s complaints and released them from guilt, promoted governance, and developed education. At the same time, he took in the people’s feelings and sentiments and compiled the *Records of the People and the Provinces* [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 105]. Tokiyori’s name is also mentioned in the afterword to the *Shin Jinkokuki*, but with a share of doubt in his authorship [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 280]. Hojō is mentioned as the compiler of *Jinkokuki* in the *Ii Ke Hisho* (*Secret Records of Ii House*), kept in *Kunai-chō*, the Administration of the Imperial Court of Japan. According to this text, a famous medieval commander Takeda Shingen (1521–1573) used the records made by “a master from Saimyō-ji” as a textbook on military art [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 8-9]. Takeda Shingen conducted reconnaissance in the provinces and used *Jinkokuki* to better understand the methods of suppressing the local population given the peculiarities of their morals and behaviors. He specially focused on the provinces of Yamashiro, Harima, Ise, Ōmi, and Echizen. He allegedly wrote down citations from the sections containing descriptions of these places on his fan and demonstrated it to his warriors as an audio visual aid in military skill training. Citations and paraphrases from *Jinkokuki* are also found in the military treatise *Kōyō Gunkan* (1586) of the Takeda clan [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 286]. Shingen’s acquaintance with the “*Records of the People and the Provinces*” is mentioned by Seki Sokō in his version of the Kan province description. He ascertains that, according to Takeda Shingen, as proved by *Jinkokuki* by the master from Shingen, there are such morals in the Tango and Iwami provinces that if you meet one good man out of a thousand, ten thousand – you are lucky [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 134].

No earlier references to the work have been found. Although the text’s commentators and copyists of the 18th and 19th centuries often challenged Tokiyori’s authorship, the first issue of *Jinkokuki* in the 20th century dates the text as of the Kamakura’s period and attributes it to the shikken’s brush [Rokujūrokushū *Jinkokuki* 1911]. The current position on this issue follows the survey performed by psychologist Watanabe Tooru
(Tohru) (1883-1957), who first published both versions of the text in 1948, supplying them with detailed commentaries and an introductory article. According to Watanabe, Jinkokuki could not have been written before the 16th century. The textological analysis enabled the researcher to limit the time parameters of its appearance to 1529-1569. His arguments are the use of the word sengoku in the meaning of “warring provinces”, which was impossible before 1468, references to the ikki rebellion of 1487, the description of realities of the early 16th century, as well as the depiction of some events in the text – both “past” and “present” [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 21-23]. The earliest of the surviving manuscripts, the so-called Bairinbon, is, however, attributed to the 17th century and is dated as of 1686. It was created by Kurokawa Dōyū (1623–1691), a doctor from the Aki province, who had come to know about the existence of Jinkokuki from the Secret Records of the Ii House, borrowed the manuscript from a certain Ochi Masamichi after moving to Kyoto, and completed copying it on the 15th day of the 9th moon of the 3rd year of Jōkyō [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 24]. Attributing the text to the 16th century still makes it possible to characterize it as the first overall description of the natural and topographic features of all provinces in Japan based on the consistently advanced idea that there is a relationship between the natural conditions of the habitat and the characters and morals of the people inhabiting a particular territory. The ancient fudoki described only some provinces; they were compiled in accordance with a plan, but the narration did not follow any pre-formulated concept. In other words, Japanese researchers who studied Jinkokuki and Shin Jinkokuki suggest considering these texts the earliest examples of Japanese literature that can be referred to as “humanitarian geography”. Watanabe Tooru also sees the roots of geopsychology in these texts [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 8].

The researcher has failed to determine the name of the author of Jinkokuki. Watanabe provides only some general considerations prompting that this text, due to its stylistic homogeneity, can be attributed to one author who could have really travelled through many Japanese provinces, had military skills and battle experience, showed an interest in political issues, and knew Confucian principles [Watanabe (ed.) 1948,
The presumed author was likely from the Shinano province (currently the Nagano prefecture), which is testified by the affectionate description of this territory in the text.

The author of the *New Records of the People and the Provinces* is a Confucian scholar and cartographer Seki Sokō. Until the 2012 publication of Kasai Kazuhiro’s monograph, the information about Seki Sokō was very fragmentary. It is known that he was friendly with Kawai Sora (1649-1710), a disciple of Bashō (1644–1694), loved travelling, produced several geographical works, started editing the *Records of the People and the Provinces* in 1700 and published the book in 1701. [Kasai 2012, pp. 106-138; 242-249]. It should be noted that Seki Sokō also gave the text the title of *Jinkokuki*. To avoid confusion, it was already in the 20th century that scholars started to refer to the 1701 version as the *New Records of the People and the Provinces*. Seki enlarged the original text, added a more detailed description of the territory, mentioning the significant place names; he traced the changes of morals, comparing realities described in *Jinkokuki* with his own observations and ideas, wrote the preface and the afterword as well as provided the description of each province with a map. All this enables one to refer to *Shin Jinkokuki* as one of the earliest Japanese atlases.

In Seki Sokō’s time, Japan was under the reign of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The period of long feuds had been in the past, and the publication of the *Jinkokuki* original text, with recommendations on how to conquer separate provinces based on the inhabitants’ morals engendered by local geographical and climatic features, was no longer possible. In his preface, Seki postulates the dependence of human qualities on the features of the earth, then praises the current leadership, under which people’s morals are gradually improving, people are fed, strive for the good, and are happy [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 105]. A. N. Meshcheryakov writes: “Thus, recognizing the fundamental importance of the natural factor, the author ascertains that it is subject to being corrected by the

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1 For the details of the Japanese map-making tradition, see [Woodward, Harley 1994, p. 367-497; 598-621].
authorities. As a matter of fact, this is the task of any wise ruler: using and building on people’s natural qualities to encourage them to drastically improve this naturalness” [Meshcheryakov 2014, p. 223]. Commenting on Seki’s text, Watanabe notes that, on the surface, it reminds of a war treatise, but by the content, it is rather a composition on the psychology of personality based on the Jinkokuki revised text [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 284]. Yet, the original version of the Records of the People and the Provinces also testifies to the independent interest for researching the relationship between the natural habitat and a human being, which is not limited to the pragmatic military aid. At the end of the text, there is a lengthy deliberation about the world order principles with citations from Chinese classics comparing the behavior of people and animals, touching upon eradication of ugly customs, and improving methods of political governance [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 96-97]. Seki Sokō develops these ideas and adapts the material to the realities of his time. The need for considering possible sanctions on the part of the authorities in case the text contains critical remarks about the regime resulted in expressing a clearer idea of historical changes in morals not explicit in Jinkokuki. Shin Jinkokuki is also notable for mentioning individuals (Takeda Shingen, Emperor Jimmu, Akamatsu Norimura’s “gang”, etc.), some place names, more detailed climatic and topographic descriptions of the provinces.

Seki Sokō, however, sticks to the general conceptual construct of the text, providing his own examples for explanation. Let us elaborate on the afterword to Jinkokuki. It dwells on the begetting of all things following the initial principle dōri 道理, whereby things and phenomena are not analogous due to the uneven distribution of the ki (pneuma) 氣 energy, and primary “purity” or “haziness”, which conforms to the light 阳 (yang) and dark 陰 (yin) forces. The deliberation in the spirit of Confucian philosophical thought, with citations from the Chinese philosophical treatise Huainanzi (2nd century BC) and with Buddhist terms, gradually passes from the general world order issues to particulars – the difference of qualities characteristic of man as well as of animals and plants. It is noted, for example, that, among the four types of the living things (arising from warmth, a womb, an egg, and by way of transformation), there are
birds and animals, fishes and insects, trees and plants. Among human qualities are sacred wisdom and good knowledge, but there are also bad and unworthy things. Even birds and beasts possess a bit of soul-kokoro. Even predators love their kids; even bees and ants know what it is to follow the master’s and the vassal’s way, follow the rei etiquette observing the difference between the upper and the lower; and warblers look for shelter to build a nest. Even trees and plants, which are deprived of the soul-kokoro, may be large and small, long and short; they are changing continuously. There also exist a certain number of possible combinations associating external features with internal qualities. According to the afterword, it happens so that a person is handsome, but his soul-kokoro is dirty; or he is ugly and his soul-kokoro is loathsome; or his appearance is awful but his soul-kokoro is direct. The reason for the variety of such associations is that the original qualities of the ki energy in all creatures are not the same [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 96].

Then follows a paraphrase of Huainanzi section «Terrestrial forms» discussing the relationship between people’s innate qualities and peculiarities of the earth. For example, people of the hard land are determined, people of the soft land are weak; people on the fertile land are handsome, while people on the poor land are ugly. There are many women where the air is swampy, and many men where the air is mountainous; there are many crazy people where the air is hilly, and there are many humane ones where the air is expansive [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 97]. The final part dwells on the opportunities for “straightening, and improving morals and customs of people with the help of three teachings – Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism” – as well as continuous persuasions and explanations of principles differentiating between good and evil. However, these measures are effective only after the people’s qualities in a particular province have been identified. In his afterword to the New Records of the People and the Provinces, Seki Sokō does without direct citations from Chinese classics and complex philosophical schemes; yet he expresses the same idea. According to Seki,

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2 For English translation of Huainanzi see: [Queen, Meyer, Roth 2010]
the life of people is similar to that of plants. Depending on the soil, they
flourish or wither; their character will be molded depending on how they
are watered. He ascertains there are no talents in people living on fertile
lands, while people living on poor lands are turning in the direction of
duty, gi 義. People on cliffs and in deep ravines are direct and simple-
minded, and people in wide valleys and on seacoasts are pretentious. The
reasons are qualities of air, water, and soil [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 280].

Nearly all records of both Jinkokuki versions contain evaluative
characteristics of the local population’s qualities, and the main criteria
enabling to define the morals as bad or good were, as a rule, categories
common for understanding the conceptual construct of the samurai
tradition. These include giri – a sense of duty; dōri – following the
initial principle, common sense, “correctness” of deeds; katagi (gyōgi) –
manners, ability to hold a “ceremonial form” and take up the body posture
conforming to the respective status (applies also to the state of attire and
arms); magokoro (jitsugi) – loyalty, devotion to duty, performance of
duties in compliance with the position held, sincerity; kō – filial piety;
chū – allegiance to the master.

There are some characteristics depending on the social class (samurai,
peasant, city dweller, or merchant) and gender. The marker for samurai
morals is courage or heroism (Japanese yū 勇, as well as readiness to
sacrifice one’s life in the service to the master (provinces Tōtōmi, Kai, Awa,
Buzen, Hizen, Hyūga, Ōsumi, and Satsuma). Meanwhile, recklessness
and irascibility – when warriors cease to value life – are described as
a vice. The records of the Kai province in Jinkokuki say that the morals
there are severe, while the principles of the filial piety and vassal duty
are infringed. The description of severe local morals is presented as an
illustration. According to the Jinkokuki text, heroism and courage are
so widespread there that nobody reckons even with death. For example,
if the parent is killed in the child’s presence, the child will step over his
dead body and fall next to him in the battle. The parent will do the same
in the case of his child’s death [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 33].

The characteristics significant for peasants and city dwellers are
being law-abiding (ritsugi), compliance with the principles of hierarchy,
decency, and directness (Shinano, Dewa, Bitchū, and Tosa). The lack of these qualities in the overwhelming majority of the population in a particular province results in the dissemination of lies, subservience to the strong or the rich, theft and robbery. For example, the morals and customs of the Iga province are characterized in very uncomplimentary terms because genuineness is completely gone while greed is deep-seated. For a long time, day after day, night after night, the rulers of the land are deceiving peasants and rob them by violating the law. As for the peasants, they are thinking day and night about how to rob the rulers of the land; since no one has ever seen in a dream what following the principle of duty, *giri*, means, it is useless to try disseminating samurai customs in this area [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 25]. The character of women shows diligence, perseverance, and modesty (Mikawa). The qualities like intelligence, quick wit, directness, and insistence do not have a constant positive or negative evaluative characteristic; they depend on whether they conform, first, to the proper behavior of a certain class representative, and, second, to the striving for the performance of duty and the demonstration of loyalty.

Of special interest are records directly referring to the influence of natural factors on the appearance, speech, character, and behavior of people. The records of the Yamashiro province in *Jinkokuki* say that these features are influenced by the local river water and soil; the speech of men and women is clear and understandable from birth. The author of *Jinkokuki* compares it with free flowing water and wonders whether it is true that the province has such customs because of the local water. He states that the Yamashiro water is pure and is colored by ten thousand flowers; these colors are quite different from those in other provinces – that is how it was in the past and that is how it is now. Similar to this, the people’s skin remains equally smooth. In addition, thanks to the local water qualities, a very feminine pronunciation is widespread here like in no other province. However, concerning the samurai customs, they are not respected in Yamashiro and are not at all so good [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 15]. Seki Sokō somewhat expands the description of this province, discussing differences of natural conditions in several parts of Yamashiro,
and, consequently, people’s character qualities and models of behavior. Thus, people in a mountainous area have a direct soul but it would be hard for them to avoid common tendencies predisposing to immorality and effeminacy [Asano (ed.) 1987, p. 107]. The inhabitants of faraway provinces are often characterized as bull-headed and obstinate (Dewa), people from places with a mild climate – as effeminate and lazy (Kaga), those living in cold lands – as quick-minded and shrewd (Echizen).

In essence, both accounts describe the diversity of people’s customs in all of the Japanese provinces caused by natural and climatic conditions of the territory; yet these morals – unlike the environment – are thought of as prone to change and may be improved by the proper influence on the part of the natural factor.

**Records of the People and the Provinces: The Studies of Nature and the Nature of Studies**

With the formation of the state in the Meiji period (1868-1912), the interest for peculiar features of people from different provinces is replaced with the study and interpretation of the characteristic features of the “Japanese” behavior, thinking, and perception of the world. The Western scientific methodology is actively applied to the Japanese material for the search of its own historical and cultural guidelines. This search often channeled the attention of the scholars of that time to the *Jinkokuki* text. One of the first to raise the issue of this work’s importance for studying the psychology of the Japanese was Takashima Heizaburō. His *Essays in Psychology* 心理漫筆 *Shinri manpitsu* (1898) contain a short description of ten provinces taken from *Jinkokuki*. The author explains the principle of selection by his attempt to demonstrate “the characters of the people inhabiting the key areas of the country” [Takashima 1898, p. 43]. Takashima does not in any way comment on the fragments per se, and it looks as if the reader had to make his own conclusions as to the information presented. Probably, using the example of the Ōsumi province, the psychologist tried to show the specific features of the attitude to death, by the example of Nagato – of the
attitude to requests and duties, by the example of Tosa – the relationship between behavior of humans and animals under the influence of natural factors, and through the example of Higo, he wished to show the softness of the samurai morals, etc.

The Records of the People and the Provinces are also mentioned in some geographical and ethnographical works; however, of special interest is an attempt of the military interpretation of the text conducted by Japanese authors in the period of militarization. The year of 1943 saw the publication of the book by Watari Shōzaburō (1873-1946) Studies of Yamato-damashii (Yamato damashii kenkyū), which tells the story of how the Japanese self-awareness was being established; it was expressed in loyalty, patriotism, and self-sacrifice. One of the sections of this extensive volume is devoted to the justification of Japan’s superiority over other countries. Thus, leaning on the idea of the relationship between natural conditions and human qualities and supporting his deliberations with citations from various works, including Jinkokuki, Watari ascertains that Japan is rich in the light “yang” forces; therefore, it is better than, for example, China, which is the congestion of the dark force “yin”. [Watari 1943, p. 325-348]. A separate chapter dwells on the influence of natural conditions on the formation of the Japanese morals and the rise of the military spirit [Watari 1943, p. 280]. For Watari, Jinkokuki is one of the stages of the establishment of Japanese self-awareness and a source for studying the bushidō philosophy. The usage of this term in the record of the Iyo province is especially remarkable for him. It is traditionally considered that the word “bushidō” was first mentioned in Kōyō Gunkan, but the text of the Records of the People and the Provinces had been compiled somewhat earlier [Watari 1943, p. 331-333].

The main student of Jinkokuki, who first published the work with comments in 1948, is Watanabe Tooru. He is known as a pioneer of Japanese psychology. Watanabe acquainted the Japanese academic world with the theory of the psychology of personality by William Stern (1871–1938), having issued the book About Personality (Jinkakuron) in 1912. He writes about the psychology of personality as a discipline important for the perception of the processes taking place in the Japanese
society of the period of modernization. To his mind, the promotion of this
discipline will enable Japan to gain independence in the scientific world,
annunciate itself, and get rid of the dependence on Western knowledge
[Watanabe 1912, p. 9]. He also writes that personality studies are at the
intersection of ethics, pedagogics, and biology [Watanabe 1912, p. 13-14].
Later, developing these ideas, he turned to studying the psychology of
the habitat. In 1915, Watanabe stepped up as a translator of the book
Die geopsychischen erscheinungen (“Geopsychological Phenomena”,
1911. It was reissued in 1935 under the title of “Geopsyche”). The book
had been written by scientist Willy Hellpach (1877-1955), founder
of this scientific field (psychology of the habitat, geopsychology,
environmental psychology). The book’s Japanese title was Fūdo
Shinrigaku, which can be notionally translated as the Psychology of
Natural Conditions. The book described the influence of natural factors
and environmental conditions on the formation of the personality and
behavioral patterns of particular communities.

The preface to the Japanese edition stated that global science had not
yet witnessed such studies, and the translation of this book was able to
impact the popularization of the new trend in the Japanese society. It is
specially indicated that the original was written in a complex professional
language, abounding in psychological terms. For this reason, Watanabe
had to resort to simplification and curtailments of the text’s fragments
to make Hellpach’s book accessible to the Japanese reader [Hellpach
1915, p. 1-3]. The appeal to specific natural conditions in order to justify
the qualities of the people inhabiting a specific territory can be found
in earlier works by Japanese authors, for example, in Shiga Shigetaka’s
book Japanese Landscape (Nihon Fūkeiron, 1894) [Meshcheryakov
2014, p. 313-337]; but Watanabe insisted on the scientific approach to
studying this phenomenon. In some respects he preceded the studies
made by Watsuji Tetsurō and described in his 1935 book Natural
Conditions (Fūdo), where the philosopher deliberates on the influence
of the climatic and natural factors on the formation of the Japanese
national character [Meshcheryakov 2014, p. 395-405], and those by
It is likely that studying the psychology of personality and geopsychology, as well as Watanabe’s evident wish to promote the independence of Japanese science prompted him the necessity of exploring Japanese sources. Another step towards researching the psychology of habitat using the Japanese material and from the historical perspective was the 1918 publication of the book *The Essence of Moral of the Japanese People* (國民道德要領, *Kokumin Dōtoku Yōryō*). The biased character of the book can be detected from the very beginning – the first page contains the text of the “Imperial Rescript on Education” of October 30, 1890, which underlines the necessity of observing the principles of filial piety, patriotism, and development of a vassal’s moral and ethical qualities. Next is the text of the *Boshin Decree* (戊申詔書, *Boshin Shōsho*) of October 13, 1908, stressing the necessity of moral education for the nation that serves as a formal start for the government campaign to improve the economic condition of the peripheral areas (*chihō kairyō undō*, 1909). The improvement of the periphery was planned by nurturing the required qualities in the subordinates. In the afterword, Watanabe stresses the role of science – psychology, particularly – in the cause of forming the foundations of the flourishing state. He refers to the necessity of studying morals and behavioral patterns of Japanese citizens in various parts of the empire if the state system called *kokutai* (ad verbum – “state body”) is to function successfully; thus, he justifies the existence of the psychology of personality and defends this sphere against possible accusations of an individualistic bias [Watanabe 1918, p. 3].

The book describes various options of the interaction between individual and group morals and responsibility [Watanabe 1918, p. 12], interconnection between morals of the citizens and the state system [Watanabe 1918, p. 3], household and political understanding of this term [Watanabe 1918, p. 41]. Watanabe places the people’s morals into the position inferior to that of the state system. Japan’s state system is unique by virtue of the system of government – the head of the state is the single and continuous dynasty of heavenly august rulers, while Japan itself is located in the favorable climatic conditions: it is lavishly sunlit
and is enjoying fertile lands [Watanabe 1918, p. 2-3]. The “people’s character” (kokuminsei) largely depends on the natural factor [Watanabe 1918, p. 10]. According to Watanabe, the main qualities of the Japanese people existing naturally and improving under the influence of the particular political system since the ancient times are loyalty (chū) and filial piety (kō), which are in unity [Watanabe 1918, p. 14]. Thus, duty (gi) and care (jō) (categories characterizing the master-subordinate and parent-child relationship, respectively) are also united into an inseparable semantic pair. In the Jinkokuki terminology, all these categories, along with heroism and courage (their presence or absence in the inhabitants of a particular province), serve as the main criteria for defining the qualities of people’s morals and customs. Watanabe believes that Japan is unique compared to China, because, in China, these categories are not applied to the state and used only in the family; in Europe, their manifestation is defined not by natural reasons but by a search for personal profit, or may be provoked by forced pressure [Watanabe 1918, p. 15]. Referring to historical examples of specifically Japanese manifestations of character, Watanabe highlights the samurai as the most evident carriers of the “spirit of Japan” (yamato-damashii or yamatogokoro), attributing to them such qualities as piety, loyalty, courage, and patriotism rising to the level of self-sacrifice, all at once [Watanabe 1918, p. 26]. With this in view, Watanabe’s choice of Jinkokuki as a basic text for his studies looks quite appropriate.

Watanabe begins studying some aspects of historical psychology per se based on Jinkokuki in 1937 in order to prove the independent character of psychological perception development in Japan. The studies were completed in the post-war period, when Kyūshin Jinkokuki book with a detailed introductory article and comments was published in 1948. In addition to purely textological issues, Watanabe touches upon the specific historical weather perception and the influence of the natural factor on the Japanese character’s formation. In the environment of the post-war censorship and the total change of the ideological course, a paper like this could not glorify Japanese culture – the discourse here focuses on its independence emergent by virtue of
natural development [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 33]. Watanabe writes that, despite many external factors influencing the Japanese worldview, the ideas presented in both versions of *Jinkokuki* are to be recognized as original. Giving the example of the Yamashiro province’s description saying that clear speech, smooth skin, and soft morals of its inhabitants are defined by the quality of quick and pure local rivers and the qualities of soil, he states outright that the rudiments of geopsychology may be seen in this description [Watanabe (ed.) 1948, p. 36]. The most recent academic publication of *Jinkokuki* and *Shin Jinkokuki* with Asano Kenji’s comments appeared in 1987; however, it does not propose any drastically new approach to the comprehension of these texts, following, on the whole, Watanabe’s survey and summing up its main conclusions.

**Conclusion**

In different times, the *Records of the People and the Provinces* were used as a textbook on military art, studied as a literary monument on geopsychology, and applied to research in the field of *bushidō* history. They were relied on as an element of state propaganda in the process of searching for the “spirit of Japan” and were cited in order to jest and satisfy the need for the feeling of superiority. Two versions of the text available and the problems with defining the author of *Jinkokuki* do not simplify the research either; however, further prospects are opening for continuing the study of the work as it is and its further life in the information environment.

**References**


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Abstract. This work studies the world map from the popular encyclopedia *Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū* (Complete Compendium of Urban Knowledge, Osaka, 1801) from the perspective of borrowing sources, typological features, combination of European, Buddhist, Chinese, and Japanese geographic and spatial concepts. The map is a partial copy of the world map by Nagakubo Sekisui 長久保積水 (1717-1801), but has many features typical of the Buddhist world view. We consider in detail the representation of India, China, Europe, and mythical countries. Special mention is made of the representation of ships in the map.

Keywords: mapping, *setsuyōshū* 節用集, world map, Matteo Ricci, Nagakubo Sekisui 長久保積水, tenjiku 天竺

This work provides an analysis of the world map from the popular encyclopedia of the *setsuyōshū* 節用集 genre: *Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū* 都会節用百家通 (Complete Compendium of Urban Knowledge, Osaka, 1801). The abundance of diverse information, including geographic representations, as well as the availability and credibility of kanji dictionaries of the *setsuyōshū* 節用集 genre among common people of
the time make them a valuable source for researching the worldview of the Tokugawa era (1603-1868). In particular, a detailed analysis of the maps from the commented kanji dictionaries allows us to evaluate the degree of the prevalence of European geographic representations, of how they interacted with earlier concepts and of the peculiarities of their perception.

As for the scope of research on this issue, over the last decade, the analysis of maps and other evidence of spatial and geographic perceptions on the basis of printed publications of the Tokugawa era has been one of the fastest growing areas of research. Earlier works studying maps from setsuyōshū 節用集 date back to the first quarter of the 20th century and are authored by Abe Makoto and Iwane Masushige. The maps from setsuyōshū as sources on borrowing geographic information are studied in Oda Takeo, Unno Kazutaka, and Muroga Nobuo’s book Great Collection of Old Japanese Maps (Kodansha, 1975). The studies of setsuyōshū have a long history, but, for a long time, researchers focused on the lexical and structural aspects. Among the recent works on the spatial and geographic data in setsuyōshū, special mention should be made of the studies by Tatsuoka Yuji [Tatsuoka 2013], Elena Polovnikova [Polovnikova 2013], and Steffen Remvik [Remvik 2011; Remvik 2017].

Tatsuoka Yuji’s work The Emergence of the Term chiri 地理 (Geography) in the Setsuyōshū Encyclopedias in the Modern Era (2013) gives a lexical analysis of the geographic texts in the commentary. In addition, the author compiled a summary table of setsuyōshū from the Setsuyōshū Taisei 節用集大成 collection, in which he provided data on the presence or absence in them of maps and geography sections.

In her article The Common People’s World View: World Maps from Setsuyōshū, Elena Polovnikova analyzes 19 world maps from the encyclopedias published between 1690 and 1864, and, on the basis of this analysis, she draws conclusions on the common people’s world view, studying in detail the use of different toponyms relating to the same places and describing changes in the status and ways of representation of India, mythical countries and nations.
The World Map from the Encyclopedia Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū
Available at: International Institute for Digital Humanities
https://www2.dhii.jp/nijl/kanzo/iiif/200006409/images/200006409_00004.jpg
In his works of 2011 and 2017, Steffen Remvik analyses the spatial representations in *setsuyōshū* on the basis of maps and introduction and commentary texts and gives a comprehensive review of the materials on space and time from the dictionary *Eitai Setsuyō Mujinzō* 永代節用無尽蔵 (the 1830s), also addressing the issue of publishing rights with regard to various kinds of information and texts.

The world map from the encyclopedia *Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsu* is discussed in Max Moerman’s work *Buddhist Japan and the Global Ocean* (2018). Dr. Moerman points out the features inherent in Buddhist world maps and also makes suggestions about what could have served as their source and for what this map could have served as a source later on.

The world map from *Tokai setsuyō hyakkatsu* is an interesting example of interpenetration and interaction of several geographic concepts. It has not yet been analyzed from this point of view. Therefore, this study seems to us to be important and useful for our further work.

**World Views:**

**Basic Concepts, Sources of Influence and Development Trends**

The Tokugawa era, despite the country’s policy of closure and limitation of contacts with foreigners (*sakoku* 鎖国), became a time of growing interest in the outside world and active intellectual exchange. Trade with Holland, China, Korea, Ryukyu, countries of South Asia through the mediation of China was of great importance for the economy. Trade contacts contributed to the introduction of new knowledge and ideas about the world, including geographic information about Europe, Asia, and Americas. In 1720, shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune 徳川吉宗 (1684-1751, ruled from 1715 to 1745) allowed to import into Japan European books the contents of which were not associated with Christianity. Consequently, books on various themes began to be brought to the country, including books on geography and maps, for instance, Blaeu’s atlas [Yonemoto 2003 p. 106]. New European information
supplemented the knowledge brought earlier, before the country’s closure, and was superimposed on the already existing spatial concepts.

In addition to the European geographic views, we can roughly mark out two main concepts of the world order prevalent in Japan at the beginning and in the middle of the Tokugawa era. One of them is the concept of three countries (sangoku sekaikan 三国世界観), according to which the world was divided into three countries: honchō 本朝, i.e. Japan, kara 唐, i.e. China and Korea, and tenjiku 天竺 — India. The other concept is the Buddhist world view, according to which Japan was a small country located in the northeast of the inhabited world of Jampudvipa.

Another important process related to spatial representations that took place in the Tokugawa era was the desire of the shogunate to change the status of Japan vis-a-vis China in the official ideological view of the world. While in the Muromachi era (1336-1573), Japan was thought of as a satellite of China which was the center of the world, the Tokugawa shoguns made attempts to raise the status of Japan, making it higher than that of China. After the fall of the Ming Empire in 1644, the shogunate’s rhetoric had the Manchus as barbarians, China as having lost the “mandate of heaven”, and Japan, since it had not been subjected to the barbarian conquest, as its successor.

Such ideas can be found in the travel notes by Nagakubo Sekisui 長久保積水 (1717-1801), in the parts describing the Chinese from Nagasaki, and in the new rules of trade with China developed by Arai Hakuseki 新井白皙 (1657-1725) in 1715 in Nagasaki. Tang China, which had been a cultural and ideological ideal, then began to be associated with the distant past and seemed to be completely severed from contemporary China in terms of ideology [Yonemoto 2003, p. 103]. Yokoyama Toshio sees a manifestation of the desire to equalize the positions of China and Japan in the comparison of Chinese and Japanese heroes and famous species that can often be found in the encyclopedias of the setsuyōshū genre [Yokoyama 1988, p. 85]. However, such ideas remained exclusively at the level of rhetoric. China was still an important economic partner and exerted a great intellectual influence on Japan, being, among other things,
a source of geographic information. The Chinese encyclopedias Shan Hai Jing 山海經 (The Classic of Mountains and Seas), Sancai Tuhui 三才圖會 (The Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1607), and others were sources of ideas about the peoples that inhabited lands around China; borrowings from these books can be found in many Japanese encyclopedias, for example, in Wakan Sansai Zue 和漢三才図絵 (The Illustrated Japanese-Chinese Encyclopedia, 1712), Kimmō Zui 訓蒙図彙 (The Illustrated Lecture, 1690) and some others [Yonemoto 2003, pp. 104-106].

Another expression of the shogunate’s desire to elevate Japan’s position in relation to the rest of the world was the widespread use of the earlier existing concept of shinkoku 神国, according to which Japan was believed to be the “land of the gods”.

Printed Maps, Peculiarities of the World Maps from the Setsuyōshū Encyclopedias

Maps, particularly world maps, are a visual objectification of interpenetration and interaction of elements of different geographic and spatial concepts. The specific feature of maps as a means of fixing and transmitting information is the mixing and generalization of disparate elements of the picture of the world by conveying them in one graphic image. The depiction of reality, both fictional and real, with the aid of maps was a common technique for visual transmission of information in the Tokugawa era [Yonemoto 2003, p. 43]. Maps were issued as separate editions, were included in directories and encyclopedias, and used as illustrations in urban belles-lettres of various genres and during public talks.

World maps of the Tokugawa era are traditionally divided into four types according to their sources and world view. These included maps based on the map drawn by the Jesuit missioner Matteo Ricci (1552-1610); world maps repeating Dutch maps; world maps reflecting the Buddhist view of the world; maps based on earlier Portuguese and Spanish information about the world received from the Jesuits before the country’s closure and ban on Christianity [Kinda, Uesugi 2012, p. 264].
The development of commercial printing and the growth of literacy among the common population contributed to the dissemination of information about the structure of the world and formed ideas about the world among ordinary urban people. In the 17th and 18th centuries, several world maps were drawn; they were reprinted many times and were popular with urban dwellers. Among them we should mention the world map Bankokusōzu Jimbutsuzu 万国総図人物図 (The Map of the Countries of the World. Depiction of the Peoples of the World, 1645, Nagasaki), Bankoku Sōkaizu 万国総会図 (The World Map, 1688) by Ishikawa Ryūsen 石川流宣 (the years of life are unknown), the map by Nagakubo Sekisui Kaisei Chikyū Bankoku Zenzu 正健地球万国全図 (The Corrected Map of the Countries of the World, 1785). They all are based on the map by Matteo Ricci Kon’yo Bankoku Zenzu 坤輿萬國全圖 (The Map of the World) published in Beijing in 1602. In addition to separate editions, world maps were included in directories and encyclopedias. Elena Polovnikova maintains that city people could get acquainted with a world map in encyclopedias and other similar printed books rather than in a separate edition [Polovnikova 2013, p. 64]. The world maps published separately and the maps included in the books have some typological differences, which we will talk about later. One of the publications that included maps were kanji dictionaries with setsuyōshū commentary, and one of such dictionaries is Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū.

The first setsuyōshū appeared in the Muromachi era. They were handwritten kanji dictionaries for writing, used by the better educated segments of the population. In the Tokugawa era, setsuyōshū began to be supplemented with comments and additional inserts on various topics. The handwritten kanji dictionaries for writing practice of the educated elite turned into reputable printed reference publications popular with city dwellers.

In terms of structure and content, the commentary was a partial or complete compilation from other publications on the topics of etiquette, world order, housekeeping, fortune-telling, and other similar topics. Starting from the late 17th century, they acquired a uniform three-part structure. In most cases, the commentary was bigger than the dictionary.
item and consisted of three sections: the introductory (kantō 巻頭 or kanshu 巻首) one, that placed above the dictionary (kashiragaki 頭書), and the concluding (kammatsu 巻末 or okugaki 奥書) one. In the early 19th century, bigger setsuyōshū, often consisting of a few volumes, began to be published. The content of the compilation part of the dictionary was largely determined by the publisher’s rights to print a particular type of information. Although the setsuyōshū comments could be very different in content, they all had sections on spatial and geographic representations, history, calendar, writing of characters, and life of the upper classes. Comments to setsuyōshū were not structured thematically, and passages on related or similar themes could often be found in different parts of the dictionary. This is equally true for all themes presented in the comments, including geographic information. However, maps of the world and of Japan were usually placed at the very beginning of a book. Most researchers agree that commentaries for dictionaries became one of the ways to unify the language and ideas about their country among the common population in the Tokugawa era.

Maps began to be included in dictionaries in the 17th century, and, in the second part of that century, they became a mandatory part of the commentary. Usually, the dictionaries included a map of Japan, a map of the world and maps of three largest cities, santo 三都, — Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto. World maps first appeared in setsuyōshū in the Genroku era (1688-1704). The earliest examples typologically belong to Buddhist maps of the world and were entitled as an image or plan of Mount Sumeru. But in the late 17th century the Buddhist world view in setsuyōshū began to be replaced by geographic information received from Europeans. Most of the world maps from 1699 to 1778 are based on the Bankoku Sōzu 万国総図 map (Complete Representation of All Countries) depicting representatives of different nations of the world, which was compiled in Nagasaki in 1645. The names of practically all of them include the word bankoku 万国 (myriads of countries), in which fact some researchers see not only an indication of the source of borrowing, but also a departure from the traditional concept of sangoku sekaikan 三国世界観. Maps of this type have some differences in shape (rectangular or oval) and
orientation, with some facing north and some facing east. In terms of content, however, they are very similar. In the late 18th century, maps included in *setsuyōshū* became varied both in their sources and content. Most of them are simplified copies of Matteo Ricci’s map and maps drawn on its basis. These are the maps *Bankoku Sōzu* (1671), the world map by Nagakubo Sekisui (1717-1801) *Chikyū Bankoku Sankai Yochi Zenzusetsu* 地球万国山海輿地全図説 (Map of Seas, Mountains and Countries with Explanations, 1750) [Nagakubo 1788], the map by Hashimoto Sōkichi 橋本宗吉 (1763-1836) *Oranda Shin'yaku Chikyū Zenzu* 嗚蘭新訳地球全図 (New Translated Dutch Map of the World, 1798), and some others. When copying, the compilers of *setsuyōshū* simplified maps in two ways: first, they reduced the number of toponyms, often at random; second, maps with the image of the two hemispheres were remade into a more familiar oval shape. Some researchers consider this as evidence of the unpreparedness of the readers for whom *setsuyōshū* were meant to perceive the information that the earth is not flat, but has the shape of a ball [Polovnikova 2013, p. 80].

**Encyclopedia *Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū*:**

*History of Creation, Genre Features, a Part of the Commentary on Geography*

The dictionary *Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū* 都会節用百家通 was one of the first publications with an extensive commentary. It was published in Osaka in 1801 by the joint effort of several publishers. A few words should be said about the authors of the encyclopedia. Takayasu Rooku 高安蘆屋 (1772-1801) was a calligrapher, expert in Chinese classics, author of historical essays on Chinese and Japanese history, and neo-Confucian scholar; Kamata Kansai 鎌田環斎 (1753-1822) was the head of a *juku* school, a calligrapher, expert in Chinese classics, and neo-Confucian scholar; Niwa Tokei 丹羽桃渓 (1760-1822) was an artist, book illustrator, author of pictures for several encyclopedias on various household and economic topics.
The dictionary comprises 718 pages and about 32 thousand words. It consists of three parts: *kanshu* 巻首 – 64 sections, 46 page spreads; *kashiragaki* 頭書 – additional text occupies about one-third of the sheet, 35 sections, 303.5 page spreads (in terms of volume it is about 100 full text spreads); *kambi* 巻尾 – 14 sections, 9 page spreads.

The commentary to the dictionary contains an extensive amount of data on geography and notions about space (18 out of 112). Most of them are graphic representations: maps, bird’s-eye views of temples and sanctuaries, plans, and landscapes. Text descriptions are lists of famous places, provinces, short notes about toponyms and their origins. The first section of the commentary contains a world map, a map of Japan, layouts of the emperor’s palace and the capital’s sights, a map of Mount Fuji, images of three sanctuaries, images of the sanctuaries in Nikkō, Ise, Kasuga, and Yahata, Mounts Kompira and Koya, well-known Chinese landscapes glorified in verses and their Japanese analogues: Matsushima, West Lake, eight views of Ōmi hakkei 近江八景 and eight views of Xiaoxiang 瀟湘八景. The second part of the commentary comprises descriptions of all the Japanese provinces and well-known places, as well as notes on the pilgrimage from Edo to Ise. The final part includes maps of three capital cities (Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto) and stories about the history of the Big Buddha Pavilion *Daibutsuden* 大仏殿 and the *Sanjūsangendō* 三十三間堂 in Kyoto.

We can single out several peculiarities of the information placed in the commentary to the *setsuyōshū* dictionaries, including geographic ones, which make them different from other publications. On the one hand, it is their conservative nature: the same passages were repeated in encyclopedias for several decades, in spite of the appearance of books with new, updated information about the world and more recent maps of the world and of Japan, for example, maps made by Ishikawa Ryūsen 石川流宣 and Nagakubo Sekisui 長久保積水. On the other hand, according to some researchers, the compilers deliberately simplified the materials, making them accessible to uneducated readers [Polovnikova 2013, p. 80].
The World Map from Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū 都会節用百家通

The world map is on the fourth spread of the dictionary right after the contents and the introduction. The map occupies the entire spread, has the rectangular form and is not supplemented by an additional text or comments. The rectangular form is not very typical of the period under consideration, since normally the world was depicted in encyclopedias in the oval form, even if the source for copying was European maps depicting the world in the form of hemispheres. Place names on the map are written in two ways: kanji in Asia and katakana in Europe and Africa (with a few exceptions).

The map is entitled Sekai Bankoku Zu 世界万図, i.e., “Map of many countries of the world”. The presence of the word bankoku 万国 in the name is quite typical of the Tokugawa era, which has been mentioned before.

Sources of Borrowing

Typologically, the map belongs to those based on Matteo Ricci’s map, but also some features inherent in the Buddhist tradition. Matteo Ricci’s world map was well known in Japan practically from the moment of its publication. It is known that the Jesuits used this map during geography lessons at their academy in Kyoto in 1605. In addition, in 1645, a map with pictures of residents of different countries was published in Nagasaki, and it was almost a complete copy of Ricci’s map [Yonemoto 2003, p. 16]. The direct source for the map, as indicated in the work by Unno Kazutaka, Muroga Nobuo, and Oda Takeo and in the article by Elena Polovnikova, was the map by Nagakubo Sekisui, Chikyū Bankoku Sankai Yochi Zenzu Setsu 地球万国山海輿地全図説 (1788). Nagakubo Sekisui was a prominent map-maker, geographer, and neo-Confucian scholar. Nagakubo Sekisui lived in the domain of Mito, located in the Hitachi province northwest of Edo, worked as a civil servant and studied geography and history. One of the main works by Nagakubo Sekisui was the book Dainihoshi 大日本史 (Great History of Japan). In addition
to history and geography, he wrote verses and was a notable poet; he published a collection of his poems in the Chinese style *kanshi* 漢詩. As part of an official commission and as a representative of the domain, he participated in several travels, including some time spent in Nagasaki (1766), where he communicated with the Chinese and the Dutch. It is known that he studied with students of the astronomer Sabukawa Shunkai (1639-1715), from whom he learned how to use the grid of meridians and latitudes in mapping. Nagakubo Sekisui made the first printed map of Japan with a grid of latitudes and longitudes and several important printed maps of Japan and China [Yonemoto 2003, pp. 37, 40, 69-70]. Due to his education, intellectual exchange with foreigners, and access to the most precise maps of his time, Nagakubo Sekisui used in his works the most advanced map-making techniques and geographic knowledge. Probably, the maps by Nagakubo Sekisui were not as popular as other printed maps of his time, but remained in demand for a long time, as evidenced by a large number of copies up to the second quarter of the 19th century.

The text written in the margin says that the world map was based on the map by Harame Sadakiyo 原目貞清 (life years unknown), Yochizu 輿地図 (*World Map, 1720*). The world is depicted in the map in an oval, and place names, except those located in Asia or the mythical ones, are written in katakana. The map is oriented to the north; the center is located just east of Japan in the Pacific Ocean; the meridians, the equator, and the major latitudes are indicated. For its time, the map was advanced, and the author used all the map-making techniques available to him.

The map in *Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsu* 会都節用百家通 is a simplified copy of the map by Nagakubo Sekisui. It has significantly fewer place-names and no meridians or parallels. Moreover, the map from the encyclopedia can only loosely be called a world map since it copies only the Western hemisphere. The northern and southern parts of the world are also cut off. Africa and Europe are depicted as one continent. Thus, instead of the map of the European type which depicts the world in the form of five continents *godaishū* 五大州, the world is shown according to the traditional Buddhist concept of one continent *ichidaishū* 一大州.
Buddhist world maps which included European geographic views were created often enough in the Tokugawa era. One of the first such maps was made by the monk Hōtan 鳳潭 (1654-1728) in 1710. In an explanation to the map, Hōtan wrote that geographical knowledge was important for understanding the structure of the world, that his map combined all the concepts and made them visible to the human eye and that he saw the creation of world maps with the inclusion of the latest European data an important tool for integrating the Buddhist concept of world order into the culture of his time (Max Moerman, lecture at Stanford University, 2015). Over the next two centuries, several similar Buddhist maps of the world were created; most of them depicted one continent coinciding with the Western hemisphere. An example of such a map is the map made by the monk Zontō 存統 in 1821.

Another feature that makes the map from the encyclopedia akin to the Buddhist maps is the location of Tenjiku 天竺 (India) in the center of the map, that is, in the center of the world. In this case, Japan is found on the northeastern edge of the ecumene, which is quite consistent with the idea of it as a small lost country, zokusan hendo 粟散辺土, that was widely spread in the 13th and 14th centuries.

**Representation of India**

The part of the map showing the area that can be related to the Indian subcontinent requires special attention. This part of the map shows most clearly the simultaneous coexistence and interpenetration of several concepts of the world order. India is designated with several toponyms: Tenjiku 天竺, Indea いんであ, Mouru モウル, and Bengaru ベンガル.

The term Tenjiku is part of the concept sangoku sekaikan 三国世界観, which we have mentioned before. In this concept, the term Tenjiku denotes India not geographically, but as the place of the origin of Buddhism and the birthplace of Shakyamuni. Also, the term Tenjiku denoted the rest of the world, except Japan, China, and Korea. For instance, Ishizaki Takahiko writes that geographically Tenjiku was at first associated not with India (Hindustan), but with Siam. For example,
one of the reasons for the respectful attitude towards the first European Jesuits was the fact that they had arrived from Siam, i.e., from *Tenjiku* [Ishizaki 2012, pp. 215-220].

The toponym *Tenjiku* is mentioned in the map five times: *Higashi Tenjiku* 東天竺, *Nishi Tenjiku* 西天竺, *Naka Tenjiku* 中天竺, *Minami Tenjiku* 南天竺, *Kita Tenjiku* 北天竺, i.e., Eastern Tenjiku, Western Tenjiku, Middle Tenjiku, Southern Tenjiku, and Northern Tenjiku. This designation probably goes back to the world map of five Indias — *Gotenjikuzu* 五天竺図. In their work on the Buddhist world maps in Japan, Muroga Nobuo and Unno Kazutaka write that the map was made in China and brought to Japan via Korea. When exactly the map was made and when it reached Japan remains unclear, but the oldest existing copy is kept in the Hōryūji temple and dates back to 1365. The popularity and credibility of the map can be evidenced by the fact that this particular map became the first printed map of the world in 1642. Muroga and Unno see the reasons for the popularity of the Buddhist concept of the world order firstly, in the equidistance of China and Japan from the center of the world and, secondly, in the proximity of this concept to the widespread ideas of the coming era of the end of the law (*mappō*) and the insignificance of their country [Muroga, Unno 1962, p. 65]. The toponym *Tenjiku*, together with other names for India, occurs in most Japanese world maps before the 19th century.

Matteo Ricci, who used Chinese sources to create his map of the world and tried to convey the Christian and European concept of the structure of the world using traditional Chinese concepts and place names, also put the name *Tenjiku* on his map twice: *Shōtenjiku* 小天竺 (Small Tenjiku) and *Nishi Tenjiku* 西天竺 (Western Tenjiku), simultaneously using the toponym *Indo* 印度 on the same map.

In addition to the toponym Tenjiku, the map from the encyclopedia has another few elements typical of the Buddhist representations of the world. These are toponyms denoting mythical lands, for example, *Tōjokoku* 東女国 (Eastern country of women), located between Tenjiku and China (on the map from the encyclopedia it is located slightly to the left of the Kunlun mountains).
Along with the toponym Tenjiku, there are three other toponyms for India on the map. These are Bengaru, Mouru, and Indea; each of them has its origin and semantic field. The toponym Bengaru, or more often Hengaru ヘンガル, appeared on the Japanese maps in the 16th century and, according to Ishizaki Takahiko, it was borrowed from the map of the Eastern Hemisphere in the Ortelius Atlas (1570) [Ishizaki 2012, p. 217]. The toponym Mouru initially designated the Mogul Empire, and it is often found in the maps of the Tokugawa era; usually it was used together with the toponym Maraharu マラハル, meaning Northern and Southern India, respectively. However, on the map from the encyclopedia it is used separately. According to Elena Polovnikova, the toponym Indea was also borrowed from Europeans [Polovnikova 2013, pp. 73-74].

The coexistence of asynchronous toponyms or different names of the same territory on the same map speaks of three facts. First, there is no connection between the world depicted on the map with any specific point or period of time. At the same time and on the same map, you can see toponyms and countries that existed at different times. Second, there is parallel coexistence of several geographic concepts. Ishizaki Takahiko points to the fact that, though the terms Tenjiku, Mouru, Bengaru, Indo, and Indea designate the same region, contemporaries did not connect them with each other. Thirdly, the concept of Tenjiku was not rooted in the minds of people. According to Ishizaki and Polovnikova, the compilers of the maps and encyclopedias could not afford not to map such important concepts of the structure of the world [Polovnikova 2013, p. 74].

**Representation of China**

The representation of China and surrounding areas was copied from the map by Nagakubo Sekisui. Elena Polovnikova points out that the maps that were included in the comments to the setsuyōshū dictionaries had the following characteristic features in the representation of China. They used the names Daimin 大明, Shina 志那, or Morokoshi 唐土 instead of Sei 清; there was a random set of toponyms on the territory of China.
Polovnikova explains this by the desire of the encyclopedia compilers to place the centre of the world in Japan and not in China [Polovnikova 2013, pp. 72-73]. But, in the case of the map from Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū, we see a slightly different picture. China has no common name. There are fewer toponyms inside China than on the map by Nagakubo Sekisui, but they are not of random nature: these are the largest cities and districts or sacred places. The author of the map replaces with katakana the kanji spelling of toponyms denoting the Kunlun Mountains and the head of the Yellow River. The Kunlun Mountains and the head of the Yellow River are very significant in the Chinese traditional world model. In her work on the representation of these sacred places on maps of different periods, Vera Dorofeeva-Lichtmann points out that, no matter how the political and ideological situation changed, these objects remained indispensable attributes of Chinese maps, only slightly changing their location [Dorofeeva-Lichtmann 2012, pp. 1-31]. Also, the Kunlun Mountain is often associated with Mount Sumeru and is represented on Buddhist maps.

The territory north of China is marked out in sufficient detail. It contains toponyms that can often be seen in Chinese and Japanese encyclopedias of that time and of earlier periods, such as the Kimmōzui 訓蒙図彙.

**Europe and Africa**

Europe and Africa are shown as one continent; the toponyms were copied from the map by Nagakubo Sekisui, but often incompletely and at random. In some cases, part of a word may be missing, or syllables are mixed up. For instance, the toponym Horonia ホロニア is written as Horomia ホロミア (Poland). The only toponym written with hieroglyphs in the part of the map representing Europe is Oranda 阿蘭陀, i.e. Holland.

It is noteworthy that the part of the map that can be correlated with the Iberian Peninsula was copied in sufficient detail and has such the toponyms Horutokaru ホルトカル (Portugal), Isupania イスパニア (Spain), Kasutera カステラ (Castilla), Anataru アンタル (Andalusia),
and between them there are hieroglyphs denoting Kirishitan （Christians). The original map by Nagakubo Sekisui reads Kirishitan honkoku （“the country where Christianity came from”).

Thus, Europe is depicted mostly to show the location of Holland, which played an important role in the life of Japan as a trade partner and as a source of new knowledge and skills. This representation of Europe is quite typical of the maps from encyclopedias of that time.

When analyzing the world view represented in the maps setsuyōshū, Elena Polovnikova identifies several levels of space. The first level is Japan as the centre of the world; then Tenjiku, China, and Korea; the next level comprises fictitious peoples from the Buddhist, Chinese and Japanese tradition; then Europe, America, and Asia; then fictitious peoples of the European tradition [Polovnikova 2013, p. 81]. Although the map from Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū does not quite correspond to this scheme, since Tenjiku is in the center of the world and Japan is depicted very schematically, the representation of Europe on this map fits well into the proposed model.

**Fictitious lands and peoples**

In addition to real countries, peoples, and landscape elements, there are fictional, mythical countries and peoples on the map. This part of the representation merits particular attention, as it clearly shows which geographic and spatial notions are reflected on the map. When analyzing the presence or absence of fictitious peoples and their location, it should be borne in mind that the map from the encyclopedia is a partial copy of a copy of the map compiled by the missionaries. The map by Matteo Ricci, published in Beijing in 1601, was one of the first European maps in which Chinese geographical knowledge was used. In creating this map, the author set himself not only scientific goals, but also sought to make a tool for attracting local residents to his faith. Matteo Ricci strove to gain recognition and approval of Chinese readers, to change their sinocentric view of the world and to give them an idealized picture of the Christian world [Qiong 2015, p. 47].
Among the place names on the map, the following toponyms relating to fictitious people and lands can be singled out: Land of Night (Sekininkoku 夜人国, northern edge of the map), Land of Devils (Oniguni 鬼国, roughly corresponds to the north of Siberia), Country of One-Eyed People (Ichimokukoku 一目国, roughly corresponds to the north of Siberia), Country of Small People (Shōninkoku 小人国, roughly corresponds to the north of Europe), Eastern Country of Women (Tōjokoku 東女国, between China and Tenjiku), Country of Women (Joninkoku 女人国, roughly corresponds to the Caucasus). We mentioned the Eastern Country of Women earlier when we spoke about Tenjiku and elements of the Buddhist world view.

All the fictitious countries are part of the Chinese and Buddhist traditions. In certain cases, however, Matteo Ricci and the Japanese map-makers after him changed the usual location of a nation on the map to a new one. For example, small people, Shōnin 小人, are mentioned in Shānhǎi Jīng and then in later encyclopedias, for example, Wakan Sansai Zue, which says that they live on an island in the east. The island of small people Kobitojima 小人島 is often the setting for popular Edo period entertaining works, for instance, the works by Santō Kyōden 山東京伝 (1761-1816) or by Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北斎 (1760-1849). But on the map from the encyclopedia, the Land of Small People is shown in northern Europe just like on Matteo Ricci’s map. Elena Polovnikova believes that the author correlated small people from Chinese mythology with gnomes from European myths and therefore placed them in Scandinavia [Polovnikova 2013, p. 78]. Another example of such correlation of characters of the Chinese mythological tradition with European ones (which are not mentioned in Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsū) can be the giants chōnin 長人, which the author associates with Patagonia.

**Representation of ships**

On the map from the encyclopedia, there is a segment that is absent from the map by Nagakubo Sekisui. This is a representation of seven ships from different countries. The images are placed on different sides
of the mainland. These are Korean and Dutch ships, the Flying Ship, and four ships from different regions of China: Canton, Nanjing, Fuzhou and Beijing. The ships are depicted in detail, and they all are different from each other. Max Moerman points out that the image of ships is a frequent occurrence on European maps and that the representation of ships on Asian maps has European maps as its prototype [Moerman 218, p. 150]. For example, on Ishikawa Ryusen’s map of 1688 we can see images of two ships, the Japanese and the Chinese one. Radu Leca identifies three main goals or reasons for the appearance of ships on the map. On the one hand, they reflected the current foreign policy situation – a reflection of the fear of external aggression. Also, ships are symbols of sea travel, and the map often served as a guide for imaginary travel. The image of the ship also occurs in the literature of that time. Radu Leca points to the mention of ships by Ihara Saikaku 井原西鶴, as the symbol of the life of a successful and rich merchant, who, like a ship, sails the ocean [Radu 2015, p. 51].

Special mention should be made of the Flying Ship. The caption next to the image says “flies through the sky driven by the wind”. This image is not unique: Max Moerman mentions European aeronautic vehicles depicted on ceramics by the artist, printer, and rangakusha scholar Shiba Kōkan 司馬江漢 (1738-1818) [Moerman 2018, p. 152]. The image in the encyclopedia repeats the image from the earlier rangaku books—Kaikoku heidan 海国兵談 (Military Defense of a Maritime Nation, 1786) by Hayashi Shihei 林子平 (1738-1793) and Kōmōzatsuwa 紅毛雜話 (Chats on Novelties of Foreign Lands, 1787) by Morishima Chūryō (1754-1808). The author of these books, in turn, copied the engraving by Antoine Joseph Gaitte (another spelling is Guette), which was published in Le Journal de Paris of 25 March 1784 [Remvik 2017, pp. 146-147]. Moerman mentions subsequent copies of the ships on the map from the encyclopedia in a Buddhist world map of the early 19th century in the Kobe Museum [Moerman 2018, p. 153].
Conclusion

The world map from *Tokai Setsuyō Hyakkatsu* reflects the typological features of the commentary to the dictionary and is a part of it. Being a copy of a map made with the use of the most advanced cartographic techniques, the map is made in the traditional style, with no grid and many place names copied incorrectly. It combines European geographic concepts with the Buddhist cartographic tradition, which depicts the human world as one continent. European influence is expressed not only in the use of geographic information received from Europeans, but also in the decoration of the map with images of ships.

In terms of content, the map largely repeats the world map by Nagakubo Sekisui, which is based on the map by Matteo Ricci, but typologically it is closer to the maps depicting the Buddhist view of the world. China and India are shown in the greatest detail. The image of India follows Buddhist maps and contains several toponyms denoting the same places. In China, the main trading and sacred places are marked. Europe is depicted schematically, and the place names contain errors, as the author did not seek to give its detailed representation. The map contains indications of mythical countries. They mainly refer to mythical countries and peoples from traditional Chinese cosmology; however, their location in space repeats the maps like that by Matteo Ricci, and not Buddhist maps.

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Russian edition of the article:
Compassionate Neo-Traditionalism in Hosoda Mamoru’s Animation Movies

M. M. Grajdian

Abstract. Throughout his activity as an animation director, Hosoda Mamoru tackles important issues of present-day Japan – and of late modernity – with creative acuity and a keen sense of observation. From Digimon: The Movie and ONE PIECE: Baron Omatsuri and the Secret Island, in which Hosoda rehearses his directing skills in the field of animation by taking over popular and familiar elements from highly successful Japanese franchises and embedding them into a more mature and more profound context of addressing challenging topics, through The Girl Who Leapt Through Time and Summer Wars, in which Hosoda finds his way into the extremely competitive world of the Japanese entertainment industry with original storylines and powerful characters, to Wolf Children with its complex problematic of single motherhood, The Boy and the Beast with its combined topics of runaway children, of absent fathers, and of loss of masculinity addressed in a raw manner, and Mirai, in which Hosoda carefully avoids delving too deeply into the disturbing child-rearing and education politics of Japan, he constantly chooses a narrative of comfortable traditionalism, showing both that he understands Japan’s critical situation and that he does not regard it as his duty to offer alternative solutions, more in tune with the spirit of the 21st century.

Keywords: Japanese animation, late modernity, cultural conservatism, rigid traditions, cultural consumption
Introduction: Reframing Traditionalism

Among the Japanese animation directors born into the shinjinrui generation, Hosoda Mamoru 細田守 (born 1967) appears as the most productive, yet the most conservative animation director, with a remarkable power to depict difficult, controversial issues without getting involved into them or proposing valid solutions to those very issues. In this paper, I shall analyse Hosoda’s animation works in the chronological order of their release, both as aesthetic manifestos within the framework of Japanese animation as a field of cultural consumption and an impactful medium, and as ideological statements, on the quest for an answer to the question “Why are Japanese creators so cautious in delivering alternative answers and solutions to the problems they describe in their artistic works?”

Hosoda Mamoru started his career as film director and animator at Tōei Animation in 1989, where he stayed until 2001; in parallel with his activity as key animator for several animation series and movies, during his time at Tōei Animation, he released Digimon: The Movie in 2000 and ONE PIECE: Baron Omatsuri and the Secret Island in 2005, after his return from a failed attempt of cooperation with Studio Ghibli in 2001-2002 for Miyazaki Hayao’s animation movie Howl’s Moving Castle. In 2005, Hosoda moved to Madhouse, where he released his next two animation movies, The Girl Who Leapt through Time (2006) and Summer Wars (2009), but after he quit Madhouse in 2011, he founded in the same year his hallmark production company Studio Chizu together with the Madhouse producer Saitō Yūichirō 斉藤優一郎 (born 1976), who had produced his two previous animation movies. Ever since, Studio Chizu has released Hosoda’s last three animation movies: Wolf Children (2012), The Boy and the Beast (2015), and Mirai (2018).

It is no exaggeration to observe that, in all his animation movies, Hosoda Mamoru approaches the directing act as a proactive gesture of observing the world around him and then mirroring it in a creative gesture of what might be called “artistic redistribution”: he takes over from the real world what he sees as relevant facts and events and
subsequently turns them into symbolical pieces of history [Bolton 2018, p. 53; see also: Bauman 2000; Grajdian 2008]. In the transformative process, he does not, however, allow himself to delve too deeply in the maelstrom of causes and effects as well as of alternative solutions to the official mainstream discourse. Instead, Hosoda prefers, ostensibly, the comfort of traditional solutions, even when they have already proven inefficient or detrimental. As to be shown further below, Hosoda’s directorial attitude seems to be the norm rather than the exception within the framework of Japanese creators, who shy away more often than not from giving their own input on burning sociocultural issues or questionable economic-political trajectories. While censorship or lack of valid information are not necessarily reasons to be addressed, this kind of uncritically approaching the creative act seems to stem from a long tradition of observing without interfering, of analyzing without reaching any final conclusions, of redistributing information without commenting on it [Clements, McCarthy 2017, p. 121-122; Condry 2013, p. 95; see also Lamarre 2009]. Against the background of this aesthetic-ideological vision of the productive creativity, the current paper questions the validity of the passivity implied by Hosoda’s directorial accomplishments at a point in time when the sensitivity and sense of justice engaged by powerful artists is painfully, immediately needed.

The Beginnings: Tradition as Cultural Standard

The beginning of Hosoda’s career as animation director in Japan was marked by two highly traditionalist animation movies: *Digimon: The Movie* from 2000 and *ONE PIECE: Baron Omatsuri and the Secret Island* from 2005. Both animation movies are to be seen as apprenticeship works for Hosoda, under the careful eyes of more experienced senior directors and producers, rather than full-blown cultural products authored by him.

Thus, *Digimon: The Movie* was co-directed with Yamauchi Shigeyasu 山内重保 (born 1953) and is an American-Japanese film adaptation of
the Digimon franchise, produced and released by Tōei Animation and distributed by 20th Century Fox. The film used footage from the short films Digimon Adventure (1999), Digimon Adventure: Children’s War Game! (2000), and Digimon Adventure 02: Digimon Hurricane Landing!!/Transcendent Evolution!! The Golden Digimentals (2000). Upon release, the movie received generally negative reviews from critics, but despite this, the film was a box-office success, grossing over $16 million worldwide against a production budget of $5 million [Clements, McCarthy 2017, p. 121-122].

Digimon: The Movie is composed of four episodes running over 40 minutes, deeply connected with the Digimon universe. The first episode – the Angela Anaconda short – shows Angela Anaconda and her friends line up to watch Digimon: The Movie, but Nannette and her friends cut in line and invite Mrs. Brinks to block her view. Angela imagines herself digivolving into Angelamon to defeat Mrs. Brinks and Nannette. However, the audience realizes they are in the wrong theater and leave. In the second episode – Eight Years Ago – a Digi-Egg appears from Tai and Kari’s computer, which hatches and digivolvs into Agumon. Tai chases Agumon and Kari out into the night, where a second Digi-Egg appears in the sky to reveal a Parrotmon. As the neighborhood watches, Agumon digivolves to Greymon to fight, but is knocked out. When Tai reawakens Greymon with Kari’s whistle, he defeats Parrotmon and disappears with him. In the third episode – Four Years Later – an infected Digi-egg appears on the Internet and hatches into a Digimon that devours computer codes. Izzy and Tai are warned by Gennai, and Greymon and Kabuterimon enter the internet, but are overwhelmed when it quickly digivolves into Infermon, followed by hasty plot-development. In the final episode – Present Day – while in New York city, T.K. and Kari witness a battle between Willis, Terriermon, and a corrupted Kokomon who insists that Willis “go back”, and so Willis returns to Colorado. Kari tips off Davis, Yolei and Cody, who head for Colorado and meet Willis and Terriermon hitch-hiking on the way. Willis reveals his history with Diaboromon and that the same virus has infected Kokomon, and they decide to restore the situation.
On the other hand, *ONE PIECE: Baron Omatsuri and the Secret Island* (ONE PIECE: オマツリ男爵と秘密の島), equally produced by Tōei Animation, is the sixth animated feature film of the “One Piece” film series, based on the eponymous manga written and illustrated by Oda Eiichirō (尾田栄一郎) (b. 1975). The animation in this movie is very different from the regular series, using the style often seen in Mamoru Hosoda’s works [Clements, McCarthy 2017, p. 121-122].

The plot of *ONE PIECE: Baron Omatsuri and the Secret Island* starts off with the Straw Hats receiving an invitation to an island resort on the Grand Line run by Baron Omatsuri, and the crew travels to the island intent on relaxing and having fun. The Baron welcomes them to the resort and encourages them to enjoy themselves, but only after they complete ‘The Trials Of Hell’. The crew is hesitant, but Luffy accepts the challenge. The Straw Hats win the first trial, but the outraged Baron demands they compete in another challenge. Luffy, Chopper, and Robin wait at the resort while the rest of the crew participate in the second trial. Robin questions Muchigoro, one of Baron’s crewmates, about a flower on the island. Muchigoro mentions something about the “Lily Carnation” being at the island’s summit before running off. Luffy and Chopper wander off, both meeting other pirates who had previously arrived and participated in the trials. Then, the adventures take off.

With lighthearted plot-lines and conventional stories taken over from the familiar universes of extremely popular animation franchises, both *Digimon: The Movie* and *ONE PIECE: Baron Omatsuri and the Secret Island* offer the laboratory conditions for visual experiments to test the audiences’ reactions while simultaneously providing for the young Hosoda the directorial space to access and to understand his own visions and ideas.

**Experimental Artifacts: Clinging on Tradition**

Hosoda Mamoru’s next two animation films – *The Girl Who Leapt through Time* from 2006 and *Summer Wars* from 2009 – provide deep insights into his developing pathway as a profoundly conservative
creator who does his best, at the same time, to grasp and to elucidate artistically the challenges of his own historical time. This occurs in two steps.

In the first step, *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time* (時をかける少女 *Toki wo kakeru shōjo*) (2006) appears as an animated science-fiction romance film produced by Madhouse and released by Kadokawa Herald Pictures. It is, generally speaking, a loose sequel to the 1967 eponymous novel by Tsutsui Yasutaka 筒井康隆 (b. 1934) and shares the basic premise of a young girl who gains the power of time travel, but with a different story and characters than the novel. At first sight, it might be perceived as an imaginative and thoughtfully engaging animation film with a highly effective visual design: a coming-of-age comedy drama with wild resources of inventiveness to explore [Clements, McCarthy 2017, p. 121-122; Lamarre 2018, p. 46-48]. There is real craftsmanship in how the film sustains its sense of summer quietude and sun-soaked haziness through a few carefully reprised motifs such as the mountainous cloud formations or the classroom still-pictures – and it does so in a soft-spoken, compassionate manner. (A few months before the film’s theatrical release, it was adapted into a manga by Ranmaru Kotone and serialized in *Monthly Shōnen Ace* 月刊少年エース.)

The plot of *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time* starts with Konno Makoto at Kuranose High School in Tokyo, who discovers a message written on a blackboard and ends up inadvertently falling upon a walnut-shaped object. On her way home, Makoto is ejected into a railroad crossing when the brakes on her bicycle fail and is hit by an oncoming train, but finds herself transported back to the point in time when she was riding her bicycle right before the accident. After entering the Tokyo National Museum to meet with Yoshiyama Kazuko, she explains to Makoto after hearing her story that clearly, she now has the power to “time-leap”, to literally leap through time. At first, Makoto uses her powers to avoid being late, getting perfect grades, and even relive a single karaoke session for several hours, but soon discovers her actions can adversely affect others. Consequently, Makoto uses most of her leaps frivolously, to prevent undesirable situations from happening, which creates even more
awkward situations. But, in due course, events set up rightly, with time paradoxes turning into life-changing moments.

In the second step, *Summer Wars* (サマー・ウォーズ *Samā wōzu*) (2009) is a powerful animated science-fiction film produced by Madhouse and released by Warner Bros. Pictures Japan. The plot of *Summer Wars* evolves around Koiso Kenji who is a young student at Kuonji High School with a gift for mathematics and a part-time moderator in the massive computer-simulated virtual reality world OZ along with his friend Sakuma Takashi. One day, Kenji is invited by fellow Kuonji student Shinohara Natsuki to participate in her great-grandmother Jinnouchi Sakae’s 90th birthday. After traveling to Sakae’s estate in Ueda, Natsuki introduces Kenji as her fiancé to Sakae, surprising them both. Kenji meets several of Natsuki’s relatives and discovers that the Jinnouchis are descendants of a samurai (vassal of the Takeda clan) who challenged the Tokugawa clan in 1615. He also meets Wabisuke Jinnouchi, Natsuki’s half-great-uncle and a computer expert who has been living in the United States since stealing the family fortune 10 years ago. Kenji receives an e-mail with a mathematical code and cracks it. However, Love Machine, a virtual intelligence created by Wabisuke, uses Kenji’s account and avatar to hack the infrastructure, causing widespread damage. Kenji, Sakuma, and Natsuki’s cousin Kazuma Ikezawa confront Love Machine – and the “war” for the “survival of the fittest” starts. Kenji must repair the damage done and find a way to stop the rogue computer program from causing any further chaos.

More than anything, *Summer Wars* is a story about a social network and a stranger’s connection with strange family: the real-life city of Ueda was chosen as the setting for *Summer Wars* as part of the territory once governed by the Sanada clan; it was close to Hosoda’s birthplace in Toyama. Hosoda used the clan as the basis for the Jinnouchi family after visiting his then-fiancée’s home in Ueda [Clements, McCarthy 2017, p. 121-122; Lamarre 2018, p. 52-55; see also Ōtsuka 2004]. Family drama mixes with virtual online action in the breezy and entertaining *Summer Wars*: it contains familiar elements, beginning with its bashful, moonstruck young hero, but it combines them in fresh, contemporary, and
dazzlingly imaginative ways; the film provides a social commentary on the differences between an “analog world” and a “realm of digital devices”.

The more complex narrative lines and the developing design of the characters resulting in a ramified architecture of The Girl Who Leapt Through Time and Summer Wars reveal Hosoda’s efforts to surpass prevailing directing models of focusing on static structures guaranteed to appeal to the audiences and, therefore, to secure high levels of success at the box-office. Instead, the dynamic tackling of plot-lines and of characters’ construction in their respective inner worlds, flaws, disappointments, and insecurities included, turns into a sure-sign of Hosoda’s creative approach transcending cultural consumerism towards a more profound and compassionate representation and understanding of the human nature.

**Exploring Wilderness, Orchestrating Compassion**

Hosoda Mamoru’s next animation film, *Wolf Children*  (おおかみこどもの雨と雪) Ōkami kodomo Ame to Yuki from 2012, follows a young mother who is left to raise two half-human half-wolf children, Ame and Yuki, after their werewolf father dies. In order to create the film, director Hosoda established Studio Chizu, which co-produced the film with Madhouse. Sadamoto Yoshiyuki 貞本義行 (b. 1962), the character designer for *Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water*¹ and *Neon Genesis Evangelion*², was appointed to outline the characters for the movie.

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¹ *Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water* ふしぎの海のナディア  (literally “Nadia of Mysterious Waters”), directed by Anno Hideaki (Gainax) was a TV animation series composed of 39 episodes and broadcast in 1990-1991 by NHK, Tōhō based on a concept by Miyazaki Hayao. It was inspired by the works of Jules Verne (1828-1905), particularly by *20.000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1870) and the exploits of Captain Nemo.

Additionally, two novelizations and a manga written by Hosoda with art by Yū (優) were released by Kadokawa Shoten in 2012. *Wolf Children* was the second highest-grossing movie in Japan on its debut weekend of 21-22 July 2012, beating Pixar’s animation release *Brave*, which debuted in Japan on the same weekend.

The plot starts off in Tokyo, where college student Hana falls in love with an enigmatic man. One night, the man reveals that he can transform into a wolf; nevertheless, the two move in together and later have two half-wolf, half-human children: a daughter, Yuki, and a son, Ame. Soon thereafter, their father is killed in an accident while hunting for food. Hana’s life as a single mother is difficult; Yuki and Ame constantly switch between their human and wolf forms, and Hana has to hide them from the world. After she receives noise complaints and a visit from social workers concerned that the children have not had vaccinations, Hana moves the family to the countryside away from prying neighbors. She works hard to repair a dilapidated house, while struggling to sustain the family on their own crops. With help from Nirasaki, an old strict man living in the neighborhood, she learns to farm more proficiently and becomes friends with some of the locals. Along their daily lives, both Yuki and Ame learn to cope with their complex structure in the world, and to pursue their natural inclinations.

In *Wolf Children*, Hosoda’s representation and visual analysis of single motherhood, both as a perennial issue and a social phenomenon in present-day Japan, is particularly powerful. In this train of thoughts, there are several problematic layers in Hosoda’s tackling of single motherhood: firstly, the prevailing tone of judgment towards Hana for her decision to fall in love and then live together without getting married to a man she knows nothing about [Schäfer 2017, Suzuki 2008]. Moreover, her pregnancies add to a somewhat contemptuous moral attitude towards her lifestyle and her way of moving forward. Her partner’s death – on the hunt, to be sure, but suspiciously anonymous on a heavy rainy day – appears as a “well-deserved punishment” for this young lady living her life outside of strictly regulated and sanctioned social norms. The resulting complications are part of this obvious
and still hidden judgmental attitude which transpires from Hosoda’s directorial handling of the situation – surely reflecting the general atmosphere in (modern/contemporary or not) Japan. However, things start to shift when Hana decides to transcend her despair and misery and to courageously take her fate – and the fate of her two small children – in her own hands: she moves away from the simultaneously alienating and suffocating metropolis to the countryside, where she finds solace and support, human warmth and freedom. As the movie evolves, the initial contempt gradually turns into open admiration, which then again metamorphoses into tremendous respect towards Hana’s steely commitment to her children and their wellbeing [Kristeva 1974; Eagleton 2000]. The inherent conflicts and misunderstandings are displayed as major opportunities for vulnerability and closeness, with Hana immersing into the worlds of her children and then rising above her own insecurities to find ways to understand and empathize, rather than tame or restrict, Ame’s and Yuki’s growth.

Secondly, there is the almost unrealistic representation of the metropolis and of the countryside as two sides of the same coin: present-day Japan and its contradictions, inconsistencies, ideological perils. In the overall-architecture of the movie, though, this static orchestration of human habitats appears as an important background for the characters’ quest for solutions to unusual decisions – decisions which, if dealt with improperly for too long lead to calamitous life circumstances [Castells 1997; Luhmann 1996]. In doing so, Hosoda allows for a more explicit visualization of the characters’ inner worlds and dialectical struggles rather than diverting the focus towards more general issues. Thirdly, there is the highly problematic approach to masculinity and the symptomatic absence of fathers from the lives of their children. In Wolf Children, the father’s absence is symbolic: he is not human, anyway, and therefore does not fit in the world of humans. His death – again, a highly symbolic disappearance – is almost a necessity for the children to develop “normally” according to sociocultural standards; in the larger scheme of things, though, his absence is a huge delusion in a society which has long forgotten the necessity of healthy polarization between masculinity and
femininity in the creation and formation of the next generation, as well as of the society as a whole, and excessively relies on artificial models articulated by political discourses and the mainstream media [Azuma 2001, p. 101; see also Sugimoto 2013; Fuller 2007].

To be fair, *Wolf Children* had its difficult premises and therefore required complex approaches to represent the main topic and its alternative solutions. Despite a decidedly critical attitude towards the phenomenon of single motherhood – as well as of the circumstances which lead to this situation – Hosoda displays it with warmth and compassion, cautiously sending a warning signal: things can get out of hand faster than one would imagine; therefore, non-judgmental benevolence is appropriate, even if one does not agree with someone else’s life choices. It is a transactional message in itself, nevertheless, and, at the same time, a powerful reminder to show kindness and acceptance to those less fortunate than us.

**Masculinity, Fatherhood, and Love**

As if counterpointing his previous films, Hosoda’s next animation production *The Boy and the Beast* (バケモノの子 Bakemono no ko) (literally “The Child of the Monster”) from 2015 focuses on fatherhood and masculinity paradigms in Japan – encompassing several historical layers hidden in the development of the main character – as well as on role-models available nowadays to boys and male teenagers in Japan [Lamarre 2018, p. 81-83; see also Allison 2013; Kristeva 1989]. Generally described as an animated action adventure fantasy film, *The Boy and the Beast* was produced by Studio Chizu and released by Tōhō. It tells the story of a nine-year-old Ren who has recently lost his mother. With no news of his father and refusing to live with his legal guardians, Ren flees into the streets of Shibuya. Ren steals some food and sleeps in an alley, reminiscing the aftermath of his mother’s funeral. In the meantime, in the Beast Kingdom, the lord has decided he will retire in order to reincarnate as a deity and names two potential successors: the popular Iōzen, who is also the father of two children, and the powerful Kumatetsu,
who is lonely and lazy. The Grandmaster suggests that Kumatetsu find a disciple in hopes of inspiring him to succeed him. While wandering the streets of Tokyo with his makeshift companion Tatara, Kumatetsu meets Ren and suggests that the boy becomes his disciple. Though Ren is fiercely opposed, he follows Kumatetsu back to the Beast Kingdom out of curiosity but is unable to go back to the human world. As he watches a battle between Iōzen and Kumatetsu, Ren is impressed with Kumatetsu’s persistence despite the lack of support from onlookers. When Ren cheers for him, Kumatetsu is easily defeated. However, the Grandmaster declares the actual duel of succession has not come yet. Taking Ren as a disciple, Kumatetsu gives him a new name, Kyūta. Their initial training sessions go poorly, but Kyūta realizes that he can learn from Kumatetsu by imitating him while performing his household chores. The boy gradually discovers that he can predict his master’s movements and can dodge and move adeptly in combat. They soon begin training together. After eight years, the teenage Kyūta has become a distinguished kendō practitioner. Moreover, through his relationship with Kyūta, Kumatetsu gains his own following of supporters, including the younger son of Iōzen, Jirōmaru, who wishes to be trained by Kumatetsu. After a long series of adventures, Ren reconciles with his father and decides to live once again in the human world with Kumatetsu, who had sacrificed himself to save his disciple, forever residing in his heart.

The Boy and the Beast combines familiar parts to create a gripping, beautifully animated adventure with inventive storytelling to match its visual appeal, and has more in common with the “Harry Potter” series than the usual female-centered [Hayao] Miyazaki fantasy, thus turning into an entertaining coming-of-age adventure, on the one hand, and an excellent thematic exploration of fatherhood and masculinity, on the other hand [Takahata 1999; Wells 1998]. On a larger scale, The Boy and the Beast is a bracing tale of two flawed individuals who find the love and discipline they need to assume their rightful places in their respective worlds, and, at the same time, an action-packed buddy-film that strategically combines several of Japanese fans’ favorite ingredients: conflicted teens, supernatural creatures, and epic battles —
an eclectic mixing of film plots and concepts into a mish-mash that seems original.

Hosoda’s description and analysis of relationships of power, aggressiveness, and emotional suppression among men pay a huge tribute to his overall commitment to traditional values and hierarchies. For instance, he does not question at all the reasons for which Ren runs away from his officially appointed guardians after the death of his mother and for the absence of his biological father from the entire procedure. Later on, after Ren, who has now become Kyūta, finds his biological father, he is confronted with a rather weak-willed, insecure man, unable to stand his ground and serve as a valid role-model for his son [Allison 2000, p. 17-19; Žižek 1989, p. 127-133; see also Turner 1968]. Moreover, at least in the initial phase of their encounter, Kyūta takes over the role of an ersatz father for his own father, who is obviously overwhelmed by the obligations and emotional turmoil of seeing his long-lost son again. This phenomenon of “parentification of children” who find themselves in the position to parent their own parents is a widely known medical appearance of the last several years in all developed countries: an increasing number of children and young adults are forced into taking care of their own parents at an age when the roles should be definitely reversed.

Additionally, Kyūta’s return to the human world and his final decision to stay in it are reminiscent of an existential vision which endorses socio-cultural immobility and discriminates against the cross-overs. Ren’s early sorrow and loneliness are depicted with warm compassion; his refuge into the world of the non-humans (化け物, literally “monsters”) is depicted as understandable and natural; his acceptance and training by Kumatetsu are described as solely inevitable rites of passage within the formation process of a strong, resilient personality. What Hosoda fails to acknowledge is the impact delivered by the contact between the two worlds and the necessity of communication and mixing-up of them, instead of a permanent segregation and separation [Rimer 1995, p. 19-21]. Falling back on visions of intangible uniqueness, ethnic homogeneity, and biocultural superiority so often encountered in Japanese
discourses on race, history, and the universe, Hosoda ignores the realistic denouement of the story-line in *The Boy and the Beast*, more in accordance with the challenges and the tendencies of current times: the quest, the longing, and the joy of embracing the unknown, rather than rejecting it after depleting it of its magical resources.

**The Hegemony of Conservatism and the Dangers of Exceptionalist Propaganda**

As if to confirm the perils of neo-traditionalism disguised under the progressive appearance of products of popular culture, Hosoda Mamoru’s next animation film *Mirai*（未来のミライ Mirai no Mirai）(literally “Mirai of the Future”) from 2018 brings into the spotlight the typical nuclear family and its apparent struggles in present-day Japan – with the all-too-comfortable solution of the return to gender roles and socio-cultural norms of times long gone. An animated adventure fantasy film, produced by Studio Chizu and distributed by Tōhō, *Mirai* tells the story of Kun, who is a boy born to an executive mother and an architect father. The family lives in a stepped house in Isogo-ku, Yokohama, that Kun’s father designed around a tree, where Kun spends his days playing with the family dog, Yukko, and his beloved toy train sets. When Kun is four, his sister Mirai (Japanese for “future”) is born, and he is happy at first when his mother returns home with her. But he soon grows jealous when his parents focus all their attention on her and has to be restrained from hitting her with one of his toy trains. He lashes out first at his mother, and then at his father when he becomes a stay-at-home dad working from home while his mother returns to work. After one such tantrum, Kun stomps off to the house’s garden and, subsequently, he immerses into a series of cross-temporal adventures, which teach him important values of patience, self-restraint, resilience, kindness, and respect.

It seems that Hosoda was partially inspired to write the script for *Mirai* after seeing his then-three-year-old son’s first reactions to having a baby sister in his life. While initially only cautious of the newborn when
meeting her for the first time, Hosoda’s son threw a tantrum one day, jealous of the attention that his parents were giving his sister. Hosoda’s curiosity with how his son reacted, and how he would adapt to being a big brother, prompted him to make the protagonist of Mirai four years old. In Hosoda’s words, “Mirai is about how a family can change but always remains itself.” The simplicity and colorful warmth of Mirai’s animation is underscored by a story with surprising – and profoundly affecting – impact and emotional resonance [Giddens 1992, p. 173-181; Brown 2010, p. 91-96; see also Bauman 2003]. It is, to be sure, an emotional resonance that defies its conventional underpinnings, while privileging moments of emotion over belabored story mechanics. Mirai might be regarded as both a gentler and potentially younger-skewing film than Hosoda’s previous works, and as the work of a true auteur (in what feels like his most personal film yet) presented as innocuous family entertainment.

In envisioning this conventional family drama, Hosoda shows unexpected insights into the challenges attacking the nuclear family – in itself, a powerful invention of the postwar social engineers, on its way out due to unsustainable ideals and sociocultural dynamics – while simultaneously choosing to blatantly ignore the realistic solutions. This contemptuous attitude, so typical for traditionalist intellectuals posing as left-wing social activists or creators of products of popular culture, turns obvious on several levels: firstly, there is the outdated gender paradigm, with Kun’s father being depicted as hopelessly clumsy in his role of the primary caregiver and Kun’s mother appearing as exhausted after long, intensive hours at work and intensely longing for more time with the new-born daughter [Allison 2000, p. 56-58; see also McLuhan 1964]. Secondly, Kun’s temper tantrums are somehow grating to sit through, as any healthy parent knows that such acts of selfish gestures, if tolerated, develop into anti-social attitudes of entitlement and narcissism. Thirdly, the film’s daydream sequences simply do not feel like anything a real child would imagine; rather, they are carefully constructed fantasy images of what grown-ups should learn to think about the inner worlds of their own children. Eventually, even the film’s overall theme – children are overwhelming before they learn how to control their emotions – is
only hinted at, never thoughtfully expressed: the idea that children are full-fledged humans, with their own thoughts and emotions, who exist outside of their parents’ expectations and desires [Giddens 1992, p. 189-190; see also McQuail 1984; Žižek 1989]. This is, one might assume, a far too progressive manner to represent children and their relationship to parents. Accordingly, the parents’ role is to observe and to educate the children in the spirit of independence and autonomy for a future in which they – the children – will be resilient, self-reliant citizens. As in Wolf Children and The Boy and the Beast as well, in Mirai, Hosoda Mamoru fails to see the real solutions being openly displayed by the society in its everyday occurrences, and instead favors a vision of life, family, love, parenting, and inter-generational dialectics glaringly reminiscent of anachronistic preconceptions related to these elements. While the aesthetic dimension of Mirai, like in all Hosoda’s animation movies since Summer Wars, remains memorable and warm-hearted, his choice of a conservative message under the disguise of left-wing flavored products of popular culture turn them into questionable tools for reinforcing a status quo already on its way out from the stage of history.

Conclusion: Neo-traditionalism or Conservatism?

Throughout his activity as an animation director, Hosoda Mamoru tackles important issues of present-day Japan – and of late modernity – with creative acuity and a keen sense of observation. While his descriptions are realistic and deeply compassionate, he fails incessantly to suggest credible, insightful solutions which might disturb the audiences’ mindset and/or the political establishment [Baudrillard 1983; Suzuki 2008]. In Digimon: The Movie and ONE PIECE: Baron Omatsuri and the Secret Island, Hosoda still rehearses his directing skills in the field of animation by taking over popular and familiar elements from highly successful Japanese franchises and embedding them into a more mature and more profound context of addressing challenging topics. In The Girl Who Leapt Through Time and Summer
Wars, on the other hand, Hosoda finds his way into the extremely competitive world of the Japanese entertainment industry with original storylines and powerful characters: in the first case, the main female character undergoes a deep inner development on her intensive journey of initiation towards becoming a full-fledged grown-up, while, in the second case, the main male character finds himself caught in a complex video game threatening to infect and disrupt the real world – and his task is to solve the world-consuming danger.

These four animation movies are Hosoda’s laboratory, in which he explores the possibilities, limitations, and fascinating dimensions of the visual medium, to be subsequently enlarged with the simultaneous depiction of the Japanese society from a critical, yet compassionate angle. In Wolf Children, the problematic of single motherhood is regarded as the inevitable consequence of an individual’s unfortunate choice; Hana’s situation is not a historically given circumstance, but something she had put herself into, by entering a romantic and then a cohabitation relationship with a man she knew nothing about. Like in many such morally questionable scenarios, the victim turns into the person to be blamed. Hosoda avoids such a unilateral, prevalent vision of single motherhood by moving beyond the victimhood itself and scrutinizing the way in which Hana faces the problems and then grows into a responsible, reliable mother and citizen. As a director and story-teller of animated universes, Hosoda transcends the blaming-the-victim attitude and looks for solutions by looking at the individual’s resilience and commitment to giving the next generation an authentic chance to an existence lived on their own terms.

The same gesture of a compassionate, yet very ambivalent sense of observation appears in Hosoda’s next movie, The Boy and the Beast: here, the problematic of runaway children, of absent fathers, and of loss of masculinity is addressed in a rawer manner, without the delicacy from Wolf Children. It is somehow understandable, given the fact that all main characters are male, and probably those supposed to feel targeted in the audiences are male as well, with their confusions, flaws, insecurities, which they do their best to hide, completely. It is
a brutal world of competitions and the-winner-takes-it-all mindsets, where belonging to the right family or having the right master can change one’s destiny entirely. Ren/Kyūta learns this the hard way, and, upon the tardy encounter with his biological father, he is able to show up as a stable young man on his steady way into adulthood. Again, Hosoda’s solution is one of agreeable conformism: Ren/Kyūta can and does choose, eventually, to stay in the world of humans, leaving behind those who have turned him from a scared, hurt little boy into a reliable, strong young man, while, symbolically, conventionally, carrying in his heart the spirit of Kumatetsu – his master and “adoptive” father, a lonely outsider, like himself, who moved beyond the limitations of his own caste and taught a lost little human the rules of survival.

In the same line of equivocally tackling the burning problematics of late-modern Japan while sticking to conservatory rhetorics, in Mirai, Hosoda carefully avoids delving too deeply into the disturbing child-rearing and education politics of the country, and instead presents a heavily ideologized image of an upper-middle-class family who tries to find its way out of the chaos after the birth of the second child. The elder child, Kun, develops all sorts of emotions and confusing thoughts, but they are clearly filtered through the mature vision of the movie’s makers and lose their naiveté and candor in the process. Once again, the return to a re-assuring morale of the story is the obvious solution, not the more progressive attitude of a liberated couple – a CEO mother and a working-from-home dad – who understand the challenges and benefits which come with their decisions. In choosing this narrative of comfortable traditionalism, Hosoda shows both that he understands the critical situation and that he does not regard it as his duty to offer alternative solutions, more in tune with the spirit of the 21st century.

Like his younger contemporary Shinkai Makoto, Hosoda Mamoru observes with keen interest the social phenomena of his time and depicts them with warm compassion in his animation movies, without attempting to understand why humans make the choices they make and what valid alternatives there are, as opposed to traditional solutions enforced by the socio-economic status quo. It is a convenient attitude
which avoids ideological criticism as well as social responsibility and obviously reflects the attitude of a large number of creators nowadays, with political correctness as the moral compass and box-office success as the main target.

References


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