

Chapter 4

Russia's Eastward Approach to East Asia: The Qing, Japan, and Boundary Issues with Russia

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Introduction

Russian eastward expansion in the 17th century was stopped by China, but later in the 19th century Russia used its power as a modern state to acquire territory from China as well as Sakhalin from Japan. The above description of Russia's eastward expansion until the mid-19th century is not erroneous. Yet, if our reading of this one sentence is predicated on the modern nation-state, it will cause a variety of misunderstandings.

For example, it is wrong to assume that Russia and China at a time agreed on the change of the line based on common knowledge of local situations on topographic maps, and turned the lands which the Chinese had previously inhabited and administered into those inhabited and administered by the Russians. There is a perceptual gap between the present and the past, and there were even wider gaps between those involved at the time. In fact, parties involved had different sets of concepts on lands, boundaries, communications, and agreements, and changes took place through a long and complex process.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, Russia engaged with the orders being constructed by Qing China and the Tokugawa Shogunate in a way that was unique and unlike that of Western Europe. From this period until the mid-19th century, Russia itself joined the Western European order and went through a process of modernization.¹ In the 1840s and 1850s, the Western nations used the power and logic of the Western European order to attempt to transform the East Asian order, and Russia similarly began engaging with East Asia in a new way. During all of this, boundary issues (or issues of territorial rights) became an important theme for the Qing and Tokugawa Japan.

For the Qing, the gap between their ideals and reality in foreign relations grew increasingly wider, leading to disadvantageous outcomes in terms of their general stance

¹ The reigns of Peter I and Catherine I are well-known as periods when Russia moved to join the Western European order. The custom of entering treaties of alliances with European states came into play from the late 17th and early 18th centuries [Ogawa 2012: 259].

towards other states and boundary agreements. Russia also responded to this and demonstrated a crude approach to treaties, but Japan took the Russian advance as an opportunity to reconstruct the management of Ezo 蝦夷 as a modern possession, achieving favorable diplomatic outcomes by utilizing the permanence of treaties and agreements in boundary negotiations.

In this chapter, we will trace these developments, focusing not on how the boundaries themselves changed, but rather on how the different sides conceptualized boundaries and land. It will be a study of how the East Asian order was transformed, reexamining the perceptions and interactions of that time.

First, I would like to discuss some of the terminology. As the principles of Qing rule differed according to location (see this book's Introduction), and there existed no unified principle such as that of today's China, I will refer to it by its formal name "Daicing gurun" or its popular name "the Qing", while I use "China" primarily as a translation of Russian and Western terms. Words such as "territory" and "national border" might apply where conditions are similar, such as in densely populated areas, but are not very suitable for the northern frontier area of Daicin gurun that are discussed here. There was nothing but "land", and since there was no need for either communications or industry or strict and exclusivist sovereignty, the "boundaries" that separated rights of control were not thin lines between areas abutting each other. Lastly, there is the term "treaty", where I will make an exception for what is usually called the 1858 Treaty of Aigun, due to the many problematic restraints it places on international relations, and refer to it simply as the "Aigun Document" for reasons to be discussed later on.²

1. The Rise of Russia's Traditional Qing Policy

The Russian expansion beyond the Ural Mountains took them to the Amur River (Heilongjiang 黑龍江) basin, the Sea of Okhotsk, and Kamchatka. In the 17th century, they built military bases in Nerchinsk, Albazin, and elsewhere, profiting by collecting tributes in the form of pelts from residents. At the same time, the Manchu regime of the Aisin Gioro clan inherited the Khaan title of the Mongols, founded Daicin gurun, and expanded their influence, for example by subjugating the Chosŏn Dynasty and old Ming territories.

As a result of skirmishes between Russian troops and Qing expeditionary forces

² In this period, treaties were often referred to as *dogovor* or *traktat*, with no distinct difference between them as the word applied to a "treaty" between states; thus, the same treaty might be called both *dogovor* and *traktat*. Moreover, the Russian *dogovor* is broadly used today with regard to contracts and terms of agreement.

starting around 1650, the Treaty of Nerchinsk was concluded in 1689, which forced Russia to relinquish its bases such as that in Albazin, and created a boundary that favored Daicin gurun. Nonetheless, it was not that Daicin gurun was able to control Albazin by armed might alone, but the agreement was essentially reached through negotiations between the two parties [Yoshida 1974: 97]. Daicin gurun also wanted to decide on the boundary between “Outer Mongolia” and Russia, but this did not happen as they had not been able to extend their authority there due to the presence of Galdan’s Dzungar Khanate [Yoshida 1974: 116]. As Jesuits working for the Qing were involved in writing the treaty, Latin was used in the text which came to include some of the logic of Western civilization. When translated into Chinese, the original contents of the treaty placing both sides on equal footing were rewritten according to a Sinocentric logic. Moreover, the boundaries were meant to settle the status of contested areas; thus, it did not contain any clear agreement or shared understanding about either side’s domains in the north-east, which would later become an issue.

In 1712–15, the Qing dispatched Tulišen to the Torghuts who had been expelled from the Mongolian Plateau, submitted to the Russian Empire, and inhabited the coast of the Caspian Sea. *Yiyu lu* 異域錄 (Record of Travel to the Foreign Regions), authored by Tulišen, long remained one of the premier works for understanding Russia in China [Tulišen [1724] 1985]. Next, Peter I dispatched Lev Vasil’evich Izmailov, requesting that Daicin gurun trade with them and establish a consulate.

The Treaty of Kyakhta was concluded in 1727, which decided the boundary between the Mongol areas belonging to Daicin gurun and the Russian territory. In the Manchu text, “Daicin gurun” and “Oros gurun” are discussing their “boundaries”.³ That is, the bounds of Daicin gurun were decided, and it differed from the covering up that occurred in the later forced boundary negotiations.

There had been no explicit agreement on boundaries prior to this; thus, it is likely that there existed some degree of shared understanding about the geographic bounds of each other’s spheres of influence. Based on that, guard posts were set up, and both countries had dealt with issues of people fleeing across their borders for some time already. Both the journey of Tulišen in 1712 and that of Izmailov in 1720 were predicated on the existence of this “boundary”, which was likely similar to that of the later Treaty of Kyakhta [Yanagisawa 1989: 4–5].

Another reason for the importance of the Treaty of Kyakhta was that it established systems for trade as well as diplomatic communication in the frontier trade city of Kyakhta. Kyakhta was a base for the tea trade and flourished until the arrival of the Trans-Siberian Railway. In Russia, it was the Senate that communicated with the Qing’s

³ For a verbatim interpretation of the Manchu text, see [Nomiyama 1977: 66–80].

Lifan Yuan 理藩院 (in Russian, the *Tribunal Vneshnei Snoshenii*, meaning the Tribunal of Foreign Relations). A Russian Orthodox mission was established in Beijing, with replacements dispatched from Moscow every ten years. This became the source of Russian knowledge about Chinese, Manchu, and Mongolian, as well as Qing information analysis.

In Daicin gurun, the Khaan of the joint Manchu-Mongol regime was the defender of Tibetan Buddhism, while also figuring as the Son of Heaven (*tianzi* 天子) of “Sinitic civilization” (Zhonghua 中華) in relation to countries in the east and south of the Sino-Confucian Sphere. Tokugawa Japan, which was conceptually located within that Sino-Confucian Sphere, maintained its own position by not accepting the hierarchical principles of the Qing and the Chosŏn Dynasty of Korea. Even when using the same Classical Chinese, they maintained relations while “not translating” the essential significance of its contents [Yonaha 2009]. As suggested by the fact that it was the Lifan Yuan, with jurisdiction over Mongolia and Tibet, that handled relations, Russia was categorized outside the Sino-Confucian Sphere. Yet, they had in common with Japan that they built relations with Daicin gurun without strictly conforming to their hierarchical principles.

While the Russians in Beijing were one of the northern peoples seeking trade with “Sinitic civilization”, and they were simply a northern neighbor to the Mongols, in Moscow *Kitai* or China was a country with whom trade and communication was possible. It can be said that Russia participated in the Qing’s order and ceremonial institutions as far as they entered and were active on Qing soil. For example, in Classical Chinese records, Russian missions’ visits to Beijing were recorded as “tributary” (*chaogong* 朝貢) [Yanagisawa 2009: 195].

While few in number, there were also exceptions to this rule. Emperor Yongzheng dispatched an official mission headed by Toxi to the Russian government, and in 1731, they had an audience with Empress Anna Ivanovna. According to Russian sources, Toxi requested that the Russians manage Dzungars fleeing into Russian territory, and offered to give Russia some of the Dzungar land once it was under Qing control.⁴ Furthermore, he is said to have performed “one kneeling and three kowtows” before Empress Anna Ivanovna.⁵

Subsequently, when producing the *Shilu* 實錄 (The Veritable Record) during the reign of the Emperor Qianlong, it would seem that all references to the mission were deleted, perhaps because of an unwillingness to preserve in Chinese text anything unbecoming of the concept of “Sinitic civilization” [Nomiyama 1977: 142–6]. With the in-

⁴ Russian document No. 23, St. Petersburg, 20 May 1757, in [*Gugong E-wen shiliao*: 180–1].

⁵ [Matsuura 2011: 8–11] provides a detailed introduction to the Russian archives. [Yanagisawa 2003: 579] also refers to the public records in Manchu.

creasing Sinicization of the Qing imperial family and the ruling class, they increasingly came to plainly express the logic of the Sino-Confucian Sphere and “Sinitic civilization”. This further widened the gap with Russia, who had difficulty accepting etiquette such as kowtowing.

2. Russia's Approach to Japan and the Japanese Statements on Their Northern Regions

The first time Japan found out about the appearance of a group called Russians in the north was in the mid-18th century. Following the Treaty of Nerchinsk, the Russians crossed the Bering Strait and expanded their operations to the North American west coast, the Kamchatka Peninsula, and the Kuril Islands. They experienced difficulties in replenishing their supplies, which is why they sought to open trade with Japan.

Matsumae 松前 domain wanted to avoid piquing Edo's interest in their administration of *Ezo-chi* 蝦夷地 (now Hokkaido Island) and thus they refused dealing with the Russians. However, once Moric Benyovszky fled Kamchatka and moved south via Awa 阿波 and other places, we start seeing Japanese references to the appearance of an enemy country in the north. Japanese intellectuals conducted an investigation based on knowledge of the world that they had received from the Dutch, understood that what now lay beyond *Ezo-chi* seemed to be Russia, and debated the administration of *Ezo-chi* and *Kita-ezo-chi* 北蝦夷地 (now the Sakhalin Island) in light of their Russia analysis [Yamazoe 2004].

For example, Hayashi Shihei 林子平 stated that the Russians had expanded eastwards using military force and were now trading at the island of Etorofu 択捉 close to *Ezo-chi* proper, and speculated that they were also intending to annex Etorofu [Hayashi [1786] 1932: 251–2]. Kudō Heisuke 工藤平助 argued that Japan should establish effective rule and secure both the land and the local population before the people there yielded to the Russians [Kudō 1943: 221–2]. The Japanese had not yet conducted any direct boundary negotiations, but had now started to think about first securing the land up to the boundary in the north before anyone else. By contrast, Beijing, who was already dealing with the Russians, had no intention of administering the land between them.

In 1792, Siberian Governor-General Ivan Alferovich Pil' ordered Army Lieutenant Adam Laksman to deliver Daikokuya Kōdayū 大黒屋光太夫 and the other Japanese castaways to Nemuro 根室 in *Ezo-chi* as a way to open relations. Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信, the chief *rōjū* 老中 (Senior Counselor) of the Shogunate, and his colleagues debated the matter as an invitation to trade relations. Matsudaira Sadanobu commented that traditional foreign relations had been limited to “sincere diplomacy with the Chosōn Dynasty” and “trade with the Qing people and the Netherlanders”. Until this period, the

reality of Japan's limited foreign relations was not considered as an established ancestral law of *sakoku* 鎖国 or closed country [Fujita 1992: 275–92].

The idea of Matsudaira Sadanobu is detailed in *Roshia jin toriatsukai tedome* 魯西亜人取扱手留 (Record of Treatment of Russians), which is predicated on a perceived threat from the appearance of European vessels. He had previously argued for the necessity of coastal defenses and measures to counter this situation. In the case of Russia, he also thought it best to avoid conflict for the time being while simultaneously preparing defenses. Part of the diplomatic response to avoid conflict was to envision a logic based on “courtesy and law” that could act as an intermediary between Japan and Russia.

This time they arrived with a legitimate pretext. We are obliged to defend ourselves with courtesy and law. This *Oroshiiya* (Russia) is a great power second to none, who subordinated all the states such as *Tarutariya* (Tatar or Mongol) from Europe to Asia. It is important to recognize *Oroshiiya* does not use military forces without a legitimate pretext, according to European books.⁶

When responding to the Russians, Sadanobu first presented the rules that thus far had supported the Japanese order as “law”, explaining to them that foreign relations could only be conducted with a limited number of parties and by a limited set of methods. He also found it necessary to return sufficient amount of “courtesy” to the Russians, corresponding to their kindness of the castaway repatriation. Therefore senior Shogunate officials were dispatched to the Russians, to provide them with documents for entering Nagasaki, and to orally indicate the possibility of trade.

Sadanobu thought that this standard of “courtesy and law” could also be applied to countries with whom they previously had not had relations. It is interesting that he assumed there to be something of common import beyond the scope of Japan's existing theory of order. That is, the universal was not something starting from the self and accepted by the other; rather, he saw it as something self-styled that was nonetheless supposed to exist between the self and the other. At the very least, he did not try to fit Russia into the framework of *Ka-i chitsujo* 華夷秩序 ([Japan-centered] civilized-barbaric world order).

There was something distinct about the outlook on foreign civilizations that gave rise to Matsudaira Sadanobu's response, but he had in common with his contemporaries that he acknowledged the risk that this country emerging in the north could interfere with Japanese interests and that he wanted to defend them. In the end, the Shogunate was not

⁶ *Roshia jin toriatsukai tedome* (Record of Treatment of the Russians), manuscript held by the Historiographical Institute, the University of Tokyo (Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo 東京大学史料編纂所), fascicle 1, page 6.

able to administrate *Ezo-chi* or prepare its defenses sufficiently, but their understanding of the order was in itself one that looked beyond the realm governed by the Shogunate. It was within this context that Matsudaira Sadanobu sought to derive and propose a logic that could mediate the other party.

Nevertheless, no relations were opened between Russia and Japan. Instead, there were incidents of a Russian vessel attacking Japanese bases on Sakhalin and Etorofu in 1806–07, and the Golovnin Incident in 1811. Matsudaira Sadanobu was of the opinion that not administering *Ezo-chi* was a way to maintain a distance from Russia; thus, after some twists and turns the Shogunate relinquished its direct administration of the areas that lay adjacent to Russia.

Even so, the accumulation of surveys and analyses for administering the north since the 18th century and the experiences of post-conflict settlement would prepare the Japanese for the coming age of trade and boundary issues.

3. The Concepts at Play in Russian-Qing Boundary Negotiations during the Arrow War

3. 1. Russian Attempts to Change the Boundary

The Opium War which broke out between the Qing and Britain in 1840 and the 1842 Treaty of Nanking concluded in its aftermath brought change to the Qing's trade system, but did not cause any fundamental change to how they conceptualized the order governing the relationship between China and outsiders. Russia was unable to obtain port trade rights in the way that Britain, the United States, and France had, and so retained their overland trade rights. As Russia was expanding its rule in Central Asia, they requested the legislation of trade conducted by Russian nationals in Xinjiang, which resulted in the Treaty of Kulja in 1851. At the time, the Qing was not subject to pressure, but can be said to have affirmed in Ili the same trade conditions they had approved in the Treaty of Kyakhta [Noda 2011: 254].

Britain and France were dissatisfied with the implementation of the 1842 settlements and eventually caused the Arrow War (1856–60) to demand the treaty's implementation, but Russia had already started moving to expand their influence in the east. Nikolai Nikolaevich Murav'ev (later known as Murav'ev-Amurskii), who became governor-general of Eastern Siberia in 1847, saw the use of the Amur River (called "Sahalien Ula" in Manchu, translated into Chinese as "Heilongjiang") as necessary for accessing the sea from around Irkutsk, and so moved to secure control over it. He was wary of the threat posed by the expansion of British naval power, and wanted to secure the basin and southern estuary of the Amur River basin as well as the Sakhalin Island opposite the

estuary while there was still time, thereby solidifying Russian control over Kamchatka. He did not think it was enough to merely expand control, but thought it necessary to cede the difficult-to-defend Russian territories in America, namely Alaska, to the United States [Барсуков 1891: vol. 1, pp. 322–3].

Murav'ev investigated the possibilities of navigating the Amur River, explored Sakhalin, and promoted immigration into the basins of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers, expanding control independently of the boundaries settled in the Treaty of Nerchinsk as well as establishing Primorskii and Amur Oblast'. The Qing had in fact issued warnings over Russian activities, but they had insufficient on-site information, unlike at the height of their power. The administrative bases that had previously existed in the Heilongjiang basin and around Sakhalin were almost all deserted, nearly completely removing that land from Beijing's horizon.

I will briefly describe subsequent treaty-related developments. In May 1858, Murav'ev brought about an “agreement” at Aigun by the Amur River, which stipulated that the Amur River could only be navigated by Russia and the Qing, that the land north of the Amur River (hereafter, “Amur left shore”) belonged to Russia, and that of the land to the south, that to the east of the Ussuri River (hereafter, “Ussuri right shore”) belonged to both countries. Beijing initially accepted this, but then repudiated it. The Treaty of Tianjin, which was negotiated around the same time and concluded in June 1858, stipulated a new system for trade and diplomacy. In November 1860, with the final peace of the Arrow War, Prince Gong (Gong Qinwang 恭親王) in Beijing signed the Treaty of Peking with conditions approved by Russia. It included detailed stipulations on the effectiveness of the “Treaty of Aigun”, Russian possessions on the Ussuri right shore, and other matters of trade.⁷

Despite this outcome, this was not something that happened by Russian design, but was the result of numerous coincidences. While Murav'ev moved to take control of the areas in question, he first asked Daicin gurun to recognize them in a treaty, but Beijing did not see the need and repeatedly ignored his requests. Murav'ev's actions were motivated by the perceived importance of using the Amur River for sustaining Eastern Siberia and the need for Russia and the Qing to jointly defend themselves from British dominion.⁸ As such, he was not very interested in conforming to existing agreements between Russia and the Qing. It would later become clear that Murav'ev cared little even for those agreements that he himself had concluded.

In reality, Russia approved of existing treaties and agreements. The Treaties of

⁷ [Miyazaki 1922] presents and analyzes the treaty text in multiple languages with a Japanese translation. See [Evans 1999] for an English translation.

⁸ Murav'ev argued that this demand would naturally be accepted by the Chinese. Paine refers to this repetition of Russian misconceptions as the “myths of friendship”. [Paine 1996: 10, 68]

Nerchinsk and Kyakhta differed from modern treaties in terms of plenary powers and ratification procedures, but they were subsequently approved by both countries' sovereigns and effectively implemented. Moreover, Foreign Minister Karl R. Nesselrode and others opposed Murav'ev's active expansion as it might incite Britain and the Qing. In June 1853, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, via the Senate, notified the Qing's Lifan Yuan that the boundaries in the Treaty of Nerchinsk were in effect.⁹ Thus at this time, the sovereigns of both countries were formally in agreement on effective boundaries on the basis of written agreements. Even Murav'ev admitted that the land in question belonged to China according to the Treaty of Nerchinsk, but he wrote that it was untenable [Барсуков 1891: vol. 2, p. 125].

Subsequently, things were also changing in Russia with the Crimean War, in which it came into conflict with the British, removing the need to avoid friction with Britain in the east and even making it deeply urgent to secure those locations that they feared Britain was after. In fact, Murav'ev had anticipated the outbreak of war and the Franco-British attack, allowing him to assist the defense of Petropavlovsk on the Kamchatka Peninsula in 1854 by transporting supplies on the Amur River. The expansive policy for the Amur River area and the desire to decide on new boundaries was something supported by the new Emperor Alexander II and Foreign Minister Aleksandr Mikhailovich Gorchakov in the post-war period.

3. 2. *From the Dispatch of Putiatin to On-Site Negotiations*

In his efforts to obtain legal sanction of his territorial changes, Murav'ev suggested the need for boundary changes to the Jilin General (Jilin Jiangjun 吉林將軍) and others on Daicin gurun side, but Beijing did not see any need. As the Franco-British allied forces were dispatched to the Qing, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs decided to send Evfimii Vasil'evich Putiatin to negotiate boundary and trade issues. As expected, the Qing initially did not receive Putiatin; however, they had no choice but to deal with him as he joined the Franco-British forces in their negotiations.

In February 1858, the missions from Britain, France, the United States, and Russia jointly submitted a document to the Qing demanding revisions to the trade system and direct negotiations with senior officials of the Beijing government. On this occasion,

⁹ [Шумяк 1878: 274] cites part of a letter dated 16 June 1853 (Julian). “Eluosi ziwen” 俄羅斯咨文 (Russian correspondence), rec'd 3rd year of the Xianfeng period, 3rd month, *dingchou* 丁丑 day [YWSM-XF: vol. 6]. In March 2006, I requested to see the relevant file at the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire (Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii), but it contained no document of that date, only listing one in the table of contents.

Putiatin appended demands for boundary negotiations without the knowledge of the other countries. On 21 March, Emperor Xianfeng issued an imperial mandate mentioning that Russia was a long-time friend and, as they had no reason to become involved in the Guangdong dispute with Britain and France, they should not interfere. In the same mandate he also gave orders to explain to the Russians that Russia should respect the old treaty and withdraw their subjects who had already crossed the determined boundary, while the Qing would graciously not expel them.¹⁰

The Beijing government requested that Putiatin go to Heilongjiang for boundary negotiations there, but he stayed with the Franco-British forces and Russia once again entrusted the boundary issue to Murav'ev. The Heilongjiang General (Heilongjiang Jiangjun 黑龍江將軍) Yi Shan 奕山, who had previously conducted treaty negotiations with Russia as the Ili General (Yili Jiangjun 伊犁將軍), was dispatched to Aigun by the Amur River. Emperor Xianfeng had simply ordered him to explain to the Russians, which meant neither clarifying nor changing the boundaries through negotiations. At this point, it was dubious whether any on-site agreement would result in an agreement between the sovereigns.

3. 3. *The Negotiations at Aigun*

In May 1858, negotiations were conducted between Heilongjiang General Yi Shan and Governor-General of Eastern Siberia Murav'ev at Aigun, which resulted in a signed document. I will refer to this as the “Aigun Document”, but it is dubious whether its contents were shared between Beijing and St. Petersburg at the time. It is true that a text consisting of three articles was written in Russian, Manchu, and Mongolian and then exchanged. Yet, with regard to the jointly administrated Ussuri right shore, there are inconsistencies between the records translated into Classical Chinese, such as the *Siguo xindang* 四國新檔 and the *Chouban yiwu shimo* 籌辦夷務始末, and treaty texts and general literature on the Russian side [Quested 1968: 148–52; Quested 1970]. Furthermore, according to the Research Department of the South Manchuria Railway in the early 20th century, the Russian text contained clear stipulations about the Ussuri right shore while the Manchu text was deemed unintelligible [Miyazaki 1922: 287–8].

The Russian records contain concrete descriptions of the initial ceremonial and amicable meetings, while Yi Shan's report is concise and says that the Russians were threatening [Невельской 1947: 371]. The Russians presented a draft with six articles, which revised and added to the old treaty. It identified the Amur and Ussuri Rivers as the

¹⁰ Rec'd 8th year of the Xianfeng period, 2nd month, *jiayin* 甲寅 day [YWSM-XF: vol. 19].

boundary (also making the Ussuri right shore Russian), only allowed Russia and the Qing to navigate and trade along the rivers, and stipulated that all subjects of Daicin gurun living on the Amur left shore move to the right shore within three years [Ильмакxep 1878: 298].

Following the negotiations, only three articles remained in the agreement. Article 1 stipulated that the Amur left shore “belonged” to Russia, that the Ussuri left shore would be under “joint management” until they could negotiate an agreement, that the Amur, Sunggari (Songhuajiang 松花江), and Ussuri Rivers could only be used by subjects of the two countries, and that the subjects of Daicin gurun living on the Amur left shore would remain under its jurisdiction. Article 2 regulated trade on the rivers and Article 3 the outline of how to exchange the document.

As it consisted of no more than three articles, had no provisions for plenary powers, authentic text, or ratification, differed from other contemporary treaties, and no authority had been explicitly delegated by the emperor in Beijing, it does appear rather lacking as a “treaty” in the modern sense.

There is much that is also uncertain about the negotiations, but what is clear is that Yi Shan managed to have the Russians compromise and change their proposal. Unhappy about this, Murav'ev immediately set out to reverse the change.

According to a report by Petr Nikolaevich Perovskii, Murav'ev's aide and the man in charge of the negotiations, Russia wanted the Qing to recognize both the Amur left shore and the Ussuri right shore as Russian territory, but they changed the proposal to accommodate Yi Shan's claims. Yi Shan was the Heilongjiang General and thus had no authority to discuss what fell under the Jilin General's jurisdiction, which is why he wanted to exclude the Ussuri right shore from the treaty. Russia first accepted this and made “the Ussuri right shore unsettled as previously”, but this was changed to “henceforth until the definition of the border in these places between the two states, as nowadays [they] will be in the common possession of the Daicin and the Russian states” (*vpred' do opredeleniia po sim mestam granitsy mezhdu dvumia gosudarstvami, kak nyne da budut v obshchem vladanii daitsinskogo i rossiiskogo gosudarstv*) on Perovskii's suggestion.¹¹ Through this, Russia was added as a country with rights in the area in question, a development that resembled what was happening then between Japan and Russia with regard to Sakhalin (discussed later).

Moreover, Yi Shan did not want the word “boundary” to enter the text, which is why it was rewritten as the Amur left shore “belongs to Russia” and the left shore “belongs to Daicin gurun”. Perovskii stated that the meaning was the same.¹² As a represen-

¹¹ Perovskii to Kovalevskii, 10 June 1858, no. 17, State Archive of Irkutsk Oblast', f. 24, d. 9, l. 5.

¹² *ibid.*

tative of the Qing whose position was that the boundary had already been established much further north, Yi Shan must have thought it problematic if he were to decide on a new boundary, fearing that it would mean the Qing's compromise.

If we look at the 1842 Treaty of Nanking, while Article 3 of the English text says that the Qing emperor "cedes" Hong Kong to the British queen, the Classical Chinese text says "permits to give", meaning that Britain is permitted to legislate in and govern Hong Kong for their use when arriving from far away.¹³ The British were possibly under the impression that Hong Kong no longer belonged to the Qing, but from the Qing's perspective, the emperor had simply allowed Britain to use part of his "realm" (*tianxia* 天下) and it would theoretically revert to the Qing if the emperor retracted his permission.

The fundamental concepts had not changed at Aigun in 1858. The Qing likely saw it as bestowing the right of residence on the barbarian Russians without making any changes to the "boundaries" that are the bounds of Daicin gurun.¹⁴

Yi Shan returned to Beijing and wrote a report, explaining that he had temporarily accommodated them in light of their anger and the risk of violence. In response to this, the emperor stated that though he had exceeded his authority it was inevitable in this case, suggesting that they may be given uninhabited land.¹⁵

Here we see that the Qing lacked any normative awareness of restraints placed on itself by the agreement in this treaty, and that the Qing's control did not mean the administration of "territory" but rather ruling over people. With such a concept of control, the protection of any land without subjects was worth little in comparison to dynastic stability. As we can see in Chapter 9 of this book, it was not until the emergence of the concept of "territorial" control that the land became "lost territory". In the 1850s the Qing had not accepted a modern principle of the exclusivist control of land, which had not necessarily been complete in numerous eras and places throughout human history.

3. 4. *The Treaty of Tianjin and the Aftermath of the Boundary Issue*

Putiatin, having conducted the treaty negotiations on trade and diplomacy at Tianjin, finally participated in the conclusion of the Treaty of Tianjin in June 1858, which the Qing

¹³ Rec'd 22nd year of the Daoguang period, 8th month, *wuyin* 戊寅 day [YWSM-DG: vol. 59].

¹⁴ There are testimonies to the effect that the Russian habitation on the Amur left shore was described as a temporary loan in the Manchu text of the "Aigun Document" of Daicin gurun's side [Quested 1968: 151].

¹⁵ Rec'd 8th year of the Xianfeng period, 5th month, *wuyin* day [YWSM-XF: vol. 25]. Also see [Quested 1968: 152].

concluded with Britain, France, the United States, and Russia as a sign of reconciliation after the Arrow War. The treaty with Russia was signed on 13 June, and while it had little in the way of specific content on trade and so forth, it had a total of twelve articles, including one on most-favored-nation status.

It was only after this that Putiatin found out from the Qing representative that a boundary agreement had already been concluded at Aigun in May. Beijing saw this as a provision of benefit and expected that it would soften Russian as well as British and French demands, thus leading to peace. At this moment, the Qing admitted to the Russian mission that the boundary had been changed, and on top of the "Aigun Document" also sent another document agreeing to trade between Beijing and Irkutsk. The sovereign in Beijing took an official position of having agreed to new boundaries; thus, it can be argued that such an agreement was reached between the two countries.

Yet, Beijing's will to recognize the "Aigun Document" became indistinct after this point. As peace with Britain and France was concluded through the Treaty of Tianjin in June, the British representative James Bruce, 8th Earl of Elgin and 12th Earl of Kincardine, compromised by deferring the right of diplomatic residence for the time being. Britain and France withdrew their fleets, announcing that envoys would be bringing instruments of ratification from the home countries. Subsequently, the Beijing government exchanged instruments of ratification for the Treaty of Tianjin with the United States and Russia, but the "Aigun Document" was not ratified. Article 9 of the Treaty of Tianjin stipulated that undetermined boundaries would be surveyed and agreed upon; thus, if the "Aigun Document" was not recognized, this could be taken to mean that the Amur River boundary remained undetermined.

The British envoy Fredrick Bruce encountered some trouble as he was en route to exchange the instruments of ratification, and the Qing troops under Sengge Rinchen repulsed the British fleets at Taku Fort in June 1859. It was then that the Beijing government made it clear to the Russians that they did not recognize the "Aigun Document". Yet, they did not change their earlier policy of not taking any measures to push back the Russians.

Seeing this approach by Beijing, we can sense that they did abide by what had been agreed to with countries like Russia and the United States to some extent, but rather than seeing treaties as rules for the perpetual regulation of relations, they tended to see them as temporary promises for the sake of accomplishing peace. Guiliang 桂良, who negotiated the Treaty of Tianjin, reported that the emperor may punish him and his colleagues and cancel the treaty once the British and French fleets had retreated.¹⁶

¹⁶ Rec'd 8th year of the Xianfeng period, 5th month, *gengyin* 庚寅 day [YWSM-XF: vol. 26]. Also see [Swischer 1953: 505, no. 374, 26 June 1858].

Even Murav'ev himself did not think of the "Aigun Document" as something final, but immediately started demanding that the Qing recognize the Ussuri right shore as Russian territory. When he had first commanded his ships to Aigun to make demands to Yi Shan, he had compromised and withdrawn some of the paragraphs. Now, as Perovskii was heading to Beijing to exchange the instruments of ratification for the Treaty of Tianjin, he wanted to put those paragraphs before the Beijing government again and have them agree to them.

Of course, this had no chance of success, and he could not receive any agreement from the Beijing government even when he personally commanded his fleet to Zhili 直隸 Bay in August 1859. At the time, he expressed that it would be difficult for him to change Beijing's mind with a Russian fleet that was in the state that it was, while Britain and France had only barely achieved their aims by landing with overwhelming military force [Барсуков 1891: vol. 1, p. 558]. From May 1858 to August 1860, there was little rational hope for the fulfillment of Murav'ev's wish to have the Qing recognize the Ussuri right shore as Russian territory (even if it had been possible to anticipate the crises faced by the Qing in the form of the Taiping Rebellion and the return of the Franco-British forces).

Regardless, Murav'ev did not think of the agreements as permanent; they were nothing more than temporary steps toward fulfilling his final goal.

3. 5. *The Treaty of Peking*

It was first Perovskii and then Nikolai Ignat'ev who were tasked with making efforts in Beijing to realize Murav'ev's unreasonable wish.

Following the Taku Incident in June 1859, the Beijing government was no longer in a position to grant benefits to other countries, and initiating a dialog was the best that they could do. Yet in August 1860, the Franco-British allied forces made their return, occupied Taku Fort, and advanced from Tianjin to Beijing.

The Beijing government once more expected Russia to soften the British and French demands, conveying their request for Ignat'ev to mediate. Emperor Xianfeng set out from Beijing and left matters to Prince Gong, who started negotiating for peace. With Ignat'ev's mediation, peace was achieved with the additional Treaty of Peking in late October. As the Franco-British troops withdrew from Beijing in early November, Ignat'ev concluded the Treaty of Peking with Prince Gong, and thus comprehensively prescribing the contents desired by the Russians for the first time.¹⁷ Later, Prince Gong

¹⁷ According to Ignat'ev, he wrote to Prince Gong that he would call back the Franco-British

founded Zongli Yamen 總理衙門, and other steps were taken to manage Qing diplomacy on the tentative basis of existing treaties and institutions such as permanent diplomatic missions in Beijing.

The Treaty of Peking made reference to the “Aigun Document”, meaning that the two countries explicitly affirmed the document *ex post facto*. Unlike the references to “belonging” in the “Aigun Document”, the new treaty clearly prescribed boundaries, with the Amur left shore and the Ussuri right shore becoming Russian territory and some detailed geographic descriptions added. On the basis of this, a boundary agreement was concluded after an on-site survey in 1861, signifying how the Beijing government went on to manage its foreign relations without repealing the 1860 Treaty of Peking.

Long after this, during the border negotiations in the 1960s and 1990s, the Communist Party administration in Beijing debated the border issue with the Soviet Union on the basis of the 1860 Treaty of Peking, despite calling it an “unequal treaty”, and succeeded in determining to which side each of river islands would belong in detail, in conformance with international norms [Fravel 2008]. In this sense, the 1860 Treaty of Peking was maintained as a basic agreement between Russia/the Soviet Union and the Qing/China, and its concrete applicability for determining modern state borders was settled in the 1990s.

Russia's expansion in the 1850s lacked any legal foundation, and the agreements and negotiations up until 1859 were legally insufficient. If this had persisted into the 1880s, the territorial rights in the Russian Far East would surely have been different; thus, the 1860 Treaty of Peking and the Beijing government's observation of the treaty are significant. Still, this was not brought about by Russia's own strength or intimidation, but was a random product of the Arrow War.

4. Japan's Treaty Negotiations and Territorial Administration

4. 1. The Treaty of Shimoda and the Position of Sakhalin

With the outbreak of the Opium War in 1840, the Edo Shogunate analyzed the information they had, reaching the conclusion that they must avoid any all-out confrontation with Western ships, and thus relaxed the Edict to Repel Foreign Vessels (Ikokusen Uchi-harai-rei 異国船打払令). In 1853, Matthew C. Perry entered Uraga 浦賀 from the United States and Putiatin entered Nagasaki from Russia, leading the Shogunate to recognize the necessity of negotiating and concluding treaties for the sake of stable relations.

troops unless the Qing accepted Russia's demands [Quested 1968: 271].

Putiatin was tasked with negotiating boundaries for islands such as Sakhalin, Kunashiri 国後, and Etorofu, and conducted preliminary negotiations in Nagasaki. Hearing the Japanese objections, he requested the withdrawal of the Russian fleet, then moving south along Sakhalin on the order of Murav'ev. On his second visit, he concluded the Treaty of Shimoda in February 1855.

The Shogunate likewise felt insecure about not determining the boundaries while the Russians were wanting to go south, motivating itself to resolve the matter through negotiations. It had been engaged with the issue of how to secure and manage this area in the face of the Russians at least since the 18th century.

The Treaty of Shimoda determined that Kunashiri and Etorofu were Japanese land, but no agreement was reached on Sakhalin. As the Japanese text reads that it “remains unseparated, under the customs until now”, the Japanese assumed that their bases around Kushunkotan (later Ōdomari 大泊, Korsakov) in southern Sakhalin were secure, since nothing was changed on this point. By contrast, the Russians interpreted the phrase “remains unseparated between Russia and Japan, as it was until now” as “shared without boundary”. That is, they thought that they also had the right to conduct activities all over Sakhalin. This ensured that friction would remain between the two countries for a long time.

4. 2. Murav'ev Comes to Edo and Renegotiates Sakhalin

Murav'ev was of the opinion that use of the Amur River for moving goods was indispensable and thus worked to secure territory that could serve as a base for defending and securing the river. Thus, he viewed as crucial not only the Ussuri left shore, but also Sakhalin Island that lay opposite the Amur River estuary. After having included the Russian possession of the Amur left shore and the Russo-Qing shared possession of the Ussuri right shore in the “Aigun Document” in May 1858, he started demanding that the shared possession of the Ussuri right shore and Sakhalin should be changed to Russian exclusive possession. This means that both Japan and the Qing were subject to the same approach and shock from Russia.

In August 1859, Murav'ev commanded his fleet down the Amur River and stopped at Edo to demand that the Shogunate recognize the Russian possession of Sakhalin. As the Shogunate also saw the need to settle the matter, they arranged talks at Tentokuji 天徳寺 Temple. At the time, there were no discussions about concrete proposals, such as drawing the boundary at the 50th parallel north, and it ended with Japan rejecting Murav'ev's claim for possession of the entire island; however, we can discern some misalignment between the logic of Murav'ev and that of the Shogunate.

Murav'ev stated that he had obtained territorial rights for the Amur River basin

from the Qing, arguing that this automatically gave them the right to possess Sakhalin Island.¹⁸ The Shogunate's *waka-doshiyori* 若年寄 (Junior Counselor) Endō Taneo 遠藤胤緒 and Sakai Tadamasu 酒井忠毗 agreed that an agreement should be reached as they feared that a third country might interfere if the matter remained undecided.

While Murav'ev said that Putiatin had not had the authority to decide the Sakhalin border during the previous negotiations for the Treaty of Shimoda, which was the reason for his visit now, the Shogunate responded that they had negotiated and concluded the treaty because Putiatin had brought a letter of authorization for deciding the borders. Murav'ev said that he was not authorized to do so. The Shogunate pointed out that if the letter of authorization that they had previously trusted was now denied, then there was no guarantee that the current negotiations would remain in effect until their next meeting. From then on the Shogunate kept repeating that it was troublesome to hear that Putiatin had not been authorized to decide borders, and requested a confirmation of the legitimacy of the previous letter of authorization as a matter of proper order [Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo 1985: vol. 25, pp. 244–62].

Murav'ev stated that he was a regional governor-general and thus in charge of territorial matters under his jurisdiction, while Putiatin had no such authority despite carrying a letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁹ This way of thinking could also justify how the Heilongjiang General or the Jilin General were able to decide boundaries under their jurisdiction even without an explicit letter of authorization from the emperor. Murav'ev was also of the opinion that of the existing agreements, those that were advantageous should be kept, while those that were disadvantageous should be changed. This meant that any agreement immediately lost its significance, regardless of the level of legitimate authority by which it was reached. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Putiatin had never made so little of existing agreements.

In response, the Japanese requested repeated confirmations as their trust in future agreements would be undermined if the previous letter of authorization was so simply denied, even as they were not opposed to negotiating outstanding matters. They were of the strong belief that treaties were permanently binding for the two countries and a basis for future stable relations. When compared to the Qing's approach to negotiations around the same time, this stance is very much antipodal.

Murav'ev did not repeat his strong demands and left without exerting powerful pressure on the Shogunate, despite the murder case of a Russian sailor. He subsequently

¹⁸ The origin of the Russian name "Sakhalin" is said to be that it is an island beyond the Amur River, called "Sahalien Ula" in Manchu. Murav'ev also made this claim.

¹⁹ [Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo 1985: vol. 25, pp. 244–62]. Murav'ev was critical of Putiatin who had concluded the Treaty of Tianjin and introduced ambiguity in the paragraph on territory in June 1858, just one year after the "Aigun Document" from May 1857.

inspected the harbor in the new Primorskii and then used his fleet to increase the Russian presence *vis-à-vis* Beijing in support of Ignat'ev, as previously discussed.

Once back home, he said that he would once more demand exclusive possession of Sakhalin from Japan [Барсуков 1891: vol. 2, pp. 276–7], but this did not come to pass during his term in office. He explained that he thought the Japanese would understand if they asserted the Russian need to possess Sakhalin [Барсуков 1891: vol. 2, pp. 115–16], which bears some resemblance to his “myths of friendship” with China. At the same time, Murav'ev praised the ability of the Japanese and said that they would become a powerful country if they imported Western civilization [Барсуков 1891: vol. 1, pp. 558–9].

5. Russia's Shock and the Parting of Ways for Japan and the Qing

5. 1. Russia's Approach to the East

In this chapter, we discuss the boundary issues in East Asia in the 1850s as well as the concepts at play. In conclusion, I would like to provide an outline of subsequent developments.

Before the modern Western international order reached East Asia in the 19th century, Russia emerged as a nation that was in the process of accepting Western institutions. They engaged with the Qing in the 17th and 18th centuries as a country in continental Asia, maintaining a basis for trade and surveys. They approached Japan at a gentle pace and experienced intermittent contact.

By the mid-19th century, Russia had made use of conventional customs in their contacts with both the Qing and Japan to secure the Amur left shore, the Ussuri right shore, and Sakhalin almost as “territory”. Yet neither process was like the other. They quickly secured benefits from the Qing who could not meet the modern Western demands of treaties and “territory”. By contrast, they spent a significant amount of time negotiating with Japan, who was prepared in terms of “territory” administration and treaty negotiations, to resolve the issues of Sakhalin and Chishima 千島.

Part of the reason for this historical pathway lay in Russia. The governor-generals of the eastern parts of Imperial Russia possessed “private, charismatic, *ad hoc* authority for administering borderlands where the ordinary imperial law does not apply” [Matsuzato 2008: 299]. For example, Murav'ev's arguably arbitrary actions with regard to treaties that did not even take heed of the ideas of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stem from this.

Moreover, as Russia was alone in having a Russian Orthodox Mission in Beijing, they were very far ahead in terms of linguistic knowledge and information gathering

when compared to the countries of Western Europe. Putiatin's diplomatic approach also made use of such existing special treatment, but did not make the kind of harsh demands that Britain and others did [Yamazoe 2008].

As such, Russia's stance *vis-à-vis* East Asia differed from the approach adopted by the central government as they sought to emulate Western modern norms demonstrated by the West and Europe. It was an intermediary stance, not quite modern yet not quite pre-modern. Thus, this Russian stance also amplified the differences between Japan and the Qing.

5. 2. *Resolving the Sakhalin Issue and the Modernization of Japanese Diplomacy*

In Japan, the Sakhalin Issue was, after the negotiation of the provisional regulations for Sakhalin by the Shogunate in St. Petersburg in 1867, finally resolved with the Treaty of St. Petersburg (in Japan called the Sakhalin-Chishima Exchange Treaty) concluded by the Meiji government's Enomoto Takeaki 榎本武揚 in 1875.

Meanwhile, Russia consistently asserted exclusive possession of all of Sakhalin and had already stationed troops there, but they never had the chance to force a treaty on Japan in the context of a crisis. Since Japan had the Kushunkotan base, the Russians also needed to somehow change the situation.

The Japanese Meiji government moved away from their initial policy of securing Sakhalin to relinquishing it due to difficulties of administration and defense; however, they negotiated for the acquisition of territory in the Chishima Islands, in exchange for drawing a national border across the island. Looking at Sakhalin as a whole, the Russian influence was stronger than the Japanese, but Japan managed to negotiate by making use of their control of the southern part of the island. As a result of negotiating a treaty on the basis of existing agreements with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in advance of Russian troops occupying all of the island, Japan could gain the territory of Chishima in its entirety in 1875, and avoided any large-scale conflict over Sakhalin, which they relinquished.

What was important with regard to the boundary issue between Japan and Russia was not only the objective circumstances, but also the conceptual foundation that prepared the way for the Japanese response. Already prior to the Meiji period, those concepts were very much congruent with the modern Western order.

The appearance of Russia in the 18th century was a chance for Japanese intellectuals and the Tokugawa Shogunate to reassess *Ezo-chi* from borderland to defense line. While not everything led the way to "territorial" administration and sufficient defenses, it helped maintain a certain level of *de facto* control that was necessary for a modern state and its "territory". In addition, they trusted and used the permanent quality of

agreements and treaties. When Murav'ev made his aforementioned visit in 1859, the Shogunate was less focused on either side's claims and more concerned with whether anything agreed upon would be upheld in the future, which is why they pressed Murav'ev who took existing agreements very lightly.

To the Japanese, treaties were a standard to be upheld by both countries. They believed in the merit of limiting the other party's actions to the scope of the agreement by themselves abiding by it. With the emergence of international law, this turned into a belief in the moral case for upholding agreements as well as in its utility as a principal element of international relations. Hereafter, Japan's foreign relations became based on this belief.

The argument put forth by Yokoi Shōnan 横井小楠 suggests one model for this. He discussed the Arrow War in his *Kokuze sanron* 国是三論 (The Three Major Discussions of State Policy) and stated that the Qing invited disaster by violating the treaties. He criticized them, saying that the Qing was a great state, but it was haughty and did not uphold the treaties. In every crisis it lost ports and land to make up for treaty violations, never trying to learn from other countries [Yokoi [1860] 1971: 449–50]. The thoughts and actions of the neighboring Qing also had an impact on Japan's foreign relations.

5. 3. *Conceptual Unrest and Later Change in the Qing*

The Qing of the 1850s, thus assessed by Yokoi, was unable to fulfill the condition of securing "territory" in northeast Manchuria, as defined by modern international society. To begin with, none of the officials of the Beijing government, the Heilongjiang General, or the Jilin General had any interest in administrating or securing the left shore of the Heilongjiang, nor did they possess the concept of drawing a line for that purpose and extending control there. By the time they criticized Russia with reference to the ambiguous line decided on in the Treaty of Nerchinsk, the Russians had already extended their influence to that area and the Qing only had tenuous control over those residing there. Moreover, the Qing negotiators in Aigun, Tianjin, and Beijing did not view the land in northeastern Manchuria with the same sense of crisis as they did at the center, and only saw the treaties as temporary expediences in exchange for Russian cooperation. Were it not for the 1860 Treaty of Peking that confirmed the new borders and regulated the subsequent developments, perhaps Russia would not have been able to secure "territory" as it did. Thus, from the perspective of the Qing, the land that they relinquished was the kind that was uninteresting and not worth defending, much like northern Sakhalin was to Japan. They were unable to gain anything in its stead through diplomatic negotiations, nor did they have a sufficient understanding of the permanent significance of the treaty and the boundaries to which they had agreed.

There were those in the Qing who desired a more realistic awareness, such as Wei Yuan 魏源 who authored *Haiguo tuzhi* 海國圖志 (Illustrated Treatise on the Maritime Kingdoms) in 1842. However, even Wei Yuan demonstrated an understanding typical of Sinocentric thought, namely, that “*yi* 夷 (barbarians) ought to be controlled by way of *yi*.” Even this was soon forgotten in the Qing, while *Haiguo tuzhi* was read more widely in Japan. Indicative of this is that when the Arrow War forced the Qing to conclude the Treaty of Tianjin, one official presented Wei Yuan’s *Haiguo tuzhi* to the emperor, saying that if they printed the book and the imperial family as well as civil and military officials learnt about other countries, then they would see that it is not impossible to resist the *yi*.²⁰ Treaties were not something benefitting one’s own country, but a set of rules for the *waiyi* 外夷 (outer barbarians) as they were the recipients of grace in a “Sinocentric” world. They saw no reason for the “Sinitic civilization” to be restrained by the treaties.

It was this kind of thinking as well as a lack of understanding of the intentions and capabilities of the Franco-British forces that invited the second campaign and defeat. In January 1861, in his report for proposing the establishment of the Zongli Yamen, even Prince Gong argued that the *yi* were taking advantage of the Qing’s weaknesses; thus, they ought to first end civil unrest and then move to control Russia who was encroaching on Qing “territory” and Britain who sought trade.²¹ Even the very person who concluded the Treaty of Peking and argued for the need to deal with other countries through the Zongli Yamen insisted that foreign relations was about controlling the other parties. Perhaps it was that such rhetoric was needed for internal debate; however, it suggests how unaware the Qing was that it was participating in the modern Western order.

Until 1860, the various concepts at play in the Qing’s boundary issues were shaken up and contributed to the disadvantageous results of boundary relations with Russia. The determination of boundaries and the correspondence of diplomatic missions between Imperial Russia and Daicin gurun were handled in the context of bilateral relations, but it could not contain the sense of a “Sinocentric” order that had been growing since the reign of Emperor Qianlong. By the mid-19th century, the awareness of and actual control over the area around and beyond the Amur River had all but disappeared. Heilongjiang General Yi Shan allowed Russian settlement there merely to satisfy Murav’ev for the time being, but it subsequently resulted in a permanent national border. At the time, the Qing only had a vague sense of the binding force of the agreements it made with other countries, and this complicated relations. Since Murav’ev continuously demanded “territory” with the intention of changing any previous agreements depending

²⁰ Memorial of Wang Maoyin 王茂蔭, rec’d 8th year of the Xianfeng period, 5th month, *guimao* 癸卯 day [YWSM-XF: vol. 28]. Also see [Swischer 1953: 510, no. 378, 9 July 1858].

²¹ Rec’d 10th year of the Xianfeng period, 12th month, *renxu* 壬戌 day [YWSM-XF: vol. 71]. Also see [Teng and Fairbank 1954: 48].

on expediency in the present, this worked in the favor of Russia.

The Qing's approach to foreign relations changed after this. Previously, the Son of Heaven of "Sinitic civilization" unilaterally bestowed grace on foreign visitors in the form of documents, and if the circumstances changed, he could always unilaterally ignore the contents of those documents. Now they moved toward the recognition that treaties were permanent agreements between the signatories, which remained binding until the relevant countries reached a new agreement and changed the contents.

Furthermore, with regard to the borderlands in the northeast and the northwest, instead of seeing it merely as people and land subjugated by the Khaan of Daicin gurun, they edged closer to the modern Western idea of the state by continuously managing and administering these areas as well as perceiving the importance of national borders as the bounds of the nation. They moved from wanting to protect the land of Manchuria from the influx of Han Chinese to administering Manchuria by moving in Han Chinese, thereby also protecting it from Russia. From the so-called Ili Crisis in the 1870s to the Treaty of St. Petersburg in 1881, we can see from the ways in which the Qing resolved boundary issues in the borderlands that it had become a different kind of administration, also in terms of modern Western treaties, diplomatic relations, and territorial administration. This process can be seen as a condition for its eventual transformation into the nation we now call China.