

# Greetings!

It is my great pleasure to announce the opening of the exhibition booth "Journey through the Eurasian Borders" at the Hokkaido Museum following the establishment of the Global COE Program (grant-in-aid, Ministry of Education) on "Reshaping Japan's Border Studies." This first exhibition on Eurasian borders has been compiled by the wealth of resources on the history of the border areas in Eurasia collected and accumulated at the Slavic Research Center.

Our aim is to attempt to understand the dynamics of the belt areas of borderland regions that traverse Eurasia starting from Europe, Black Sea Rim, Caucasus region, Russia, Central Asia, South Asia, China and Japan.

It is our hope that together with us each and every one of you can enjoy the "virtual" journey through these regions. Please feel free to take a look at the documents, materials and books in our bookshelves for more information.

The next exhibition on "Unknown Tales of the Northern Borders" will open in mid-December.

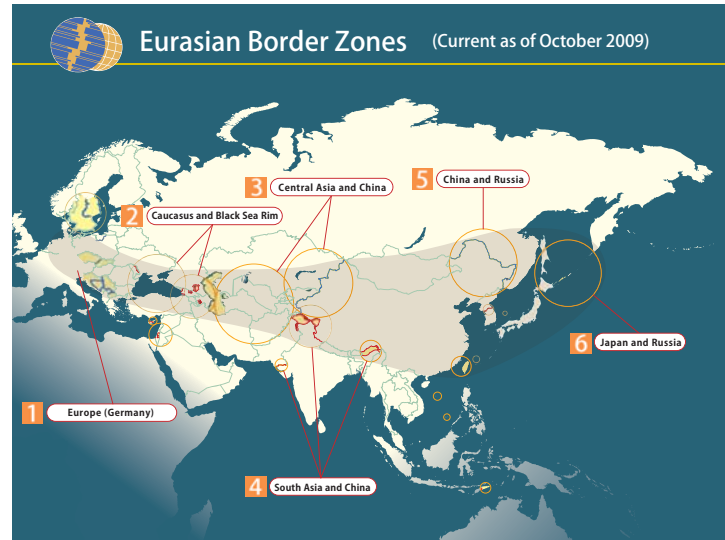
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http://borderstudies.jp/en/

# "Journey through the Eurasian Borders"



## 1 Borders change –Europe–



Part of Europe during the Vienna Conference right after the end of the Napoleonic War in 1815.



The red dot indicates the capital of Germany, Berlin.

The city of Berlin, with respect to its borders, changed with time.

Berlin was truly the center of the unified Germany in the 19th century (refer to the top figure).

At present, however, Berlin is closely situated at the Eastern border (refer to the bottom figure).



(1) (1871-1918) Germany at the end of WWI.

Unified Germany shared its border with Russia and Austria-Hungary.



(2) (1919-1938) Poland recovered its independence after Germany's defeat in WWI.

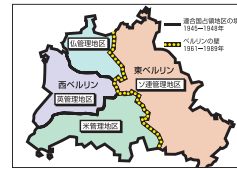
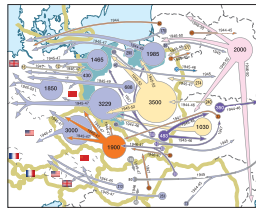
(3) (1949-1990) Germany attempted to regain its territories in WWII, however, Germany's defeat resulted in the loss of its territories once again. The borders shifted to the west.

The blue line indicates the sea border "Oder-Neisse Line" which marked the boundary between East Germany and Poland.



German territory — Oder-Neisse Line

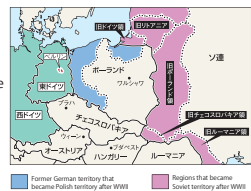
This figure represents the number of people (in units of thousand) that were forced to emigrate at the end of WWII. \*The area in green represents areas that became Polish territory after the end of WWII.



Postwar Germany was divided and occupied by Britain, France, U.S. and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union occupied East Germany, while the other three countries occupied West Germany (1949).

While Chancellor Adenauer did not recognize the Oder-Neisse Line, Chancellor Brandt, in line with his rapprochement policy (Neue Ostpolitik) signed the friendship treaty of the Treaty of Moscow (1970) with the Soviet Union which renounced the use of force and recognized the post WWII borders, including the Oder-Neisse Line.

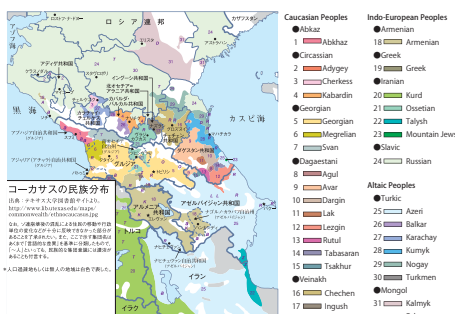
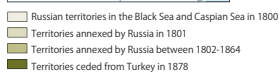
The recognition of Polish territory promoted the easing of tension in Europe. The revolution in the Soviet Union and the democratization movements in the Eastern European countries ultimately led to the fall of the "Berlin Wall" and the unification of East and West Germany.



## 2 Caucasus and Black Sea Rim



The independence and recognition from the international community and the international borders of the countries in the Caucasus and Black Sea Rim regions took place merely few decades ago. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia have been acknowledged and recognized as independent states by the international community, however some still remain to be recognized.



Distribution of ethnic groups in the Caucasus region



Chechnya was annexed by the Russian Empire in the 19th century and was under Soviet rule for a long time. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union Chechnya declared independence, but the Yeltsin administration did not recognize it as an independent state and sent Russian troops in December 1994. The seize fire that followed the conflict allowed the "de facto" independence of Chechnya, however, under the former President Putin Russia recovered its control over Chechnya through military force.

### Case of Abkhazia

Abkhazia was under the rule of the Russian Empire in the 19th century, and later a part of the Republic of Georgia in the Soviet Union. During the process leading up to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Abkhazian people demanded independence against the rising Georgian nationalism which led to war. As a result, the Georgian people that lived in Abkhazia were forced to leave and today Abkhazia remains a de facto "independent" state although it is not recognized by the international community.



### Black Sea—Inland Sea of Orthodox and Islam

Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh and the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic (PMR) are not recognized by UN members. An interesting characteristic of these unrecognized states is that they are located around the Black Sea area. Moreover, the Black Sea is also poses as a border region of the Orthodox Church. For example, PMR is situated in between the jurisdiction of the Romanian and the Russian Orthodox Church. Furthermore, the region around the Black Sea itself is a massive border zone of Islam and Christianity.



unrecognized states and former suzerainty



Romanian Orthodox Church in Bucharest  
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople in Istanbul  
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia  
Georgian Orthodox Church in Tbilisi

(Figure created by Prof. Kimitaka Matsuzato)

## 3 Central Asia and China



Beginning of the 19th century

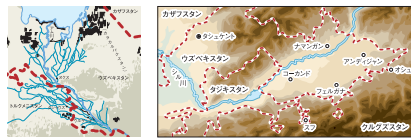
The borders in this area changed 3 times. The first time was during the Russian imperial rule. The second time was during the time of the establishment of the national republics in Soviet Central Asia during 1924-1925 after the transition from the Russian Revolution (1917) to the formation of the Soviet Union (1922). The third and last time was after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, when 5 countries including Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan declared independence. These borders became the "national boundaries" we see today.



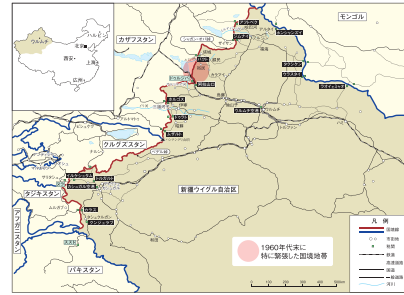
Under Russian Imperial rule

The jurisdiction of cities or villages near the borders becomes a serious issue when borders are drawn. One example is the city of Tashauz (Dashaugh at present) in Turkmenistan. This area was mostly occupied by Uzbeks, however, the nomadic Turkmens were given administrative priority which resulted in Tashauz becoming Turkmenistan jurisdiction. Another example is the Fergana region. The same logic was used by the Kyrgyz who demanded Andijan as their capital, however, in order to avoid strong opposition from the Uzbek majority instead Osh became part of Kyrgyzstan. The Fergana region is a complex area inhabited by various ethnic groups and potential conflict area. Many Uzbeks fled to Kyrgyzstan during the Andijan incident in May 2005.

Establishment of the National Republics in Soviet Central Asia

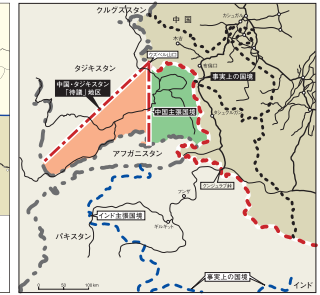


Area around Tashauz Fergana Basin

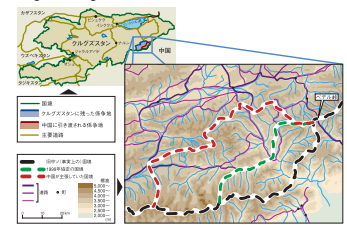


China and Central Asian border

The border between China and Central Asia stretches 3200 km from Mongolia to Afghanistan. China has insisted that under the "unequal treaty" of the latter half of the 19th century, China lost 500,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, China has also claimed that the area around the border of Tajikistan that stretches 20000km<sup>2</sup> was forcefully ceded without legal grounds. The tension increased around Alashankou during the conflict between China and the Soviet Union in the eastern border in 1969. The negotiations after the collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in a resolution for a "fifty-fifty" relationship.



China Tajikistan border

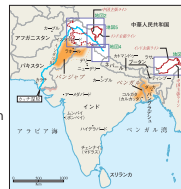


China-Kyrgyzstan border after a "fifty-fifty" solution

## 4 South Asia and China

### India and Pakistan: National and Religious Borders

The current areas of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh were under the rule of the British Empire in the latter half of the 19th century. In 1947, Pakistan, a Muslim majority area, declared independence as well as India (Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan in 1971). The artificial borders drawn by the British in an area with diverse religious groups brought about confusion and turmoil, which resulted in over 15 million refugees in Bengal and Punjab. However, except for the case in the Rann of Kutch, the drawing of Indian Pakistan border did not cause much problem. The problem was the attempt to redraw the lines after the borders have been agreed upon.

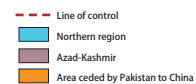


MAP 1: The main borders of the area

MAP 2: The area of rule of Kashmir according to India.



The Princely State of Kashmir and Jammu was dominated by Muslims. The Maharaja aimed to declare Kashmir independent but the people demanded to accede to Pakistan. When the Maharaja hesitated to do this Pakistan crossed the borders and launched a guerilla attack and he appealed for assistance to India on the condition that the Maharaja acceded to India. This is the beginning of the Kashmir conflict (October 1947). The war ended with a ceasefire under the UN auspices in January 1949, and the red dotted line in Map 2 is the line of control. The route from India to Kashmir involves passing through the rugged Himalaya. India has tried on many occasions to take Kashmir under its rule. Many people think that Pakistan is dominated by the Muslims while India by Hindus. However, the raison d' état of India is to accept people of various religions including Muslim. The gap in this notion is at the basis of the border issues between India and Pakistan and has resulted in three wars over Kashmir between the two countries.



### India and China: Border Issues Stemming from International Relations

India and China entered a friendly relationship when India declared its recognition of China's sovereignty over Tibet. However, border conflicts between China and India became apparent after few years.

Map 3 shows the McMahon Line drawn by the British diplomat McMahon at the Simla Conference in 1914. The same ethnic group according to the Chinese classification lives on either side of the McMahon Line. Britain anticipated a significant Chinese and Russian influence on Tibet and decided to redraw the lines in order to secure India's safety. The People's Republic of China did not recognize this border but India continued to declare this as the border even after independence.



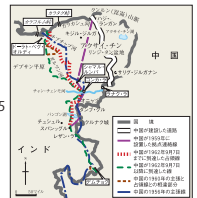
Map 3

Map 4 shows the disputed areas along the central border areas, but there are hopes for resolution in the near future.

On the other hand, a highly disputed area in the western border of the Aksai Chin (refer to map 5). China built a road that cut across the territory declared by India. The relationship between these two countries deteriorated when the Indian authorities knew about this road through the Chinese media in 1957 which ultimately resulted in a war in 1962. While the border conflicts were taking place between China and India, China and Pakistan started to build a friendly relationship and regarded India as their "common enemy." China started to cooperate with surrounding countries to demarcate their own borders in the 1950s and 60s, and in that process part of Kashmir was ceded by Pakistan to China (orange area in map 2). The normalization of the relations between China and India took place in the latter half of the 1970s, and has developed in recent years.



Map 4



Map 5

## 5 China and Russia

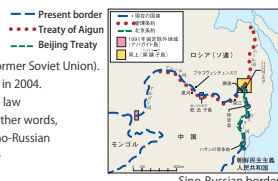
The border between China and Russia stretches 4300km (more than 7000km with the former Soviet Union). The border conflicts intensified in the late 1960s, but these border issues were resolved in 2004. The Sino-Russian border is mostly made up of rivers (3500km). In general, international law provides that borders be drawn in terms of the main channel of navigable rivers, or in other words, demarcating the river almost in half. Moreover, the 2444 islands along the river of the Sino-Russian border were also divided between the two countries. However, many of the islands are under the effective rule of Russia. This is the cause of Sino-Russian border conflicts.

### Breakup of Negotiations to Military Conflict

China and Russia conducted negotiations regarding border issues and agreed to demarcate the border along the main channel of navigable rivers in 1964. However, China strongly opposed to Russia because Russia declared and controlled "de facto" all islands near Khabarovsk as their territory, which led to the breakup of negotiations. China attempted to retake these islands as the tensions intensified after the breakup. The military conflict took place in 1969 at Zhenbao Island (Damansky Island). 68 people on the Chinese side and 48 people on the Soviet side died as a result of this conflict. Border conflicts took place in other areas which almost led to war.

### Towards a Resolution

The border conflict between the two countries was at a stalemate until the 1990s when China and the Soviet Union signed an agreement. The agreement was signed in 1991, and the two countries agreed on 98% of the borders. The remaining 2% was regarding the islands around Khabarovsk and the Abagaitai Island in the western region. The two countries stopped their conflict temporarily and did what they can do "realistically," a gradual approach to a resolution. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the local administrative authorities strongly opposed to the border arrangements. An example is the 300 hectares of land in the Khasan region along the Chinese, North Korean and Russian border. The tensions escalated, but a "fifty-fifty" method of resolution was undertaken and both sides compromised and divided this area. The execution of the border demarcation agreed in the 1991 agreement was officially declared. The conflict concerning the islands around Khabarovsk and Abagaitai were also resolved in the same manner. In these examples, the territories were not just simply distributed equally between the two countries but the interests of both China and Russia were taken into consideration (vested interests in marine resources and land). The two countries compromised by creating a relationship of mutual interest or a "win-win situation", and the two were able to reach a resolution. This method has been applied to conflicts between China and Central Asia and with Vietnam as well. This "fifty-fifty" method has received much attention in recent years, and some experts are discussing the possibility of applying the same method for border conflicts between Japan and Russia.



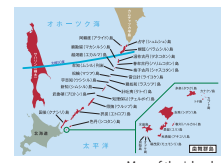
Sino-Russian border



Areas around Zhenbao (Damansky) Island

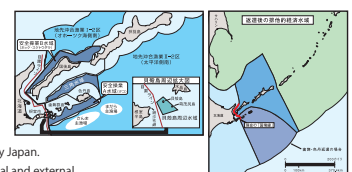
## 6 Japan and Russia

The border between Japan and Russia has moved back and forth between Sakhalin Island and the Kurile Islands. According to the Treaty of Shimoda in 1855, the line was drawn between Etorofu and Uruppu Island. The Treaty for the Exchange of Sakhalin for the Kurile Islands stipulated that Japan give up the Sakhalin Island in exchange for the 18 islands from Uruppu to Shumushu Island (up to the Kamchatka Peninsula). In the 20th century, the area south of 50 degrees north latitude of Sakhalin Island was given to Japan, based on the Treaty of Portsmouth signed after the Russo-Japanese War. However, the borders were pushed south once again after the Soviet Union occupied the southern part of Sakhalin and Kurile Islands when they entered a war with Japan in August 1945 violating the terms stipulated in the Soviet Japanese Neutrality Pact. The postwar border dispute between Japan and Russia started from Soviet occupation of Southern Sakhalin and Kurile Islands without any legal premise. The Japanese government renounced its rights to Sakhalin and Southern Sakhalin with the Treaty of San Francisco, however, since the Soviet Union did not sign the treaty, the issues regarding these islands remain unresolved. The key element to the negotiation for the peace treaty between Japan and Soviet Union took place starting in 1955 was the issue of the belonging of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashiri and Etorofu. The Soviet side proposed to hand over Habomai and Shikotan while Japan continuously demanded for Kunashiri and Etorofu. The relationship between the two countries normalized with the joint declaration that stipulated the handing over of Habomai and Shikotan upon signing the Peace Treaty. Since then, the Japanese government declared that the islands including Kunashiri and Etorofu are "an integral part of Japan's sovereign territory," and refers to them as the "northern territories." The Japanese government has continuously demanded for the "return of all four islands." The Soviet Union denied any territorial disputes with Japan.



Map of the islands

In recent years, however, both Japan and Russia have shown signs toward a more constructive approach. In the Tokyo Declaration on October 1993 the Russian side agreed to "resolve the issues of the four islands" upon signing the Peace Treaty. Moreover, several measures have been taken to build trust between the both countries regarding the border issues, such as special visits without passports or visas, the safe operation in the waters surrounding the four islands by Japan. The two countries have started to not only consider their various internal and external interests but also the needs of the people living in the border areas for a constructive approach to the resolution of border issues.



conceptual map of operations near the waters surrounding the four northern islands