

Chapter 3: Ussuri and the Bear



Damanskii Island under the Chinese flag (Aug., 2001)

1 The Damanskii Syndrome

The Truth about Russia's De facto Control of "Disputed" Islands

A crucial theme of the Sino-Russian border problem is undoubtedly the military conflict over Damanskii Island (Zhenbaodao). The island, less than a square kilometer, is famous for being the battlefield between the Soviet Union and China in March 1969. At that time, what actually initiated the conflict can only be guessed because both sides criticized each other, claiming that the other attacked first (Mouri 1987: 118). It was recently reported that the attack was deliberately conducted by the PLA of China during the tumultuous Cultural Revolution of the late 1960s, asserting that the islands on the Amur and the Ussuri Rivers were being occupied "illegally" by Soviet forces (Ishii 1998: 122-123; Goldstein 2001).

Here is an interesting point for the border negotiations: what side had been controlling the islands de facto since the incident? While China announced its own control just after the military clash, the Soviet Union also proclaimed a brilliant victory. Some Russian specialists confirm that the Soviet side maintained control of the island, others comment that the transfer of the island to China only occurred in the Gorbachev era. Even Mikhail Kapitsa, a former deputy of the Foreign Minister, noted in his memoirs that the transfer of Damanskii Island was realized according to the 1991 agreement (Kapitsa 1996: 79): Gennadii Medvetskii, deputy mayor of Dal'nerechensk City, reiterated that the transfer was conducted under Gorbachev administration (Interviews: Medvetskii 2001). Is this the truth?

The opinions mentioned above confuse de facto from de jure control. The truth is in China's hands. Recently some Russian articles have begun to recognize that Damanskii Island has been under Chinese control since the incident (Damanskii 1999: 14; Krasnoe znamia Primor'ia Mar. 29, 2001). Boris Vereshchagin, a simultaneous observer of the Foreign Ministry and the Sino-Russian negotiations over territorial disputes, suggests that the Soviet side had not set foot in the island again after the incident (Vereshchagin 1999: 179).

In Iurii Galenovich's memoir, published in 2001, he explained in detail the Sino-Russian handlings of the incident. In his memoirs,

more than 130 pages are devoted to the Sino-Russian negotiations in the period between the special meeting for discussing the incident between Aleksei Kosygin and Zhou Enlai on September 11 in 1969 and another meeting held in July 1970. During negotiations, as depicted in Galenovich's memoirs, China was "sitting" on Damanskii Island after the incident while Russia had demanded, repeatedly, a return to the "status quo" before the incident, e.g. China's departure and Russia's recovery of the island. It is true that Russia and China agreed to the "status quo," but Russia considered it as before the incident while China considered as proceeding from September 11, the day of the summit just after China's successful occupation of the island (Galenovich 2001: 181-182; 196-197).

The Memory of Damanskii

Why was China's control of Damanskii Island never made public during the period of Perestroika or the early Yel'tsin years? Galenovich's memoirs show the depth of Russia's shock over Chinese aggression during the Damanskii Incident and its uncompromising assertiveness over the de facto control on the island after the incident. Even if the Soviet Army had won the March battle against China and had reasonably stopped further action to recover the island by force, a de facto "loss" of the territory would have meant a Russian defeat by a rival for territory. If the "loss" of Russian territory were to be made public at the time, it would have seriously harmed not only the glory of Russian forces but also the Sino-Russian border negotiations, which were in crisis.

Russia was obliged to confirm China's de facto control of Damanskii Island, but information that Damanskii's "loss" did not directly relate to Russia's signing of the 1991 agreement was concealed. The lack of information on China's de facto control of the island by the general public left the officials and people in Primor'e with the impression of weakness in the Russian Foreign Ministry's position concerning Sino-Russian negotiations over the islands on the border river.

Despite problems in Russia's domestic decision-making in the mid-1990s, the Foreign Ministry withheld from the public facts relating to the Damanskii Island situation after the conflict and, in

turn, kept alive the memory of the Damanskii Incident and used "Damanskii" as a nightmare symbol of a possible military clash between Russia and China in the future. This symbol deterred Russian local resistance against the border negotiations and promoted the demarcation work, as seen in Chapter 1. Lingering memories of Damanskii and fear of future Sino-Russian conflicts in the Russian mind were factors that resulted in last-minute compromises between the central and local governments over territorial issues.

This seems to have had a big psychological effect on the completion of demarcation by the end of 1997, which had been in deadlock since the mid-1990s. It is also worth noting that Russia and China introduced measures of mutual confidence building in 1996 and a reduction of military forces in 1997. This provided the conditions necessary for further compromise in demarcation negotiations not only along the Sino-Russian border but also along the Sino-Central Asian border (see page 179). Recalling the multi-faceted syndrome of Damanskii was a necessary condition to normalize border relations between Russia and China.

Damanskii Island as a Chain of Disputes

The Soviet side is said to have prepared for the transfer of Damanskii Island before the incident. During the 1964 border negotiations (as mentioned later), Nikita Khrushchev had already recognized, in principle, the border as the navigable channel on the Amur and Ussuri Rivers. If negotiations had been terminated successfully then, Damanskii Island would have peacefully belonged to China both de facto and de jure. The Soviet side wanted to keep the two islands at the junction of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers, Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii and Tarabarov, under its own control, even if it accepted Thalweg on the Sino-Russian border river.⁷ This firm attitude toward the two islands caused a breakdown in the negotiations (Ishii 1995: 101-103).

The true meaning of the Damanskii Incident should be understood not as a point but as a chain consisting of disputed islands. In fact,

7 Concerning the Thalweg principle itself, Soviet international law theory generally accepted it, at least, in the early 1950s. See, *Mezhdynarodnoe pravo* 1957: 192-193.



Sino-Russian military clashes were not limited to Damanskii Island in the late 1960s. It is well known that conflicts were repeated at many spots on the border, e.g. Gol'dinskii (Bacha) Islands near Tarabarov on the Amur River, and some districts along the western Sino-Russian border near the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

It is crucial to identify which islands in the long chain of disputed islands existed besides Damanskii and to research how the disputes were resolved during border negotiations. It is also important to make clear the details of border cooperation and perspectives in the chain after the demarcation work had been finished. This chapter analyzes and further considers the de facto control of disputed islands. It covers the border from Lake Khanka, the Sungacha River — south of Damanskii Island through the Ussuri River to the delta between the Amur and Ussuri.

2 The Disputed Islands and the Ussuri River Myth

The Truth about Island Control

The Ussuri River turns into the Sino-Russian border from its junction with the Sungacha River near Lesozavodsk City. When we see a few hundred islands on the map of the Ussuri River, a question arises: Was Damanskii the only island seriously disputed?

According to Chinese records of regional history, Hulin, Raohe, and Fuyuan along the Ussuri River, and at least 122 other islands are on the border: Hulin has 59 islands in all (35 "Chinese," 24 "Russian"), Raohe has 42 in all (26 "Chinese," 16 "Russian"), and Fuyuan has at least 21 islands "belonging" to China (islands belong to Russia are unknown). The records cover various "Chinese" islands from a small 2,000 square meter island, Xiashuilaoerdao in Hulin or Xiaodao in Raohe, to a 17 square kilometer island, Daxitongdao in Raohe. Half of the islands on the river are less than one square kilometer in size.

The figures on "China's" islands on the Ussuri River in the local records are confusing, however. "China's" islands can be divided into three categories: (1) islands China controls de facto that Russia accepts; (2) islands China controls de facto that Russia claims as its own; (3) islands Russia controls de facto that China claims as its

own. In turn, "Russia's" islands mean: (4) islands Russia controls de facto that China accepts. The true figures of China's control of the islands should be deduced from category (1) plus (2), namely "China's" figures of the record minus category (3). And the figure of disputed islands can also be counted in categories (2) plus (3).

Therefore, it is necessary to revise the figures recorded in Chinese records to identify which of the two countries control the islands de facto. Naturally, it is a good idea to compare the figures in category (1) and (4), or the figures in categories (1) plus (2) with (3) plus (4).

Facts about De Facto Control

If we recalculate the figures in the Chinese records, the Hulin records show that 29 of the islands the Chinese claim do not mention its de facto control of them. The 29 islands belong to categories (2) or (3). Therefore the islands clearly belonging to category (1) are 6 in number (35 minus 29), and to category (4), 24 in number. According to these records, after 1969, the Soviets did not set foot on Damanskii Island, which has been kept under China's control ever since. Damanskii Island is apparently one of many islands belonging to category (2) in the region (Hulin xianzhi: 119-123; 599).

Raohe records mention 10 islands of "China's" as being disputed. That is, belonging to category (2) or (3). Therefore, category (1) indicates 16 islands belonging to China and category (4) indicates 16 islands belonging to Russia, meaning an equal distribution (Raohe xianzhi: 38-45). The Fuyuan records only show 8 of "China's" 21 islands as being disputed, showing 13 islands belonging to category (1). The record does not give much detail, but at a minimum 25 islands can be categorized under category (4) as a rough estimate of the 1:200,000 scale map published in the Soviet Union in 1985. Category (4) includes Sakhalinskii Island, which was under Russia's de facto control without Chinese claims but was finally and, maybe groundlessly, transferred to China. The details are given later in the chapter (Fuyuan xianzhi: 61-69; 416-418).

A final analysis of the recalculated figures in the Chinese records show: the Ussuri River has 147 border islands; Russia has 65 and China has 35 respectively which are undisputed (belonging

to category (1) or (4)), and 47 of which are disputed (belonging to category (2) or (3)). The allocation of islands on the Ussuri River between China and Russia suggests the real power balance in the border region after the Damanskii Incident.

It is unclear to what extent the past figures from the Chinese records reflect the present situation. The official data of island division on the Ussuri River after the demarcation work show that there are 320 islands in all, 153 Chinese and 167 Russian (see Table 4 on page 194). To explain this gap in the figures between the local records and the official data is not easy. Counting the number of islands on the Ussuri River could be changed according to time, location, and the counting method employed. Some islands seem to have suddenly appeared or disappeared as a result of seasonal water flow of the river. Even Damanskii Island disappeared once in its history (Tian Feng 1998). Chinese records are based partly on a survey conducted in the mid-1980s on the islands but mainly on surveys conducted in previous periods. The method is also disputable. A group of islets might be counted as a single island in the record of the Ussuri River as for the Amur River (see Chapter 4). The gap between China's previous and newest figures for the islands on the Ussuri border seems to depend on differences in counting methods. Nevertheless, most of the islands listed in Table 2, with an individual Chinese name given, were considered crucial by China in the border dispute with Russia. Therefore, the figures of islands in the Chinese records give a helpful hint for identifying the real balance between Russia and China on the border.

Table 2. Number of Islands or Island Groups on the Ussuri River

	Total	China		Russia	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	147 *				
Hulin	59	6	29		24
Raohe	42	16	10		16
Fuyuan	46 *	13	8		25 *

*estimated figure

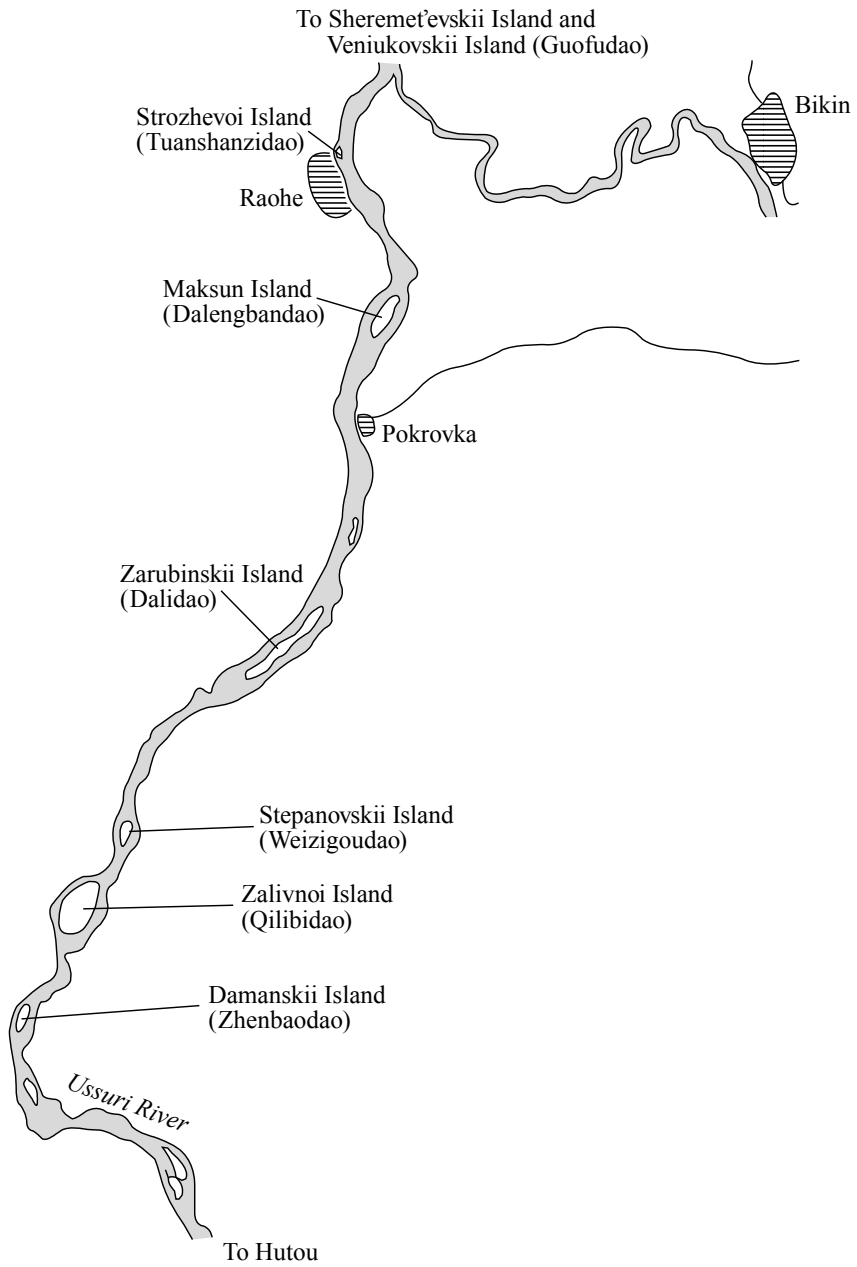
What islands belong to category (2) or (3)? Here is a review of the islands of Raohe Region, next to Damanskii Island. Raohe Region is worth researching because the number of islands belonging to category (1) for China and category (4) for Russia is even. The Raohe record does not mention the names of the 10 disputed islands, however. Therefore, it is not easy to identify which 10 disputed islands were discussed in the negotiations. For example, according to the records, the largest island on the Ussuri River, Kutsuzov (Daxitongdao) was under Chinese control but was transferred to Russia in the Manchukuo period, and then the main channel of the river changed direction west of the river (Raohe xianzhi: 42). It suggests that China gave up its claim to the island early on in the negotiations and recognized Russia's claim. The records give no clear indication whether or not Kutsuzov is included as one of the 10 disputed islands. In fact, the island has remained under Russian control since demarcation.

According to my field research on the Ussuri River, in the summer of 2001, there are at least five formerly disputed islands: Zalivnoi (Qilibi), Stepanovskii (Weizigou), Zarubinskii (Dali), Maksun (Dalengban), and Strozhevoi (Tuanshanzi), a chain consisting of 0.2 to 3.6 square kilometer islands located on the river between Damanskii Island and Raohe City. This chain was a link in the most acutely disputed border area and small-scale Sino-Russian military exchanges were reported there before the Damanskii Incident.

The Raohe report shows that China maintained control over two islands: Zalivnoi and Maksun. Zalivnoi Island — sometimes called Kirkinskii in Russia — next to Damanskii, was known for the skirmishes that occurred before the Damanskii Incident from the end of December 1967 to the beginning of January 1968 (Raohe xianzhi: 331; Miasnikov 2001: 204). The report indicates that China stopped its citizens from entering Maksun because of the dangerous situation caused by the strong Soviet claims on it (Raohe xianzhi: 332). Even if Russia had handed the two islands over to China, Russian pressure on China would have remained heavy.

Besides that, another chain of disputed islands could be found down river using the former Soviet map: at least three islands on the river from Raohe City — Utinye (Machang), Faingov (Xinxing-

Ussuri River Basin



dong) and Sheremet'evskii (Dapaozi) — were clearly disputed islands. In this chain, only Faingov was controlled de facto by China (Raohe xianzhi: 38-45).

In short, when we focus on the eight disputed islands found on the map or in my field research, five of the eight islands in Raohe Region were under Russian control. Even on the water near the islands under Chinese control, Chinese fishermen were sometimes reportedly stopped by Russian border patrol ships. China was then obliged to accept the bitter reality of Russia's strong presence over the river, though it defended a few islands next to Damanskii to the last.

The declaration of finishing the border demarcation work in 1997 fundamentally changed the border situation. It leads to categories (2) and (3) being eliminated. For example, China's de facto control of Damanskii Island was recognized by Russia de jure. A memorial stone commemorating the completion of the demarcation work in 1997 can be seen on a jetty extending out from the island. The three islands belonging to category (2) for China as well as Damanskii were also recognized by Russia. Except for Sheremet'evskii Island, five islands belonging to category (3) for Russia were transferred to China. The group of islands was crucial because it meant not only Russian juridical and formal recognition but also the actual transfer to China. Most of the disputed islands, irrespective of category (2) or (3), finally belong to China. It is a natural result as they were controlled de facto or claimed by Russia because it chose not to apply Thalweg on the Sino-Russian border. Russia, in turn, must accept the loss of its former "territory" in the negotiations.

For Russia, the loss of category (3) islands has a special meaning. The concrete loss of de facto control over the islands could damage Russian local interests. Therefore, Russia had strived to acquire an exception to Thalweg for these islands in order to maintain and maximize its own interests during the later stages of the border negotiations in 1997. One exceptional case seems to be the four square kilometer Sheremet'evskii Island, located between the two villages of Sheremet'evo and Kedrovo. China had long claimed this island, but it remained under Russian control after negotiations. The reasons and details surrounding its final decision are unclear.

even now. The Raohe record blames Soviet army intrusions on the island for attacking and killing Chinese residents during the Chinese Eastern Railway incidents in 1929.⁸ As the island is seemingly close to the Chinese coast of the Ussuri River, there is no apparent reason for China to give up its claim to this island (Raohe xianzhi: 44).

In the spring of 2001, Russia issued a new map of the Ussuri River, which replaced the old border with a newly demarcated one. This map suggests the existence of another exception to Thalweg on the river in Fuyuan Region.⁹ This is Sakhalinskii Island near Cherniaev Village of Khabarovsk Krai. The Fuyuan report never mentions it as "China's," and recognizes it as belonging to category (4) (Fuyuan xianzhi: 416). It is now under Chinese control on the Russian new map. The transfer of an undisputed island to China is indeed curious.

If we remember the story in Chapter 1, Genrikh Kireev honestly expressed some difficulties inherent in the Sino-Russian border demarcation work in early 1997. In particular he pointed out the work on the 200 kilometer Ussuri River south from Khabarovsk City as being just such an example (see pages 25-26). This was basically resolved at the end of August of that year, a few weeks before the final decision over the disputed land in Khasan Region (*Priamurskie vedomosti* Aug. 20, 1997). One of the islands had yet to be resolved even then, however. Vladimir Rakhmanin, Deputy Head of the First Asian Bureau of the Foreign Ministry, dared to mention that Sheremet'evskii would remain under Russian control without any concrete explanation (Rakhmanin 1997: 21). The last island to be negotiated is believed to be Sheremet'evskii.

8 These incidents were a de facto war, which Zhang Xueliang began against the Soviet Union to "restore" the railways. In 1929, he investigated the Soviet Consulate at Harbin, arrested the staff for a plot of "communist propaganda," and at last confiscated communications and other equipment of the Chinese Eastern Railway. In August, the Soviet side entered China and attacked many Chinese cities and killed almost ten thousand people. Finally, China was obliged to accept conditions for peace, on which the railways should be controlled by the Soviet Union as before.

9 Veniukovskii Island (Guofudao) that belonged to the category (3) of Russia was handed to China.

Rakhmanin objectively tried to explain that Russian control of the island was a result of the "technical" demarcating work and Thalweg, but at the same time expressed the importance and nuances of the island for Khabarovsk Krai, keeping silent about the fate of Sakhalinskii Island that would soon be under Chinese control. His explanation lacks full creditability and seems unacceptable according to the map and my research. Is it possible for us to suppose the existence of a political deal that was struck to allow for the exchange of islands: did Russia hand Sakhalinskii Island over to China to maintain control of Sheremet'evskii? I could not set aside my own suspicion that an exceptional deal had been arranged at the eleventh hour as a compromise "fifty-fifty" division of the disputed land in Khasan Region.

3 The Thorn of the Amur-Ussuri Delta

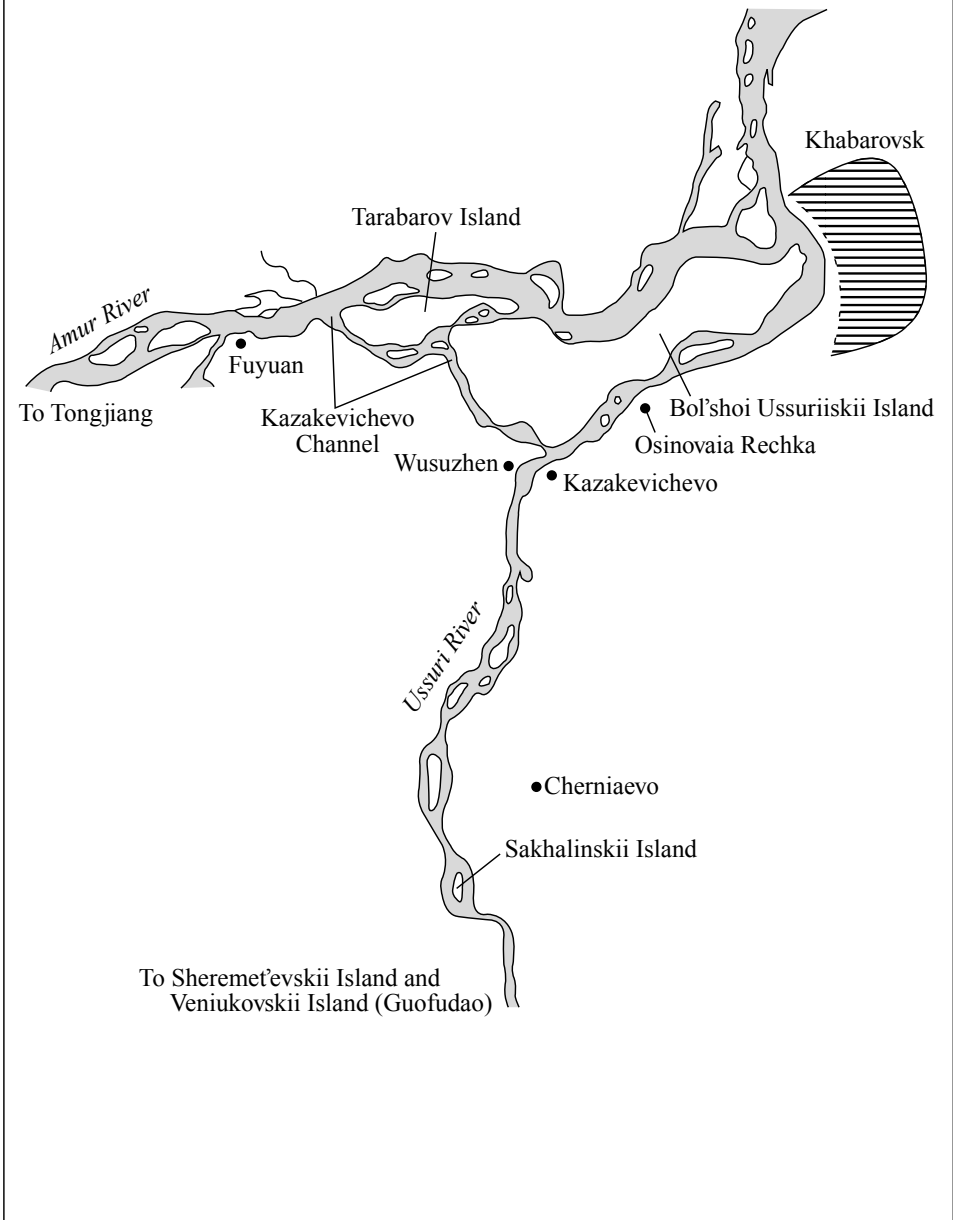
History of the Delta Zone

As the Ussuri River flows toward the sea, its banks widen and the water flow becomes more rapid. We see a Chinese border guard in a watchtower on the left and a Russian village on the right. In front of the Chinese tower a branch of the river begins. Here is Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii Island (Heixiazidao), a big delta between the Ussuri and Amur River. The island is world famous, and any disagreements relating to it must be resolved during Sino-Russian border negotiations, which have been going on since the implementation of the 1991 agreement. Chinese locals call it Xiaotongjiangzi or Fuyuan-shuidao (the latter named during the Manchukuo period), while the Russians call it the Kazakevichevo Channel, the same as the village opposite the Chinese tower, originating from Petr Kazakevich, a Russian representative during Sino-Russian border negotiations on the Protocol of the Beijing Treaty (Xingkai Agreement) which was signed in 1861 (see Chapter 2).

The Amur and Ussuri have another point of juncture, north of the delta near Khabarovsk City. Which should be considered the true juncture: the south or north? This is the first and most important point under discussion between Russia and China.

The Aigun Treaty of 1858 stated in Article 1 that the left bank from the Argun River to the mouth of the Amur River would belong to

Khabarovsk and the Amur-Ussuri Delta





An exit of Kazakevichevo Channel on the Ussuri River (Aug., 2001)

Russia while the right bank to the Ussuri River would belong to China. The land between the Ussuri River and the sea was under Sino-Russian joint control before the border was actually determined.

The Russian side took the position that the Kazakevichevo (Fuyuan) Channel was a branch of the Amur River. Accordingly, the Ussuri River comes to an end at the south junction point near Kazakevichevo Village, and a stream flowing from it could be a part of the Amur River. When the Ussuri River stops before the beginning of the delta, the delta should technically be Russian territory (Miasnikov 1997: 421-422).

Russia recognized that China had first claimed the delta in 1906 (Filonov 2001: 36-40). China attempted to refute the exact place of the river junction. The Chinese emphasized that the northern junction near Khabarovsk City is a natural border and the Fuyuan (Kazakevichevo) Channel is not the main stream of the Amur but only a narrow and shallow flow, while a stream down south to the northern junction is part of the Ussuri River (Fuyuan xianzhi: 412).

Russian geographers ignored China's appeal; since the water flow on the Kazakevichevo Channel runs through the Amur to the Ussuri River, it consists only of the Amur and the delta — Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii, Tarabarov and 30 other small islets, which were formed by the water flow from the Amur River (Filonov: 36-40).

The next discussion centered around a map attached to the Beijing Treaty of 1860 that decided once and for all that the right bank of the Ussuri River to the junction point with the Amur would belong to Russia. On this map, a red line depicts the delta as being Russian territory located between the Amur and the Ussuri (Gaimusho 1975: 68). In response, China criticized Russia for unilaterally making the map with the red line and for its inaccuracies on a map scale of 1:1,000,000. The existence of the map attached to the treaty is to Russia's advantage, even if the map is disputable.

The placement of the marker "E" that had been set as a sign of the Sino-Russian border according to the Additional Protocol of the Beijing Treaty was also disputed. Russia justified the placement on the southern edge of the delta, diagonally across from Kazakevichevo (Datsyshen 2000: 133). In contrast, the Chinese blamed Russia for moving the marker south of the delta intentionally at the time of the border redemarcation work in 1886 (Fuyuan xianzhi: 413).

Which side has occupied the delta: Russia or China? According to a geographer in Khabarovsk, the name Taravarov Island originated from the first settlers on the delta and its history began after the Aigun Treaty of 1858. A jetty was built on the delta and named Ussuriiskii Village in 1895 (Filonov 2001: 36-40). The Chinese records indicate that Chinese had already lived on the delta with agricultural and fishery activities by 1901, and show some traces of their activities from 1909 to 1913 on the delta. It also records that Russia had prohibited Chinese ships from navigating on the north river channel of the delta since 1911 (but Chinese ships could navigate freely from 1918 to 1923 as a result of Russia's weakness just after the Revolution), and Russia had expelled all Chinese from the delta and completely controlled the island and the channels since the Chinese Eastern Railway incidents of 1929 (Fuyuan xianzhi: 63; 414). As Japanese records of the Manchukuo period also verify Russian control of the delta in the 1930s (Nakamura 1939: 41-42), it is plausible that Russia's de facto control of Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii and Tarabarov was established following the incidents. The government of Manchukuo occasionally protested Russia's control of the delta, proclaiming that it belonged to Manchukuo.

The official border dispute between Moscow and Beijing resumed in the 1960s. As many analysts proclaim, the first Sino-Russian border negotiations after World War II started from the end of 1963 and ended during the autumn of 1964. According to the memoirs of Boris Vereshchagin, the Russian side was prepared to recognize its seizure of islands on the river in the 1930s and agreed to revise the river border on the basis of Thalweg. Russia maintained its position, however, to ensure that the delta between the Amur and the Ussuri would be an exception to Thalweg because of the existence of the red line on the map attached to the Beijing Treaty of 1860. But, as Khrushchev hesitated to sanction the plan in the Politburo, the Soviet border guard service had to guarantee many islands close to China's bank. This, ultimately, led to tragedy: the Damanskii Incident (Vereshchagin 1999: 169). Vereshchagin missed a chance for a peaceful resolution of the border issue in the mid-1960s.

Though Russia basically prepared to transfer islands in Chinese waters except the delta, Akira Ishii explains that China's insistence on holding the delta would eventually lead to a break-off in negotiations. Since the ice break of the Amur River in the spring of 1967, Russia has forcefully blocked Chinese ships from navigating on the north channel of the delta. China lost the channel again after its restoration in the 1951 Sino-Russian agreement which had permitted Chinese navigation on the river. The Soviet side justified its military blockade of the channel because of the lack of Chinese rights to navigate Russia's "inland" water (Ishii 1987: 262; Kapitsa 1996: 100).¹⁰

The fact that the Russians, in principal, had accepted laws based on Thalweg on the border river weakened Russia's position during negotiations. The discussion on whether the north junction belongs to the Amur or the Ussuri has lost its centrality for the negotiations. Even if the Kazakevichevo Channel were a branch of the Amur as Russia has insisted, the delta should be under China's control because of the narrowness of the channel and its close proximity to China. Nobody could justify the Kazakevichevo Channel as a main channel of the Amur based on maps and field surveys. If Thalweg

10 China recovered access to the channel after the end of the Soviet blockade in September 1977 (Ishii 1987: 262; Kapitsa 1996: 100).

were applied in principle, Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii and Tarabarov would naturally be transferred to China.

The remaining discussion focuses on the validity of the map attached to the Beijing Treaty. The red line in the map also seems not to have the same persuasive effect on negotiations as before, when Russia expressed its willingness to revise most of the old border. In addition, inconsistencies in Russia's stance toward the previous border agreements damaged its position on the delta: while Russia demanded revisions of the border agreement on the Argun River because of the closeness of some islands to the Russian bank after a change in the water flow, they demanded observance of another agreement concerning the Granitnaia River in another case (Gaimusho 1975: 68). Therefore, as a last resort, Russia asked China to make an exception to Thalweg only on the delta with Russia maintaining de facto control.

Sino-Russian Negotiations: Islands and Navigation Rights

Full-scale negotiations over the border issue were resumed only after Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech of 1986. But secret preliminary negotiations had resumed in the early 1980s. China gave indications that it wanted to improve its ties with Russia. China's official newspaper, "Renmin Ribao," on June 17, 1981, published an article by Li Huichuan. He wrote that the present Sino-Russian border had been borne from an "unequal treaty" of the nineteenth century under coercion of the Russian Empire, but China had carefully considered well the realities in the border area and was prepared to negotiate to determine the true border on this account (Wang Qi 2000: 154-156).

Border negotiations were conducted under a new initiative of the Russian Foreign Minister, Edvard Shevardnadze, from February 1987. Russia and China reaffirmed the constructive results of the 1964 consultations and agreed to demarcate the river border based on the Thalweg principle. Even if both sides were to agree in principle, details on dividing the islands, particularly on "delicate" placement of the border on the river would be discussed in future negotiations. Concrete negotiations over many deltas and spots on a meandering river or junction of rivers seem to have been difficult. To judge

which stream is the main channel on a multi-tracked river also seems a difficult task for negotiations. What negotiations over the border river have been conducted? What portions of territory have Russia and China insisted are theirs in areas other than a few famous disputed islands? The mystery on the Amur River will be explored in Chapter 4.

Here we come back to the thorny question of the delta between the Ussuri and the Amur. The discussion over the delta was revived according to the 1964 negotiations. The Soviet side argued for keeping Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii and Tarabarov under its own control as an exception to Thalweg based on the map attached to the Beijing Treaty and Russian de facto control of the islands. On the other hand, the Soviets proposed to accept navigation of Chinese ships on the channel north of the Amur on its initiative as early as the second round of negotiations (Vereshchagin 1999: 226). Article 8 of the 1991 agreement is interesting because it did not clarify the nationality of the ships going through the north channel, though "ships" mean Chinese "ships" under the conditions of Russian de facto control of the north channel. This phrase appears a bit strange in comparison with Article 9: a ship, which could navigate on the Tumen River, clearly indicates China (see page 15). If the delta belongs to China, China could naturally go through the north channel without any sanctions from Russia and Article 8 would have no meaning to China. In turn, if Russia gives special permission to Chinese ships to navigate on the north channel through its "inland" river, Article 8 should clearly state the ships as being Chinese as does Article 9. Therefore, Article 8 is thought to be a product of a compromise between Russia and China, and the problems belonging to the delta were never mentioned.

As far as Chinese ships are concerned, they have been navigating the channel de facto since 1977, and could be seen as a confirmation of a *fait accompli*. A key is the reason why the Russian side, unilaterally, proposed such a compromise early on in the negotiations. It supposes that Russia endeavored to protect its own interests by this deal: naturally the delta on the Amur and the Ussuri. Vereshchagin repeatedly emphasized Russia's insistence in keeping the delta under its own control during all negotiations in the late 1980s. His tone of explanation seems to have been too defensive, however (Vereshchagin

1999). Even if Russia tried to keep the Delta, this did not necessarily mean that it meant to keep the whole delta. A few rumors about the delta are well-established: Sino-Soviet negotiations for China's retracting its claim to disputed land in Tajikistan in exchange for the return of the delta was then going on behind-the-scenes, or for dividing the delta and preparing it for Sino-Russian common use, and so on.¹¹ It seems that Russia could not have appealed objectively to its own justness on the issue. This is why, though the government repeatedly publicizes its unchangeable position for keeping the delta under its own control even to this day, Khabarovsk people do not believe the central government's position on the delta, as briefly mentioned in Chapter 1.

Local Resistance

Khabarovsk authorities have been insisting that a security threat from China would exist if the delta, only two kilometers from Khabarovsk City, were transferred to China. They also have mentioned would-be economic damage for local citizens, who have agricultural activities on Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii Island. They particularly criticized Article 8 for giving Chinese ships, including military ships, the right to navigate freely on the channel near Khabarovsk City. Governor Viktor Ishaev demanded control of the navigation of Chinese ships on the channel by an international regulation. According to the 1994 regulations, Chinese ships must provide prior notification to Russia. I heard that a Chinese ship at Fuyuan port went through the north channel to the south junction of the Amur and the Ussuri in the summer of 2001, after the owner notified Khabarovsk authorities through a Chinese counterpart, a branch of navigation and transportation of Heilongjiang Province in Jiamusi City.

The Khabarovsk authorities were also wary of possible "joint use" of disputed islands (see page 26). If it were introduced for Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii and Tarabarov, the disputed delta would be open for Chinese use even if it were to remain under Russian juris-

11 The former episode was famous among Chinese specialists, but after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the negotiations brought no results. The latter rumor was revived just after Russia's succession after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992.

diction. They were afraid that there would be a rush of Chinese entering the island facing Khabarovsk City to live, while conducting business.

After all the demarcation activity on the basis of the 1991 agreement, the "two island" issue is much more intense than before. Local newspapers in Khabarovsk repeatedly insist on the lawfulness of their possession of the two islands and China's malice toward them (Tikhookeanskaia zvezda Jul. 25; Oct. 10, 1998; Feb. 19, 1999, Primurskie vedomosti Jul. 22, 1998; Mar. 2, 1999). Some of these "anti-Chinese campaigns" in Khabarovsk are clearly artificial. One widespread rumor, which has spread all over Russia since 1998, is that China is trying to connect its main lands to the delta and is secretly filling in a narrow point of the Kazakevichevo Channel between Fuyuan City and Wusuzhen, a jetty beside the Chinese Border Guard watch tower on the Ussuri opposite Kazakevichevo Village on the Ussuri. I conducted field research there in the summer of 2001 and found that there was no road directly to the bank of the Kazakevichevo Channel, and the south and north junction points of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers were closely watched by Russian military ships. It would be hard for the Chinese to conduct big business on the river in secret.

At a meeting in Keio University, Tokyo on November 2001, I asked Mikhail Titarenko, Director of the Institute for Far Eastern Studies, a question about the supposed Chinese channel plot: what method is China employing to fill the Kazakevichevo Channel under Russia's tight surveillance of the border? His answer was that China is not trying to fill the channel. It is true that China had encouraged natural change in the Kazakevichevo Channel by prohibiting the navigation of Chinese ships through it. China did not allow any dredging work to keep it navigable. Local Russian sinophobia, fearful of a would-be territorial loss, helps to beget this fantastic rumor in Khabarovsk Krai.

For justifiable reasons, the people of Khabarovsk have an uneasy feeling about the future of the two islands. In July 2001, when Russia and China signed the 20 year term Treaty of Good-neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation, some Chinese leaders were said to have shown some resistance. They were most likely



Wusuzhen and its jetty on the Ussuri River (Aug., 2001)

concerned with a lost chance for recovering China's rights on the left bank of the Amur and the right bank of the Ussuri, the territory of which China was "deprived" of by the Russian Empire in the late nineteenth century. Jiang Zemin reportedly took the first initiative for the friendship treaty, but Russia was in much more haste to sign it than the Chinese. One reason the Chinese changed their attitude toward the treaty is rumored to be that the treaty could prevent China's "recovery" of the Russian Far East after its reunification with Taiwan in the future (Straits Times, Jul. 18, 2001).

In contrast, Russia showed its strong will to have all of the remaining problems on the territorial issue resolved in time for the signing of the treaty. During this time, a story was made public: President Putin hoped to hand Bol'shoi Island on the Argun over to China in return for keeping the two islands on the Amur under Russia's control. However, China seemed to have rejected Russia's proposal, even if one actually existed, and demanded the two Amur islands, or one at least. As a result, Russia and China could not resolve the problems successfully and inserted in the treaty a phrase on the status quo of the three islands and the need for further negotiations. Khabarovsk is likely to keep organizing groups oriented against a would-be transfer of the two islands to China.

The Khabarovsk campaign for the delta between the Amur and the Ussuri River does not necessarily cause daily conflict with the Chinese, or widespread paranoia over the Russian Far East, beyond the propaganda organized in Primor'e Krai in the 1990s. Nevertheless, the "two island" issue in Khabarovsk is often seen as a thorn remaining in Sino-Russian relations. It has also delayed regional cooperation near the disputed area between Khabarovsk and Heilongjiang. Khabarovsk is promoting an unilateral plan for developing the delta to strengthen a fait accompli in the recently revised program for developing Zabaikal'sk and the Far East from 2001 to 2011, ignoring Chinese interests in the area (Li Chuanxun 2003). Rumors of "a secret Chinese plot to fill in the Kazakevichevo Channel" remain strong even now (Kyodo News, Jul. 20, 2002).¹² On August 30, 2002, a seven hundred meter floating bridge between Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii Island and Osinovaia Rechka, on the way to Kazakevichevo Village, was built for the first time since 1995. Khabarovsk has paid careful attention to the delta and its future (Tikhookeanskaia zvezda Aug. 31, 2002).

4 A Bridge on the Border

South of the Ussuri River

Seen from China's eyes, the border with the Russian Far East can be divided into two parts with the center point being Khabarovsk City: its eastern border from the Tumen River facing North Korea to the delta between the Amur and the Ussuri River and its northern border from the delta up the Amur River. The Ussuri runs as an inland river down to Lesozavodsk City on the Siberian Railway in Primor'e Krai, joining the Sungacha River, and turning into the border river. Here we explain the border from the Tumen River to the Ussuri River.

The border runs over land through Khasan Region and reaches roughly the same latitude as the administrative boundary between Jilin and Heilongjiang Provinces, or Razdol'noe City in Primor'e. Then, it goes along the Granitnaia River to the Dongning - Poltavka

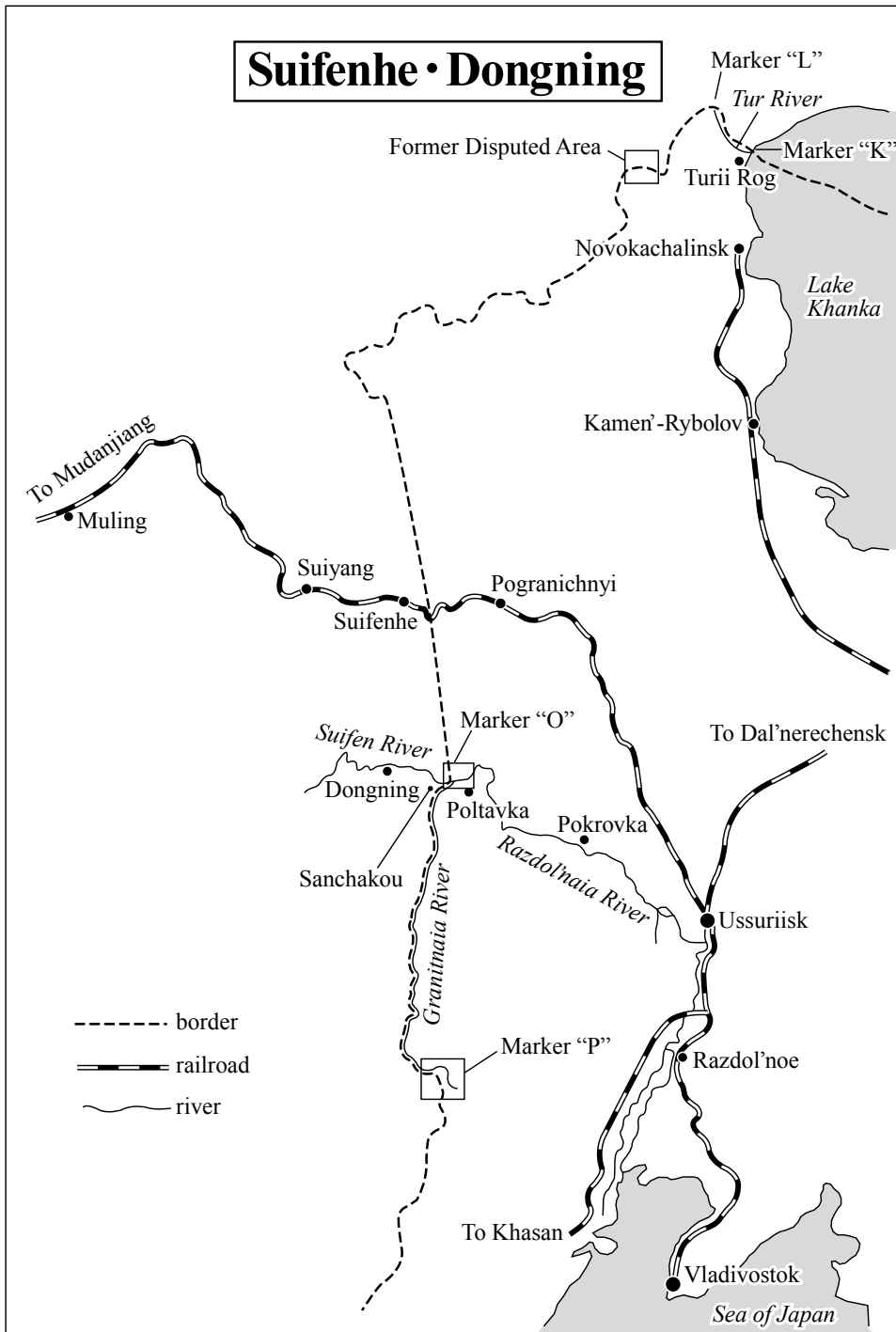
12 Not only the local papers but also a central paper like "Izvestiia" play a key role in publicizing such rumors. See, an article written by a Vladivostok correspondent (Izvestiia Jul. 19, 2002). Similar propaganda is repeated in Russo-Japanese border negotiations (see Izvestiia Feb. 4; Feb. 10, 2004).

border point and turns again into a land border through Suifenhe, Muling, Jidong and Mishan. From Mishan, the border goes back to the river, across Lake Khanka to the Sungacha River. This area is well-known for the many Korean-Chinese residents, e.g. in San-chakou, the customs area of the border point of Dongning City. The Russian area is a back door to Primor'e and a trouble spot as a "green border" with many illegal Chinese travelers and poachers.

The border is a short but unique line, which often switches from a land to a river border and vice versa, and includes a border going through a big lake. The land border consists of many short lines heading in various directions; the border agreement has many more points on land than on rivers. Article 2 of the 1991 agreement refers to 20 of 33 points in all the 4,300 kilometers of this border area. In comparison with islands on the river border, places on land are easier to locate on the map because the article is directly clarified. The three disputed territories mentioned in Chapter 1 are on the land border.

According to Article 1 of the Beijing Treaty, the border between the two states from the origin of the Sungacha River crosses Lake Xingkai and goes to the Bailing (Tur) River. From the mouth of the Bailing, the borderline goes along the mountain range to the mouth of the Hubutu (Hubtu) River. From there, along the mountains located between the Hunchun River and the sea, it goes to the Tumen River. The Additional Protocol of the Beijing Treaty in 1861 set markers on the border: "E" at the mouth of the Ussuri River (see page 34-35), "I" at the origin of the Sungacha River, "K" at the mouth of the Bailing River, "L," "N," "O," "P," and the last marker "T" at the bank of the Tumen River. Markers "M," "R," and "S" were added on the border after the signing of the 1886 Agreement, as mentioned before.

The discussion over one of the three disputed territories, called "Ussuriisk P," caused a certain amount of uncertainty as to the exact position of marker "P," which had been set at the origin of the Granitnaia River according to the Additional Protocol but was soon lost. The historical marker "P," not directly mentioned but implied in Article 2 of the 1991 agreement, is at the origin of the branch of the Granitnaia River that deeply cuts into Russian territory. The land



separated from the origin is about 900 hectares, a planned land transfer to China. The so-called "patriots" have voiced their arguments against the 1991 agreement: the marker "P" itself is groundless because it is referred to not in the Beijing Treaty but in the Additional Protocol; and the Granitnaia has multiple origins, and therefore, the place of the marker "P" is disputable. Previously, China did not demand land around the marker "P" (Tkachenko 1999: 167-169). The Primor'e administration finally recognized the inherent weakness of their arguments and this land was subsequently transferred to China (Interviews: Stegnii 1998).

There is another disputed territory on the Granitnaia River. The Granitnaia joins the Razdol'naia (Suifen) River near Dongning and Poltavka, and the river border turns into a land border. On the junction point between the river and land borders, called marker "O," is a small delta. The delta was occupied by Russia in 1903 on the premise of the water flow of the river having changed from the west to the east. Manchukuo restored most of the delta from Russia but some islands have remained under Russian control (Nakamura 1939: 38-40). The names of the islands are Polovinka and Peschanyi (Jiixinzi), which were claimed by the Chinese. According to previous research, the state of this land was also negotiated between Russia and China. This disputed land was transferred to China after implementation of the 1991 agreement.

Another discussion concerned one of the three disputed territories 20 kilometers west of the Turii Rog - Dangbi (Mishan) border checkpoint on the west side of Lake Khanka.¹³ The details of the disputed territories near Lake Khanka mentioned in Chapter 1 are not clearly understood. Kireev explained that this line was unilaterally

13 The border near Mishan was originally drawn in strange at the beginning of the marking. Article 1 of the Beijing Treaty put (Tur) after the name of the Bailing River, but then the Chinese side was said not to know where the Bailing River ran. The Russian side strongly demanded this unknown short river. A Japanese specialist explains it as a Russian evil design to take a plain west of Lake Khanka and the Razdol'naia basin for its own use. See the map on page 81; putting the markers "K" and "L" each on the origin and the mouth of the Tur River enabled Russia to acquire most of the water of Lake Khanka and much land between the lake and the Razdor'naia River (Gaimusho 1975: 67-68).

re-marked close to the Chinese side by the Soviet Union on the basis of a secret resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the CPSU in 1933 for guaranteeing and protecting the border from Manchukuo aggression. The figures for the hectares exchanged display some variations (Tkachenko 1999: 130-135). I heard about the figures from the Vice Governor of Primor'e Krai: 70 hectares for Russia and 90 for China. These figures could not be corroborated by other sources. Of the three, this dispute over territory was, however, resolved the earliest. It does not seem so serious as to warrant further negotiations as seen in Chapter 1.

After implementation of the 1991 agreement, the atmosphere in the border area dramatically improved. As shown in Chapter 2, the Khasan area has slowly progressed, but Primor'e Krai has taken a more positive stance toward cooperation with China than before. Governor Nazdratenko stated that the Primor'e has the friendliest administration toward China when he welcomed Li Peng at Vladivostok Airport in December 1999 (Krasnoe znamia Primor'ia Sept. 21, 1999). He also explained that the Primor'e had seven border checkpoints with China, including road and railway points. He added that these seven points were the most numerous in Russia (Rossiiskoe primor'e 1999: 10-19).

The seven checkpoints are Kraskino and Changlingzi (road and railway, Chapter 2), Poltavka and Dongning (road), Pogranichnyi and Suifenhe (road and railway), Turii Rog and Mishan (road) and Markovo and Hulin (road). In addition, up north there are two checkpoints in Khabarovsk Krai: Raohe and Bikin on the Ussuri River and Khabarovsk and Fuyuan on the Amur River. Here we examine four points: Mishan, Hulin, Raohe and Fuyuan. The reader should know that the border areas are stabilized and the residents have calmed their feelings toward China, particularly after the demarcation work, and that the border area is diversified in its geographic character.

Border Points after the Demarcation

(1) Mishan and Turii Rog

The border point between Turii Rog and Mishan (about 34 kilometers from Mishan City) is at the western edge of Lake Khanka,

which is shared by both Russia (3,200 square kilometers) and China (1,200 square kilometers). Sino-Russian trade occurred in this area at the end of eighteenth century and had gradually developed by the time of Japan's blockade of the area in 1933. In 1946, trade was temporarily renewed. However, trade was again renewed only recently in November 1991, when Russia and China agreed to open customs ports after the Chinese government recognized Mishan as an open gate to Russia in 1988 (Wang Jiaying 1998: 372-378). Even after the official opening of the checkpoint in June 1993, cargo and passengers passing through were kept at a bare minimum: the total amount from June 1993 to August 1999 over a six year period was some 220,000 tons or \$150 million of cargo and some 140,000 people entering the country. Particularly, from January to August 1999, about 21,000 tons or \$7.23 million in cargo and 6,837 passengers crossed (Heilongjiang jingjibao Sept. 24, 1999).

The situation dramatically changed since the latter half of 1999; customs records in China show 54,000 tons of cargo from September to December 1999 and 115,600 tons of cargo and 51,000 passengers from January to June 2000. These figures had risen ten times when compared with the same period of the previous year (Heilongjiang jingjibao Jul. 25, 2000). The figure of \$45 million in



Mishan customs close to Lake Khanka (Aug., 2001)

cargo and 190,000 passengers in 2001 hit an all time high (Heilongjiang jingjibao Feb. 11, 2002). Cargo figures did not reach the levels of border points such as Suifenhe, Heihe and Dongning, the main cities of border transportation, but the number of border passengers was second only to Suifenhe, which had some 820,000.

Despite the bitter competition among the seven customs ports geographically concentrated within Primor'e Krai, what was the reason behind the dramatic development at the Mishan checkpoint? A local economic newspaper praised the success of Mishan for four reasons: improving the environment of the customs, achieving efficiency, reducing the time of customs procedures, and lowering the procedure cost. The paper explains in more detail Mishan's simplified customs procedures: thirty seconds for entry and exit at customs, and open around the clock, regardless of weather. Therefore, many cargoes were attracted from Dongning, Suifenhe and Hulin (Heilongjiang jingjibao Jul. 25, 2000; Feb. 22, 2002).

One reason for the rapidly increasing passengers through customs is quite apparent. According to my research on the Mishan customs in August 2001, a few hundred Russian passengers went through the border and visited a market for commodities, passing Chinese customs on a non-visa tour group basis. It is said that they come and buy necessary goods there on a daily bus tour except on Saturdays from Kamen'-Rybolov, a city 60 kilometers from the customs port. This border market in China is very attractive to Russian citizens living in towns and villages far off the main road and railways from Vladivostok to Khabarovsk.

Dangbi Village, next to the Chinese border market, has a nice beach on Lake Khanka for Chinese citizens on vacation with lakeside hotels and restaurants. Many Chinese families and friends enjoy swimming on Lake Khanka in summer. In contrast, few people are seen on the Russian coast of the lake. This is because Russia sets a border check point a few kilometers off the border itself within its territory and strictly controls passengers and cargoes headed to China over the border.

The Mishan authorities have plans to build a railway to Dangbi Village from Mishan City and have proposed that Primor'e Krai connect it with the Russian railway at Turii Rog (Yuandong jingmao

daobao Dec. 7, 1992). When I asked a Russian border guard in August 2001 about the feasibility of this plan, he laughed. The Russian railway terminates at Novokachalinsk Station though it reaches Turii Rog on the map. Before considering a Sino-Russian international railway, this part of the Russian railway should be renovated first. From Turii Rog to Ussuriisk City, there is a wide asphalt road and there is no rush nor need on the Russian side to renew this railway. The Chinese side should renovate the 34 kilometer road, which is in a dilapidated condition, from Mishan City to Dangbi Village before they try to fulfill their railway dream with Russia.

(2) Hulin and Markovo

From Lake Khanka north on the Sungacha River is the junction with the Ussuri River at Lesozavodsk City. Ten kilometers south of the city, border checkpoints are on the Sungacha River: at Markovo and Jixiang (Hulin). The Sungacha River is slow and shallow with a width of ten meters. A bridge over a small river was constructed through a Sino-Russian joint investment in July 1995 and customs were established on both sides (Yuandong jingmao daobao, Jul. 31, 1995; Tian Feng 1998: 81). The length of the bridge is just 200 meters, but this is the only international bridge over the Sino-Russian border built in the 1990s. Nevertheless, a good flow of passengers and cargo through the bridge did not materialize. This border point that Mishan had won in 1999 has developed slowly despite the 150,000 tons of total cargo in 2000 and the steady increases from 50,000 tons in 1998 to 66,000 tons and \$37.7 million (Heilongjiang jingjibao Oct. 23, 1999; May 26, 2001) in the period between January to September 1999. Seventy to eighty percent of Chinese exports through the border are rice (Heilongjiang jingjibao May 26, 2001).

The border, despite having the only international bridge to Russia in Heilongjiang Province, is a lonely place and local newspapers pay little attention to it. The geoeconomic situation in Primor'e is also an important factor that needs to be analyzed. Lesozavodsk and Dal'nerechensk, cities with about 35,000 residents respectively, are on the Siberian Railway and do not depend much on China. According to my field research in September 2001, whereas a few Chinese work in a city bazaar in Lesozavodsk City, Chinese bazaars are pro-



Hulin customs and a Sino-Russian bridge on the Granitnaia River (Aug., 2001)

hibited within Dal'nerechensk City because they are said to deprive Russian residents of jobs.

If we go down the Ussuri, we see Hutou Village on the left bank, where the Manchukuo fortress was built, and Belaia Rechka on the right bank, neighbor to Dal'nerechensk City. In Hutou Village, there is a sightseeing jetty at the bank from where many floats run on the river, while Dal'nerechensk does not directly face the river. We can see Hutou with our own eyes on top of a wooded rolling hill in a suburb of Dal'nerechensk. The Siberian Railway on the river side was built as a double track rail to avoid being bombed from the Hutou Fortress in case of war. Dal'nerechensk was called Iman, a Chinese name, and was later renamed in 1972 after the Damanskii Incident (Primorskii krai 1997: 170).

(3) Raohe and Bikin

If we go 100 kilometers down the Ussuri, we come to the city of Raohe, the center of Raohe Region. This region has many disputed islands on the river. On the river bank within the city, we see a former disputed island, Tuanshanzidao (Strozhevoi) that Russia had controlled de facto but is now under Chinese control. The city is also isolated because of bad access: there are no railways, only one bus

that comes to and from other cities once a day and bad conditions around the main road. Besides its geographic limitations, the stagnant border demarcation work disturbed the development of this area despite the city being officially opened in 1993. A new but lonely Raohe customs is eight kilometers south of the river opposite Pokrovka Village with about 19,000 residents. Between the customs ports automobiles can cross the frozen river in winter, and they can be moved by barge in summer. From a bus terminal in Pokrovka through the border checkpoint up to Bikin City is 17 kilometers (see page 66).

Bikin, a developing city, does not directly face the Ussuri River like Dal'nerechensk. It has no hotel, no restaurant, and it is difficult to find an unlicensed taxi at the center of the town because there are only a few cars. We have little chance of seeing any Chinese in the city. According to a local newspaper, cargo ships carrying vegetables and drinks lumber twice to four times a week between Pokrovka and Raohe customs (Yuandong jingmao daobao Sept. 5, 1994). Passengers going through customs were some 7,000 in 1996 (Yuandong jingmao daobao Dec. 2, 1996).



A barge between Pokrovka and Raohe (Aug., 2001)

The mayor of Bikin City, Gennadii Kekot', explained that the Russian customs had been provisionally operated and was officially completed only recently in December 2000 (Interviews: Kekot' 2001; Heilongjiang jingjibao Mar. 30, 2002). Owing to the official opening, it was recorded that Raohe customs hit 182,000 tons (a 160 percent increase from the previous year) and over \$120 million worth of cargo and 40,000 passengers (2.6 times higher than the previous year) in 2001 (Heilongjiang jingjibao Feb. 22, 2002). Bikin Region, thanks in part to having no apparent evidence of territorial problems, has a comparative advantage in the developmental programs in Khabarovsk Krai, including the establishment of a special economic zone (Tikhookeanskaia zvezda Apr. 20, 2002).

Bikin Region has a short history of cooperation with China. A jetty in Pokrovka Village was opened in 1862, but according to the Director of Bikin Museum, interaction between Russia and China was rare even in the period of the Sino-Russian friendship of the 1950s (Interviews: Litvinova 2001). As in the story of the tortoise and the hare, the slow runner sometimes has an unexpected advantage over the faster runner. Bikin knows little about the Sino-Russian "friendship" in the 1950s but even less about the military conflicts of the 1960s (Damanskii Islands belongs to the Primor'e but Bikin City to Khabarovsk Krai). In addition, it has not experienced the rush of Chinese in the early 1990s, thanks mainly to the long distance from the main routes between Russia and China. Bikin citizens seem to feel little threat from China, including "Chinese migration;" not only the administrative officials but the elderly chief editor of the local newspaper "Bikinskii Vestnik," which is published three times a week and is a successor of the "Kommunist" founded in 1933, reaffirmed that there was no threat from China (Interviews: Iakovchuk 2001).

The scenic view on the Ussuri River is spectacular. If access to Raohe City were improved and interaction with Bikin City were enlivened, it would be possible for Russian tourists to sail with Chinese to Damanskii Island for sightseeing from the city's jetty. After their excursion they could drink a local Chinese vodka called "Zhenbao-dao" together. After the demarcation work on the Ussuri River, local cooperation between Chinese and Russian residents over the border

could proceed; the Damanskii syndrome should gradually calm down.

(4) Fuyuan and Khabarovsk

Fuyuan City, which faces Tarabarov Island, is on the western edge of the delta between the Amur and Ussuri Rivers. It is a small town with a few thousand of residents (in the past it had a population of over 110,000). In February 1993, the customs port was officially opened and ships operated between Fuyuan and Khabarovsk City, 65 kilometers away. The number of passengers crossing the border was over 8,000 in 1995 and tens of thousands in 1997 (Yuandong jingmao daobao Feb. 22, 1993; Nov. 27, 1995; Jul. 14, 1997).

Ships ply the route everyday from May to the end of October. Khabarovsk residents enjoy going to Fuyuan City for a day of shopping. Fuyuan City is well-arranged for shopping and sightseeing. The Russian side can be seen from its beautiful park on the south bank of the Amur River. A special road to Tongjiang City and Harbin is rapidly being constructed. The meaning of the city for China is increasing as a gateway or show window to Khabarovsk. The Chinese side has also made known its plans to build customs both in Wusuzhen and Kazakevichevo for conducting trade across the frozen river (Yuandong jingmao daobao Jan. 1, 2000).

Both Chinese and Russian border guards, watching the mouth of the Kazakevichevo Channel at the south edge of Bol'shoi Ussuriiskii Island, visit Kazakevichevo Village and Wusuzhen on a daily basis to exchange information on the border. Chinese boats enjoy fishing activities and Chinese tourists come on the jetty at Wusuzhen near the Border Guard tower for sightseeing under the supervision of Russian Guard ships. Chinese sightseeing on the Russian border is normally seen on the Sino-Russian-Korean triangular border on the Tumen River or on the Sino-Russian border on a plain between Manzhouli City and Zabaikal'sk Village. It is important to remember that Sino-Russian interactions occur at various points on the border.