

THE RUSSIAN PRESENCE IN NIIGATA AND HOKKAIDO: PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS

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Introduction

In recent years Japan's internationalization has taken on a human dimension, in addition to the trade and investment dimensions, for which the nation's international profile had been well established. Increasing numbers of foreign nationals are entering Japan and growing numbers of Japanese are going overseas. Japanese nationals traveling overseas outnumber foreigners entering Japan by a large margin. In 1999, for example, 16,357,572 Japanese went overseas and 4,901,317 foreign nationals entered Japan—a ratio of roughly 3 to 1. Nonetheless, the number of foreigners coming to Japan has grown significantly—from 2,985,764 in 1989.¹

Japan is attracting foreigners for various reasons, but the most important are the economic factors. Against the background of the fast graying Japanese population, labor shortage is becoming a serious problem in many sectors of the nation's economy. Although in the relatively homogeneous society there remains much resistance to the influx of foreign workers, many industries are opening employment opportunities to skilled and unskilled foreign nationals. The higher standard of living in Japan in comparison with its neighboring countries is also luring increasing numbers of foreigners to the country, through both legal and illegal channels. Even among those who enter Japan legally, there are increasing numbers of aliens who either overstay their visas or engage in activities other than those for which they are granted entry into the country.

Among the foreign visitors in Japan are the Russians who come in search of economic opportunities and for other purposes. They are still a relatively small presence in the country, particularly in comparison with South Korean, Chinese, and other Asian nationals. Out of the 4,901,317 foreign nationals that entered Japan in 1999, the largest number came from South Korea (1,160,034, or 23.7% of the total number of foreign visitors in Japan), followed by Chinese from Taiwan (ROC) (963,701, or 19.7%), Chinese from PRC (327,005, or 6.7%), and Filipinos (144,305, or 2.9%). In comparison, far fewer Russian nationals—23,064, or 0.5%—entered Japan.² Nevertheless, the number of Russians entering Japan has steadily grown since the mid-1990s.³ (See Table 1.)

Table 1. The Number of Russian Nationals Entering Japan

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Number	24,232	26,349	30,120	26,896	23,064
% over previous year		8.7	14.3	- 10.7	- 14.2
% of total foreigners	0.65	0.62	0.65	0.59	0.47

Source: *Statistics on Immigration Control 1999*, Tokyo: Japan Immigration Association, 2000, p. 14.

Russians are a very small minority among the foreign resident community in Japan. Japan's Aliens Registration Law requires all foreign nationals who stay in Japan for 90 days or longer to register with the local cities and municipalities where they reside. In 2000, as many as 951,884 South Koreans were thus registered, as were 190,380 Chinese from the People's Republic of China and 882,394 Chinese from Taiwan. In comparison, the number of documented Russian residents in the country was 26,217—a mere 0.6% of the total foreign residents in Japan.⁴ (See Table 2.) The Russian community in Japan also a very recent presence in Japan. Soviet citizens' entry into Japan was strictly controlled during the Cold War. There were a small number of Soviet diplomats but

their movement in certain areas of the country, such as port cities in Hokkaido, was strictly prohibited.

Table 2. Registered Foreigners in Japan by Nationality, 1995-2000

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	% of total
South Korea	897,467	917,475	640,968	835,297	951,884	22.4
PRC	134,140	149,831	152,046	156,507	190,380	4.5
Taiwan	695,238	796,788	814,956	901,874	882,394	20.7
Russia	23,858	27,350	23,933	19,712	26,217	0.6
Total foreigners	3,410,026	3,809,679	3,667,813	3,959,621	4,256,403	100.0

Source: Ministry of Justice homepage at <http://www.joi.go.jp?PRESS/010330-2/table03.html>.

What impact if any is the growing Russian presence in Japan having on the Japanese public's views of Russia and Japanese-Russian relations? What opportunities and problems do the Russians in Japan present in those areas of the country, such as Niigata and Hokkaido, where they appear in fairly large numbers? What is the nature of the Russians' experience in living in those communities? What cultural barriers might exist between the Russians and the host communities? How is Japan's policy toward Russia reflected in the local administrators' and citizens' views? What influence if any will the evolving relations between the Russians and the local communities have on the relationship between the two countries? This study is a modest effort to answer these questions.

We will examine the above questions through a case study of two prefectures, Niigata and Hokkaido. We have chosen these regions because of the significance their leaders attach to their communities' ties to Russia and the salience Russia holds as a focus of attention among the local citizens. As we will note shortly, these provinces have invested many years and many resources in developing ties with their Russian counterparts since the Soviet era and the Russian presence in their communities is having some significant impact on the local economic and social life.

The current study uses three sources of information. First, to obtain background information about the two prefectures' experiences with Russia and Russians, we consulted several publications and other information supplied by prefectural and city government officials. Second, to gauge the range of experiences and views of local citizens, we conducted small surveys in Sapporo and Wakkanai, Hokkaido. Although our survey samples are very small and are by no means representative of the larger communities in which our respondents reside, the respondents' answers proved very useful in canvassing the range of views that exist at the local level. Many of the views expressed in the surveys also appeared in the series of interviews we conducted, which is the third source of information we have employed for this study. In order to get a better understanding of the views of the local citizens, we interviewed local government officials, journalists, business people, university professors, and private researchers in the cities of Niigata, Sapporo, Otaru, and Wakkanai. We also interviewed some Russian residents in Niigata, Sapporo, and Otaru and obtained useful information about their experiences in their host communities.

The Growing Russian Presence in Niigata and Hokkaido

What are the purposes for which the Russians are coming to Japan in general? Table 3 shows the breakdown of purposes of entry as officially documented by the Japanese immigration authorities in 1999. These statistics are not entirely accurate, as it is well known that many foreign nationals, including Russians, engage in activities other than those for which they have been granted entry into the country. Moreover, these numbers do not include Russians who come into Japan on special landing permits, such as those that arrive by ship at the ports in Niigata, Otaru, and Wakkanai and briefly visit the nearby cities while their ships are docked. Still, it is clear that among the longer-term Russian visitors in Japan, entertainment is by far the most popular field of

engagement, with 2,925 Russians entering Japan under this category. This compares with the 2,679 South Koreans and the 2,056 PRC Chinese that came to Japan for the same purpose in 1999. The largest number of foreign entertainers in Japan came from the Philippines—45,594 in 1999.

Table 3. The Number of New Russian Entrants by Purpose of Entry, 1999

Total	Diplomat Official	Professor	Artist	Journalist	Business investor/ manager
19,712	487	107	59	1	1
Researcher	Instructor	Engineer	Specialists in humanities/ international services	Intra-firm trainee	Entertainer
66	2	9	33	8	2,925
Skilled labor	Cultural activities	Temporary visitor*	College student	Pre-college student	Trainee
45	41	15,402	123	38	46
Dependent	Designated activities**	Spouse or child of Japanese national	Spouse or child of permanent resident	Long-term resident	
218	7	77	1	16	

*See Table 4 below for a breakdown.

** Includes working holiday and other activities.

Source: *Statistics on Immigration Control 1999*, Tokyo: Japan Immigration Association, 2000, pp. 20, 22, 24, 26.

Among the Russians visiting Japan on a temporary basis, the 6,713 businessmen were by far the most numerous, followed by 5,989 sightseers and 1,404 Russians conducting cultural activities. The number of Russian students in Japan was surprisingly small—123 enrolled in colleges and 38 in pre-college programs. (Table 4)

Table 4. The Number of New Temporary Russian Visitors in Japan, 1999

Total	Sightseeing	Business	Cultural activities	Visiting relatives	Other
15,402	5,989	6,713	1,404	540	756

Source: *Statistics on Immigration Control 1999*, Tokyo: Japan Immigration Association, 2000, pp. 20, 22, 24, 26.

The Russians' presence is increasingly being felt in local communities, particularly in the provinces located along the Sea of Japan (East Sea). Niigata and Hokkaido are particularly interesting cases. Both prefectures have invested much time and effort in developing ties with Russian regions.⁵

In 2000, there were 475 Russians officially registered in Hokkaido and 180 in Niigata Prefecture. In comparison, there were as many as 5,934 Koreans (both North and South) and 3,933 Chinese officially documented in Hokkaido, and 2,584 Koreans and 3,120 Chinese residents in Niigata Prefecture.⁶ As of the end of September 2001, there were 105 and 233 Russian nationals registered as residents in the cities of Niigata and Sapporo, respectively. These numbers compare with 1,000 Koreans and 1,042 Chinese living in Niigata and 2,710 Koreans (both North and South) and 2,332 Chinese registered in Sapporo.⁷

In addition, growing numbers of Russians visit these and other areas of the two prefectures on a temporary basis—thus not registered as residents. In 2000, for example, 831 Russians entered Japan through the port city of Wakkanai, 533 through Nemuro, and 1,064 through Otaru in Hokkaido, not counting those who obtain a special landing permit while their ships were anchored in those ports, typically for 2-3 days at a time.⁸

These port cities have become very important points of entry into Japan. As many as 58,723 foreign nationals were granted special permits to land at Wakkanai Port in 2001. Another 27,771 came into Otaru Port, and 22,693 into Hanasaki Port close to Nemuro under the same regime. Unfortunately, we do not have a breakdown of these statistics by nationality, but according to the local officials we interviewed, the largest segments are Russian.⁹ These numbers far exceeded the 4,749 foreigners, including 99 “Russians, who landed at Chitose Airport, the largest airport in Hokkaido. In comparison, 1,056 Russians landed at Hakodate Airport, which has regularly scheduled services to Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.¹⁰ In contrast, Niigata Airport serves as a more important regional airport, with regular services to foreign destinations, including Khabarovsk, Irkutsk, Vladivostok, Seoul, Shanghai, Harbin, Guam, and Honolulu. In 2000, a total of 225,391 Japanese and foreign passengers used this airport for international travel. Of these, 19,196 traveled to and from Vladivostok, 17,001 to and from Khabarovsk, and 1,784 to and from Irkutsk.¹¹

The ports in Hokkaido have become important ports for Japan’s trade with Russia. In Wakkanai, there were only 40 Russian residents in 2000, but there were as many as 58,473 Russians who were granted special permission to go into the city that year. For a city with a population of only 43,000, this is a huge number. Most of these Russians were crewmembers on boats making port calls. In 2000 alone, there were as many as 3,780 Russian ships coming into Wakkanai Port. Most of them were fishing boats carrying crab and other marine products to Japan. Wakkanai also has a ferry service to Korsakov during the May-September period. In 2001, a total of 3,028 Japanese and 1,177 foreigners (mostly Russians) used the service.¹² Many Russian ships also visit the Port of Otaru. In 2000, there were 1,291 Russian ships calling in the port. They carried 1,064 Russian nationals, who entered Japan in Otaru, and another 26,040 who were permitted to land temporarily while their ships were anchored in the port.¹³ As we will note below, the brief visitors from Russia are having a visible impact on the local Japanese residents’ attitudes toward Russians.

Niigata’s Ties with the Russian Far East

There is a well-known division of labor between Hokkaido and Niigata with respect to their economic partners in the Russian Far East, Niigata focusing on the continental Far East and Hokkaido on Sakhalin. This is quite visible in the way the two Japanese regions have established sister-city or friendship-city ties in Russia and the way they have developed transportation links to the Russian Far East. While Hokkaido has developed direct air and shipping routes to Sakhalin, Niigata has opted for air and shipping links to points in the continental Far East.¹⁴

Niigata is a pioneer in the internationalization (*kokusaika*) movement that has been going on throughout Japan in recent decades. The prefecture’s efforts to establish international transportation links to the neighboring countries date back to the 1960s. The public sector in Niigata has played a pivotal role in this prefecture’s growth as a regional hub for international transportation. Its geographic location—the proximity to both Russia and the Korean Peninsula—and the considerable size of its population give it a clear advantage over most other prefectures facing the Sea of Japan (East Sea). The postwar governors of Niigata Prefecture and mayors of Niigata City have eagerly sought closer ties with the neighboring Northeast Asian countries, including Russia.

Niigata City has sister-city ties with Khabarovsk and Vladivostok. Interestingly, natural disasters played a role in bringing the peoples of these cities closer. When a major earthquake hit Niigata in July 1964, Khabarovsk and Vladivostok sent timber for construction as humanitarian assistance to the Japanese city. Nine months later Niigata and Khabarovsk became sister cities. It

was in February 1991 that Niigata and Vladivostok established sister-city relations, months before the latter officially became an open city. Niigata and its Russian sister cities have exchanged visits by elected officials, public administrators, teachers, scientists, students, athletes, artists, and medical doctors.

Russia's human presence in Niigata is quite modest, with only 102 Russian citizens officially registered as residing in Niigata City as of May 2001. In comparison, there were 1,042 Chinese and 1,000 North and South Koreans registered in the city.¹⁵ Niigata City is also host to a Russian consulate general, which was opened in 1994. As well, there is a Russian Village near Niigata City, where visitors can enjoy Russian food, souvenirs, and watch Russian dance performances. The complex is financed by private funds but its major sponsor—a regional bank—went bankrupt in 1999 under the weight of bad loans and the Village's future remains uncertain.

Two of the most visible illustrations of the prefecture's active efforts to promote ties with the neighboring countries are its sponsorship of the annual Northeast Asia Economic Conference and the establishment in 1993 of the Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia (ERINA) with funding from both Niigata Prefecture and Niigata City.¹⁶ Additionally, Niigata City serves as the secretariat for an association of the mayors of 27 Japanese coastal cities on the Sea of Japan, established in 1970, which meets regularly with its counterpart composed of 18 Siberian and Far Eastern city mayors.¹⁷ Niigata City also serves as the secretariat for the Conference of the Cities on the Sea of Japan for the Promotion of Friendship and Trade between Japan and North Korea, which was established in 1972.¹⁸

Regular air services between Niigata and Khabarovsk, Irkutsk, and Vladivostok started in 1973, 1991, and 1993, respectively. Until the mid-1990s, Niigata-Khabarovsk flights provided the only air services available between Japan and the Russian Far East. Today there are twice-weekly air services between Niigata and Khabarovsk and between Niigata and Vladivostok, and once-a-week service in the summer months between Niigata and Irkutsk. In 2000, 17,001 passengers flew between Niigata and Khabarovsk, 1,784 passengers between Niigata and Irkutsk, and 19,196 passengers between Niigata and Vladivostok. Parenthetically, these numbers are not as large as comparable figures for Niigata-Seoul or Niigata-Harbin flights, which are more frequent.¹⁹ Niigata's shipping links to Nakhodka, Vostochny, and Vladivostok were established in 1976, 1980, and 1993, respectively.²⁰ As part of the prefecture's effort to expand trade with Siberia and the Russian Far East, Niigata established a sister-city relationship with Khabarovsk in April 1965. Because Vladivostok was a closed city until 1992, Niigata decided to seek a direct link to Nakhodka and was successful in shipping goods for a Niigata trade fair in Khabarovsk to Nakhodka in July 1965. However, the low volume of goods did not justify the establishment of a regular shipping service to the Far Eastern port. A passenger service that opened in 1968 linking Niigata and Nakhodka met a similar fate and was discontinued in 1969. In 1993, Niigata was able to resume a passenger service to Vladivostok during the summer months.²¹ Virtually all Russian ships that call in Niigata ports today bring raw materials, particularly marine and forestry products, and take manufactured goods, including used automobiles and consumer goods. Excluding ships flying the flag of convenience (most under Panamanian registry), Russian ships have long enjoyed the most visible presence in Niigata. Out of the 1,274 foreign-registered ships that called in Niigata Port in 1999, as many as 182 were Russian ships.²²

Russia clearly is not the most important economic partner for Niigata Prefecture. Among the Northeast Asian countries, China is by far the most important partner, followed by South Korea. Niigata's exports to Russia in 1998 stood at a mere 2,219 million yen (about \$18 million), which is dwarfed by the prefecture's exports to South Korea and China, respectively valued at 11,795 million yen (about \$97.5 million) and 21,213 million yen (\$175.3 million).²³ The prefecture's imports from Russia in 1998, at 2,513 million yen (around \$20.9 million), were also outdistanced by its imports from South Korea and China, respectively at 6,974 million yen (around \$57.6 million) and 23,131 million

yen (about \$192.8 million).²⁴ These facts explain why Niigata Prefecture has set up a representative's office in Seoul, Dalian, and Harbin, but not in the Russian Far East.

Interviews with Japanese and Russians in Niigata

In the city of Niigata we interviewed eight individuals, five of them Japanese and three Russian. One of the Japanese was a city government official in charge of international cooperation and exchange. Another interviewee was a leader of a not-for-profit organization (NPO) called "Habatake 21" (Spread Your Wings 21), which was promoting international exchange among local and Russian children. One Japanese was a senior reporter/writer for the regional newspaper *Niigata Nippo*. The two other Japanese interviewees were engaged in research and consulting on Russia-related issues of interest to the local community, including the business community. Their company published a monthly newsletter covering developments in Russia and the Russian Far East. The following are the findings from these interviews.

First, there was much local interest in Russia, particularly in the Russian Far East. As we just noted, Niigata had a long history of relations with the Russian Far East and Niigata citizens prided themselves on being at the forefront of Japan's relations with the Russian Far East.

Second, the city of Niigata devoted a good amount of resources to the development of ties with the Russian Far East. The city hired five new foreign nationals each year as international interns for three years, including Russians. In the city's International Exchange and Cooperation Department, there were 21 staff members. Five of them spoke Russian, two had taught Japanese in Vladivostok, and three worked directly on projects related to Russia, which was one more than the staff focused on China projects.

Third, there was also sustained, if not overwhelming interest among the citizens of Niigata to gain international experiences and to develop opportunities to meet with foreigners for children. "Habatake 21" is an example of volunteer citizens who devote time and money to hosting Russian children and sending their children to Russia for a cultural experience. The NPO depended for its activities on the 200,000 yen the city provided annually as well as corporate contributions. The most interesting program the association conducted was the hosting of Russian children from the cities of Vladivostok and Khabarovsk. When the local media reported on their activities, many citizens called and inquired about opportunities for them or for their children to be involved. This group was unique in that, according to its representative that we interviewed, it was the only Japanese NGO solely focused on the Russian Far East. However, they had just decided to invite Chinese children to Niigata as well, forcing them, for financial reasons, to reduce the number of children they can bring from Russia.

Fourth, Russian visitors to Niigata had become much more open over the years, as had the Russian authorities in charge of visa issuance and other official functions. In earlier years, bureaucratic hurdles were very high for inviting Russians to Japan or for Japanese to visit Russia, but the situation had improved in more recent years.

Fifth, the local media were much more positive about relations with Russia than the national media, but still there was much attention given to unfortunate incidents involving Russians and this tended to project a negative image of the Russians in the city. For example, when a Japanese man was murdered by a Russian man in Niigata, the media paid more attention to fact of the murder than the fact that the victim used to beat up on his Japanese wife who, reportedly, had her Russian friend kill the Japanese.

Sixth, the actual contact between the local Japanese and Russian residents or visitors appeared quite limited, thus accentuating the importance of media coverage of Russian issues. There was no uniform view of the Russians in the local community, but stereotyping happened. In some corners, for example, there was the impression that most Russians were poor because the media depicted only very rich Russians or very poor Russians but rich Russians went to Tokyo and

other places in Japan. One of the researcher/consultants noted that the Japanese tended to “gravitate toward the average,” toward conformity, and most of them did not understand that there were important differences among the Russians. Frequent contact was limited to those local people who lived or worked in or around the “entertainment district” in the city or Higashi Port where many Russians were seen, including crewmen from Russian ships anchored in the port.

Seventh, there were a number of educational exchange opportunities between local schools and universities and those in Russia.

Eighth, there was disagreement on whether the territorial dispute had any impact on the interaction between Russian and Japanese citizens and groups at the local and regional level. On the one hand, the two researcher/consultants we interviewed said that the territorial dispute and the economic situation in Russia since the early 1990s and now in Japan were obstacles to expanded relations between Japan and Russia. They also said that many Russians they had met, both in Niigata and inside Russia, behaved as if they were superior to the Japanese. The one newspaper reporter we interviewed concurred. On the other hand, the representative of the Japanese NPO said the territorial problem had no impact on her group’s activities or on the relationship between the Russians and the Japanese who came into contact with each other through those activities.

Our interviews with Russians in Niigata were with one researcher and two consular officers, including the consul general. We offer the following brief observations from these interviews.

First, there was very little that the Russian residents did as a community. They led and preferred to lead a rather independent life in Niigata, coming together only when there were some official functions, such as those organized by the Consulate General.

Second, there was little contact between Russians and Japanese outside of the work environment. The Russian researcher we interviewed said Japanese co-workers did not appear interested in knowing much about the Russian’s personal interests. Nor, in his view, did they appear interested in socializing with him or his family. Consequently, there was very little contact outside of the work environment. The same individual also noted that local Japanese assumed all Caucasians that they saw on the streets were Americans. According to him, when they discovered that they were Russian, they did not show any interest.

Third, the local people in Niigata did not show any outward sign of discrimination against Russians, but in Higashi Port, where many Russian ships and sailors came in, local authorities tended to look at Russians with suspicion. Local storeowners also treated Russians with suspicion. These behaviors were influenced by the reports of thefts and other incidents allegedly involving Russians.

Fourth, the local media reported on Russian sailors, cars, dealers, drunkenness, and theft, creating a negative image of Russians. There were some restaurants that displayed signs saying, “Russians are not welcome.”

Fifth, the number of Russians residing in Niigata had increased in recent years, particularly women who were married to Japanese men. Often these marriages were marriages of convenience, for Russian men and women to be able to stay and work longer terms in Japan. Many of these Russian women were engaged in illegal activities for money. Currently there were about 100 officially documented Russian residents in the city, about 50 of them married to Japanese locals. About 80% of them were women.

Sixth, when a child was born to a Japanese and Russian couple, typically the child adopted Japanese citizenship because there was no bilateral treaty allowing dual citizenship. Russian children who went to local schools did not experience discrimination.

Seventh, many Russian women felt isolated or rejected by their Japanese husbands because the husbands did not show much intimacy. When relationships turned sour, Japanese men typically wanted to divorce Russian wives, but the wives only wanted to be separated so that they could remain in Japan. The husbands, however, were anxious to officially terminate their marriage so as

not to bear the burden of legal guarantors. This comment echoed the observations offered by two Russian interviewees in Sapporo.

Eighth, Russian sailors that came into the city posed a problem because some of them committed crimes, such as drug smuggling and petty thefts.

Ninth, there were many more Russian women than men coming to Japan, and there was a public perception that a large percentage of the women were engaged in illegal or semi-illegal activities. Niigata had become an important transit point for many of these Russians.

Hokkaido's Ties with the Russian Far East

Hokkaido occupies a special place in Japanese local initiatives toward Russia in general and toward the Russian Far East in particular. Historically, the island played an important part in defining Japan's territorial, security, political, and economic interests vis-à-vis Russia (and the Soviet Union).

There are three notable features to Hokkaido's relations with the Russian Far East, including Sakhalin. First, the geographical proximity—adjacency in fact—between the two regions had a defining impact on their relationship, giving the local-level ties a dynamic quite apart from and independent of the interplay of national interests of the two countries. This is quite apparent in the sustained growth in local initiatives involving individuals, civic groups, and prefectural and municipal administrations. Second, the prefectural government of Hokkaido played a particularly important role in promoting better relations with the Russian Far East. Third, the local-level exchanges could not but be affected by the state of bilateral relations between Japan and Russia, particularly with respect to the Northern Territories dispute and its constricting effects on the range of international cooperation at the regional level. For instance, all Hokkaido Administration officials from the governor to the lowest-ranking bureaucrats have had to tow Tokyo's official line as far as Japan's claims of sovereignty over the Northern Territories are concerned. On the other hand, the government of Sakhalin has been one of the staunchest opponents to territorial concessions to Japan.²⁵ In spite of this, Hokkaido plays host to special bilateral arrangements for expanding cross-border ties between Japan and Russia. One such arrangement is the so-called "no-visa" visits reciprocated between the residents of the disputed islands and former Japanese residents and other Japanese. By March 2001, a total of 4,038 Japanese and 3,588 Russians had participated in the reciprocal visits.²⁶ These visits have expanded direct contacts at the regional level. Another special regime includes a series of private and state-level agreements allowing Japanese, mostly Hokkaido, fishermen to conduct fishing within the limits of Russian-claimed waters surrounding the disputed islands.

The Hokkaido Administration has set four main goals in its approach to the Russian Far East. First, it wants to contribute to the resolution of the territorial dispute. Second, it wants to ensure safe fishing activities of Hokkaido fishermen in the Russian waters, including areas surrounding the disputed islands. Third, it wants to prevent oil spills and other environmental disasters in the offshore oil and gas development in Sakhalin. Fourth, it wants to promote ties between Hokkaido and Russian Far East businesses and contribute to the prosperity of local economies in Hokkaido.²⁷ In its initiatives toward Russia, the regional administration has officially targeted the Russian Far East generally and Sakhalin particularly.

One of the most important areas of contact between Hokkaido and the Russian Far East is trade. The prefecture's trade with Russia represents nearly 20 percent of total Japanese-Russian trade. During the 1990s, the number of Russian ships calling in Hokkaido ports increased twelve-fold, from 731 in 1990 to 9,181 in 1999. This represented a doubling of trade turnover, to 88.6 billion yen (\$738 million).²⁸ Russian ships come into local ports, bringing mainly marine and forestry products, representing significant economic benefits to local economies in Hokkaido. In the port cities they visit, the Russian crewmembers typically purchase used and new cars, office

equipment, electronics, food, and consumer goods. According to one estimate, the Russian shipping into the port of Nemuro, in the east of Hokkaido, represents an estimated 9.39 billion yen (about \$78 million) a year in economic benefits for this provincial city, including purchases by more than 25,000 Russian sailors.²⁹ Estimates for Monbetsu and Wakkanai, two port cities in the north of Hokkaido, put annual economic benefits for these port cities at 15 billion yen (\$125 million) and 27.9 billion yen (\$232.5 million), respectively.³⁰

There are many private efforts to encourage Russians to visit their communities. For example, an enterprising local businessman in Nemuro has expanded his small retail store into a booming business by attracting thousands of Russian seamen. He employs three Russians to provide interpretation and translation services for the Russian visitors and draw up business contracts with a growing number of business partners in the Russian Far East. He has also opened Russian language classes, with a Russian employee as instructor. Local banks encourage their employees to attend the language classes as part of their training program.³¹

Not all is well, however. There are also many stories of trouble, including alleged thefts by Russians in Otaru, Wakkanai, and Monbetsu. Some local bathhouses and shops have displayed signs stating that foreigners (namely Russians) are not welcome. Japanese fishermen have also complained that many of their fishing nets have been damaged by Russian boats operating in waters between the two countries.³² Despite these problems, or perhaps because of these problems, prefectural leaders stress the importance of improving relations with Russia.³³

People-to-people diplomacy has also become an important part of the growing ties between Hokkaido municipalities and their Russian counterparts. As of February 2001, there were 17 pairs of Hokkaido-Russian sister cities, representing more than half of the 30 pairs of sister-city relationships that existed between Japanese and Russian municipalities. The oldest such arrangement is a sister-city relationship between Otaru and Nakhodka that dates back to 1966. As many as 11 of the 17 pairs of sister cities involving Hokkaido municipalities are with cities in Sakhalin, reflecting the special importance Hokkaido attaches to the closest Russian territory to their north. These ties enable officials of municipal governments, students, and members of cultural and sports organizations to exchange visits. To facilitate communication between the Hokkaido administration and the municipalities involved in these arrangements, a “Hokkaido-Russian Far East Friendship City Liaison Council” was organized in 1996.

Well over 2,000 Russians annually visit Sapporo, the largest city of Hokkaido, and about 150 Russian residents are officially registered in the city. The Russian residents constitute the sixth largest foreign community in Sapporo, after the Korean, Chinese, U.S., Filipino, and Canadian communities.³⁴

In the field of cultural exchange, civil society groups have been the driving force but the Hokkaido government has also played an important supportive role. The prefecture’s initiatives include joint research projects between Sakhalin and Vladivostok and Hokkaido museums, academic exchanges between universities and research institutes in Hokkaido and the Russian Far East, student exchanges at the elementary and high school levels, and exchanges of language teachers. Hokkaido and Far Eastern communities has also held joint sporting events.

Humanitarian exchanges have also become an important part of the growing ties between Hokkaido and Sakhalin. The first humanitarian incident took place in 1990, when a badly burned boy from Sakhalin was flown to Sapporo for an emergency treatment. In 1992, with funding from the Hokkaido government, a public trust—the Hokkaido-Russian Far East Medical Exchange Fund—was established to support the ensuing cooperation between the Hokkaido and Sakhalin medical communities. In 1997, another medical fund was established by the Hokkaido-Japan-Russia Association to provide aid for Sakhalin citizens to receive medical treatment in Hokkaido. Natural disasters have also played a role in bringing Hokkaido and Sakhalin communities closer. In May 1995, for example, an earthquake of magnitude 7.6 occurred in Neftegorsk on the island of

Sakhalin, resulting in 1,995 deaths. Municipalities and various civic groups in Hokkaido joined the Japanese government in dispatching medicine, blankets, footwear, foodstuff, wheelchairs, and other relief goods. Major forest fires in the north of Sakhalin in May 1998 also prompted Hokkaido residents to send humanitarian assistance to the affected victims.

A Survey of Sapporo Residents regarding the Russian Presence in Their Community

In October 2001, we conducted a series of interviews in the cities of Niigata, Sapporo, Otaru, and Wakkanai. We met with a total of 30 individuals, including Niigata and Hokkaido prefecture administrators, officials of the four city governments (including the mayors of Otaru and Wakkanai), Japanese journalists and researchers, Japanese and Russian businessmen, and Japanese and Russian NPO (not-for-profit organization) personnel. We also met Russian diplomats (including the consul general and deputy consul general in Niigata), and the Sakhalin дума chairman.

We also distributed a questionnaire in these cities and have so far received 60 completed surveys. The questionnaire for Japanese subjects was in Japanese and the one for Russians was in Russian. The observations offered below are preliminary. Because our sample is very small and is not necessarily representative of the larger community of Sapporo, we offer our observations as if we had conducted interviews with a limited number of individuals.

The profiles of the 33 Japanese residents of Sapporo who have returned their completed questionnaires are presented in Table 5 through Table 8.

Table 5. Occupations/professions of Sapporo Respondents

Total	Business employee	Business owner/executive	Service company employee*	NPO employee	University professor	Public servant	Interpreter
30	11	2	5	2	3	6	1

* Includes restaurants and bars.

Table 6. Age

Total	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s
31	8	6	10	3	3	1

Table 7. Gender

Total	Male	Female
32	20	12

Table 8. Highest Level of Education Obtained

Total	High school	University	Graduate school
29	9	16	4

About half of the respondents have daily, weekly, or monthly contacts with Russians at or through work, and the other half rarely or never meet Russians through work. Generally, those that have had direct contacts with Russians have positive impressions of them. The favorable adjectives they used to describe their impressions of the Russians they have encountered include: “easy to befriend or friendly” (noted by 4 respondents), “honest” (3), “simple” (*soboku*, a positive Japanese concept) (3), “kind” (2), “cheerful” (2), “logical” (2), “able” (2), “sturdy,” “hardworking,” “serious,” “artistic,” “clean,” “warm,” “persevere,” “gregarious,” “open,” “passionate,” “positive,” “intelligent,” “have own opinion,” and “fond of Japan.” Six respondents used only 7 adjectives generally seen in a negative light in Japanese culture. They used such expressions as “inexact” or “not detail-oriented” (3 respondents), “dirty,” “noisy,” “sloppy,” “have no risk management skill,”

“stubborn,” and “authoritarian.” Two respondents referred physical characteristics and noted the Russians they have come into contact with in their work were “big.” Three respondents answered “can’t generalize,” “no lasting impression,” and “varies from one to another.”

As far as interactions with Russians outside of work are concerned, only one Japanese respondent said he had daily contacts with Russians, with 28 respondents saying they rarely or never meet Russians in a social situation. The Russian residents in Sapporo (as well as in Niigata) that we interviewed shared a common regret that their Japanese colleagues and acquaintances rarely asked questions beyond those related to work. Furthermore, our interviews with Russians and Japanese in Sapporo, as well as in Niigata, also revealed that the contact between Russian and Japanese co-workers is generally limited to the work environment. They rarely socialize outside of their work. The Russians we interviewed view the seeming indifference among their Japanese colleagues as a lack of interest.

Eleven Japanese respondents shared their impressions of the Russians they had met outside of their work, most of them favorably. They were asked to use three adjectives. Their choices were: “sturdy, honest, and kind to friends,” “kind, Japanese-like, and reliable,” “friendly, cheerful, and inexact,” “good-natured, loyal, and sensitive,” “cheerful, joyful, and friendly,” “intelligent, serious, and broad-viewed,” “good-natured, cheerful, and talkative,” and “simple, Japanophile, and open.” Two individuals just used one adjective, “good-natured” and “big”, while one respondent wrote, “varies from one Russian to another.”

Through work-related and very limited non-work-related contacts our Japanese respondents have formed generally favorable views of Russians. As we noted at the outset, our sample is not necessarily representative of the larger community of Sapporo. Indeed, our interviews in the city revealed, as we will note later in this paper, that the general public’s images of Russians tend to be rather negative. Two factors seem to be at play here. First, the media coverage tends to focus on incidents involving Russian visitors that have a lingering impact on the local residents’ images of Russians. Second, the average citizen’s experience dealing directly with Russians is very limited or non-existent. Therefore, the media-generated impressions become doubly important in the formation of local people’s attitudes toward Russians. This observation is corroborated by the finding that our survey respondents indicate they generally rely more on the mass media for information on Russia and Russians than on other sources, including personal contacts with Russians. The problem is compounded by the fact that the level of Russia-related knowledge among the general public is limited due to the lack of Russian contents in their school education. Even our respondents, many of whom have had work-related contacts with Russians, acknowledge that their knowledge of Russia is not what it should be.

Our respondents are clearly more favorably inclined toward Russia than the general public in Japan. For example, an Asahi Shimbun public opinion poll in 1998 found that only 24 percent of the Japanese wanted to visit Russia and 74 percent did not want to. In contrast, 62 percent of the Russians polled said they wanted to visit Japan, in comparison with 31 percent who said they were not interested in going to Japan.³⁵

Our respondents rated their knowledge of Russia conservatively, with 17 of them saying they considered themselves “somewhat knowledgeable,” and 12 others acknowledging they had little or no knowledge about Russia. Not one person stated he considered himself very knowledgeable. The respondents’ Russian language ability was even more limited or non-existent. Five of them said they considered their ability to use Russian as “fairly strong,” 8 as “weak,” and 20 as “nonexistent.”

What sources of information do the people in Sapporo use to learn about Russia or Russians? Our respondents were given seven choices—Japanese newspapers, Russian newspapers, TV and radio programs, magazines, Japanese government sources, Russian government sources, and personal sources of information. Japanese newspapers and TV and radio programs were the most important sources of information that our respondents used. Among the Japanese newspapers, the

Hokkaido Shimbun was most frequently cited (by 10 respondents), the *Asahi Shimbun* (3 respondents), and the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* (3 respondents). Only one person wrote he used Japanese and Russian government sources for information on Russia.

We wanted to gauge the perceptual impact of the Russian presence upon the residents of Sapporo, so we asked the respondents about how many Russians they thought were residing in their city. We gave them five choices—fewer than 50, between 50-100, between 100-200, between 200-500, and over 500. If we believe official statistics, only 5 respondents correctly estimated the number of Russians residing in Sapporo. As noted earlier, 233 Russians were officially documented as residing in the city in 2000. Most (25) respondents underestimated the size of the Russian resident community in Sapporo. Assuming that the actual number of Russians residing in the city is larger than the officially documented number, it appears that the Russian residents are not very visible.

Having more Russian residents in the community, therefore, does not appear to be problematic among our respondents. We asked our respondents whether they would welcome more Russian visitors in their local community. They were generally receptive to the idea. Twelve people said there should be more Russians in their area. Only one person answered there should be fewer Russians.

We then asked the respondents to explain their opinion. Three of the six people who believed a lot more Russians should visit Sapporo gave the following reasons: “Hokkaido’s future depends on international exchanges among the countries of the Northern Region and that Hokkaido should become a center of these exchanges.” “Exchanges should expand between Hokkaido and Sakhalin, between Sapporo and Novosibirsk, and between Russia and East Asia.” “There is no reason not to have more Russians visit our community.” “The expansion of international contacts, not just with Russians, will promote mutual understanding.” Those who believed there should be somewhat more Russian visitors in their community gave the following reasons: “If the economic relationship between Hokkaido and Sakhalin is to expand, mutual understanding is necessary and more Russian visitors will help this cause.” “Japanese-Russian exchange and mutual understanding is very important.” “The Japanese are not used to foreigners and a sudden increase in Russian visitors may hurt Russia’s image (so, small increases are preferable).” “Human contacts will promote friendly relations between the two countries, but we don’t need any mafia elements.” “More Russian visitors in our community will mean more economic exchanges between the two countries.” “More Russian visitors will help to improve the worsening Russian image in Hokkaido and Russians can improve their manners.”

Those who believed the current level of Russian visitors in their community should be maintained did not give any clear reasons for their belief. The one individual who wrote the number of Russian visitors in his area should be reduced a lot gave no reason for his opinion.

When asked what kind of impact the Russian presence had on their community, the balance of assessment was only slightly favorable, with 8 individuals thinking there was positive impact, 5 respondents believing there was some bad impact, and the largest number of people (12) seeing little or no impact. We should remind ourselves that our respondents are more favorably inclined toward the Russian presence in Sapporo, as well as Japanese visits to Russia. We will also note below that our respondents are definitely in favor of expanding Sapporo’s ties with Russian cities. For the larger community of Sapporo, however, the balance of assessment is likely to be less favorable than among our respondents.

Those who offered positive evaluations of the impact of Russians on their community gave the following reasons: “There is a Russian child at the school that my child attends. It is good for us to have contacts with people from different countries. It helps to expand our horizon.” “Many Russian customers come to the restaurant where I work and we welcome them.” “We should promote the study of the Russian language and culture in Japan and the study of Japanese and

Japanese culture in Russia.” “I voluntarily teach Russian and also enjoy research exchanges with Russian colleagues.” “Japanese people who personally interact with Russians know how much the Russians in Japan know about Japanese culture. Unfortunately, though, the general impression of Russians in Japan is bad.” “A new international community is emerging.” “There is no more fear of Russia or prejudice against Russians. There are some bad Russians, just as there are some bad Japanese. Japanese-Russian exchanges are beneficial to Japan’s economy.” “I feel somewhat closer to the Russian community here. The Russian Consulate General is much more open to us now.”

On the other hand, those who noted negative influences of the Russian presence in Sapporo gave the following reasons: “We need to think more severely about the Russian mafia.” “Russians have caused lots of damage to our fisheries. Now bad Russians are infiltrating Japan’s economy.” “The incident that happened in an Otaru public bathhouse led to the denial of admission for Russians.” “Big Russians don’t smile much, and they give a scary impression.” “I have the image of illegal fishing, smuggling, mafia, and increasing crimes committed by Russians.” The Japanese and Russians we interviewed in Sapporo also noted that media reports on the various incidents had created a generally negative image of Russians among the general public.

We wanted to put Russian visitors in comparative perspective and asked our respondents to compare the increase in the number of Russians with the increase in the number of Chinese visitors in Sapporo. Most of our respondents did not have a comparative sense, with 26 of them replying they did not know.

We then asked if the number of Japanese visiting Russia should increase. As many as 13 of them said the number should increase a lot, and five answered the number should increase somewhat. Only two said the number should be smaller.

Those who believed a lot more Japanese should visit Russia gave the following active reasons: “The economic relationship between Hokkaido and Sakhalin will grow and mutual understanding will require more Russian contacts.” “We must have better understanding between Japanese and Russian citizens. Our contacts with Russians are very limited in comparison with our experience with the United States and Southeast Asia.” “We should not be influenced by someone else’s information. We should see Russia for ourselves.” “Sakhalin has rich oil reserves. The Russian Far East is abundant in timber. Japan should actively promote economic development in these areas, as well as more people exchanges in the Northern Territories.” “Russia has a wonderful culture and if it becomes easier to obtain visas to visit Russia, more Japanese will be interested in visiting Russia.” “Japan has many things to learn from Russia.” “Hokkaido should expand its ties with Sakhalin, Sapporo with Novosibirsk, and Russia with East Asia.” “Exchanges and mutual understanding between Japan and Russia are very important.” “There is no reason why many more Japanese should not visit Russia.” “The economic and cultural ties between Hokkaido and Russia are growing, and they should naturally growth further.” “More Japanese should visit not only Russia but other countries as well. Face-to-face contacts can help us change our stereotypes. We should broaden our ties beyond Sakhalin.” One of the two individuals that thought fewer Japanese should visit Russia wrote, “People who want to visit Russia with no clear purpose should be discouraged.”

Here again, our sample appears not representative of the larger community in Sapporo. Our sense is that the number of people in Sapporo who have a strong desire to visit Russia is quite limited.

When asked if they thought the relationship between their local community and its Russian counterpart should be expanded or lessened, most of the respondents said they favored more active promotion of ties between their community and Russian partner cities. Even the five respondents who offered a somber assessment of the current Russian presence in their local community supported expansion of ties with Russian partners. Of the 19 supporters of closer Russian ties, five

specifically mentioned that Hokkaido and Russia (or Sakhalin) were geographic neighbors and should develop closer ties.

Surprisingly, only one respondent mentioned the conclusion of a peace treaty and resolution of the territorial dispute between Japan and Russia among his reasons for wanting expanded bilateral ties. In our interviews with individuals in Sapporo, Otaru, and Wakkanai, we found eagerness to forge closer ties with Russia, particularly Sakhalin, irrespective of the progress on the territorial problem. Very few of them believed the territorial impasse was or should be a barrier to closer ties with Russia.

We then asked our respondents if they felt friendly toward Russia. This is a question that has been repeatedly asked in numerous public opinion surveys in Japan, including those annually conducted by the Japanese Prime Minister's Office. For example, according to a 2000 public opinion survey by the Japanese Prime Minister's Office, only slightly more than 14 percent of the Japanese polled said they felt friendly or somewhat friendly toward Russia and over 81 percent said they felt either not very friendly or not friendly at all. We wanted to find out if the Sapporo citizens deviated from the national pattern. Eighteen out of 33 respondents said they felt friendly or somewhat friendly toward Russia, whereas 11 felt somewhat unfriendly or not friendly at all. This balance is contrary to the pattern repeatedly found in nationwide public opinion polls. Since our sample is quite small and is not a representative of the Japanese living in Sapporo, much less Hokkaido, the most we can say is that there is a potential reservoir of goodwill in Sapporo toward Russia.

We asked another question which is frequently asked in nationwide public opinion surveys—whether they think the overall relationship between Japan and Russia is good. Eight of our 33 respondents believe the bilateral relations are good or somewhat good, whereas 12 people believe they are somewhat bad. Here again, our respondents are more positive about the bilateral relations than the Japanese public in general. According to the opinion survey by the Prime Minister's Office noted above, 17.8 percent of the Japanese thought in 2000 that the bilateral relations were good and 69.3 percent said they were bad.

Asked to give their reasons for their assessment of Japanese-Russian relations, seven of our respondents specifically mentioned the territorial dispute. Another four individuals cited difficulties in economic relations. Three respondents cited limited contacts, including complicated and time-consuming visa applications procedures. On the positive side, five respondents stated that private-level ties are growing between the two countries.

We then asked what should be done to improve the relationship between Russia and Japan. As many as 18 respondents pointed out bilateral exchanges should be expanded, including information exchange, economic and cultural exchange, including citizens' visits. Only three people answered that Japan and Russia should solve the dispute over the Northern Territories and another three stated the two countries should sign a peace treaty.

Sapporo has a sister-city relationship with Novosibirsk. Asked if they were aware of any sister-city-like relationship between Sapporo and a Russian city, 17 of our 33 respondents were aware and able to name Novosibirsk as Sapporo's sister city. It appears that the city needs to publicize the sister-city ties more prominently. Eleven respondents said the sister-city ties were having a good impact on the overall relations between Japan and Russia, but eight individuals saw little or no impact. Only one person answered the relationship had a bad impact but gave no reason for his critical view.

Among those who looked favorably upon the sister-city relationship between Sapporo and Novosibirsk, six people gave active reasons for their positive assessment: "The sister-city relationship will help the two sides' economic development." "Exchanges between citizens and universities are growing." "The sister-city arrangement gives citizens and students opportunities to visit each other." "Hokkaido is the most active promoter of economic relations with Russia."

“Sporting events, musical exchanges, and ballet performances have good influences on Sapporo citizens.” “The sister-city relationship helps to build trust between the two cities and the two regions.”

On the other hand, out of the eight people who saw little or no impact of the sister-city relationship, 6 individuals were not encouraged by the current state of inter-city relations and wrote: “There is little or no economic exchange.” “Exchanges are limited to officials but they should involve private citizens.” “I do not feel any impact of the sister-city ties.” “The current level of contact between the two cities is not promising.” “The two cities are physically very distant from each other, although there are no political problems between them.” “Given the physical distance between the two cities, economic relations are almost impossible to develop.”

Earlier we noted that our respondents depended on newspapers, TV and radio programs, and a few other sources for information on Russia and Japan-Russia relations. In addition, we asked them what had influenced their views of Russia and the Russian people the most. We listed six sources and asked them to rank-order them. The choices were newspapers and TV programs, experience of working with Russians, personal contacts with Russians, school history lessons, books and music, and preconceptions. Newspaper reports and TV programs were the most important influences. It is encouraging that eight people and five people formed their views on the basis of their experiences working with Russians or through private interactions with Russians, respectively. Among the second-ranked sources of influence, working with Russians and preconceptions were most frequently cited.

At the end of our questionnaire, we asked our respondents to write any comments they liked regarding Russia or Russians. Nineteen respondents chose to do so. Several dimensions were discernible in their comments.

First, all but four people noted that it was either desirable or possible to build mutual trust between the Japanese and the Russians through expanded contacts. Six people acknowledged that there was a great psychological distance or differences between the Japanese and the Russians. Four of them added, however, that it was desirable or possible for both sides to try and bridge those gaps. One of them wrote, for example, “Russians are compulsive and do not much like Japanese preference for moderation. They like deep personal relations. Japan can learn much from them through personal contacts.” Another respondent wrote, “I do not feel close to Russians. I have very limited information about Russia compared with other countries. I feel a distance with Russia and Russians. But, I would like to deep my understanding of them.”

Second, five respondents commented favorably on the characteristics of the Russians they had met through work or personally or found some similarities between the Russians and the Japanese and believed it was possible to develop better relations between the two peoples. One of them wrote, for example, “There are similarities between the Russians and the Japanese. Unlike with the contractual society one finds in the West, the Russians and the Japanese share subconscious spirituality, and I feel culturally much closer to the Russians.” Another wrote, “I have met many compassionate and polite Russians. I feel friendly toward the Russians. But then, I am not a politician.”

Third, there were only three respondents who made critical comments on Russia or Russians without any hint as to whether or how Japan-Russia relations might be improved. One of them wrote, “In Russia, the government has the power to change everything. There are corrupt fisheries officials and mafia, and there is no trust.” Another wrote, “I only have average knowledge and my view (of Russia and the Russians) is based on preconceptions, but I do not have very good impressions of Russians. I know that the Russians have achieved great literature and art. Our political systems differ. I have no personal contacts with Russians.”

Fourth, two people mentioned the difficulty of obtaining visas and traveling to Russia as obstacles to closer ties between the two peoples.

Finally, and surprisingly, only one person mentioned the territorial dispute and wrote, “Russia should return the Northern Territories promptly and the two sides should conclude economic agreements. That would be good for Hokkaido’s construction business.”

Interviews with Japanese and Russians in Sapporo

We conducted interviews with eleven individuals in Sapporo, seven of them Japanese and four Russians. Among the Japanese, two worked in the Russia Section of the International Exchange Department of Hokkaido Governor’s Office, two were in the marine product distribution business, one held a senior position in the *Hokkaido Shimbun*, one was a researcher in Information Institute of the *Hokkaido Shimbun*, and one was an official in the International Exchange Department of the Sapporo City Government. We offer several observations from our interviews with the Japanese.

First, the Japanese interviewees all agreed that Russia—particularly Sakhalin and the Russian Far East—had a special importance to Hokkaido. They clearly saw Russia as their neighbor with whom they needed to develop closer ties.

Second, Hokkaido was ahead of all other Japanese prefectures in developing relations with Russia, particularly Sakhalin. The two officials of the Governor’s Office proudly stated that Governor Hori was personally enthusiastic about expanding relations between Hokkaido and Sakhalin. (The governor was born in Sakhalin and spent the first six years of his life there.)

Third, the development of Hokkaido’s ties with Sakhalin and other regions of Russia had been led by the prefectural government. Similarly, the city government of Sapporo had been taking the initiative in and bearing the brunt of the cost of developing a sister-city relationship with Novosibirsk. The prefectural administration hoped that the private sector interest would grow and that the government’s burden could be reduced.

Fourth, Hokkaido’s interest in forging economic ties with Russia peaked in the early 1990s and, due to numerous difficulties involving bad business experiences and commercial losses suffered by private businesses located in Hokkaido, the public’s interest shifted toward private citizens’ exchanges and contacts in the cultural and social fields, including humanitarian contacts. This, however, had not caused the prefectural government to lose sight of their long-term interest in benefits from expanded business ties with Russia.

Fifth, there was general agreement among the Japanese interviewees that the territorial dispute over the Northern Territories was an obstacle to state-level relations between the two countries but they also agreed that the territorial problem did not seriously affect the local and regional level contacts, including contacts between the citizens of Hokkaido and Sakhalin. One of the prefectural government officials said, “Irrespective of the territorial dispute, we want to continue to improve our relations with Russia based on our (local) interests.” His colleague said, “The islands issue is left to the national governments to deal with and the lack of Japanese business presence in the Russian Far East is a result of economic difficulties. The Japanese government today keeps the territorial and economic issues separately.” According to the two officials of the Governor’s Office, when Hokkaido Government began actively promoting ties with Russia, particularly Sakhalin, in the early 1990s, the local businesses community and many members of the prefectural assembly believed it was premature when Japanese businesses were experiencing difficulties with their Russian partners. The public’s attention was also on the territorial issue and highly critical of the Soviet Union. More recently, however, the criticisms waned and the focus had shifted toward a wider range of issues, including business and cultural ties. As a result, the public’s attitudes toward the prefectural government’s effort to improve ties with Russia had become more favorable.

Sixth, rather than immediate material benefits, the officials of the public sector stressed the importance of improving mutual understanding between the Russians and the Japanese through

direct human contacts. They noted, however, that the Japanese were not very eager to go to Russia, seeing Russia as a “distant neighbor.”

Seventh, the local people’s attitudes toward Russians were increasingly influenced by the growing number of Russians in their communities and by the increasing number of incidents involving Russians. On the one hand, human contacts were expanding and this was a welcome phenomenon. On the other hand, the media highlighted many incidents allegedly involving Russian sailors and mafia. An official of the Governor’s Office said, “At least one incident is reported daily in Otaru, Wakkanai, or Monbetsu.” In one incident, a Russian was gunned down by another Russian on a street corner in the city of Wakkanai. In another incident, a public bathhouse in Otaru refused to admit Russians because many Japanese customers complained that the Russians did not know how to take a bath in the *sentō*, public bathhouse. The media also reported many cases of car thefts and burglaries involving Russians. The involvement of “Russian mafia” was often suspected in these incidents.

Eighth, there was general consensus that the current Russian Consul General and his staff had a very open attitude toward the local community and were doing a very good job promoting Russia’s ties to Hokkaido and Sapporo. The consul general’s activities had a real impact on the local community’s awareness of the Russian presence in the area. So, in the view of the Japanese interviewed, it mattered who the consul general was and how he conducted his affairs.

Ninth, our Japanese interviewees thought the people of Hokkaido generally had a higher interest in Russian affairs than people in other parts of Japan. They admitted, however, that their level of interest or understanding of Russia was still limited. The Hokkaido Shimbun editor noted, “The Japanese have some general ideas about Russia based on Russian music and literature, but they have limited knowledge about the Russian government, bureaucracy, or other specialized issues.”

We interviewed three Russians in Sapporo. One was a researcher with the Information Institute of the *Hokkaido Shimbun*. One was a businessman selling Russian marine products. One was a businesswoman from Novosibirsk who was working at the Sapporo International Plaza, providing visitors with information about Sapporo and Novosibirsk. We offer the following points from these interviews.

First, Russian children did not experience discrimination at school. Most of them spoke Japanese and behaved like Japanese children.

Second, there was no such thing as an organized Russian community in Sapporo or organized activities among the Russian residents in the city. Our Russian interviewees in Niigata shared this observation.

Third, Russians felt that most Japanese they had met, including their co-workers, were rather superficial in their conversations with them, with limited interest in them. The Russians we interviewed in Niigata also shared this observation. According to the Russian interviewees in Sapporo, interest in Russia was particularly limited among the young Japanese. They even noted that the young Japanese were not very interested in the territorial dispute between with Russia.

Fourth, Russians had the impression that Japanese lacked in originality, spontaneity, and passion, but that they were efficient when working with pre-established procedures and programs.

Sixth, the number of mixed marriages between Japanese and Russians was increasing. Many Russian wives complained that their husbands showed very little sincerity and that they were not able to see them as friends. Russian women married to Japanese men felt deprived of the important traditional role of a Russian wife and mother, as the central figure in family life. As we noted earlier, we heard the same comment from our Russian interviewees in Niigata.

Seventh, Japanese media coverage on Russia was not very penetrating or comprehensive. An exception was noted for NHK, which provided in-depth coverage of developments in Russia. There was some local media coverage about Russians’ wrongdoings in Hokkaido but the journalists

did not seem particularly critical of the Russians. In Sapporo, “foreigners” typically meant Americans, but in port cities of Hokkaido, people assumed the foreigners they saw were Russians.

Eighth, the present Russian Consul General, despite his lack of resources, was doing a good job and quite active.

A Survey of Japanese Residents in Wakkanai

Wakkanai is a port city of 43,000 people, located at the northern end of Japan, directly across the Soya Strait from Sakhalin. It is home to an active but dwindling fishing industry. The city leaders see expansion of relations with Russia, particularly Sakhalin, as very important to Wakkanai’s economic vitality, indeed to its survival. The city established friendship-city (yukotoshi) ties with Nevel’sk in 1972, with Korsakov in 1991, and with Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in 2001. There is a scheduled shipping service between Wakkanai and Korsakov during the months of May-September. In 2001, 32 round-trip services carried 4,205 passengers and 1,075 tons of cargo. In 2000, as many as 3,760 ships came into Wakkanai Port and 3,730 of them were Russian ships, mostly small fishing and freight ships. As many as 58,473 Russian citizens landed in Wakkanai on special permit while their ships were anchored in the port. A more permanent Russian presence is very small. In 2001, only 59 Russians were registered in the city, but they constituted over one-fourth of the foreign residents in the city.³⁶

The city administration is actively promoting human and economic ties with the friendship cities in Sakhalin. For example, it sent 62 Wakkanai citizens on two goodwill missions to Sakhalin in 2001 and funded their travel. In addition, the city dispatched one of its administrators to Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk for a three-month stint in 2000 and received four administrators from the Russian city for two weeks each in 2000 and again in 2001. Wakkanai also sent two of its administrators to the Wakkanai Liaison Office in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk in 2001. Moreover, Wakkanai participated in a newly established exchange program between Japanese private organizations and Sakhalin Oblast in 2001. In this framework, various organizations in the city dispatched or received chamber of commerce members, junior chamber of commerce members, high school students and teachers, university students and professors, children, and tourism specialists. These exchanges involved people in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, Korsakov, and Nevel’sk in Sakhalin. In 2001, the city budgeted about \$134,000 for various programs to promote the economic exchange with the Sakhalin cities. In addition, the city spent about \$161,700 in subsidies for various citizen group activities to promote economic, business, cultural, and educational exchanges with various cities in Sakhalin and the Russian Far East.³⁷

Are these efforts by the city of Wakkanai having any impact on the local citizens’ views of Russia and Russians? What other developments are affecting their views? In order to answer these questions, we conducted a survey of some city residents and students at a private university. Twenty-eight people responded.³⁸ We also conducted a series of interviews with several individuals in Wakkanai.

In the survey, we asked identical questions to those we asked in Sapporo. However, the two sets of surveys are not directly comparable because we did not use any sampling technique for either survey and the composition of the two sets of respondents is quite different, in terms of occupation, age and educational background. Nonetheless, there are some responses from the Wakkanai sample that either accord with our observations about the respondents in Sapporo or raise a number of additional questions that we need to investigate further.

First, we present the profiles of our respondents in Wakkanai.

Table 9. Occupations/professions of Wakkanai Respondent

Total	Business employee*	Business owner/executive	University professor	University student	Public servant	Newspaper reporter
28	1	2	2	21	1	1

* Includes restaurants and bars.

Table 10. Age of Wakkanai Respondents

Total	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s
23	12	5	1	2	3

Table 11. Gender of Wakkanai Respondents

Total	Male	Female
25	18	7

Table 12. Highest Level of Education Obtained

Total	High school	University	Graduate school
28	23	2	2

As many as 21 respondents were students at Wakkanai Hokusei Gakuen University, a four-year college with a student population of around 360 and one major, in information media. As we will note below, their views of Russia and Russians are strikingly different from the views expressed by adult respondents in a number of ways.

The amount of contact between our Wakkanai respondents and Russians was very limited, except for four adult respondents who either had visited Russia or met Russians at or through their work. Seven of our respondents, including 3 students, saw Russians at least once a week, one respondent saw Russians at least once a month, and the rest rarely or never saw Russians. Outside of their work environment, only four individuals said they met Russians on a weekly basis and one at least once a month. The other respondents rarely or never met Russians. Those that met Russians at or through their work described the Russians they had met with such favorable adjectives as “beautiful,” “studious,” “clever at work,” “jovial,” “kind,” “broad-minded,” “intellectual,” “compassionate,” “proud,” “eloquent,” and “serious.” Only one person offered negative characterization, saying the Russians he had met were “loose with work schedule.” Among the other individuals who had little or no contact with Russians, the impressions were understandably more superficial, but they were largely negative. Five students used “scary” and three students “big” to describe their impressions of Russians. When it came to impressions based on contacts outside of the work environment, the three respondents who met Russians at least once a week offered the following adjectives: “warm,” “childish,” “gentle,” “beautiful,” “scary,” “fun,” and “kind.”

The above impressions suggest that, as we noted with respect to the survey in Sapporo, more frequent and more intimate contacts with Russian people tend to improve the impressions the Japanese hold of the Russians they meet.

The limited amount of contact the Wakkanai respondents have with Russians is compounded by the fact that they admit that their knowledge of Russia is very limited. Only six respondents said they had some knowledge of Russia and one (a university professor who taught Russian and Russia-related subjects) said he was very knowledgeable. All others admitted their knowledge of Russia was either very limited or nonexistent. When it came to the ability to use the Russian language, the two university professors who responded to our survey were the only ones assessing their ability as “good.” Everyone else rated his/her Russian ability as either very limited or non-existent.

As to the sources of information our respondents used about Russia, newspapers were cited by 15 respondents and radio and TV programs by 14 people. Five people specifically mentioned the *Hokkaido Shimbun*, and seven cited local newspapers, including the *Nikkan Soya*, and the *Wakkanai*

Press. Other newspapers cited by at least one person were the *Asahi Shimbun* and the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. Seven individuals said they had personal sources of information.

The size of the Russian presence in Wakkanai cannot but have a visible impact in the city. Russians living in the city are small in number, but, as we noted earlier, there are a large number of brief visitors, particularly those who come into the city while their ships are docked in Wakkanai Port. Only fifty-nine Russians were officially documented as residents in Wakkanai in 2001. Nine of our respondents underestimated the number of Russian residents. Eight respondents guessed correctly that there were between 50 and 100 Russian residents in the city. Five people thought between 100 and 500 Russians were residing in Wakkanai. Six respondents—all university students—thought there were over 500 Russians living in their city. The Russians in the city appear quite visible in the eyes of the students who responded to our survey.

About one half of the respondents thought, correctly, that the number of Russians visiting Wakkanai had increased over the last two-three years, while only three people believed the number had declined, with four noticing little or no change in the number of Russian visitors.

The visibility of Russians is quite striking among our respondents. This contrasts sharply with our observation in Sapporo, where most people underestimated the size of the resident Russian population in their city. This is understandable in that Wakkanai is a substantially smaller city, with a population of only 43,000. The more than 50,000 Russians that come through the city each year while their ships are anchored in the port leave the local residents with the impression that there are many more Russians living in the city than there really are.

Asked if more Russians should come to Wakkanai, only seven respondents thought so. They said expanded contacts with Russians would improve mutual understanding and be in the economic interest of Wakkanai. Eight people said the current level should be maintained, while two people said there should be fewer Russian visitors in their city. Maintenance of “public safety” and control of “crimes” were given as reasons for their cautious views. Eight people said they would like to see more Russian visitors in their city but that they were concerned about increasing crimes.

If participation in Russia-focused events is an indicator of the level of public interest in Russia, the interest is high among the adult respondents but low among the students. Every one of the non-student respondents said he/she had participated in or attended some Russia-related public events, while only four of the 21 university students indicated they had attended similar events.

Should more Japanese visit Russia than currently? Fourteen respondents answered this question affirmatively. Not one respondent said fewer Japanese should visit Russia. Four individuals preferred the status quo. As many as ten people said they did not know.

Asked what kind of impact if any the presence of Russian people in their local area had on their community, only four people said the impact was positive. In contrast, as many as 15 respondents said the impact was negative. Another two individuals said there were mixed impacts. Reasons for the negative assessments pointed to the growing incidents of shoplifting, bicycle thefts, and violent crimes. One respondent wrote, “Wakkanai is a small port city and many Russians that come on ships misbehave in the city.” Another wrote, “The general public has little contact with Russians but there are many newspaper reports about crimes committed by Russians.” Echoing the same sentiment, another individual wrote, “Most Russian residents in the city have only limited contact with the local citizens, but the more visible seamen leave bad impressions on the local community.” Several respondents recognized that there were indeed misbehaving Russian visitors. They cautioned against generalizing about all Russians and said that the local economy also benefited from the presence of Russian visitors.

Our respondents wanted a more balanced relationship as far as citizens’ visits between the two countries were concerned. Interestingly, support for expanded relations between Wakkanai and its partner cities in Sakhalin was strong among our respondents, even among those who said the Russian presence in the city had bad impacts. Sixteen out of the 28 respondents said Wakkanai’s

ties with the Russian cities should be promoted. In contrast, only two individuals said the inter-city ties should be controlled. Among the reasons given for expanding friendship ties were economic benefits, geographical proximity, and mutual cultural understanding.

Do our respondents feel friendly toward Russia? As many as 15 individuals, including all university students in our sample, said they felt either not very friendly or not friendly at all. Nine people said they were either friendly or somewhat friendly. None of these were students.

As to the overall relations between Japan and Russia, only one person (a city government official) evaluated the relations as “good” and another (a student) thought they were “somewhat good.” Five respondents chose “Don’t know.” The remaining twenty-one respondents were equally split between “not very good” and “cannot generalize.” Among the reasons given for the negative assessments, the territorial dispute was cited by the largest number of respondents (8 individuals).

Asked what should be done to improve Japan’s relations with Russia, two people said the two countries should conclude a peace treaty and another six people said the territorial dispute should be solved. Some of them demanded that Russia return the territories to Japan but others said both sides needed a spirit of compromise. Another eight individuals agreed that more contacts and more communication between the two peoples would build trust and more friendly relations.

About half of the respondents were aware of the friendship relationship that Wakkanai had established with Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. A slightly smaller portion of the respondents also correctly named Nevel’sk and Korsakov as Wakkanai’s friendship cities. Eleven respondents thought these friendship relationships were having a good impact on the overall relations between Japan and Russia, while six said they saw little or no impact, and eleven others said they did not know.

How were our Wakkanai respondents’ views of Russia and Russians formed? Second-hand sources, including media, were the dominant source of influence on their views. Eight of them cited newspapers and TV programs as the most important source of influence.

Clearly, a larger sample is necessary to draw accurate conclusions about the Wakkanai City residents’ views on Russia and Russians. Nonetheless, the marked difference between the adult respondents and students in our sample is quite intriguing. It is also disconcerting that the image of the Russians is far from favorable, with the brief visitors in the city leaving quite a negative impression on the local residents, particularly the young. We only interviewed a limited number of people in the city, all of them with fairly extensive contacts with Russians. They were also concerned that the behavior of Russian seamen was a source of unfavorable images the local people had of the Russians in general.

Conclusions

There is a noticeable difference of views about the Russians in Japan and Russo-Japanese relations between those who have had some levels of personal or professional contact with Russians or experience in Russia on the one hand and, on the other, those who have had little or no such contact or experience. The former group is clearly more favorably inclined toward the Russians in their community and interested in promoting closer ties with Russia than the latter group.

Another difference is found between the local government authorities and others. Government officials from the areas closest to Russia realize that the two countries are geographical neighbors and that this fact will eventually bring their economies closer. They take pride in being in the forefront of ties with Russia and that the efforts and energy that they put into sustaining and expanding relations with their Russian counterparts will help modify the nation’s policy toward the improvement of bilateral relations.

The same officials believe that the current low level of visible economic benefits from Russian ties should not be a reason for proceeding with their effort to expand people-to-people contacts between their citizens and the citizens of the Russian cities and municipalities with which they have established sister-city or friendship-city relationships. They are hopeful that eventually

their efforts in the cultural and social fields will lead to more promising business opportunities than they have seen so far.

The impasse over the territorial dispute between the two countries does not appear to be a deterrent against efforts to build commercial ties on the part of local businessmen and government officials. Some even expressed concern that a territorial settlement would terminate the advantageous position they currently enjoy in their dealings with Russians. They also fear that expanded Japanese access to fisheries and other resources on and around the disputed islands would be damaging to those resources, as well as to the natural environment of the hitherto underdeveloped areas.

The most damaging in the current state of local-level interactions between Russians and Japanese is the largely negative reputation Russians have acquired because of the frequently reported crimes allegedly committed by them. The local authorities do not seem to have taken an active role in remedying the situation by, for example, offering an orientation program to the visiting Russians, particularly those who come onshore briefly. While individual Russians may not be able to influence the local mass perception, there may be a role that Russian consular officials can play, in cooperation with local Japanese authorities.

Despite the outward appearance of adjustment to the Japanese cultural environment, many Russians appear to exhibit pronounced behavioral and thinking patterns that reflect their Russian identity. They were disturbed by the lack of interest on the part of their Japanese colleagues to engage them not only on a professional but also on a personal level. At the same time, they were deeply appreciative of the few local Japanese who were quite interested in and engaged with them, breaking through the customary manner of relating to foreigners in Japan.

For most Japanese, the mass media is the main source of information on Russia and Russians. Local and even national media coverage of Russia in Japan shows two seemingly contradictory tendencies. On the one hand, the media depict the glossy side of historical and contemporary Russia and it resonates well with many Japanese intellectuals who are familiar with Russian achievements in art, literature, and sports. On the other hand, the same media reports repugnant manifestations of Russian behavior, such as thefts, murders, illegal drug and gun trafficking, and other types of crimes, as well as the impoverished local conditions in some areas of Russia. The dichotomy of two extremes is too much to bear for the average Japanese, who tends to gravitate toward the middle ground. So, many Japanese feel confused as to what the real Russia is, and with which Russia they are being asked to deal.

Contacts between any two cultures are bound to create both excitement and disappointment. While we do not necessarily subscribe to the idea of an inevitable clash of civilizations, we do see a potentially disconcerting possibility in the growing Russian presence in the Japanese provinces we have begun to examine. The “abnormal” relations between the two countries at the state level are not helped by the lack of substantial people-to-people contact. What limited contact there is, there are signs of both accommodation and resistance by the local communities vis-à-vis the Russians. It seems unlikely that the generally negative public opinion in Japan about Russia or Japanese-Russian relations will change. However, the territorial dispute—the thorn in the state-level relations—does not appear to dampen the local initiatives to expand cross-border ties for the benefit in their own communities. Whether the interests of the provincial administrators can influence the political-strategic considerations in Tokyo and Moscow remains to be seen.

Notes

- ¹ These numbers include foreign nationals entering Japan for the first time as well as those who re-entered Japan. Unless otherwise noted, these statistics are from *Statistics on Immigration Control 1999*, Tokyo: Japan Immigration Association, 2000.
- ² US citizens entering Japan in 1999 numbered 720,142 and were the third largest group, representing 14.7% of the total number of foreign nationals entering Japan.
- ³ The number of Russians coming to Japan declined somewhat in more recent years, as a result of the final crisis in Russia. In comparison, the number of Chinese entering Japan (from both PRC and Taiwan) has grown every year in the same period. The number of Korean nationals entering Japan has grown every year except in 1998, when it declined by 22.3%.
- ⁴ Ministry of Justice homepage at <http://www.joj.go.jp?PRESS/010330-2/table03.html>. There were 661,564 US citizens documented in Japan.
- ⁵ For general background information on the development of Niigata's and Hokkaido's relations with Russia, particularly the Russian Far East, see Tsuneo Akaha, "Local Diplomacy in Northeast Asia: The Case of Hokkaido and Niigata and Their Ties to the Russian Far East," a paper presented at the 2001 Hong Kong Convention of International Studies, Hong Kong, July 26-28, 2001.
- ⁶ These statistics were supplied by Hokkaido and Niigata Prefectural government officials.
- ⁷ The information was supplied by the city administrators of Niigata and Sapporo.
- ⁸ The information was provided by the city administrators of Otaru City.
- ⁹ The information was supplied by Hokkaido Prefecture administrators. "Special permits" are issued to ferry passengers and crew members who wish to come ashore while their ships are calling in Japanese ports, those who use these ports as transit points, those requiring emergency landing, and others rescued by Japanese coastal authorities.
- ¹⁰ The information was provided by Hokkaido Prefecture administrators.
- ¹¹ The information on Niigata Airport was supplied by Niigata City officials.
- ¹² The information was provided by Wakkanai City officials.
- ¹³ The information was supplied by Otaru City officials.
- ¹⁴ For an account of Niigata's experience in international exchange and cooperation, including in the Russian Far East, see Masao Ichioka, *Jichitai Gaiko: Niigata no Jissen-Yukokara Kyoroku e (Local autonomous bodies' diplomacy: From practice-friendship to cooperation in Niigata)*, Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyoronsha, 2000.
- ¹⁵ There were also 314 Filipino residents officially documented in Niigata City in May 2001. These statistics were provided to Akaha by Niigata City's International Division.
- ¹⁶ Niigata Prefecture contributed 3 billion yen and Niigata City 300 million yen toward ERINA's establishment (Ichioka, p. 195).
- ¹⁷ For a brief description of the role of Mayor Watanabe of Niigata in establishing the mayors' association in Japan, see Ichioka, pp. 189-191.
- ¹⁸ This comprises 20 Japanese cities.
- ¹⁹ As many as 40,227 passengers flew between Niigata and Khabarovsk in 1991, 4,063 passengers used the Niigata-Irkutsk air service in the summer of 1992, the second summer of its operation, and 19,689 people flew between Niigata and Vladivostok in 1993, the first year the air link started between those cities. These statistics were provided to Akaha by Niigata City's International Division.
- ²⁰ The Niigata-Vostochny cargo service operates once a month, the Niigata-Nakhodka cargo service operates accordingly to demand, and the Niigata-Vladivostok passenger line operated four times in 1998 (Ichioka, pp. 172).
- ²¹ Ichioka, pp. 172-176.
- ²² Ichioka, p. 87.

²³ By way of reference, Niigata's exports to the United States in 1998 stood at 62,420 million yen (about \$515.9 million).

²⁴ Niigata's imports from the United States in 1998 amounted to 27,464 million yen (around \$228.9 million).

²⁵ A recent expression of Sakhalin's opposition to territorial compromises to Japan is the resolution adopted by the Sakhalin Oblast Duma in April 2001 stating that President Putin's plan to review Russia's position on the territorial dispute threatened the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Russia. The resolution was prompted by Putin's acknowledgment that the 1956 Japan-Soviet joint declaration, which pledge the return of Habomai and Shikotan islands to Japan upon conclusion of a peace treaty between the two countries, was legally in effect (*Niigata Nippo*, April 23, 2001, p. 3).

²⁶ Hokkaido, *Hokkaido to Roshia Kyokuto: Koryu Jisseki to Roshia Kyokuto no Gaiyo* (Hokkaido and the Russian Far East: realized exchanges and an outline of the Russian Far East), Sapporo: Hokkaido, 2001, p. 47.

²⁷ Akaha interview with Hisahiro Sugawara, Director, Hokkaido Governor's Office, Sapporo, July 4, 2001.

²⁸ The most important ports were Wakkanai, Hanasaki, Otaru, and Monbetsu, which received, respectively, 3,691, 1,766, 1,223, and 1,073 Russian ships in 1999. These statistics were provided by the Hokkaido Governor's Office. For the following description of the relationship between Hokkaido and the Russian Far East, I have relied heavily on interviews with officials in the Hokkaido Governor's Office in Sapporo on July 4, 2001 and on Hokkaido, *Hokkaido to Roshia Kyokuto: Koryu Jisseki to Roshia Kyokuto no Gaiyo* (Hokkaido and the Russian Far East: realized exchanges and an outline of the Russian Far East), Sapporo: Hokkaido, 2001.

²⁹ Shinichi Suzuki, "Nemuro to Tai-Roshia Koryu: Jimoto Minkan Kigyo no Kokoromi" (Nemuro and its interaction with Russia: The efforts of local private enterprises), *Charivari*, No. 223 (September 2000), p. 33.

³⁰ The estimate for Monbetsu was made in 2000 and the one for Wakkanai was in 1997. *Hokkaido Shimbun*, June 1, 2000, p. 22 and January 19, 2000, p. 10.

³¹ Shinichi Suzuki, "Nemuro to Tai-Roshia Koryu: Jimoto Minkan Kigyo no Kokoromi" (Nemuro and its interaction with Russia: The efforts of local private enterprises), *Charivari*, No. 223 (September 2000), pp. 34-35.

³² Akaha interview with representatives of the Hokkaido Fisheries Association, Sapporo, July 5, 2001.

³³ Akaha interview with Tonoyuki Musashi, Russia Section, Hokkaido Governor's Office, Sapporo, July 4, 2001.

³⁴ Sapporo, *Sapporo-shi no Kokusai Koryu* (International Exchange of Sapporo City), Sapporo: Sapporo City, 1999, p. 103.

³⁵ *Asahi Shimbun*, October 31, 1998, p. 8 and November 17, 1998, p. 11.

³⁶ This information was supplied by the Wakkanai city administration.

³⁷ This information was also supplied by the Wakkanai city administration.

³⁸ We acknowledge with appreciation the assistance of Mr. Yukihiro Okazaki of Hokkaido Shimbun and Professors Kazuhiko Iwamoto and Chihiro Tsukamoto of Wakkanai Hokusei University in conducting the survey, as well as for agreeing to be interviewed by us.