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Imagining Manmō: Mapping the Russo-Japanese Boundary Agreements in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, 1907–1915

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to delineate the boundaries of the spheres of interest in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia established under the Russo-Japanese accords of 1907 and 1912. Although the agreements are well known, there have been few efforts to reconstruct these spheres cartographically. Two existing maps offer contradictory interpretations. These partition agreements had a major impact on diplomacy, railway policy, and strategic planning during the decade they held force between 1907 and 1916, and the precise location of the Russo-Japanese sphere boundaries in this contested region was a matter of no small consequence. The author proposes a revised boundary map based on an examination of textual and cartographic sources, including maps produced by the army command of the Kwantung government-general. At the same time, the author seeks to highlight the potential value of cartographic analysis as a mode of historical inquiry into the record of Japanese imperialism. Cartography was an indispensable tool for modern empire builders in bringing a measurable territoriality to their realms and making their lands and subjects politically legible. The mapping entailed in these boundary agreements was important not only in bilateral diplomacy but also in enhancing the legibility of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia to Japanese imperialists themselves.

INTRODUCTION

Early in the twentieth century, Russian and Japanese diplomats negotiated boundary agreements that partitioned Manchuria and Inner Mongolia into spheres of interest. Although staking out such spheres in China had emerged as a common practice among the Great Powers around the turn of the century, the Russo-Japanese agreements were unusual in adopting an approach to boundary making more consistent with the demarcation of formal territorial frontiers than with the rather amorphous claims characteristic of conventional *sphärenpolitik*. Past studies of international relations in the region have paid due attention to these accords (Matsui 1972; Tsunoda 1967). At the same time, few scholars have attempted to precisely locate the boundary lines of the spheres these accords defined, let alone to represent them cartographically. Writing on the subject typically reproduces the text of the secret agreements but sheds little light on the obscure toponyms used by the negotiators, which remain largely indecipherable to most latter-day readers (Williams 1932). Attempts to identify some of these landmarks have produced “dots” that cannot be “connected” according to the terms of the agreements (Institute of Modern History 2005). Two mappings are available, but both are relatively rough sketches that lack supplemental explanations as to how they were produced. Moreover, these mappings offer conflicting interpretations (see figures 1 and 2). Despite the fact that the partition agreements as such are well known, then, the actual location of the Russo-Japanese frontiers in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia and the scope of their spheres of interest in this region remain fuzzy at best.

A renewed attempt at mapping these spheres as precisely as possible would be worthwhile if only because these partition agreements had a major impact on diplomacy, railway policy, and strategic planning during the decade they held force between 1907 and 1916. Of broader potential significance, though, is the window that such a project might open into the geographic imaginary of Japanese imperialism in the early twentieth century. In particular, it offers an avenue into the process, to borrow both a phrase and conceptual framework from Mark Elliott, by which the Japanese “imagined into existence” (Elliott 2000, 605) a land they came to call “Manmō,” a shorthand reference for a particular imperialist blending of Manchuria and

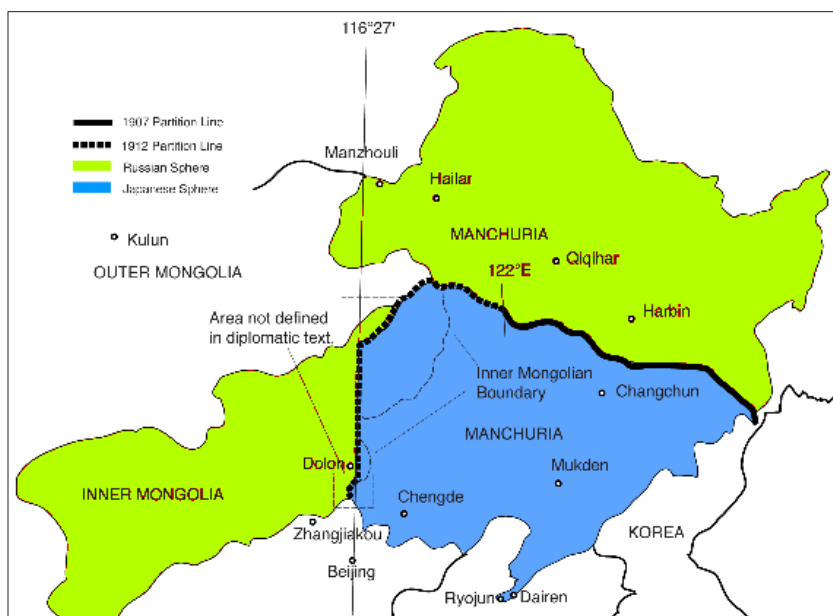


FIGURE 1 Kajima's Partition. Source: Kajima (1970, 71).

Inner Mongolia. In addition, the mapping project may provide insight into the extraordinarily complex rivalries unfolding in this region among Russians, Japanese, Chinese, Manchus, and Mongols, which manifested themselves not only in politics, diplomacy, land disputes, and armed conflict, but in contested cartographies as well. As a number of scholars have pointed out, mapmaking served modern state and empire builders as an indispensable tool in making their lands and subjects politically legible (Perdue 1998; Scott 1998). For that very reason, map analysis and historical mapmaking would seem indispensable as a mode of inquiry into the record of modern imperialism.

It is in this context that this study seeks to reconstruct graphically the spheres of interest described in the Russo-Japanese accords of 1907 and 1912. As a specialist in modern Japanese history with no formal training in historical geography or cartography, I acknowledge from the outset the limited expertise I bring to this endeavor. A more thorough approach would require

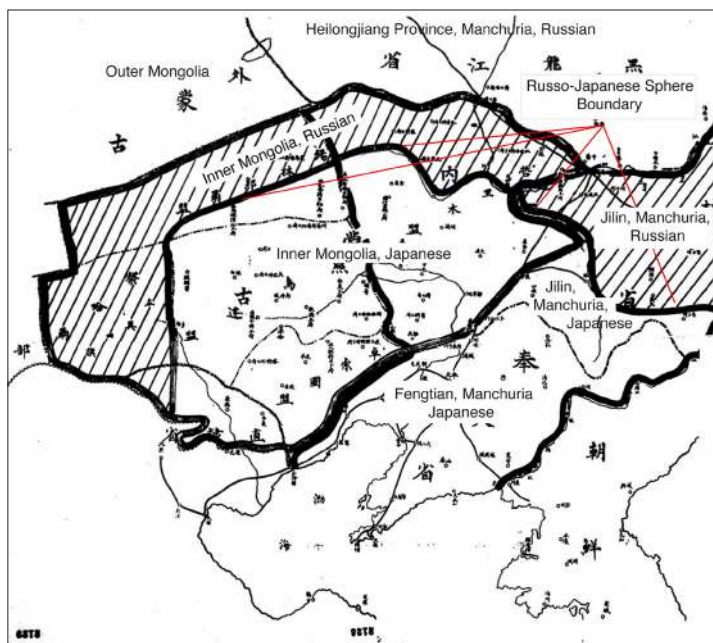


FIGURE 2 Nishikawa's Partition. Source: Nishikawa (1915, 2126–2129).

interdisciplinary analysis as well as collaboration among specialists in Japanese, Chinese, Mongolian, and Russian history. Given my limitations, this project adopts an admittedly skewed Japanese vantage point on the problem. Nonetheless, I hope that it offers a useful beginning.

PROBLEMS, METHODS, AND SOURCES

Any attempt at mapping these spheres faces two major sets of challenges. One lies in the identification of geographic referents used as boundary markers in the agreements, particularly on the Inner Mongolian end of the partition, where diplomats used Russified Mongol toponyms that were in the process of displacement by Sinified variants or new Chinese place names altogether. Changing toponyms reflected the larger process of Han Chinese colonization of Mongol lands encouraged by the Qing authorities in an effort to secure these territories against Russian and subsequently Japanese

encroachment. As a corollary of this colonization process, provincial and regional political units underwent frequent reorganization that destabilized the cartography of the region and rendered uncertain the administrative borders used by the Russo-Japanese agreements as referents (Lattimore 1934, 89–108; Lee 1970, 116–167).

The second set of challenges lies in recovering the assumptions of Russian and Japanese diplomats about the topology of the territories they sought to partition. These accords did no more than describe one or two lines designed to slice a bounded shape of presumably known size and contour. Partition lines alone, which describe no more than open-ended fences, are not sufficient for us to visualize the extent of these spheres. Whereas the division of an island such as Sakhalin by a single east-west slice presents no ambiguities, a reconstruction of the partition of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia is not so simple. Their shapes changed over time, particularly during the decade after the Russo-Japanese War, and varied according to the party producing geographic knowledge.

As noted, there are two available maps of the partition that can serve as points of departure for this inquiry. One is contained in Kajima Morinosuke's multivolume history of Japanese diplomacy and represents, to the best of my knowledge, the only effort on the part of a historian to offer a visual reconstruction (Kajima 1970, 71). As we shall see, Kajima's rendering is similar, at an "eyeball" level of examination, to what I offer as my hypothesis. Unfortunately, his map provides few of the geographic referents outlined in the diplomatic texts and is too schematic for us to ascertain how closely it cleaves to the terms of the agreement. It also includes features neither strictly consistent with the agreement nor otherwise explained (see figure 1).

I discovered the other map, a potentially significant document representing something close to a primary source, in a memorandum written by Major General Nishikawa Torajirō, chief of staff of the Kwantung government-general's army command (Kantō totokufu rikugunbu; hereafter, Kwantung garrison). The memorandum was contained in an entry in the 1915 *Mitsu Dai Nikki* (Japanese Army Ministry's Classified Great Daily Log) (Nishikawa 1915). This source dates only three years after the second agreement and carries considerable authority because the survey teams and cartographers of this army unit produced much of the expert geographic knowledge available to Japanese officials at this time. The Nishikawa map is also a rough

sketch, but it does contain a few landmarks that serve as reference points (see figure 2).

Even at a gross level of examination, the configuration of spheres Nishikawa's map shows is at odds with Kajima's interpretation. At the same time, the boundary markers discernible in Nishikawa's map are at variance with some of the mapping "instructions" contained in the diplomatic accords. Such inconsistencies, along with the schematic nature of both maps, highlight the need for a detailed reexamination. Moreover, reconciling the evidence explored in this study with the Nishikawa map, given its putative authority, constitutes another major challenge in itself.

The other cartographic sources I have used in the visual reconstruction of Russian and Japanese spheres warrant some comment. The most important are two maps of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia produced by survey teams and cartographers of the Kwantung garrison. The first map, published in 1908, I use as an approximation of the geographic knowledge available to Japanese diplomats at the time of the first partition agreement. This map was produced presumably under the supervision of Tsujimura Kusuzō, chief intendant officer of the garrison in 1908, who was responsible for directing a survey of Inner Mongolia between 1906 and 1908 (Tsujimura 1908).¹ The second map, used as an approximation of geographic knowledge available to the boundary makers of 1912, was produced by Tsujimura's successors in 1911 (Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu 1911). Both are published maps rather than military originals and, unfortunately, are likely to have been stripped of considerable information. I have also made use of later maps from the South Manchuria Railway Company (SMR) and U.S. Army Mapping Service (AMS) along with other more recent renderings to correlate topographic features referenced in the boundary agreements. Older atlases—Western, Japanese, and Chinese—produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, proved useful in identifying changing toponyms as well as providing some sense of the prevailing cartographic conventions of the time (Negoro 1908; Smith 1906, 107; Stanford, 1901).

Russian and Japanese diplomats negotiated the partition of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia in two secret agreements. Although the 1912 agreement may be understood as having completed a process started in 1907, the logic and context of boundary making differed significantly in each set of talks. Accordingly, they must be contextualized and explored separately.

The first of the two partitions formed part of a larger set of accords negotiated in 1907 in order to reduce tensions and avoid misunderstandings in North-east Asia. The accords were a follow-up to the 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth, which brought the Russo-Japanese War to a close. In addition to considerations regarding the future status of Korea, these talks sought to define more clearly the respective claims of the two former belligerents in the region they called, and which I will also call, for now, “Manchuria” (Gaimushō 1907, 97–112). Railway issues lay at the heart of their immediate concerns in this territory. Indeed, the service or “catchment” area of the Russian-built Chinese Eastern Railway (CER) provided a working definition of “Manchuria” used by the two sides independent of any political, cultural, or demographic criteria. Accordingly, the partition of the CER in the Treaty of Portsmouth established a basic framework for dividing a “Manchuria” largely defined by railway interests into northern and southern spheres. The terms of the 1905 treaty divided the T-shaped Russian railway system at Changchun, giving Japan most of the “upright” of the T, from Dalian to Changchun, which the Japanese renamed the South Manchuria Railway. Russia was left with the segment from Changchun (Guangchengzi Station) to Harbin, along with the east-west trunk line running through Heilongjiang and Jilin (see figure 3).

Railway catchment areas, also called “spheres of influence” by railway managers, however, had imprecise and disputable boundaries, susceptible to enlargement through creative traffic acquisition strategies and the construction of invasive feeder railways. Good railway management, indeed, required expansionist business strategies (Matsusaka 2001, 65–73, 126–139). In an effort to forestall any initiatives that might be interpreted as deliberate encroachment, diplomats sought to stabilize these spheres by drawing a line running from east to west that would divide Manchuria into two parts, a Russian north and a Japanese south. The two sides would agree not to build railway or telegraph lines across this boundary.

Foreign Minister Hayashi Shigeru took the initiative in proposing specific boundaries (Gaimushō 1907, 139–142, 144–146). His scheme called for drawing a line that he described from west to east, starting at the source of

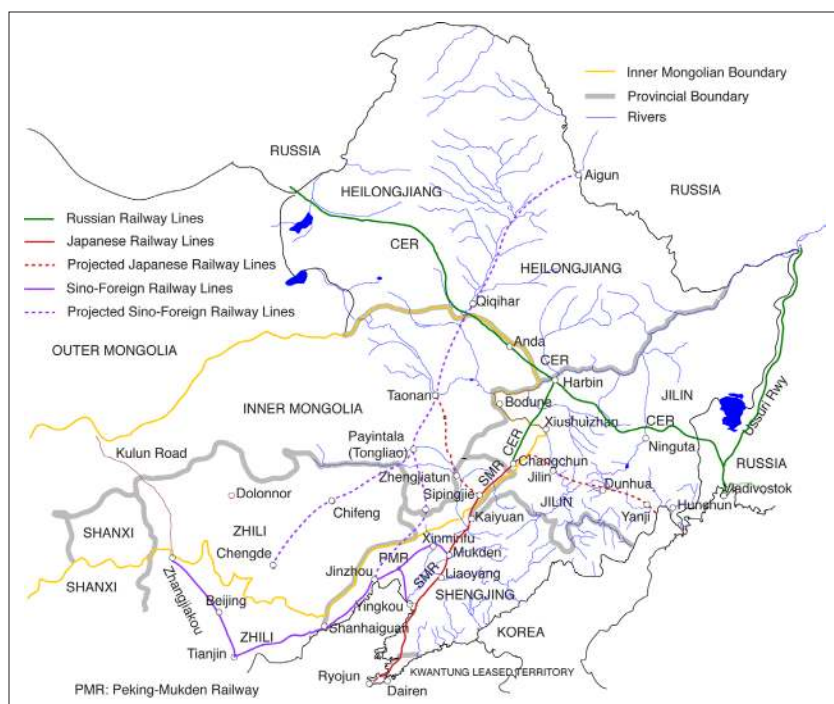


FIGURE 3 Railways in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Provincial borders are approximations as of 1908. Railways projected between 1907 and 1911. Sources: Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu (1911); Matsusaka (2001, 118; Tsujimura (1908).

the “Tuola (托羅) River” in the Great Xing’an range and following its course to its confluence with the Nenjiang. His line then followed the Nenjiang downstream to its confluence with the Sungari River and upstream along the Second Sungari (the upper Sungari starting from the junction with the Nenjiang) until it reached a settlement on the riverbank called Xiushuizhan (秀水站). A straight line connected Xiushuizhan to the northernmost end of Lake Biruten (written in katakana), followed by another straight line southeast to the city of Hunchun. From Hunchun, yet another straight line extended south to the conjunction of the Russo-Korean and Chinese borders (Gaimushō 1907, 117). For the purposes of easy reference, I will call the boundary defined in this proposal the “Hayashi line.”

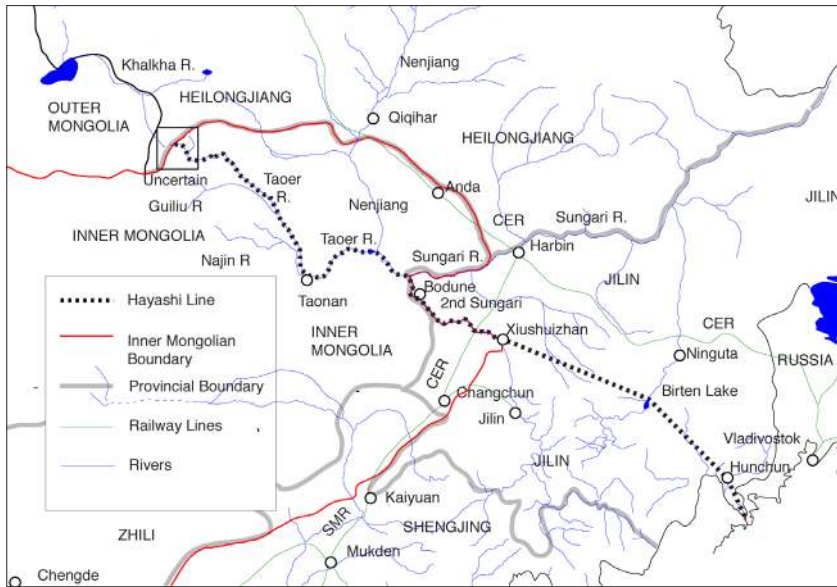


FIGURE 4 The Hayashi line. Sources: Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu (1911); Tsujimura (1908).

The identification of geographic reference points on this line presents few difficulties. The “Tuola River” is most certainly the present-day Taoyer River, known as early as the turn of the twentieth century by the Sinified name (Lattimore 1934, 46; Smith 1906, 107; Tsujimura 1908). The precise source of the Taoyer as Hayashi understood it is uncertain, but diplomats never verified that location during the course of these talks because, as we shall see, the negotiated boundary line fell well short of the Great Xing’an range. “Xiushuizhan” is undoubtedly the same as Xiushuidianzi, a river port of major significance according to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century atlas maps (Smith 1906, 107). Lake Biruten, also rendered variously as Birten, Pilten, Pirdin and Porteng, is an old name for Jingbo Lake, a well-known scenic spot created by the volcanic damming of the Mutanjiang (Stanford 1901; Williams 1932, 81). Hunchun remains a sizable city today. A mapping of the Hayashi line, with uncertainty in the upper Taoyer region, is shown in figure 4.

RECOVERING ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE SHAPES OF MANCHURIA AND MONGOLIA

Hayashi had intended to divide “Manchuria” into northern Russian and southern Japanese portions with his line, but what was the shape and extent of this territory as he understood it? This problem warrants some cautious consideration, because our present-day assumptions about this region tend to be informed by the shape of Manchukuo, the last iteration of “Manchuria” in the international public imagination. As commonly mapped in the early twentieth century, however, this territory, defined as the Three Eastern Provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Shengjing, described a crescent shape with Inner Mongolia filling the concavity (*Encyclopaedia Britannica* 1911, 553). This mapping excluded sections of Inner Mongolia and Zhili Province north of the Great Wall (insofar as northern Zhili was considered separate from Inner Mongolia) later incorporated into Manchukuo (see figure 5).

Within this broadly shared framework, two divergent conventions may be discerned.² One defined Manchuria proper as the Three Eastern Provinces exclusive of historically Mongol territory, even if those Mongol lands had been incorporated at the time into provincial administration, using the Outer Palisade and northern and eastern limits of Jerim League territory as the frontier between Manchuria and Mongolia (see figure 6).

This approach, favored by the Kwantung garrison’s cartographers for reasons that will be considered subsequently, might be called a “little Manchuria” mapping convention. Alternatively, “greater Mongolia” might be a more apt rubric insofar as it included within Inner Mongolia not only parts of the Three Eastern Provinces but sections of Zhili and Shanxi Provinces north of the Wall. It is worth noting that “little Manchuria” maps had the SMR north of Kaiyuan Station running through Inner Mongolia and placed its terminus, Changchun, within the Mongol pale as well.

The other convention excluded from Inner Mongolia and designated as “Manchuria” all territory incorporated into the administration of the Three Eastern Provinces, whether historically Mongol or not. This mapping approach, in effect, recognized Qing administrative reorganization concomitant with advancing Han Chinese colonization of Mongol lands. This might be described as a “greater Manchuria” mapping principle, or a “little

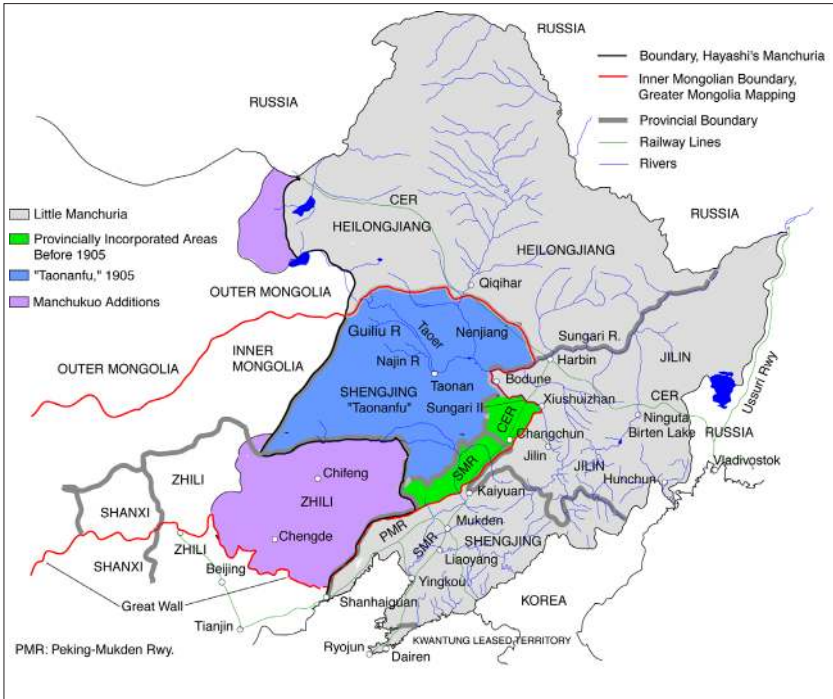


FIGURE 5 Four Manchurias. Sources: Kaneko (1991), 12; Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu (1911); Negoro (1908), 3; Smith (1906), 107; Tsujimura (1908).

Mongolia” approach insofar as it excluded from Inner Mongolia not only territory incorporated into the Three Eastern Provinces, but Zhili and Shanxi north of the Wall as well (see figure 5).

Before 1905, the variance between “little Manchuria” and “greater Manchuria” mappings was not large, although the complete inclusion of the SMR’s Russia predecessor within Manchuria in maps based on the latter convention was an important difference. It is in this context that the significance of the Hayashi line in reconceptualizing “Manchuria” becomes evident. The proposed boundary, extending all the way to the Great Xing’an range and cutting across the heartland of the Jerim League, penetrated what even “greater Manchuria” mappings of the time designated as Inner Mongolia. The Japanese foreign minister explained his line as a partition of “Man-

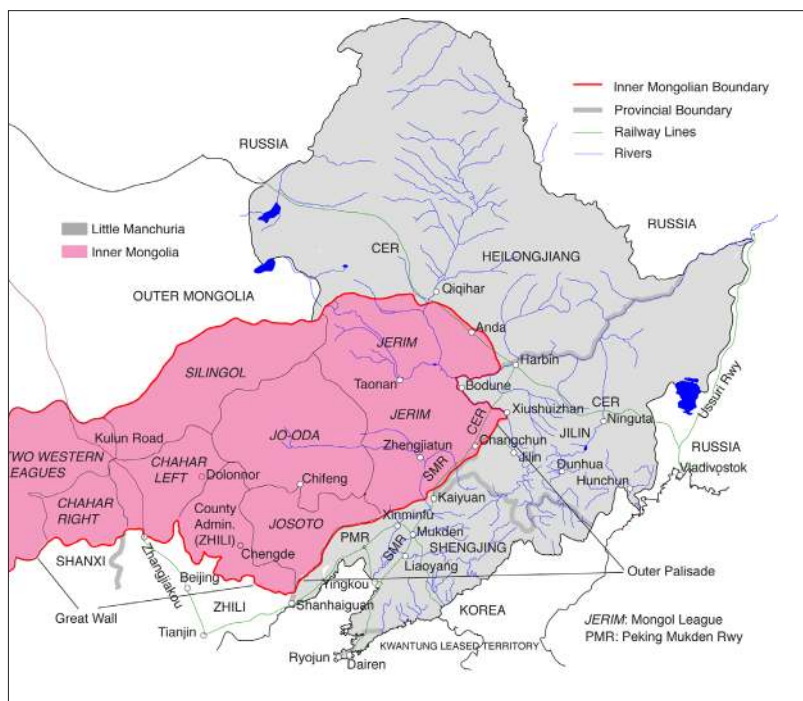


FIGURE 6 Mongol leagues in eastern Inner Mongolia. Sources: Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu (1911); Kantō totokufu rikugunbu (1915), 316–326; Tsujimura (1908).

churia,” without any reference to Inner Mongolia, by arguing that Shengjing Province had “recently” incorporated Inner Mongolian territory east of the Great Xing’an range. Hayashi was presumably referring to the establishment of Taonanfu in 1905 (*Dai Shin teikoku zenzu* 1905, 3; Negoro 1908, 6), which he believed had acquired, as a subdivision of the province, full administrative jurisdiction over this region (see figure 5). Subsequent research by the Japanese foreign ministry would show that Taonanfu’s direct jurisdiction was actually more limited, but what is important here is Hayashi’s assumption at this time (Gaimushō 1914, 1–2). Invoking “greater Manchuria” mapping principles, he argued that the jurisdiction of the Three Eastern Provinces defined Manchuria, and as a result of the expansion of Shengjing Province, Manchuria now reached as far west as the Great Xing’an range (Gaimushō

1907, 117). To be sure, Hayashi was not implying that Japan's sphere of interest would grow or shrink with Qing administrative reforms. If pressed, he might have found some other rubric, perhaps even something resembling "Manmō," to describe the territory he saw as an area of Japanese interest, had Taonanfu not provided him the opportunity to employ a newly expansive definition of Manchuria. In this respect, reference to Qing administrative reform served as a diplomatic convenience. At the same time, it acquired special importance in helping to keep Taonanfu off the table during the course of disputes with the Russians over Mongolia.

The two sides engaged in some "obligatory" posturing about adjusting the line farther north or south. Once the Russians received assurances that Hayashi's proposal would not compromise Russian control of the CER between Changchun and Harbin, however, they appeared to take no further issue with Hayashi's line and, implicitly, with his working definition of the territory being divided (Gaimushō 1907, 139–142). The source of difficulty lay elsewhere, centered on a dispute over Russian claims to a sphere of interest in Mongolia that they sought as "fair exchange" for a tacit acknowledgment of Japan's future annexation of Korea. Alexander Izvolsky, the Russian foreign minister, pointedly declined to make a distinction between Inner and Outer Mongolia in his stance, but he does not seem to have been pushing a "greater Mongolia" interpretation that would have challenged Hayashi's mapping of Manchuria. Insofar as he did not problematize the extension of the partition line to the Great Xing'an range, he was not claiming "Taonanfu" as part of the Mongolian sphere he sought. Instead, Izvolsky seemed more concerned about Outer Mongolia and the band of Inner Mongolian territory stretching from Xinjiang in the west to the Great Xing'an range in the east (Gaimushō 1907, 114–116, 120–163). Japanese policy makers assumed, in any event, that Taonanfu was not on the table as part of "Mongolia" and adopted a position consistent with this assumption, hardening their commitment to Hayashi's concept of the territory.

Japan's representative, Ambassador Motono Ichirō, argued that "Mongolia" distinguished in this manner from Hayashi's "greater Manchuria" was not a region in which the particular interests of the two countries might clash directly and, thus, outside the framework of these accords. Japan, he argued, claimed no greater or lesser interest in "Mongolia" than in any other part of

the Qing empire and had no wish to infringe on the interests of other powers by affirming a Russian sphere in that territory (Gaimushō 1907, 122–123). The dispute threatened to derail the agreement as a whole, but in the end, Japanese diplomats, under pressure from some of their superiors who regarded Russian acceptance of the annexation of Korea as more urgent than the partition of Manchuria, agreed to a compromise. Japan would acknowledge a Russian sphere in Outer Mongolia, understood as Khalkha Mongol territory, based on the rationale that Russia had special interests in a region bordering national territory. Japan would not acknowledge such claims in Inner Mongolia, which was well removed from the Russian frontier (Gaimushō 1907, 158, 160–163). This separation of Inner and Outer Mongolia, again, had little to do with defending Taonanfu as part of the Japanese sphere but was aimed simply at minimizing concessions to Russia under a rationale than might cause less difficulty with other Great Powers. Inner Mongolia, as understood by the Japanese side in this agreement, remained a territory in which it claimed no greater or lesser interest than in any other part of the Qing realm.

The Russians protested the distinction drawn between Outer and Inner Mongolia with the argument that the historical separation had little present-day meaning, but in the end, they grudgingly accepted the compromise. However, they took a new tack on a nominally separate issue, objecting in the final round of negotiations to the western extent of Hayashi's partition line. Although previously amenable to the Japanese proposal, the Russians demanded, in the end, that the line extend no farther west along the course of the Taoer River than the mouth of the Kuyler River (Guiliuhe), a point more than 200 kilometers short, following the course of the Taoer, of the Great Xing'an range (SMR 1926, 6–8). The Russians identified the mouth of the Guiliuhe, somewhat imprecisely, with the intersection of the Taoer and the 122° East meridian. This latter point came to be adopted in the final document (Gaimushō 1907, 164; see figure 7).

There is no discussion of this modification in the diplomatic record, no rationale given by the Russians nor sought by the Japanese. This suggests that Hayashi, for his part, may have submitted to internal pressure in favor of a quick agreement that would settle the Korean question. As for the Russians, they may have had a different and more advantageous extension of the boundary in mind, such as the Guiliuhe, and kept the door open for future

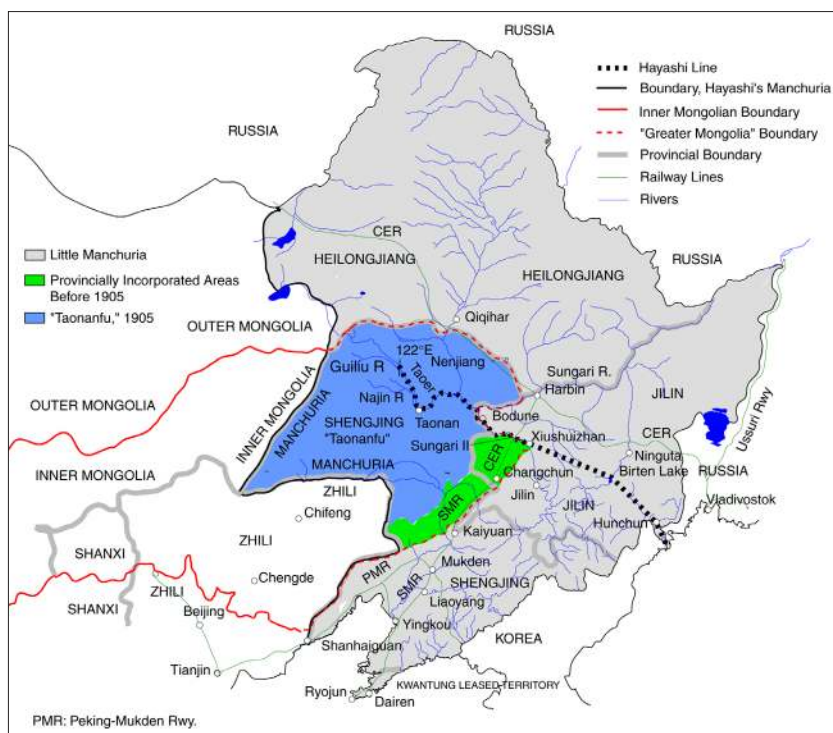


FIGURE 7 1907 partition. Sources: Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu (1911); Negoro (1908), 6; Smith (1906), 107; Tsujimura (1908).

negotiation. At the same time, the Russians may have intended to signal some dissatisfaction over the Mongolia issue with an implicit challenge to Hayashi's definition of Manchuria. If the Japanese insisted on a strict division of Inner and Outer Mongolia, might not the Russians similarly insist on a division between Inner Mongolia and Manchuria? Whatever the reason, terminating the line at 122° East left the project of partitioning the territory incomplete. The separation of northern and southern spheres was clear in the eastern part of Manchuria, and for the time being, the Japanese side may have found the arrangement sufficient. Hayashi had regarded the eastern part of the boundary as particularly important because of plans to build a railway from Changchun through Jilin to the Korean border that would parallel the CER (Gaimushō 1907, 117; see figure 3).

THE 1912 BOUNDARY AGREEMENT

Given the unfinished nature of the partition of 1907, some attempt at follow-through might well have been expected. In the five years following these accords, however, Russo-Japanese relations moved from a wary coexistence to a more positive cooperation based on mutual interest that diminished the urgency of fence building. In 1910, Russia and Japan joined together to fend off U.S. initiatives to internationalize Manchuria's railways and concluded a second set of accords that affirmed a commitment to the defense of mutual interests in the region. This second Russo-Japanese agreement did not include any further consideration of the boundary, but shortly thereafter, the outbreak of revolution in China generated new reasons for clarifying spheres of interest in the region. The fall of the Qing dynasty and the questionable stability of the new regime created both dangerous uncertainty as well as greatly expanded horizons of opportunity in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. For Japanese with adventurist inclinations, the time had come for a "fundamental resolution" of the status of southern Manchuria, implying some measure of formal separation of this region from the Chinese state. Their Russian counterparts entertained similar ideas for northern Manchuria but appeared focused on the more immediate issue of supporting the creation of an independent Outer Mongolia. Indeed, the eruption of Mongol revolts in both Inner and Outer Mongolia following the fall of the Qing dynasty that, as Owen Lattimore puts it, broke "the essential link between China and Mongolia" (1934, 16), put the problem of Russian and Japanese interests in Mongol territory squarely on the table in a manner quite different from the framework of 1907.

Unlike the first partition talks, which had become bogged down in issues that threatened to displace boundary discussions as such, negotiations in 1912 focused more narrowly on clarifying spheres of interest and proceeded relatively smoothly despite the fraught environment. The most important parts of the agreement concluded in July 1912 read as follows:

Article 1. (T)he extension of the 1907 line of partition] begins at the intersection of the Tuola River and Greenwich East 122° and follows the course of the Ulunchur River and the Mushisha River to the watershed of the Mushisha and Haldaитай Rivers. From there, it follows the boundary

line between Heilongjiang Province and Inner Mongolia to reach the end point of the boundary line between Inner and Outer Mongolia.

Article 2. Inner Mongolia is divided into two parts, eastern and western, by the Beijing meridian of Greenwich East 116° 27'. The imperial government of Japan agrees to recognize and respect the special interests of Russia in Inner Mongolia to the west of the aforementioned meridian. The imperial government of Russia agrees to recognize and respect the special interests of Japan in Inner Mongolia to the east of said meridian. (Gaimushō 1912, 91–92, my translation)

For a number of reasons, this partition scheme presents greater difficulties to map than the first. Particularly vexing is the identity of the three rivers, other than the Taoer referenced in Article 1, which do not appear by these names in the 1908 Tsujimura map, the 1911 Kwantung garrison map, or any of the atlases consulted. A useful hint, though, may be found in Foreign Minister Uchida's initial proposal for a boundary line formulated in January 1912, which simply called for a completion of the Hayashi line of 1907, following the Tuola (Taoer) to its source in the Great Xing'an range (Gaimushō 1912, 43). Before actually submitting the proposal to the Russians, however, he "clarified" his proposal by designating the problematic three rivers in the final agreement along with additional provisions for taking the partition line to the Outer Mongolian border. Uchida offered no explanation for these clarifications, but given the timing, they presumably reflect unilateral changes rather than adjustments negotiated with the Russians (Gaimushō 1912, 56). If so, and given the starting point of the boundary extension on the Taoer, a hypothesis that the Ulunchur and Mushisha are alternative names for the upper Taoer and that the Mushisha-Haldaitai watershed more precisely identifies the source of the Taoer would seem plausible. I was fortunate to run across a U.S. army map that gave support to this hypothesis. This map, produced at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, uses the name "Ulunchur" for the Taoer upstream of the northward bend at Taonan (United States Adjutant-General's Office, Military Information Division 1904). The way in which the map labels the "Ulunchur" unambiguously distinguishes it from the Guiliuhe ("R. Kuilor" in this map), a reasonable alternative candidate for the Ulunchur, given the earlier Russian demand that the line stop at the mouth of the Kuyler in 1907. Because of the manner

of description in the diplomatic text, the “Mushisha” is presumably continuous with the Ulunchur, but identifying which of a number of prospective sources of the Taoer/Ulunchur is the “Mushisha” of Uchida’s clarification presents a more difficult problem. Although it is not possible to resolve this question definitively, evidence points to one of two choices, based on the pairings of a Mushisha candidate with a Haldaitai candidate that form a watershed on the Great Xing’an divide.

One choice for a Mushisha candidate is the left fork of the Taoer River as shown on the 1908 Tsujimura and 1911 Kwantung garrison maps, which forms a watershed point on the Great Xing’an divide with a tributary of the Khalkha River (Khalkhyn Gol), the Haldaitai candidate. This watershed is today a relatively well-known location where a railway tunnel connects the Taoer and Khalkha valleys on opposite sides of the divide. The Arxan hot springs, located close to the source of the Haldaitai candidate, is found on tourist maps of the region (China Tourist Maps 2011). The 1908 Tsujimura map (figure 8) hints at this watershed, but because the lines denoting rivers are partly obscured by the use of thick ink strokes for borders and difficult to distinguish clearly from a plethora of contour lines, an unambiguous identification is not possible.

The 1911 Kwantung garrison map (figure 9) does not show a watershed and appears to extend the left fork of the Taoer across the Great Xing’an divide that forms the Heilongjiang-Inner Mongolia boundary in this region.

An SMR map of the Taoer and Khalkha river valleys made in 1926 by a survey team exploring possible routes for a railway from Taonan to Manzhouli, including the siting of a tunnel, shows this watershed much more clearly (SMR 1926; see figure 10).

A later AMS map (figure 11) shows an operational railway and a tunnel dug through the divide. The AMS map labels the left fork of the Taoer the “Qidaogou,” and the tributary of the Khalkha the “Harubakanto-ka” (a toponym transliterated in Japanese, although the SMR survey map labels it the “Arushan”).

This Arxan watershed point is compelling because it is at least hinted at in the 1908 map, and the fact that the boundary line it would define was found suitable for a railway route in later years suggests that it may have been readily accessible to earlier surveyors and identifiable by Russian and Japanese observers in 1912.

FIGURE 8 Upper Taoer.
Source: Tsujimura (1908).

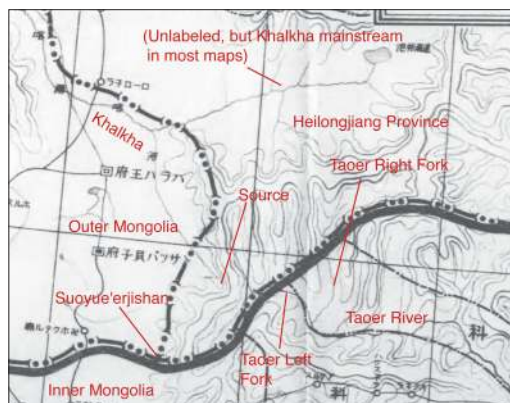


FIGURE 9 Upper Taoer,
Kwantung garrison map.
Source: Kantō totokufu
rikugun keiribu (1911).



A second choice lies in a watershed point formed near the base of the mountain Suoyue'erjishan (索岳爾濟山). This mountain lies at the point, described in the text of the 1912 agreement, where the boundary line between Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang Province impinges on the border between Inner and Outer Mongolia (Tan 1987, 57–58). According to a Chinese geographic dictionary entry on Suoyue'erjishan first published in 1931, “East of the mountain lies the source of the Taoer; west of the mountain lies the source of the Khalkha” (Zang 1979, 747). If Suoyue'erjishan is the same peak known to early Western geographers as Siolki Mountain, some

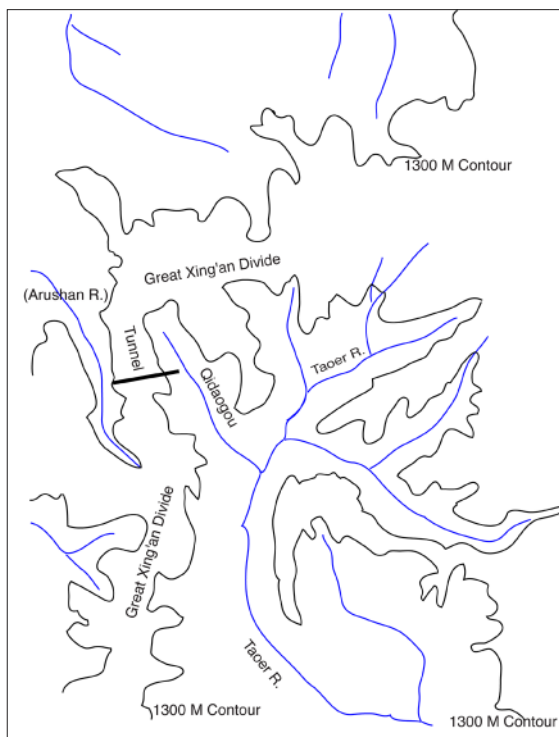
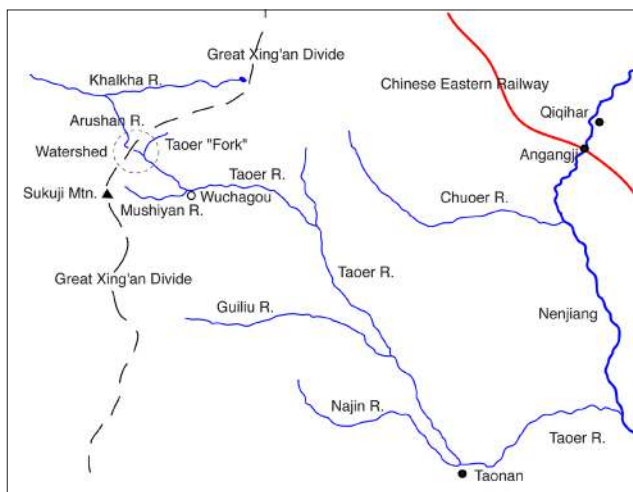


FIGURE 10 (*top*) 1926 SMR Taonan-Manzhouli railway map. Source: SMR (1926), insert.

FIGURE 11 (*bottom*) Arxan watershed, AMS. Source: AMS (1955), NL51-1.

older atlas maps show the source of the Taoer at its base (Stanford 1901). Although none of the maps examined in this study, other than the AMS map discussed below, shows a source of the Khalkha River to the immediate west of the mountain, an oral tradition of the Khalkha Mongols recounted by the eighteenth-century Jesuit geographer Jean-Baptiste Du Halde has the source of that river at the base of Siolki (Du Halde 1739, 118–19). Mark Elliott includes in his article several early maps based on the work of Du Halde and his associates that might be construed as showing a Khalkha tributary flowing from this mountain (Elliott 2000, 627, 629). The 1926 SMR survey map adds a particularly intriguing piece of evidence. It shows a tributary of the upper Taoer, well south of the left fork described above, joining the Taoer at a settlement known as Wuchagou (五叉溝), rising to the base of a “Sukuji” mountain shown at the same location as Suoyue’erjishan, and labels that tributary “Mushiyan”³ (see figure 10). The possible connection between “Mushisha” and “Mushiyan” is strengthened by Uchida’s parenthetical note in his “clarification” that “Mushigan” was an alternative name for his designated river. No such tributary of the Taoer, however, appears in either the 1908 or 1911 Japanese army maps, nor does it appear unambiguously in other maps examined with the exception of one in the AMS series. The AMS map shows an unnamed river with multiple tributaries joining the Taoer near Wuchagou, and at least two of these tributaries form watershed points with rivers flowing down the opposite side of the Great Xing’an divide. Most of the latter appear to feed into tributaries of the Khalkha, such as the Numurgin Gol (see figure 12).

The AMS map thus offers several possible candidates for a Mushisha-Haldaitai pairing, and perhaps the strongest case might be made for the “Banjiagou,” which formed part of the provincial boundary between Liaobei and Heilongjiang Provinces (Republic of China Provinces). According to another SMR map produced by the same survey, the Mushiyan formed part of the boundary between Fengtian (Liaobei’s predecessor) and Heilongjiang (SMR 1926).

The evidence is compelling for both choices, and it is not possible to decide unequivocally between the two. Nonetheless, I lean toward choosing the Arxan watershed as a working hypothesis for several reasons. First, the Arxan watershed is sufficiently unambiguous and most probably identifiable to the diplomats of 1912 to serve as a geographic marker for a bound-

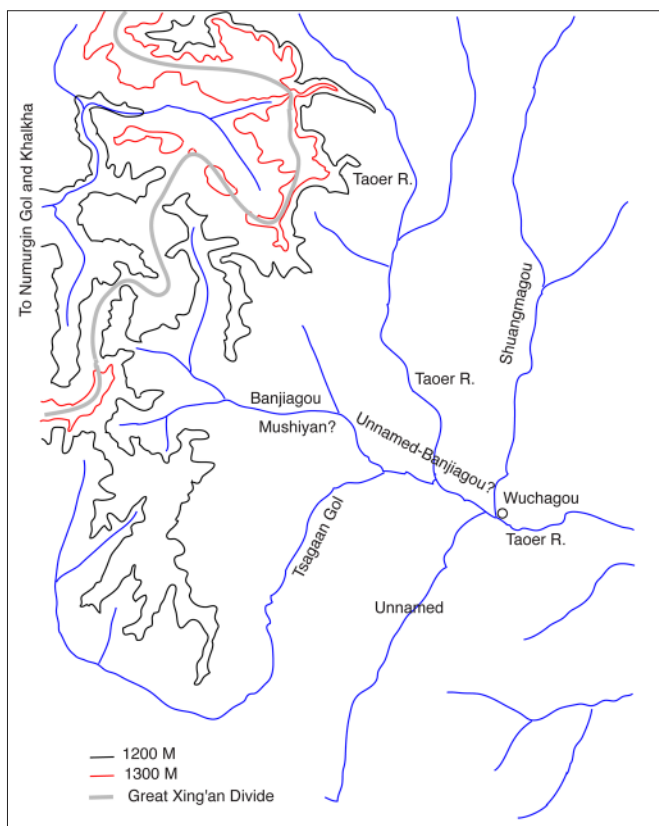


FIGURE 12 Mushiyan area, AMS. Source: AMS (1955), NL51-4.

ary agreement. The Mushiyan candidate as shown in the AMS map offers greater problems in this regard. Second, the Japanese army maps of 1908 and 1911, used as a baseline of geographic knowledge for the Japanese side, do not show a Mushiyan at all. The later SMR map shows the Mushiyan but no “Haldaitai” candidate. The Japanese army maps tend to agree with most other maps, other than pre-twentieth-century atlases, in placing the sources of the Taoer northeast of Suoyue’erjishan. Third, as suggestive as the name “Mushiyan” might be, the fact that mapmakers often confused names of nearby rivers may warrant evaluating this point at a discount. For example, the SMR map labeled the tributary of the Khalkha forming the Arxan watershed as the Arushan while the AMS map used the Sinicized version of

this name, Aershan, to label a distinctly different river (AMS 1950, NL50-3). Finally, whether or not oral and textual descriptions using Suoyue'erjishan as a landmark are doing so in a manner that could serve to identify a location in "scientifically" measured cartographic space is difficult to say. The Taoer and Khalkha Rivers, along with Suoyue'erjishan, were well known locally and figure significantly in Mongol history. It would not be surprising if a triplet of two river sources and a dominant peak served to define a culturally defined "place" (Elliott 2000, 604) more than the kind of geographic referent meaningful to diplomats striving to eliminate ambiguity. If so, this "triplet" might apply as well to the Arxan watershed, which is, after all, formed by rivers that could be considered sources of the Taoer and the Khalkha and lies just twenty kilometers north-northeast of Suoyue'erjishan.

DEFINING "MANMŌ"

A second set of problems entailed in mapping the 1912 partition agreement lies in defining the topology of the territory subject to division. In addition to following through on the incomplete partition of a "Manchuria" as conceived in 1907, negotiators had placed all of Inner Mongolia on the block. Accordingly, Hayashi's mode of separating Manchuria from Inner Mongolia that used the expedient of "Taonanfu" lost much of its relevance. At the same time, this expansion of scope helps explain why Foreign Minister Uchida sought to clarify his proposal by extending the Hayashi line from the source of the Taoer River to the Outer Mongolia border. By doing so, he explicitly included Inner Mongolia west of the Great Xing'an range, beyond the pale of Hayashi's Manchuria in 1907, in the new sphere agreement.

The status of Zhili and Shanxi north of the Wall, also outside the framework of the 1907 agreement, however, remains to be determined. Although not explicitly referenced in the final accords of 1912, several considerations strongly suggest that the second partition included these territories as well. First, considering the focus of both Russian and Japanese negotiators on the upheaval in Mongol lands, whether located in Inner or Outer Mongolia or in provincially administered territory, it would be surprising to find Zhili excluded. Second, Zhili had become an increasing target of Japanese interest since 1907, as a result of competitive railway projects running through this territory as well as the SMR's growing interest in securing traffic from

the western Liao region (see figure 3). Although northern Zhili might not be Manchuria, it was unquestionably a territory of Japanese concern. Third, Russian remarks about the western boundary line formed by the Beijing meridian during the course of negotiations, placed in this larger context, might be interpreted to further affirm the inclusion of Zhili. The original Japanese proposal had placed the boundary farther west along the trade road between Kulun (Urga) and Zhangjiakou, but Uchida had conceded Russia's position that the line be shifted farther east. The Russians, noting their satisfaction with this concession, wrote, "A partition of the region based on the principles above will result in placing both Russia and Japan in equally advantageous positions with respect to Zhili Province and the Chinese capital that is located in that Province" (Gaimushō 1912, 79). In other words, the Russians were getting a larger slice of Zhili than the Japanese proposal would have provided, and the partition at the Beijing meridian would allow both sides to exert balanced pressure, from their respective vantage points north of the Wall, on Beijing.

If, as seems likely, the partition agreement included Zhili (and Shanxi) north of the Wall, Japanese policy makers had modified their approach to defining Manchuria and Mongolia significantly with respect to their position in 1907. With the inclusion of Inner Mongolian territory west of the Greater Xing'an range along with northern Zhili, the term "Manchuria" could no longer meaningfully encompass the Japanese sphere, hence the emergence of "Manmō" in the Japanese imperialist lexicon around this time. The inclusion of Zhili, moreover, implied a decisive shift to a "greater Mongolia" mapping of the region and the corollary abandonment of provincial jurisdiction as a criterion to distinguish Inner Mongolia from either Manchuria or Zhili north of the Wall. The utility of Qing provincial structures in defining the extent of one or the limits of the other had dissipated with the collapse of the dynasty. There was no telling, in the summer of 1912, what administrative arrangements a new regime might put into place. "Manmō" represented a new territorial concept, then, not only in incorporating more Mongol territory than Hayashi's "greater Manchuria" had already absorbed, but in defining a geography independent of Chinese political categories.

Given an understanding of the shape of the territory subject to partition, it is possible to draw a complete, hypothetical map (see figure 13). At an eyeball level of analysis, this map is more or less consistent with the Kajima

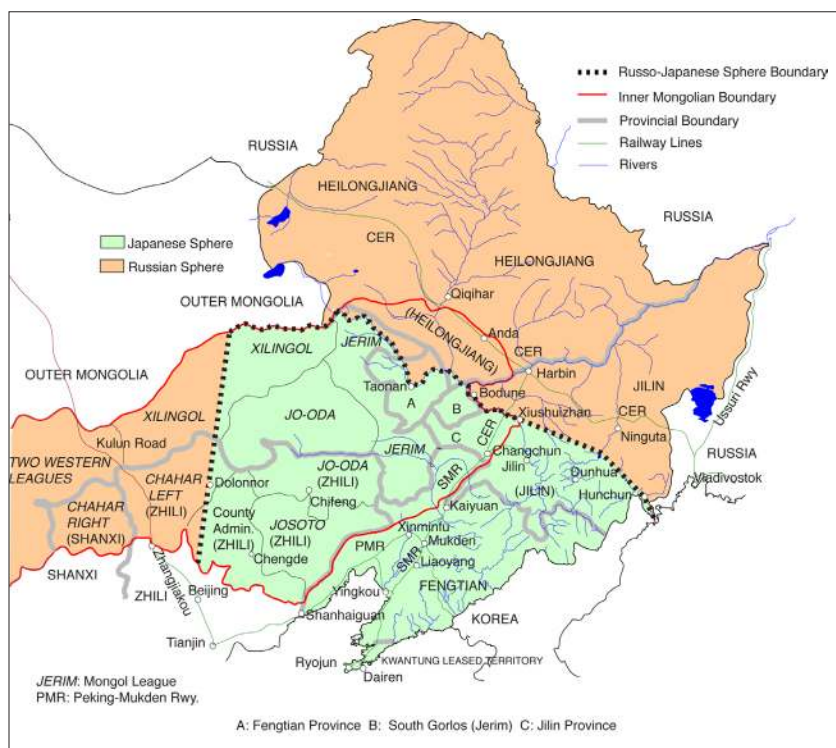


FIGURE 13 1912 partition. Provincial boundary approximations as of 1911. Sources: Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu (1911); Kantō totokufu rikugunbu (1915), 316–326; Tsujimura (1908).

rendition. At the same time, it also appears at odds with General Nishikawa's partition scheme, and this variance in interpretation remains to be addressed.

THE NISHIKAWA MAP

Nishikawa's rendition differs from my proposed mapping in two major respects (see figure 14). First, on the western side of divided Manmō, the Nishikawa map posits a corridor of territory belonging to the Russian sphere roughly 120 kilometers wide running along the Outer Mongolian border east of the Beijing meridian. Nishikawa's boundary lines represent a rough sketch, to be sure, but he is using as a template a scaled map that corresponds

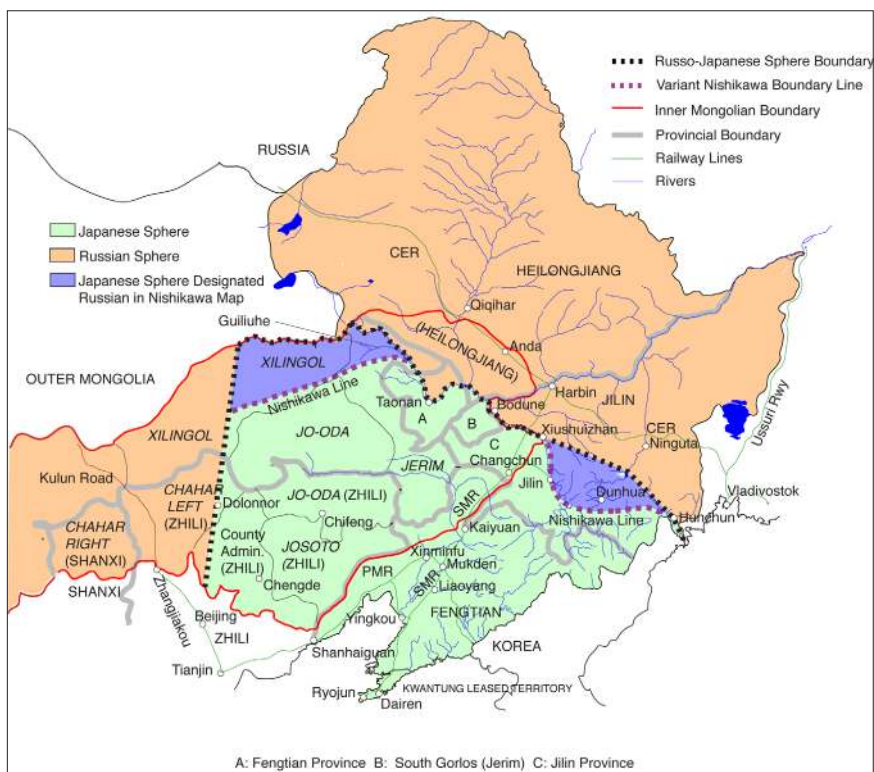


FIGURE 14 Nishikawa line compared. Sources: Kantō totokufu rikugun keiribu (1911); Kantō totokufu rikugunbu (1915), 316–326; Tsujimura (1908).

to other Japanese army maps of this period. Accordingly, even rough lines can be related to known geographic referents. Although there are no obvious features, natural or political, that might correspond to the topology of this corridor, Nishikawa's version of the Russo-Japanese boundary line in this region comes closest to approximating schematically either the Great Xing'an range or the boundary between the Silingol and Jo-oda Leagues. Nishikawa's rendition produces a corollary variance in the mapping of the upper Taoer (Ulunchur) that does not correspond to the location of the river had the cartographer used an army template map. His "Ulunchur" matches more closely, though biased southward, the position of the Guiliuhe. This mapping pushes the Hayashi line farther south than what I have proposed,

and for that reason, Nishikawa's boundary in this region never reaches the Outer Mongolian border, a junction that Uchida took pains to stipulate in his clarification.

Second, on the eastern side of divided Manmō, Nishikawa's map has the Russian sphere bulging significantly south of my proposed partition line. Even accounting for the schematic nature of the map and the thickness of the ink lines, it is apparent that he is not following a straight line from Xiushuizhan to Jingbo (Birten) Lake but tracing the Second Sungari to Jilin and beyond to a town whose name is obscured by the partition line but seems to correspond to the county seat of Huadian (桦甸). From this town, he draws a near-straight line to Hunchun. He is unquestionably using a different set of landmarks in drawing his boundaries. As a result, he seems to "surrender" considerable territory to the Russians, eliminating provisions that Hayashi had made to protect the projected railway from Changchun to Jilin to the Korean border.

To be fair, it was not Nishikawa's intent to produce a map delineating the partition as such. His purpose lay in arguing that Japan might well enlist Russian support in pressing for the implementation of land rights in "southern Manchuria" and "eastern Inner Mongolia" contained in the Twenty-One Demands of 1915. In support of this argument, he had redefined "southern Manchuria" using geographic rather than political criteria, eschewing the conventional use of the term as a synonym for the Japanese sphere and suggesting historical, cultural, economic, and ecological reasons for classifying all of Jilin Province (much of which lay in the Russian sphere) as "southern Manchuria." His mapping also sought to show how much of the Russian sphere might be considered to lie in "eastern Inner Mongolia" (defined by the lands of the Jerim, Josotu, Jo-oda and Silingol Leagues, along with the left wing of the Chahar Banners) (Nishikawa 1915, 2124–2125).

The motivation behind his memorandum, however, should have no bearing on the logic of his mapping. How do we explain his departure from the "instructions" embedded in the 1907 and 1912 boundary accords? There are two broad possibilities. One particularly intriguing possibility is that Nishikawa may have had information thus far unavailable to historians. Although he notes that these boundaries were established through past secret accords between Japan and Russia, he does not specify the dates of these accords, and this leaves room for the hypothesis that some hitherto

unknown set of negotiations, concluded sometime between 1912 and 1915, altered the boundaries in Russia's favor. The verification of such a hypothesis would have major ramifications for our understanding of Russo-Japanese diplomacy in this era. The other possibility lies in a major mapping error, which would represent more than a simple cartographic mistake and raise questions about Nishikawa's familiarity with imperial political geography. Even without relying on a boundary map, the chief of staff and his aides would be expected to know if the Japanese sphere extended beyond the Great Xing'an range or if building a railway from Changchun through Jilin to the Korean border would run afoul of the boundary. Given the fact that the army command of the Kwantung government-general represented the Japanese empire's principal repository of geographic knowledge of this region, such an error would be surprising and significant in its own right, pointing to the need for detailed research into the cartography of the Kwantung government-general along the lines pursued by Kobayashi Shigeru and his colleagues with regard to the Japanese Army General Staff (Kobayashi 2011). In either case, however, it would appear that the Nishikawa map is not a faithful interpretation of the partition scheme entailed in the 1912 accords, and although the variances demand explanation, they do not directly challenge the interpretation I have offered.

CONCLUSIONS

The kinds of questions posed in a comparative examination of the Nishikawa map nonetheless point to the potential value of mapping as a mode of historical inquiry. Indeed, the "payoff" in pursuing a historical mapping project lies as much in generating such questions as in the final production of the map itself. Although historians might use maps as texts, as tools, and as modes of presenting information, maps also offer ways of thinking about history. The writing process is an intellectual discipline that forces the historian to render holistic bodies of knowledge into the unavoidable linearity of the narrative. The historical mapping process imposes an analogous kind of discipline. It forces the mapmaker to organize a wide range of knowledge into two-dimensional visual representations, clarifying geographic relationships in ways not demanded by written narrative. Culturally defined "place," such as the triplet of Suoyue'erjishan, the Khalkha, and the Taoer might

represent, must be located in mappable “space.” The same applies to familiar territorial entities such as Manchuria and Mongolia, and the attempt to map them reveals ambiguities, uncertainties, and meanings not apparent in purely textual renderings.

In this context of mapmaking as a way of thinking about history, I would like to offer a few concluding observations about the imagining of Manmō drawn from this exercise. Given the location of the SMR, “Manchuria” could not have served as an adequate label for the scope of Japanese interests in this region from the start. “Minami Manshū” (south Manchuria) indicated, at best, a vague geographic location in the northeastern corner of the Qing empire, holding greater meaning, perhaps, as a narratively defined arena of action situated in the story of Japanese imperialism than as a mappable territorial entity. The process of boundary making in 1907 began to render this territory legible to the managers of the empire for the first time. Taken at face value, the principal concern of Japanese negotiators in these talks lay in reducing ambiguities that might generate Russo-Japanese friction, but understood in a broader context of making “Manchuria” more legible, other considerations become apparent. Hayashi’s well-delineated space of “greater Manchuria” made possible, on the one hand, a preemptive staking of claims with respect to the rival Russians. On the other hand, creating an unambiguous space also established clear limits to the Japanese expansionist project, and this, perhaps, was of paramount importance to an imperialistically conservative foreign ministry. The open-ended and vague imaginary of “south Manchuria” posed serious dangers, not only to peace with the Russians, but to the foreign ministry’s efforts to restrain undisciplined adventurism within Japanese ranks. A clearly defined greater Manchuria, in contrast, contained Japanese expansion to a region south of the Hayashi line, east of the Great Xing’an range, and outside the borders of Zhili Province. The conservative orientation of Hayashi’s Manchuria mapping is highlighted in comparison to the emerging emphasis on a “greater Mongolia” mapping on the part of army cartographers that began at least as early as 1908. Although it would be important not to infer too much from maps alone, an understanding of the tension in this era between army staff and intelligence officers taking up posts in China, on the one hand, and civilian diplomats, on the other, particularly under Prime Minister Saionji, makes it difficult to overlook the political implications of these mappings (Kitaoka 1978, 59–86).

The “greater Mongolia” approach pointedly reduced Manchuria proper to a narrow realm that could not possibly encompass Japan’s sphere of interest. Simultaneously, it opened up the vast territory of Inner Mongolia where the scope of Japanese claims remained yet to be determined. The emerging concept of “little Manchuria” linked to “greater Mongolia” in the formulation “Manmō” thus fundamentally undermined the clarity, legibility, and containment achieved by Hayashi’s definition of Manchuria and unleashed, once again, the danger of open-endedness previously implicit in “south Manchuria.” In a sense, army expansionists got their wish in the new boundary negotiations of 1912 insofar as the new sphere could no longer be confined to a self-limiting “Manchuria” but instead, encompassed “Manmō.” At the same time, the new agreements of 1912 disciplined the open-endedness of the army’s Manmō vision and gave it clear boundaries: south of the extended Hayashi line, east of the Outer Mongolian border and the Beijing meridian, and north of the Great Wall. For conservative Japanese diplomacy, bridling the expansionist imagination must be regarded as an important dimension of these boundary talks, quite apart from dealing with the Russians.

The countervailing orientations represented by “greater Manchuria” as opposed to “greater Mongolia” mappings point to another line of tension within Japanese imperialism at this time. Hayashi’s construction of “greater Manchuria” relied on Qing provincial boundaries. While this may have served, in large measure, as a diplomatic expedient, it also entailed recognition of the reality and legitimacy of Qing authority in this part of their empire. Such recognition was consistent with the approach of the conservative foreign ministry to “informal imperialism” in China that stressed the importance of working through Qing central authorities in pursuing Japanese interests, rather than creating realities on the ground and working with local collaborators, strategies favored by both civilian and military adventurists (Kitaoka 1978, 163–181; Matsusaka 2001, 186–226). In contrast, a deliberate emphasis on “greater Mongolia” by army cartographers that defined territory as Mongol regardless of provincial administration implied a weaker commitment to Qing authority and, taken to a logical conclusion, a championing of Mongol claims. This latter orientation emerged in subsequent efforts of the army to exploit Mongol revolts, to solicit allies among disaffected princes, and to encourage separatism. To be sure, these and other tensions in Japanese expansion in the region have been well studied through

textual sources (Jansen 1954, 137–140). Nonetheless, the manifestation of these trends in mapping schemes is intriguing and highlights the potential value of organizing more systematic inquiries into the history of Japanese imperialism through the analytical lens of cartography.

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NOTES

1. “Tsujimura” is indicated under publication information, but the booklet, which contains only the map, offers no other authorship or publication data. A “Tsujimura,” however, provides a preface to the 1911 map described below in which he describes the original survey.
2. This observation is based on maps examined in this study and represents only a rough-sketch hypothesis. A more detailed investigation of the cartography of this period is warranted.
3. Shown at the triple junction of Fengtian (Taoer in this region forming the northern border of Fengtian Province as of this date), Heilongjiang, and Outer Mongolian borders, the same point as the triple junction of Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, and Outer Mongolia as of the 1912 agreement.

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