

**Matsuda Denjūrō's Service in Hakodate
and the Surrounding Area
From October 31, 1799, to January 1, 1801
(Based on the *Tales of the Northern Barbarians*)**

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Abstract

The manuscript *Tales of the Northern Barbarians* (*Hokuidan*, 「北夷談」) by Matsuda Denjūrō (松田伝十郎, 1769–1843) is a valuable source on the history of Russian-Japanese relations, the development of the northern territories inhabited by the Ainu conducted by the Japanese, relations between the Ainu and the Japanese, their barter trade. The written source consists of seven notebooks. The manuscript was created in the first years of the Bunsei era (文政, 1818–1831). It describes the events from 1799 to 1822 in chronological order, i.e., events that occurred during the 24 years of Matsuda's service in the lands of the Ainu. The manuscript is written in cursive (Japanese: “grass writing”, *sōsho* 草書). The second half of the first book examines the bear festival and the *inau*, cult objects of the Ainu, which were described in detail by the author in [Klimov A.V. 2024].

This article is the continuation of the description of the events of the first notebook, in which Matsuda describes: wintering in Akkeshi, the life and clothing of the Ainu, the peculiarities of hunting sea lions, the attitude towards the moon fish, wintering in Aputa, the fight against the smallpox epidemic that arose, and his return to Edo. The text is accompanied by numerous sketches. The illustrations in the manuscript are of great value, providing additional information that is missing from the text itself. Matsuda's descriptions refer to November 1799 – January 1801. The

Hokuidan manuscript has not yet been translated into any of the European languages other than Russian. The author of this article provides translations of fragments of the written source in the chapters of published collective monographs [Klimov A.V. 2020; Klimov A.V. 2021; Klimov A.V. 2022]. The translation was carried out from the published text of the Japanese manuscript in the ten-volume series of written monuments entitled *Collection of Historical Materials About the Life of the Common People of Japan* (*Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shū sei* 日本庶民生活史料集成), in the fourth volume [Matsuda 1969]. In addition to this series, the *Tales* were published in Old Japanese in the fifth volume of a six-volume series of written monuments called *Library: Northern Gate* (*Hokumon sō sho* 北門叢書), published in 1972.

Keywords: Matsuda, Hokkaido, Hakodate, Ainu, Aputa/Abuta, *Tales of the Northern Barbarians*.

Introduction

Matsuda Denjūrō (松田伝十郎, 1769–1843), a low-ranking official of the military government (*bakufu* 幕府), who was sent to develop the lands inhabited by the Ainu in Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the southern islands of the Kuril Chain, called “barbarian lands” (*ezochi* 蝦夷地), worked in direct contact with the local population. Therefore, his diary entries, entitled *Tales of the Northern Barbarians* (hereafter *Tales*, *Hokuidan*, 「北夷談」), contain valuable information for researchers dealing with Russo-Japanese relations and the Japanese exploration of Ainu lands at the very onset of the 19th century.

In the part of the *Tales* that deals with Matsuda’s service in Hakodate and its vicinity, he is mentioned under the name Jinsaburō (仁三郎), rather than Denjūrō, the name of his stepfather, which was passed on to him after the latter’s death. The text of the manuscript in Old Japanese, published in 1969 in the *Collection of Historical Materials About the Life of the Common People of Japan* [Matsuda

1969, pp. 77–175], was used as the basis for this work. The actual events of 1799–1801 are reflected on pages 83–94 of the printed text of the manuscript, along with black-and-white illustrations. The manuscript itself (pages 86–165) in digital form, which is kept in the Cabinet Office collection under the code 35114 (*Naikaku Bunko* 35114, 内閣文庫 35114) of the National Archive of Japan (*Kokuritsu Kōbunshokan* 国立公文書館), was also used. The manuscript is published in the official website of the archive.¹ In the manuscript itself, the sketches are presented in color.

There is still no translation of the *Tales* into Western European languages and there are no detailed studies devoted to this source. Western European and American researchers only mention its name, mostly in connection with Mamiya Rinzō (間宮林蔵, 1780–1844), to whom they ascribe superiority in the discovery that Sakhalin is not a peninsula, but an island.

On the 1st day of the 1st moon of the 12th year of the Kensei (寛政) era (January 25, 1800, of the Gregorian calendar), the Matsumae clan transferred the lands of the [Eastern] barbarians² to the direct administration of the military government in fulfillment of the shogun's order [Klimov V.Yu. 2021]. The author of the *Tales* names two points on the boundary line of the Eastern lands: the

¹ *National Archives of Japan, Digital Archive*: <https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/file/1225358.html>

² Present-day Hokkaido was divided into the Matsumae clan's Japanese lands proper of the Oshima Peninsula in the southern part of the island, the "Eastern Barbarian Lands" (*Higashi Ezochi* 東蝦夷地), the part of Hokkaido facing the Pacific Ocean, as well as the islands of Kunashir and Iturup, and the "Western Barbarian Lands," the part of the island facing the Sea of Okhotsk. Sakhalin (called Karafuto by the Japanese) was called the "Northern Barbarian Lands" (*Kita Ezochi* 北蝦夷地) or the "Distant Barbarian Lands" (*Oku Ezochi* 奥蝦夷地). After the unfinished Meiji bourgeois revolution, the toponym Hokkaido appeared in 1869.

settlements of Shiriuchi-mura 知内村³ on the eponymous river and Mitsuishi ミツイシ.⁴

In this regard, in accordance with the instructions coming from Edo, Matsuda was ordered by Ōta Jūemon (太田十右衛門), Ōshima Ejirō (大島栄次郎), Mizukoshi Gembae (水越源平衛) to stay for the winter in Hokkaido and prepare to conduct procurement in the Ainu settlements from Washi-no-ki (鷲の木)⁵ to Horopetsu (ホロペツ).⁶ Matsuda, together

- ³ The toponym Siriuchi (知内) is etymologically derived from two words of the Ainu language: *chiri* チリ and *ochi* オチ, meaning “a place where falcons are found.” Incidentally, the falcon is now one of the symbols of the urban settlement of Siriuchi-chō.
- ⁴ The toponym Mitsuishi ミツイシ is derived from the Ainu word in the Japanese pronunciation ピットウシ *pittoushi*, “land full of small stones.” This place name is now spelled with the characters 三石 or 三ツ石 (literally translated: “three stones”). The Matsumae clan’s lands was originally limited to a small area of the Oshima-Hanto (渡島半島) Peninsula. Mitsuishi was on the border of the Matsumae daimyo’s lands, and from here the lands of the “barbarians”, i.e., the Ainu, began. From the second half of the Edo period (1603–1868), Mitsuishi was administratively referred to as the “Eastern Barbarian Lands” (*Higashi Ezochi* 東蝦夷地).
- ⁵ The toponym is given in kanji, unlike many other cases. On the side of it, there is an okurigana reading in small hiragana letters.
- ⁶ A rare occurrence. In the text of the *Tales*, as a rule, Matsuda does not use nigori marks. But, in this case, the half-nigori sign (*handaku ompu*, 半濁音符) is placed above the written sign *he* へ, and it should, in this case, be read as *pe* ぺ, not *he* へ, or *be* べ. We know that, quite often, the word for river in Ainu, *betsu* べつ, often enters and completes toponyms in Japanese. Therefore, it would probably be logical to assume that we should read the name of this area as *Horobetsu* ホロベツ. In support of this idea, we can find a town of this name on the modern map of Hokkaido, but with the kanji spelling 幌別. However, the dictionary *Nihon Daihyakka Zensho*, 日本大百科全書 (Nipponica, ニッポニカ), gives the following explanation: “the name of the area goes back to the Ainu word *Poropetsu* ポロペツ, which means Big River.” <https://kotobank.jp/word/%E5%B9%8C%E5%88%A5-1417568>

with Toyama Motojūrō, left Hakodate on the 15th day of the 10th moon of the 11th year of the Kensei (寛政) era, or November 12, 1799. Because of the great snowfall that began, they were forced to stop at the village of Ōno-mura (大野村) that day. After the snowfall, they traveled to the mountainous area of Kayabe (カヤベ, the modern kanji spelling is 茅部), verified the correctness of the logistics routes, and determined the locations of warehouses and guard posts at the *basho* trading areas. Matsuda and Toyama stayed for the winter at a place called Aputa (アプタ). On the sidelines, in small script okurigana, Matsuda gives the kanji spelling of the toponym as 虻田, selected from similarly sounding characters *abu* (虻), or “gadfly,” and *ta* (田), “rice field” [Matsuda 1969, p. 83]. But, in this case, this binomial is to be read as *Abuta*, not *Aputa*. Etymologically, the name of the area goes back to the Ainu word in the Japanese pronunciation, *Aputa-petsu* (“the river that creates fishing hooks”).⁷ Matsuda served in that area from October 31, 1799, to January 1, 1801. During the Edo period (1603–1868), this area was used to raise livestock.

It was there that Matsuda familiarized himself with the peculiarities of the bear festival, noting that it was held wherever the Ainu lived [Sokolov 2014, Pilsudskii 1914]. For clarity, he left eight sketches in the *Tales*, emphasizing the importance of this ritual in the life of the barbarians (*ijin* 夷人). Here is a full translation of a short text dealing with this subject.

“In early spring, a female bear gives birth to a cub, it is captured, and a barbarian woman feeds it with her milk and raises it. With the coming of the 5th to the 6th moon, it is kept like a dog. Then, having made a cage of wooden poles, they place it inside and feed it dried fish.

With the onset of the 10th – 11th moon, of course, relatives of the owner feeding the bear, acquaintances, as well as elders from the nearest villages gather [for the celebration]. On the appointed day, everyone lines up wearing festive clothes (*haregi* 晴れ着), with bows and arrows. They release the fattened bear from the cage, tie it with a thin rope and

⁷ Kotobank: <https://kotobank.jp/word/%E8%99%BB%E7%94%B0-26716>

fasten it to a pole in the middle of the area where this takes place. The host launches an arrow first, then relatives shoot in turn, and the already weakened bear is strangled with a log.

After that, they decorate [the place of celebration] with vessels (*kibutsu* 器物), which barbarians rank as jewels, set up *inawo* (イナワ, a kind of sticks or twigs, which are comparable to *heihaku* (幣帛) Shinto prayer papers in our homeland), they worship them, chanting something in a prayerful and monotonous way. And then, having prepared the food, they eat raw meat, bring their share of raw sake (*nigorizake* 濁り酒) prepared in advance for the occasion, and have a feast (*sakamori* 酒盛りをする).

The woman ([in the barbarian language,] *menoko* メノコ), who raised and fed it with her milk while it was still a cub, weeps bitterly and is very sad when it is shot with arrows and killed before her eyes. It is a heartbreaking sight (*shikyoku* 至極). And yet, the *menoko* takes part in the feast and eats the meat. When you see this, you feel startled. In the attachment below, I provide sketches of the bear festival.” [Matsuda 1969, pp. 83–84]. The published manuscript contains five drawings.

Matsuda goes on to describe the sacred Ainu objects used during the feast, explaining their meaning and significance and comparing them to Japanese objects. Let us quote this part of the text without editing: “*Inawo* can be compared to *gohei* 御幣 (paper strips at the entrance to a Shinto shrine – A. K.) in our country. In the lands of the barbarians, starting from Heaven and Earth, everything and in relation to everything, gods are worshiped reverently. In this country, the most important thing is the worship [of the gods]. Therefore, whoever you are, whatever you do, you must first of all honor the gods and worship them. And this is called [in the language of the barbarians] *kamai·nomi*⁸ (カマイノミ). *Kamai* means god and *nomi* means to pray, to honor. During the *kamai·nomi* prayer to gods, *inawo* is necessarily used. Therefore, *inawo* is the most important item when honoring the most luminous gods (*shinmei* 神明). First of

⁸ The Japanese text does not have a two-word breakdown. This can be seen in the above Japanese word combination written in katakana characters.

all, humble your body, purify your mind and flesh, and then make the object that is depicted.⁹ The forms of *inawo* that are created are strikingly different from each other depending on which god you pray to. *Inawo* also has another name: *nusha* (ヌシヤ).¹⁰

Description of Wintering in Akkeshi and Ainu Clothing

The military government, determined to actively develop the lands inhabited by the Ainu, decided to have Japanese officials there year-round, albeit in small numbers [Shchepkin 2017]. Matsuda further reports on his personal experience of wintering in Hokkaido. In particular, he writes that they arrived by ship in Akkeshi at the height of summer¹¹ during the 6th moon.

At the time of arrival, while aboard, the Japanese wore two cotton-wool kimonos, one above the other. When they came ashore, they wore cotton underwear and one cotton-wool kimono over it. During the day, when it became hot under the sun, they wore an unlined summer kimono. However, after the 9th hour and a half (2 p.m. – A. K.), it became colder, and they put on lightly lined kimonos or cotton-wool kimonos. At the onset of the 8th moon, two cotton-wool kimonos were worn one above the other. At the beginning of the 9th moon, it snowed. During the 10th and 11th moons, a snow cover of 3 to 4 *shaku*, or 90.9 to 121.2 centimeters, thick formed. With the onset of cold weather, the snow covered the roofs. The living quarters were dark even at noon. The mood was depressed and many people fell ill. From the 10th to the 3rd moon of the following year,

⁹ In the drawings, Matsuda provides sample images of 12 *inawo*.

¹⁰ The varieties of *inawo* and the bear festival were described in detail in the article: [Klimov 2024].

¹¹ Matsuda used the kanji binomial *doyō* 土用, which refers to the last eighteen days of each season. In our case, we are talking about the hottest days of summer. The expression “entering the first day of this eighteen-day period” (*doyō-no hairi* 土用の入り) refers to the first day of the said period.

it was difficult to go outside because of the snow. It was sad to sit indoors with artificial light. It was important to take care of one's health.

The Ainu wore their *atsushi* clothes, woven from tree bark, or insulated themselves with animal hides in cold weather. Their clothing, according to Matsuda, was very thin. Children of up to 12–13 years of age were naked on the street and only in cold weather did they put on dog hides. They would go out to the seashore, run there, and practice wrestling similar to Japanese sumo. Children also played with round rings 5 to 6 *sun* (15.15 to 18.18 centimeters) in diameter, rolling them on the ground, tossing them into the sky, and catching them by stringing them on a narrow pole. Matsuda even made a sketch of children engaged in this game for clarity. Adults even determined the punishment for children if they failed to catch a ring on a pole. The author of the *Tales* emphasizes that, by such training, children honed, in a playful way, the techniques they would need in hunting sea animals: harbor seals (*ottosei* オットセイ), sea lions (*todo* トド), earless seals (*azarashi* アザラシ).

One of the main tools used to hunt them is the *harena* (ハレナ), a type of harpoon. The length of the shaft is about 2–3 *ken*.¹² It has a spear-like shape. The Ainu hunt by hitting with a stabbing motion. These skills of hunting with a harpoon are practiced at a young age during gameplay. In the Ainu language in Japanese pronunciation, this game is called *shinotsu* (シノツ).

Hunting for Harbor Seals

Harbor seal hunting was allowed at six locations on the coastline from Oshamambe (オシヤマンベ)¹³ to Etomo

¹² One *ken* 間 is 1.818 meters. In other words, the length of the shaft in metric measures is 3.636 to 5.454 meters.

¹³ A settlement located in southwestern Hokkaido on the Oshima Peninsula (渡島半島) on the eastern coast. Today, this toponym, Oshamambe, is spelled with three characters, 長万部. It is etymologically derived from

(エトモ)¹⁴. Having acquired a certificate, the Ainu were granted the right to sea hunting (*kazei ryōken*, 課税猟権). There was a definite number of boats that could go hunting and the time it could be done, namely, from the winter solstice (*tōji* 冬至, from December 22 in the Gregorian calendar) up to and including the 2nd moon of the spring of the next year (that is, up to and including March; the luni-solar calendar, according to which the Japanese lived at that time, does not allow for a more precise definition). During this period of time, a day is chosen when there are no waves, the weather is clear, there is no wind, and there is peace and quiet. And the boats (*debafune* デバ舟) go out to sea. There are three strong Ainu on each boat. When they have reached a considerable distance from the shore, they stop rowing with oars (*rokai* 櫓), watch the surface of the water, do not smoke, do not talk, and stay quiet. If they are swept away by the wind or current, they paddle with their hands, trying not to move away from the hunting ground. Seals, not feeling any danger, appear on the surface, numbering 14, and even 24 animals, jumping and playing in the water. Finally, one or two seals in a state of relaxation are carried by the waves closer to the hunters.

The Ainu, watching them, continue to wait in complete silence. When the distance between them is reduced to 7–8 *ken*, one of the Ainu strikes

the Ainu word in Japanese pronunciation *O · shamambe* オ · シヤマンベ, meaning: a place where false halibut lives (*hirame* ヒラメ – in the published manuscript, the name of the area is written in katakana, the Latin name is *Paralichthys olivaceus Temm. et Schleg.*).

¹⁴ During the Bunroku (文禄, 1592–1596) years, the Matsumae clan authorities in the Etomo-Misaki (絵鞆岬) peninsula established an office (*unjōya* 運上屋) there and began trading with the Ainu. Etymologically, the toponym Etomo is derived either from the Ainu word *etoku* (エトク) – a ledge, or from *enrumu* エンルム – a promontory. Now, this is one of the districts of the city of Muroran (室蘭), the town's name etymologically deriving from the Ainu words in the Japanese pronunciation *mo · ruerani* (モ · ルエラニ, “small mountainside”). Later the toponym, having undergone changes in pronunciation, became Muroran.

the animal with a harpoon and the others finish it off. Matsuda calls the first of the Ainu who hit the seal “the barbarian of the outcome of the battle” (*shōbu-no i*, 勝負の夷), the next “the second barbarian” (二の夷), and then “the third barbarian” (三の夷). The amount of reward (*hōbi* 褒美), goes downward in the sequence mentioned above: from the first, to the third.

Moon Fish and Inawo

Matsuda then moves on to another topic, in which he reveals the Ainu’s special relationship to the moon fish. In the vicinity of Horobetsu, Shiraoi (ホロベツ、シラオイ), in the waters around these lands, there is a “sea beast” (*kaijū* 海獣) called *Kinambō* (キナンボ).¹⁵ It is the moon fish. After catching it, the Ainu people extract the fat from it and send it to Japan. Matsuda writes: “In shape, the moon fish resembles a turtle, the large ones reach a size of three *jō*¹⁶ (about 4.5 m² – A. K.), the small ones – two *jō* (about 3 m² – A. K.). To get their fat, barbarians sit in two to three people in a boat, go out into the open sea. Having found a moon fish, they hit it with a harpoon, in their language *hanare* (ヤナレ), pull it

¹⁵ The author of this article is grateful to V. V. Shchepkin, who, when discussing my paper “Matsuda Denjuro’s Service in Akkeshi at the Turn of the 18th – 19th Centuries” at the conference “Ainu Between Russia and Japan” held on November 25, 2021 at the IOM RAS, drew attention to the fact that, earlier in 1739, Sakakura Genjirō (坂倉源次郎) in his work *Fugitive Notes on the Ainu* (*Ezo Zuihitsu*, 「蝦夷随筆」) also mentions the moon fish, calling it *kinaho* キナホ, as well as the rite of placing *inawo* in the opened belly of the said fish (see: Sakakura Genjirō 坂倉源次郎. *Ezo Zuihitsu* 蝦夷随筆 (*Fugitive notes on the Ainu*). *Hoppō mikōkai komonjo shūsei* 北方未公開古文書集成. Vol. 1. Tokyo, 1979. P. 57).

¹⁶ *Jō* (畳) is a unit of area. Even now in Japan, the area of a room is measured not in m², but in *jō*, a tatami of rice straw spread on the floor. One *jō* is equal to about 1.5 m².

up to the boat. Matsuda was told that the barbarians step onto the shell of the fish, open its belly, put all the entrails, intestines, and fat into the boat, and then, having carved the *inawo*, they place it into the abdomen of the fish and release it. As mentioned above, two to four specimens are said to be caught in a day and released into the sea. The barbarians say that, in this way, they preserve the life of the moon fish, and sometimes previously caught fish are caught again. But, without the guts and liver, it's impossible to survive. Jinsaburō did not believe these stories. If you listen to the barbarians, then the *inawo* that was placed in it the first time should have been found in the fish that was caught for the second time. Moreover, neither the operating officers nor the guards of the posts have heard that, even in a storm with great waves, a large quantity of their remains were thrown on the seashore, if we compare it to the quantity of the moon fish fat taken out. This is extremely strange, but [I am] writing down here [everything] that I have heard. In the coastal waters of Nuubutsu (ヌウブツ) barbarians are involved in catching one species of fish. They call it *ichinge* (イチンゲ). It also [looks like] a turtle. Barbarians make food out of it. The pattern of the shield resembles the hexagonal pattern of the shell. When it is polished, it looks like the shell of a turtle; it is called “white turtle shield” (*shirokame-no-kō* 白亀の甲).”

New Year's Eve and Wintering in Aputa

Matsuda goes on to describe his wintering in Hokkaido and welcoming the New Year at the village of Aputa in southern Hokkaido. “It was decided to winter in [the village of] Aputa. In [the 11th year of the Kansei era,] the 12th moon, 28th day (January 23, 1800, according to the Gregorian calendar – A. K.) an operating officer arrived at our place. It is not the custom in these parts to set up pine tree decorations for the New Year, but these lands became the property of the military government at the beginning of the passing year. And, since [the operating officer] said: “Since the gentlemen officials of the [military government] meet this year here, pine ornaments have been placed at the entrance to the dwellings,”

when we looked closely, we found that there were no *futaba-no matsu* (二葉の松) pine trees and no *sasadake* (笹竹) small-growing bamboo in these lands. [In their place] we installed a South Sakhalin fir (トド[マツ]) (the Latin name is *Abies sachalinensis*), unraveled a sack into straw ropes, fastened brown kelp seaweed [instead of strips of paper] on them, and hung dried herring roe. No more decorations. The present course of administration of these lands, which have come under the control of the military government, is to develop them by educating [barbarians].

And immediately Jinsaburō composed a poem:

教育の	Kyōiku no	For the sake of training [barbarians]
行トドひたる	Gyō todo hitaru	Installed a fir tree
門飾り	Kado kazari	Decorated the entrance to the house with it
よろ昆布蝦夷や	Yoro kobu ezo-ya	[Symbols of] treasure in the form of seaweed
数の子たから	Kazu-no ko takara	And dried herring roe hung out.

We met the New Year without any celebrations, and there were no New Year greetings or cards. There were no decorations made of the *Torreya* evergreen coniferous tree (カヤ, *Torreya nucigera* Sieb. et Zucc.) and New Year's treats made of roasted chestnut (*kachiguri* かし栗), but there was a lot of dried herring roe and kelp seaweed, the main local products. Three days passed, we welcomed the New Year and headed out of Aputa to supervise surrounding villages.

The trading areas that were inspected last year had been placed under the administration of the bakufu, and since the First Day of this year the whole population had become commoners, governed and taken care of

by the government. So we went to the villages, to summon the elders of the barbarians, and explain to them the points of the Law. It was early spring, and there was still a great deal of snow. It was extremely difficult to navigate the paths. But since I was guided by a sense of duty, the cold and the wind could not stop me.

Smallpox Epidemic

Matsuda then moves on to the next topic: the smallpox epidemic that suddenly broke out among the Ainu. "From the first ten-day period of the second moon,¹⁷ there was a smallpox infection in the area. There was commotion everywhere. It all began with one *ashigaru* (足軽) of the Matsumae family. He came to Usu in a seal hunting boat accompanied by one barbarian from Oshamambe (オシヤマンベ) and stayed at the barbarian's dwelling. There were three people living there, all of whom were elderly. However, the barbarian who had escorted [the Japanese] from Oshamambe fell ill with smallpox, and his wife raised a commotion. Since the elders announced this, they hurriedly returned the sick man to Oshamambe.

Two or three days later, people from the same house fell ill simultaneously, and commotion started among the barbarians. [I] posted guards and tried to provide medical care, but the smallpox cases continued. They died of high fever at the initial stage of the disease, even before the rash appeared. I cared about the sick in every possible way, supported them to the extent possible, but unfortunately there were no positive results. According to the custom of the barbarians, if the dead were burned together with the houses, relief came, and the disease receded. Although they burned the house in question, after ten days, smallpox broke out simultaneously in neighboring houses. Confusion swept through the village. Every single person fled to the mountains.

¹⁷ The first ten-day period of the second moon (*nigatsu jōjun* 二月上旬) begins, according to the Gregorian calendar, on February 24, 1800.

No one stayed in the village. They went to different places. But they were already infected. And immediately in the places they fled to, they fell and died. A truly sad sight.

Jinsaburō himself went to all the places, but there were so many sufferers that it was impossible to visit them all. Among them were some who, with fever, wandered about madly with arrows and bows or with kitchen knives in their hands. The guards of the posts, shocked by what they saw, were also in a confused state, unable to sleep, eat, or rest. The population of the Usu area – out of over 250 men and women – more than 40 people died.

The infection was stopped there, not a single person became ill after that, and the situation was brought under control. But we began to experience difficulties with the carriers of goods: none of the barbarians employed in the delivery of goods, so that gradually the communication between officials and their movement between sites could be established, came to work. I reported this to Hakodate in advance. People traveling to distant lands gradually arrived here and expressed concern. In the second ten-day period of the 2nd moon,¹⁸ there was a report of smallpox infection spreading to Aputa. The barbarians raised a commotion.

There was quite a large population in this place [Aputa]: over 500 people, including men and women. Everyone, starting with the barbarian elders, said: since the smallpox infection had broken out, it threatened life itself. Therefore, they declared that, in any case, it was necessary to run away. And when they were convinced of this idea that it was necessary to save themselves, they all scattered within a day.

There's still a lot of snow in the mountains. There would be a shortage of food. I made them take some tobacco and rice with them so they wouldn't starve. An interpreter named Kumajirō (熊次郎) reassured me that there is a large swamp in the mountains about one and a half *ri* from this place. If they run away there, of course they will survive because

¹⁸ The second ten-day period of the 2nd moon of the 12th year of the Kansei era begins on the 11th day, that is, March 6, 1800, in the Gregorian calendar, and ends on the 20th day, that is, March 15 of the same year.

they can eat small fish caught from the swamp lake. If they do that, there is nothing to worry about, the interpreter reassured me. I relied on his opinion.

On the direction to Abuda (アブダ) the disease visited only one hut of a barbarian named Kozakura (コザクラ). There were seven people living in his house. Everyone got infected, only one girl of five years of age survived. All the others died. Received a report that, at a distance of about 15 *ri* from this house, in a place called Riporobetsu (リポロベツ), smallpox broke out and the barbarians all scattered. So, we went there, and I ordered all possible measures to be taken, forced everyone to leave the place of contagion. But only two barbarians were infected in one house. That was the end of it. The disease had stopped in that area, had not reached the outlying lands.

Smallpox spread to the western lands of the barbarians. The infection was in all lands. The western lands of the barbarians were still under the control of the Matsumae clan, so there was no medical care there [by us]. There was a rumor that a lot of barbarians had scattered to the outlying lands: around Akkeshi, Nemoro. After that, all the western lands of the barbarians were transferred to the bakufu domain. And when Jinsaburō went to the western lands, he was told that, during the smallpox epidemic, the inhabitants of the three settlements left their homes and scattered. Only the ruins of the settlements remained. In all the other lease areas there were a lot of dead. Those who fled to the eastern lands, and there were many of them, remained there and did not return to their settlements. He was told this by the clerks and guards of the posts.

So, smallpox in the lands of the barbarians was a great trial for the barbarians. Of the ten who fell ill, ten could not be saved. And, in fact, the disease caused great confusion and unrest. As previously noted, if the parents fell ill, the children fled. If the children fell ill, the parents fled. The husband fell ill – the wife fled. The wife fell ill – the husband fled. This is a local custom [Arutiunov, Shcheben'kov 1992]. Since [everyone] was fleeing, as noted above, the residents of the neighboring transferred areas (*basho*) did not like it very much,

and their elders demanded that no one comes to them [in search of rescue]. And the Japanese officers of neighboring areas were always trying to stop them, but all this had no effect, everything ended up in an exchange of bickering in letters. It was very important to set up guards on the borders of the settlements and prevent the barbarians from moving uncontrollably, to make it impossible for them to visit neighboring settlements. This seems to be a custom of this country: one can avoid smallpox if a man or woman puts soot from a pot on his or her face and hides in the mountains, thus being able to escape from this disease [Taksami 1990]. We realized that when we began fighting this disease.

My fellow officer Ganjūrō (元十郎) left, having been assigned to the Yamukushinai (ヤムクシナイ) outpost. Jinsaburō was left alone. Whenever anyone [of the barbarians] fell ill with a cold or some other disease, a commotion was raised, assuming it was smallpox. Then I would go to the house of the sick person, look at the symptoms and, explaining to the elders, reassured them. When [I] arrived in Abuta (アブタ), there was a summon to Etomo (エトモ). When I arrived in Etomo, there was a summon to Usu. And when I arrived in Usu, they came for me from Mororan. When I arrived in Mororan, I was called to Horobetsu. I would come and go from outpost to outpost that was assigned to me. A lot of people came to see me. I was not a healer, I only looked at the symptoms of diseases and explained to the barbarians what to do. And I established a high authority among them. However, I had some medicine. And it was the first year of administration by the military government. So, they were not yet accustomed to the customs and manners of the Japanese (*wajin* 和人) and did not willingly accept medicine. From the second ten-day period of the 3rd moon¹⁹, rumors of illness disappeared and everything calmed down.

¹⁹ The first day of the second ten-day period of the third moon of the 13th year of the Kansei era is April 4, 1800, of the Gregorian calendar.

End of Official Duties

This year, officials from Edo arrived at the outposts and Jinsaburō began to hand over to them one by one the areas that he had been in control of since the last year. He received a written order with a seal, in which Bugyō gave orders to keep under his control only the Etomo lease area, which is a promontory protruding into the sea. There is no path to it by land. It is a place difficult to reach, and it takes two days to get there. So I went to Mororan, which is part of this area, and from there I crossed the sea area of the port. The sea route is one *ri* long and easy to traverse. The outpost to which he was assigned has a good harbor where ships can park. At the entrance to the port, there is a small island called Daikokujima (大黒島). It stretches out from the harbor entrance into the deep water. There is a bay called “Swan Harbor” (*Hakuchō-no-Minato* 白鳥の港). It is flat terrain. There are no winds from land. If you bring coaster ships deep into the harbor, it will be very difficult for the ship to leave the harbor. That is why ships are anchored off the back side of the Daikokujima Island. And there is no need to worry about them, no matter what kind of storm is brewing in the open sea [near the harbor]. A few years ago, a foreign ship that brought [Daikokuya] Kodayū [大黒屋]光太夫, who had been shipwrecked, was stationed in [the port of] Etomo. Locally produced goods include herring, cod, dried trepang (*iriko* イリコ), scallops, kombu seaweed, red seaweed (red algae) (*funori* フノリ), and shiitake mushrooms. There is a lot of small fish. In the cold season, they catch fish in the Swan Harbor. The barbarians have enough food. There is no construction timber here. The population of Etomo and Mororan combined is 100 men and women. It is colder in Etomo and warmer in Mororan.

When Jinsaburō was on duty in this area, a Mororan elder named Chikarawai/Chikarahai caught a crane alive and gave it to him as a gift. In return, the elder was given [high quality] purified sake. The crane was alive, cared for and fed. That year, inspecting the lands of the

barbarians, Togawa Tōjūrō (戸川藤十郎, 1762–1821),²⁰ who had the title of the “head of the shogun’s personal servants” (*konando tōdori* 御小納戸頭取),²¹ and Ōkouchi Zejūrō (大河内善十郎, ?–?) came to [Matsuda’s] area. They stopped at Etomo and saw the crane. Tōjūrō explained, “This crane belongs to a special species called *tanchō* (タンチョウ)²². Since it is a rare species of crane, it is best to bring it with you when Jinsaburō will be returning to Edo, to give it to the Edo Castle.”

Having completed his duties in the area, he left Etomo at the end of the 9th moon and set out on his return journey. He left Matsumae, then crossed [by sea] to Mimmaya, which is in the Tsugaru clan domain. The strait is said to be about 8 *ri* wide and consists of three streams: Shirakami (シラカミ), the Middle Stream (*Naka-no-shio* 中の潮), and Tatsuhi (*Tatsuhi-no-shio* タツヒの潮). It is easy to cross it when the sea is calm, but sometimes difficult when the weather becomes unpredictable.

²⁰ He is better known by his other name Yasutomo or, less commonly, Yasunobu. The two characters of the name 安論 can be read in two ways. In the *Tales*, Matsuda gives another name, Tōjūrō, consisting of three characters, 藤十郎.

²¹ Konando (小納戸) – personal servants of the shogun, who formed the inner circle of the ruler (*kinjishoku* 近侍職) and were responsible for the comfortable living of the military ruler and for the state of his health. For example, their duties included tasting his food (to check for the presence of poison), weighing the leftovers after the meal of the shogun, so that, at the request of his personal physician, the necessary data could be provided. Their salaries amounted to about 500 *koku* of rice. Meanwhile, their immediate superiors (*konando-tōdori*), numbering four men, received 1500 *koku* each. They were subordinate to the “junior elders” (*wakadoshiyori* 若年寄). While during the reign of the fourth shogun, Tokugawa Ietsuna (徳川家綱, 1641–1680, ruled in 1651–1680), their number was about 20, it reached 100 in the last years of the shogunate.

²² The name of the crane species is spelled out in the written characters of the katakana alphabet. Today it is usually written in two characters, 丹頂, with the same reading. This species is called the Japanese crane or, in Latin, *Crus japonensis* P.L.S. Muller.

And, from there, by highway, returned to Edo on the 17th day of the 11th moon.²³ Bugyō²⁴ was informed in advance [of the time and place] of the handing over of the Japanese crane as a gift. I was directed toward Senju (千住方面) and, in the Yunomijo premises of the financial office (*go-kanjōsho yunomijo* 御勘定湯呑所) handed it over to the prosecutor-officer (*ometsuke* 御目付) and a representative of the financial office. For the first time, a Japanese crane from the Ezo lands was brought to Edo as a gift. Thereafter, Togawa Tōjūrō received the [high] title of *Chikuzen-no kami* (築前守, “Lord of the Chikuzen Province” – A. K.) and was appointed governor of Hakodate (*Hakodate bugyō* 箱館奉行). The Japanese crane, recently gifted, is rumored to be circling the [Shogun's] Fukiagegyōen (吹上御庭) garden in the Edo Castle and is now said to be in good health.”

Conclusion

In contrast to the first half of the manuscript, which describes the sea crossing from Edo to Akkeshi in detail and is organized clearly in chronological order with the indication of dates, the second half is not characterized by a logically verified narrative, when the author passes from one topic to another, trying to link them into a single whole. There are repetitions, additions, which would be more logical to link with the previously considered material. There is virtually no dating.

The Bear Festival was apparently held in the second half of November 1799 in the village of Aputa (now pronounced Abuta) in southern Hokkaido. The author of the *Tales* noted the importance of this festival to the Ainu and its prevalence throughout their territory. Matsuda, while attending the bear festival, was not a professional ethnographer and did not set out to study it thoroughly. He himself

²³ The 17th day of the 11th moon of the 12th year of the Kansei era is January 1, 1801 of the Gregorian calendar.

²⁴ *Bugyō* – probably refers to the governor responsible for administering the lands inhabited by the Ainu.

said that, realizing the importance of this rite for the “barbarians,” he wrote down everything he saw and heard on paper, without analyzing the information he received, as Bronislav Pilsudski did much later. Nevertheless, the Japanese explorer managed to schematically define, without specifically stipulating it, the complex of rituals that formed the basis of the Ainu bear festival. Matsuda writes nothing in the text about the preparation of the place of the ritual killing of the bear: making and installing variously shaped *inawo*, decorating the back wall of the “frontal place” consisting of mats decorated with objects valuable to the Ainu (Japanese katana swords and other items). But, in the drawings, we can observe all this.

Matsuda, describing his journey through the Eastern Lands, centered on the port of Akkeshi and one of the important administrative centers of administrating the Ainu, showing an already established infrastructure. Roads had not yet been built for easy crossing on foot, but lodges or modest inns had already been built where people could stay for the night while traveling by day on foot along trails in difficult, rugged terrain. For clarity, the author of the *Tales* makes sketches of the most strategically important places.

It is easy to see the relative unpreparedness of the Japanese for the harsh cold weather. They wrapped themselves in two warm kimonos while local children, who were used to the cold weather, were playing half-undressed. The author emphasizes the importance of children's games as training for becoming a good seal hunter and how great the reward is in the case of successful hunting.

The example of the attitude to the moon fish clearly shows the special attitude of the Ainu to nature and their understanding of the necessity of harmonious existence in it. Meanwhile, the smallpox epidemic shows the harsh reality of nature's cruelty faced by the Ainu.

The descriptions of wintering and the fight against smallpox not only allow us to see Matsuda only as a diligent official but also reveal his personal experiences. One can clearly trace how the locals increasingly trusted the author, which, in turn, strengthened the authority of the Japanese government in these lands.

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