

### TRAVELING TO UKRAINE WITH EROSHENKO (1930)

This travel essay written by Wada Kiichiro is being published for the first time. It is translated in Russian by S. Anikeev and commentary is added by Yu. Patlan. Although there is a degree of fiction and exaggeration, the text is a unique historical document created by the Japanese author.

It is about the first trip of Eroshenko to his native village Obukhovka, Starooskolsky county, Kursk province in August 1922, following his eight years of traveling in Japan, Siam, Burma, India and China.

Peking University Professor Vasily Eroshenko was sent as a delegate of the Beijing Esperanto League to participate in the 14th World Esperanto Congress in Helsinki, and at the Second World Congress of blind Esperantists from 8 to 16 August 1922. At that time a rampant famine spread in Soviet Russia. Taking pity on the young Japanese-teacher, Wada Kiichiro, who was starving in Moscow, Eroshenko invites him to be his companion on the trip home, to the south - through Tula, Yasnaya Polyana, Elec - to Stary Oskol. Wada Kiichiro relates colorful sketches of the Russia he experienced, at that time. He allows the readers to imagine the real Vasily Eroshenko as the independent, determined and confident man he was. The blind Eroshenko saved his younger Japanese fellow from starvation.

The published text is a valuable resource for researchers on the history of Eroshenko's family for there are very few available documents of the early Soviet period. Kiichiro's essay was probably known to the first researcher of Eroshenko's life - sinologist Vladimir Rogov - and yet, oddly, it was never quoted or referred to in the works about Vasily Eroshenko in the Soviet and post-Soviet period. From the text, you can clearly discern the attitude of Eroshenko's family to the Soviet authorities, following the confiscation of their land, house and adjoining shop, which were burned to the ground. The family was forced to move into a squalid, mud hut. Wada Kiichiro's writings are sympathetic to the communists and revolutionaries. Further, it is also interesting due to references to the persecution of the Japanese comrades in Moscow in 1922. It is rich in vivid, historical details, the impressions of the Ukrainian nature in the South of Russia and contains the preserved eyewitness accounts of events in the Civil War against Denikin and Makhno's warriors on Kurschina (Kursk) region. It stands as an authentic account of the facts about the rise of Soviet power in the year following the war.