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Mapping the Russian Far East:
Cartography and the Representation of Sakhalin, the Kurils, and Japan in the 18th century

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Abstract

This paper examines the changing of the representation of the Russian Far East, especially Sakhalin, the Kurils, and Japan, in the context of Russian mapmaking in the eighteenth century. The history of Russian cartography has the compilation of Remezov's Atlas of Siberia (*Chertyozhnaya Kniga Sibiri*) from the second half of the seventeenth century to the beginning of eighteenth century and the publication of Kirilov's Atlas, the 1745 atlas of Russian Academy in the first half of the eighteenth century. During this period there were many organized Russian scientific expeditions and Russia expanded her territory as an imperial state. The author clarifies the way geographical information about Sakhalin, the Kurils, and Japan were portrayed in maps of the Russian Far East in these atlases and some manuscript maps which were influenced by Bering's expedition—known as the Great Northern Expedition—in the first half of the eighteenth century. This geographical expedition to Siberia, Kamchatka, and the Bering Strait led to rapid progress in geographical knowledge and a changing of the geographical shape of the Kurils in Russian mapmaking, however, that of Sakhalin and Japan remained as before.

Keywords: Bering's expedition, Chaplin's maps, eighteenth century, Kirilov's atlas, Russian cartography, The Atlas of Russian Academy in 1745, the Russian Far East

Introduction

In the 17th and 18th centuries the Russian Empire compiled many maps in Siberia and the Far East in order to grasp geographical information and colonize these areas. Many cartographers and scholars employed by the central government made maps and atlases as a result of exploring, surveying, and investigating inland and coastal areas of Siberia during this period.

Russian geographers and historians have made numerous studies of Russian mapmaking in the Far East[1]. The main emphasis of their research has been the development of Russian cartography and the representation of Kamchatka Peninsula, Chukot Peninsula, the Bering Strait and North West America[2].

Many Japanese geographers and historians have also attempted to show the history of cartography of Sakhalin and the Kurils by analyzing on Japanese publications and manuscripts or Russian publications[3]. What seems to be lacking however, is a body of research based on analyzing Russian manuscripts. The author was fortunate to research some excellent manuscripts in the State Historical Museum in Moscow in 2004.

This paper examines the changing of the representation of the Russian Far East, especially Sakhalin, and the Kurils; as well as Japan using maps made by Russian mapmakers in the 18th century.

The history of Russian cartography includes the compilation of Remezov's Atlas of Siberia from the second half of the 17th century to the beginning of 18th century and the publication of Russian Atlas in the first half of the 18th century. Many Russian expeditions were organized during this period, as Russia expanded her territory as an imperial state. Bering's expedition was particularly important from a scientific perspective. The purpose of this study is to clarify the way geographical information about the Russian Far East was influenced by Bering's expedition.

Russian Mapping in the 18th Century

It is important to remember, we must consider not only the study of 'the cartography of Russia' but also 'Russian cartography' in the 18th century[4]. Peter the Great discarded many old Russian customs and habits and introduced European ones as his state reformed. Russian mapping sponsored by him also followed the way of intensive scientific development in connection with the state reforms and an active foreign policy. In this period we can find a change from the national traditional methods of large scales mapping to surveys and mapmaking based on scientific view.

Remezov's atlas is a good example to show an original national mapping. Semyon Ul'yanovich Remezov was a famous cartographer. His works have been preserved in the form of three atlases of Siberia and a few separate sheet-maps. In the course of the following description these atlases are referred to their original titles: (1) Chorographic Atlas (*Khorograficheskaya Chertyozhnaya Kniga*), (2) Service Atlas (*Sluzhebnaya Kniga*), and (3) Atlas of Siberia (*Chertyozhnaya Kniga Sibiri*)[5].

On January 10th 1696, an order was issued by the Siberian court office in Moscow for the Siberian towns to produce maps of their respective townships. The instructions directed that each district must contain all Russian villages and native settlements dependent on the district town and paying tribute to it, indicating the rivers on which they were situated, their names, and the distances from them to the town. The local governor entrusted this new task to Remezov in Tobol'sk, which was at that time an important administrative center in Siberia[6]. Fig. 1 shows the 21st sheet of Atlas of Siberia (*Chertyozhnaya Kniga Sibiri*), this title is 'a map of all the Siberian towns and districts', drawn by Remezov in 1698. The top of this map indicates south. This one is an interesting case where a Russian cartographer has made a map of Siberia and the Arctic Sea including, Korea, China and Japan. In this map a part of Japanese Archipelago is drawn in the top left corner. On the left side we can see a part of Kamchatka peninsula, written island in this map. But Sakhalin and the Kurils are not drawn.

(Remezov, S.U.: *Chertyozhnaya Kniga Sibiri*, reprinted, Moscow, 2003)

Fig. 1 A map of all the Siberian towns and districts by Remezov, 1701

Russian Cartography and Bering's Expedition

The period between the death of Peter the Great and the publication of the first complete atlas of Russia was called the heroic period of Russian cartography. In this new period in cartography, however, Tsar couldn't see his efforts, because the first general map of Russia by Kilirov didn't appear until 1734 nine years after his death, and an improved map and atlases known as the Academic Atlas, were not ready until 1745.

Before Tsar Peter died, he gave orders to prepare an expedition for the purpose of ascertaining whether Asia joined America or was separated from it by a strait. Recently this traditional theory was renounced by Polevoi[7] and Fisher[8]. They see as the new reason Peter wished to have Bering reach North America by sailing and to reconnoiter the southern coast until he met subjects of some other European power. But Bering sailed to the north, and in the first expedition of 1728, determined that Asia and America were separate, at least up to the parallel of 67 degrees, 18 minutes north latitude[9].

The main results of this expedition are shown on the map, which was compiled by midshipman Peter Chaplin under the guidance of Captain Aleksei Chirikov. This expedition, like all other Russian governmental geographical enterprises of the 18th century, was secret, so Chaplin's map was not published, but survived in some copies and variants. In printed form, the results of the first Bering expedition were reflected for the first time on the map in the Atlas of Russia, published in 1733-1734 by Ivan Kirilov[10].

In 1733 the second Bering expedition, known as the Great Northern Expedition, was authorized. It was one of the most ambitious expeditions to map the northern and eastern coasts of Siberia and outlying lands. The result of this expedition was reflected on the map in the Atlas of Russia, published in 1745 by the Russian Academy[11].

The Representation of the Russian Far East

In the first half of the 18th century the eastern frontier of Russia reached to Kamchatka, Chukot Peninsula, the Aleutians, north west coast of America, and the Kurils. On the other hand, in the beginning of the 18th century, the northern frontier of Japan reached *Ezo* (Hokkaido), and collected geographical information about Sakhalin and the Kurils from the Ainu (native peoples in Hokkaido, Sakhalin and the Kurils). We should give some examples to show how some maps represent Sakhalin, the Kurils and Japan in the context of Russian mapmaking.

Kirilov's atlas

Ivan Kirilov, who is the compiler of the First Russian Atlas, was born in 1695. He worked as a subordinate official to the Senate in 1720, a secretary of Senate in 1721, and a senior secretary of Senate in 1726. He planned to construct 3 volumes each containing 120 survey maps of Russia

as part of his administrative duties and scientific activities. But he couldn't realize all his plans, so published only 37 maps in a Russian atlas by himself in 1733–1734[12].

Fig. 2 is a general map of the Russian Empire by Kirilov. He used a map of China for the charting of the Russian Far East, especially, the Amur and Sakhalin. Sakhalin island was situated opposite the Amur mouth. These Chinese maps were produced based on information gathered in the area by the Jesuit survey and exploration organized by Emperor K'anghsi in 1708. In the Russian Academy, Delisle and Kirilov had borrowed information from these Chinese maps and south of Kamchatka, *Ezo* (Hokkaido) was represented based on a map drawn as a result of an exploration by De Vries in 1643[13]. In Europe in the beginning of the 18th century the course of Amur and the situation of Sakhalin island are clearly shown in the map of Witsen. This map had been compiled on the basis of Russian materials. In De Vries' map, the southern point of Sakhalin became known. D'Anville, who was a famous French cartographer and geographer, represents these two Sakhalin islands, one situated opposite the Amur mouth based on a map by Jesuit survey, and the other discovered by De Vries, separately in his map in 1734[14].

Moreover, in the Kirilov's general map of Russia, the main island of Japan was drawn as an island with a small Kyushu and Shikoku. This geographical shape is similar to a style of Gyoki map (a Japanese style map used from ancient time to the medieval period), broadly shown in the European making of Japanese maps.

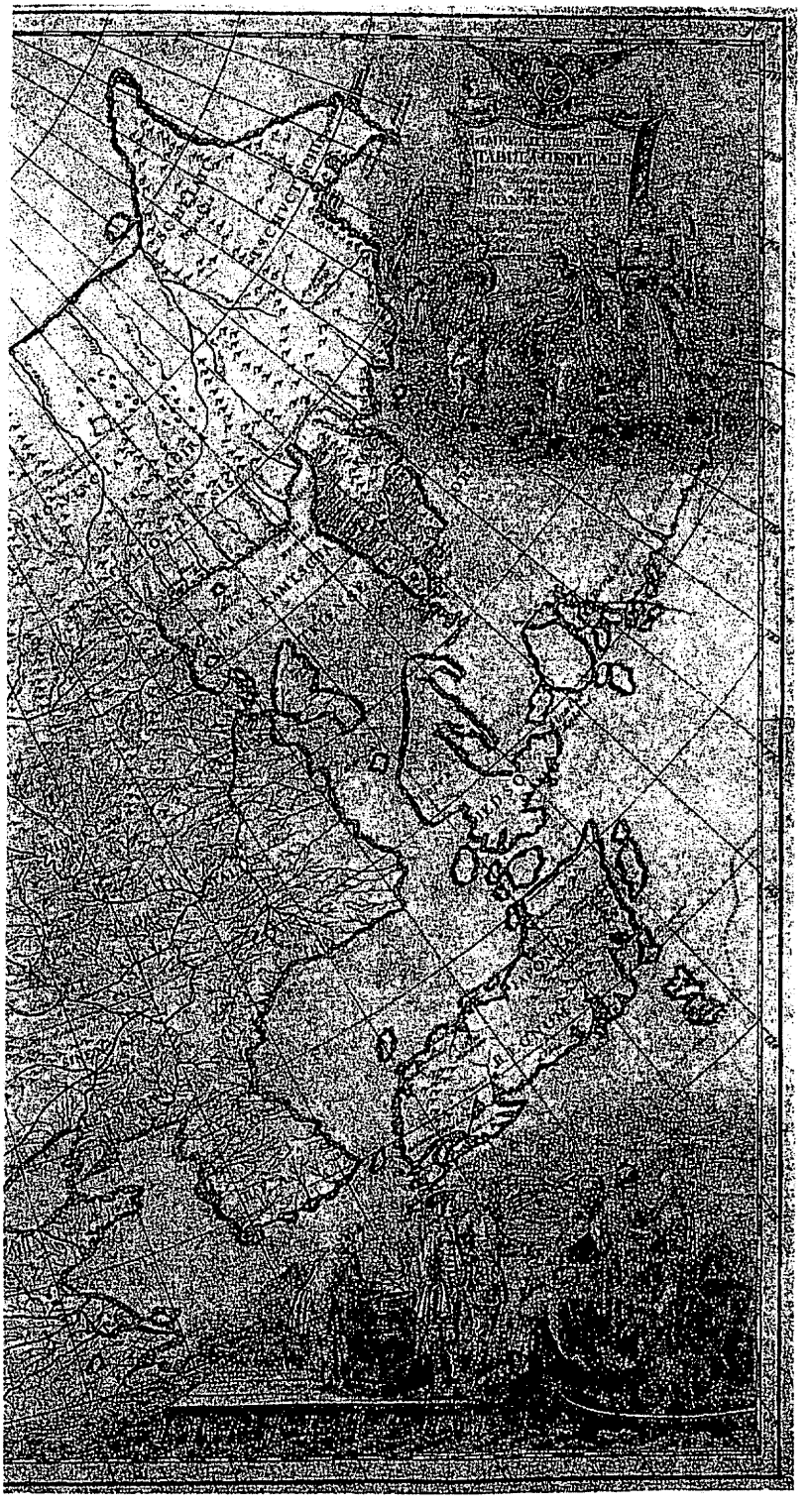
The Atlas of Russian Academy in 1745

As we consider Russian small-scale general maps in the 18th century, there is one further Russian atlas 'Academy atlas' first made in 1745. This is the first widely published atlas of the Russian Empire in the languages of Latin, Russian, French and German. It was presented to the Academy of Sciences under the name of Delisle, who was a well-known French astronomer, geographer, and cartographer invited by Kirilov[15]. The atlas has a general map and 19 district maps, and all maps used the Delisle's method. So this atlas was ranked with 'K'anghsi maps' in China, or large-scale surveying maps using the triangulation, the work of Jean-Dominique Cassini in France, in the history of scientific mapping[16].

Fig. 3 is a part of a General map of the Russian Empire in the Atlas of Russia in 1745 by the Russian Academy. The Kurils are mapped based on information from the second Bering expedition, but Sakhalin is represented according to Kirilov's map of 1734, because Bering's expedition did not explore Sakhalin. A part of Japan and Matsumae (the southern part of Hokkaido) are drawn in the bottom of the map, although Kirilov's map represented Japan as a big main land of Japan with many small islands including Shikoku island and Kyushu island.

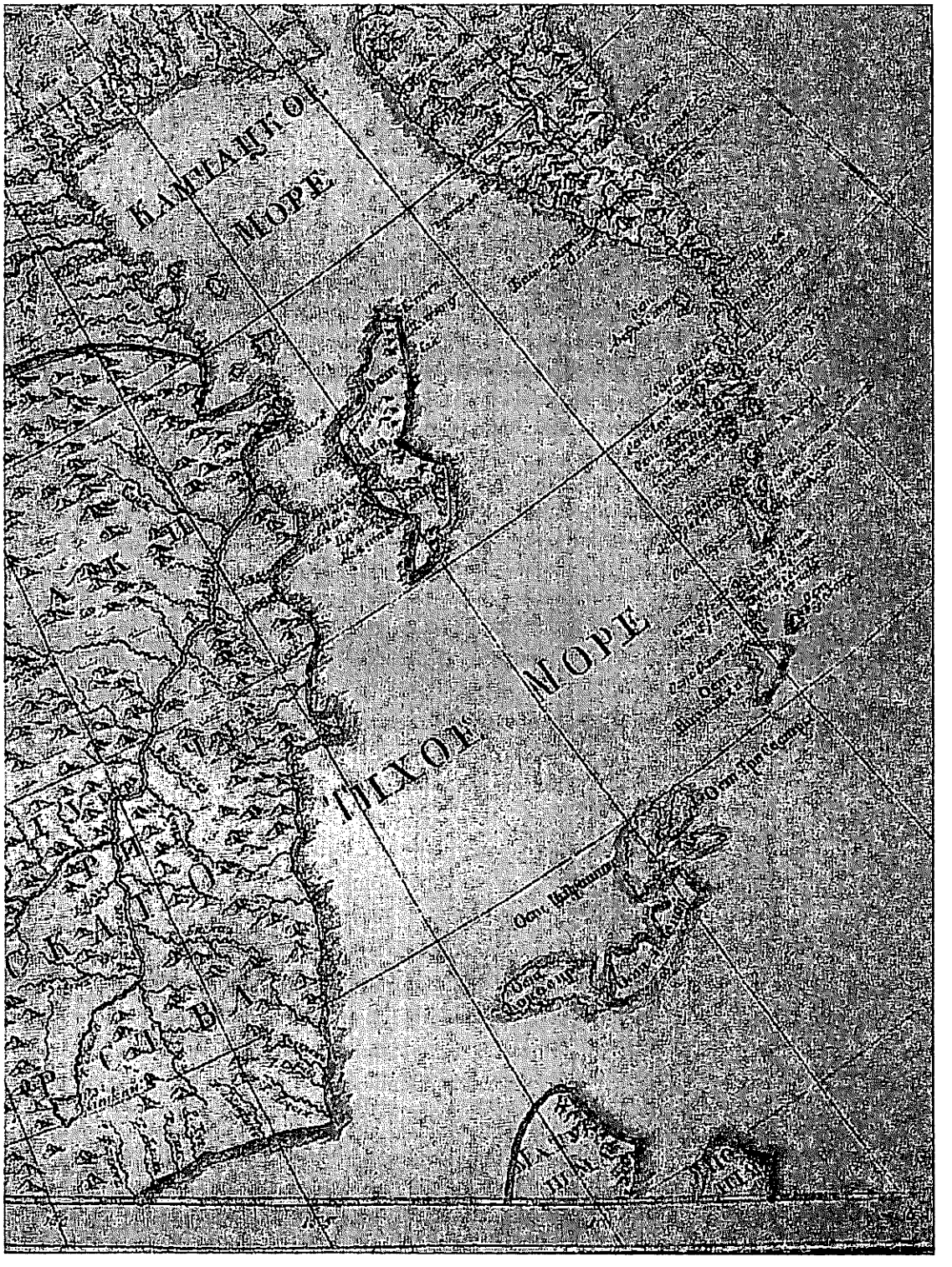
Chaplin's maps

Bering gave his expedition report together with Chaplin's map to the Committee of the Admiralty in St. Petersburg in 1730[17]. But this original map was lost, and at present some copies



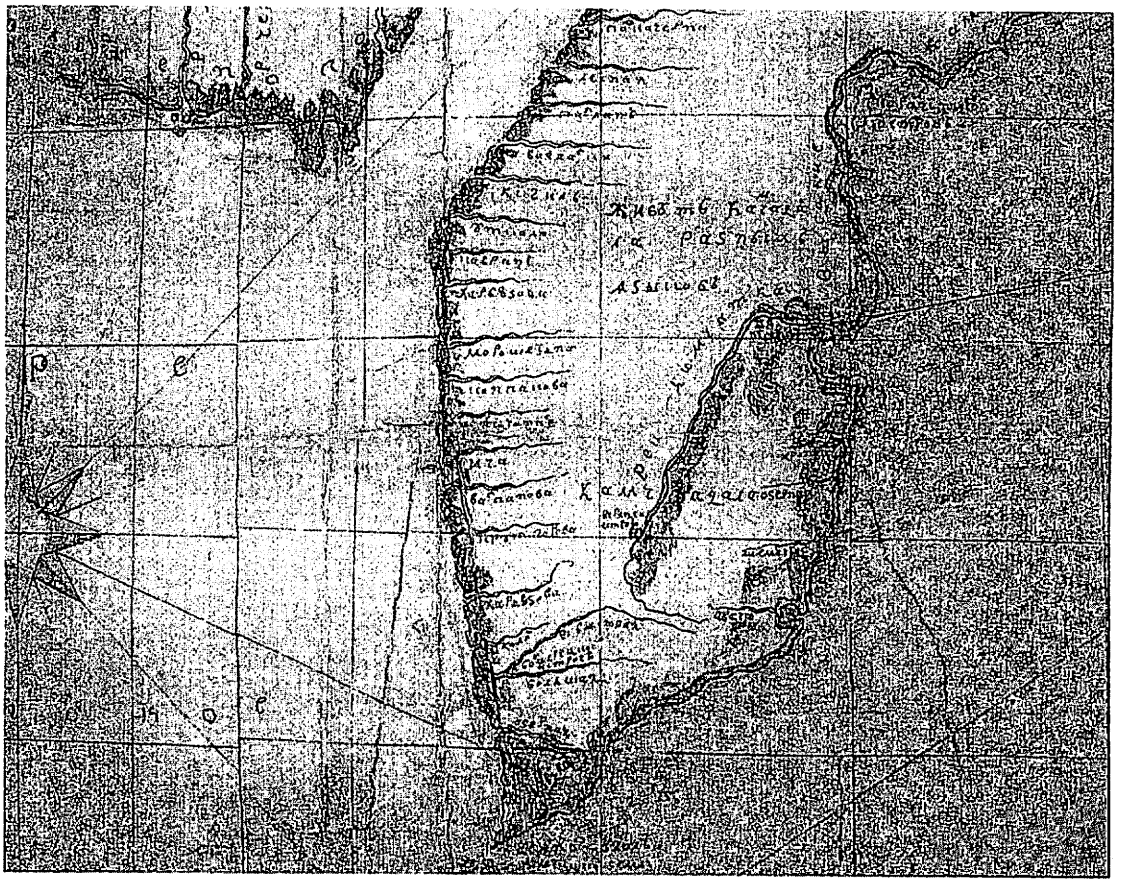
(Efimov, A.V.: *Atlas geograficheskikh otkrytii v Sibiri I v Severo-Zapadnoi Amerike XVII-XVIII vv.* Moscow)

Fig. 2 A general map of the Russian Empire by Kirilov, 1734



(Department of Cartography, The State Historical Museum, Moscow)

Fig. 3 A general map of the Russian Empire by Russian Academy, 1745

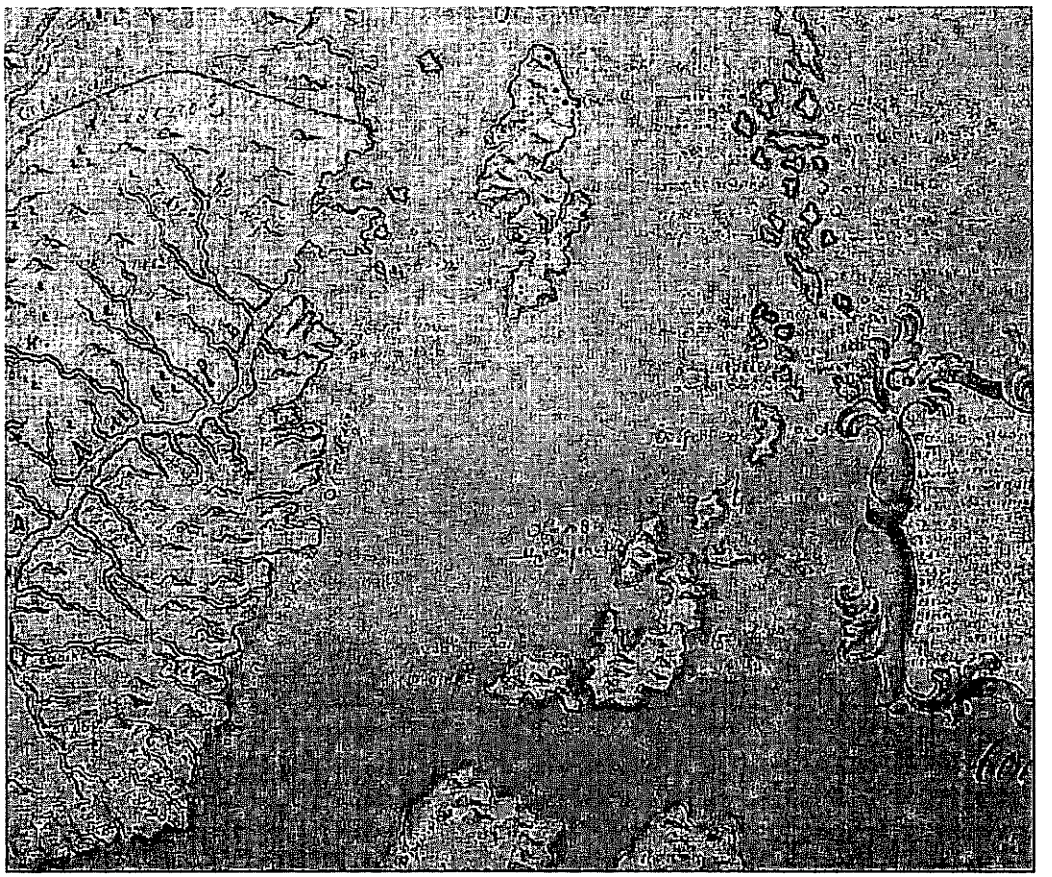


(Department of Cartography, The State Historical Museum, Moscow)

Fig. 4 A variant of Chaplin's map, 1753

and variants survived in Russia, Sweden, Germany, France, Britain, etc[18]. Some Chaplin's maps, which several copies and variants exist, show the travel route of the First Bering Expedition and contain pictures representing Siberian native peoples[19]. These ethnographic illustrations of Siberian peoples were inserted in the Russian unexplored areas in the mid-18th century[20].

A variant of the Chaplin map (Fig. 4) in the State Historical Museum in Moscow, in a 1753 manuscript[21], Kamchatka is more accurately represented than before, but there is no information about Sakhalin, the Kurils or Japan. However, a 1757 variant (Fig. 5)[22] in the State Historical Museum in Moscow represent not only Siberia and Kamchatka but also Sakhalin, the Kurils, China, and Japan. The author thinks, in this 1757 manuscript (Fig. 4), Sakhalin, the Kurils and Japan are represented according to the Academy Atlas of 1745 (Fig. 2). On this map, we can see some descriptions and many place names, and read the names of some Russian Academy geodesists. Goldenberg and Postnicov[23] pointed out in the paper that Russian mapping had a method of large-scale mapping based on land survey by many geodesists in the period of Kirilov's mapping work in the former half of 18th century. So this 1757 variant of Chaplin's map was drawn and compiled of using information based on many new maps of geodesists in Russian



(Department of Cartography, The State Historical Museum, Moscow)

Fig. 5 A variant of Chaplin's map, 1757

Academy, and as result very different from Chaplin's original map in 1730.

Conclusion

The second Bering expedition to the Russian eastern frontier was not only to collect information on Russian America but also on the Kurils and a part of northern Japan. There were investigated by the Shpamberg section of Bering's expedition. Bering's expedition led to rapid progress in geographical knowledge of the northern coast of Siberia, Kamchatka and Chukot Peninsula, and the geographical shape of the Kurils, however, that of Sakhalin and Japan remained the same.

The next important stage of Russian mapmaking of the Russian Far East began in the beginning of 19th century. Krusenstern's expedition which investigated the northern part of Sakhalin, especially the coastal area, and surveyed also the coast of *Ezo* (Hokkaido)[24], was responsible for this change in Russian cartography.

However, on the other hand, a new stage of Japanese cartography in the northern area began

with the first expedition supported by Tokugawa shogunate in 1785–1786 investigated *Ezo* (Hokkaido) as well as Sakhalin and the Kurils. Also in the beginning of 19th century, Rinzô Mamiya explored and mapped these areas very accurately[25] the northern Sakhalin as well as the Amur estuary and the lower Amur.

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1 See, for example: 1) Efimov, A.V.: *Iz istorii russkikh ekspeditsii na Tikhom Okeane. Pervaina polovona XVIII veka.* Moscow, 1948 (R), 2) Efimov,A.V. ed.: *Atlas geograficheskikh otkrytii v Sibiri I v Severo-Zapadnoi Amerike XVII–XVIII vv.* Moscow, 1964 (R), 3) Andreyev, A.I.: *Ocherki po istochnikovedeniyu Sibiri, vypusk 2. XVIII vek.* Moscow, 1960 (R), 4) Postnikov, A.V.: *Razvitie krupnomasshtabnoi kartografii v Rossii,* Moscow, 1989 (R).

2 See, for example: 1) Postnikov, A.V.: The mapping of Russian America, A history of Russian-American contacts in cartography, *American Geographical Society Collection Special Publication* No. 4, 1995, 2) Postnikov, A.V.: *Russkaya Amerika v geograficheskikh opisaniyakh i na kartakh 1741–1867 gg.* S. Petersburg, 2000 (R).

3 See,for example: 1) Funakoshi, A.: *Hoppouzu no rekishi,* Kodansha, 1976 (J), 2) Funakoshi, A.: *Sakoku nihon ni kita Kôkizu no rekishi,* (The Acceptance of K'angshi Maps in Japan in the Age of her isolation: A study of geographical history.), Hosei daigaku syuppannkyoku, 1986 (JE), 3) Akizuki, T.: *Nihon hokuhen no tanken to chizu no rekishi* (A History of the Exploration and Cartography of the Northwest Pacific.), Hokkaido daigaku tosho kankoukai, 1999 (JE).

4 Bagrov, L.: *A history of Russian cartography up to 1800.* Ontario, 1975.

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9 Postnikov, A.V.: The mapping of Russian America, A history of Russian-American contacts in cartography, American Geographical Society Collection Special Publication No. 4, 1995.

10 See, above 9.

11 Bagrov, L.: *A history of Russian cartography up to 1800.* Ontario, 1975.

12 1) Bagrov, L.: Ivan Kirilov, compiler of the first Russian atlas, 1689–1737. *Imago Mundi,* II, 1937, 2) Goldenberg, L.A.: Ivan Kirilovich Kirilov 1695–1737. *Tvorchy otechestvyonnoi nauki: Geograf,* Moscow, 1996 (R).

13 Bagrov, L.: A few remarks on the maps of the Amur, the Tartar Strait and Sakhalin. *Imago Mundi,* XII, 1955.

14 See, above 13.

15 Bagrov, L.: *A history of Russian cartography up to 1800.* Ontario, 1975.

16 Funakoshi, A.: *Sakoku nihon ni kita Kôkizu no rekishi,* (The Acceptance of K'ang-shi Maps in Japan in the Age of her isolation: A study of geographical history.), Hosei daigaku syuppannkyoku, 1986 (JE).

17 Siia Karta socinise v sibirskoi ekspeditsii pri Komande ot flota Kapitana Beringa ot Tobol'ska do Chiukotskago ugla, Codex Ash 246, Meeting of Frontier (Digital Library).

18 Navrot, M.I.: *Novyi variant itogovoi karti Pervoi kamchatskoi ekspeditsii Rossiya i Amerika.* The State Historical museum, Moscow, 1999 (R).
19 Efimov, A.V. ed.: *Atlas geograficheskikh otkrytii v Sibiri I v Severo-Zapadnoi Amerike XVII–XVIII vv.* Moscow, 1964 (R).
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(R) written in Russian
(J) written in Japanese
(JE) written in Japanese with English abstract