

WEST-EUROPEAN, RUSSIAN, AND JAPANESE MAPS OF THE KURIL ISLANDS UP TO THE 19TH CENTURY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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The ancients showed on their maps in the Far East of the Asian continent the two legendary islands – Chryse and Argyra, they believed that the soil of the former consisted of gold, while that of the latter did of silver. After the Marco Polo's voyage Europeans acquired a clearer idea of Pacific islands including the Japanese ones.

Some maps of the 16th century equaled the island of Iapan (Zipangri) with Chryse, to the north of which they showed the island "La Plata" ("Argyra"), as on maps by Abraham Ortelius compiled in 1570 "Tartariae sive magni Chami Regni" and 1589 "MARIS PACIFICI, (quod vulgo Mar del Zur)".

The discovery of the Kuril Islands was the result of two independent colonization directions: the exploration and development of Siberia and the Far East by Russian pathfinders and the voyages of West-European sailors. The formers were attracted by fur-bearing animals and virgin lands, the latter – by Eastern spices, gold and silver mines.

The Europeans obtained the information on this chain of islands only after they reach Japan in 1565, this information interlaced with information about the island of Eso (Yedso), that is modern Hokkaidō.

In 1643 the ships of the Holland expedition under Maarten Gerritsz Vries sailed along the Eastern shores of Eso (Yedso) and the southern Kuril Islands. On the results of this expedition they compiled a map which was published by J. Jansson in Amsterdam in 1650 and 1658.

This is the earliest known map of the Kuril Islands. It shows the western end of the Urup Island ("Compagnies Land" as a part of the American continent), the Iturup Island ("Staten Eylant"), and the eastern end of the Kunashir Island (as a part of Eso) with the volcano Tyatya ("Piek Anthonia").

Even after the Vries' expedition, the European's idea of this part of the world was still rather faint. In *Novus Atlas Sinensis* by Jesuit missionary M. Martini (first published in 1655), Eso is depicted as an island northward of Japan while the Asian mainland lies farther to the north.

In the maps compiled by G. Sanson in the 1660s – 1670s, the Land of Eso is divided into two parts: the western part of the Land discovered by the Dutch (i.e. the Southern Sakhalin) was attached by the mapmaker to the Asian mainland, while the place of the Compagnies Land was occupied by a sort of a small continent named Ieço and situated rather close to California. The Amsterdam burgomaster N. Vitsen, who kept up a frequent correspondence with Russian authorities, held with Vries that the Compagnies Land was a part of the American continent and that the Land of Aniva gave its name to the legendary Strait of Anian allegedly dividing both continents.

According to these ideas, the German cartographer I.B. Homann has depicted the Land of Eso in the place of the fabulous Land of Joan da Gama connecting it with the coasts of California at 40° North.

As for the islands to the north of Honshu, the Europeans could judge about them also from oral and written information from the Japanese, including rather schematic Japanese maps, such as the Map of Japan of the Shoho period ("Shoho Onkuko Ezu", 1644). It depicts the Land of Eso as an island, but the archipelago showed to the right of Eso has nothing in common neither with the real outlines of the Kuril Islands nor even with the map of the Dutch.

Basing on the collected Japanese maps and inquiries of Japanese seamen, the German scientist and explorer Engelbert Kämpfer noted that the Land of Eso was depicted in the Japanese maps in such a way, that it was impossible to understand whether it is a single island or a group of several islands.

The first Japanese map of the lands to the north and north-east of Hokkaido made in 1644; it served as a basis for later Japanese maps of the North compiled in the second half of the 17th – the first half of the 18th century. One of such maps is "The Map of the Land of Matsumae and Eso" dated about 1681. There is the island of Hokkaido in the center of the map; the Sakhalin Island lies to the north of it. A cluster of numerous small islands is depicted to the east of Hokkaido. This indicates convincingly that in the 17th century the Japanese had a quite vague idea of the geographical position of the Kuril Islands. It is more likely that the Japanese got the information on these islands from the Ainu people.

When the Russians reached the Pacific coast in the late 17th century, it became possible for the first time to survey new accurate maps of the whole Kuril Islands. The 'Drawing of the Kamchatka Land' (1701), compiled by Semyon Remezov on the base of data provided by Vladimir Atlasov during his Kamchatka campaign in 1696-1699, demonstrates a group of islands to the south of the Kamchatka Peninsula. There is an inscription at the southern end of the peninsula: 'The Kuril Land at the lake and in the islands'.

The drawing, made by Semyon Ul'yanovich Remezov in 1701 on a base of data gathered by Vladimir Atlasov during his Kamchatka campaign in 1696–1699, demonstrates a group of islands to the south of the Kanchatka. There is the inscription "The Kuril land at the lake and on the islands" on the southernmost end of the Kamchatka Peninsula.

The first complete depiction and description of all Kuril Islands was made by Ivan Kozyrevskiy in 1726 basing on the results of his expeditions to the islands of Shumshu and Paramushir as well as data that he got from captive Ainu and Japanese. The map contains the depiction of the southern end of the Kamchatka Peninsula and the verbal description of 21 islands of the main Kuril chain as well as islands of Hokkaido (Matmai) and Japan (Nifon).

The first printed depiction of the Kuril Islands made on a base of Russian geographical drawings was issued by I.B. Homann in 1723 on Jacob Bruce's order. The right half of the map is entitled «The Land of Kamchadalia, or Ieso, with the Lamskoye or Penzhinskoye Sea, as they were discovered and explored in the course of different maritime and terrestrial expeditions of the Russian Cossacks and sable hunters».

The results of the expedition of the Russian surveyors Ivan Yevreinov and Fedor Luzhin in 1721 were used for the mapping of the northern part of the Kuril Islands. There are 14 big and 11 small islands of the Kuril chain on the map.

The first printed map, representing the discoveries made in the course of M. Spanberg's voyages in 1738-1739, was the map included into the "Atlas Rossiyskoy..." («The Russian Atlas...») of 1745.

A new and rather precise map of the Kuril Island was compiled by subpilot G. Pribylov in 1773.

The member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences G.F. Müller compiled a map of the Kuril Islands on a base of the discoveries made by the participants of the Second Kamchatka Expedition (1738-1739). The map demonstrates that the Russian explorers, despite the M.P. Spanberg's voyage, had rather vague idea of the Southern Kuril Islands by the mid-18th century.

The Russian pilot M. Petushkov made a precise map of the several Kuril Islands in 1778.

The new voyage of the Russians led by F.Ya. Shabalin to the Kuril Islands and Matmai (Hokkaido), performed from August 27, 1779 to September 17, 1780, allowed to rectify the coastline depiction and the location of some islands of the Kuril chain.

Another anonymous Russian map of the late 1770s – the 1780s demonstrates the relative positions and shapes of the islands which differ from their positions and shapes on the maps made by D.Ya. Shabalin and I.M. Antipin expeditions.

The French expedition led by La Pérouse in 1787 also made its contribution to the mapping of the Kuril Islands. As La Pérouse's ships came to Petropavlovsk in the Kamchatka, the maps and other materials of the expedition were sent by the terrestrial way through Siberia; they were brought to Paris by Jean-Baptiste de Lesseps, the only participant of this round-the-world voyage who returned home. De Lesseps' map was published in the "*Atlas du voyage de La Pérouse*" («Atlas of La Pérouse's voyage») after many years since his return to France. It is unknown, what was its original background. This map differs from the known Russian maps of the Kuril chain. It depicts only eighteen islands entitled by ordinal numbers. It is specified which islands

are habitable and which are not. A big Land of Samour, incomplete in its eastern part, is shown to the south-east of the 17th Island. The western coast of the Land of Nanaçaki lies to the north-east of Samour.

The Russian expedition led by Lieutenant Adam Laxman in 1792–1793 also surveyed detailed maps of some islands of the Kuril chain.

The Japanese maps of the late 18th century testify that the Japanese knowledge about the Southern Kuriles did not experience any significant transformation since the time of the emergence of the first maps demonstrating the lands northward of Hokkaido. The maps were based on a rather vague idea of the geography of the southern part of the Kuril chain. Only the map, compiled by the Japanese voyager Mogami Tokunai on a base of surveys carried out in 1785-1786, displays the shapes and position of the Kuril Island the most realistic.