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Vasily Shchepkin

**The Manuscript *Nijūgokoku chūka chikyū no zu*
 (“Pictures of the Peoples
of Twenty Five Countries with Maps
of China and the World”)
in the IOM, RAS Collection**

Abstract: The article introduces a Japanese manuscript containing maps of China and the world along with depictions of the inhabitants of 25 countries and brief descriptions of those countries. On the basis of the information about Russia and the Ainu lands, the author puts forward a hypothesis about the date of the manuscript.

Key words: Japanese manuscripts, dating of manuscripts, geography, Russia, Ainu lands, depictions of tributaries (*zhigongtu*)

The “Nova” Chinese collection of the IOM, RAS contains at least one manuscript in Japanese (designated as H-5). Its title is *Nijūgokoku chūka chikyū no zu* 二十五國人物中華地球之圖 (“Pictures of the peoples of twenty five countries with maps of China and the world”). The manuscript is a single binding notebook of 41 ff. (82 pages), with 29 ff. carrying maps and pictures, and the remaining eleven the text. The paper is of Japanese origin; the maps and drawings are made in color; there is no pagination in the manuscript. Also absent are a preface, summary, colophon or any indications concerning the manuscript, the author or the copyist. On the first page there is a red seal reading *Tōwa kyōin* 藤和卿印 or *Tōin Wakyō* 藤印和卿. Alongside the *katakana* characters and Chinese symbols indicating different countries there are Cyrillic transcriptions written in lead pencil. These transcriptions are frequently incorrect. For instance, the *katakana* characters *wo* (ヲ) and *re* (レ) have in virtually all cases been marked as *shi* (シ). That probably attests to the person who attempted to indicate the pronunciation of the characters not being able to read Japanese.

The *General Catalog of Japanese Writings* 国書総目録 contains no information about a manuscript bearing this title; nor was it possible to find it

in various databases of Japanese archives and libraries. On the basis of earlier publications, it has been established that the aforementioned seal can be found on at least two manuscripts extant in Japan. One of them is a copy of *Bojutsu yume monogatari* 戊戌夢物語 (“A story of a dream in the Bojutsu year”) written by Takano Choei in 1837 and now in the Tsukuba University library. The other, *Gekizetsu wakumon* 馱舌或問 (“Diverse problems of barbaric pseudo-speech”), was the work of the renowned artist and philosopher Watanabe Kazan. Both treatises were written at approximately the same time and connected with the shelling of the United States ship “*Morrison*” in 1837 on the orders of the Japanese government. Both authors were known as outspoken critics of the actions taken by the government, which makes it obvious that the seal belonged to someone who lived in the mid-19th c. and was interested in international relations. It therefore seems entirely logical that the manuscript under consideration also belonged to his library.

The title itself indicates that the manuscript contains maps of the world and China, each filling a double-page spread, along with the representations of the inhabitants of 25 countries (as a rule, drawings of a man and a woman wearing national costume) and brief descriptions of the countries in Japanese in the same order as the illustrations.

The countries are as follows: 1) Ming 明; 2) Qing 清; 3) Tartar 韃靼; 4) Tonkin 東京 (Northern Vietnam); 5) Mouru 毛留 (Mogols); 6) Siam 暹羅; 7) Korea 朝鮮; 8) Ryukyu 琉球; 9) Quảng Nam 廣南 (Southern Vietnam); 10) Jiaozhi 交趾 (Northern Vietnam); 11) Jakarta 咬瑠吧; 12) Holland 阿蘭陀; 13) Kafuri 加富里 (Africa?); 14) Orankai 兀良哈 (to the North of Korea); 15) Luzon 呂宋 (Philippines); 16) Armenia 亞爾默尼亞; 17) Java 爪哇; 18) Africa 亞費利加; 19) Germany 齊爾瑪尼亞; 20) England 諳尼利亞; 21) Macau 亞媽港; 22) Kanarin 加拿林 (judging by assonance, the Canary Islands); 23) Italy 意大利亞; 24) Onkaria 翁加利亞 (Hungary); 25) Aoren 阿勒戀 (according to the text, somewhere in Southern America); 26) Muscovy 莫斯科未亞 (Russia); 27) Ezo 蝦夷 (Ainu).

Compositions of this sort probably originated from the Chinese *zhigongtu* 職貢圖 genre — “Depictions of tributaries” or “Portraits of [vassals arriving with] tribute”, describing envoys of the lands and tribes dependent in fact or just theoretically upon China and paying tribute to the court. The last work in the series was “Portraits of [vassals arriving with] tribute to Emperor Qing” written by Xie Sui 謝遂, in 1751.¹ In China, those compositions had been commissioned by the imperial court which employed its extensive bu-

¹ *Xie sui zhigongtu manwen tushuo xiaozhu* 1989. There is a Russian translation of the third volume of this work made by Iakin (Nikita) Bichurin in the 1810s, (BICHURIN 2010).

reaucratic apparatus to manufacture thousands of depictions.² In Japan, however, there was no tradition of that sort, and the genre appeared only toward the late 17th c., as a succession of studies reviewing trade relations and the goods traded between China and its partners. Some treatises split the countries and peoples into two groups, “foreign states” (the countries of Eastern Asia that had diplomatic ties with China) and “foreign barbarians”; others did not distinguish between the two categories.

Japanese studies of the same sort are well-known. One of the earliest was probably the treatise entitled *Kaitsūshōkō* 華夷通商考 “A Study of Trade Relations between China and the Barbarians” written in 1695 by Nisikawa Joken, a geographer and astronomer residing in Nagasaki. It contained illustrations and descriptions of forty two peoples whose representatives had made contact at one time or other with the Chinese. However, the earliest copies of the study contained only black-and-white outline drawings; the treatise was dominated by the text. Later, Joken’s work was considerably augmented, and its geography expanded. This most probably happened after Giovanni Sidotti, an Italian missionary, arrived in Japan. The supplemented copies of Nisikawa Joken’s work appeared in the 1720s; among them ones with modified titles, such as (“Pictures of the Peoples from Thousands of Countries”) *Bankoku jimbutsu no zu* 万国人物之図 or (“Pictures of the Peoples from 42 Countries”) *Yonjunikoku jimbutsu no zu* 四十二国人物之図. However, the manuscript in the IOM, RAS collection must obviously date from a later time, as becomes clear as soon as we consider the descriptions of Muscovy and Ezo (it may well be no coincidence that these are the last in the list).

Most of the information about Russia coincided with that given in the augmented copy of Nisikawa Joken’s work from 1720 that has already been mentioned. It was reported to be a vast and cold country situated in Europe, east of Holland. In it, there were a huge bell and a giant cannon 4 *jo* (12 m) long charged with 2 *koku* (300 kg) of gunpowder (obviously referring to the Tsar Bell and Tsar Cannon still to be seen in the Moscow Kremlin today). Further, the distance between that country and Japan was reckoned to be 14,100 [Chinese] *li* (about 7,000 km) by sea. Its primary exports were said to be amber, products of corals, and leather.

On the other hand, there was also information not present in Nisikawa Joken’s study or the copies of it written in the early 18th c. Thus, besides “Muscovy”, another name was suggested for the country: “Oroshia”. It was

² LAI 2012, 75.

reported that its residents were referred to as *akahito*, “the red people”. What is important is the fact that the text mentions an “Empress” who ruled during the *Kambun* era (1661–72) and annexed territories extending as far as Kamchatka. All this taken together suggests that the primary source of information concerning Russia, besides the work by Nisikawa Joken, should be looked for among the late 18th c. studies, such as the *Sangoku Tsūran Zusetsu* 三国通覧図説 (“Illustrated Description of Three Countries”) by Hayashi Shihei³ and *Akaezo fūsetsukō* 赤蝦夷風説考 (“Research of the Rumors about Red Ezo”) by Kudo Heisuke.⁴

With regard to Ezo, it was stated that the land was situated north of the Princedom of Matsumae, east of Tartaria (Dattan) and south of Kamchatka; from all of which it was separated by the sea. The land was 300 [Japanese] *ri* (1,200 km) long (from north to south), and 100 *ri* (400 km) wide (east to west). Its territory was divided into five parts (plus the land belonging to Matsumae), the names of which were all listed. It was reported to be an “inferior” country inhabited by “dishonorable” people trading clothes imported from Japan, China, and Muscovy. The poorest among them made their clothes of wisteria rods called *atsushi*. Due to its cold climate and mountainous terrain, it had no agriculture and most food was provided by the sea. The mountains contained plenty of gold and silver, but the locals had no idea how to mine them. The land had no ruler, but every locality was governed by wealthy people. Listed finally were the goods for which the country was known. On the basis of the data in this brief text, we can be certain that the author(s) also drew on such works as *Sangoku Tsūran Zusetsu* by Hayashi Shihei.⁵

Ryukyu was another country whose description was undoubtedly based on *Sangoku Tsūran Zusetsu*. A telling indication is this: Hayashi gave a complete list of Ryukyu kings from the 12th c. to the early 18th. In it a few names were accompanied by a description of some important event which occurred in their time. Our manuscript mentions only those rulers whose reigns were marked by those same events.

Another peculiarity of the manuscript is the fact that the texts about three countries, 22) Kanarin 加拿林, 24) Onkaria 翁加利亞, and 25) Aroren 阿勒戀, are missing, with blank pages following their names, even though the corresponding drawings are present. Brief descriptions of them can be found in an augmented copy of Nisikawa Joken’s *Zōho Kaitsūshōkō* 增補

³ HAYASHI 1979, 35–36.

⁴ KUDO 1969, 279–280.

⁵ HAYASHI 1979, 37–38.

華夷通商考. Possibly, the compiler of the manuscript failed to attribute these three countries though the texts about them were available for him.

It should finally be noted that the manuscript contains drawings of people representing 27 countries (see the list above), while the title mentions only 25. The scribe might have discounted Ming and Qing, as both those names were linked to China, which the title names separately.

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