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‘[...]I WROTE NEITHER TO PRAISE MY WORK NOR FOR BENEFIT...’: ANTON LOSEV’S UNIQUE WORK FOUND IN THE JAGIELLONIAN LIBRARY

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ABSTRACT

In October 2020, an 18th-century manuscript containing hand-coloured drawings and featuring a long title in Russian: *Abbreviated Description of the Lena River together with a General Map and Drawings of All Curiosities and Attributes along Its Banks* underwent the digitizing process as part of the Jagiellonian Library digitizing ‘Patrimonium’ Project. The work seeming from the writing legacy of Ż. Pauli (1814–1895) was authored by the Russian clerk, Anton Ivanonovich Losev (1765?–1829). Losev was well known in Siberia, and particularly Irkutsk as a land surveyor, geographer, cartographer, historian, and tourism lover. However, in the remaining territory of Russia and Poland, his person and his works are practically unknown. The unique manuscript discovered at the Jagiellonian Library is the topic of this paper. Additionally, it contains the translation of the genuine text into English, which is published here for the first time.

KEYWORDS: Anton Losev, Jagiellonian Library, Irkutsk, manuscript, the Lena River, Eastern Siberia

In October 2020, a manuscript of Anton Ivanovich Losev (1765–1829, a Russian land surveyor¹ who lived at the turn of the 19th century), was submitted for digitizing as part of the Patrimonium Project² at the Jagiellonian Library (BJ). On handmade paper, apart from the body of the text written in Russian in legible handwriting, it also contains hand-coloured and features a long title in an ornamental frame:³ *Abbreviated Description of the Lena River together with a General Map and Drawings of All Curiosities and Attributes along Its Banks made by the District Land Surveyor Anton Losev in 1785–1786* (Fig 1, 2). The manuscript reached the paper’s author quite acci-

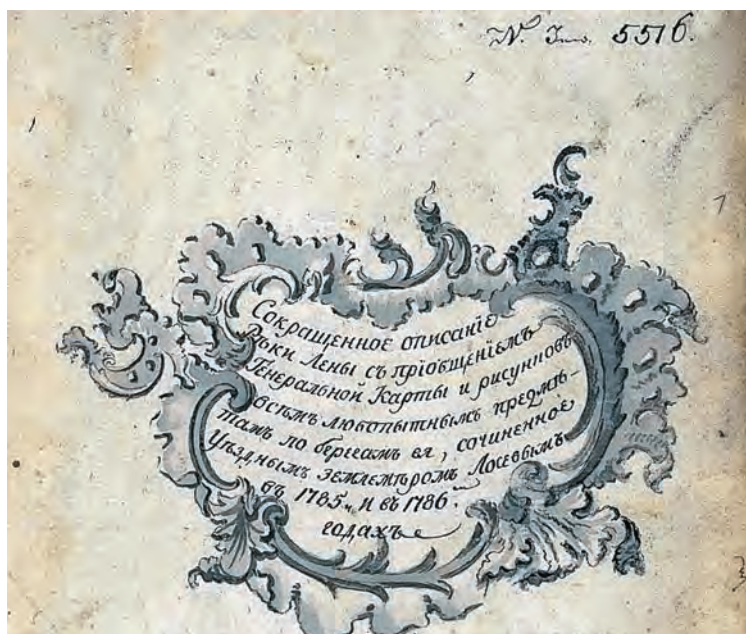


FIG. 1. Title page of the Abbreviated Description of the Lena River..., BJ, ACNO 5516 III

- 1 Surveyor (also geodesist), from *zemlemer*, literary: ‘land surveyor’.
- 2 Colloquially referred to as ‘Patrimonium-2’ as distinct from the first Project: ‘Patrimonium: digitizing and sharing Polish national heritage from the National Library and the Jagiellonian Library’ completed in January 2020.
- 3 BJ, ACNO, Rkp. 5516 III, *Sokrashchennoye opisaniye Reki Leny s priobshcheniyem General'noy Karty i risunkov vsem lyubopytnym predmetam po beregam yeya, sochinennoye Uyezdnym zemlemerom Losevym'' v 1785 i v 1786 godakh*, pp. 33.

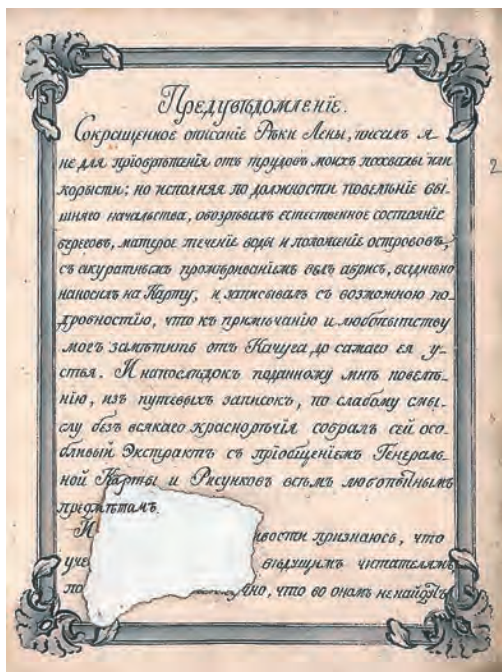


FIG. 2. Introduction to the Abbreviated Description of the Lena River..., page 2 recto

dentally with the purpose of editing and translating the genuine text. However, when its history was discovered, it became evident that the manuscript is one of the most unique findings in the BJ collection.

In the tsarist offices of the time, many documents were commissioned along with their copies (later handed to applicants if requested). Losev himself made copies, too. In fact, he used to give his friends his watercolours as a present.⁴ In the Irkutsk archive, letters with the surveyor’s authentic autographs have been preserved, allowing to distinguish the genuine documents from copies. When comparing Losev’s original handwriting⁵ with the man-

4 V. Titov, ‘Voobrazhayemyy obraz torgovogo dela’, *Kapitalist. Irkutskiy zhurnal dlya predprinimateley*, 2009, 8, p. 33.

5 O. Tatarnikova, ‘Losev - arkhitekto’, *Kopeyka*, 2010, 13, p. 8.

uscript discovered at BJ, it can be judged that the work found is a copy: either official or private. (At the moment, it is not possible to verify if the manuscript was made in the Irkutsk office at all.)

A part of the itinerary of the manuscript is known: it was donated to BJ in the early 20th century by Dr Władysław Wisłocki (1841-1900), a Jagiellonian University Professor, archivist, and BJ’s curator who had received it as an inheritance⁶ from a friend who died heirless. This was Żegota Pauli (actually Ignacy Jakub Pauli⁷, 1814-1895)⁸, a librarian, historian, and a tourism enthusiast to boot. The earlier vicissitudes of other Losev’s works were so complicated that finding the description of the Lena River amidst Żegota Pauli’s legacy may shed some light on their history and all the puzzles they may entail.

‘I WROTE NEITHER TO PRAISE MY WORK NOR FOR BENEFIT’...

The future District (*uezd*)⁹ and Guberniya¹⁰ Land Surveyor, Anton Ivanovich Losev, was born in Irkutsk in 1765, a date that has remained uncertain since his genuine birth certificate was lost (possibly burnt in the 1879 fire in Irkutsk¹¹). While his birthday was unknown for a long time, the scholar, Natalia Sukhova, identified it in the State Historical Archives in St Petersburg Losev’s official file (equivalent of a CV at the time) from 1821, where it was written that Losev was 56.¹² In the until-now elaborated lists of families

6 H. Ułaszyn, ‘Dr Władysław Wisłocki. Notka biograficzna, *Przewodnik bibliograficzny*, Kraków, 1901, 6, p. 94.

7 W. Bieńkowski, ‘Pauli Żegota (właściwie Ignacy) Jakub (1814-1895)’, in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 25, ed. E. Rostworowski, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk 1980, pp. 345-347.

8 A. Bęlcikowski, *Nad grobem ś. p. Żegoty Paulego*, Kraków 1895, pp. 3-4.

9 *Uezd* in the original: administrative unit used in Russia until 1929.

10 *Guberniya*: higher administrative unit in Russia until 1929, later replaced by oblast.

11 A.N. Keshikova, ‘Delo svoje znayet sovershenno...’, *Sibirskoye nasledie*, 2004, 3, p. 5.

12 N.G. Sukhova, ‘A.I. Losev i yego rol’ v izuchenii Vostochnoy Sibiri’, in: *Istochniko-vedeniye gorodov Sibiri v kontse XVI - nachale XX v.*, eds. O.N. Vilkov [et al.], Novosibirsk 1983, p. 44.

living in Irkutsk in 1801, a piece of information has been preserved, saying that Losev was actually 37; Thus, he may have been born in 1764 or 1765.¹³ It was only in 2021 that a publication was released on the well-known Irkutsk families in which Andrei Cherepanov shared his discovery: Anton Losev was born exactly on the 13th January 1765.¹⁴ Additionally, in the documents preserved in the State Archives of the Irkutsk Oblast, Cherepanov found information on Anton’s ancestors (His great-grandfather came to live in Irkutsk in 169) and on Losev’s children.

In 1773-1777, Losev went to a so-called navigation school¹⁵ that focused on teaching mathematics, astronomy, geography, optics, mechanics, hydrology, navigation, fortifications, and urban architecture.¹⁶ Following graduation, he was given the military rank of corporal. Losev’s career is bonded first of all with Irkutsk: in 1779, he was given the rank of geodesy sergeant and the position of a teacher at the school he had graduated from (at the age of merely 14 or 15!¹⁷). Then in 1781, he was appointed Senior Land Surveyor and the city architect’s assistant. In 1786, he was appointed as District Land Surveyor while in 1790, he became an assistant to the architect of the Irkutsk Guberniya. In 1792, Losev was appointed

13 A.N. Chikisheva, ‘Losev Anton Ivanovich: k 240-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya’, in: *Priangar’ye ot “A” do “Ya”: spravochno-bibliograficheskii yezhegodnik-2005*, sost. D.Ya. Maydachevskiy, T.I. Stepanova, Irkutsk 2005, pp. 27-28.

14 A.V. Cherepanov, *O rodoslovnnykh korniyakh A.I. Loseva - vydayushchegosya arkhitektora irkutskoy gubernii, zemlemera, krayevedy i kartografa*, [online] <https://www.ve-starchive.ru/issledovaniia/4760-o-rodoslovnnyh-korniah-ai-loseva-vydaushegosia-arhitektora-irkutskoi-gubernii-zemlemera-kraeved.html> [accessed 1 August 2022].

15 The type of university in imperial Russia that targeted at exploration, geodesy, etc. The Irkutsk school was the only such specialist institution in Eastern Siberia; it was founded in 1754 at the initiative of the Danish sailor Vitus Bering who serving in the Russian navy explored Siberia, the strait bearing his name, and Alaska. He was also considered the official founder of Pietropavlovsk in Kamchatka.

16 A.N. Keshikova, ‘Delo svoye znayet...’

17 This seems highly unlikely; yet the archival documents studied by A. Chikisheva and the latest findings of A. Cherepanov (see the works quoted above) testify to this. It is possible that Losev acted as a teacher’s support; however, officially he was referred to as a teacher.

Guberniya Architect, and in 1805, he earned the title of Guberniya Land Surveyor.¹⁸

Losev began his first official assignment in 1785 when he participated in preparing an economic-geographic description of the Irkutsk Guberniya and mapping the East Siberian rivers: the Lena (in 1785-1786), the Selenga (1787), the Nizhnyaya Tunguska (1790, 1792), and also Lake Baikal (1787-1788). The map was released for use in 1792.¹⁹ From 1792-1803, Losev was the main architect of the Guberniya, entirely focused on designing²⁰ buildings in Irkutsk²¹ and Verkhneudinsk²². (Regrettably, almost none of the edifices he designed has survived, either because of fires or a thorough remodeling).

Losev's motivations for work evolved with age: in 1792, he wrote that 'it was his supervisors' instructions and human curiosity that stimulated him to create the topographic description'. In the manuscript discovered in BJ, he mentioned official assignments: '[...] I wrote neither to praise my work nor for benefit but complying with the instructions of my superiors'. In one of his later works from 1812, he also mentioned his superiors, yet he additionally pointed to the Free Economic Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture and Husbandry, and the tasks assigned by them.

Of note, Losev combined his professional historical curiosity with his life interest - the desire to become acquainted with the history of his own family and life. He writes, 'Inquisitive historians undoubtedly enrich their knowledge: not only a learned man will find in the history of Russia traces of his life'.²³ There is another

18 A.N. Keshikova, 'Delo svoje znayet...'; N.G. Sukhova, 'A.I. Losev...', p. 44.

19 Ibidem, pp. 46-47.

20 V.I. Kochedamov, *Anton Losev - irkutskiy arkhitektorkontsa XVIII - nachala XIX v. Arkhitekturnoye nasledstvo*, Moskva, Vol. 19, 1972, pp. 102-106.

21 O. Tatarnikova, *Losev - arkhitektork*, p. 8.

22 The name used until 1934, presently: Ulan Ude, capital of the Republic of Buryatia.

23 D.Ya. Rezun, 'Anton Ivanovich Losev kak istorik gorodov Vostochnoy Sibiri', in: *Lichnost' v istorii Sibiri XVIII-XX vekov. Sbornik biograficheskikh ocherkov*, ed. A.K. Kirillov, Novosibirsk 2007, p. 11.

mention of Losev, characterizing him from an entirely different perspective than his previous statement. It is in a letter of Timofey Basnin, an Irkutsk merchant, from 1797 as follows: ‘Today [19 July] Peter the Redhead came to town to buy out his son from Onton [sic!] Ivanovich Losev; Losev gave him the son but instructed him to hire a man as replacement’.²⁴ This testimony preserved in the Irkutsk State Archives suggests that Losev, most likely an affluent clerk already at the time, hired farmhands on his farm.

Siberia General-Governor and Government Auditor, Mikhail Speransky (1772-1839), judged that Losev was one of the best Siberian activists. He further suggested to Tsar Alexander I to decorate him with a medal for devising the atlas of the Irkutsk Guberniya.²⁵ In 1822, upon Speransky’s motion, Losev was awarded the Imperial Order of St Vladimir of the 4th class, which gave him a hereditary nobility title and a fixed annual pension. Apart from that, upon the Tsar’s decision, he was also given a sizeable plot of land near Irkutsk,²⁶ automatically becoming the owner of the serfs inhabiting this land.²⁷

It is worth adding to Anton Losev’s profile some information on his personal life. Regrettably, a great fire in Irkutsk in 1879 caused the local archives and offices to lose most of their documentation. It was only in the early 21st century that the local librarian of the Province Library in Irkutsk, Anna Chikisheva, found materials related to Losev’s private life in Irkutsk; these were for the first time fully²⁸

24 E.V. Komleva, ‘Pis’ma Timofeya Maksimovicha Basnina detyam (1797 g.)’, *Izvestiya Irkutskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Seriya Politologiya. Religiovedeniye*, 2017, 22, p. 147.

25 A.N. Keshikova, ‘Delo svoye znayet...’

26 According to the preserved order the plot amounted to over 1,000 tithes, namely over 900 hectares.

27 G.F. Bykonya, ‘O formirovaniy administrativno-territorial’nykh granits Yeniseyskoy gubernii’, in: *Yeniseyskaya guberniya – Krasnoyarskiy kray, 190 let istorii. Sbornik dokladov i vystupleniy*, ed. V.I. Fedorova, Krasnoyarsk 2012, p. 5.

28 The first to mention Losev’s sons was Victor Kochedamov, however, providing an erroneous date of birth of the youngest of his sons Andriei; V.I. Kochedamov, *Anton Losev – irkutskiy...*, p. 106.

published in 2005.²⁹ They demonstrate that three years her husband’s junior, one Elena Losev, was the daughter of the Orthodox priest Mikhail Mikhailiov. The wedding took place when the groom was around 18, while the bride was not fully 16. They had four sons (born in 1784, 1789, 1791, and 1794, respectively) and two daughters (1795 and 1796). Furthermore, the preserved documents inform that Losev lived with his family in his own wooden house. He had designed it himself on the plot inherited by his wife. Losev’s elder son, Ivan, also became a land surveyor at the Irkutsk office at the mere age of 16. The research of the above-mentioned A. Cherepanov confirms these findings.

Losev died in Irkutsk on the 4th of December 1829 and was buried at the Jerusalem Cemetery. Of his legacy, neither the houses he designed nor any printed works have survived. By the irony of fate, his grave was damaged: in the Soviet times, the cemetery was destroyed and the Central Park of Culture and Recreation was raised in its place.³⁰ Fortunately, the date of the surveyor’s death is known, thanks to the fact that one of Irkutsk chroniclers, Vasilii A. Krotov, mentioned his burial in records recounting the major events in the life of Irkutsk.³¹ He was right in doing so: Anton Ivanovich Losev’s service and his extraordinary interdisciplinary works merit a worthy position among the best-known researchers on Siberia.

MANUSCRIPTS’ WANDERING

Losev’s manuscripts are precious and unique, owing to the fact that they are currently the only remaining testimony to his research, service, and extensive works. Guberniya Land Surveyor, Losev, authored several voluminous manuscripts: *The Description of the Irkutsk Guberniya, part 1³² General on the Irkutsk Guberniya. De-*

29 A.N. Chikisheva, Losev Anton Ivanovich..., p. 29.

30 A.G. Filippov, ‘Anton Ivanovich Losev i peshchery Vostochnoy Sibiri’, in: *Yeni-seyskaya provintsiya. Al’manakh*, Vol. 4, eds. M.S. Batashev [et al.], Krasnoyarsk 2009, p. 174.

31 N.G. Sukhova, ‘A.I. Losev...’, p. 58.

32 Here and below the Polish translation of the titles from Russian by the paper’s Author.

rived from various chronicles and matters in archives, complemented with extensive credible information and experience. Made by the Irkutsk Guberniya Land Surveyor of eighth class³³ Anton Losev in Irkutsk in December 1805;³⁴ *Economic Description of the Irkutsk Guberniya Respectively with Guidance from the Free Economic Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture and Husbandry Made by the Irkutsk Guberniya Land Surveyor Court Councillor Losev* (1811, in 6 volumes); *Overview of Various Events of History and Ancient Objects Concerning the Irkutsk Guberniya and Three Countries Bordering on It in Three Parts* (1812); *Geographical and Statistical Description of the Irkutsk Guberniya Informing on the Cities with Their Provinces Together with Schemes and Drawings Made by the Surveyor Court Councillor Losev in Irkutsk in 1819*.

Furthermore, Losev supervised the elaboration of various albums of maps of the Irkutsk and Yeniseyskaya Guberniyas. He also authored short articles published in the Works of the Free Economic Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture and Husbandry periodical, Kazakh News, and Northern Post. Regrettably, the lack of sufficient resources did not permit Losev to publish a monograph. Nonetheless, the manuscripts of his works are currently dispersed throughout Russia's various archives.³⁵ As mentioned, the tsarist offices of the time had precise official copies (spisok) made; if requested, they were later given to applicants/ Losev copied his own works. The Irkutsk archives contains preserved letters with Losev's authentic autographs, allowing us to distinguish the originals from the copies. There is no question of his authorship. The manuscript found at BJ is signed as Losev's work; nonetheless, it is not possible to confirm whether this particular copy was made by the author himself or another unidentified individual. The found manuscript is thus a copy (either an official or private one), which

33 According to the Table of Ranks introduced by Peter I the eighth class was adequate to court councillor, collegiate assessor (civil rank) or major (military rank).

34 Copies of this work have been preserved in the Library of the State University in Irkutsk and the State Historical Museum in Moscow; D.Ya. Rezun, *Anton Ivanovich Losev...*, p. 9.

35 N.G. Sukhova, 'Trudy A.I. Loseva', in: *Fizichsko-geograficheskoye issledovaniya Vostochnoy Sibiri v XIX v.*, Moskva-Leningrad 1964, p. 21.

does not diminish its worth. (I will return to the manuscript’s relevance in due course.)

Quite a substantial portion of Losev’s manuscripts reached the library of the University of Irkutsk³⁶ and the State Historical Museum in Moscow.³⁷ Anna Chikisheva informs that the manuscript department the Russian State Library in Moscow has several handwritten documents by Losev.³⁸ In the file of the Free Economic Society for Agriculture and Husbandry at the same library, the manuscript of the work *Economic Description of the Irkutsk Guberniya* has been preserved.³⁹

Some of Losev’s manuscripts can be found in the collection of the National Library of Russia in St Petersburg, including information on the dispatching of ships with the merchants Lebedev-Las-tochkin and Shelikhov to Matmai⁴⁰ in 1775 and 1777 and the trading experience in Japan, as well as on the expedition of Adam Laxman⁴¹ to Japan, which took place in 1792.⁴² Subsequent works covering the period of Losev’s service as an architect have been preserved in the Central State Historical Archive in St Petersburg, while some plans and maps are now kept in the manuscript section of the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences.⁴³

The library of the Russian Geographical Society holds the manuscript of the geographic-statistical description of the Irkutsk

36 D.Ya. Rezun, *Anton Ivanovich Losev...*, p. 9.

37 State Historical Museum in Moscow, manuscript section, collection 96, portfolio 49/183.

38 A.N. Chikisheva, ‘Trudy irkutskogo krayeveda A.I. Loseva kak istochnik po istorii Sibiri pervoy poloviny XIX v.’, *Izvestiya Irkutskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Seriya Politologiya. Religiovedeniye*, 2012, 1, p. 160.

39 Russian State Library in Moscow, manuscript section, collection 731, no. 478, pp. 1, 3.

40 Japan’s Hokkaido Island.

41 Adam E. Laxman (1766–1806), a military, the first Russian to have officially visited Japan on the instruction of Catherine II, was granted the privilege of docking his ship at Nagasaki; records confirm that Losev and Laxman knew each other.

42 A.N. Chikisheva, ‘Trudy irkutskogo krayeveda...’, pp. 160–161.

43 Details provided in the 1983 paper by N. Sukhova; see bibliography for: N.G. Sukhova, *A.I. Losev...*, pp. 58–65.

Guberniya from 1819,⁴⁴ while in the cartographic section, resides the original (most likely⁴⁵) version of the possibly first general map of the Lena River.⁴⁶ It is a supplement of the abbreviated description of the river presented in the BJ copy. The second known copy of the map itself is to be found at the Library of the Georg August University of Göttingen, Germany, in the collection of the 18th-century documents of Georg von Asch.⁴⁷ The copy made in legible handwriting, resembling that of the BJ copy, has been digitized.⁴⁸ A supplement to the map was found in the album of plans, towns, and profiles of the banks of the Lena. Of note, the currently known 19 drawings have been preserved in the archive of the Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg.⁴⁹ The drawings feature no captions, but contain dates - 1785 and 1786 - as well as the names of places marked on the two known maps.⁵⁰ Their authorship has not been officially identified, while the drawings are kept in portfolios amidst 200 maps and atlases.

A similar set of drawings was found in the 1970s in the State Archives of the Kostroma Oblast in Russia by the journalist and tourism lover, Alexandr Chuvarkov.⁵¹ In 2008, Andrei G. Filippov received a reply from the archives staff about the set of drawings (containing maps of the Ice Lena Cave and Nozdrevataya Cave,

44 Archives of the Russian Geographical Society, manuscript 55, portfolio no. 49, p. 259; N.G. Sukhova, ‘Trudy A.I. Loseva’, p. 20.

45 Quite a problem can be found in the lack of A.I. Losev’s signature on many genuine maps and copies; this problem is mentioned by N. Sukhova and A. Filippov; a pending issue is also the creation of *spisoks* by different individuals (not only clerks).

46 Archives of the Russian Geographical Society, section of cartographic documents, manuscript 134.

47 N.G. Sukhova, *A.I. Losev...*, p. 60.

48 A.I. Losev, *General'naya karta reki Leny*, Library of University of Göttingen, manuscript no Asch 259, [online] <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.ndlpcoop/mtfxmp.g349593558> [accessed 1 August 2022].

49 Archives of the Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg, collection 220, portfolio no.181.

50 A.G. Filippov, *Anton Ivanovich Losev...*, p. 172.

51 A.G. Filippov, A.V. Osintseva, ‘Peshchera Ledyanaya Lenskaya’ in: *Atlas peshcher Rossii*, ed. A.L. Shelepin, Moskva 2019, p. 594.

which were of interest to the researcher) kept in a separate collection of the historian, Nikolai Selifontov (1835–1900).⁵² The documents were brought to Kostroma by his grandfather, Irkutsk Governor Ivan Selifontov (1743–1822); thus, most likely they came from that region. Furthermore, the letter confirms that the author of the drawings remains unidentified, but they feature the date of 1785.⁵³ Neither the drawings nor the schemes contain the general map of the Lena River, but only, as phrased by Losev himself, its ‘attributes and curiosities’.

Determined to solve the puzzle of the attribution of these drawings, Andrei Filippov dedicated two years of his investigation to the task. It was for the first time in the history of writing that he published a copy of the drawing of the *Ledyanaya Lenskaya* received from the Kostroma archive (2009). At that point, however, the drawing’s author was yet unknown.⁵⁴ Still, on the grounds of Losev’s article with his description of the Cave⁵⁵, Filippov hypothesized that Losev indeed the author. In late 2009, the Director of the Irkutsk Museum of Dekabrists, Elena Dobrynina, provided Filippov with a scan of the genuine signature of A.J. Losev. It was the purview of Irkutsk to offer a graphological opinion of the inscriptions in the Kostroma drawings. However, despite the scan of the signature – of a high definition – it did not enable a comparison; therefore the attribution of the drawings could not be confirmed with absolute certainty.

When investigating the Nozdrevataya, Cave Filippov once again referred to the afore-mentioned paper by Losev on caves, remark-

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- 52 State Archives of the Kostroma Oblast in Russia, collection 655, acquisition 2, portfolio no. 216.
 - 53 A.G. Filippov’s private correspondence with the archive of the Kostroma Oblast, letter no. 261/36 dated 19 March 2008 (copy owned by the Author by courtesy of A. Filippov).
 - 54 A.G. Filippov, ‘Ledyanaya Lenskaya Peshchera v Yakutii’, in: *Peshchery. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov*, vyp. 32, Podvodnyye peshchery, ed. N.G. Maksimovich, Perm’ 2009, p. 132.
 - 55 A.I. Losev, ‘Opisaniye peshcher v Irkutskoy Gubernii’, *Trudy Vol’nogo ekonomicheskogo obshchestva*, 1815, 67, pp. 149–154.

ing that apart from that description, he had been unable to find any other of the cave in 19th-century writing.⁵⁶ In his work from 2010, based on that description and the investigated copy of the map of the Lena River kept in Göttingen, Filippov confirmed that the authorship of the drawings of the two caves (in the BJ copy they are respectively drawings 7 and 12) can be attributed to Losev.⁵⁷

The BJ copy is undoubtedly one made officially or by private individuals. (It is impossible to decide with certainty that this definite copy was made by the author himself.) So how did it end up in Poland? Regrettably, at this stage, we are most likely unable to find a response to this question. Maybe only a thorough investigation of the handwritten legacy of Żegota Pauli will allow us to solve the puzzle of the unique document reaching him.⁵⁸

Thanks to the copy discovered at the Jagiellonian Library, it will be possible to confirm with high certainty (using the author’s marking on the title page) that Anton Losev is the author of the drawings from Kostroma and, in consequence, of the unsigned drawings from the archives of the Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg. It suffices to compare the twin drawings of the Ice Lena (drawing No. 7, Fig. 3, 4) and Nozdrevataya caves (note: drawing No. 12; the copy from the Kostroma archive was also published for the first time by A. Filippov⁵⁹) with the signed BJ copy (see the photo at the paper’s end) to decide that yet another of the fascinating puzzles of attribution has once again been definitely solved.

56 A.G. Filippov, ‘Nozdrevataya peshchera v Yakutii: chertezh 1785 goda’, *Speleologiya i karstologiya*, 2010, 5, p. 6.

57 Ibidem.

58 In the notebooks of revenues and expenditures for 1849–1850 preserved in BJ, as well as in the list of acquired books, manuscripts, paintings, and prints run extremely meticulously by Ż. Pauli, there is no mention of Losev (ACNO BJ Rkp. 5456, 5457).

59 A.G. Filippov, ‘Nozdrevataya peshchera v Yakutii...’, p. 7.

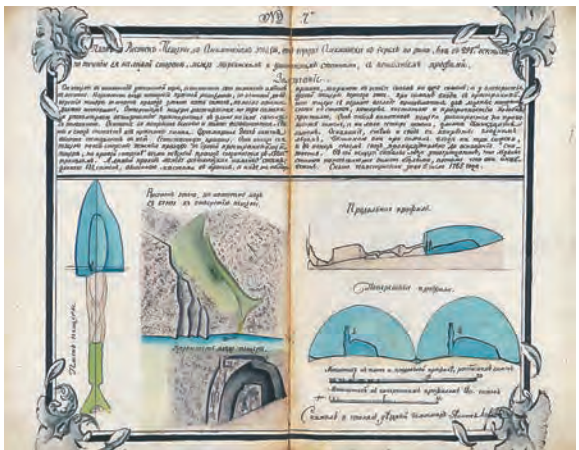


FIG. 3. Drawing No. 7 from the BJ manuscript (Ice Lena Cave), pages 16 verso and 17 recto

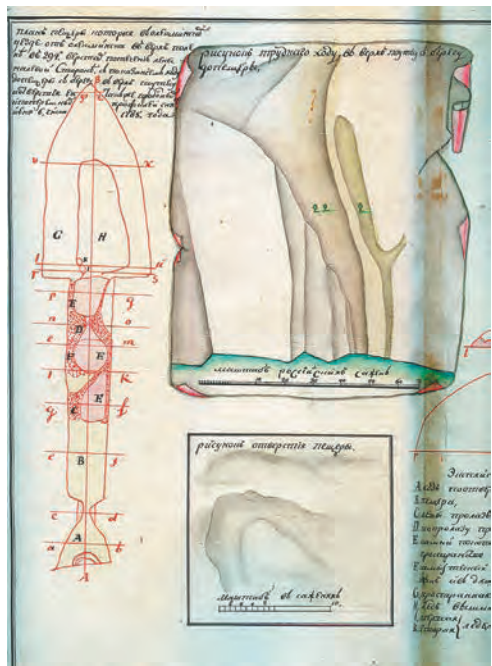


FIG. 4. Drawing No. 7 (Ice Lena Cave) from the collection of the State Archive of the Kostroma Oblast, Russia, collection 655, acquisition 2, portfolio No. 216, page 43 (courtesy of Andrei Filippov

THE LENA RIVER AND ITS CURIOSITIES

Losev's works were majorly known to the historians and researchers in the Eastern Siberia of the time. Many of them (e.g., Gavriil Baten'kov, Nikolai Shchukin, Piotr Slovcov, Nikolai Semivsky⁶⁰) used the data amassed by Losev, although they did not always mention the source of their information. This led to the unjust oblivion into which the figure of this hard-working clerk and exceptional scientist of his time fell and an almost total ignorance of his works among contemporary researchers.

I believe that the elaboration of the discovered manuscript boasting an unquestionable scientific and historical value and its translation into English will contribute to restoring interest in A.L. Losev's output. Access to the translation may lead to opening up new interpretation spheres for investigators - not just librarians, but also historians, geographers, anthropologists, and ethnologists - while the content of the manuscript may be an interesting source of historical knowledge of Eastern Siberia. Furthermore, the picturesque and unique language of Losev's works should contribute to the research of Russian philologists or linguists.

My purpose is to make the physical aspects of the manuscript and its general content known, which, hopefully, will encourage researchers from other disciplines (not only bibliography) to lend their interpretations of the text. The manuscript is composed of two major parts: the descriptive one (an excerpt of Losev's expedition notes and other minor works on the Lena River that supplement the general map but now is the only worldwide known *spisok*) and images with notes. These contain drawings of some of the points on the river that attracted the attention of the young clerk.

In 1785-1786 following the instructions of his supervisors, Losev mapped out and described the Lena River. The map was very de-

60 The latter took over a part of his work from Losev with no referencing, Victor Kochedamov directly says that the whole book by Semivsky was based on Losev's works; see: A.G. Filippov, A.V. Osintsev, *Peshchera Ledyanaya Lenskaya*, p. 593; A.G. Filippov, *Ledyanaya Lenskaya Peshchera...*, p. 136; V.I. Kochedamov, *Anton Losev - irkutskiy...*, p. 106.

tailed (the digitized version from the University of Göttingen can be accessed) and was accompanied by a set of drawings illustrating the ‘curiosities’ along the river’s banks.

This is how Losev recalled his work on the map and in the description of the Lena in 1805:

[...] I was for 28 years assigned to measure and describe many places [...] of the Guberniya between the Arctic Ocean and the beginning of the Lena River, and when doing so I felt obliged by my curiosity to observe every site I visited, I wrote down with the utmost possible precision everything that seemed to me worth recording and worthy of interest.⁶¹

In the chronicle of Yakutsk from 1786, a record has been preserved about member Anton Losev of the Free Economic Society for Agriculture and Husbandry having visited the entire territory of the Lena River from its very beginning to its estuary; he made precise measurements and formulated a description. According to the measurements, the length of the River from its source up to Kachug⁶² stands at 231versts⁶³, then at 4,002 versts to the Arctic Ocean, totalling 4,233 versts long.⁶⁴ Furthermore, Losev was involved in seeking the answer to the question as to whether any ancient structures had been preserved on the Lena; however, his answer to this issue was negative.⁶⁵

The descriptive part of the found manuscript shows the excerpt from Anton Losev’s notes taken during his expeditions in 1785–1786. In the introduction, the author writes straightforwardly and modestly, yet also with humour and irony:⁶⁶

61 N.G. Sukhova, *A.I. Losev...*, pp. 44–45.

62 Kachug: a locality in the Irkutsk Oblast founded in 1686.

63 One verst amounted to 1,0668 km; the distance stood roughly at 216.5 km.

64 Approximately 3,967 km; the currently assumed length of the Lena River stands at 4,294 km. Bearing in mind the surface and climatic changes of the terrain, as well as measurement errors, Losev was very precise in his calculations, even with no access to contemporary technologies or measuring devices.

65 P.A. Slotvsov, *Istoriya Sibiri. Ot Ermaka do Ekateriny II*, Moskva 2014, p. 320.

66 In Polish, the punctuation of the original has been preserved; it has also been attempted to retain A.I. Losev’s style and syntax [English syntax and punctuation updated].

[...] I wrote neither to praise my work, nor for benefit; but complying with the instructions of my superiors I observed the natural state of the banks, the initial direction of the flow and island location, with much diligence I drew the contour, I drew daily on the Map and wrote down with the possible care for detail what I could observe and found curious [...] and finally, with the instruction given of my trip notes I made this peculiar excerpt, neither excessively wise nor grandiloquent. I admit with my honesty [...] that readers will not find such an excessive eloquence with which dignified writers embellish their works. However, I am hopeful that my dear readers, possibly only of curiosity with bestow their attention upon the lines of this little work; and this satisfaction for my eagerness will be regarded by me the most precious of prizes.

Losev provides general information on the Lena River, while at the same time a lot of statistical and geographical facts. There is information on the location of its source and its outlet, the towns that lie along its channel (e.g., Yakutsk, Irkutsk, Olyokminsk, Kirensk, Zhigansk), the length and width, the number of navigable tributaries (the Kirenga, Vitim, Olyokma, Aldan, Vilyuy), the distances between particular harbours on the river, the islands' shapes and terrain, meteorological properties, as well as dangers for navigation.

The clerk was also interested in ethnography and local legends. On the descent of the native inhabitants, Lesov quotes the story that they 'multiplied from the Yakut called Tumat'. This is why they say about themselves that they are from the "Tumat lineage" and are relatives of the tribes living a nomadic life earlier near Yakutsk. The majority had converted to orthodoxy and were trying to adopt Russian customs, whereas the rest 'held onto churl shamanic prejudice'. The nourishment of the locals was composed of fish and poultry, clothes were made of reindeer hide. The Yakuts were in Losev's opinion 'curious, but simple people'.

The imagery portion of the manuscript contains watercolours (in total 17, although according to several records, there were 19). Each was dedicated to one 'curiosity' connected with the Lena, e.g., the amount of yellow and most likely containing semi-pre-

cious stones. The ‘shamanic rock’⁶⁷ is in the form of a pillar with sculpted primitive figures on all sides. There is a plan of the banks of the Lena in the Kirensk District,⁶⁸ listing those rocks and cliffs dangerous for sea navigation. One of the mentioned rocks is the Drunken Bull,⁶⁹ connected with a local legend: when a ship transporting wine barrels crashed against it, and although the majority of the barrels were later retrieved, the losses were sizeable.

The site received an appropriate name with 14 mineral springs in the Kirensk District known for their healing properties and the Ice Lena cave in the Olyokminsk District (details and a copy of this drawing were published by Andrei Filippov). In addition, there is a cross-section of the Gusinye Mountains in the Olyokminsk District, a perspective of the Stolbovy cliff in the Yakutsk District made of numerous ‘pillars in seven rows standing of yellowish, reddish, or greyish rock’. Amidst those pillars, Losev noticed deposits of iron ore and a cave in the Yakutsk District – the Nozdrevataya Cave (Fig. 5, 6).

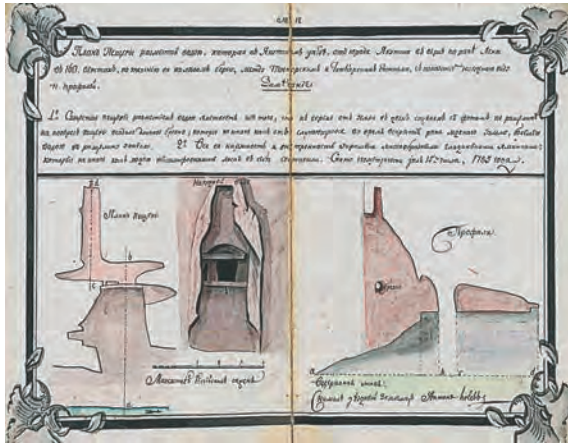


FIG. 5. Drawing No. 12 from the BJ manuscript (Nozdrevataya Cave), pages 26 verso and 27 recto

- 67 Proper name as in the original.
- 68 Currently the Kirensk District in the Irkutsk Oblast whose centre is the town of Kiernsk, to where in 1887-1890 Józef Piłsudski was exiled.
- 69 In the original: *Р’ѣаной Булѣ* (bull in the meaning of the rock).

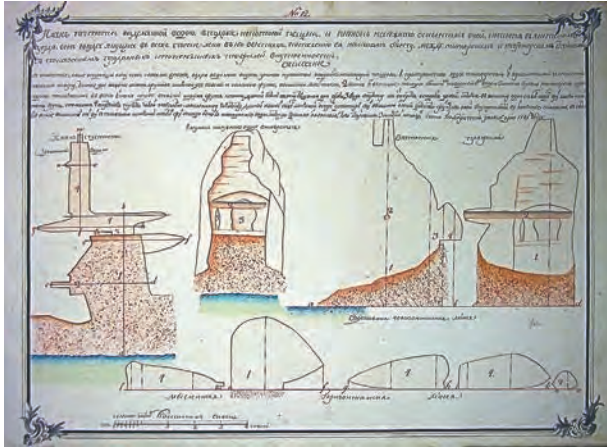


FIG. 6. Drawing No. 12 (Nozdrevataya Cave), Archives of the Institute of History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg, collection 220, portfolio No.181' (courtesy of Andrei Filippov)

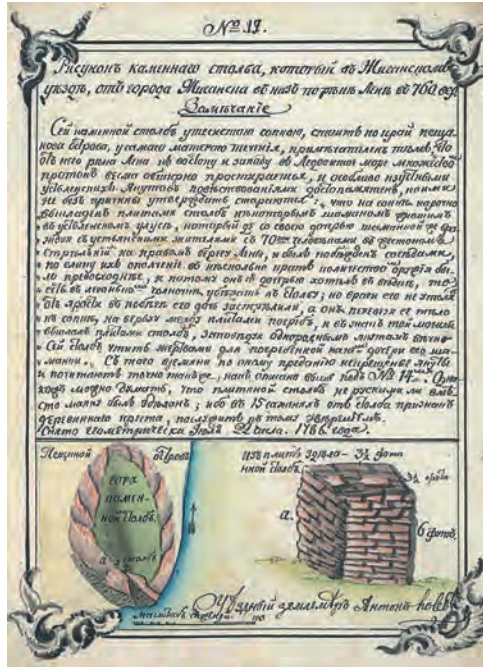


FIG. 7. Description and drawing No. 17 from the BJ manuscript (Agrafena Pillar), page 33 recto

Filippov published the details and a copy of a similar cave⁷⁰). He also noted gravel on Mount Lunkha in the Zhigansk District⁷¹ that contained various types of rocks with iron ore. One of the drawings presents the so-called Agrafenin Pillar⁷² in the Zhigansk District (Fig. 7). Losev informs that the name was connected with the shaman woman, Agrafena. Legend has it that her ghost appeared between two hills called pillars. The imagery part of the manuscript closes with a legend related to the last watercolour told in detail and showing the stone pillar in the Zhigansk District.

Losev tells it in the following way:

[the hill, E.B.] is interesting because of the Yakuts' tale which, for justified reasons, they try to keep alive: on that hill a pillar purposefully polished with slabs by a certain shaman living in the ust'-lensk ulus who together with his daughter, a shaman too, had a conflict with 70 ustiansky inhabitants, and was defeated in a cruel fight with fire arms on the right bank of the Lena by neighbours [...] that is why in a small canoe he wanted to run to the pillar, however, his enemies had not satisfied their fury, and when on the run, his daughter was shot, yet he took the body of his daughter to the hill, and buried her under slabs, leaving the slabs to point to his tomb. At the same time he ordered his relatives, the Yakuts, to perpetually venerate this pillar with sacrifices for his daughter the shaman.

When penning this picturesque legend Losev, a clerk who objectively looked at the world remarked that worshiping a pillar was happening in a similar way in the case of the Agrafenin Pillar, while the site itself was covered with slabs by Russians to serve as a lighthouse and identification mark. This actually does not diminish the charm or ethnographic value of the legends and tales collected by Losev.

70 A.G. Filippov, *Nozdrevataya peshchera v Yakutii...*

71 Currently the Zhiganskiy Ulus forming part of the Republic of Yakutia whose centre is the village of Zhigansk.

72 In the original: *agrafenin stolb*.

MANUSCRIPT'S PRESERVATION STATE AND TRANSLATION PRINCIPLES

The manuscript is kept in the storage room of the manuscript section of the Jagiellonian Library. It comprises 33 pages of hand-made paper and is wrapped in protective acid-free paper. Digitized in March of 2021, the manuscript was shared at the Jagiellonian Digital Library. Its dimensions are 31×24 cm, with a thickness oscillating between 1.5 to 1.9 cm, depending upon the pressure (the difference resulting from paper deformation and folds of page corners). The object features soft makeshift covers of machine-made paper (the spine cracked and with many losses, its state is poor) while the flyleaves also made of hand-made paper have been well preserved. Sewn with white threads, the block of the manuscript has been well preserved; only a delicate loosening of the sewing may be observed.

The manuscript paper has been preserved in a rather mediocre state; in several places there is some unprofessional filling of the paper losses (in total eight pages) which had a negative impact both on the possibility to recreate the text of the manuscript and its initial aesthetics (neither paper colour nor texture have been adjusted to the original). Additionally, a slight deformation of some pages can be observed, as well as corner folding throughout the entire object. Furthermore, slight ink fading can be noticed; this, however, does not significantly affect the text's legibility. Of note, there are minor losses at the bottom of pages 14-15, a trace left possibly by small rodents.

Overall, the state of manuscript preservation has been assessed as good and not requiring conservator intervention. The colours of the drawings have retained their differentiation, while the state of the ink makes the text of the document legible. The original text was in Russian. In its translation into English, square brackets with dots mark the places where paper loss does not allow one to unequivocally recreate the missing fragment. Square brackets with text in italics give single letters, word fragments, or whole words whose presence can be supposed from the word forms (con-

jugation, declination) or the context. Furthermore, the words in italics are additions that permit one to understand the sense of the sentence. The explanation of some archaic or currently unused words, potentially posing problems to the readers with no command of the language of the original, as well as some geographical names, have been provided in footnotes. All the footnotes and any additional information come from the paper’s author.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

[page 1r]

Abbreviated Description of the Lena River together with a General Map and Drawings of All Curiosities and Attributes along Its Banks made by the District Land Surveyor Anton Losev in 1785-1786.

[p. 2r] Introduction

I wrote neither to praise my work, nor for benefit; but complying with the instructions of my superiors I observed the natural state of the banks, the initial direction of the flow and islands’ location, with much diligence I drew the contour, I drew daily on the Map and wrote down with the possible care for detail what I could observe and found curious, beginning with Kachug up to the very outlet of the river. And finally, with the instruction given, of my trip notes I made this peculiar excerpt, neither excessively wise nor grandiloquent, with the addition of the General Map and Drawings made of all the curious attributes. I admit with my hone[sty]⁷³ [...] that [...] active readers shall not find in it

[p. 2v]

such an excessive eloquence with which dignified writers embellish their works. However, I am hopeful that my dear readers, possibly only of curiosity shall bestow their attention upon the lines of this little work; and this satisfaction for my eagerness will be regarded by me the most precious of prizes.

73 Here and similarly below in square brackets: the loss of the page is filled in with incidental paper not allowing for partially or entirely recreating the text, without precise marking of the number of missing letters or words.

[p. 3r]

Excerpt or abbreviated description of the Lena River made of the travel notes from 1785 and 1786. According to the tales of the residents who explored the outlet of the Lena and ascertain its beginning in the Irkutsk Oblast, at the distance of 231 and a half versts from the Kachug harbour, from the mountain range stretching along the Baikal Sea. It begins with a spring and flows northwards at a regular speed along the towns of: Kirensk, Olyokminsk, Yakutsk, and Zhigansk, at 73.30 degrees longitude it flows into a bay of the Arctic Ocean known for polar bears multiplying, which often drift on the sea on ice floes; but there are also walruses there. Upstream of the Olyokma outlet even up to the mouth [of the Lena] is what the Yakuts known as *Ulakhan=oryus*, this standing for a large river. Its total length from the very top [...] stands at 4,200 versts; and at that [...] from both sides [...] flow into it [...] sources. With [...] in the Irkutsk Oblast [...] at 140 the Ilga River, for 200 versts [...] the Kuta River in the Kirensk District

[p. 3v]

flowing from the west; people say that on the distance longer than 200 versts. There are five navigable rivers, namely: from the east the first in the Kirensk Oblast is the Kirenga, the second is the Vitim River in the Olyokminsk District, the third being the Olyokma River, the fourth is the Aldan in the Yakutsk District, while the fifth from the West is the Vilyuy River. After the confluency of the inflowing rivers and sources [the Lena] differs in width: at the Kachug Harbour it is 30 fathoms⁷⁴ wide, across from the city of Kirensk it is up to 140 fathoms wide, near Olyokminsk it is 250 fathoms wide, across from Yakutsk it spreads from 7 to 9 versts, and up to 25 versts on the frequent islands, across from Zhigansk it is 10 versts wide, by the muddy Kumaksurskiy Forest it is merely 2 and a half versts wide, this because of the high mountains on both banks. Its depth with full water happens to reach across from

74 A fathom stood at 2.134 metres.

Kirens[k] [...] fathoms, and around [...] it reaches [...] fathoms [...] [bu]ll on it kno[wn] of a stone pillar, [...] [di]fferent channels [...] of the foreland to the Olyok[ma] river to [...]

[k. 4r]

and it has five outlets fit for navigation if only ice floes blown by the wind or sandy dunes close to the seashore do not get in the way. The Abardam-Tyubilyaga, the first outlet eastward, is five fathoms deep, flowing by rocky inland hillside⁷⁵ for 45 versts, flowing into the Sea near Bykovskiy Headland, by which despite it being quite deep, for reasons of the lack of spots for rest during storms navigation is troublesome. The second outlet: Zver’,⁷⁶ called Kyllakh by the Yakuts, is as deep as the first one, flowing among isles for 50 versts; the famous channel named Tryupi flows out of it, and owing to the water speed it freezes later than all the other outlets. The third outlet Gagara of Hogostakh flows for 10 fathoms reaching the depth of 3 fathoms. The fourth outlet Abardam flows westwards along high inland mountain ranges. The fifth out[let] [...] [fl]ows amidst shallows [...] [is]lands askew every ten versts [...] [fo]ur fathoms. The outlet was named [...] of the islands Tumata family⁷⁷

[p. 4v]

of the Yakuts. Those Yakuts tell their genealogy as follows: that in a small number they come from a certain Yakut called Tumata, thus they call themselves related to the Omogoybaiskiy tribes who had earlier led nomadic life in the uluses⁷⁸ near Yakutsk. The majority of them had converted to Christianity, and are trying to adopt to Russian custom, whereas the rest held onto churl shamanic prejudice. They have food thanks to fishing and hunting, in autumn they store for winter, making *porsa*⁷⁹ of the fish, they

75 In the original: the form used instead of *materik*; here in the meaning of mainland.

76 In the original: *zver’*.

77 The origin of that name was explained in the sentence which follows.

78 Ulus: name of an administrative unit of the Mongolian peoples of Siberia.

79 Porsa: fish flour or dried fish in Eastern Siberia.

store bones as feed for dogs, which they ride in winter to hunt polar foxes, making a ski⁸⁰ for 10 dogs.

In the summer they use a *vedny* [meaning a light canoe made of thin wood] for sailing. To live they prepare huts, on the isles covered with coat cloth. They wear clothes made of reindeer hides: parkas and dresses; they exchange some hides for polar foxes from Olensk Tungusic peoples part[ially] during the autumn floods they kill [rein]deer. In speech [...], but curious [...] simple. For [...] from Yakutsk [...], and they bring [...]

[p. 5r]

goods: tobacco, horse tails, and yarn for nets, unworked beech wood for skis, tin dishes to melt for axes, knives, and other tools, cotton and linen scarves, wax candles, incense, beads,⁸¹ combs, and others; from them they take from Yakutsk soft fur animals⁸² of all the species of polar foxes, white bears, also goose and swan feathers. From all these goods owing to the difficulties of the hard journey, expensive hire cost, and transport maintenance, they receive at least a triple margin.

The Lena abounds in all species of red and white fish, the catch includes: the Northern pike, Siberian taimen, burbot, nelma, sterlet, muksun, houting of the *coregonus* and *thymallus* genuses, as well as the Arctic cisco. Fishing of the nelma, muksun, and the sterlet at the outlet of the Vilyuy River provides the main source of nourishment to the Yakutsk residents where they annually fill several ships [...] with fish. At the very outlet there are sufficiently many birds [...] geese and swans, and [...]. It freezes [...] September and October, it opens up [...] mid-April, while in the mi[ddle] of June the water

[p. 5v]

overflowing its banks, floods low terrain, tearing off soft and flat banks. As for air adventures,⁸³ we have to say that earthquakes are

80 Here in the meaning: long narrow sledges, sled dog team.

81 Here in the broad meaning of jewellery.

82 Fur industry; name for natural fur in imperial Russia (*pushnina*).

83 The Author means atmospheric phenomena.

gentle here, no spot suffers from shortage of rain, snow lies deep in the Yakutsk land, and although in the summer thunders are quite powerful, other peculiarities have not been observed, while the air is harsh and excessively cooled with northern sea winds.

Navigation on the Lena with pontoons, boats, and ferries, from the harbour in Kachug to Yakutsk, Zhigansk, up to the very frontier of ice floes, in spring continues uninterrupted. There are no rapids on the river, however at some places around the upper river there is some shaking making the boat movement difficult. Downstream of Kirensk, between the Chastinskiy and Dubrovskiy Post Stations,⁸⁴ it flows bending between high and cliffy mountains called the Jaws.

When only the flow speed [...] tops of underwater rocks [...] for this reason noise can be heard, there are five harbours on the Lena [...] within 232 versts of the dist[ance] after Irkutsk [...] towards the town; the third one is in the town of Olyokminsk, [...]

[p. 6r] in Yakutsk; the fifth in Zhigansk. There are five crossings on it too: the first near Kachug, the second near the town of Kirensk, close to the Zaborskaya Post Station; the fourth in Olyokminsk, and the fifth in Yakutsk. There are smaller ones by each settlement on the riverbank. Crossing and ferries can also be found at the outlet of the Kuta and Ilga Rivers where warehouses have been made for the transported private food.

The banks of the Lena from upstream to the Kachug Harbour are mountainous on both sides; when it flows further, mountains and meadows take turns. As soon as the plain finishes, mountains rise immediately: this is how the river continues its movement. At many places mountains are made up of calcareous rock, carbonate rocks, whetstone and millstone. The sands on the banks differ, yet they are mainly yellow, loose, and large-grain. On both banks of the Lena from upstream even down to the Vitim River, the undulating hillsides are populated by Russian farmers: 150 villages,

84 Post office station (*stanok, stanciya*): a small post office in Siberia.

5 settlements, and 3 forts. Farming is the main occupation of the population: owing to their efforts except for the high [...] ma[de] usable, on which [...] flower beds and fertile layers [...] of corn and hemp; amidst all these [...] with birch, aspen, lar[ch], fir trees, and spruce serve

[p. 6v]

the residents for different products. On many islands from the earth interior the fertile multitude of rye emerges, as well as beautiful meadows encircled with birch growths. Below the Vitim River Russians move into the furnished post stations;* however, it is the Yakuts who keep horses there. In the Olyokmink Oblast high mountains' sloping hillsides are covered with larch forests, extensive meadows are partially grown with perennial plants on which nomadic tribes graze herds of horned cattle whose unprocessed butter is sold to the inhabitants of Olyokmink.

Within the Yakutsk District thick larch forests cover mountains and deep valleys. Some isles are grown over with birch and willow trees. Near Yakutsk, extensive steppes are covered with salty swamps; it is on them that red and yellow flowers of the martagon lily are overgrown with perennial plants, (their roots are a good source of nourishment for the Yakuts). In the steppes it is the main and profit[able] [...] occupation: so if the horn[ed cattle] [...] to feed the Yakutsk citizens, [...] loads a multitude of horses from [...]. Downstream of Yakutsk within 40 versts below, Sergueva Mountain is interesting for the reason

(*) there are 55 post stations from the Vitim River to the town of Zhigansk.⁸⁵

[p. 7r]

of hard coal. In the Zhigansk District relatively high mountains are overgrown with a bar larch forest down to Snitackiy Suglan;⁸⁶ from there they have it closer to float with the river to the outlet,

85 A.I. Losev's note.

86 *Suglan*: a national assembly (as a political organ or a site) for some of the peoples of Eastern Siberia.

there more stick larches appear; however, these are dwarfish, too, and around the Kumaksurskiy grove they finish within 100 versts. From that point, further down, on both sides of the river you can see gravel: rocky and chaotic, covered with moss which serves as food for wild reindeer. Because of severe frost, on many such bare banks snow never melts. From there plain hollows leading to the foot of cliff mountains are so deep that the sunshine hardly reaches them. It’s very outlet where [*the Lena*] spills around with various sources, is filled with the shallow.

The natural state of the banks differs: from Kachug to Olyokma amidst hills the ground is clayish, permeable, and sandy; whereas in valleys and on some isles farmers gr[ow] [...] pull from earth’s depth ric[h] [...]. The quality of soil is here and there soft [...] mo[rē] fertile; while here and there [...] layers for their impermeability [...] barren ground;

[p. 7v]

for this reason also fertility is not the same everywhere. However, with home savings the inhabitants not only do not have problems, but also for the flow to Yakutsk they sell them to merchants who load food on large boats. Near Yakutsk, close to the Pokrovsk Hermitage, the land of black soil mixed with sand is fit for corn; nonetheless, be it for a small number of inhabitants, be it due to negligence there is very little ploughed land. Further downstream the Lena on scything meadows and on the islands it is quite humid. In the Zhigan District towards the Arctic Ocean the mountains along the banks are rocky, partially wet soil with sand is humid, so it is unfit for growing food.

On the sides of the river in the woods of the large mountain ranges there is a multitude of furry animals to be noted: hares, squirrels, good⁸⁷ wolves, foxes, and sables multiply there; on the islands at the river’s outlet all the species of polar foxes are hunted. The interesting attributes are excellent mountains, with altitude, view

87 Here in the meaning of wolves which have high-quality fur.

[...] mineral content [...] caves are investigated thorough[ly] [...] I am attaching Drawings with a [*detail*]ed desc[ription].

District Land Surveyor Anton Losev.

[p. 8v]

No. 1.⁸⁸

Drawing of yellow sand which is found in the Irkutsk District downstream the Lena River of the Kachug Harbour within 16½ versts, in harmony with its flow on the right bank.

Comment⁸⁹

This yellow sand differs from ordinary with shiny drops and small colourful opaques additives. Made geometrically on the 15th day of May, 1785.

[p. 9r]

No. 2.

Drawing of the shaman's rock in the Irkutsk District, downstream the Lena River of the Kachug Harbour, within 20 versts, in harmony with its flow on the right bank.

Comment

The rock is like a pillar on a mountain hillside, interesting in four-sided shape with a connection. The rocks hanging over the connection overgrown with turf. Made geometrically on the 15th day of May, 1785.

[p. 10v]

No. 3.

Drawing of a cliff of white rock found in the Kirensk District, across from the Ustkuck settlement at the outlet of the Kuta River on the right.

88 See: A.G. Filippov, *Anton Ivanovich Losev...*, p. 172; A.G. Filippov mentions that in the description attached to the General Map preserved in Germany there is mention of 19 curiosities of the Lena River which correspond to the number of drawings; the BJ copy contains 17 such drawings, however, the last one contains corrections in ink from No. 17 to No. 19 or vice versa.

89 Here and below emphasis as in the original.

Comment

Because of a sharp hill angle this cliff of white rock surrounded by a grove of pines, broadleaf trees, and spruces, from afar resembles a building featuring red stripes with glittering quartz embellishing it. Made geometrically on the 24th day of May, 1785.

[p. 11r]

No. 4.

Drawing of a gingerbread cliff found in the Kirensk District, downstream of Kirensk within 16 versts, in harmony with Lena’s flow on the right bank.

Comment

This gingerbread cliff contains grey pressed rock, it is interesting for six piles resembling gingerbread cakes polished by water. Made geometrically on the 30th day of May, 1785.

[pp. 12v–13r]⁹⁰

No. 5.

Location plan of the river banks in the Kirensk District, from the town of Kirensk along the Lena River within 286 versts, from the Filatushkov Bull⁹¹ to the Head Bulls within 40 versts, with drawings, views of jaw⁹² cliffs and bulls which are dangerous for navigation of ships and boats.

Comment

[p. 12v]

From the Chastinskiy Post Station the speed of the Lena River beats with waves against the Filatushkov Bull found in harmony with its flow on the left bank, in the fear of which boats navigate towards the right bank. Having passed this bull one has to beware of the cliff of the first jaw which is on the right bank in harmony with the flow of the Lena; then they sail closer to the left bank. From the first river the river flow is as fast until the second jaw, found in harmony with

90 Homogenous text written on two pages.

91 Here the ‘bull’ in the meaning of a rock sticking out above the water surface.

92 It refers to the Jaws Mountain Range.

the river flow on its left bank. In the middle of that jaw from time immemorial a huge rock parted and fell into water; when the river water rises it occasionally reaches 5 fathoms above it, when water is low one can see it under the surface at 1½ fathoms.

The flow of the Lena down to this rock is quite violent, the water noise audible up to within 2½ versts. If ships and boats sail as fast as the water taking them to the rock at this speed they are unable to row; in this situation it is not simply dangerous, but disastrous. It is not as perilous at the regular water level, although the noise of the water from the rock is much louder with powerful waves; the waves usually drift ships and boats onto land. People living around in closer settlements know of some who crashed the boat on that rock and people on planks

[*captions for the drawing*]

The Lena River

Karpachevskiy Cliff

1. jaw
2. jaw
3. jaw
4. Karpatchevskaya S[*tream*]
5. Drunken Bull
6. 4 bulls
7. Head Bull.

Dubrovskiy St[*ation*]

Rashchel'e S[*stream*]

Dubrovka S[*tream*]

Ost[*d*]ora

Filatushkov S[*tream*]

[*p. 13r*]

sailed to the bank, from that time on they navigate with guides and along the right bank. Only once they pass that rock up to the third jaw which is on the right-hand side, they row to the left bank. They row away from the land and the rock which is between the third jaw and the side source; however, if they do not make the rowing away,

and the strong flow takes them onto it, that is why it is so dangerous. Fearful of the Drunken Bull cliff, they row to the right bank. They say that once a boat loaded with wine crashed against that rock, and though they caught barrels downstream, albeit with losses, and since then the cliff has been dubbed Drunken Bull. From the Drunken Bull to the Dubrovskiy Station on the left bank there are 4 bulls, equally dangerous since the speedy current flows against them.

On the right bank of the Lena River there are pillar-like head bulls, these being dangerous, too. They say that a boat with food was damaged against these heads, its body rebounding from it, sank with one man drowning. All these cliffs and rocks never dry at low water. Made geometrically on the 2nd d[ay] of June, 1785.

[*captions for the drawing*]

1. The first jaw
2. The second jaw
3. The third jaw
4. Karpachevskiy Cliff
5. Drunken Bull.
6. Four bulls.
7. Head bulls.

[*pp. 14v-15r*] No. 6.

Drawing of 14 of mineral springs which are in the Kirensk District, downstream the Lena of Kirensk within 362 versts, in harmony with its flow between the Parshinskiy and Chuyskiy Stations.

Comment

[*p. 14v*]

These mineral springs of milky water flow down from a perpendicular cliff mountain, entering the Lena River at its foot. They all taste salty and sour; the odour is excessively atrocious and so stinky that downstream in harmony with its flow even within two versts⁹³ the stink can be smelt.

[*drawing*] Bank of the Lena River.

93 It can be smelt for almost 2 km.

[p. 15r]

Of these the most interesting is the eighth spring which foams out of a rocky crack, to the side of which some rocks are covered with mould, some resembling hot sulphur. Made geometrically on the 3rd day of June, 1785.

[pp. 16v–17r]

No. 7.⁹⁴

Plan and drawing of the cave⁹⁵ in the Olyokminsk District, upstream the Lena River of the town of Olyokminsk at the distance of 294 versts, in harmony with its flow on the left-hand side, between the Zherbinskiy⁹⁶ and Ushaganskiy⁹⁷ Stations, with respective profiles.

Comment

[p. 16v]

The cave is in the inclined part of a cliff mountain, in its natural location leaning eastward. From the outside the view of the entrance resembles a simple crevice along which the entrance to the cave opening is narrow, five fathoms long,⁹⁸ and when walking there you have to bend down. With the opening, the cave widens up by 3 fathoms, and continues with an even surface for seven and a half fathoms. Its basis is covered with greenery, rising up straight. The walls and the ceiling are of tightly condensed rock. The even height of two fathoms underlines the cave's natural beauty. From the end of this cave on both sides narrow passages [lead] to another bigger cave: on the right a very tight passage connects with the left passage. Meanwhile, the left passage between the walls of crum-

94 See: A.G. Filippov, A.V. Osintsev, *Peshchera Ledyanaya Lenskaya*, pp. 590–594.

95 Ibidem, p. 591; A.G. Filippov considers this drawing to have been the first professional map of the Cave in the Asian part Russia.

96 A.G. Filippov gives the contemporary name of the Russkaya Derba Village (*Russkaya Derba*).

97 A.G. Filippov gives the contemporary name of the place: Tinnaya.

98 A.G. Filippov, A.V. Osintsev, *Peshchera Ledyanaya Lenskaya*, pp. 590–591; see the data of the contemporary on-site measurements of the Cave o by A.G. Filippov and A.W. Osincev.

bling rock is 13½ fathoms long, at places an *arshin*⁹⁹ high, at other places one and a half

[*drawing*] Drawing of the cliff from which you have to go from the bank to the cave entrance.

Cave plan.

Outside look of the entrance to the cave.

[*p. 17r*]

arshins, a fathom wide at its outlet; by the opening of the second cave the entrance is far narrower. At the entrance to the larger cave at first sight two icicles seem to be hanging, resembling a statue, and with their clearance and transparency looking like crystal. Beginning from these icicles the cave widens up to the right by six fathoms. The foundation, walls, and the ceiling are covered with smooth ice. At the entrance the cave is three fathoms high, and at the end the ceiling proportionally lowers towards the foundation. The people who visited that cave claim that in winter the ice figures are white since frost-covered. Made geometrically on the 6th day of June, 1785.

[*pp. 18v-19r*]

No. 8.

Drawing of the Geese Mountains which are in the Olyokminsk District, upstream the Lena River of Olyokminsk within 169 versts, in harmony with its flow on the right-hand bank between the Maszhenskiy and Kharatyugskiy Stations.

Comment

[*p. 18v*]

These mountains stretch for 2 and a half versts of length; owing to the mixture of layers of fine loose gravel, blue, green, dark-red and white stone gravel with sand, from afar

99 In the Russian partition arshin stood at 0.711167 m, a fathom was an equivalent of three arshins.

[p. 19r]

it looks very pleasantly; yet, from near it is not possible to distinguish the layers.

Made geometrically, on the 9th day of June, 1785.

[pp. 20v-21r]

No. 9.

Drawing of the cliff in the Yakutsk District, upstream the Lena River of the town of Yakutsk within 217½ versts, in harmony with its flow on its left bank between the Onmuranskiy and Sin'skiy Stations.

Comment

The cliff is [*composed of*] yellowish calcareous rock with white layers, reaching fifteen versts and three hundred fathoms, in some places it resembles a crumbling wall, at other places it reminds one of a river bank made of rock.

Made geometrically on the 18th day of June, 1785.

[pp. 22v-23r]

No. 10.

Drawing of the cliff in the Yakutsk District, upstream the Lena River of the town of Yakutsk within 200 versts, in harmony with its flow on the right bank, between the Onmuranskiy and Sin'skiy Stations.

Comment

The cliff is five versts and a half, it is made of pale red rock, in its narrow horizontal stripes of white stone it presents a relatively pleasant sight to a curious observer.

Made geometrically on the 19th d[ay] of June, 1785.

[pp. 24v-25r]

[No. 11].

The perspective of the Stolbovyy Cliff in the Yakutsk District, upstream the Lena River of the town of Yakutsk within 168 versts, in harmony with its flow on the right bank, across from the Bata-mayskov and Titarskov Stations.

22 versts and 284 fathoms long, the Cliff presents extraordinary natural objects in the form of a multitude of pillars, standing in up to seven rows, made of strong yellowish, reddish, and grey rock. In the cracks between the pillars there is partially iron ore. Made in perspective from the 20th day of June up to the 14th day of July, 1785.

[pp. 26v–27r]

No. 12.¹⁰⁰

The plan of the cave washed over by water, which is in the Yakutsk District, upstream the Lena River of the town of Yakutsk within 160 versts, in harmony with its flow on the left bank, between the Toenarskiy and Titvarski¹⁰¹ Stations, with the external view and profiles.

Comment

Firstly. The swiping the cave with water results from the fact that two fathoms upwards from the ground with the foot in the crevice across the cave a long beam was stuck; it had reached here no otherwise than with the opening of the river and ice flooding happening, high water carried [the beam] to the crevice. Secondly. All its surface on the outside and inside is seasoned with a multitude of small smooth hollows; which shine not otherwise polished than with water.

Made geometrically on the 15th day of June, 1785.

[drawing] cave’s plan

Outside view

Profile

Beam

Separating line

[k. 28v]

[No. 13].

Drawing of the sprinkles on the Lunkha Mountain which is in the Zhigansk District, upstream the Lena River of the town of Zhigansk within 330 versts, in harmony with its flow on the left bank.

100 A similar drawing or its copy can be found in the afore-mentioned Selifontov collection in the State Archive of the Kostroma Oblast for No. 12.

101 A.G. Filippov gives the contemporary names of the towns: Toyon-Ary, Tith-Ary.

Comment

The sprinkle a verst and a half long is made of gravel, sand, and clay; it is noteworthy because of beautiful heavy rocks resembling spheres and small ones looking like cannonballs hiding iron ore inside.

Made geometrically on the 1st day of September, 1785.

[p. 29r]

[No. 14].

Drawing of the Agrafena Pillar which is in the Zhigansk District, upstream the Lena River of the town of Zhigansk within 75 versts.

Drawing

Comment

The Yakuts use the name of this Pillar to define 2 cliff hills at the top of the island hillside; they superstitiously venerate by it a certain shaman woman Agrafena, and tell the story that she once appeared there after her death before her Yakuts, frightening them; for this reason simple and naïve Yakuts when passing by it show their humbleness by offering Agrafena money, and throw card packs into the water saying; 'Here you are, Agrafena, money and cards, play them, and do not play with us!'

Made geometrically on the 3rd day of June, 1786.

[pp. 30v-31r]

[No. 15].

Drawing of the Kumakurskiy Zamok Mountain which is in the Zhigansk District, downstream the Lena River of the town of Zhigansk within 660 versts, in harmony with its flow on the right bank.

Comment

The Kumakurskiy Zamok Mountain [*is made up*] of gravel sprinkles and high cliffs which resemble strange rocks similar to pillars between which deep in the cracks winds howl.

Made geometrically on the 15th day of July, 1786.

[*drawing*] Mountain 3 versts and 220 fathoms long.

Mountain 6 versts long.

Mountain 5^{v[ersts]} 450^{fa[thoms]} long

[p. 32v]

No. 16.

Drawing of the Ogus’oegose Cliff, which is in the Zhigansk District, downstream the Lena River of the town of Zhigansk within 745 versts, in harmony with its flow on the right bank.

Comment

The Cliff is on the headland of the Lena River opposite Desenyaka resembling pillars of yellow and grey rock, 400 fathoms long, 45 fathoms high. Made geometrically on the 18th day of July, 1786.

[p. 33r]

No. 17.

Drawing of a rock pillar which is in the Zhigansk District, downstream the Lena River of the town of Zhigansk within 760 vers[ts].

Comment

This rock pillar on a cliff hill stands at the verge of a sandy island, right next to the very current, it is interesting because eastward and westward from it the Lena River flows extensively in a multitude of rivulets towards the Arctic Ocean; it is also interesting because of the tales told by the Ust’-lensk Yakuts which, for justified reasons, they try to keep alive: on that hill a pillar purposefully polished with slabs by a certain shaman living in the ust’-lensk ulus who together with his daughter, a shaman too, had a conflict with 70 ust-iansk inhabitants, who was defeated in a cruel fight with fire arms on the right bank of the Lena by neighbours, since their rising had much more arms, that is why in a small canoe he wanted to run to the pillar, however, his enemies had not satisfied their fury, and when on the run, his daughter was shot, yet he took the body of his daughter to the hill, and buried her under slabs, leaving the slabs to point to this tomb. At the same time he ordered his relatives, the Yakuts, to ‘perpetually venerate this pillar with sacrifices for his daughter the shaman’. Since then the legend has it that unbaptized Yakuts venerate [*the pillar*] similarly as it is described above at No.14. It can be, however, also considered whether the pillar of the slabs was not prepared by Russians

for a lighthouse; since within 15 fathoms from the pillar there are signs of a wooden cross which may confirm this thesis.

Made geometrically on the 22nd day of July, 1786.

[*drawing*] Sandy island

mountain

rock pillar

pillar [*cross*]

[*drawing*]

pillar made of slabs 3½ feet

a. 3½ feet

6 feet

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska