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Andrei V. Grinev

I. Introduction

- 1 Such plans for expansion did not arise in a vacuum. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the authorities in eastern Siberia had begun to obtain more or less reliable information about the unknown lands lying to the east of Chukotka, that is, Alaska. As a result of several exploratory expeditions between 1728 and 1742 Russian mariners discovered vast territories and numerous islands that became part of so-called Russian America, which included the territory of the present state of Alaska, a small enclave in California (Fort Ross), and the Commander Islands (off the coast of Kamchatka). From 1799 the American possessions of the empire were subject to the monopolistic Russian-American Company (RAC), which governed Alaska until 1867 when it was sold to the United States (Fort Ross had already changed hands in 1841). The concession of Alaska signified the withdrawal of Russia from the “American bridgehead,” and its expansion was now entirely confined to the Asian continent. Up to this time, projects for colonial expansion directed at transforming the northern part of the Pacific basin into a “Russian sea” and increasing the possessions of the empire in the New World had been repeatedly promoted by government and private individuals.
- 2 These plans were explored and studied even during the existence of Russian America. Thus, in 1861 Captain of 2nd Rank P. N. Golovin pointed out that the well-known merchant G. I. Shelikhov (who founded in 1784 the first permanent Russian settlement on Kodiak Island), as well as A. A. Baranov, who managed Shelikhov’s company in America, and Shelikhov’s son-in-law, Chamberlain N. P. Rezanov, planned to expand Russian possessions from Alaska to California and to control at least part of this rich region, together with the mouth of the Amur, Sakhalin Island, and one of the Hawaiian

Islands. Golovin wrote: "The plan was vast, bold, but possible; however, inconsequential intrigues, which were revived as a consequence of the immoderate ambition of individuals who had assisted Rezanov, stopped the execution of his well-conceived plan at the very beginning. After Rezanov's death (in 1807 - A.G.) and the removal of Baranov (in 1818 - A.G.) the plan was dropped."¹ Somewhat later, in 1865, the eminent publicist D. I. Zavalishin also reported on ambitious projects related to the North Pacific. In his words, an "ingenious plan" of A. A. Baranov existed regarding Russia's subjection of the whole northern part of the Pacific Ocean, beginning from the mouth of the Amur and Sakhalin to California, including the Hawaiian Islands, a plan then supported by Rezanov and the board of directors of the RAC. In Zavalishin's opinion, the most favorable moment for colonial acquisition, at least in California, was the period 1824–1825 when ships of the Russian naval fleet and of the RAC commanded the North Pacific basin.²

- 3 Some modern authors essentially repeat these assertions. Thus, E. M. Roginskii writes that Zavalishin supported Baranov, the governor of Russian America, who "unconsciously but instinctively tried to ingeniously enclose the northern part of the Eastern Ocean among our possessions, adding and isolating them from Udscoi Island to Sitka by occupation of California, the Sandwich (Hawaiian - A.G.) Islands, and the southern Kuriles, which would lead to occupation of the mouth of the Amur and other points to the south."³ However Zavalishin was by no means able to support Baranov in his "ingenious" expansionistic undertakings for one simple reason. Zavalishin, a young naval officer, had arrived in the capital of Russian America—Novo-Arkhangel'sk (Sitka)—aboard the frigate *Kreiser* in 1823, whereas Baranov, the first governor of the Russian colonies, died en route to St. Petersburg in April 1819.
- 4 If the elaboration of colonial plans for the New World and the Pacific Ocean basin has been attributed in prerevolutionary historiography almost exclusively to private individuals, then in Soviet prewar historiography the chief initiator of expansionist projects has been identified as the Tsarist government. Thus, academician B. D. Grekov wrote in 1939, in the introduction to the monograph of Professor S. B. Okun': "Similar to this, as the English government for 200 years carried out war for possession of the Indies cloaked under the name East India Company, so the Tsarist government intensively fought for almost one hundred years for the shores of the Pacific Ocean, cloaked under the name Russian-American Company."⁴ Okun' himself emphasized in his work the unrestrained striving of Tsarism for colonial possessions, used for this purpose its proxy the RAC:

The Tsarist government set before the Russian-American Company the task of great political significance. Precisely in this way it expected to realize grandiose plans of expansion, as a result of which the northern part of the Pacific Ocean would be transformed into "home" waters for the Russian Empire. This plan assumed further fortification of Russia on the western shore of North America, including California, the Hawaiian Islands, the southern part of Sakhalin, and the mouth of the Amur. These colonies, together with Kamchatka, Alaska, and the Aleutian Islands, which already belonged to Russia, would turn it into the absolute master of all the northern basin of the Pacific Ocean.⁵

- 5 This program for the broad expansion of Tsarism was put forward in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and it led to the creation of the Russian-American Company. As Okun' noted, it began to be carried out at a moment when the political situation made its realization very difficult. It required an open break with England—its primary rival in the North Pacific. However, in spite of mutual

antagonism, St. Petersburg preferred not to move toward an open clash. Its politics in relation to England in the Pacific Ocean, Okun' suggested, were determined by events elsewhere. St. Petersburg opposed the French Revolution and its effects across Europe, and this objectively drew the positions of Russia and England together in the First and Second Coalitions against France. This struggle, together with the effort to support legitimism in Spain, did not provide Tsarism the possibility of actively encroaching upon California, which once belonged to Spain. Okun' has written in his monograph: "Thus, in the way of Russian expansion in the Pacific Ocean, in the way of broad development of the activity of the Russian-American Company, stood the aspiration of Alexander I to preserve the Sacred Union, which forced him to concentrate all attention on European affairs. This signified the failure of the grandiose plans, which once the government itself had proposed and supported and to which the merchant circles connected with the company clung."⁶

The original headquarters of the Russian-American Company at Moika 72, St. Petersburg

II. Too Grandiose a Plan

- 6 "The merchant circles," mentioned by Okun' were represented primarily by G. I. Shelikhov, who as early as 1786 proposed the initiative of subjecting for Russia the whole North American coast as far south as 40° north latitude (n. lat.), that is, to California.⁷ According to Okun', "Russian merchants, had by that time, based on a decree of the government, hastened to create on any occasion some circumstance for seizing it in the future."⁸ Besides Shelikhov (who died in 1795) there was A.A. Baranov, who was living in Alaska from 1790 onwards and who was governor of the Russian colonies there from 1799 until his departure in 1818. Baranov contributed no small amount to the realization of this expansion. In addition, Okun' could not disregard the chief prosecutor of the Senate, the active Chamberlain of the Court, Cavalier of the Maltese Order, and head of the diplomatic mission to Japan, N. P. Rezanov, who in the mid-1800s also actively pursued grandiose plans of expansion in the North Pacific.⁹ The

latter was one of the creators of the RAC, a large stockholder in the company and simultaneously controller of its activities on behalf of the government. This circumstance permitted Okun' to emphasize the state character of Russian expansion in the New World and to define the RAC as a government organization that served as a distinctive tool of Tsarist expansionism.

- 7 In postwar Russian historiography several authors continued to follow this theme. Thus, S. G. Fedorova wrote in her monograph:

Studying the politics of the Tsarist government in the years preceding the formation of the Russian-American Company, the Soviet historian S. B. Okun', and following him N. N. Bolkhovitinov, noted that primary in these politics in this case was not the granting of monopolistic advantages to any particular company, even such a strong company as Shelikhov's, but the striving to create under direct control of the government a powerful monopolistic unity for successful resistance to foreign expansion and firm possession of northwestern America.¹⁰

- 8 Academician N. N. Bolkhovitinov, being then initially an adherent to the views of S. B. Okun',¹¹ changed his point of view over time and began to assert that the expansionism of Tsarism in the Pacific region had been substantially exaggerated.¹² In one of his recent works, Bolkhovitinov touched upon this theme:

Meanwhile, Okun's assertion that the Tsarist government had a carefully considered plan of establishing the supremacy of Russia in the North Pacific, including the Hawaiian Islands and California, had no documentary support. In contrast, the documents that came from the government limited and suppressed attempts at excessive expansion of Russian influence in the Pacific basin, which was shown in particular in the rejection in 1818–1819 of the request of the “owner of the Sandwich Islands”—Kaumuali'i—regarding his admission into Russian citizenship and of the skeptical relationship to the projects of P. V. Dobell regarding the trade connections of Kamchatka and Russian America with the Philippines, California, Canton, and others.¹³

- 9 N. N. Bolkhovitinov's student, A. Yu. Petrov, also observes that on the basis of available published and archival documents no weighty or direct evidence of the presence in the government of a grandiose plan of expansion is found.¹⁴ The Ekaterinburg researcher E. V. Alekseeva, with reference to A. Yu. Petrov, also reports on this.¹⁵
- 10 Other authors also give priority, in the expansion of Russia into the North Pacific, not to the Tsarist government but to Shelikhov, Baranov, Rezanov, and Zavalishin. Alekseeva wrote in her book about the unrealized projects to transform the Northern part of the Pacific Ocean into an inland sea of Russia, something that the “not indifferent Russian strategists” G. I. Shelikhov and D. I. Zavalishin supported.¹⁶ The St. Petersburg Americanist V. V. Noskov states that in 1806 Rezanov proposed a concrete plan for Russia's establishment on both shores of the Pacific Ocean as a future flowering of the Russian Empire.¹⁷ The Moscow historian A. V. Postnikov holds in his monograph a similar view: “N. P. Rezanov tried in every way to bring to life the idea, proposed by Grigorii Shelikhov, of advancing the boundaries of the Russian colonies to the south (along the North American coast — A.G) as far as the fortieth parallel.”¹⁸ Foreign specialists also usually agree with such points of view, identifying Rezanov as the chief elaborator of the expansionist projects, and Shelikhov and Baranov as the “builders of the empire” on the Pacific coast of America.¹⁹
- 11 Thus, a survey of the scholarly literature vividly demonstrates the absence of unity in Russian and foreign historiography in relation to the key questions of Russian expansion in the New World. Some scholars ascribe expansionistic plans in the North

Pacific to government circles; others generally deny the presence of Tsarism in such projects; still others suppose that such plans were worked out by private individuals, especially representatives of the RAC. The chronology of the origin of such projects and their final downfall remains unclear.

III. Retracing Early Steps

- 12 In order to grasp all these questions, we turn to the documents and begin with the sources of Russian expansion in the Pacific Ocean and North America. As the sources attest, Peter I had already initiated the organized movement of Russians to the east of Kamchatka and Chukotka: on December 23, 1724, he gave a decree to the Admiralty College regarding the organization of the First Kamchatka Expedition. Two weeks later Captain V. I. Bering, assigned as the main leader, received an imperial instruction to build two boats with decks in Kamchatka and that they be sent along the shore of the land “which goes to the nord”²⁰ (evidently America); then to investigate the region where it “met” Asia, and after this to go to the nearest city of any of the European powers in the New World.²¹ In other words, the captain was to simultaneously execute at least two incompatible tasks: first, to examine the region of the strait between the mainland just south of the Arctic Circle and second, to reach European possessions on the west coast of America, the closest of which were located far to the south—in the territory of contemporary Mexico.
- 13 Understandably, Bering did not completely fulfill the instructions of the Emperor. In 1728 he only just passed the strait between America and Asia in the boat *Sv. Gavriil*, and was not able to identify it because of the fog, nor to find the shores of the American mainland. Inasmuch as Bering did not carry out the task entrusted to him, he was sent once more to the Far East as head of the Second Kamchatka Expedition. In a decree of December 28, 1732, the Senate ordered the members of the new expedition to once again set off to the region of the Chukchi Peninsula and to finally clear up the question of the strait between Asia and America. Peaceful relations were to be deliberately maintained with the local population, inviting them to adopt Russian citizenship and to pay *yasak* (tribute of furs) on a voluntary basis. A separate task of Commander Bering and his assistant Captain A. I. Chirikov was to search the “American shores,” using two packet boats built in Kamchatka, “with extreme diligence and care.” Finally, the Senate ordered a member of the expedition—Captain M. P. Shpanberg—to go with another boat and two dubel boats,²² also built in Kamchatka, and study the Kurile Islands and the coast of Japan.²³
- 14 On the whole, three vectors were marked for Russian expansion in the Pacific Ocean: the northern vector—the region of the Bering Strait; the eastern—to the shores of America; and the southern—in the direction of Japan. This second expedition had political as well as scientific goals in mind. It was no accident that precisely during preparations for this expedition that the first more or less detailed plans for a vast Russian colonial expansion in the Pacific basin emerged. Its author was over-secretary of the Senate I. K. Kirilov, who composed a remarkable report in 1733 which directly discussed the necessity to investigate the American shore to 45° n. lat. and to advance from Kamchatka to Japan in the western part of the Pacific Ocean. As a special point, members of the Bering expedition were ordered “to find everywhere new lands and islands and to bring nonsubject peoples as much as possible into citizenship.”²⁴ Kirilov especially stipulated the possibility of joining the American lands in California and Mexico to the possessions of the empire, and as a possible counteraction to the

intrigues of the Spanish he proposed using the hatred of the local Indian tribes toward them. Expansion on the American coast, in the opinion of the prominent statesman, would contribute to reinforcing the treasury and the development of Russian trade in the Pacific. Thus, Kirilov's report vividly demonstrates that already by the beginning of the 1730s a project of broad expansion in the Pacific basin existed in government circles, including even the land of California. Therefore, one cannot agree with the assertions that such plans by the Tsarist government did not exist. We note that they were worked out long before similar proposals by G. I. Shelikhov, which researchers at times relate.²⁵

- 15 The history of the Second Kamchatka Expedition is sufficiently well known. During the course of this expedition Russian mariners on the packet boat *Sv. Pavel*, under the command of A. I. Chirikov, succeeded for the first time in arriving, on July 15, 1741, on the shores of America at 55° n. lat. This location was for a long time the southern boundary of the official Russian claim in the New World. After the discovery of the shores of Southeast Alaska, Chirikov went north to the Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak Island, and on return to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski discovered several of the Aleutian Islands. The head of the expedition, V. I. Bering in the packet boat *Sv. Petr*, landed at Kayak Island (58° n. lat.) not far from the mainland at Cape St. Elias one day later than Chirikov. After that he immediately set off for Kamchatka, discovering along the way the Shumagin Islands and several islands in the Aleutian chain before reaching the Commander Islands, where the packet boat suffered shipwreck and the commander himself died from scurvy in December 1741. It was not until August 1742 that the surviving members of the crew of Bering's packet boat succeeded in building a new boat, in which they returned to Petropavlovsk. In September 1743, the Second Kamchatka Expedition was officially concluded. The Tsarist government was not satisfied with its results because of the huge expenses in carrying out the geographical investigations without sufficient economic and political returns. In just organizing and equipping the Second Kamchatka Expedition the treasury had paid out since 1733 the gigantic sum of 360,659 rubles.²⁶ The government was not satisfied with the scant information about lands discovered in the New World, which also had not been very earnestly studied. Members of the expedition did not succeed in discovering mineral deposits or raw materials, or introducing Russian citizenship to the local population. Moreover, a third of the members of the expedition (including its leader) did not return from the trip to the shores of America, while one of the packet boats perished and much government equipment was lost.

IV. A Shift in Direction

- 16 Not surprisingly, with the termination of the Second Kamchatka Expedition the central government lost interest in organizing new expeditions to the islands in the Pacific Ocean, handing over the initiative to private individuals—primarily to Siberian merchants, who had to provide their own capital and expense for the interests of the empire on its eastern borders. Beginning in 1743, ships equipped by Siberian merchants with crews of Russian *promyshlenniki* set off for the Commander and Aleutian Islands, which had been discovered by members of the Bering-Chirikov expedition. The *promyshlenniki* collected valuable furs and subdued the local Aleuts,²⁷ compelling them to pay *yasak* to the Tsarist treasury and to furnish furs for the merchant companies.
- 17 At the beginning of the 1760s the government's attention was again attracted to the North Pacific when mariner S. G. Glotov, who wintered over three years in the Fox

Island chain, returned in 1762 to Nizhnekamchatsk and reported to the Kamchatka authorities that he had heard from local Aleuts about an enigmatic “Shugachtany” people, who lived to the east and supposedly had mirrors, broadswords, and ink pots. He also delivered news about the find on Chikhmil Island of a foreign two-masted ship stranded on the shore.²⁸ The appearance of the first signs of a foreign presence at the most distant borders of the empire could not but alert the government. Empress Catherine II, in a decree of May 4, 1764, commanded the Admiralty College to immediately send several naval officers for a more detailed study of the region,²⁹ and in March 1766 an official decree appeared on the annexation to Russia of six Aleutian Islands.³⁰ In the same year the commandant of Okhotsk, F. Kh. Plenitsner, recommended annexing to Russia the territory of the New World from California “to the highest regions of North America,”³¹ that is, no more and no less than all the west coast of the present United States and Canada. However, the highly optimistic plans of the Okhotsk commandant were not brought to life. Instead a new government expedition led by captains P. K. Krenitsyn and M. D. Levashov, which lasted from 1764 to 1771, cost the treasury enormous resources and great human sacrifices, and did not bring the desired results,³² which again forced the government to withdraw from participation in any expansionistic projects in the North Pacific for almost 15 years.

V. A Feverish Pace, an Aggressive Stance

- 18 The next time the Tsarist government turned attention to this region was after obtaining reports from Kamchatka and the Aleutian Islands of the arrival there of the English expedition of the famous captain James Cook, who in 1778 visited the shores of Southeast Alaska, the Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak Island, Unalaska Island (where he encountered Russian *promyshlenniki*), the region of Bristol Bay, and Bering Strait; in addition, Cook’s ships twice visited Petropavlovsk in Kamchatka. Cook’s visit to the North Pacific brought alarm to the Tsarist authorities concerning the situation in the “back yard” of the Russian Empire. It was urgently ordered that the priority of Russian discoveries in this region be confirmed: By 1780 feverish work had begun in the Admiralty College and the Academy of Sciences on composing geographic maps, which would reflect the results of the expeditions of Russian mariners.³³ In 1784, by the initiative of academician P. S. Pallas, the idea of sending to this region a new official expedition emerged in government circles, as seen in the invitation to join Russian service in this same year of one of the members of Cook’s voyage—midshipman Joseph Billings. The formation of his expedition was accelerated by the dispatch of French ships under the command of La Pérouse to the North Pacific.³⁴ The new governmental Northeast Geographic and Astronomical Expedition of J. J. Billings and G. A. Sarychev was officially organized in August 1785 after a decree by Catherine II to the Admiralty College. Her main goal was the detailed investigation and formal strengthening of the Russian crown in Chukotka. A second goal was the study of the islands lying close to the Alaska Peninsula as far as Cape St. Elias, which had been discovered by V. I. Bering in 1741. In addition, Billings was ordered to “try to confer the Russian scepter” upon the local population, if not yet subject to any other European power. Finally, if the occasion arose he was encouraged to describe the Kurile Islands as far as Japan, China, and Korea.³⁵ On the whole, the Billings expedition (1785–1795) bore more of a reconnaissance and scientific character than political, and less the military one that some historians occasionally assert.³⁶
- 19 Parallel with the Billings expedition, a project was elaborated within the Tsarist government to send a large-scale expedition of the Russian naval fleet from Kronstadt

to the Pacific Ocean. The proposal to send two frigates and a military transport to the Pacific from the Baltic with the goal of training experienced mariners, expanding commerce, and founding fortifications in America was first expressed as early as 1732 by the inspector general of the fleet Count N. F. Golovin at the time of Bering's Second Kamchatka Expedition.³⁷ However, Golovin's project was not sanctioned by the throne. Another such proposition by the Empress's Secretary of State, P. A. Soimonov, appeared in December 1786.³⁸ Soimonov substantiated the urgency of sending a Russian squadron to the Pacific by pointing to the growing activity of the English in the North Pacific and the expense of construction of naval ships at local sites. The president of the Department of Commerce, A. R. Vorontsov, and a member of the Office of Foreign Affairs, Count A. A. Bezborodko, entirely supported Soimonov's project in a joint message to Catherine II, which discussed the claims of Russia to all the northwestern coast of America to 55° n. lat. and the whole Aleutian and Kurile chain by right of first discovery of these lands and islands by Russian mariners. Foreign governments should be notified of the inadmissibility of their subjects' ships appearing on Russian shores to conduct trade with the local inhabitants. To secure these demands two warships were to be sent from the Baltic to the Pacific, and the coats of arms of the Russian Empire would be displayed on the coast of Alaska and adjacent islands.³⁹

- 20 On the advice of her councillors, the Empress gave instructions to the Office of Foreign Affairs at the end of December 1786 to notify European powers of the rights of Russia to the lands discovered by its mariners, and ordered four warships sent to the Pacific.⁴⁰ At the end of April 1787, Captain of 1st Rank G. I. Mulovskii was assigned to command the future Pacific squadron, having received detailed instructions from the Admiralty College.⁴¹ Mulovskii's squadron (four small warships and a transport carrying supplies) was expected to go from Kronstadt around the Cape of Good Hope, and then cross the Indian Ocean and pass through Sunda Strait into the Pacific. Here, on the shores of Japan, two vessels were supposed to begin a detailed inventory of the Kurile Islands and officially secure them for Russia, and then examine the mouth of the Amur River and Sakhalin Island. At the same time, Mulovskii was to continue the voyage to Kamchatka with the remaining ships, and from there move on to the shores of the New World in the region of 40–50° n. lat. Later, he was to go along the coast to the north, to visit Nootka Sound on the west side of Vancouver Island (49° 35' n. lat.). All land north of 55° n. lat. was considered (since its discovery by Captain Chirikov) as belonging to Russia, and Mulovskii was to "tear down, level, and destroy" coats of arms and signs of other powers discovered there. Southwards from that point Mulovskii was to "take into the possession of the Russian state, if no other power occupied it." With favorable circumstances Mulovskii was to extend the possessions of the empire in America to 43° n. lat. and even farther south,⁴² that is, to occupy all of California. For formal seizure of the American coast he was to raise Russian flags on high places, to erect state coats of arms, and to distribute to the natives specially cast medals.

V. Dreams Crushed by the Weight of Wars

- 21 Thus, a broad plan of colonial expansion was outlined, including a clear military-political aspect, which in fact reanimated the project of I. K. Kirilov of 1733. In the event that it was realized, Russia would make a serious claim to converting the northern part of the Pacific Ocean into the "Russian Sea." However, these plans were not realized: the beginning of the Russian-Turkish and then the Russian-Swedish war forced the abandonment of the Mulovskii expedition (he was himself redirected to the Baltic, where he heroically perished in the battle of Öland in 1789). The French

Revolution and subsequent upheavals in European politics completely moved the question of Russians colonialism in the New World to the background, at least for St. Petersburg.

- 22 Almost simultaneous with the government's expansionist plans concerning the North Pacific, a similar project was proposed by the Ryl'sk merchant G. I. Shelikhov. Shelikhov, in instructions of May 4, 1786 to the director of his company on Kodiak Island, K. A. Samoilov, called for the settlement of artels (groups or brigades) of promyshlenniki along American lands to 40° n. lat.⁴³ In his reports to the Irkutsk governor-general in April 1787, Shelikhov emphasized in every way his unselfishness "for the benefit of the fatherland" and formulated tasks for later colonization of America. "And what is more," wrote Shelikhov, "I tried to go as far as possible to the south along America to the shore lying at California with occupation by Russian settlements and leaving our signs to avert those who might think of making attempts on this part of the land for other nations, to make our acquisitions first."⁴⁴ Later, patriotism and external threats became favorite argumentative devices to justify expansion both for G. I. Shelikhov personally and for the RAC as a whole.
- 23 Shelikhov's proposals were completely supported by the Irkutsk governor-general, I. V. Yakobi, who was an active advocate of expansion, the more so since as a result of the activity of the "Shelikhov" company new vast and rich territories fell under his authority.⁴⁵ Therefore, in November 1787 he sent a report to Empress Catherine II, which also reflected a worry for the future of Russian possessions in the Pacific in connection with the active penetration of foreign mariners and traders onto the Northwest Coast of America following the voyage of James Cook. In order to secure these territories for Russia, Yakobi ordered 30 copper Russian coats of arms prepared and the same number of iron plates with the inscription *Zemlya rossiiskogo vladeniya* (Land of Russian Possession), part of which was handed over to Shelikhov. The people of his company were to set up the coats of arms in the most visible places on the coast beginning at 44° n. lat., while the plates were to be buried in the ground nearby as evidence that the land belonged to the empire. This claiming of territory also was to be done in the Kurile Islands. In addition, for securing Russian claims, Yakobi recommended sending to the Pacific several warships and building fortresses on the American coast as far south as possible, at least to 47° n. lat. "if farther is not possible."⁴⁶ Thus, Yakobi, on behalf of the Siberian administration, supported the plan of turning the North Pacific into the "Russian Sea."
- 24 The report of the Irkutsk governor-general and the petition of G. I. Shelikhov and his companion I. I. Golikov about the development of trade in the Pacific and the intention of founding new colonies on the Northwest Coast of America and the Kuriles received a favorable response from the Tsarist government.⁴⁷ However, in March 1788 the Committee on Commerce, regarding voyages and trade in the Pacific Ocean, recommended limiting Russians possessions to 55° n. lat., "about where Captain Chirikov had encountered the American mainland in 1741," because of the threat of a clash with the English in America.⁴⁸ Catherine II herself generally rejected the petitions of the high governmental authorities and the solicitations of privileges by the zealous merchants, noting: "Much spread in the Pacific Sea will not bring positive benefits. Trade is one thing, seizure is another."⁴⁹ As historian N. N. Bolkhovitinov has convincingly indicated, the rejection by the Empress of colonial expansion at this time was also dictated by other things, such as wars with the Turks and Swedes. During the

second half of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries the primary direction of Russian expansion was south (the northern Black Sea area—the Caucasus), which was directly reflected in the utterances of the Tsaritsa during this period. Also the all-powerful favorite Duke G. A. Potemkin was lobbying for a “southern direction.” In addition, the Empress did not trust swindling Siberian merchants and feared a future desertion of the Russian colonies from the old country based on the example of the United States, which had just liberated itself from the authority of Great Britain. Finally, she did not wish additional complications with other powers in the Pacific—the problems of European politics fully occupied her.⁵⁰

25 As we see, in only one year the plans of the Tsarist government regarding expansion in the Pacific basin radically changed: if Mulovskii was ordered in 1787 to consolidate the rights of the empire from the shores of Japan to California, it was followed by a full rejection of the new acquisitions in the east followed in 1788. After Catherine II’s resolution, Count A. A. Bezborodko wrote in September 1788 to Procurator General of the Senate, A. A. Vyazemskii, that it was necessary to “strongly declare in general to the promyshlenniki, concerning the Kurile Islands, to not engage in disputes with the Chinese about possession and likewise not to touch the islands that were in possession of other powers.”⁵¹

26 And later, while Russia was involved in numerous coalitions and wars in Europe and in the Caucasus at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the government did not wish additional foreign political complications on the far-eastern boundaries of the empire. From this moment the initiative in elaborating expansionist plans in the North Pacific finally moved to representatives of merchant capital, who were vitally interested in occupying new resource areas because of the exhaustion of fur wealth in the former territories. In February 1790, Shelikhov reported to the new Irkutsk Governor General, I. A. Pil’: “Along the mainland of America from the island of Kaktak [Kodiak] to California, far beyond Cape St. Elias, in many places through the means and expense of the company, at my instruction, imperial signs were distributed and left, the essence of which is the coat of arms and plates with the inscription: land belonging to Russia.”⁵² In addition, Shelikhov planned to begin trade and to subject the tribes north from the Alaska Peninsula to the mouth of the Yukon River and farther to Bering Strait to the Russian scepter. He succeeded in this same year in engaging a new director for his company in America—the Kargopol merchant, A. A. Baranov—who completely shared the views of his patron in spreading in every possible way the possessions of the empire in the New World.

VI. Competition Runs Fierce

27 Pil’, like his predecessor I. V. Yakobi, did not give up hope of helping Shelikhov’s company to eventually advance south along the American coast to California and along the Kurile Islands to Japan, which he reported to Catherine II in 1790. He especially directed the attention of the Empress to the English and Spanish—the chief competitors of the Russians during this period—who now carried out voyages to the shores of Russian America more often.⁵³ Later, in a report of September 28, 1793, Pil’ again turned the attention of the government to the need to support Shelikhov’s company.⁵⁴ On the other hand, in a letter of August 9, 1794 to A. A. Baranov, Shelikhov wrote about his organizing a special North American company that would spread its operations to the north from Unalaska Island to Bering Strait, as well as establishing a colony on the Kurile Island of Urup.⁵⁵ Later, the primary burden for the expansion of Russian

possessions in America lay entirely with Baranov, since Shelikhov unexpectedly died in Irkutsk in July 1795. Baranov's dream was to spread Russian colonies from Alaska along the American coast to Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island.⁵⁶

- 28 In a letter of June 10, 1798, Baranov outlined a detailed plan for founding new colonies in the region of Southeast Alaska.⁵⁷ And in a letter of July 24, 1800, to the head of the Unalaska office, E. G. Larionov, he wrote:

And with this it may be that our high court will also follow with reinforcement and defense of our hunting and trade from being undermined by new arrivals (foreigners – A.G.), and this is very necessary at the present time, since Nootka is not yet occupied by the English and the courts of the Gishpanskii [Spanish] and Aglitskii [English], and the American Republic are occupied by war with France and other ministerial (diplomatic – A.G.) affairs; the advantages of those places are so important since they ensure the future gains of millions for the government.⁵⁸

- 29 However, the spread of Russian possessions in America was accompanied by incredible difficulties: Baranov struggled with dangerous competitors represented by the company of P. S. Lebedev-Lastochkin (until 1798) and foreign businessmen. He fought the sabotage of his own promyshlenniki and sailors, encountered hostile relations with natives, and dealt with insufficient necessary goods and materials and lack of personnel. In 1799 the ship *Feniks*, on which 70 promyshlenniki reinforcements and goods valued at 569,328 rubles were being sent to Baranov from Okhotsk, was wrecked.

⁵⁹ But these setbacks did not retard the process of the Russian colonization of America. In 1799 Baranov succeeded in founding on Sitka Island (57° n. lat.) the Mikhailovskaya (Arkhangel'skaya) fortress, while in Russia the final formation of the monopolistic Russian-American Company occurred, created by the union of several merchant organizations under the aegis of the government. The RAC's region of operation was defined as stretching along the American shore from 55° n. lat. to the Bering Strait and the Aleutian and Kurile Islands (to the island of Iturup). It especially stipulated the possibility of "making new discoveries not only above 55° north latitude, but also some farther to the south and occupying lands discovered by it [the RAC] for Russian possession ... if they are not occupied by any other (European – A.G.) peoples and are not subject to them."⁶⁰

- 30 Having in fact obtained *carte blanche* expansion in the New World, the RAC selected its chief direction as south, which was dictated by several circumstances. First, the sea otter did not live north of the Alaska Peninsula—the main commercial object hunted by the company—whereas it was plentiful to the south from Kodiak to California. Second, the RAC strove to outstrip foreign competitors in the struggle for new territories and hunting grounds. Third, company management pursued the hope of developing agriculture in America to provide a dependable supply base for the Russian colonies. By fall 1801 the board of directors of the RAC reported to the Emperor that A. A. Baranov "meanwhile arranges to add to the possession of Russia the Queen Charlotte Islands and Nootka Sound, which the English have now left."⁶¹

- 31 In a secret "instruction" to Baranov in April 1802 the directors of the RAC wrote: "The board of directors commissions you to try to assert the right of Russia not only to the 55th degree, but even farther, supported by the maritime voyages of Captains Bering, Chirikov, and others." The instruction added:

Strive even with this to display some right also in Nootka Sound itself, in order that for the demands that might come from the English court it will be possible in some way to determine the boundaries at 50th degree or at least at half the distance to

55th degree, if farther is not possible, because that part is not yet occupied by them, and, consequently, at this time Russia has the primary right to it, and toward this you are to try to assert by settlements at the 55th degree as forcefully and quickly as possible, with completion of a regular fortress, as far as the people you now have are sufficient And for better success in those places it is suggested at the present time to stop all investigations toward the north and to turn attention to that part when we strengthen our establishment with the English in the neighborhood.⁶²

32 At the same time the directors reported to Emperor Alexander I that should Baranov “receive the necessary reinforcements, he will intend to occupy not only the closest lying Queen Charlotte Islands but spread the Russian acquisitions farther.”⁶³

33 However, the active expansionist striving of the RAC encountered opposition in the Tsarist government, which given the complex situation in Europe did not want additional complications in America. This was directly discussed in the instructions of July 10, 1803, by the Minister of Commerce, Count N. P. Rumyantsev, to the correspondent of the RAC, N. P. Rezanov, before the dispatch of the latter to the Russian colonies:

In the reasoning of the membership of the Russian Empire you have as a boundary the recent discovery, made in 1741 by Captain Chirikov, known as the 55th degree of north latitude. Give the director of America the order that he by no means spread farther from this place any Russians beyond boundaries being occupied by other maritime powers. Bring home to them that this should be the more piously observed, that through this all trouble will be removed forever from the maritime powers allied with us, and that the company, being limited to acquisitions indisputably belonging to Russia ... in this way will more quickly attain the their respect and general trust.⁶⁴

34 In addition, Rumyantsev ordered the correspondent of the RAC to avoid in every way, upon encountering foreigners, any talk “about the boundaries of our American settlements.”

35 For his part, N. P. Rezanov was exhorted to repeat the basic order of Rumyantsev to the governor of Russian America, A. A. Baranov, in the instruction of January 12, 1804, where he appealed to “confirm resolutely our property to 55 degrees north latitude, taking this as the rule and for future plans in America not to embrace its spread farther on the shores, but to strive gradually to penetrate into the interior of the mainland.”⁶⁵ Consequently, Rezanov tried to redirect the point of Russian expansion from a southern direction to an eastern and northern one. Arriving in Alaska in 1805, he offered a proposal to the directors of the RAC to significantly strengthen the colonial flotilla with armed ships and with their aid to expel from the Northwest Coast American maritime traders who had been buying up the valuable furs from the local Indians and selling them firearms, which they then used against the Russians. In a letter of February 15, 1806, to the Emperor, Rezanov reported to him the intention of expelling the Japanese from Sakhalin Island and compelling them to enter into trade relations with the RAC.⁶⁶ For this, he sent two RAC ships from Alaska in the summer of this same year, the crews of which destroyed several Japanese villages in the southern Kuriles and Sakhalin and sank four Japanese junks in 1807–1808,⁶⁷ blocking for a long time any friendly contact between Japan and Russia.

VII. Striving to Make Inroads

36 The diversion of relatively substantial forces to the “Japanese” expedition had a very negative effect on the Russian colonization of America, though plans of strengthening the colonization effort especially occupied the thoughts of N. P. Rezanov. Finding

himself in Alaska, he elaborated the project of broad expansion, presenting a detailed program of colonial seizures in the New World. Although a government official of high rank, in this case he emerged rather as a representative of the RAC inasmuch as he was the informal head of the company and representative of its interests before the throne. In a letter of February 15, 1806, to the directors of the RAC, Rezanov wrote from Novo-Arkhangel'sk: "If we have the possibility of making a settlement on the Columbia River, it will be a central place from which to easily seize the island of Kaigani (Prince of Wales and Dall Island — A.G.) and settle on it, and to construct shipyards opposite the Queen Charlotte Islands." Being based at Novo-Arkhangel'sk, at Kaigani, and at a settlement on the Columbia River, and having warships constructed, Rezanov planned to seize all the fur trade on the Northwest Coast. From the Columbia river he intended to spread the influence of the Russians as far south as San Francisco Bay in California: "If means are given to them at the very beginning, then I could boldly say that we will attract to the Columbia residents from various places, and in the course of ten years it would be possible to be strengthened to that stage, that with the least occurrence of fortune in favor of our political circumstances in Europe, it could be included in the number of Russian possessions."⁶⁸

37 Especially attractive to the enterprising chamberlain was the bountiful California: "The Gishpanskii [Spanish] people are very weak in this region and if in 1798, when war was declared on the Gishpanskii court, our company had been found in forces corresponding to its activity, then the part of California to 34° north latitude to the mission Santa Barbara could easily be used and a piece of this could always be held for ourselves, since from Mexico, due to natural conditions, any aid by a land route would be impossible for them."⁶⁹

38 Rezanov also developed his ideas in a dispatch of June 17, 1806, to the Minister of Commerce:

If earlier the Government thought about this part of the world, if it considered it as sufficient, if it uninterruptedly followed the insightful visions of Peter the Great who outlined the Bering expedition with small means for that time, then it can be affirmatively said that New California never would have belonged to the Gishpanskii, for it was only from 1760 that they turned their attention and with the undertaking of some missionaries consolidated this best piece of land for themselves forever. Now no occupied interval still remains that is equally profitable and is very necessary to us (*sic*), and so if we let it pass, then what will our descendants say?⁷⁰

39 However, Rezanov, due to an early death, was prevented from bringing to life plans for a substantial increase in the possessions of the empire in America. He died in Krasnoyarsk of pneumonia en route to St. Petersburg on March 1(13), 1807.⁷¹ With the demise of Rezanov, the RAC was compelled to set aside the plans of broad colonial expansion in America. As the eminent Russian mariner V. M. Golovnin wrote later, not without sarcasm: "With the death of Mr. Rezanov all hope of great undertakings by the great company ended, the directors, being from merchants ..., gravitated away from great ideas, as Rezanov called his dreams, to the usual merchant speculations."⁷²

40 On the other hand, the directors of the RAC tried to colonize Sakhalin and in August 1808 secured approval from the throne for colonization of the island,⁷³ but the plan remained unrealized. During this period the company fell into a serious financial crisis. It lacked the strength, means, and personnel for large-scale colonial seizures. In America A. A. Baranov was not able to push Russian colonies south of Novo-

Arkhangel'sk. In a report to the Emperor of August 20, 1808, the directors of the RAC reported:

Because of the insufficiency of time and opportunity, and most of all an adequate number of Russian workers, the Company has not yet spread in America farther to the south beyond the mentioned occupation; though more than 600 people are found there, they are all obliged to provide both for the island of Sitka and all occupied land lying behind it along the islands and mainland shore. As soon as time and possibility contribute, the company business will advance into the Queen Charlotte Islands, and farther toward the Columbia, if these lands and places do not yet belong to any European peoples.⁷⁴

- 41 Baranov acted rather carefully. He had neither the sanction of St. Petersburg for independent seizure of the territory south of the 55th parallel nor sufficient forces for the realization of huge expansionist plans. Therefore, in 1808 he directed his closest assistant, I. A. Kuskov, to carry out only reconnaissance in the regions of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the mouth of the Columbia River, and California. Regarding negotiations with foreigners, Kuskov was instructed "not to enter into any discussion about the awarding of rights in the local seizures there."⁷⁵ Under favorable conditions Kuskov was supposed to establish a small outpost in the territories examined. However, Baranov clarified that "it is not necessary to establish vast replacements with buildings in the first and present case, until all this shore from Californian San Francisco harbor to the Strait of de Fuca is entirely explored and we receive formal permission from our government for occupation and settlement there."⁷⁶
- 42 In contrast, the government was clear during this period about not making colonial seizures in the Pacific. When Lieutenant L. A. Hagemester, who was on an RAC ship in 1808, visited the Hawaiian Islands and carried out rather successful negotiations with the local king, Kamehameha I, for a colony of Russians on one of the islands,⁷⁷ the prospects of consolidating a position in Hawaii did not entirely inspire official St. Petersburg.
- 43 Under these conditions the RAC was forced to act independently while the government remained passive. Also, negotiations between St. Petersburg and Washington in 1809–1811 were not successful concerning the limitation of trade of American entrepreneurs with the Indians of Southeast Alaska, which was within the sphere of Russian influence.⁷⁸ Tsarist diplomacy not only lacked a clear idea of the boundaries of its possessions in America, but also did not assert its governmental interests or the rights of the RAC there. However, in summer 1810, N. P. Rumyantsev, upon an encounter with the American envoy J. K. Adams, mentioned that the Russian maps included all the coast from Nootka Sound to the Columbia River among Russian possessions. However, the chancellor later acknowledged directly to the American diplomat that he himself and the Emperor did not attach great significance to the question of contraband trade by citizens of the United States; further, it was advisable to lay aside the question of the boundary on the west coast of America to a later time "in order to avoid possible clashes."⁷⁹
- 44 Meanwhile, events moved rapidly. In 1811, Americans established an outpost at the mouth of the Columbia River, which at one stroke sharply limited the potential claims of the RAC on the Northwest Coast. And though in the following year, based on the initiative of the company, the Russians established a fortified settlement (Fort Ross) in California north of San Francisco, the scheme for complete control over the whole American coast was by then given up for lost. Founding Fort Ross on lands that the

Spanish claimed led to diplomatic friction with the Spanish crown,⁸⁰ and later with authorities in Mexico. In this connection, S. B. Okun's assertions that the Tsarist government at the end of the decade 1800–1810 allegedly prepared to seize Spanish colonies in America under the “cloak” of the RAC appear unconvincing.⁸¹ Neither the Tsarist government nor the company planned seizure of the Spanish colonies; the RAC only wished expansion of their own possessions in California, where there were no Spanish settlements. However, the establishment of Fort Ross was not a success for the company. The development of agriculture there for supplying goods to the colonies in Alaska was pursued by an insufficient work force, and the colony suffered from an economically and strategically unfavorable location.

- 45 One attempt by representatives of the RAC to obtain one more agricultural outpost to supply Alaska with goods was the so-called “adventure of Doctor Schaeffer.” In 1815–1817 a physician in the service of the RAC, G. A. Schaeffer, attempted at his own risk to join one of the Hawaiian Islands to Russia, which N. N. Bolkhovitinov has described in detail.⁸² He correctly criticized S. B. Okun's thesis⁸³ of an alleged plan by the Tsarist government for seizure of Hawaii. On the contrary, as the documents attest, such an initiative came almost wholly from Schaeffer himself, though partially from A. A. Baranov, who sent him to Hawaii in 1815. With this, the governor of Russian America, under specific conditions, did not exclude the annexation of the island of Kauai by armed means, but nevertheless preferred to act with St. Petersburg in mind. The RAC board of directors at first reacted very negatively to the plans of the ardent doctor, fearing international complications. However, the board later tried to carefully support its employee, whereas Alexander I himself and the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, K. V. Nessel'rode, categorically rejected the idea of joining tropical islands to the empire in 1818.⁸⁴ If the conservative ‘legitimism’ of the Tsar and the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is rejected as a reason, then the real arguments against the annexation of Hawaii were the lack of a strong naval power in the Pacific and the insignificant trade fleet of Russia, as well as the danger of provoking the discontent of England and the United States, which the government sought to avoid for the sake of RAC interests. In these circumstances, when the Russian consul in Manila, P. V. Dobell, came out in 1820 with a scheme for joining the Hawaiian archipelago by means of an armed expedition, his plans did not arouse serious attention of the Tsarist government.

85

VIII Continuing Attempts in America

- 46 Having accomplished no success in Hawaii, the directors of the RAC nevertheless did not give up hope of expanding Russian possessions in America, having “shifted” the boundary on the shore to several degrees south of the 55th parallel. The board of directors of the RAC tried to persuade the government of the incontestable right of the company to new territories—not merely for the sake of acquisition or exaltation of the motherland, but for obtaining as many potential hunting grounds as possible. The RAC quietly explored such acquisition for several years before the formal expiration of its 20-year privileges in 1819. In a special memorandum of December 23, 1816 (January 4, 1817), the head of the company, clearly falsifying the facts, reported that the Russians were the first Europeans to tread on the American shore from the Bering Strait to the mouth of the Columbia River (46° n. lat.), that geographical expeditions from 1728 to 1785 “discovered and described all the local places,” and that the number of baptized natives by 1806 “was considered more than 20 thousand souls of both sexes.”⁸⁶ From

this came the logical conclusion that all these lands were legally owned by the Russian Empire, which the RAC represented. However, wishing to secure beforehand the support of the government in case of possible complications, the authors of the “memorandum” pointed to the insignificant number of Russians in America (a total of 400 men) and the contraband trade of the Americans, who equipped the hostile Indians with guns.⁸⁷

47 Around this time the board of directors issued a document with a predictable title: “Regarding the right of Russians to possession of the Northwest Coast of America from north latitude 50° to Icy Cape (70° 19’ n. lat. – A.G.) and to the supposed Polar Sea.” The author of the document rejected outright the discovery of the region by the Spanish and Captain Cook, striving to substantiate the territorial claims of the RAC.⁸⁸ As a result of such “historical research” the company concluded the legitimacy of the southern boundary of Russian possessions at 51° n. lat.⁸⁹ In the scheme of the new privileges of the RAC, presented to the government in spring 1819, the establishment of control by the company over the coastal mainland from Bering Strait to 45° n. lat. was assumed, and even posts farther south if these territories were still not occupied by “European nations.”⁹⁰ In another document submitted to the government—“Memorandum on the Trade of North Americans in the Russian Colonies in America”—claims were made to all the Northwest Coast north from 46° n. lat.⁹¹ Thus, the company proposed to promote the officially recognized boundary of Russian possessions in the New World 10 to 12 degrees south to the mouth of the Columbia River.

48 The question of the delimitation of possessions in the New World was raised as early as 1816–1817 during diplomatic consultations between the leaders of Russia and the United States in connection with the founding of the American colony at the mouth of the Columbia River. With this, the claims of the American side initially did not extend north of 49° n. lat.⁹² For its part the RAC strove to induce the Tsarist government to act on two fronts in defense of its privileges: first, to organize diplomatic pressure in Washington for the prohibition of trade by American citizens with natives of Russian America; second, to guarantee the dispatch of naval vessels for suppressing the contraband trade of Americans in the waters of Southeast Alaska. With the goal of strengthening their claims, the board of directors sent one complaint after another about the activity of foreign traders in the possessions subordinate to the RAC. Thus, in a report to the Minister of Internal Affairs of October 31, 1819, the RAC board of directors referred to data concerning this question provided by the government inspector V. M. Golovnin. The latter sent the directors of the RAC a memorandum on September 10, 1819, about the indisputable right of Russia to the Northwest Coast of America, and recommended securing the possessions of the company in California and appealing to the government for support and protection of the privileges and colonies of the RAC.⁹³ In his opinion Russia had inalienable rights to the vital shores of America up to 51° n. lat.⁹⁴

49 These memoranda and reports received on the whole a favorable response from the Minister of Finance, Count D. A. Gur’ev, who supervised the RAC in the Tsarist government. Gur’ev felt that the southern boundary should have been the northern cape of Vancouver Island at 51° n. lat., and even suggested that the boundary could have been moved even farther south. However, this faced two problems—the proximity of American colonies and the hostility of local Indians.⁹⁵

50 Gur'ev's views were taken into consideration in a new decree ("Rules") of the RAC, signed by the Tsar in September 1821. In the first section of the document were designated the boundaries of the possessions of the RAC in America: from the coast of Bering Strait to 51° n. lat., with the adjacent islands; and in Asia—the chain of the Kurile Islands to the island of Urup, inclusive (45° 50' n. lat.). In these territories the company was granted exclusive rights to hunting and trading. The Rules of 1821 also stipulated the possibility of expanding the possessions of the company to unoccupied lands.⁹⁶ The conclusion to be drawn is that the Tsarist government backed the RAC's territorial claims, though rather moderately: the southern boundary of Russian possessions was designated at 51°, and not at 45–46° n. lat., as the company insisted. Yet even in this case the territorial appetites of St. Petersburg were clearly ambitious, since the southernmost Russian settlement (Novo-Archangel'sk) was located at only 57° n. lat.

51 Besides expansion of the boundaries, a Tsarist decree of September 13, 1821, prohibited foreign whalers and merchants conducting hunting and trade on all the Northwest Coast of America from Bering Strait to 51° n. lat. and the whole coast of eastern Siberia: Foreign ships, under threat of seizure (along with the cargo), did not have the right to approach the designated shores of Russian possessions closer than 100 Italian miles.⁹⁷ Commenting on the September decree, D. I. Zavalishin wrote: "All this was interpreted by foreigners in such a way that Russia would seize all foreign ships past the above-designated boundary, though they did not approach the shore—such a claim of annexation of part of the ocean was considered unheard of. In American and English newspapers individual declarations even began to appear that force will be repelled by force."⁹⁸ These unilateral steps of the Tsarist cabinet quickly brought on official protests from the United States and England, and a little later served as a trigger for the well-known "Monroe doctrine."⁹⁹

IX Collapse of the "American Bridgehead"

52 By 1822 the Tsarist government was forced to retreat: the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nessel'rode, ordered that the patrols of Russian warships should stay as close as possible to the shores of Russian America and "not to stretch," as was recorded in the most recent privileges of the RAC, farther than 55° n. lat. to the south along the American shore.¹⁰⁰ In Russian America itself, rejection of trade with foreigners led to a sharp deficit of many necessary wares and supplies since the RAC board of directors was not able to regulate an effective supply of the colonies from the Baltic port of Kronstadt. By 1824 the RAC had asked the government to permit trade with foreign entrepreneurs in Novo-Archangel'sk.¹⁰¹ By this time the Tsarist cabinet had become completely disappointed both in the politics of the company and its own rash steps in the Pacific arena. In response to unfounded claims to a substantial part of the Northwest Coast of America, the government was forced in 1824–1825 to sign conventions with the United States and Great Britain,¹⁰² which included considerable concessions. Foreigners were granted the right to ten years free trade (with the exception of the sale of guns and spirituous drinks) and hunting in the territorial waters of Russian America, and the Russian side had no right to undertake any forcible action toward foreign ships. The conventions determined the southern boundaries of the Russian colonies on the Northwest Coast of America at 54° 40' n. lat., and the eastern boundary—along the coastal range of mountains only 10 sea miles from the shore to the 141st meridian, from where the boundary went north to the shores of the

Arctic Ocean. In addition, the English were granted the perpetual right to freely sail on all rivers having a source in British possessions and that emptied into the Pacific Ocean in the territory of Russian America. And inasmuch as in Southeast Alaska the Russian-British boundary was installed along the coastal range only 10 miles from the shore, this gave the English practically unlimited access to this region. What is more, the largest river in Alaska—the Yukon—also had its source in Canada and therefore, by the Convention of 1825, was perpetually open for English navigation. Representatives of the RAC insisted in vain on creating the boundary in Southeast Alaska at 53° 40' n. lat. and along the Rocky Mountains inland. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs represented by Nessel'rode was inflexible on this point, and the Emperor did not wish to hear more about any claims of the company in America.¹⁰³

53 After signing the conventions, the Russians recognized that the only place in the New World still open to Russian expansion was California. In November 1823 Midshipman D. I. Zavalishin, having just arrived in California aboard the frigate *Kreiser*, created a storm of activity, striving to influence several local officials to proclaim the independence of this Mexican province and make it a protectorate of Russia. Zavalishin's final goal was to expel any citizens of the United States, to join northern California (from Bodega Bay to 42° n. lat.) to the empire, and to settle it with Russians. However, his plans, which have been analyzed in detail by Barratt,¹⁰⁴ were deflected by the Tsarist government as adventurist and bound to cause aggravated relations with England and the United States. Likewise was the proposal of the representative of the RAC, Admiral N. S. Mordvinov, who addressed himself to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nessel'rode, on January 8, 1824. Mordvinov wrote of Fort Ross: "The boundary for this distant southern possession could have been assigned from Bodega to 2 degrees to the north; in the depth of the land to the east, to the Cordillera Mountains or Rocky Mountains. But if this expanse of land was impossible to acquire, then at least to sufficiently try to retain one degree to the N from Bodega and to one degree to the east."¹⁰⁵ The petitions of the board of directors of the RAC in 1825 for settlement of California by peasant-farmers and the expansion of the colony to the north of Fort Ross to 40–42° n. lat. were also in vain. In fact, the proposals of the company were supported by such eminent navigators as I. F. Kruzenshtern and V. M. Golovnin, who recommended acquiring for Russia the port of San Francisco.¹⁰⁶ But all these ideas found no support in government circles. However, as A. A. Istomin correctly notes, the idea of joining part of northern California to Russia in the mid 1820s did not seem entirely unreal.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not wish to pursue the formal confirmation of Russian ownership of land in New Albion (northern California) already occupied by the company. In 1827, the board of directors of the RAC stated with sadness in a dispatch to the governor of Russian America, P. E. Chistyakov, that the "endeavors for formal confirmation for Russians of the places where settlement has been approved remain unsuccessful, and based on present circumstances there is no hope of a favorable resolution." In 1829 the leadership arrived at a more categorical conclusion, that "supporting any hope ... of expansion of settlement would be useless."¹⁰⁸

54 Though the directors of the RAC recognized the economic uselessness of Fort Ross at the end of the 1820s, they nevertheless did not hasten to part with the California colony,¹⁰⁹ hoping with more favorable circumstances to expand it to the north and northeast. The last attempt in this direction was undertaken by the governor of Russian America, Baron F. P. Wrangell. In 1834, he began to test the ground in St. Petersburg for

negotiations with the Mexican government with regard to the Fort Ross settlement in California. Wrangell hoped that the establishment of official diplomatic relations would help not only to state the right of Russians to Fort Ross, but to expand this enclave. To delay this affair was dangerous, since the English or Americans could soon occupy California. Wrangell's opinion was supported by the directors of the RAC.¹¹⁰ However, the Council on Political Questions at the RAC rejected his petition to begin official negotiations with Mexico, declaring to go no farther than negotiations about the development of trade.¹¹¹ The Emperor also rejected Wrangell's proposal in January 1835, having sanctioned only trade connections.¹¹²

- 55 This resolution placed a definitive end to expansionist plans of the RAC with regard to the New World. After this began the surrender of positions and the retreat of Russia from America: in 1839 the strip of mainland coast from the Portland Canal in the south to Cape Spencer in the north was leased to the English; in 1841 Fort Ross was sold; in 1847 the British Hudson's Bay Company constructed Fort Yukon in the territory of Russian America without sanction of the RAC; and in 1867 the Tsarist government sold Alaska to the United States, which sharply changed the geostrategic balance in the North Pacific, and not in Russia's favor.

X. Conclusion

- 56 In light of the above investigation, the following conclusions can be drawn. The research and analysis of documents presented here attest to a complex picture, far from the simple appraisals of plans of Russian expansion in the New World often proclaimed in the works of previous researchers.¹¹³ At the outset stood the government, which soon delegated the expansion of the Empire's possessions in America to its subjects. It was initially the government that declared grandiose plans to transform the northern part of the Pacific Ocean into the "Russian Sea." These plans were then taken up by representatives of the merchant class at the end of the eighteenth century and supported by the local Siberian administration. From the beginning of the nineteenth century the main elaborator of expansionism was the RAC, with complete passivity on the part of the Tsarist government. Only at the beginning of the 1820s did official St. Petersburg try once more to reanimate the old schemes, but they were unsuccessful, after which any plans by the RAC to expand possessions in America were blocked by the central authorities. The extremely inconsistent and short-sighted politics of the Tsarist government in the end led to the loss of the "American bridgehead" in the New World, and as a result a complete reorientation of colonial expansion to the Amur area and Sakhalin.

NOTES

1. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv voenno-morskogo flota [Russian State Naval Archive] (hereafter RGA VMF), f. 224, op. 1, d. 304, l. 35 ob.

2. Zavalishin, D. I. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya* [The Russian-American Company], (Moscow: Universitetskaya tipografiya, 1865), pp. 9–11.
3. Roginskii, E. M. “D. I. Zavalishin kak obshchestvennyi deyatel’ [D. I. Zavalishin as a Public Figure.” *Voprosy istorii* [Questions of History] 8 (1998): p. 138.
4. Grekov, B. D. Predislovie [Preface] to Okun’, S. B. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya* [The Russian-American Company], (Moscow-Leningrad: Gos. sots.-ekon. izd-vo, 1939), p. 3.
5. Okun’, S. B. *Op. cit.*, p. 49.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
7. See: “Russkie ekspeditsii po izucheniyu severnoi chasti Tikhogo okeana v pervoi polovine XVIII v.” [Russian Expeditions for the Study of the Northern Part of the Pacific Ocean in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century]. *Sbornik dokumentov* [Collection of Documents], (Moscow: Nauka, 1984), p. 196.
8. Okun’, S. B. *Op. cit.*, p. 112.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 114–115.
10. Fëdorova, S. G. *Russkoe naselenie Alyaski i Kalifornii. Konets XVIII veka–1867* [The Russian Population of Alaska and California. End of the Eighteenth Century–1867], (Moscow: Nauka, 1971) pp. 121–122; Al’perovich, M. S. *Rossiya i Novyi svet (poslednyaya tret’ XVIII veka)* [Russia and the New World (Last Third of the Eighteenth Century)], (Moscow: Nauka, 1993) pp. 214–215; Shkarovskii, M. V. “Russkaya Kaliforniya” [Russian California]. *Klio* 4 (2005): p. 94, 96. A similar point of view was put forward in Grinëv, A. V. *Indeitsy tlinkity v period Russkoi Ameriki (1741–1867 gg.)* [The Tlingit Indians during the Russian-American Period (1741–1867)], (Novosibirsk: Nauka, 1991), p. 245.
11. See: Bolkhovitinov, N. N. *Stanovlenie Russko-Amerikanskikh otnoshenii 1775–1815* [Formation of Russian-American Relations, 1775–1815], (Moscow: Nauka, 1966) p. 305.
12. Bolkhovitinov, N. N. *Russko-Amerikanskie otnosheniya 1815–1832* [Russian-American Relations 1815–1832], (Moscow: Nauka, 1975), pp. 86–88, 259, 573–574. See also: Ponomarev, V. N. “Russko-Amerikanskie otnosheniya. Doktrina Monro i Russkaya Amerika” [Russian-American Relations. The Monroe Doctrine and Russian America] in *Istoriya vneshnei politiki Rossii. Pervaya polovina XIX veka (Ot voyn Rossii protiv Napoleona do Parizhskogo mira 1856 g.)* [The History of Russian Foreign Affairs: First Half of the Nineteenth Century (From the War of Russia against Napoleon to the Paris Peace of 1856)], (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1999) p. 273.
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16. Alekseeva, E. V. *Russkaya Amerika. Amerikanskaya Rossiya?* [Russian America. American Russia?], (Ekaterinburg: URO RAN, 1998) pp. 48–49, 116–117.
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18. Postnikov, A. V. *Russkaya Amerika v geograficheskikh opisaniyakh i na kartakh. 1741–1867 gg.* [Russian America in Geographic Descriptions and on Maps, 1741–1867], (St. Petersburg: Izd-vo “Dmitrii Bulanin”, 2000) pp. 226, 230–231.
19. Hulley, C. C. *Alaska, 1741–1953* (Portland, OR: Binfords and Mort, 1953), p. 127; Kushner, H. I. *Conflict on the Northwest Coast. American-Russian Rivalry in the Pacific Northwest, 1790–1867*, (Westport, London: Greenwood Press, 1975), pp. 9–10; Haycox, S., Barnett, J. K., and Liburd, C. A. *Enlightenment and Exploration in the North Pacific, 1741–1805*, (Seattle, London: University of Washington press, 1997), p. 16; Black, L. T. *Russians in Alaska, 1732–1867*, (Fairbanks, AL: University of Alaska Press, 2004), pp. 114 ff.
20. “Nord” is “north” in German. The Russian mariners often used German terms in navigation. “N” and “O” (*Nord* and *Ost* (“north” and “east”) are also used.—*Trans.*
21. See “Russkie ekspeditsii po izucheniyu severnoi chasti Tikhogo okeana v pervoi polovine XVIII v,” pp. 35–36.
22. *Dubel'-shlyupka* [a dubel boat] was a small sail-paddle war boat without a deck. It was part of the Russian fleet, a gunboat for coastal operations: they were 20–25 m long, 6 m wide, and a 2 m bottom with one mast and up to 20 paddles, plus several cannons. – A.G.
23. *Russkie ekspeditsii po izucheniyu severnoi chasti Tikhogo okeana v pervoi polovine XVIII v,*” pp. 124–132.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
25. Alekseev, A. I. *Sud'ba Russkoi Ameriki* [The Fate of Russian America], (Magadan: Magadanskoe kn. izd-vo, 1975), p. 125.

26. *Russkaya Tikhookeanskaya epopeya* [The Russian Pacific Epic]. Compiled by V. A. Divin et al. (Khabarovsk: Khabarovskoe kn. izd-vo, 1979), p. 242.
27. Promyshlenniki were the Russians and Siberians who went to the New World to hunt, trap, trade, and exact tribute from the natives.—
Trans.
28. *Russkaya Tikhookeanskaya epopeya* [The Russian Pacific Epic], pp. 314–319.
29. “Russkie ekspeditsii po izucheniyu severnoi chasti Tikhogo okeana vo vtoroi polovine XVIII v.” [Russian Expeditions for the Study of the Northern Part of the Pacific Ocean in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century]. *Sbornik dokumentov* [Collection of Documents], (Moscow: Nauka, 1989), pp. 74–77.
30. *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii (PSZRI)* [Complete Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire], vol. XVII (St. Petersburg, 1830), no. 12.589, pp. 603–604.
31. PSZRI, vol. XVIII, No. 13.320, p. 26. Lieutenant T. I. Shmalev, who served in Kamchatka, came up with the analogical proposition (see: Makarova, R. V. *Rysskie na Tikhom okeane vo vtoroi polovine XVIII v.* [Russians on the Pacific Ocean in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century], (Moscow: Nauka, 1968), p. 28.
32. For more detail, see: *Russkaya Tikhookeanskaya epopeya* [Russian Pacific Epic], pp. 333–362; *Istoriya Russkoi Ameriki (1732–1867)* [The History of Russian America (1732–1867)] (hereafter *IRA*), Vol. I; *Osnovanie Russkoi Ameriki (1732–1799)* [The Founding of Russian America (1732–1799)], N. N. Bolkhovitinov (ed.), (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1997), pp. 197–223 ff.
33. Postnikov, A. V. *Op. cit.*, pp. 133, 135–140.
34. Al’perovich, M. S. *Op. cit.*, pp. 93–94; *IRA*, vol. I, pp. 223–224.
35. Sarychev, G. A. *Puteshestvie po severo-vostochnoi chasti Sibiri, Ledovitomu moryu i Vostochnomu okeanu* [Voyage through the Northeastern Part of Siberia, the Arctic Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean], (Moscow: Geografiz, 1952), pp. 31–35; *Russkaya Tikhookeanskaya epopeya* [Russian Pacific Epic], pp. 363–367.
36. See: Divin, V. A. “Russkie moreplavaniya k beregam Ameriki posle Beringa i Chirikova” [Russian Voyages to the Shores of America after Bering and Chirikov]. *Ot Alyaski do Ognennoi zemli* [From Alaska to Tierra del Fuego], (Moscow: Nauka, 1967), pp. 91–93; Alekseev, A. I., p. 115; Alekseev, A. I. *Osvoenie russkimi lyud’mi Dal’nego Vostoka i Russkoi Ameriki do kontsa XIX veka* [The Opening Up by Russian People of the Far East and Russian America by the End of the Nineteenth Century], (Moscow: Nauka, 1982), p. 109.
37. *Russkie ekspeditsii po izucheniyu severnoi chasti Tikhogo okeana v pervoi polovine XVIII v.* [Russian Expeditions for the Study of the Northern Part of the Pacific Ocean in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century], pp. 114–115.
38. *Russkie ekspeditsii po izucheniyu severnoi chasti Tikhogo okeana vo vtoroi polovine XVIII v.* [Russian Expeditions for the Study of the Northern Part of the Pacific Ocean in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century], p. 226.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 229–232.
40. *Ibid.*, pp. 232–233.
41. See: *Ibid.*, pp. 233–242.
42. Al'perovich, M. S. *Op. cit.*, p. 103.
43. *Russkie otkrytiya v Tikhom okeane i Severnoi Amerike v XVIII veke* [Russian Discoveries in the Pacific Ocean and North America in the Eighteenth Century]. Edited and with introductory article by A. I. Andreev (Moscow: Gos. izd-vo geogr. lit., 1948), p. 196.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
45. The “Shelikhov” company was officially registered with the government as an ordinary merchant company, not as a government or semi-government one.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 250–265.
47. See: *Ibid.*, pp. 265–269.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 274.
49. *Ibid.*, pp. 281–282.
50. Bolkhovitinov, N. N. *Rossiya otkryvaet Ameriku. 1732–1799* [Russia Discovers America. 1732–1799], (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1991), pp. 184–186.
51. *Russkie otkrytiya v Tikhom okeane. . .*, pp. 283–284; see senate decree: PSZRI. Vol. XXII, No. 16.708, pp. 1105–1107.
52. *Russkie otkrytiya v Tikhom okeane. . .*, p. 291.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 302, 306–310.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 321–322.
55. *Ibid.*, pp. 349–352.
56. Khlebnikov, K. T. *Zhizneopisanie Aleksandra Andreevicha Baranova, Glavnogo pravatelya Rossiiskikh kolonii v Amerike* [Biography of Alexander Andreevich Baranov, Governor of the Russian Colonies in America], (St. Petersburg: Morskaya tipografiya, 1835), pp. 31–32; Khlebnikov, K. T. *Russkaya Amerika v “Zapiskakh” Kirilla Khlebnikova: Novo-Arkhangel'sk* [Khlebnikov, K. T. Russian America in the “Notes” of Kirill Khlebnikov: Novo-Arkhangel'sk], compilation, preface, commentary, and index by S. G. Fedorova, (Moscow: Nauka, 1985), pp. 221–222.
57. AVPRI, f. RAK, op. 888, d. 121, l. 23–25.
58. Tikhmenev, P. A. *Istoricheskoe obozrenie obrazovaniya Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi kompanii i deistvii eya do nastoyashchago vremeni* [Historical Survey of the Formation of the Russian-American Company and Its Activities up to the Present Time], (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya Eduarda Veimara, 1863), Pt. II, Appendix, p. 148.
59. AVPRI, f. RAK, op. 888, d. 143, l. 14.
60. “Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya i izuchenie Tikhookeanskogo Severa, 1799–1815” [The Russian-American Company and the Study of the North Pacific, 1799–1815]. *Sbornik dokumentov* [Collections of Documents], (Moscow: Nauka, 1994), p. 21.

61. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov [Russian State Archive of Ancient Documents] (hereafter RGADA, f. 1605, op. 1, d. 161, l. 2 ob.
62. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya*. . ., pp. 34–35.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 144; Levenshtern, E. E. *Vokrug sveta s Ivanom Kruzenshternom* [Around the World with Ivan Kruzenstern], (St. Petersburg: TsKP VMF, 2003), pp. 337, 383.
67. Tikhmenev, P. A. *Istoricheskoe obozrenie obrazovaniya Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi kompanii i deistvii eya do nastoyashchago vremeni* [Historical Survey of the Formation of the Russian-American Company and Its Activities up to the Present Time], (St. Petersburg, 1861), Pt. I, pp. 158–160.
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69. *Ibid.*, pp. 233–234.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
71. The first date is from the Gregorian calendar and the second date from the Julian calendar (Old Russian style).
72. Golovnin, V. M. “Zapiska kapitana 2 ranga Golovnina o sostoyanii Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi kompanii v 1818 godu” [The Note of Captain of 2nd Rank Golovnin on the State of the Russian-American Company in 1818]. *Materialy dlya istorii russkikh zaselenii po beregam Vostochnogo okeana* [Materials for the History of Russian Settlement along the Shores of the Eastern Ocean], (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya Morskogo ministerstva, 1861), Issue I, p. 97.
73. *Vneshnyaya politika Rossii* [Foreign Policy of Russia] (hereafter VPR), (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1965), Vol. 4 (ser. 1), pp. 314, 626.
74. AVPRI, f. gl. arkhiv II-3, 1805–1811 gg., op. 34, d. 8, l. 19.
75. *Rossiya i SShA: stanovlenie otnoshenii. 1765–1815* [Russia and the USA: Development of Relations, 1765–1815]. Compiled by N. N. Bashkina, N. N. Bolkhovitinov, J. H. Brown et.al., (Moscow: Nauka, 1980), pp. 344–347.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 345.
77. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv [Russian Government Historical Archive] (hereafter RGIA), f. 13, op. 1, d. 287, l. 63–64; Tikhmenev, P. A. (Petersburg, 1861), Pt. I, p. 166.
78. See: *Rossiya i SShA* [Russia and the USA], pp. 408–409, 410, 422–423.
79. *Ibid.*, pp. 432, 438–439.
80. VPR. Ser. II, vol. 2, pp. 574–576; vol. 3, pp. 140–141, 235–237; vol. 4, pp. 555–556.
81. Okun', S. B. “Russkie poseleniya v Kalifornii v XIX v.” [Russian Colonies in California in the Nineteenth Century]. *Uchenye zapiski LGU* (ser. istorich.) [Scholarly Notes of Leningrad State University (Historical Series)], 32 (1939): pp. 148–149.
82. See also Pierce, R. A. *Russia's Hawaiian Adventure, 1815–1817* (Kingston, Ont.: The Limestone Press, 1976).

83. See: "Tsarskaya Rossiya i Gavaiskie ostrova" [Tsarist Russia and the Hawaiian Islands]. Compilation and introductory article by S. B. Okun'. *Krasnyi arkhiv. Istoricheskii zhurnal* [Red Archive. Historical Journal], 5 (1936): p. 161.
84. Bolkhovitinov, N. N. *Russko-Amerikanskie otnosheniya 1815–1832* [Russian-American Relations, 1815–1832], pp. 86–131, 143.
85. *IRA*. Vol. 2, pp. 295–298.
86. *VPR*. Moscow, 1974. Ser. II, vol. 1(9), p. 378.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 379.
88. See: Bolkhovitinov, N. N. *Russko-amerikanskie otnosheniya, 1815–1832*, pp. 146–151.
89. *RGIA*, f. 994, op. 2, d. 866, l. 7–14 ob.
90. Bolkhovitinov, N. N. *Russko-amerikanskie otnosheniya*, pp. 146.
91. *AVPRI*, f. RAK, op. 888, d. 288, l. 108–118 ob.; *VPR*. (Moscow, 1974), Vol. 1(IX), ser. II, p. 378.
92. See: *IRA*. Vol. 2, pp. 310–313.
93. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya*, pp. 65–70.
94. Golovnin, V. M. *Sochineniya. Puteshestvie na shlyupe "Diana" iz Kronshtadta v Kamchatku, sovershennoe v 1807, 1808 i 1809 gg. . . .* [Works. Voyage on the Sloop *Diana* from Kronstadt to Kamchatka, Carried out in 1807, 1808, and 1809. . . .], (Moscow-Leningrad: Izd-vo Glavsevmorputi, 1949), p. 336; Golovnin, V. M. "Bereg Ameriki nuzhny nam" [We Need the Shores of America]. *Rossiya morei* [Russia of the Seas], (Moscow: Institut DI-DIK, 1997), pp. 221–231; *Rossiya v Kalifornii: russkie dokumenty o kolonii Ross i rossiisko-kaliforniiskikh svyazyakh, 1803–1850* [Russia and California: Russian Documents on the Fort Ross Colony and Russian-California Connections, 1803–1850]. Compiled by A. A. Istomin, J. R. Gibson, and V. A. Tishkov (Moscow: Nauka, 2005), pp. 563–576, 583–586, 617–621; Barratt G., *Russia in Pacific Waters, 1715–1825. A Survey of the Origins of Russia's Naval Presence in the North and South Pacific* (Vancouver and London: University of British Columbia Press, 1981), pp. 212–216; *IRA*. Vol. 2, pp. 257–274.
95. *AVPRI*, f. RAK, op. 888, d. 288, l. 330–330 ob.
96. See: *PSZRI*, vol. XXXVII, No. 28.747, pp. 842–843.
97. One Italian mile = 1 nautical mile or 1.15 statute miles—*Trans*.
98. Zavalishin, D. I. "Krugosvetnoe plavanie fregata 'Kreiser' v 1822–1825 gg. pod komandoyu Mikhaila Petrovicha Lazareva" [The Round-the-World Voyage of the Frigate *Kreiser* in 1822–1825 under the Command of Mikhail Petrovich Lazarev]. *Drevnyaya i novaya Rossiya* [Ancient and Modern Russia] 2 (1877): p. 55.
99. See: Bolkhovitinov, N. N. "Doktrina Monro: proiskhozhdenie, kharakter i evolyutsiya" [The Monroe Doctrine: Origin, Character, and Evolution]. *Amerikanskii ekspansionizm. Novoe vremya* [American Expansionism. New Time], (Moscow: Nauka, 1985), pp. 49–65; *Istoriya vneshnei politiki i diplomatii SShA. 1775–1877* [The History of Foreign Politics

- and Diplomacy of the U.S., 1775–1877], (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994), pp. 150–157 ff.
100. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya*, pp. 130–131.
101. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya*, pp. 160, 162.
102. PSZRI, vol. XXXIX, pp. 251–253; vol. XL, pp. 72–74.
103. Arkhiv Grafov Mordvinovkh [Archive of the Counts Mordvinov]. Preface and notes by V. A. Bil'basov (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya I.N. Skorokhodova, 1902), Vol. VI, pp. 642, 644–648, 651–652, 658–661.
104. Barratt, G. *Op. cit.*, pp. 226–232.
105. Arkhiv Grafov Mordvinovkh [Archive of the Counts Mordvinov]. Preface and notes by V. A. Bil'basov (St. Petersburg, 1902), Vol. VI, pp. 642.
106. *Rossiya v Kalifornii: russkie dokumenty o kolonii Ross i rossiisko-kaliforniiskikh svyazyakh, 1803–1850* [Russia and California: Russian Documents on the Fort Ross Colony and Russian-California Connections, 1803–1850], pp. 563–576, 583–586, 617–621; Bolkhovitinov, N. N. *Russko-amerikanskie otnosheniya, 1815–1832* [Russian-American Relations, 1815–1832], (Moscow, 1975), pp. 293–297; IRA. Vol. 2, pp. 257–274.
107. IRA. Vol. 2, p. 274.
108. Vishnyakov, N. “Rossiya, Kaliforniya i Sandvichevy ostrova” [Russia, California, and the Sandwich Islands]. *Russkaya starina* [The Russian Past] Vol. CXXVI (1905): p. 273.
109. See: VPR (Moscow, 1992) Ser. II, vol. 15, p. 480.
110. *Rossiya i Meksika v pervoi polovine XIX v. (sovmestnyi sovetsko-meksikanskii sbornik dokumentov)* [Russia and Mexico during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century (Combined Soviet-Mexican Collection of Documents)]. Compiled by A. I. Sizonenko and Marta Ortega (Moscow: Institut Latinskoi Ameriki AN SSSR, 1989), pp. 68–72.
111. *Rossiisko-Amerikanskaya kompaniya*, pp. 302–303, 312.
112. *Rossiya i Meksika v pervoi polovine XIX v. (sovmestnyi sovetsko-meksikanskii sbornik dokumentov)* [Russia and Mexico during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century (Combined Soviet-Mexican Collection of Documents)], pp. 74–75; Okun', S. B. “Russkie poseleniya v Kalifornii v XIX v.” [Russian Colonies in California in the Nineteenth Century]. *Uchenye zapiski LGU (ser. istorich.)* [Scholarly Notes of Leningrad State University (Historical Series)] 32 (1939): pp. 165–167.
113. See, for example: Petrov, A. Yu. “Rol' gosudarstva v protsesse obrazovaniya Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi kompanii” [The Role of the Government in the Process of Formation of the Russian-American Company]. *Russkaya Amerika i Dal'nii Vostok (konets XVIII v.–1867 g.)*. K 200-letiyu obrazovaniya Rossiisko-Amerikanskoi kompanii. Materialy mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii (Vladivostok, 11–13 oktyabrya 1999 g.) [200th anniversary of formation of the Russian-American Company. Materials for the International Science Conference (Vladivostok, 11–13 October 1999)], (Vladivostok: IIAEN DVO RAN, 2001), p. 36.

ABSTRACTS

The theme of Russian expansion in the New World and North Pacific in the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries has repeatedly attracted the attention of Russian and foreign scholars. At the same time, the topic evokes discussion in scholarly historiography as authors frequently adhere to diametrically opposing points of view. In this paper we will investigate the elaboration of plans for Russian territorial expansion in the New World, noting that these plans often were an organic part of larger plans to include the whole North Pacific among the possessions of the Russian Empire.

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