

acterised by the historian K. I. Mouratov in the following terms: “The edict of 1775 abolished the 20 existing provinces of Russia and introduced 40 new ones [twice as many provinces, in other words! – Auth.] ... The government forbade the very mention of Pougachev’s name. The village of Zimoveyskaya, his birthplace, was renamed Potyomkinskaya, and River Yaik became known as the Ural. The Yaik Cossacks became known as the Ural Cossacks. The Volga Cossacks were disbanded, likewise the Zaporozhye Army. The Empress gave orders to forget every fact of the peasant uprising, and to refrain from so much as mentioning it” ([562], page 172).

## 2.6. Novaya Zemlya depicted correctly on earlier maps (as an island) and incorrectly on some of the later ones (as a peninsula)

When the Romanovs had obtained access to Siberia, they got the opportunity of correcting the old geographical maps that they inherited from the XIV-XVI century epoch of the Horde. This monotonous gradual perfection of cartography can be seen as a process from a study of the XVIII century maps. In February and March of 1999, the Private Collection Affiliate of the Pushkin Museum in Moscow organized an exhibition of Russian maps compiled in the XVII-XVIII century. We have attended it and discovered a great many interesting facts.

Let us consider the Dutch map of 1733 called “The Map of Great Tartary” (*Magnae Tartariae Tabula*. J. Covents et C. Mortier, Amsterdam, 1733), qv in fig. 12.35. The Novaya Zemlya archipelago (formerly known as Nova Zembla) is explicitly and incorrectly drawn as a peninsula (fig. 12.36). The cartographers had obviously attempted to make the map as detailed and accurate as they could. However, one can instantly see that their awareness of the Siberian geography (its coastline etc) had been rather poor in 1733. This is easy enough to understand – the map was compiled before the war with Pougachev in 1773-1775.

Moreover, the compilers of the 1771 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* had just as vague an idea of Nova Zembla’s geography. In fig. 12.37 one sees a fragment of the British map of Siberia taken from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (the full version of the map was shown earlier in fig. 12.2). It is impossible to see whether Nova



Fig. 12.35. A map of 1733 (Map of the Great Tartary): *Magnae Tartariae Tabula*. J. Covents et C. Mortier. Amsterdam, 1733. Was put up at the exhibition of the maps of Russia dating from the XVI-XVIII century held at the museum of Private Collections at the Pushkin Museum in Moscow (February-March 1999). From a video recording of 1999.



Fig. 12.36. Fragment of a map dating from 1733, where the Novaya Zemlya island is misrepresented as a peninsula. The map in question dates to the pre-Pougachev epoch. From a video recording of 1999.

Zembla is drawn as an island or a peninsula. There is some kind of barely visible shading right over the legend “Nova Zembla”, which demonstrates that the authors of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* had a very unclear concept of this region’s real geography (see fig. 12.38). In fig. 12.39 we present a fragment of the modern map that shows the correct geography of these parts.

Once again, 1771 predates the war against “Pougachev”. The Romanovs had still been denied entry to Siberia, and the Northwest of the American continent had remained closed for the United States of America. Therefore, the Romanovian cartographers and their colleagues from the Western Europe have still been confused about the geography of Northern Siberia and the Far East – even such professionals as the experts who had compiled the maps for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, a work that had accumulated the results of all the latest advances made by the scientific avant-garde of the epoch.



Fig. 12.37. Fragment of a map of Asia from the 1771 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The authors of the *Britannica* are obviously still quite confused about the true geography of this region. The Novaya Zemlya island is drawn most nebulously indeed – it is possible that the authors of the *encyclopaedia* were referring to the peninsula reproduced below. Taken from [1118], Volume 2, pages 682–683.

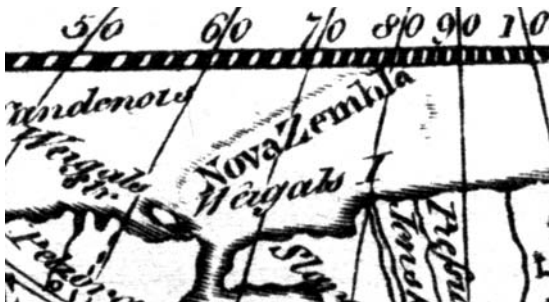


Fig. 12.38. Close-in of a fragment of a map reproduced above. The authors are clearly unaware of the geography of Novaya Zemlya.



Fig. 12.39. A modern map of the Novaya Zemlya Island and its environs. Taken from [507], pages 5–6.

Furthermore, Novaya Zemlya is falsely drawn as a peninsula in the 1730 map compiled by Philip Johann Strahlenberg (see fig. 12.40). The “isthmus” is drawn a great deal smaller, but present nonetheless (fig. 12.41).

There are many such maps dating from the first half and the middle of the XVIII century. We have only cited individual examples that illustrate the common but erroneous conception of Novaya Zemlya being a peninsula and not an island shared by the XVIII century cartographers.

What do the presumably “more ancient” maps of the XVI–XVII century tell us? For instance, let us study the map of the Great Tartary known as the map of Mercator-Hondius and allegedly dating from 1640 – we are told that it predates the map from the *Britannica* by more than a century (see fig. 12.42). We see the map of Mercator-Hondius depict Novaya Zemlya correctly, as an island. Its top part is not drawn (apparently, due to paucity of information) – however, the island is separated from the continent by a strait; it is easy enough to see the island does not approach the continental coastline anywhere. This example is very typical.

Let us take a look at the world map of Rumold Mercator (see fig. 12.43). Modern historians date it to 1587 ([1160], page 100). It is presumed that this map was drawn by Rumold, the son of the famous cartographer Gerhard Mercator, and based on the map that his father is said to have compiled in 1569, no less ([1160], page 98). That is to say, the map drawn up in 1569–1587 by Rumold and Gerhard Mercator (presumably more ancient than the already described Mercator-Hondius map dating from the alleged year 1640). Once again, we see Novaya Zemlya drawn correctly – as an island (see fig. 12.44). Moreover, this “early” map of Rumold Mercator dating from the alleged years 1569–1587 is a lot better and more accurate than a “later” map of Mercator-Hondius, allegedly dating from 1640. We see the same to be the case on another version of the map, ascribed to Gerhard Mercator and dating from the alleged year 1595 (see fig. 12.45). Novaya Zemlya is drawn correctly, as an island separated from the continent by a strait and not approaching it anywhere else.

We discover Scaligerian history to have a strange trait – the older the map, the more accurate it is. As we realise nowadays, it should be the other way round





Fig. 12.40. Fragment of a map dating from 1730 under the title of “A New Description of the Geography of Great Tartary” (*Nova descriptio geographica Tartariae magna*. Philip Johann von Strahlenberg). Modern commentators call it “one of the most important maps of the Russian Siberia in the XVIII century” ([1160], page 216). The *Novaya Zemlya* Island is drawn erroneously – as a peninsula. Taken from [1160], page 217.



Fig. 12.41. A close-in of a fragment of a 1730 map with *Novaya Zemlya* drawn as a peninsula. Taken from [1160], page 217.



Fig. 12.42. A map of Great Tartary allegedly dating from 1640, compiled by Mercator and Hondius (*Tartaria sive Magni Chami Imperium*, Mercator-Hondius, 1640. Amsterdam). Was put up at the exhibition of the maps of Russia dating from the XVI-XVIII century held at the museum of Private Collections at the Pushkin Museum in Moscow (February-March 1999). From a video recording of 1999.





Fig. 12.43. World map compiled by Rumold Mercator in the alleged year of 1587 (Rumold Mercatoris Orbis terrae compendiosa descriptio quam ex magna universali Gerardi Mercatoris... M. D. LXXXVII (1587). This map is believed to be based on the map compiled by Gerhard Mercator (the father of Rumold) in the alleged year of 1569 ([1160], page 98). We see Novaya Zemlya drawn correctly – as an island. Taken from [1160], pages 97–98.