

THE 1780 RUSSIAN INVENTORY OF COOK ARTIFACTS

by Robert D. Craig

Yakov M. Svet and Svetlana G. Fedorova have presented us with a valuable piece of Cook historical evidence--the manuscript *1780 Inventory*, reproduced on pages 16-19 of their article. As they point out, the ethnographical collection listed in the *Inventory* [erroneously attributing almost all of them to Tonga] came from the Pacific Islands. It was given to the Russians in 1779 by the English seamen anchored at Kamchatka as a token of their gratitude for the Russian hospitality afforded Cook's ships after his death. This two-page manuscript lists forty-eight Cook artifacts that arrived back in Leningrad in 1780.

During the past year, an interest in Cook artifacts has again been heightened in Hawaii as a result of the excellent exhibit at the Bishop Museum, brought together under the expert guidance of Adrienne Kaeppler. Artifacts from museums throughout the world were on display. Kaeppler's resulting folio catalog, *Artificial Curiosities*, carefully documents work that took her eight years to collect.¹ The importance of accurately dating ethnographical pieces now appears vital to Pacific cultural history. Kaeppler's *Artificial Curiosities* has shown that what we have generally accepted as "classical" Hawaiian art, perhaps did not develop until after Cook (and subsequent) navigators introduced the use of iron tools into their society. "It appears that 'classical' Hawaiian forms," she says, "evolved from specific traditional forms in the immediate post-contact period."²

For each entry in her *Artificial Curiosities*, Kaeppler has attempted to give ample proof that each article is indeed a "Cook artifact." Where questionable, it is noted: "The following objects are probably from Cook's voyages, but are not traceable by documented links."³ Such is the case with the artifacts from the Leningrad museum. Documentation is weak: "Given by Captain Clerke to the Governor of Kamchatka . . . Rozina [as source], 1966 . . ."

¹Adrienne Kaeppler, *Artificial Curiosities* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1978) [Pp. xiv, 292, illustrations, paperback, \$27.50].

²Adrienne Kaeppler, "The Significance of Cook's Third Voyage for the Study of Hawaiian Art and Society," paper presented at the Captain James Cook and His Times conference held at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, 28-29 April 1978, p. 2.

³Kaeppler, *Artificial Curiosities*, p. 5.

Kaeppler's second valuable folio volume, *Cook Voyage Artifacts*,⁴ that appeared in November of this year, examines in detail the three major collections in Leningrad, Berne, and Florence. The Leningrad portion consists of a translation of an article written by L. G. Rozina in Russian in 1966.⁵ In this article, Rozina gives no first-hand evidence that the artifacts in Leningrad are actually attributed to Cook. The first written account cited is the *Catalog* of the former Peter the First Museum of Natural History (the *Kunstkamera*) which was published in 1800. Since that time, authority of identifying these as Cook artifacts has apparently only been through this *Catalog*. No scholar until now has cited the *1780 Inventory* manuscript, nor has it ever seen print.

A close comparison of the *1780 Inventory* and the descriptions by Kaeppler and Rozina confirms that the *Catalog* of 1800 (and, therefore, all subsequent references) is indeed correct. Almost all of the objects in the *1780 Inventory* can be located in the 1978 Kaeppler/Rozina work as shown in the following table.

1780 Inventory		Kaeppler/Rozina, 1978		
Number	Description	Description	Page Reference	Leningrad Museum No.
4	Fish net of tapa.	Tongan mat?	8	505-3 1
5	Wooden head rest.	Tongan head rest.	13	505-1
6	Stone axe with wooden handle.	Stone adze From Hawaii.	14	505-28
7	Large fan of long black feathers.	Hawaiian <i>kahili</i> or feather fans.	11-12	505-2 and 4

⁴ *Cook Voyage Artifacts in Leningrad, Berne, and Florence Museums* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1978) [Pp. x, 186, illustrations, paperback, \$15.00].

⁵ L. G. Rozina, "Colleksiya Jemsa Kooka," *Sobranii Muzeya Antropologii i etnografii*, 23 (1966), 234-53, and pages 3-17 in Kaeppler's English translation, footnote 4 above.

1780 Inventory		Kaepler/Rozina, 1978		
Number	Description	Description	Page Reference	Leningrad Museum No.
11	Wooden dagger with tail of an animal.	Hawaiian "tabooing" wand with white dog's tail pulled over stick.	12	505-6
12, 18	Morion (helmet) of feathers.	Hawaiian helmets.	6	505-7 and 11
13,20	Feather collars.	Society Island gorgets.	15-16	505-10 and 14
14,19,22	Feather mantles.	Hawaiian 'ahu'ula.	4-5	505-9, 12, 505-17-19
17	Wooden dagger.	Hawaiian <i>pāhoa</i> .	15	505-33
24	Armllet of small red feathers.	Hawaiian bandlike object.	7-8	505- 15
25	Armllet of animal fangs.	Hawaiian boar tusk bracelet.	8	505- 16
26	Wooden dagger with blade set with sharp teeth.	Hawaiian dagger with shark's teeth.	15	505-5
28	Wooden roller to make tapa.	Hawaiian <i>kapa</i> beater.	14	505-29

1780 Inventory		Kaepler/Rozina, 1978		
Number	Description	Description	Page Reference	Leningrad Museum No.
29	Mat of woven leaves.	Probably woven mat.	12-13	Lacking
31	Three zephyrs [fans] red and yellow feathers.	Hawaiian feather fans.	11-12	505-4
33	Women's mother-of-pearl front piece.	Tahitian mother-of-pearl breast apron.	9	505-20
34	Reed, wooden combs.	Tongan combs.	9	505-22 and 23
35	Five fish hooks.	Hawaiian & Tahitian fish hooks.	14-15	505-24, 25, 26
37	Tattooing instrument.	Object labeled as tattooing instrument but doubted.	16	505-27
38	Kisa [purse].	Tongan basket?	13	505-32

The importance of this *1780 Inventory*, therefore, gives documented proof that those articles in the Leningrad collection that appear on the *Inventory* are truly those that were collected by Cook on this third voyage around the world.