

## A BRIEF HISTORIOGRAPHICAL NOTE RELATED TO NORTH ASIA: NICOLAE MILESCU (1636–1708) & JOHN FREDERICK BADDELEY (1854–1939)

Daniela DUMBRAVĂ\*

**ABSTRACT.** Russian exploration in the 17<sup>th</sup> century attracted the attention of twentieth-century geographers, a fact that also resulted in a series of translations of texts produced by Russian embassies in the Far East, especially those beginning to deal with the Qing dynasty. The British geographer John F. Baddeley was one of these geographers, as he was also a member of the Royal Geographical Society. He not only translated texts, but also explored the Russian territories under discussion using the corpus of manuscripts compiled by the Russian ambassador to the Qing, Nicolae Milescu. The reception of his translations and his venture into North Asia by historians of science and geographers is remarkable, and it is equally a nuance where the history of the 17<sup>th</sup> century seems to ‘encounter’ Baddeley’s time of exploration in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Keywords:** Northern Asia, geography, explorations, Russians in the Far East, historiography.

*“I was with Spatahary’s account of his journey from Chinese frontier to Peking and sojourn there that, in May 1912, I began my work of translation.” (John Frederick Baddeley, 1919)<sup>1</sup>*

The beginning of historiographical attention in texts related to Nicolae Milescu Spatahary’s mission perfectly coincides with the logic of the dissemination of the manuscript texts resulting from his journey between Tobolsk and Peking:

---

\* *Institute for the History of Religions, Romanian Academy. E-mail: daniela.dumbrava@gmail.com*

<sup>1</sup> *Russia, Mongolia, and China. Being some Record of the Relations between them from the beginning of the XVII<sup>th</sup> Century to the Death of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich A.D. 1602-1676. Rendered mainly in the form of Narratives dictated or written by the Envoys sent by the Russian Tsars or their Voevodas in Siberia to the Kalmuk and Mongol Khans & Princes; and to the Emperors of China. With Introductions, Historical and Geographical also a Series of Maps showing the progress of Geographical Knowledge in regard to Northern Asia, during the XVI<sup>th</sup>, XVII<sup>th</sup>, & early XVIII<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The Texts are taken more*

the interest in the geographical, topographical, ethnographic<sup>2</sup> and cartographic knowledge transmitted by Nicolae Milescu.

Nicolae Milescu Spathary (1636–1708), a scholar and diplomat, was part of the administration in the Romanian Principalities and later in Russia. Considered *vir doctus variæque eruditionis* even by his contemporaries, Milescu is ranked among the most important representatives of south-eastern European humanism in the 17th century. He was born in the Vaslui region in Moldavia in 1636 into a family of Macedonian-Wallachian origin (from Peloponnese in Greece), at that time landowners in the Milești-Moldova area, hence his patronymic. He remains in the intellectual and political memory of Europe, one of the protagonists of Moscow's relations with the Qing dynasty, in the prelude to an imminent Russian conflict in the Albazin area, the Sino-Russian peace treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) and the first border between Russia and China. Milescu also served the foreign policy interests of Tsar Peter the Great in missions such as the one to Armenia, despite a brief but troubled period of disseminating Russia's domestic interests immediately after the death of Tsar Alexey Michailovich and the exile of the foreign minister, Artamon Sergeevich Matveyev (1625–1682). Nicolae Milescu ended his diplomatic career late in life, settling permanently in Moscow and maintaining political, academic, and ecclesiastical relations between Russia and the Romanian Principalities as well as with the Ecumenical Patriarchate until 1708, the year that marked the end of his life.

The corpus of texts delivered by Milescu to the Moscow *Duma* as soon as he returned from Beijing remained in oblivion for two centuries, before the geographer Yuri Arsenev discovered the aforementioned manuscripts in the Kremlin treasury. Between 1891 and 1916, during the time of Tsar Nikolai II, the world's longest railway, the Trans-Siberian Railway, was also finalized. Concern in these areas was also greater from the point of view of transnational infrastructure. Geographers' attention in the access routes between Moscow and Beijing via Siberia had motives that were related to Russia's new structural plans, thus, at least in part, explains the interest in the layered knowledge of transcontinental

---

*especially from Manuscripts in the Moscow Foreign Office Archive. The Whole by John F. Baddeley, Author of The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus, Macmillan and Company, London 1919, Vol. I-II, pp. 15-ccclxv + 1 f. er. + tab. geneal. A-I, maps, etc., xii-466, New York 1963; Mansfield Center CT, Martino 2007<sup>3</sup>. [In the following "RMC", it is the English translation of massive excerpts from the PSTNK and SSPNSK, with additional documents, notes, bibliography, index, annexes, etc.]; the motto quoted from RMC I, p. 8.*

<sup>2</sup> I became interested in the subject by reading the studies of Eugen Ciurtin, "L'ethnographie sibérienne dans l'œuvre du Roumain Nicolas 'Milescu' le Spathaire (1675-1678)," *Archævs*, vol. 4, nr. 1-2, 2000, 413-437; *idem*, "L'Asie dans l'œuvre du Roumain Nicolas 'Milescu' le Spathaire (1636-1708) et son contexte européen (II<sup>e</sup> partie)", *Studia Asiatica* vol. 1, nr. 1-2, 2000, 177-208.

transit routes from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries or the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are also two maps of Spathary, generically entitled *geograficheskie chertyozhi posol'stva N. G. Spafarij* (En. "Geographical maps - the mission of N. G. Spafarij"), known as *The Spatharios Map*, 1682 (16 x 21 cm.), Leo Bagrow coll., ms. Russ. 72, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, respectively *Tabula S[c]lavonica Idiomate Typo ligneo impressa in Sybiris esilio*, Sloane ms. 2910, British Library. From a territorial-administrative point of view, these cartographic representations, together with the description of Northern Asia, form the auroral outline of the first Russian-Chinese frontier in 1689 and are included in the cartographic index of reference, alongside those by Semyon Remezov (1642-1720), Nicolaas Witsen (1641-1717), Johan Gabriel Sparwenfeld (1655-1727), Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716), etc. The strategic value of the cartographical and geographical information provided by Miclescu to Russia and the representatives of the *Societatis Jesu* in Moscow and Peking, essential mediators in the Russian-Chinese border negotiations, is a chapter in itself in the biography of the Moldovan diplomat, one of the most important.

There was an extremely interesting phase for Miclescu's corpus of texts on North Asia after his return to Moscow, not to mention that all his contacts with the Jesuits at the court of Peking developed into an immense source of topographical and cartographical data, nevertheless without sophisticated geodesic calculation.<sup>3</sup> When arrived in Beijing, Miclescu was met by the *alichachava*, Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688), whose Chinese name we know to be Nan Huai-jen or Nan Tun-po. *Alichachava* in Manchurian *aliha hafan*, corresponds to the Chinese word *qing*, chief of cabinet. After Adam Schall von Bell (1591-1666) assignment, Verbiest was the best known and most popular Jesuit of the imperial court, having already in 1673 assumed the dignity of director of the Astronomical Observatory in Beijing, coordinator of ballistic production in the Chinese capital and tutor of the young Kangxi in the exact sciences: mathematics, arithmetic, trigonometry, and astronomy. These are aspects that we find in the official report made by Nicolae Miclescu at the end of his mission. Ferdinand Verbiest was to remain, throughout the entire mission, the most useful and experienced

---

<sup>3</sup> The triangular measurement or the trigonometric computation in accordance with the angular or astronomical observation is inexistent in Old Russian map making. In the seventeenth century, topographic measurement methods were quite rudimentary: the unique reticulate structure consists of the angle formed by the disposition of the rivers belonging to the Siberian hydrographical system; the distance measurements between two geographical units are evaluated in a day's journey; there were "no geographic coordinates, uniform scale nor cartographic projections of any kind" and before the eighteenth century, there is "no mathematical foundation in the *Ptolemaic* sense", see: Alexei V. Postnikov, "Outline of History of Russian Cartography", in K. Matsuzato, *Regions: A Prism to view the Slavic Eurasian World*. Proceedings of the July 1988 international Symposium of the Slavic Research Center, Sapporo, 2000, 8-9.

mediator between Miclescu and the Kangxi emperor, as he was the translator of the entire corpus of diplomatic correspondence from Beijing to Moscow and the translator from Latin into Manchurian of the two dignitaries. We often catch him acting as a spy for Moscow, as he and Nicholas plan an accessible overland route between Europe and the Far East for the use of Jesuit Catholic missionaries destined to evangelize and promote European science in China. The Moldovan diplomat would not hesitate to offer confidential information himself to the Jesuits in Moscow about the access routes to the Siberian plateau and the peace negotiations in Nerchinsk, a sort of exchange of services and gratitude for the help he had received in Beijing in 1676. Explorations into Chinese Tartary and discoveries of several overland routes between Siberia and Northern China, mainly as a result of the Russian missions and Jesuit explorations, overcome a large number of toponyms and ethnonyms. Part of these early modern European maps and geographical descriptions are made to a certain extent use of Renaissance cartographic sources and late medieval Chinese cartography. Another part, substantially added observations in situ indicating a straight interaction between the European explorers and the indigenous people settled in Northeast Asia.<sup>4</sup>

The Manchus represented a powerful multi-ethnic group settled in the north-eastern areas of China who, within a few decades, succeeded in moving the capital from Mukden to Beijing, the seat of the new dynasty. The Dogon prince (1612-1650), the fourteenth son of Nurhaci (1558-1626) was in fact the founder of the Qing dynasty, who entered Peking with his army in June 1644, supporting the proclamation of Shenzhu or Shunzhi (r.1643-1661) as emperor of China. The conquest of the Chinese capital by the Manchus shows the ascendant and decisive phase of the progressive extension of power over the Korean, Mongolian and Chinese populations. Mainly, Lifanyuan 理藩院 the office for “submitted territories” (in Mongolian *ᠮᠣᠩᠭᠣᠯᠠ ᠤᠨ ᠲᠦᠷᠦ ᠶ᠋ᠢ ᠵᠠᠰᠠᠬᠤ ᠶᠠᠪᠣᠳᠠᠯᠠ ᠤᠨ ᠶᠠᠮᠤᠨ*). This office dealt with the tributary countries of Central and North Asia, an integral and innovative part of the Qing’s administrative system of the empire. Among other things, it performed an important function, namely that of receiving foreign diplomats during their stay in the Forbidden City, preparing them for an audience with the emperor. Only Manchus and Mongols had access to the top of this institution as the Chinese were excluded from the highest offices. Indeed, Nicolae Miclescu was protected throughout his mission by General Ma-la, Vice-president of Lifanyuan. Ma-La (? - 1698), a member of the Manchu Bordered White Banner and a noble of *the ahaha hafan*, that is the sixth rank of the noble

---

<sup>4</sup> See also my book review of Noël Golvers, Efthymios Nicolaidis (eds.), Ferdinand Verbiest and Jesuit Science in 17th century China. An annotated edition and translation of the Constantinople manuscript (1676), National Hellenic Research Foundation vol. 108, Athens-Leuven 2009, 382 p., *Stvdia Asiatica* 11 (2010), 344-352.

hierarchy of the Qing, he was among those responsible for relations with the Russian delegations, even before Milescu's mission to Beijing. Milescu met him in Nahum and later went with him to Peking in 1675. Following Milescu's mission, Ma-La was promoted to the position of Chairman of the Board of Works, but unable to fulfil his duties, he was discharged. He is known above all as a high-ranking intelligence agent, the author of detailed espionage reports. Moreover, Milescu mentions the constant pursuit of the Russian delegation from Nahum to Beijing and the capital of the Qing, complaining of not being able to move freely in that environment at the imperial court and its surroundings.

The territories of south-eastern Siberian Russia were completely unknown and inaccessible to most Catholic missions in Asia, not to mention diplomatic missions between European states and the Far East in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, to exemplify, any foreign delegation in Moscow, knowing of Milescu's mission, would secretly try to obtain information regarding the geography of the Siberian territories and especially cartographic and topographical representations.<sup>5</sup> This is a separate chapter, which I have also discussed elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> which is why I will only make a note of the incipient phase of the rediscovery of the manuscripts of the above-mentioned Milescu texts. An extremely important point must be made: the texts written by Milescu relating to North Asia and his mission to the Qing administration, over seven hundred manuscript pages (descriptions, diplomatic correspondence, translations enclosed in the report relating to Chinese territories in areas where his exploration did not reach, or generic information<sup>7</sup> relating to the end of the Ming dynasty, translated from Martino Martini's books), as well as various cartographic sketches, were never published before the Arsenev edition (1882), in Russian, and those of Baddeley (1919), in English, and not in full. They were placed among the documents relating to the

---

<sup>5</sup> In my doctoral thesis I dealt with this aspect in detail, but I will only refer for now to my "John G. Sparwenfeld e Nicolae Milescu (Mosca, 1684). Rapporti diplomatici, scambi d'informazione e convergenza delle fonti", *Studia Asiatica. International Journal for Asian Studies*, Bucharest, X (2009), pp. 297-307.

<sup>6</sup> *La missione di Nicolae Milescu in Asia Settentrionale, 1675-1676*, doctoral dissertation in *Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze*, 2007, pp. 430.

<sup>7</sup> Martino Martini, *Novus Atlas Sinensis [Atlas Sinicus, Sive Magni Sinarum Imperii Geographica descriptio o Atlas Extremæ Asiæ sive Sinarvm Imperii Geographica Descriptio]*, J. Blaeu editore, Amsterdam 1655. [Martino Martini, *Opera Omnia* (vol. I: *Lettere e documenti*, vol. II: *Opere minori*, vol. III, 1-2: *Novus Atlas Sinensis*), eds. by Giuliano Bertuccioli, Franco Demarchi, University of Trento, Trento, 1998-2002. [vol. IV: *Sinicae Historiae decas Prima*; vol. V: *De Bello Tartarico Historia, Documentazioni aggiuntive*]; *idem, Novus Atlas Sinensis: tavole*/Martino Martini s.j., (eds. by Riccardo Scartezzini, Giuliano Bertuccioli, Federico Masini), (17c. illustrations, 5 fasc.), Trento, University of Trento, 2003. *De Bello Tartarico Historia* had had tremendous success in the seventeenth century: four Latin editions, two at Antwerp, one at Köln and one at Vienna and successively had added translations in five languages, German, Italian, French, English and Dutch.

earliest official relations between Russia and the Middle Empire (late Ming and early Qing China). It was his mission report, rigorously<sup>8</sup> conceived after instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 1673 and 1675.<sup>9</sup>

The very close connections between Yuri Arsenev (or Arsenieff), keeper of the imperial jewels in the Kremlin treasury in Moscow and a full member of the *Imperial Geographical Society* in St. Petersburg and John Frederick Baddeley, a British explorer in North Asia in 20<sup>th</sup> century, member of the *Royal Geographical Society* in London, arose thanks to the existence of the North Asian route travelled and outlined by Nicolae Milescu between 1675 and 1676. Due to Arsenev's careful attention to the rapid publication of those manuscripts as well as his skills in promoting the information he discovered, he also exchanged correspondence with Émile Picot (1844-1918), a well-known linguist, Italianist, and philologist who was extremely connected to the Renaissance culture and literature of south-eastern Europe (professor at the *École des Langues Orientales vivantes*). The French scholar in the field of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Slavistics was also fascinated by Milescu's personality and work. Most probably, Picot intended<sup>10</sup> to realize a

<sup>8</sup> See "Nicolae Milescu in Asia Settentrionale (1675). Preliminari alla sua missione diplomatica presso la corte imperiale dei Qing", *Studia Asiatica. International Journal for Asian Studies*, Bucharest, X (2009), pp. 167-232.

<sup>9</sup> I have commented on this on several occasions, trying to prove that Milescu's texts are not plagiarism, which is a completely unfounded issue. See Daniela Dumbravă, "Il Novus Atlas Sinensis di Martino Martini vs Opisanie Kitay di Nicolae Milescu?" in *La storia della cartografia e Martino Martini*, ed. by Elena Dai Prà, Scienze Geografiche Franco Angeli, Milano, 2015, p. 162-177; *idem*, "The first political borders of the Eurasian continent at the northern «entrance» to the Son of Heaven? Tow European chronicles on the Manchu-Russian negotiations in the 17th century: Seicento *Statejnyj spisok & Relacao diaria da viagem*", in *Proceedings of the International Symposium* (ed. Luis Filipe Barreto) "Tomás Pereira S.J. (1645-1708). Life, Work and Time", Ed. Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, I. P., Lisbon, 2010, pp. 317-352; *idem*, "Nicolae Milescu nu a plagiat": [http://www.romlit.ro/index.pl/nicolae\\_milescu\\_nu\\_a\\_plagiat](http://www.romlit.ro/index.pl/nicolae_milescu_nu_a_plagiat), *România literară* 41, 2007; *idem*, "Ripensando Nicolae 'Milescu' Spathar (1636-1708) – Breve saggio storiografico", *Archaeus* vol. 8, nr. 1-4, 2004, p. 193-234.

<sup>10</sup> "Ayant pris connaissance lors de mon dernier séjour à St. Petersburg de Votre intéressante et savante notice sur Nicolas Spathar Milescu publiée dans les *Mélanges Orientaux* de 1883, je me suis trouvé très honoré de la mention que Vous avez bien voulu y faire de ma publication de l'itinéraire de Spathar en Sibérie en 1675. C'est un sujet auquel je continue à consacrer mes recherches et je me ferais un devoir et un plaisir de Vous en communiquer les résultats. La Société Géographique de St. Petersburg s'étaient chargée de Vous faire parvenir ma dernière publication, je prends la liberté de Vous demander. [...] L'attention éclairée que Vous avez portée sur cet intéressant personnage et sur l'activité qu'avait été en grand partie consacrée à notre pays, m'encourage particulièrement à me recommander à Votre bienveillance en Vous adressant ces lignes". (Le 19 Avril 1885, Georges Arsenieff, membre effective de la Société Géographique de St. Ptg.)- unpublished letter of Yuri Arsenev to Émile Picot, sent from Petersburg on 19 April 1885, currently in the holdings Émile Picot at *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* in Paris, FRBNF 31734370; TOL MFILM Z PICOT - 941].

French edition of the same North-Asian itinerary; to judge the correspondence with Yuri Arsenev, it appears that the Russian scholar had sent him the text of the *PSTNK* edited in 1882. It should be noted that the French scholar was already in possession of the *Slavonic ms. 35*, i.e., the *Opisanie Kitay*, located in Picot's collection of the BNF. In practice, it resulted in a fascinating *Notice biographique et bibliographique* dedicated to Aleksej Michajlovich's ambassador to China and presented at the Congress of Oriental Studies in 1882 and further published in *Mélanges Orientaux* in 1883.<sup>11</sup>

Simultaneously, the first publications of texts concerning the same embassy in China appeared, all of them edited by Yuri Arsenev, an impressive publishing achievement considering the complexity of the subject, the difficulties related to the chronology of these texts, and the systematization of a large amount of geographical knowledge of the North Asian space. Indeed, I believe it is relevant to briefly dwell on the genesis and reception with which this historiographical subject was received in the various academic worlds.

The narrative content resulting from Miclescu's exploration of North Asia stimulated 20<sup>th</sup>-century scholars with an encyclopaedical intellectual background to venture into the actual investigation and exploration of the same spaces, as in the case of Baddeley, and ultimately, into the enterprise of reconstructing the history of Russian expeditions to the Pacific, a fundamental element for understanding the pre-modern history of the peoples settled in the Eurasian macro-regions. Thus, Arsenev's editions contained many valuable additions pertaining to the history of 17<sup>th</sup>-century exploration in Siberia, and this critical apparatus enabled John Frederick Baddeley to tackle the translation of the Russian texts and edit the two volumes of the work *Russia, Mongolia, and China*. In fact, Anglo-American historiography specializing in pre-modern and modern relations between Russia and China or in the history of North Asian cartography in the 17<sup>th</sup> century has never ceased to refer to Baddeley's<sup>12</sup> translation of the

---

<sup>11</sup> Émile PICOT, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur Nicolas Spatar Miclescu, Ambassadeur du tsar Alexis Mihajlovič en Chine", [Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes] *Mélanges Orientaux* 1 (1883), p. 433-492.

<sup>12</sup> Petre P. Panaitescu, "Nicolas Spathar Miclescu (1636-1708)", *Mélanges de l'École Roumaine en France*, vol. 1, nr. 1925, 33-180; Constantin Bărbulescu (a cura di), *Jurnal de călătorie în China* (N. Miclescu Spătarul), București 19582, p. v-xlviii; Joseph Sebes, *The Jesuits and The Sino-Russian Treaty of Nertcinsk. The Diary of Thomas Pereira S.J.*, Istitutum Historicum S.I. volumen XVIII, Rome, 1961, 76-122; Mark Mancall, *Russia and China. Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728*, Harvard U.P. [Harvard East Asian Series 61], Cambridge Massachusetts, 1971, 14-17; 63; Leo Bagrow, *A History of Russian Cartography up to 1800*, eds. by Henry W. Castner, Wolfe Island, The Walker Press, Ontario, 1975; Beate Hill-Paulus, *Nikolaj Gavrilovič Spatharij (1636-1708) und seine Gesandtschaft nach China*, Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens Mitteilungen LXXI, Hamburg, 1978, 89; E. Alexandre, "Note sur Nicolas Spathar, grec de Moldavie, ambassadeur russe auprès de K'ang-Hsi en 1676", *Actes du IV<sup>e</sup> Colloque international de Sinologie*, Chantilly, 1983, 1-11; Rudolf Loewenthal,

texts of Nicolae Milescu Spathar's mission to *Katay*<sup>13</sup>, most probably because of the easy access to these sources and not to those existing in the Moscow archives, which were often inaccessible before the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Returning to the nexus of history and historiography of Milescu's Asian itinerary, a curious aspect attracts the attention of the historian, namely the factuality arising from the translation of the same texts:

"It was with Spathary's account of his journey from the Chinese frontier to Peking and sojourn there that, in May 1912, I began my work of translation. [...] I then translated the diary of his travels from Tobolsk to the Chinese frontier, and by that time had become so deeply interested in the subject that I settled down in Moscow and began the work on the musty MS. Records of earlier Russian mission, whether to the Court of China, to the Mongol khans, or to the Kalmuk princes. All this led, naturally enough, to geographical enquiries..."

The testimony of the British explorer is truly remarkable, as it indicates the impact between the bio-bibliography of two intellectuals from different eras and the interest in the cognitive process that took place in the pre-modern period of Asian Russia, Mongolia, and China. The analysis of late-medieval, Renaissance, and pre-modern maps, accompanied by an explanation of the exhibition guides of the same territories, suggests the appropriate method of evaluation of a member of the *Royal Geographical Society*<sup>14</sup>, as well as enlightening

---

"Nikolai Gavrilovich Spafarii-Milesku (1636-1708). A Biobibliography", *Monumenta Serica* 37 (1986-87), 95-111; M. Tolmachëva, "The Early Russian Exploration and Mapping of The Chinese Frontiere", *Cahier du Monde Russe, Paris* 41 (2000), no. 1, 41-56, etc.

<sup>13</sup> *Katay* derived from the Old Turkic *Qitañ*, it appears as a plural [Kitat/Kitad] in the *Secret History of Mongols* and also in Chinese, Tibetan, and Turk transcription, usually refers to the Jurčen people; medieval western sources mentioned it as well, and following the orientalist scholar Denis Signor, the earliest Latin mention is probably made by the Franciscan John of Plano Carpini, who travelled in Mongolia between 1245 and 1247. The same ethnonym occurs in Franciscan William of Rubruk's account on Mongolia. The Russian name of China is *Kitay*, most probably introduced into Slavonic thesaurus from Turkish, Mongolian, or even Arabic. Relevant enough, the historian of Central Asia Denis Sinor adds that *Kitay* is linked with the cartographic toponymy – *Kýtaia lacus* – quoted by Abraham Ortelius in his *Tartarie sive Magni Chami Regni*, published in 1570; also, in the Anthony Jenkinson's or Sigmund Herberstein's maps, usually as the headwater of the Ob, which flows into Arctic Ocean ("Mare Glaciale" or "Mare Septentrionale"), situated into the land of Ugrians. In this regard, see the extensive explications, to which it adds bibliographic basic references, offered by Denis Sinor, "Western Information on the Kitans and Some Related Questions", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 115 (1995), no. 2, p. 262-269.

<sup>14</sup> Baddeley became a prominent member of the *Royal Geographical Society*, one of the first British explorers of northern Asia to reach Aigun and Tsitsiqar (or Qiqihar), first in 1909, and a second time in 1912.



us on the historical context in which Baddeley began the drafting of the *RMC* and how he himself went on to explore the East-Asian territories. Reading the preface to the *RMC*<sup>15</sup> and the autobiographical pages enclosed in the volume *Russia in the "Eighties"*<sup>16</sup> ..., one can follow in detail the stages that preceded the completion of such a project: the invitation by Count Peter Schouvaloff (1827-1889)<sup>17</sup> to Moscow, learning the Russian language, the task of correspondent for the British press in Russia, contact with the aristocratic class in Moscow and St. Petersburg, trips to northern Asia (Irkutsk in 1900; Amur in 1907; Caucasus in 1908, Aigun and Tsitsiqar in 1909; the frontier of the northern part of China in 1912) which, however, also anticipated Sir Marc Aurel Stein's missions to the same regions. In fact, John F. Baddeley lived the whole time in Russia, of which he was absent only briefly, from 1879 through the dawn of the Bolshevik revolution, in 1917. Surely, a monograph dedicated to the British explorer could clarify the detailed chapters of his fascinating biography.

What was the impact of the *RMC* in the academic world, and who commented on Baddeley's contribution to the history of North Asian geography and cartography? There was a particular historiographical interest manifested by scholars, seemingly far removed from the usual profile of the "specialized" scientist (e.g., in the field of the history of geography and cartography), an interest linked to broader fields than those normally considered. Take the example of the multifaceted scholar George Alfred Leon Sarton (1884-1956), one of the reviewers of *RMC*. Sarton's<sup>18</sup> focus was: (i) on the ways in which a seventeenth-century scholar offered in his description details pertaining to a referential memory of the geographical units and ecosystem of Northeast Asia, and thus, information pertaining to an empirical (observable) transmission. (ii) on the multiple modes of transmission of knowledge aimed at a single geographical unit and on the dynamics of the cognitive process on the North Asian territories.

As far as Russian cartography is concerned, I will make a brief remark, in order to understand the importance of cartographic information in the *RMC*. The transition from traditional large-scale cartographic representation (*bol'shoy chertyozh*) to cartography performed on a scientific basis only developed in Moscow in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the methodology of

---

<sup>15</sup> J. F. Baddeley *RMC* 1919, 7-10.

<sup>16</sup> Baddeley was initially rejected by *The Times* and the *Daily News*. According to Baddeley, it was Count Peter Schouvaloff who had secured him the post of special correspondent from Saint Petersburg for *The Standard*. See his preface to F. Baddeley, *Russia in the 'Eighties'. Sport and Politics*, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1921, 1-47.

<sup>17</sup> Count Peter Schouvaloff, Russian diplomat, and representative of Russia at the Berlin Congress.

<sup>18</sup> George Sarton, "Russia, Mongolia, China", book review, *Isis* 4:1 (1921), 86.

large-scale mapping followed the model of Semyon Remezov (1642-1720): the distance between two localities was measured in days of travel; hydrographic systems represented the only reticulated structures; in the auroral phase of the cartographic representation of Siberia in Tobolsk in 1667, symbols were used to create distinctions between towns, fortresses, villages, shores, lakes, and nomad settlements, in order to emphasize the rudimentary system of differentiation in a map, etc. An intricate link between geography, ethnography, and history characterizes the mapping process of the *bol'shoy čertež*, indicating the main feature of traditional Russian map-making. With their specific richness of toponyms and ethnonyms, the Old Russian cartographic drawings are completely different from early modern European maps.

The execution of the first ethnographic map in 1673, attributed to the prelate of the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Cornelius of Siberia and Tobolsk, constituted one of the most important moments in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Russian cartography. In fact, it is one of the most comprehensive ethnographic maps of the indigenous peoples of the Eurasian territories ever, a primary source for subsequent European cartographic representations and for all geographical descriptions of the North-East Asian world. The land of the Manchus (of the *Bogdoi*) and those of the Yellow Mongols, Koreans, of the Chinese Empire, the Khiva domain, the Buhara kingdom, the Qizilbāsh, the Manguts included in the Nogai group, the Tanguts (Tibetans), the lands of the Calmucchi, Khoshout, Zungari, Derbet, Lamunut, Kamchadal, Yakut, with many other tribes, the lands of the Black Mongols and that of the White Mongols, are all included in the index of this map.

John F. Baddeley dedicates an extensive commentary in *RMC* on Metropolitan Cornelius' masterpiece. The northern frontier of China was a strategic area, where the relationships with the Mongol tribes were managed through defence and trade, the stability and balance of these relations being substantially determined by the privileges conferred to the various clans, stationed in and around Inner and Outer Mongolia. In fact, the fluctuations (the periods of greater cohesion or lack of unity) of the Mongol tribes are considered a crucial indicator of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century history of this frontier, representing a chapter of North Asian history awaiting further elaboration. Throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, ethno- and geo-historical information as well as cartographic representations undergo a process of transformation and also enucleate the history of the transition from the Ming to the Qing dynasty, not only that of the relations between the Qing and Russia.

A second evaluation of the *RMC* was carried out by the British scholar (librarian) Edward Heawood<sup>19</sup> at the headquarters of the *Royal Geographical Society* itself. He noted, in agreement with the author of the book, how paradoxical it was to think that the Russians had started their explorations in the northern parts of Asia because of the lack of access to the regions of northern Siberia (the huge space between Irtysh and Ob') in the pre-modern period, which had a different cause from the assumed difficulty generated by the physical characteristics of the space; the real reason was the lack of knowledge regarding the populations settled in this macro-region. The Russians' fear of the possibility of encountering barbarian and potentially warlike populations was gradually removed during the period when Ermak's expeditions began and the Kazan and Astrachan regions were occupied. These first subjugated Asian lands marked the beginning of the process of Russian expansion towards the Pacific Ocean, a process that developed over more than two centuries.

Edward Heawood, also an expert on late medieval and Renaissance cartographic history, built his account of the *RMC* volumes on the basis of the cartographic history dedicated to the "Land of Darkness", recalling Marco Polo's *itineraria scripta* and the later representation of the North Asian regions in the Catalan Atlas (1375), in addition to more remote representations of the Volga or Volga River in various portolans or late medieval maps, a correlative topography of Eastern Europe and Siberia in Renaissance maps such as the map of Fra Mauro (1457-1459), in Battista Agnese's Atlas (1554) or in the *itineraria picta* of Anton Wied (1542), Sigismund Herberstein (1554) or Anthony Jenkinson (1562), etc. This assessment also demanded critical remarks on the various transmission errors in the maps edited by Baddeley;<sup>20</sup> and as it centered on a discourse combining exploration with the representation of the space explored, he emphasized the author's special attention to the topographical information of northern Asia reported by Spathary, an unprecedented contribution in the early modern history of Russian descriptions in this regard.

Both Russian cartography and European cartography made with or by the Jesuits did not lead to a perfect representation of northern China in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but they were crucial for the delimitation of the first frontier between the Romanov and Qing empires sanctioned in Nerchinsk in 1689. There is a very specific reason for this: the territories incorporated by the Qing dynasty – Xinjinag, the lands of the Oirat and Khalcha Mongols, i.e., the territories of Outer Mongolia, the lands of the Jurchen people, i.e., Inner Mongolia and, finally, the Tanguts,

---

<sup>19</sup> Edward Heawood, "The Historical Geography of Northern Eurasia", *The Geographical Journal* 56 (1920), no. 6, 491-496.

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, "Obituary: John F. Baddeley", *The Geographical Journal* 95 (1940), 407-408.

and the people of Tibet would all be incorporated by the Qing administration. Finally, at the festive general meeting held on 30 May 1921, the President of the *Royal Geographical Society*, Sir Francis Younghusband, recalled the name of Mr John Frederick Baddeley to present him with *The Victorian Medal* – an award established in memory of Her Majesty Queen Victoria – for his travels dedicated to the exploration of Siberian territories, for his studies of Russian expansion in the Caucasus, and for the special subject that led to the award:

“Beginning to study the narrative of Russian envoys who had made this journey in the seventeenth century, especially the work of Spathary, he was led to study the whole history of Russian intercourse with China, and embodied the results in his great work in two volumes – ‘Russia, Mongolia, China’ – which is the particular subject of our Award.”

At the time of the ceremony, the British geographer and explorer was unable to join into the festive atmosphere of the assembly due to an illness that kept him in Italy.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### *Primary Sources*

Yü. V. Arsenev (edited by), *Putevoi dnevník ot Nerchinskogo ostroga do Pekina russkogo poslannika v Kitae Nikolaja Gavriloviča Spafariia 1676* [“Il Diario di viaggio di N. G. Spafarii, l’inviato in Cina dal porto di Nerčinsk a Pechino durante il 1676”], *Известия Императорского русского географического общества*, Orenburg, 1896 (71 p.), *Izvestiia Imperatorskogo russkogo geografičeskogo obšestva* (Orenburg), 9 (1896), p. 1-71.

\_\_\_\_\_, “Путешествие через Сибирь от Тобольска до Нерчинска и границ Китая русского посланника Николая Слафария в 1675 г.”, *Записки Императорского русского географического общества по отделению этнографии*, Спб. 1882. *Putešestvie čerez Sibir’ ot Tobol’ska do Nerčinska i granits Kitaja russkogo poslannika Nikolaja Spafarija v 1675 godu*. Dorožnyj dnevník Spafarija s vvdeniem i primečanijami Yu. V. Arsen’eva”, [“The travel of the Russian envoy Nikolai Spafarij, from Tobolsk to Nerčinsk and to the China’s border with Siberia, in 1675”], *Zapiski Imperatorskogo russkogo geografičeskogo obšestva po otdeleniju etnografij* 10 (1882), pp. 1-224. [abrev. PSTNK]

\_\_\_\_\_, *Статейный список Николая Спафария в Китай (1675-1678 гг.)*, *Вестник археологии и истории*. Вып. 17. Отд. 2. Спб., 1906/transl. *Statejnyj spisok posol’stva Nikolaj Spafarija v Kitae, 1675-1678 vv.* [“The official rapport outcome from the N. Spafarii’s mission to China, 1675-1678”], *Sankt Petersburg*, 1906, p. 6-178. [abr. SSPNSK]

- H. Спафарий, *Описание первья части вселенныя, именуемой Азии, в ней же состоит Китайское государство с прочими его города и провинции*, Казань, 1910. [translit. *Opisanija pervyia častija vseleennyia imenuemoj Azii v nej že sostoit Kitajskoe gosudarstvo s pročimi ego gorody i provincii, N. G. Spafarii*]/“Description of the first part of the world, named Asia, where it is to be found the reign of China, its towns and its regions”]; text edited by F. Vasiliev, A. Alexandrov, N. O. Katanov, Kazan, 1910. This volume encloses Nicolae [Spafarij] Milescu’s remarks on the great river Amur: “Сказание о великой реке Амуре”/transl. *Scazenie o velikoi reke Amure*, first edited in “Известия Императорского русского географического общества”/transl. *Izvestiia Imperatorskogo russkogo geografičeskogo obšestva* 4 (1882).
- J. F. Baddeley (a cura di), *Russia, Mongolia, China. Being some Record of the Relations between them from the beginning of the XVIIth Century to the Death of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich A.D. 1602-1676. Rendered mainly in the form of Narratives dictated or written by the Envoys sent by the Russian Tsars, or their Voevodas in Siberia to the Kalmuk and Mongol Khans & Princes; and to the Emperors of China. With Introductions, Historical and Geographical also a Series of Maps showing the progress of Geographical Knowledge in regard to Northern Asia, during the XVIth, XVIIth, & early XVIIIth Centuries. The Texts taken more especially from Manuscripts in the Moscow Foreign Office Archive. The Whole by John F. Baddeley, Author of The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus, Macmillan and Company, London 1919, Vol. I-II, pp. 15-ccclxv + 1 f. er. + tab. geneal. A-I, mappe, etc., xii-466, New York 1963<sup>2</sup>; Mansfield Center CT, Martino 2007<sup>3</sup>. [trad. inglese di massicci brani del PSTNK e del SSPNSK, con documenti aggiuntivi, note, bibliografia, indici, annesse, etc.].*
- \_\_\_\_\_, *Russia in the «Eighties». Sport and Politics*, Longmans, Green and Co. 39 Paternoster & 30 th Street, New York, Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, 1921.
- Johan G. Sparwenfeld, *Diary of a Journey to Russia 1684-87*. [translated and edited by Ulla Birgegård 2002].
- Boris P. Polevoy, “Географические чертёжи посольства Н. Г. Спафария” [“Geographical sketches from the Ambassade of N. G. Spafary”], *Izvestiya Akademii nauk SSSR: seria geograficheskaya* 1 (1969), p. 115-122.
- Semyon Remezov, *Certioznaia kniga Sibiri, sostavlennaia tobolskim synom boyarskim Semyonom Remezovim v 1701 godu*/ “Atlas of Siberia, compiled by the Tobolsk Boyar’s Son Semyonov Remezov in 1701”, Skt. Petersburg 1882.
- Martino Martini, *Novus Atlas Sinensis [Atlas Sinicus, Sive Magni Sinarum Imperii Geographica descriptio o Atlas Extremæ Asiæ sive Sinarvm Imperii Geographica Descriptio]*, J. Blaeu editore, Amsterdam 1655. [Martino Martini, *Opera Omnia* (vol. I: *Lettere e documenti*, vol. II: *Opere minori*, vol. III, 1-2: *Novus Atlas Sinensis*), eds. by Giuliano Bertuccioli, Franco Demarchi, University of Trento, Trento, 1998-2002. [vol. IV: *Sinicae Historiae decas Prima*; vol. V: *De Bello Tartarico Historia, Documentazioni aggiuntive*]; *idem, Novus Atlas Sinensis: tavole*/Martino Martini s.j., (eds. by Riccardo Scartezzini, Giuliano Bertuccioli, Federico Masini), (17c. illustrations, 5 fasc.), Trento, University of Trento, 2003.

**Secondary literature:**

- E. Alexandre, "Note sur Nicolas Spathar, grec de Moldavie, ambassadeur russe auprès de K'ang-Hsi en 1676", *Actes du IV<sup>e</sup> Colloque international de Sinologie*, Chantilly, 1983, 1-11.
- Leo Bagrow, *A History of Russian Cartography up to 1800*, (eds. by) Henry W. CASTNER, Wolfe Island, The Walker Press, Ontario, 1975.
- Constantin Bărbulescu (ed.), *Jurnal de călătorie în China* (N. Milescu Spătarul), București 1958<sup>2</sup>.
- Eugen Ciurtin, "L'ethnographie sibérienne dans l'œuvre du Roumain Nicolas 'Milescu' le Spathaire (1675-1678)", *Archævs*, vol. 4, nr. 1-2, 2000, 413-437.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "L'Asie dans l'œuvre du Roumain Nicolas 'Milescu' le Spathaire (1636-1708) et son contexte européen (II<sup>e</sup> partie)", *Studia Asiatica*, vol. 1, nr. 1-2, 2000, 177-208.
- Daniela Dumbravă, book review to Noël Golvers, Efthymios Nicolaidis (eds.), *Ferdinand Verbiest and Jesuit Science in 17th century China. An annotated edition and translation of the Constantinople manuscript (1676)*, National Hellenic Research Foundation vol. 108, Athens-Leuven 2009, 382 p., *Studia Asiatica* 11 (2010), 344-352.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "John G. Sparwenfeld e Nicolae Milescu (Mosca, 1684). Rapporti diplomatici, scambi d'informazione e convergenza delle fonti", *Studia Asiatica. International Journal for Asian Studies*, Bucharest, X (2009), 297-307.
- \_\_\_\_\_, *La missione di Nicolae Milescu in Asia Settentrionale, 1675-1676*, doctoral dissertation in *Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze*, 2007, 430.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Nicolae Milescu in Asia Settentrionale (1675). Preliminari alla sua missione diplomatica presso la corte imperiale dei Qing", *Studia Asiatica. International Journal for Asian Studies*, Bucharest, X (2009), 167-232.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Il *Novus Atlas Sinensis* di Martino Martini vs *Opisanie Kitay* di Nicolae Milescu?" in *La storia della cartografia e Martino Martini*, ed. by Elena Dai Prà, Scienze Geografiche Franco Angeli, Milano, 2015, 162-177.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "The first political borders of the Eurasian continent at the northern «entrance» to the Son of Heaven? Tow European chronicles on the Manchu-Russian negotiations in the 17th century: Seicento *Statejnyj spisok & Relação diaria da viagem*", in *Proceedings of the International Symposium* (ed. Luis Filipe Barreto) "Tomás Pereira S.J. (1645-1708). Life, Work and Time", Ed. Centro Científico e Cultural de Macau, I. P., Lisbon, 2010, 317-352.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Nicolae Milescu nu a plagiat", see online: [http://www.romlit.ro/index.pl/nicolae\\_milescu\\_nu\\_a\\_plagiat](http://www.romlit.ro/index.pl/nicolae_milescu_nu_a_plagiat), *România literară* 41, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Ripensando Nicolae 'Milescu' Spathar (1636-1708) – Breve saggio storiografico", *Archævs* vol. 8, nr. 1-4, 2004, 193-234.
- Rudolf Loewenthal, "Nikolai Gavrilovich Spafarii-Milesku (1636-1708). A Biobibliography", *Monumenta Serica* 37 (1986-87), 95-111.

- Edward Heawood, "The Historical Geography of Northern Eurasia", *The Geographical Journal* 56 (1920), no. 6, 491-496.
- \_\_\_\_\_, "Obituary: John F. Baddeley", *The Geographical Journal*, 95 (1940), 407-408.
- Mark Mancall, *Russia and China. Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728*, Harvard U.P. [Harvard East Asian Series 61], Cambridge Massachusetts, 1971.
- Petre P. Panaitescu, "Nicolas Spathar Milescu (1636-1708)", *Mélanges de l'École Roumaine en France* vol. 1, nr. 1925.
- Beate Hill-Paulus, *Nikolaj Gavrilovič Spatharij (1636-1708) und seine Gesandtschaft nach China*, Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens Mitteilungen LXXI, Hamburg, 1978.
- Émile Picot, "Notice biographique et bibliographique sur Nicolas Spatar Milescu, Ambassadeur du tsar Alexis Mihajlovič en Chine", [Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes] *Mélanges Orientaux* 1 (1883), 433-492.
- Alexei V. Postnikov, "Outline of History of Russian Cartography", in K. Matsuzato, *Regions: A Prism to view the Slavic Eurasian Word*. Proceedings of the July 1988 International Symposium of the Slavic Research Center, Sapporo, 2000, 1-49.
- George Sarton, "Russia, Mongolia, China", book review, *Isis* 4 (1921), no. 1, 85-88.
- Denis Signor, "Western Information on the Kitans and Some Related Questions", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 115 (1995), no. 2, 262-269.
- Joseph Sebes, *The Jesuits and The Sino-Russian Treaty of Nerčinsk. The Diary of Thomas Pereira S.J.*, Istitutum Historicum S.I. volumen XVIII, Rome, 1961.
- M. Tolmachëva, "The Early Russian Exploration and Mapping of The Chinese Frontiere", *Cahier du Monde Russe, Paris* 41 (2000), no. 1, 41-56, etc.

