

### Linguistic particularities of transmission of Russian geographic names

The question of transliteration of geographic names on maps, gazetteers and in text had been discussed many times by oceanographers and linguists. It became even more important for the international cartographic publications on the World ocean and its regions.

The GEBCO maps and Gazetteer are one of these publications, which give the main reference material of undersea names. Maps and Gazetteer include names proposed by various countries. All GEBCO maps are published in English.

The problem of rules on transliteration of national names is important for many countries. It is UN that controls the standardization of geographic names at the international level. There are two aspects in the problem of transmission of Russian geographic names:

1. The choice of transliteration system
2. The form of transmission of Russian names

1. System of «romanisation». There are many possibilities (system) of transferring Russian names into Roman alphabet. But there is not any final decision of this problem. The review and comparison of various systems for mapping was done by Mrs. Litvin I.P. in Russia in 1976 (National Commission of Geographic Names). Among these systems we can cite the so-called Liverpool scheme of 1947, the UN system of 1969 for transmitting Russian personal names and geographic names, some corporate systems such as International Post Union, International Electric Connection Union, International Standardization Union (1968). The Intergovernmental Marine Consulting Organization accepted English as the international language for transmitting the names of ships in Roman alphabet.

In 1981 in Russia was approved a State Standard: the rules of transliteration of Cyrillic alphabet by letters of Roman alphabet. In 1983 on the basis of rules accepted by this standard a special system of romanization of Russian geographic names in order to use them in the maps. These maps were published in Roman for international use. This system was accepted and published in 1985 for standardization of undersea feature names (see annex 1). In 1987 the UN conference (Moureal) dedicated to normalization of geographical names recommended our national system for international use. The main feature of this system is that it follows the orthographic traditions of Slavonic languages that use Roman alphabet. In the last ten years this system of romanization was used in several national and international cartographic publications. The most known is the World Atlas (1999). This system is accepted by a number of the biggest world cartographic publishing houses (Berthelmann, Agostin).

Using different systems in transliteration of the same Russian names is very undesirable as it brings chaos in cartographic and other publications.

The UN approves and recommends for the international use national systems of transliteration. This principle is the basis of the «Guidelines for the standardization of the undersea feature names» p.2-1, I. General. F.: «Names not in the writing system of the country applying the names on the map or other documents should be transliterated according to the system adopted by the national authority applying the names»

2. The transmission of Russian geographic names is connected with grammatical forms of Russian language. We can cite the categories of names as follows:

Names of undersea features that are formed on the base of names of adjoining land. Such names have a form of adjectives, for example: Kurilo-Kamchatskij Trench, Korovinskij Canyon.

These names should be saved in the form of Russian adjectives. (Rare traditional exception are possible).

Names, connected with the names of ships. They have the form of nominative case. The names are given on the maps without inverted commas, for example :

Strakhov fracture zone.

The names of institution, organizations are usually used in genitive case, for example :

Institututa okeanologii Rise, Akademii Nauk Rise.

Historical names, given in memory of outstanding persons- travellings, marine explorers, scientists etc. In Russian language these names are always in genitive case, for example : Gagarina Seamount, Klenovoi valley.

This case is understandable only to those who are speaking Russian. In order to make them recognizable for those who do not speak Russian it is reasonable to leave them in nominative case when transmitting into Roman alphabet. Doing this, it is necessary to observe the rules of transliteration, for example :

Gagarin Seamount, Klenova Seamount.

In 1991 year Mr. R. Randall recommended to use most of all the nominative case, especially on historical names. In this connection I corrected in GEBSCO Gazetteer the form of some names and their transliteration. This resulting I discrepancy in transmitting of the same names on the maps and in the Gazetteer. It is necessary to take a decision about identical transliteration in GEBSCO Gazetteer and other international publications of maps.

The possible solution - to submit a propose to the constant Russian commission on geographical names. Having the decision of the commission we could accept recommendation at the level of GEBSCO ( based on the practice).

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