

ABSTRACT

To scholars studying early encounters between Japan and Russia, the Golovnin incident has often come to signify a breakthrough in diplomatic relations. The Incident gave both countries insight into the other's value system and political ambition, promoting subsequent peaceful attempts at establishing a border in the Kurile archipelago. Up until today English language research has been centered on the actions of the Incident's namesake, Captain Vasilii Golovnin, and many scholars credit him with the success of this "impromptu embassy." His *Narrative of my Captivity in Japan, During the Years 1811, 1812 & 1813; with Observations on the Country and the People* (1816) does however feature another noteworthy character: Midshipman Feodor Moor. In this thesis the previously untranslated and to Western scholars largely unknown *Moor's Report from Prison* (1812) is examined and analyzed in an effort to rectify the current perception of Moor as a tortured soul, collaborator to the Japanese, and obstacle on the road to peace. By examining the information provided in the Report, conclusions are drawn regarding the political issues that faced Moor at the time of writing, how he addressed and negated these, and the truthfulness of his claims as he did so. Lastly, by utilizing hitherto overlooked information in Golovnin's Narrative among else, it is determined that the timing of Moor's later decline in mental health, his position among the Japanese, and the existence of corroborative evidence makes a reevaluation of Moor's contribution to the Incident necessary. At a time when the Japanese officials' trust for the Russians and regard for Russia as a whole was at an all-time low after Golovnin and the other's escape, Moor's continued reassurances of his homeland's peaceful intentions and upstanding character helped to smooth things over and paved the way for the group's repatriation and a tentative new friendship between Japan and Russia.