

Concepts

ALASKA STATE MUSEUMS

Sheldon Jackson Museum, Sitka • Alaska State Museum, Juneau

Dressing the “Main Tlingit Chief”

A 19th century
Kaftan and
Tricorner
Hat from
Russian
America

By Steve Henrikson,
Curator of Collections,
Alaska State Museum

At the end of the eighteenth century, the Russian empire was well established on the North Pacific coast, expanding eastward from Siberia along the Aleutian chain to the North American mainland. The Native inhabitants of the northern Gulf of Alaska—the Aleut (or Unangan) and Alutiiq peoples—were won over or



The Sitka Kaftan and
Cocked Hat. ASM 94-2-1, 94-39-1

subdued, and many were cruelly incorporated into Russian commercial activities (Liapunova 1987). Some of the most complex and dramatic Russian diplomatic initiatives among Alaska Natives occurred in Southeast Alaska, where the Tlingit Indians resisted Russian domination. Here, diplomacy was critical to Russian success (Dean 1994).

The Russians came to rely on Alaska Natives as trading partners who supplied labor, furs, and food (Gibson 1987). In his 1862 report, Pavel Golovin of the Russian Navy reported that the Tlingit, or Kolosh, were “self-administered, in accordance with their own customs, and the [Russian-American] Company has only a very limited authority over the ones who settle near our redoubts or forts.” Golovin added that “Whenever the Kolosh are in any way unhappy with the Russians... they stop bringing in supplies to the market, and New Archangel suffers accordingly.” Seen as hostile, the Tlingit forced the Russians to devote precious resources to maintaining strong defenses. Golovin stated that “...if they were to unite under the leadership of a brave chief, the Kolosh would easily conquer our settlements and kill all the Russians” (Golovin 1979:27, 31-2, 38).

The Russians and their work parties of Aleut and Alutiiq, brought to southeast Alaska to hunt sea otters, came under constant threat of attack from the Tlingit. Russian traders could not sustain a wholesale taking of Tlingit lands and resources by force; rather, they needed a certain degree of cooperation from them to turn a profit. Cooperation offered material reward to the Tlingit, but they would not allow the Russians to dictate the terms of the relationship. Diplomacy became an important and time consuming endeavor for both Russian and Tlingit leaders. Like the other colonial powers in North America, the Russians cultivated Native leaders with gifts—trade goods and special diplomatic presents—that increased the wealth and status of the recipients.

“Indian Presents” in North America and Siberia

As Europe and the United States began their colonial expansion in North America, they greased the skids of diplomacy by distributing gifts to indigenous leaders. Trade goods, such as beads, utensils, and tobacco, were presented along with peace medals, flags, and ornate coats, designed specifically for diplomatic purposes. Prucha (1988:239) notes that diplomatic gifts, unlike trade goods, symbolized the governments that presented them, and “their acceptance signified special ties of allegiance and friendship.” Impressive ceremonies frequently accompanied the presentation of gifts, often involving an exchange of clothing by the leaders of both sides to symbolize the beginning of a mutually beneficial trade relationship (Hanson 1982). Clothing exchange was a ritual of Native/non-Native diplomacy that existed until the latter had sufficient power and will to abandon diplomacy altogether.

The gifts and ceremonies were status symbols within Native societies, and they enabled the non-Natives to manipulate Native power structure: the most cooperative leaders were showered with gifts, increasing their prestige and authority. The presents were symbolic to non-Natives as well, signifying to other explorers that the Natives (and their lands) were claimed. Rivalry between colonial agents drove some to confiscate competitors’ gifts and replace them with presents of their own (Prucha 1988:238-9).

An undated illustration entitled “A Yakut” shows a Native of Northeastern Siberia wearing a kaftan with decorative trim and fringe—possibly a gift from Russian administrators. Dolgopolov Collection Portfolio, Alaska State Library Historical Collection, Juneau

During their expansion into Asia and Siberia, the Russian Empire had similarly distributed presents to indigenous leaders, beginning as early as the late 1500s. They treated the Native elite to lavish feasts, plied them with promises and valuable gifts, and sometimes gave them special ranks and titles. Friendly Native leaders became “best men,” leading their followers to hunt furs for the Czar (Pierce 1988:119, Lantzeff 1943:93, Armstrong 1965:117). In the early 1700s, Russian Orthodox missionaries rewarded baptized Native Siberians with Russian clothing and other presents (Slezkine 1994:48-49).

In Alaska, Russian-American Company officials followed suit by awarding a variety of diplomatic gifts to Alaska Natives, including silver *Soiuznye Rossii* (Allies of Russia) medals and bronze double-headed eagle



plaques.¹ To court the Native nobility in Southeast Alaska, the Russians also presented gifts derived from Native design. Traditional symbols of wealth and power, such as copper plates—fashioned after the Tlingit’s *tin.aa*—and brass copies of traditional spruce root hats, were believed to appeal more to Tlingit tastes (Dean 1995:290, Emmons nd:190).

Clothing in Russian/Alaska Native Diplomacy

Soon after contact, Russian traders recognized a high demand for European clothing among Alaska Natives. The clothing brought for the Native trade consisted largely of surplus military uniforms or military style garments. In 1782 the Unangan (Aleut) leader Tyutgin received a red coat with gold trim from a Russian in exchange for a sea otter skin (Black 1984:187). In 1788, explorers Ismailov and Bocharov, visiting the Yakutat Tlingit, noticed their “...caps, like those of the grenadiers, with brass ornaments which they procure from the Europeans” (Coxe 1803:326). In 1791, explorers Alejandro Malaspina and Étienne Marchand remarked that European clothing was in high demand among Tlingit men at Sitka and Yakutat (Emmons 1991:237).

By the early 1800s, Russian trader Kyrill T. Khlebnikov reported that the Sitka Tlingit had developed quite a taste for fine clothing: “In other colonies Aleuts wear bird skin parkas, which are warm, comfortable and attractive. But on Sitka they want to have clothes made not of regular soldier cloth, but from good frieze or fine wool. Many of them wear frockcoats and dress coats. Their wives were formerly delighted to have parkas of rodent fur and cotton kamleis [kamleikas], but here they all want a printed cotton dress, a shawl, etc. All of this represents a style of luxury which is harmful both to them and to the colony” (Dmytryshyn and Crownhart-Vaughan 1976:105).

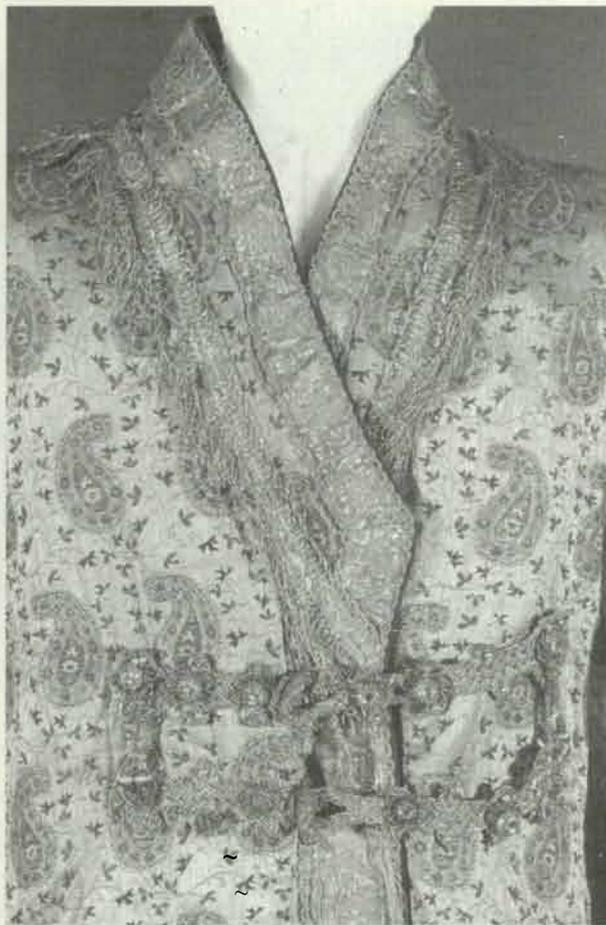
In 1827, Frederic Litke (1987:89) reported that to give Sitka Tlingit chiefs “...one hundred rifles would not give them as much pleasure as to give Russian uniforms to their elders, and once the elders are dressed up in these uniforms, they give themselves the most important but very comical airs.”

Litke added that the Tlingit noticed immediately when the Russian navy changed the style of their uniforms, and "asked that all those uniforms that had been given them previously should be remade so that they would not be different than ours."²

Following centuries-old practice in eastern Asia, the Russians presented distinctive suits of clothing to cooperative chiefs in Alaska. In 1792, Gov. General Pil' of Irkutsk, on behalf of Empress Catherine the Great, presented Andreanof Chief Sergei Dmitrievich Pan'kov a special suit of clothing marking his appointment as intermediary between the Russian Government and the Unangan. This flashy ensemble consisted of a red woolen parka with gold trim, a pale blue velvet hat, and red goat leather boots (Sarychev 1802:124-125, translated by Black 1984:95, 188). To leaders of the Sitka Tlingit, Aleksandr Baranov, chief manager of the Russian-American Company, presented special clothing in a peace ceremony following the 1804 Battle of Sitka. A red cloak trimmed with ermine and plain blue cloaks went to a Tlingit ambassador and his lieutenants. Reciprocating a gift of an ermine-trimmed blue cloak and tobacco, the Kiks.ádi clan leader K'alyáan (Katlian) gave Baranov a "coverlet" of silver-grey fox skin (Lisiansky 1968:224, 230).

"Garbed like a Prince": Dressing the "Main Tlingit Chief"

Maintaining good relations with the Tlingit was challenging for the Russians throughout their tenure in Alaska. In the late 1830s, to broaden their influence, they sought a cooperative clan leader to serve as an official intermediary, as they had done among the Unangan a half-century earlier. Tsar Nicholas I confirmed the imperial title *Glavnyi Koloshenskii Toien*, or "Main Tlingit Chief," to be conferred



The Sitka Kaftan (detail). Gold metallic braid is applied to the front opening, and the neck is outlined with silver metallic fringe. The front of the Sitka Kaftan is closed with ornate toggles, decorated with gold thread and pearls. ASM 94-39-1

on a Tlingit leader (Tikhmenev 1978:355). Along with the title came an ornate kaftan, plumed tricorner hat, and sword (Kimball 1984:232). The Russians hoped that this unprecedented recognition of a Tlingit chief would encourage friendly behavior from other leaders, even those outside his own clan.³

In the late 1830s, Governor Ivan Kupreianov selected Kuaxte of the Stikine Tlingit at Wrangell to receive the title of "Main Tlingit Chief." In addition to the title, the chief was to receive the clothing, costing over 1,000 rubles, and company employees were to doff their caps and bow whenever they came upon the chief wearing his special outfit—a remarkable gesture of respect. Before he could convey the title and clothing, however, Kupreianov learned that Kuaxte had recently committed murder—not the example of good behavior the Russians sought. Thus, they postponed the presentation of the title and clothing

until they could identify another candidate (Kan 1999:123, Pierce 1990:274).

In 1842 Adolph Etholin, Kupreianov's successor, identified a new leader worthy of Imperial recognition: Shilxaku, a Sitka Kiks.ádi leader, who had recently received the esteemed name *Kooxx'aan* and had been baptized Mikhail in 1836. While *Kooxx'aan* was relatively inexperienced and impoverished, he was prone to follow the Russians' advice and set a good example that other Tlingit could follow to complete their "conversion to humility" (Dean 1993:359-60, Okun 1951:209).⁴ Though *Kooxx'aan* was friendly toward the Russians, and of noble birth, he had yet to solidify the backing of his clan. By honoring him with an imperial title, presenting a bright and fanciful outfit as a badge of office, and supporting him with loans and a salary, the Russians hoped to thrust greatness upon this potentially influential leader (Kan 1999:122-4, Dean 1995:283-290).

In 1843 Governor Etolin reported the appointment of Mikhail *Kooxx'aan* as "Main Sitka Tlingit Chief" — *Glavnyi Sitkhinskii Koloshenskii Toien*— and presented a "gold embroidered kaftan, a sabre, and a tricornered hat with multi-colored plumes" (Kimball 1984:232-3, Tikhmenev 1978:355). Etolin presented the clothing to *Kooxx'aan* in the governor's house, and administered the oath of office in the cathedral, in the presence of Bishop Innocent (Ioann Veniaminov), company officials and employees, and a party of baptized Tlingits (Dean 1993:361 and 1994a).⁵

In accepting the title and ceremonial garments, *Kooxx'aan*, a Tlingit elite with traditional obligations, stepped into the Russians' world. With the title came respect and privilege to a degree never before shown by the Russians to a Tlingit leader. As a mediator between two strong traditions, *Kooxx'aan* certainly suffered the stress of being pulled in two directions. If the Russians had expected *Kooxx'aan* to wield authority beyond his own house and

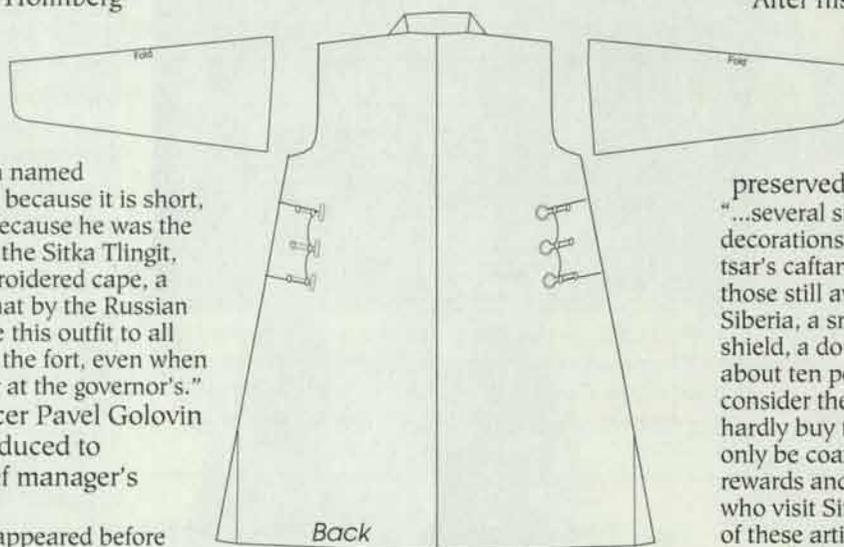
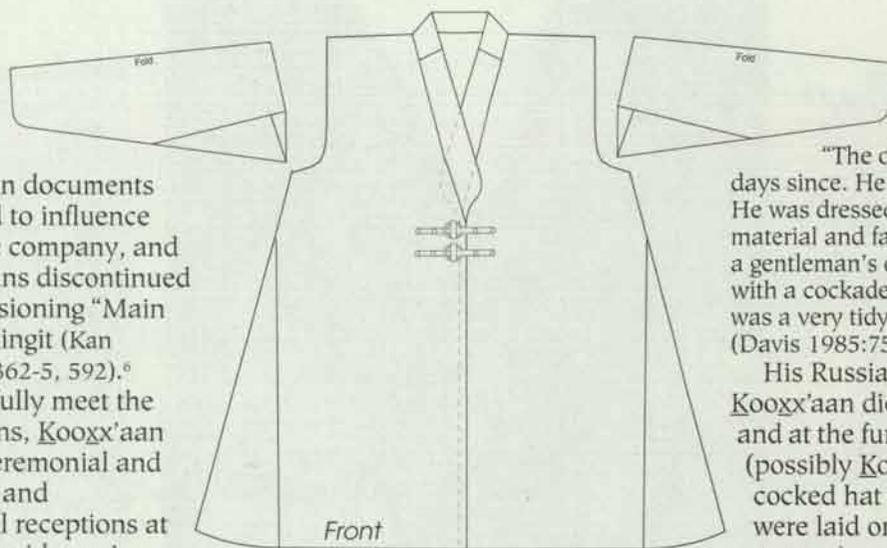
clan—in contradiction to Tlingit custom—they were surely disappointed. Russian documents suggest that he failed to influence events in favor of the company, and ultimately the Russians discontinued the policy of commissioning “Main Chiefs” among the Tlingit (Kan 1999:123, Dean 1993:362-5, 592).⁶

While he did not fully meet the Russians’ expectations, Kooxx’aan faithfully attended ceremonial and diplomatic functions and participated in formal receptions at the chief manager’s residence in Sitka. Heinrich Johan Holmberg (1985:65), visiting Sitka in 1850-51, noted that:

“I found a true friend in Chief Schilghikhu ... At baptism, he had been named Michael, a name which, because it is short, I shall use ... Michael, because he was the most influential chief of the Sitka Tlingit, was given a golden embroidered cape, a dagger, and a tricorner hat by the Russian Administration. He wore this outfit to all festive occasions within the fort, even when attending a guest dinner at the governor’s.”

In 1860, naval officer Pavel Golovin (1983:82-83) was introduced to Kooxx’aan in the chief manager’s residence in Sitka:

“Then a *toion*, or elder, appeared before us... This *toion* wore a ceremonial caftan or robe. His name is Mikhailo; he is a baptized Indian. He does not speak Russian, but is completely loyal to us. He was fully aware of his position, and presented himself to us in full magnificence. He was clothed in a brocaded cloak with silver tassels and lace, a raspberry-colored silk sash with gold fringe which cinched his belly, above the sash a naval sabre on a black thong, and in his hands he held a small triangular hat such as Frederick the Great used to wear, but with a tall plume of white, blue, rose, yellow and black feathers. It is impossible to imagine anything more hilarious than this figure. He entered very gravely, held out his hand to us, and from his inside pocket he took a certificate which had been given to him by the Russian government testifying to the fact that he had been named a *toion*. Through an interpreter we told him that he and all the rest of the elders and Indians could appear before us if they had any business to discuss with us. He replied that he was ve[r]y glad that we had come, and that he would transmit our words to the Indians, and they would then



The Sitka Kaftan (ASM 94-39-1). Unless otherwise indicated, pattern lines represent edges or seams, and the decorative edging is omitted for clarity. When worn with the back toggles attached, a large gather of material is created. Perhaps this extra yardage allowed the layering of clothing underneath the kaftan during cold weather. Overall length, including collar: 131.5 cm. Length of sleeve at fold: 66 cm. Pattern by Janet Moss.

think about what they wished to request of us, since there is no need to disturb important persons with silly speeches. Then he very gravely took his leave, shook our hands, and with measured steps he left the room.”

Kooxx’aan continued his diplomatic duties even after the Russians abandoned their colony in 1867. In October of that year, Marietta Davis, wife of General Jefferson Davis, first U.S. Army commander at Sitka,

encountered the elderly “Main Tlingit Chief:”

“The old chief called on us a few days since. He is about ninety years old... He was dressed in a coat made of some gay material and fashioned after the pattern of a gentleman’s dressing gown. He had a hat with a cockade; a sash, belt and sword and was a very tidy looking old gentleman” (Davis 1985:75).

His Russian sponsors gone, Mikhail Kooxx’aan died in 1868 (Pierce 1990:276), and at the funeral of “Prince Nicholas” (possibly Kooxx’aan), “a general’s cocked hat and a Russian sword were laid on the coffin” (Teichmann 1963:235).

After his death, Kooxx’aan’s garments and artifacts became heirlooms. Fr. Anatolii Kamenskii, a Sitka priest from 1895 to 1897, describes Russian artifacts preserved by the Tlingit:

“...several silver medals and other decorations have been preserved, e.g., a tsar’s caftan with a cocked hat, similar to those still awarded to native chieftains in Siberia, a small copper cannon, a similar shield, a double-headed eagle weighing about ten pounds, etc. ... The Tlingit consider these objects priceless. One could hardly buy them with money. They could only be coaxed with promises of great rewards and honors. American tourists, who visit Sitka in the summer, are as fond of these artifacts as the Indians ...hence they tried many times to coax these certificates and decorations from the Indians, but none of their attempts have been successful” (Kamenskii 1985:37).

In the 20th century, the Kiks.ádi clan preserved the garments and their history. In 1946, Kiks.ádi historian George Lewis recounted:

“At Redoubt Bay, the Russians had a church and a flour mill. The mill was operated by water power. The Russians, however, recognized the Native ownership of this bay by giving the owner, Kooxx’aan, food and clothing. He was treated and garbed like a prince by the Russians. He had Russian Cossacks at his disposal, just like a Russian prince who was in command of Redoubt Bay” (Goldschmidt and Haas 1998:142).

A Russian Kaftan and Hat from Sitka

While memory of the spectacularly-garbed “Main Tlingit Chief” survived, what became of the garments them-



selves? In 1957 attire remarkably similar to that presented to *Kooxx'aan* appeared at a meeting of the Sitka Historical Society. Alfred Perkins Sr., a local Tlingit, modeled a "fine coat, which had red, green, blue and yellow, gold and silver embroidery on the light ivory background," and doffed a "handsome three-cornered hat which displayed purple plumes around and over the broad brim." Perkins stated that:

"This coat has been handed down for many generations. It came to Sitka in 1804 with Baranov and then went back to Russia. In 1808 it came back to Sitka and has been here since that time. In 1867, upon the transaction of Alaska from Russian to American hands, Baranov took off the coat and hat and gave it to the man [a Kiks.ádi leader] before Thomas Bennett. After it was passed to Bennett it came in the possession of Sanders [?] It was never shown at any time...now my wife is taking care of the coat" (Sitka Historical Society 1957:1).

Alfred G. Perkins Jr. inherited the kaftan and hat from his mother Mary Perkins, and both were members of the Kiks.ádi *Shteen Hit*, or steel house. He recited another version of the story that he had learned from George Lewis, a Kiks.ádi historian: Baranov presented the garments to a clan elder following the 1804 Battle of Sitka, when the Russian navy fought the Kiks.ádi and reestablished a trading headquarters on Sitka Sound. During

The cocked hat is made of fur felt and trimmed with gold metallic braid, with an embroidered eight-pointed star attached to one flap. The feathers shown are part of a Victorian period feather boa that was added to the hat in the 20th century. ASM 94-2-1

a peace ceremony atop "Castle Hill" (*Noow Tlein*, or "Big Fort"), Baranov removed the coat and hat he was wearing and placed them on the elder. Several other coats and gifts were distributed to other elders. The highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of a double headed eagle crest, a peace offering and token payment for the Russians' acquisition of the Castle Hill site, where Baranov built his fortified headquarters called New Archangel (Perkins 1994).⁷

Since Baranov died in 1819, he could not have participated directly in the transfer ceremony as reported in the first account. The second account

has Baranov presenting the clothing following the Battle of 1804, and a contemporary Russian account confirms that Baranov distributed clothing to Tlingit ambassadors on several occasions. However, this clothing, "a handsome red cloak trimmed with ermine, and... a common blue one" (Lisiansky 1968:224) was very different from the Perkins coat, with its "red, green, blue and yellow, gold and silver embroidery on the light ivory background." The Perkins garments seem more similar to the "gold embroidered kaftan" and "tricornered hat with multicolored plumes" presented by Etholin to the Kiks.ádi leader Mikhail *Kooxx'aan* in late 1842 or the following year (Kimball 1984:232).⁸

Used and displayed by members of the Kiks.ádi clan for over a century, the garments are now heavily worn and very fragile. In 1994 the Alaska State Museum acquired the Sitka kaftan and hat as rare artifacts of 19th Century Russian/Native diplomacy. They are among the few articles of clothing that survive from the Russian period in Alaska.⁹

A kaftan is a long coat with sleeves and a short collar, gathered in back and fastened in the front with a belt or toggled closures. Russian laborers wore kaftans of wool or fur during cold weather until the mid-19th century (Sichel 1986, Braun & Schneider 1975). The garment originated in Asia, spread

throughout the Middle East, India, Persia, China and Russian Asia, and was eventually introduced into Europe by Mongolian and Ottoman invaders. The pattern evolved into many regional variations, both plain and ornate. Middleton (1996:95) illustrates a coat worn by male laborers, drawn from Russian sources of the 1830s and 1840s, that closely matches the Sitka kaftan.

The Sitka kaftan is made of heavy silk cloth with bright paisley patterns, trimmed with gold and silver braid and fringe, with a silk facing and lining. Given the location of the seams on the main body of the garment, the silk cloth was originally woven in widths of 45 centimeters. While probably sewn in Russia, some or all of the materials, such as the silk and metallic braid, may have been imported. The kaftan is closed in front and gathered in back by ornate toggled fasteners decorated with gold thread and pearls. The reinforcements for the toggles on the back are similar to the flaps on Russian military great-coats of the period (Middleton 1999).

The paisley and floral patterns¹⁰ are woven in green, red, and pink silk threads. The once bright yellow background has muted over time to a dull ivory. The cloth may have been woven on a Jacquard loom, invented in France in 1801 and used widely in Europe during the early 19th century. However Madelyn van der Hoogt (1995) feels that it was more likely woven on a hand loom. Regardless of the type of loom used, the paisley and floral details in the weave are uneven, suggesting that it was woven at some distance from a weaving center, where more regular and intricate designs were accomplished. North Africa, eastern Asia, or Russia itself are possible sources (Carmel 1993, Mackie 1994).

Cocked or tricorner hats (with brims folded to form three corners) were popular in Europe, especially among middle and upper European classes,



The star insignia is embroidered on several layers of old Russian documents, and several Cyrillic letters are visible. ASM 94-2-1

in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Ribeiro 1984:31). Tricorners were also adopted by European military forces between 1700 and 1756 (Knotel and Sieg 1980:6, 370-398). The Sitka tricorner hat is made of fur felt and trimmed with metallic braid, resembling those seen in portraits of Russian military officers of the 18th century through the first decade of the nineteenth century (Conrad 1994). It is decorated on one side with an eight-pointed star insignia, embroidered over several layers of Russian documents. Remnants of white feathers remain sewn along the inside of the hat's brim. A 20th century feather boa was later attached by clansmen for added panache.

By the mid-19th century, both in the colonies and in Russian cities, Western style dress was in vogue, and kaftans were outmoded in everyday situations. Combining a cocked hat (of relatively recent European origin) with a Russian kaftan (an ancient style from Asia), was an anachronistic blending of East and West. The "Main Tlingit Chief," dressed in a dazzling kaftan, was perhaps emulating the Russian aristocracy and royal family, who at times dressed in archaic-style garments while attending masquerades and ceremonial occasions (Middleton 1999). Mixing styles and periods, the Sitka clothing is wonderfully symbolic of the intermingling of cultural traditions commonplace in the Alaska colony.

The Russians' choice of garments was calculated *not* to conform to

current fashion, but to make their hand-picked Tlingit leader boldly stand out. In that respect, their selection of a bright yellow kaftan and feathered hat could not have been better. Certainly no other person in Sitka, with the possible exception of the Orthodox clergy, would have stepped out with such a fantastic ensemble. Clothing was a status marker in both Tlingit and Russian societies—and no other Tlingit dressed in the

manner of Russian royalty. Given Kooxx'aan's limited wealth and authority, the sight of him wearing his outfit probably elicited a mixed reaction from other Tlingit, some of whom may have viewed him exceeding his station.

Unlike traditional Tlingit ceremonial regalia, such as Chilkat robes and carved headdresses, the kaftan and hat were never adopted or used as Kiks.ádi at.óow, or crest objects (Perkins 1994). Nonetheless, the fact that these fragile garments outlived the Russians—carefully preserved by clan members for over 150 years—confirms that, in spite of the Russians' original intentions, they held high esteem as historical artifacts. ■

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work of historian Jonathan Dean proved critical in the authentication of the kaftan and hat. The following persons generously shared information and enthusiasm for this research: Joe Ashby (Sitka Historical Society), Gary Candelaria (National Park Service), Mark Conrad, Peter Corey (Sheldon Jackson Museum), Janna Leichuk, Sue Thorsen (Sitka National Historical Park), John Middleton, David Rickman, and Barbara Smith. My sister, Janet Moss, contributed the kaftan pattern.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The Alaska State Museum preserves a significant group of 19th century diplomatic presents given by Russian officials to Alaska Natives, including medals and certificates, a bronze plaque of the czarist double-headed eagle, and the ornate kaftan (coat) and plumed tri-corner hat that is the subject of this paper.
- 2 Khlebnikov (quoted in Fedorova 1973:229) noticed that the Tlingit "have European clothing, and some very much, but wear it very seldom. Sometimes one sees three or four changes on the same person in one day." In 1837, after several visits by two Sitka chiefs, explorer Francis Simpkinson noted that "These two chiefs seemed to have a great variety of dresses, as they appeared in different ones every day. On one occasion, Naawushkeil came on board very well attired. He had on a plaid cloak in very good condition, a coat of trousers with boots, and what was truly ridiculous, a new pair of white cotton gloves. Where he got them from I cannot say, but I suppose from an American ship; he appeared rather awkward, as one would imagine, in such a dress but was enormously proud of it and particularly his gloves" (Pierce and Winslow 1979:97).
- 3 Johnathan Dean (1993:361, 363 and 1994a) points out that the exact wording of the title itself is in some doubt, being referred to inconsistently as "Main Kolosh Chief" and "Main Sitka Kolosh Chief." The former title implies that the Russians felt that this leader would have some influence or power over all Tlingit, while the latter might limit authority to the Tlingit of Sitka only. Dean believes that, while the Russians may not have fully understood the complexities of Tlingit society, they probably had no real expectations that Mikhail Kooxx'aan could assert much authority outside of Sitka.
- 4 According to James (1943:5), a chief named Kooth Kahn (sic) headed the Kiks.ádi Copper Plate house (Tin.aa hit).
- 5 Etholin reported that this event occurred on December 6, 1842 (Pierce 1990:275). Reflecting the uncertainty of Kooxx'aan's authority among his own people, Markov (Kimball 1984) reported "Oh, with what importance at the end of the ceremony he did look upon his fellows, with what pride did he thoughtfully say to them, 'Obey me!' and with what envy did they silently answer him, 'We will think about it.'"
- 6 Nearly a century before, the Russians had similarly found that among the Siberians, titles such as "main Samoed commander" ... brought nothing but confusion and was soon abolished, and "native elders [were] totally ineffective outside of their extended families." Yet the program was reintroduced in Alaska and Siberia in the 1840s. In the 1860s a Kolyma official, Baron Maidel', introduced the rank of "The Highest Chief of All the Chukchi," and generally promoted the authority of cooperative Chukchi clan leaders; but "the heir to the Chukchi throne inherited his father's crimson robe and medals but did not inherit his prestige." By 1910 Russian officials concluded that their attempt to "create elders" was a failure (Slezkine 1994:69, 105-6). Interestingly, the Americans, following their purchase of Alaska in 1867, adopted tactics reminiscent of Russian practices. During a visit by the Chilkat Tlingit chief Shaadaxicht, missionary S. Hall Young recounted that the chief "... was dressed in his robe of state, an elegant chinchilla blanket. He turned around in order that we might read the inscription on the surface of his robe, and to our surprise we saw printed in black on the yellow the words, 'To Chief Shathitch, from his friend, Wm. H. Seward.' We learned afterwards that the great Secretary of State on his visit to Alaska, soon after its purchase, has visited the Chilkats..." (Young 1927:209). American military and civilian authorities continued to promote the careers of certain cooperative Native leaders as Indian Police officers, and presented them with uniforms, medals, and other accoutrements.
- 7 This is probably the bronze double-headed eagle crest in the collection of the Alaska State Museum (Henrikson and Foster 1995:3-4).
- 8 With the passage of time, details of oral traditions may change with successive tellings. Both Native and non-Native accounts of Sitka history tend to make Baranov into an archetypal Russian leader, and credit him with many of the actions of his successors. Many Russian objects in private hands originated in "Baranov's Castle"—far more material than ever would have fit in that structure. As for Tlingit history, Nora and Richard Dauenhauer (1994:xx) report a "mythologizing" tendency in many of the oral traditions that are now being passed down... This is a frustration for historians, but a field day for folklorists."
- 9 A shirt of chain mail reportedly owned by Alexander Baranov (and eventually given to a Tlingit chief) is preserved by the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution (237848). The University of Alaska Museum in Fairbanks holds a set of Russian Orthodox priest's vestments (dalmatic, cuffs, cope, cincture and stole) associated with Ioann Veniaminov (UA66-021-0001 thru -0005). Other Orthodox vestments, some probably dating to the Russian period, are owned by various Russian Orthodox churches in Alaska. Sitka National Historical Park preserves clothing fragments recovered from the Kostromitinov House, built by the Russian-American Company in Sitka in 1835 (SITK 14436.7). Small clothing fragments have been recovered from Russian archaeological sites in Alaska and California.
- 10 The primary paisley motif, the botch, is a cone-shaped organic form with a curled end. It is a stylized botanical form representing a floral spray, shoots of the date palm, or cypress tree, that in some regions symbolizes the tree of life—a fertility symbol. Though the design originated in India, "Paisley" refers to the English town that specialized in copying Indian shawls for the European and American markets.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Armstrong, Terence
1965 <i>Russian Settlement in the North</i>. Cambridge, England: University Press.</p> <p>Black, Lydia T.
1984 <i>Atka: An Ethnohistory of the Western Aleutians</i>. Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press.</p> <p>Braun, L., and H. Schneider
1975 <i>Historic Costumes in Pictures</i>. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.</p> <p>Carmel, Lorna
1993 Personal communication.</p> <p>Conrad, Mark
1994 Personal communication.</p> | <p>Coxe, William
1803 <i>Account of the Russian Discoveries between Asia and America</i>. 4th Edition, London.</p> <p>Davis, Marietta
1985 "The Frontier Letters of a Post Commander's Wife: Marietta Davis at Sitka, 1967." <i>Alaska History</i> 1(2): 73-78.</p> <p>Dauenhauer, Nora and Richard Dauenhauer, editors
1994 <i>Haa Kusteeyi, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories</i>. Volume 3, Classics of Tlingit Oral Literature. Seattle: University of Washington Press.</p> <p>Dean, Jonathan R.
1993 "Rich men, big powers, and wastelands: the Tlingit-Tsimshian border of the Northern Pacific littoral, 1799 to 1867." PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago.</p> | <p>1994a "Their nature and qualities remain unchanged": Russian Occupation and Tlingit Resistance, 1802-1967." <i>Alaska History</i> 9(1):1-18.</p> <p>1994b Personal communication.</p> <p>1995 "Uses of the Past" on the Northwest Coast: The Russian American Company and Tlingit Nobility, 1825-1867." <i>Ethnohistory</i> 42(2): 265-302).</p> <p>Dmytryshyn, Basil, and
E.A.P. Crownhart-Vaughan, translators
1976 <i>Colonial Russian America: Kyrill T. Khlebnikov's Reports, 1817-1832</i>. Portland: Oregon Historical Society.</p> |
|---|--|---|

- Emmons, George T.
n.d. Catalog E (1888-93), E/2308. Unpublished manuscript. New York: American Museum of Natural History.
- 1991 *The Tlingit Indians*. Edited with additions by Frederica de Laguna. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Federova, Svetlana G.
1973 *The Russian Population in Alaska and California, Late 19th Century-1867*. Translated and edited by Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly. Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press.
- Gibson, James R.
1987 "Russian Dependence upon the Natives of Alaska." In *Russia's American Colony*, ed. S. Frederick Starr, 105-143. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Goldschmidt, Walter R. and Theodore H. Haas
1998 *Haa Aani, Our Land: Tlingit and Haida Land Rights and Use*. Edited and introduction by Thomas F. Thornton. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Golovin, Pavel N.
1979 *The End of Russian America: Captain P.N. Golovin's Last Report 1862*. Portland: Oregon Historical Society.
- 1983 *Civil and Savage Encounters: The Worldly Travel Letters of an Imperial Russian Navy Officer 1860-1861*. Trans. and edited by Basil Dymtryshyn and E.A.P. Crownhart-Vaughan. Portland: Western Imprints.
- Hanson, James A.
1982 "Laced Coats and Leather Jackets: The Great Plains Intercultural Clothing Exchange." *Smithsonian Contributions To Anthropology* 30:105-107. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Henrikson, Steve and Mary Foster
1995 "Symbols of Russian America: Imperial Crests and Possession Plates in North America." *Concepts*. Juneau: Alaska State Museum.
- Holmberg, Heinrich Johan
1985 *Holmberg's Ethnographic Sketches*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks.
- James, John
1943 "Relating history of Kiksadi clan houses and migration." Unpublished manuscript. Sitka National Historical Park Archives 14574, R. G. 33.
- Kamenskii, Fr. Anatolii
1985 *Tlingit Indians of Alaska*. The Rasmuson Library Historical Translation by Sergei Kan. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press.
- Kan, Sergei
1999 *Memory Eternal: Tlingit Culture and Russian Orthodox Christianity through Two Centuries*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Kimball, Linda Amy, translator
1984 "Markov's visit to southeast Alaska in the 1840s." In *Western Washington Indian Socio-Economics: Papers in Honor of Angelo Anastasio*. Bellingham: Western Washington University.
- Kloster, Donald
1994 Personal communication.
- Knotel, Herbert and Herbert Seig
1980 *Uniforms of the World: A Compendium of Army, Navy, and Air Force Uniforms, 1700-1937*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Lantzeff, George V.
1943 *Siberia in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of the Colonial Administration*. University of California Publications in History 30. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lisiansky, Urey
1968 *Voyage Round the World in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, and 1806*. Bibliotheca Australiana #42. New York: Da Capo Press.
- Litke, Frederic
1987 *A Voyage Around the World 1826-1829*. Edited by Richard Pierce. Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press.
- Liapunova, R. G.
1987 "Relations with the Natives of Russian America." In *Russia's American Colony*, ed. S. Frederick Starr, 105-143. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Mackie, Louise
1994 Personal communication.
- Middleton, John
1996 *Clothing in Colonial Russian America: A New Look*. Fairbanks: The Limestone Press.
- 1999 Personal communication.
- Okun, S. B.
1951 *The Russian-American Company*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Perkins, Al
1994 Personal communication.
- Pierce, Richard A.
1988 "Russian and Soviet Eskimo and Indian Policies." In *History of Indian-White Relations*, ed. Wilcomb Washburn, Handbook of North American Indians 4:119-127. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.
- 1990 *Russian America: A Biographical Dictionary*. Fairbanks: The Limestone Press.
- Pierce, Richard A. & John H. Winslow, editors
1979 *H.M.S. Sulphur on the Northwest and California Coasts, 1837 and 1839: The accounts of Captain Edward Belcher and Midshipman Francis Guillemard Simpkinson*. Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press.
- Prucha, Francis Paul
1988 "Presents and Delegations." *Handbook of North American Indians* 4:238-244. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.
- Ribeiro, Alleen
1984 *Dress in eighteenth-century Europe 1715-1789*. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers.
- Rickman, David W.
1990 "Costume and Cultural Interaction in Russian America." In *Russia in North America: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Russian America*. Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press.
- 1994 Personal communication.
- Sarychev, Captain Gavrila
1802 *Puteshestvie Flota Kapitana Sarycheva Po Severookeanu...S 1785 Po 1793 God*. St. Petersburg: Shnor.
- Sichel, Marion
1986 *National Costume Reference: USSR*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers.
- Sitka Historical Society
1957 "Notes taken during the [Sitka] Historical Society meeting on June 2, 1957." Unpublished manuscript.
- Slezkine, Yuri
1994 *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Tikhmenev, Petr A.
1978 *A History of the Russian-American Company*. Translated and edited by Richard Pierce and Alton Donnelly. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Teichmann, Emil
1963 *A Journey to Alaska in the year 1868: being a diary of the late Emil Teichmann*. New York: Argosy Antiquarian Ltd.
- Van Der Hoogt, Madelyn
1995 Personal communication.
- Yarwood, Doreen
1982 *The Encyclopedia of World Costume*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Young, Samuel Hall
1927 *Hall Young of Alaska, "The Mushing Parson": The Autobiography of S. Hall Young*. New York: Fleming H. Revell.

The Concepts series publishes information on the preservation of Alaska's material heritage and recent research on the collections of the Alaska State Museum, Juneau, and Sheldon Jackson Museum, Sitka.

ALASKA STATE MUSEUMS
DIVISION OF LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS
395 WHITTIER STREET • JUNEAU, AK 99801
WWW.MUSEUMS.STATE.AK.US