

Mapping Hokkaido: An Accessibility Focused Public Archaeology View of Ainu Space and Japanese Maps

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Public Archaeology

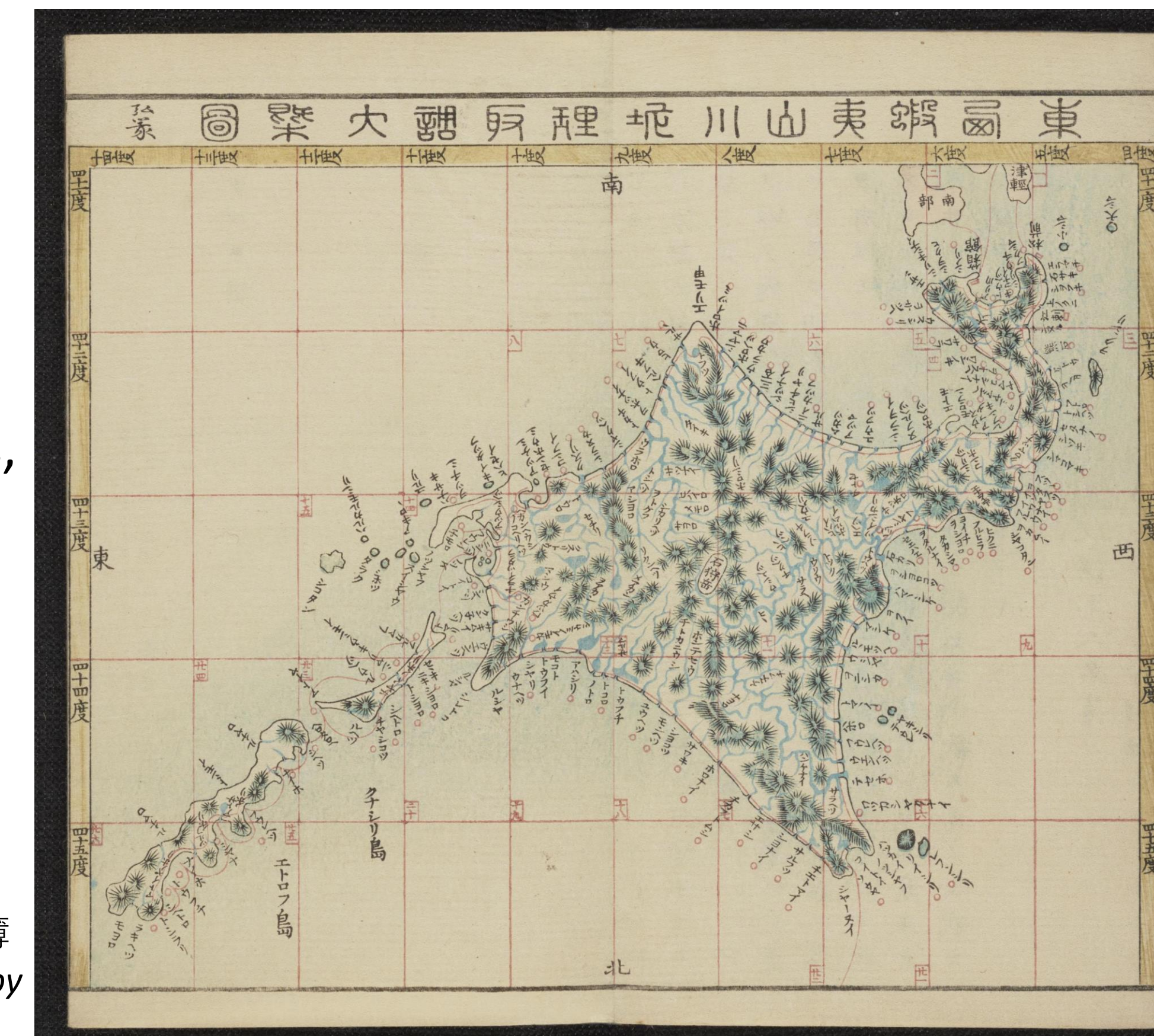
- Archaeology is an anthropological study of historical artifacts and material culture.
- Public Archaeology is the application of archaeology to the public rather than academic settings, including working with and for the public.
- My project created a public website focused on Ainu territory, Japanese maps, and Ainu history through culture.
- The website is meant to be fully accessible, as to spread the information provided to as many people as possible.
- The intention is to provide an easy access first steppingstone for those interested in learning about the Ainu.

The Ainu of Hokkaido

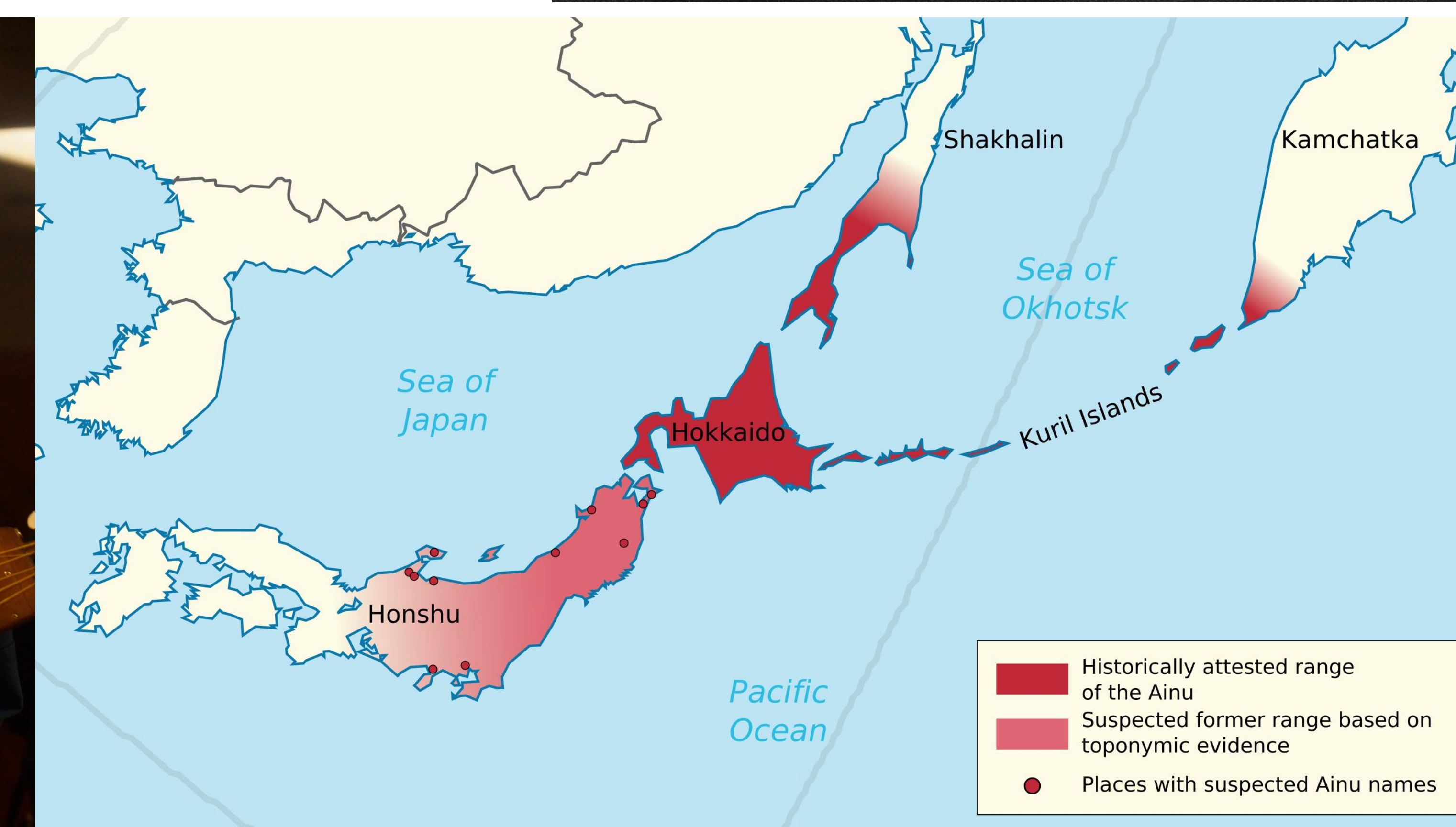
- The Ainu are an indigenous group native to Northern Japan, as well as territory that now is considered Eastern Russia.
- The Ainu culture was faced with many problems, including erasure and forced invisibility, in both Japan and Russian claimed lands.
- Ainu culture in Hokkaido can be traced back to the 12th century CE, where it evolved from the even more ancient Satsumon and Tobinitai culture groups.
- By the 1800s, there had been multiple conflicts between Japanese and Ainu. For more information, look up Shakushain, the leader of the most famous Ainu conflict.
- Japanese colonization of Hokkaido forced the Ainu to abandon ancient traditions, hunting and fishing grounds, and cultural practices.
- Today, Ainu people fight to reclaim their culture, as they still face discrimination and poverty in Japan.

Mapping Territory

- Japan annexed Hokkaido starting in 1868, and had given it that name by 1869.
- Prior to 1869, Hokkaido was called “Ezo”, a derogatory Japanese term essentially meaning savage.
- Japanese maps from before this period depicted the Ainu people, showing them as cultural others, focusing on their facial hair, tattoos, and clothes.



東西蝦夷山川地理取調圖。凡例・番合之圖・案内土人名簿
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A map of Japan and surrounding areas showing Ainu territory historically and suspected territory
Image published under CC BY-SA 3.0 by Arnold Platon



Ainu Musicians Marewrew and OKI performing
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A reconstruction of an Ainu Kotan (village)
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Ainu Musician OKI playing the Ainu Tonkori
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