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On the Ethnonym «Even»

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The article describes the ethnonym of the word “Even”. It analyzes the concept of the ethnonym in the context of classical and contemporary theories of ethnogenesis. The ethnonym “Even” is studied in the historical dynamics typical of the Even people in the 19-21 centuries.

Keywords: ethnonym, Even, ethnogenesis, the indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East.

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The word “ethnos” in the ancient Greek language had several meanings, including – the people, family, group of people, foreign tribe, pagans.

In the 19th century it was used in the meaning of “the people”. According to a definition of the famous German ethnologist A. Bastian the word “ethnic” is a culturally specific appearance of the people.

In the 20's of the 20th century for the first time the word “ethnos” received a scientific definition from the Russian ethnographer S.M. Shirokogorov: “ethnos is a group of people speaking the same language, recognizing their common origin, having a set of customs, way of life preserved and hallowed by the tradition and distinguishing it from those of other groups” (76, p.80). In 1964, in the article “The Problem of ethnic communities” a researcher S.A. Tokarev

defined the essence of people that is based on one or more of the following social relations: common descent, language, territory, nationality, economic ties, cultural background, religion (if present)”. On this basis it should be assumed that the ethno-differentiative core distinguishing ethnos from the others may be the following symptoms, such as language, values and norms, historical memory, religion, the idea of a small motherland, the myths of common ancestry, national character, spiritual and material culture, folklore and art. This definition given the emergence of a science of ethnology and ethnographic materials and information will expand with new concepts.

In today's world where with the global ethnic processes going on the cultural palette of modern nations increases, but each of them seeks to preserve and develop their cultural identity and integrity.

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In their writings in regard to the Evens researchers of different times touched upon such subjects as a common historical destiny of the people, language and partly anthropological, economic and cultural classification. The Evens managed to keep its main traditional (archaic) culture – deer farming that expresses not only the specifics of the way of life of the people, but also their value system, environment, language, perception of the world in myths and legends. Reindeer culture of the Evens is a historical versatile collection of ethnic, aesthetic, moral, material and spiritual values and reveals the centuries-old specifics of their life. The fact that the deer is the core of life of the Evens is determined by many settled components of the ethnos culture, such as the type of economy (reindeer), lifestyle (nomadic), language (in the Evens language the basic part of vocabulary consists of reindeer terminology), rituals, norms of behavior, clothing, food, instruments of labour. Contacting with other peoples the Evens did not lose their ancient ethnic culture.

It should be noted that the Evens undergone partial assimilation. In the past centuries contacting neighboring peoples led to the ethnic conflict, but as a result of different cultural contacts and exchanges of material and cultural products of their activities the interethnic, tolerant, complementary relationship was established. This relationship was contributed to by the tolerant type of relationships characteristic of the Evens that focuses on openness, trusting other peoples, generosity and honesty.

Each historical period of time leaves its mark on the culture of the Evens when they are faced with a choice whether to save and protect the integrity of the traditional way of life or to accept the identity crisis.

A.V. Krivoshepin wrote about this side of their life in his book “The Evens”: “On the one

hand, an undoubted merit of the Soviet power was in that it successfully ran a cultural revolution in the North and above all gave the Evens a written language, as well as to all previously nonliterate peoples of the North. On the other hand, the major omission of the Soviet government was that it had for decades failed to take measures to maintain and further develop the customs and traditions of the peoples of the North, as the foundation of their spiritual culture, and this led to the disappearance of the generations of the northerners from the historical arena. In this list the Evens are no exception”.

The negative trend of the Soviet government in the 60s-70s of the last century was the consolidation of deer farms, as well as the translation of the Evens to a settled lifestyle. For a short period of time the Evens adopted a new way of life, the families migrated to towns and gradually began to lose their bygone traditional culture. As a result of standardization, the Evens could not ensure the successive development of generations. Adaptation to new conditions of life was very difficult. In a short period of time well-appointed modern towns were built in the areas of compact settlement of the Evens in Yakutia. In Abyysky District – Belaya Gora (White Mountain), in Tomponsky District – Topolinoe village, in Srednekolymyky District – Berezovka village, in Allaihovskiy District – Olenegorsk village, in Momskiy District – Ulakhan-Chistay village, in Nizhekolymyky District – Andryushkino village.

In the 50's-60's-70's of the last century there were large reindeer herds in these districts. The same change was taking place in other regions where the Evens lived – in Magadan Region, Khabarovsk Territory, Kamchatka Region and Chukotka.

In the early 90's positive developments occurred in the life of the indigenous peoples of the North.

In 1989, the founding conference of the Evens of the Republic was held in Yakutsk.

In 1990 the founding conference of the Evens of Kolyma and Chukotka was held in Omolon of Magadan Region.

On March 17-18, 1992, the First All-Russian Congress of the Evens was held in Yakutsk.

By the end of the 20th century there were about 450,000 domestic deers in Yakutia.

a) The ethnonym “Evens”

1. The Evens are typical for nomadic deer farming, hunting for the northern wild deer and elk, and the fur trade. A well-known researcher I.S. Gurvich noted that “from the Transbaikal-Amur River Region the deer groups – ancestors of the Tungus – went through the south coast of the Sea of Okhotsk. The rich fishing lands of the coast sharply contrasting with the usual reindeer zone of the deciduous taiga, poor fish and animals must have looked a promised land to strangers. They settled there, partly pressing, partly assimilating coastal Paleo-Asiatic groups.

The most respected archaeologist of North-Eastern Siberia A.P. Okladnikov binds wide migration of the Tungus with the Iron Age, the events of the 1st millennium AD. The arrival of the Tungus to the coast and renunciation of the settled seaside Tungus culture can also be attributed to that time.”

The analysis of ethnographic materials shows that researchers of Siberia, the North and modern Far East for many centuries up until the 30's of the 20th century did not identify the Evens as a separate ethnic community. So, according to A.M. Zolotarev, on the Okhotsk coast lived the eastern branch of the Tungus people – Lamuts calling themselves Evens, and A.A. Burykin believes that “the ancient homeland of the Evens is the northern part of the Khabarovsk Territory (present-Okhotsky and Ayano-Maysky Districts). It is in this area where initially local and later tribal divisions of the Evens appeared. In the 10-

12 centuries the Evens – reindeer breeders begin to move north and open up valleys of the rivers of Indigirka and Kolyma, through which they reach the coast of the Arctic Ocean.”

A.V. Krivoshapkin gives the following explanation: “In our opinion, the Evens and Evenki, probably, formed one nation... Gradually, under the influence of time and different circumstances they were divided into separate ethnoses.”

In 1742, Ya.A. Lindenau wrote that “Lamuts... come from the deer Tungus and call themselves Lamuts. This name originated in a time when the deer Tungus lost all the deer and settled on the sea that in their language is LAM” and at the same time, the researcher noted: “Their language is slightly different from the language of the Tungus” (39 Lindenau). In 1750 V.L. Seroshevsky gives information on Lamuts (67, p.212): “In the upper reaches of the Yana River and the mountains according to his (Yuriyev Pentecostal) statements, the “lamutki” (Tungus) lived as they do now, and in Tastakh and the Indigirsk peaks lived many Tungus-lamutki that were not imposed a tribute in furs”. “About the emergence of the Yakuts in Kolyma District I wrote the following legend: “This land is not ours, but lamuts’ (lomuk, Tungus-Omuk) and there must have been a great number of them here... a few thousands. They said that a white seagull flying from the south to the sea over the smoke from the fires turned black”.

Thus, the question of ethnic history of the Evens has been covered for centuries by many researchers, among which is the information of the Lamuts language published by N. Vitzen (1666-77), materials of Dr. D.G. Messerschmitt (1719). And in the following years the expanding, updating the concept “lamut” is reflected in the works of S.P. Krashennikov (1711-1755), V. Bering (1733-1743). In 1789, in St. Petersburg the material collected by the Academician

P.S. Pallas was released: “Comparative vocabularies of all languages” where, among other languages, the words of the “Okhotsk” and the “Lamuts” dialects of the Evens language are presented. It should be noted that until recently in the northern regions of Yakutia, where the Evens and Yukagirs lived, the Evens and Evenks were called “Tonus” – “Tungus” or “Omuk” – “a person of other nationality”. According to V.D. Lebedev, “the confusion of Lamuts (Evens) with the Tungus (the Evenks in the 20th century and in the first quarter of the 20th century) is explained by the similarity of lifestyle, culture and language of the two peoples, and also by that the Evens do have ethnic self-definition and in different regions they call themselves differently: Evens, Orochi, Lamuts, Tungus, Kamchadals. This confusion made it impossible to accurately determine their number”. It is known that self-definition (endoethnonym) in most cases is different from the name that these people call other people – neighbors (exoethnonym). Endoethnomics of the Evens is reflected in the works V.G. Tsintsius, K.A. Novikova, M. Antropov, A.V. Krivoshapkin and other researchers.

The basic modern endoethnonym and exoethnonym is the word Even – evyn, evesel (plural). But, as noted by K.A. Novikova, the self-definition “evyn” is pronounced by the Evens from different areas differently: (even, yvyn, ebn, ebyn, ybyn, eben), this applies to all the Evens of Susumansky, Yagodninsky, Srednekansky districts of Magadan Region, Chukotka and Penzhinsk District of Kamchatka. The Evens of Olsky and North-Evensky districts of Magadan Region and the Evens of Bystrinsky District of Kamchatka call themselves Orochi (orych – deer from the Even word orych – oron (lit. oran) – deer), the Evens living in the lower reaches of the river – ilkans (ilkan – real), settled Evens of a number of settlements of the Okhotsk coast (Ola,

Arman, Tauisk) have self-definitions evn (evne) or mene – settled.

K.A. Novikova also distinguishes the presence of self-definition according to the territorial feature when the Evens of the Okhotsk coast are called namatkans – from the word Sea, and the Evens of Magadan Region, on the contrary, are called donretkens – donre – land, continent.

At the same time the Evens of Magadan Region calling themselves “Orochi” refer to Kamchadals or settled non-deer inhabitants of the villages Ola, Arman, Tauisk as “mene” – settled, living in one place, but in relation to Kamchadals of other villages of the Okhotsk coast, in particular the villages of Yamsk, Evensk and others situated in the North-East of Ola they refer as heyek. But the researcher states that Russian borrowed “Lamut”, apparently, from the Yakuts. In Yakut historical legends the Evens are called lamanka or labanka – Lamsky, a resident of the country of Lama, the coast Sea of Okhotsk is called the Lama country in folklore. In the Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic the name “lamanka” is used only in relation to the Evens of the Lamunkhinsky nasleg of Sakkyryrsky District, the term “lamanka” – “namanka” is undoubtedly of the same origin as the name “namytkan” – “namutkan”. We, in turn, believe that the Yakuts borrowed the word Lama from the Evens – the sea, because they (Yakuts) call the Sea of Okhotsk, its coast – Sire Lama – the land of the sea, and also there is a famous lake in the Oimyakon district called Labyntyk where the Evens lived, in Evens it is called Namynkyr – a large sea. A.V. Krivoshapkin writes that “self-definition of the “Even” is strongly attached by the “Evenk”. This can be explained by the Bohai factor, i.e. the fact that the ancient Evenks and Evens had a common name of “Tungus” and constituted the main population of the Tungus-Manchu state Bohai. Even and

Evenk are the words with the same root. The Evens of Nizhnekolymsky District (Yakutia) call themselves “Ilkan”, ethnonym “Even” is used in relation to representatives from the mountain, taiga districts”.

Let us note that the Evens from the village Andryushkino of Nizhnekolymsky District call themselves “Ilkan” – real. Although according to A.V. Krivoschapkin, Even and Evenk are cognates, in our opinion, endoethnonym “evn” comes from the word “evyn” evn – descent, and the word evynki – in Even the Evenks means “across”.

About the word “Oroch” A.A. Burykin gives the following definition of the word “Orochi” – a self-definition of the Evens, the word “Oroch” means “the one who has deer” and goes either to the Evens word “orapchi” – i.e. many-deer or to the old word “Orachi” – from the deer.

As to the word haek, we believe that it is not a self-definition of the Evens, they used this word to call settled Koryaks, and Evens of Oymyakon and Minsky districts of Yakutia use this word to mean “invisible being”.

Endoethnonym “Ilkan” of the Evens from Andryushkino is described by V.A. Tugolukov as follows: “Interesting word “Ilkan” – real. The term “ilkon bey” written by V.I. Johelsen is in an apparent connection to it, Yukagirs between Yana and Indigirka called themselves like that. I.S. Gurvich, who visited the Lower Indigirka in 1952, wrote that the term “Ilkan” was referred to the Evens–buyaksirs, delyans and kungugurs who were considered to be from the “upper stones”,

i.e. from the upper reaches of the river. According to an Alazeysk Yukagir A. Lapteva the term was used to call her ancestors who were real Yukagirs (Vaduls). Another Yukagir E.N. Kurilova said that the ancestors of the Ilkans were the Evens – newcomer from the West. In Evenki Ilkan is a mark (on the ears of deer); in Yukagirs Ile is a reindeer”.

Until the present day the Evens from Andryushkino call themselves Ilken Bey – ilken-real, bey-a man. We can assume that the Yukagirs call the Evens “Ilkan” based on Yukagir Ile – deer adding the suffix of the Even language – lken – with the meaning of “having”, hence ilelken – deer + having – ilelken – ilken, which then became an endoethnonym of the Evens.

A wealth of material about the ethnogenesis of the Tungus is presented by V.A. Tugolukov who based on a comparison of the existing points of view of Ya. Lindenau, T.L. Maydel, S. Patkhanov, A.M. Zolotarev, T.M. Makarevich gives the following definition: “The earliest reports of reindeer herders are dated 7-5 cc. BC and they all tend to mean the Transbaikal people “uvan” who clearly include the Tungus. One can assume that being in the Transbaikalia and Amur River region, the uvans through mutual marriages and cultural interaction with the local natives set a start for the ethnic formation of the Tungus – Evenks and Evens”.

Thus, it is clear that as a self-definition the Evens use words evyn, oroch, ilkan bey, and the words “Evaen” and “Lamut” are commonly used in relation to them.

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Об этнониме «эвен»

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Статья посвящена этнониму слова «эвен». Рассматривается понятие этнонима в контексте классических и современных теорий этногенеза. Этноним «эвен» исследуется в исторической динамике, характерной для эвенского народа в XIX-XXI веках.

Ключевые слова: этноним, эвен, этногенез, коренные малочисленные народы Севера, Сибири и Дальнего Востока.

Работа выполнена в рамках исследований, финансируемых Красноярским краевым фондом поддержки научной и научно-технической деятельности, а также в рамках тематического плана СФУ по заданию Министерства образования и науки Российской Федерации.
