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From the Historiography of the Kamchatka Evens

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The article explores existing researches on the cultural history of the Evens, who belong to small-numbered indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East. The author analyses all the historiographical researches, and classifies them according to the chronology.

Keywords: Evens, historiography, small-numbered indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East.

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From the official sources, the Evens as a nation are known as the Tungus, Evens, Orochis, Orochel, Orochons, Lamuts. The most widely used names are “evyn”, “evysel” which mean “local, living here”. The self-designation of the Evens and Ovens are widely spread among the Evens living in Khabarovsk region, Magadan oblast’, Chukotka Autonomous Okrug. In Kamchatka and Bystrinsky District the Evens call themselves “orochel”, which means, “people of deer”.

In the Soviet and modern historyography there are no systematic researches on the history of Kamchatka Krai, and the history of its settlements is not thoroughly described.

The existing publications cover either certain periods and issues of the Kamchatka history or the

life of local peoples. The problem of the research history and historiography of the Kamchatka Evens is that it has not been studied well. There are no integrated monographs dedicated to the culture of the Kamchatka Evens.

Among the authors who were the first to publish some information on the Kamchatka Evens, there was a researcher of the mid 19th century, Carl von Ditmar. As a conclusion of his work and research that he carried out, he wrote an academic tractate “Journeys and stay in Kamchatka in 1851-1855”. Ditmar mentions the Evens’ arrival in Kamchatka and the places of their settlement; he describes their first appearance in Petropavlovsk. However, his works do not provide enough information on the history and culture of the Bystrinsky Evens.

It is also worth mentioning the Swedish expedition to Kamchatka (1920-1922). Sten Bergman in his book "Through Kamchatka" describes the daily life, traditions, religions, celebrations of the local peoples. His journal was the first to provide some detailed information on the Bystrinsky Evens.

As a rule, such descriptions were made by the travellers who did not stay long in the area; moreover, the information they provided was mostly descriptive.

During the regional assignment of the first years of the Soviet era a great amount of subjective information was provided by the Circumpolar census participants, journalists, teachers, mission specialists of the Soviet authority bodies appeared; however, most of these researchers were not aware of the specificity of the lifestyle and culture of the Even people.

The research of the Evens was interrupted by the Great Patriotic War in 1941-1945, and within the first post-war years no ethnographic research was carried out, as all the effort was aimed at the economy reconstruction.

In the year 1956, the book "Peoples of Siberia" summarized the researches of the Even culture; it was the first attempt to accumulate all the information on the Evens that had been gathered by that time¹.

1960 was the year when Dolgikh B.O.² published the results of his research; he opened the aspects of the spiritual culture connected with the family relations, exogamy and endogamy, and the way it influenced the spiritual culture of the ethnos.

In 1950-60, Gurvich I.S.³ who studied the process of the modern ethnogenesis in the extreme North carried out his researches.

In 1960s, Kuzakov K.G. and Orlova E.P. studied the Bystrinsky Evens. The special attention was paid to the period of socialism construction, and they outline the "positive

changes that happened in the sphere of material culture" which happened in that time. This information provides valuable factual evidence, as it was gathered by the authors during their expeditions to Bystrinsky Autonomous Okrug; it is a real intrinsic observation of the Soviet period life, however, it is not thorough or systematic enough.

In 1970, Ogryzko I.I.⁴ turned to the problem of mutual economic influence of the local and Russian population in Kamchatka during the pre-revolutionary period. His work is dedicated to the material culture of the Kamchatka Evens.

Within the post-Soviet period in 1997, as a result of review and summary of the conducted research, a new collective monograph, a collection of historical and ethnographical articles called "History and culture of the Evens" was published. The monograph deals with the problems of ethnogenesis and the ethnical history of the Evens, it describes the main peculiarities of the material and spiritual culture of the nation, such as their activities, instruments of labour, types of their homes and settlements, food, clothes, means of transport, domestic utensils, cults and ceremonies, art, folklore. Great attention was paid to the comparative analysis of the ethnocultural development in the territorial subdivisions of the Evens.

By the 70th anniversary of Bystrinsky District a booklet called "70 years of Bystrinsky District, Kamchatka Oblast" was issued; it briefly described the main landmarks in the history of the Bystrinsky people. There were publications of some documents on the construction works carried out during the Soviet period, but no systematic survey was found.

The sources used in the research were found in the State Archive of Kamchatka Krai, in the Archive of Bystrinsky Local Ethnographic Museum, the "Collection of Documents on the Social and Economic Activities of Bystrinsky

Municipal District from 1926 to 1972 yy” (BLEM-707/1-71) from the funds of BLEM (Bystrinsky Local Ethnographic Museum).

Back in the XVIII century, there were no Evens in Kamchatka. There is no information about them in the first detailed descriptions of the indigenous population of Kamchatka, “tales” (“skaski”) by the Pentecostalist Vladimir Atlasov, works by the participants of the First and Second Kamchatka Expeditions of the XVIII century, S. Krasheninnikov, G. Steller (Shteller), or in the messages of Lesseps, a member of F. La Pérouse expedition. No official documents of the XVIII century on the tribute-paying population of Kamchatka mention the Even people. It is worth noticing that by the XVIII century the Russian noblemen had accumulated enough information on the indigenous peoples of Siberia, and in their administration practices they could distinguish between the Lamuts and their neighbours, the Koryaks, Yukagirs, Yakuts; so, there is no reason to suppose that the Evens could have been confused with another people. The Cossacks kept their tribute payment books, where they registered all tribute-paying population of the territory by their nationality, but they had never mentioned the Evens.

In the beginning of the XIX century, a part of the Gizhiga Evens made their way to Kamchatka⁵.

The Even expansion to Kamchatka was not always peaceful; they had military conflicts with the Koryaks who populated the North of Kamchatka (the coasts of the Sea of Okhotsk, Penzhinsky Krai). We can trace these conflicts in the Even tales known among the Evens of Bystrinsk and Okhotsk. The tales tell the stories of old battles between the Orochis and Koryaks that took place in the vast territory from Arman’ to Gizhiga. In the present time it is hard to restore the plots of all the battles between the local Koryaks with the foreign Orochis.

From the tales we can state the following facts:

1. The ancestors of the modern Orochis migrated to the North-East, getting away from someone. It is hard to find out who made them leave their habitual places of settlement.
2. In the North-East the Orochi faced the Yukagirs, with whom they had a series of continuous battles; as a result, they had to move further to the North-East.
3. In the East, on the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, the Orochis met the Koryaks who had been living in the territory of modern Magadan⁶.

So, as the researches prove, the migration of the Evens in Kamchatka can be divided into several stages, as shown above.

There are some disputable questions concerning the first mentionings of the Evens living in Kamchatka. The majority of the modern researches say that the first mentionings were found in the diary of C. Ditmar and refer to the year 1852. In his diary, the Kamchatka pathfinder Carl von Ditmar wrote: “On the 8th of March (1852), Petropavlovsk town was visited by highly remarkable guests: it was the first time the Lamuts came there. Four men of this tribe came early in the morning right to the residence of Zavoyko to ask him where it is better to sell their take as profitable as possible. The Lamuts are a Tungus tribe that roams along the Western coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, approximately between Ayan and Izhiginsk. Due to the narrowness of their motherland, many of them gathered with their families, crossed Penzhinsky Krai populated by the Koryaks and took up the vast empty territories of Kamchatka, mostly the Sredinny Range and the Western coast...”. The Lamuts and Evens who came to the governor told him that they had settled near Bolsheretsk and were very glad with their new motherland⁷.

So, the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky administration of Kamchatka encountered them for the first time in the year 1852, though by that time they had been living in Kamchatka for several years.

In this research we present an earlier date of Evens' appearance in Kamchatka. Patkanov S. claimed that the first "Tungus" came to Kamchatka in the 1830s⁸. The governor of Kamchatka Rostislav Mashin reported to the Primorsk administration on the 26th of May, 1849: "These days some Lamuts were seen around Tigil'skaya fortress: they were 30 adult men housed in 8 yurts who claimed that they belonged to Gizhiginskoe Province and paid their tribute there"⁹.

This way the migration of a part of the Gizhiga Evens to Kamchatka happened before year 1848; their first place of inhabitation was the surroundings of Tigil. This part of the Gizhiga Evens became the predecessor of the Bystrinsky Evens; it is hard to find their exact initial number now. According to Ogryzko I.I., there were around 120 of them.

About the changes in the number and settlement of the Kamchatka Evens in the XIX century we can judge by the information provided by the census that was held 50 years after. During the 1897 year census, 462 Evens were registered: among them there were 110 Lamuts and 352 Tungus¹⁰. The Kamchatka Evens included the first Dolgan tribe of 119 men, 110 women and 83 women, the first Uyagan tribe of 25 men and 26 women, the second Uyagan tribe of 87 men and some "unregistered tribes" of 6 men and 6 women. The census of the year 1909 registered 388 Evens (196 men and 192 women), including 89 men aged from 18 to 50¹¹.

According to the family census that was conducted among the "nomadic Lamuts" in the year 1913, there were 85 families of 405 people (213 men and 192 women)¹².

The census of the years 1926-27 that was held in the territory of the modern Bystrinsky municipal district registered 470 people of both genders, who roamed in the head of the Sopochnaya, Icha, Hayryuzovskaya rivers and along the Kozyrevka river¹³. Orlova E.P. who visited the Kamchatka Evens within those years, found 8 people of the Delianskys and 3 people from the Kolumskys besides the previously registered ones. The last one consisted of immigrants from the Kolyma, who had written their nickname reflecting their previous place of residence instead of their family name.

About the Tigil Evens who roamed between the Rekinniki and Apanka rivers in the North in the Napana and Sedanka rivers in the South we know that in the years 1926-27 they were 71 people. "It is the Northern branch of the Kamchatka Lamuts who lived in the mountain ranges in the centre of peninsula", wrote Shavrov K. who ran the census in the territory.

"In that time, he wrote, the Lamuts of the Sredinny range had been living as a closed group, isolated from both biological and economic influences from outside; only a small part of them, having migrated to the North, assimilated with the horde of the Koryak (Chauchu) population, and this encounter with a stronger and healthier people could not help reflecting on their physiognomy. Their conscious wish to assimilate with the Koryaks was also visible"¹⁴.

Shavrov noted that the Evens often got married to Koryaks, and in their household there were many Koryak features.

Penzhino-Olyutor Evens, according to the census of the years 1926-27, were found with the Gizhiga Evens and it is also hard to determine their number. The number of the Evens in the 1920 years in the territory of the modern Penzhinsky and Olyutorsky Districts increased due to the migration from Okhotsky and Anadyrsky Okrugs¹⁵.

So, since the first years of the XIX century and till the year 1926 the residence area of the Evens had considerably expanded; they arrived at the partial contact with the neighbouring peoples (Itelmens and Koryaks), and their number increased by almost 4 times.

In the beginning of the 1920s, within Kamchatsky provincial revolutionary committee the subdivision for indigenous peoples was created in order to gather authority bodies for the small-numbered peoples of the peninsula. Among the nomadic people of Lamuts, some activists appeared. In the Provincial committee Ivan Markovich Indanov was well-known for having done a lot during the member elections for the local councils.

On March 26, 1926, the nomad Evens for the first time gathered for a tribal council. There were 19 delegates with the casting vote right: seven from Anavgaysky, seven from Lauchansky and five from Kekuknaysky tribes.

The council was held in the yurt of Stepan Gavrilovich Cherkanov in the ranges of the Ebev. It was decided to unite three nomadic tribes into one Bystrinsky Lamut ethnic district, and to locate the ethnic district executive committee in its residence on the Bystraya river. The district territory was marked within the borders of the modern administrative entities, where 469 Lamuts lived.

Konon Petrovich Banakanov was elected to be the chairman of the ethnic district executive

committee, Mikhail Trifonovich Koerkov was elected to be his deputy, and Afanasiy Gavrilovich Adukanov was the member. Konstantin Ivanovich Bauerman was asked to do the work of a secretary on the temporary basis. The resolutions of the first tribal council of the Bystrinsky Even were approved by the Decree of Kamchatsky Okrug Revolutionary Committee No. 19 dated August 12, 1926¹⁶.

From the Decree of Kamchatsky Okrug Revolutionary Committee of Bystrinsky national district dated August 12, 1926: ...II To recognize the Lamut population from the following tribes (communities) as organized citizens united into tribal Councils: a) Anavgaysky with the population 182 people; b) Lauchansky with the population 160 people, Kekuknaysky with the population of 117 people...¹⁷

During the sovietization of Kamchatka the population of Bystrinsky national district was united into one administrative entity called Lamut Province, which in the year 1926 was reorganized into Bystrinsky Lamut Ethnic District; later in the year 1932 it was renamed into Bystrinsky Evensky National District¹⁸.

The centre of the district was marked in the following way: "The residence of the district executive committee is considered to be the Bystraya (Esso) river that flows into the Kozyrevka..."¹⁹.

¹ *Narody Sibiri* [Peoples of Siberia]. Moscow, Leningrad. 1956.

² Dolgikh B.O. *Rodovoy i plemennoy sostav narodov Sibiri v XVII veke* [Generic and tribal composition of the Siberian peoples in the XVII century]. Moscow, 1960.

³ Gurvich I.S. *Etnicheskaya istoriia Severo-vostoka Sibiri* [Ethnic history of the Siberian North-East], Moscow, 1966.

⁴ Ogryzko I.I. *Ocherki istorii sblizheniia koren'nogo i russkogo naseleniia Kamchatki (konets XVII-XX vv.)* [Historical sketches on the contacts between the indigenous and Russian peoples of Kamchatka (end of XVII-XX centuries)] Leningrad, 1973, 191 p.

⁵ Tugolukov V.A. et al. *Istoriia i kul'tura evenov* [History and culture of the Evens], Saint-Petersburg, 1997. P. 26.

⁶ Kreynovich E.A. *Iz istorii zaseleniia Okhotskogo poberezh'ia (po dannym fol'klora i evenskikh seleniy Arman' i Ola)* [From the history of the Okhotsk Sea shore population (according to the folklore of the Even villages Arman' and Ola)] // *Strany i narody Vostoka*, Volume XX. Moscow, Nauka, 1979. P. 190-192.

⁷ Ditmar C. *Poezdki i prebyvanie na Kamchatke v 1851-1855 gg.* [Journeys and stay in Kamchatka in 1851-1855], Vol. 1. Saint-Petersburg, 1910. P. 183-184.

⁸ Tugolukov V.A. et al. *Istoriia i kul'tura evenov* [History and culture of the Evens], Saint-Petersburg, 1997. P. 26.

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- ¹² *Itogi perepisi Severnykh okrain Dal'ne-vostochnogo kraia (1926-1927 gg.)* [Results of the population census in the Northern parts of the Far East region (1926-1927)], Blagoveshchensk, 1929, P. 44.
- ¹³ Shavrov V.O. *O naselenii severnoy chasti poluostrova Kamchatki. Statisticheskii byulleten' Dal'nevostochnogo kraevogo statisticheskogo upravleniia* [On the population of the Northern part of Kamchatka peninsula. Statistical bulletin of the Far East regional statistical department]. Khabarovsk-Blagoveshchensk, 1927, P. 90.
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Из историографии эвенов Камчатки

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В статье рассматриваются источники по истории культуры эвенов, которые принадлежат к коренным малочисленным народам Севера, Сибири и Дальнего Востока. Автор анализирует все существующие историографические источники, приводит их классификацию в хронологическом порядке.

Ключевые слова: эвены, историография, 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.
