



**NIVKHS**

**- our northern neighbors -**



**KANEKO Tohru**

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**NIVKHS – Our Northern Neighbors --**

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**Dedicated to my old friend Chuner Mihkhajlovich Taksami**



**Without my lucky acquaintance with Chuner Mikhajlovich Taksami, this book could not have been written. I express my gratitude sincerely for my əkən Chuner.**

### **Contributions of Chuner Mikhajlovich Taksami**

He is the oldest friend among Nivkhs to me. But it is only about 20 years ago when we met at the first time, it is directly after the year 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed, that it has come to be able to meet Nivkhs in somewhat liberal circumstance: while the "Iron curtain" was still shut, we could not meet a lot of people we want and have to see. Taksami belonged to the persons we knew only by name, papers and books. We could have some rare lucky chances to meet them, for example, at an international conference held outside of the Soviet Union, though we had often some serious risk to be tapped on both sides. After the year 1985 when "perestroika" was going on Taksami was able to travel beyond the border to come to Japan with an official position as the academic director of Kunstkamera we had chances to meet ourselves in Sapporo and Tokyo. In the beginning of 1990's when our colleagues planned to make an expedition in Sakhalin, he played an important role to make a detailed schedules to decide whom we meet where and when may be suitable to do. In the following years he remained as the most reliable plan-maker for our to make field works in Sakhalin as well as in Low Amur districts.

Chuner Mikhajlovich Taksami was born in 1931 in the village Kalima, ca. 20 km from the mouth of the river Amur. He is now over 75 years old, some years elder than I. So, we witnessed the last war as children, he, as a red pioneer of the Stalin Era of the Soviet Union, was trained up as a Communist at least en façade. We had a lot of things to talk about concerning with the hard times we went through while some idealism was yet vital enough to get rid of many hard things only in order to be a human being. Sometimes when he lands on Narita Air Port, he stays with my family, because we live near the air port, it was easy to make a trip further the next day to Tokyo and Sapporo. So was I, too, in Petersburg. I stayed in his house for some days when I go to another cities in Europe further. However, the highlight of our journeys was a trip to Kalima, his home town. There we stayed with his cousin, Gregor Chida, for 10 days. Near the bed on which I slept stands an old small book shelf, There I found some old books we all had to learn by heart in our younger years, e.g. "Textbook for Economy", "Tokkhiy Don" etc. We laughed seriously at the textbook and at the communist policies at the times.

It was in the critical years 1990-1992 when Japanese colleagues made the first research trip to Sakhalin. Mrs. Murasaki planed the National-aided project "Research Project of Sakhalin Minority Languages" (1990-1992). Taksami worked in the planning group of the project and did the most important function to decide the field work points and collaborators in Sakhalin. The academic collaboration with Taksami began really from this project. The most of our colleagues for the following years were already working there in this project and they are collaborating still now in this field in an international scale, but, to our regret, two colleagues are now in another world. They are late Galina Aleksandrovna OTAINA (1931-1995) and Robert AUSTERLITZ (1923-1994).

Two years after the Murasaki-project started a new project. It continued longer and had a wider perspective. The project "Language Culture Database of Eurasian Indigenous Peoples and Typological Studies" 1994-1997 (head Tohru Kaneko). Here played Taksami a very important role, too. In this trip he decided where to go and with whom we talk. We shipped first from Khavarovsk to Nikolaevsk-na-Amure. On the ship he found a group of people who he thought to be Nivkhs and after a long talk with them it was decided to visit them two days after in the village Innokenchevka where a big fisher kolkhoz was organized by Nivkhs earlier in the Soviet time. And when we arrived Nikolaevsk harbor in the next day, some peoples who were apparently to be indigenous took us to the House of Peoples in the North. There, a welcome party is prepared for us by some indigenous group of this city. We had luck to shake hands with Nivkhs, Negidals and Nanais who we knew only by name directly when we arrived at the city. So we were obliged to Taksami, who organized everything not only for us, the field work team, but also he made chance to himself, too, to meet again his own old acquaintances. This project was prolonged third times, so we worked with him to the year 1999/2000. After Kaneko retired from Chiba University and went to Petersburg and Leipzig, Colleague Hiroshi Nakagawa organized the research in Sakhalin, far better than myself, but in working with Taksami together. Anyway, without him our work could not be possible, as we all realized in every time of our trips.

### **Taksami born in Kalima**

Chuner Taksami was born in Kalima. This was and is yet a small village with about hundred inhabitants, most of



whom are Nivkhs and their family. but Kalima is a honorable name: people call it often as the metropolis of Nivkhs, because of its long history and famous peoples born in this village. It stands on the right shore of the

Amur. On the other side of the shore another big river Amgun joins it, so that it becomes so wide as we cannot see the other shore except in very fine days. When we were in the village, it was completely invisible because of the thick smoke of wood fire which has repeated in very summer in the last 20 years. The whole village was in the smoke, too, as the picture above shows. The wood house in the center of the picture we can see the house Chida, in which mother of Chuner Taksami was born. Somewhere near the house, Mamiya Rinzo spent a night on July 26, 1809 as it stands in his To-Datsu-Kikoo, a report on his trip to the old international market of Ming Dynasty(cf. Chap.1.1. "Kalima" below).

The town Kalima can be proud of its distinguished families: family Chidar, Pukhta and Gudan rank in the first place. Taksami's mother was Chidar's daughter. But when Taksami went to Leningrad (now Sankt Petersburg



again) about fifty years ago, his mother lived no more This was one of the reasons why he did not come home except some rare occasions when he had to guide his field work colleagues from Moscow. When we visited Kalima in the summer 1994, his cousin Grisha proposed him to the family grave where his mother slept, too (the picture right:

her grave). Taksami met her there after very long absence.

Taksami was born in a small house standing one step down from the main Chida house complex. At that place stands at present a new house which does not belong to Chida family any more. There lives an alien family: a Nanai-husband and his Jew wife. One day they invited Taksami. We stepped down to the gate. At the moment we opened the gate, a cruel dog attacked him biting him on the arm. Fortunately the wound was not serious. Grisha was angry with the comment: "Nivkhs do not keep such a dog, they have no knowledge about dogs, the Nanai!"

Five minutes on the way to the forest stood a wooden school building where Chuner learned in his childhood. All lessons were taught in Nivkh-language at that time, but there were some lessons taught in Russian, a Russian language and history and mathematics. But the teachers were Nivkhs in both lessons. This was perfectly normal in the situation in 1940 years in the Soviet Era. The daily life in the village went on only in the native language, too. Chuner was one of the best pupils in the school, he went to a middle school in Nikolaevsk and then in a senior school Khabarovsk. As for the higher education at that time it was usual for best pupils of minority peoples to go to the Pedagogical College named Geltsen, if they succeeded to get a recommendation form official side. They were

trained there to specialists for Russian Language and Culture, or some other disciplines; after graduation they were sent back to home towns in order to teach indigenous children with a clear political aim. This course was completely in line with the fundamental minority policy of the Soviet Union from the beginning. "Let the tuzemny (native people) read Pravda" was the slogan and the policy was carried out even during the persecution of Stalin. However, in difference from this normal course, Taksami went to Leningrad University (see picture above) and



decided to study historical science. He wanted to know better about the ethnos of his own.

### **Road to Academician**

The Leningrad University is a building of a red brick standing on the bank of the Neva. Vis-a-vis the back gate of the university stand the Library of Soviet Academy of Sciences. Some minutes from there stands the world oldest ethnological museum the so-called Kunst-kamera. A real academic quarter in Petersburg. It appears to be a treasure land to young Taksami. He frequented the Library of the Academy and the Kunst-kamera which have all the necessary books for him. After ten years in this lucky circumstance, he obtained an academic degree for historical science. From a political view it was just a stormy time in the Soviet Union: Stalin died and was criticized by Khrushchov who was then got rid of by Brezhnev. Under his dictatorship the national policy was carried out to produce "soviet people" out of all nationalities in the Soviet Union. The ethnic groups in the north have to play a tourist decoration as well as a sort of international propaganda that there lived yet the national policy Lenin imagined on.

Taksami had to work much more than his Russian colleagues in order to overcome ethnic prejudice and to get a better post in academic circles. But his ethnic origin was not always disadvantageous to get a better academic carrier. He expanded his field from history to anthropology and ethnology expecting that he could contribute to his own ethnos better than any other colleagues. He grew up from in-door historian to a field worker. He walked around the wide territory of Siberia and visited many small villages of northern peoples. So he had in reality no time to return to his hometown village for a long time, that is, about more than 20 years. He regrets that he could not meet even his mother, who could never see him again after he had shipped from the shore of the Amur.

In 1960's there were distinguished academicians in Leningrad in the field of ethnology and linguistics in Nivkhs' language and culture. They are Kreynovich, Savel'eva and Panfilov among others. Eruim Abramovich Kreynovich (1901-1985) was already an authority of some languages of northern peoples, especially about Nivkh and Ket. Also Vladimir Zinov'evich Panfilov (1928-?) was an established linguist in the field of Nivkh language. He gathered language materials mainly in Kalima and its neighborhood, in Taksami's home village. The third academician who gave an important influence on him was Valentina Nikolaevna Savel'eva (dates unknown). She was a specialist of Nivkh language, too, she gathered a lot of linguistic material also from the region around Kalima. One day, according to Taksami, she proposed him to write bilingual dictionaries Nivkh-Russian and Russian-Nivkh together. After hard work they are completed two dictionaries: Russian-Nivkh was in 1965 and Nivkh-Russian in 1970 were published. These dictionaries are yet most important materials for Amur dialect of this language, which we ourselves make use of every day. The short Nivkh language dictionaries published there after are based all on these original big ones. School children in Kalima and other villages take in hand now these small versions in hand every day in school classes. In the primary school in Kalima where Taksami himself learned 50 years ago stand more than 20 examples in the shelf of class rooms; one of the concrete contributions of Taksami for children in his home town.

### **Nivkh -Researcher Taksami**

After graduation of the university, Taksami often went out to the Far East to investigate ethnological situations of the peoples. Already in the latter half of 1970's to 80's he came to obtain respect as scholar of an ethnic origin. In



this period, the national policy has been changed again with some better tendency. Ethnic minorities got many chances to preserve their cultural and linguistic traditions. The research was encouraged from Moscow and the publications about them were supported from official side. Various kinds of textbooks for ethnic languages were delivered to the schools in province. But we see now in retrospect there were some streams going on which seem to be in contradiction to one another. The ethnic education seemed to be encouraged on one side, but at the same time the so-called internat, boarding schools, are introduced in every village. They had some significance surely if they

are build on the step where ethnic inhabitants living scattered in wide field working with reindeers. The children have to be gathered and carried over to schools with helicopters at the beginning and the end of the school seasons. In Kalima was build an internat, too, though almost all children lived near by in the village or in some kilometers outside. People laughed at the uniform measure. But a vicious policy was hidden in it: In an internat children are mixed up; language variety has to disappear soon and daily customs are mingled. The only useful means for daily life was Russian language and Russian conventions. The school system was in reality the best means to liquidate ethnic tradition. During a few months of Soviet young people of the next generation was produced out of many ethnic groups just as the Brezhniev intended to do. Anyway, it is not completely clear whether the national policy at that time could go back to a really deliberated plan based on some political thought about national minority, or it would have based merely to an ad-hoc device in order to gas off possible revolts. Anyway, it is difficult to image, however , that some residue of idealism of Lenin was said to survived in this policy. In reality, thanks to this policy young Taksami could often go out to the Far East for the minority research with purposes of the investigation and lecture travels, etc. He was welcomed by people everywhere in local towns. The photograph above shows that he shakes hand with an old friend in some village along the Amur. Such pictures were found often in books and magazines at that time.



There stood still an old primary school of wooden two story house in Kalima as our team visited there at the first time in the year 1998. The director of the school, a Negidal lady, who was one of the old friends of Taksami, brought us to the old building to guide all the corners of the wood house that Taksami himself know very well yet after half a century years (see below). In a corner of the second floor they provided a sort of school museum where all kind of regional products were arranged on the walls and desks. The picture of Taksami was there among photos of heroes the village send to the world. The director said "we are all proud of you, Chuner". In the library we found his books, too. Children learn their mother tongue with his textbooks and dictionaries in the hand. Really, he has to be proud of himself.

The school house was unfortunately burned down due to the forest fire in 2001. All the treasure on the walls and shelves could not be saved. Taksami sent anew some teaching materials and books to the school afterward.

Taksami made a lot of excellent works as anthropologist as well as historian. Not only in this academic field, but also in the practical work for minority education. He made in fact great achievement being worth to be evaluated very highly. From the beginning of the 1970s he began to open his mouth about minority problem in the Soviet



Union. He surely calculated the risk of possible persecution. What mad it possible for him to get rid of danger was surely the high quality of his works based on detailed description of real situation the peoples involved in. His first book *Nivkhi* 1967 published by the Leningrad Academy showed what he achieved already at this difficult time. We can easily imagine out of this book it what has driven him to the further work in the following years.

In the latter half of 1970's, the non-regressive change was going on in the life of minority peoples in the late Soviet Union. The fundamental life style of indigenous peoples got sustained by the policy of labor collectivization in sokhoz and kolkhoz and, consequently, the collectivization of inhabitants which made necessary collective education by means of boarding schools. The collectivization was followed by the nation wide migration of Russian in the whole Soviet territory. Russians appeared in every village of indigenous peoples with trucks and helicopters with full of iron instruments, they took job as directors and instructors in every factories and kolkhozes. They occupy local administrative posts, too, which were exchanged by different faces every four years as the result of some controlled cycle planed by the central management in Moscow.

In this period Taksami started to make brave political assertions for preserving the traditional culture of indigenous peoples, together with a small group of colleagues who were of the same opinion. It is not without risk in the situation at that time. But he has not been arrested, perhaps because of his high level academic activity which the Party estimated to be useful to make use of. It would have thought that the opinions are de fact harmless so long as no political power moves around behind. Mean-while the political process of the Soviet Union was confronted by the drastic change to the decisive collapse. Afganistan was not defeated, Chernobyl' showed the catastrophe of the Soviet nuclear technique and policy. Even Peretroika could not help stopping the definitive process to roll down the slope to the end of Communist domination.

The perestroika prepared surely the death of Soviet communism in the political viewpoint, but the same process gave chance to restore "free thinking" in the ideological sight which has been suppressed for more than 90 years. In many places in the old Soviet territory, peoples began to open the mouth to try new life styles. As long as languages use of the indigenous peoples concerned, some one would abolish Russian style of writing, the other wants to enact new official languages. This movement was, of course, caused by serious political change going on in a wide scale. In 1995 the new government of Tuva decided once to latinize the language writing. They were proud of this radical policy, when the culture-education minister talked about this brave policy at a conference in Novosibirsk. Some attendants murmured "But you must be careful; Russian tanks attack you soon after Chechen." So was the time, it was critical enough for indigenous peoples and their leaders.

Taksami and his colleagues were always ready to work much more for indigenous peoples. A new stage of the minority problems was prepared by them in this period. Monumental event was that in March 1990 the first general meeting of "the Society of Northern Minorities" was held in Moscow just one year before the collapse of Soviet

Union. Taksami was selected to the chairman and the vice chairman was Wladimir Sangi, also a Nivkh from Sakhalin (see. 2.2. W. Sangi). Both Nivkhs represent yet the intelligence of their people and continue to play a leading role after the conference not only for Nivkhs as well as for the whole minorities of the North.

### **Representing his people Nivkh**



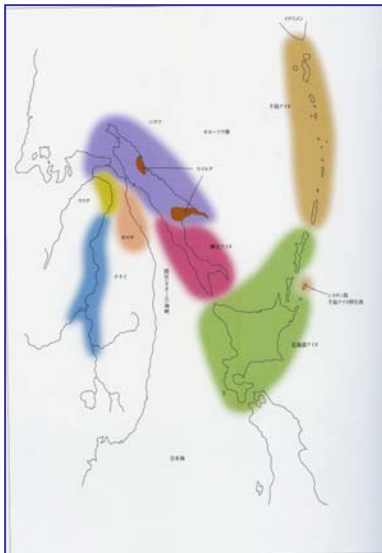
The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. The successor State Russian Federation has soon proved itself to be no more democratic than expected. But the new Constitution of the Russian, enacted in December 1993, though, contains the article: "The ecological safety of environment as well as the protection of a traditional life of the minority peoples belong to obligation of Russian Federation and its local administration" (Article 72). The article itself was the result which is due to the long time effort of minority peoples Taksami and his colleagues who have fought for it at the risk of their life. However, despite of the beautiful text, the realities of the life of the indigenous peoples was yet miserable. The so-called socialist economy was completely annihilated, instead of the Party the so-called mafia groups established their national-wide systematic power with extortion and violence, just as it was a old Russian tradition. For instance, a small fisher group poaches sturgeons somewhere near by Kalima, the caviar was carried by a small ship to Khabarovsk in the night. It passes to the hands of a small mafia group there and the poor fisher got some cash earnings. In next days the caviar appears on a party table in a hotel in Japan with the label "the best caviar from Caspian Sea".

Taksami knows the realities of life of indigenous peoples best, because he get information directly both from native people and at the same time from administration. He got angry and the anger was published in a book "Development Problems of Indigenous Peoples in the North" by Taksami et al. 2003. He wrote: 100 years of the last century were for us indigenous peoples the days of grief "it's enough, no more". And the situation does not change today. Life of "No Exit" has become even serious. However, he believes it is possible yet for the northern peoples to escapes from this situation and to recover the old ecological stability constructing ecological symbiosis in an independent territory. For this purpose the peoples need land: the territory guaranteed to live on with liberty and comfort. It must be also guaranteed to the political right to construct the multilateral life creatively as a whole. The indigenous peoples belonged to Russia at present, but this means merely that they belong to the world formerly intermediated by the state. If we want to cut off the chain, Russians and the people of the world will surely understand what we think about. Therefore, we can some day create "a Northern Region governed by the representatives of Northern indigenous peoples controlling all the stages of government." He says it is yet a dream,

but we keep imaging it.

On the shore of Nekrasovka, in the north most end Sakhalin, Taksami and I walked around to gather firewood. We came upon a small fisher, perhaps an Ukrainian, catching salmons on the shore. He peeled out only the salmon roe throwing away all the other parts of fishes. The basket was already full of ikra, and in the water nearby were floating a lot of killed fishes. Suddenly Taksami shouted out: “Here is our land! You, Russian, must go out quickly!” There stood a Nivkh with blushed face.

## NIVKHS --- Our Northern Neighbors --- Introduction



The majority of Ainus, one of the indigenous peoples of Japan islands, lived and live in the northern parts of the present Japan. They are said to have lived at least in the northern region of the line between Sendai and Akita as is described in many historical documents. People having lived there were supposed to speak Ainu language as is indicated by many local names which are assumed to go back to Ainu names. YAMADA Hidezou left detailed evidence about Ainu local names in the wide region on the east part of Japan (cf. H.Yamada, Research on Ainu local names, 4 vols, 1982-1983). There is no doubt that Ainu people lived in present Tohoku (Northeast) District and the whole area of Hokkaido, the whole Kurile Islands The ranges extends to the southern part of the Sakhalin island, too, as early as the 14th. century to the year 1945.

Neighboring on Ainus, there lived another nation called Nivkh (in the meaning “human being”) .They have a totally different language and culture from Ainu. The map above, edited by Ainu Foundation FRPAC in *Sakhalin Ainu Ethnography* 2003, p.88. shows where these indigenous peoples live in the northern region of Japanese islands. The purple part in north Sakhalin and in the small district of Amur shore indicate the inherent region of the

people Nivkh. At the red spots in the purple region indicates the Tungus minority called Ulta. Other Tungus tribes are also living on the continental parts that is marked by the blue and brown regions. We can see in this map that Nivkhs live in isolation i.e. between Tungus and Ainu, perhaps since ancient times. But we cannot say from when they live there, nor we know how they were settled in this place. But I suppose that some time in a very ancient time some groups of human beings traveled there from the North and settled down in the sea- and river-side there. In adaptation to the ecological circumstance there they developed the language and culture of their own. The ethnic establishment must have preceded to the ordinary scale of contact with neighboring other ethnic groups.

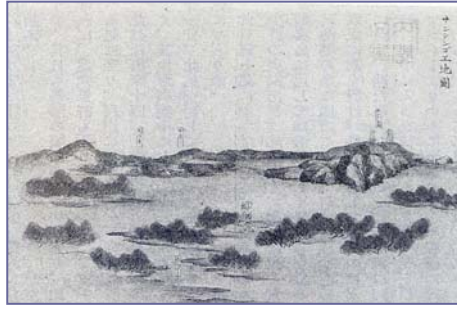
Nivkhs were called often Gilyak. Prof. HATTORI Takeshi (1909-1991), the specialist of Niv kh language, used this term consistently, except that he names the southern group of Sakhalin Nivkh Nikvun as they called themselves . But this word Gilyak was of Tungus origin; they are named so by the Tungusic peoples living on the Amur who were called Santan by Japanese in 18.C. In Chinese literature Nivkhs appear with the naming "Gilimei/Gilemei". Russian invaders adopted this term in sloppy way changing it into Gilyak, which was also used by Japanese untill a half century before. But the word Nivkh is now popular among themselves as well as for ethnologic and linguistic research. It used not only for ethnic name, but also as a common noun with the meaning human being just as the word Ainu.

In these 15 years I have acquainted myself with many Nivkh people. They have helped me learning their language; they teach me words and sentences, daily manner and dishes, they often took me to the field and forest to gather berry. They are a really guest-friendly people; they invited me to tea; they say to tea, but in reality it was very often a banquet with many dishes of traditional kitchen. But in the last years I often receive letters from them. It stand in many times that the lady in the village so and so has died, or in better cases the lady so and so lies in bed in a hospital. Every year I lost my Nivkh friends who I knew well and whom I learned language and culture of the ethnos from. In the following I picked up some stories about them form my note books to show how they lived and what they want to do. The next sentences are in fact nothing but a memorandum, but I wish it would be somehow useful as an information that in this corner of the world there live people, i.e. human beings (=nivkhs) with clever head and warm heart who are, however, endangered even to maintain their language and culture, clearly to say, in danger to sustain living in a human way.

## **1. Nivkhs in Low Amur**

### **1.1. Nivkhs in Kalima**

**"Kalima village"**



"After departure from Hol on the 23rd, four days passed. We arrived at a village called Kalme on the 26th, stayed over the night at a harata (=head-man). We were received as hospitable as in Kiji" The village Kalima was mentioned in this way in MAMIYA Rinzo *Toudatu-Kikou* vol.2. Toyo-Bunko 484, p.155. In the summer 1809 he visited the trade base camp of Qing dynasty in Delen. The way to the official village in the middle Amur he took the rout across the lake Kiji, but the way back he sailed in a small ship on the Amur to Sakhalin. It was on the day July 26, 1809 (in old calendar) when he stayed in Kalima. He explained in the book what a harata is: "in the social system of smernkur (Nivkh), some leading families are selected to govern the village, the head is called harata and the next as kahshintu. (*Hokui-Bunkai Yawa* appendix p. 101). In Kalima, according to ChunerTaksami, there were 2 or 3 leading families which deserve the title harata. Even in Soviet era one of them was used to be appointed to the mayor. The role is often exchanged after one another. In fact the leading families provide the village with many elites. Out of the leading families is Chida. The present head of the family is Gregory Nikolaevich Chida who serves now as the chef of the Fisher Cooperation. His sister Dinaida Ivanovna works as a medical doctor in Nikolaevsk and our friend Chuner Mikhailovich Taksami is one of the relatives. He was the director of Kunst-kamera in Sankt-Petersburg,. Chida is really a brilliant family. In the night 1809.07.26 Mamiya stayed supposedly at family Chida and enjoyed the guest-friendly party, in a wooden house on the small hill along the shore of the Amur.



There are some more families which served as harata or shinta. They are e.g. family Pukha, Gudan and others. Each family has excellent contributors for Nivkh culture: Maria Nikolaevna Pukhta was an informant of Nivkh language when Panfilov made a field work in this village in 1950' years. She was yet a little girl, but her Kalima dialect is yet valuable data for us. After she studies in Geltzen University in Leningrad, she worked as teacher in Nikolaevsk for a long time. To our regret, she died in 2004 just after we published her text book of Nivkh

language, Nivkh Thesaurus and Converstiaon Dictionary. Family Gudan is famous of its pedagogical contribution. The relatives of this family have managed to support the education in Kalima during the sever time of Soviet control.

It is no exaggeration to say that Kalima is the ethnic center of the continental Nivkhs. Even Sakhlín-Nivkhs give respectful glance to Kalima people. It is said that Kalima is a metropolis of Nivkh, though it is only a small village of ca. 150 inhabitants, ca. 90% of them are yet Nivkhs. The rest are Negidal, Nanai, Orochi and a few Russian.

There lives a Hanti from West Siberia, who is wife of Mr. Dekhal the old director of the primary school of this village. They got acquainted as they studies in the Geltzen University in Leningrad. She traveled with him by Trans-Siberian Express to this village many years ago, she told us. In an early morning Taksami made a short walk in the main street of the village. He happened to meet the Hanti wife. It was a happy accident meeting after 20 years. They chattered for an hour (see the photo above), and at the end they made a promise to come to tea in the afternoon.

## How to go to Kalima



It is not easy to visit this village. First, because the village has only a wooden wharf about 7 meters long on the riverside in spite of a harbor. It is too short to berth for a liner between Khabarovsk and Nikolaevsk, a hydrofoil called Metrole. It passes over Kalima and stops in Tyl, about 20 kilometers southwards. Second, between these villages there is no official transport, no bus nor ship. It is for Nivkhs no problem, they have always someone who carries them from Tyl to Kalima. But tourists will be surely at a loss

at the small harbor. My first trip to Kalima was planed in the occasion of our collective trip with an official research project. Our team consisted of Chuner TAKSAMI, Galina LOK (Museum Nogliki), TSUMAGARI Toshiro (Hokkaido University), KAZAMA Shinjiro (Tokyo Univ. of Foreign Sudies), Aleksandr PEVNOV, Malina KHASANOVA and myself. We gathered at the Khabarovsk Airport and stayed one night in an Intourist Hotel on the shore. In the evening after dinner we talked about the plan in detail. Early in the next morning we were on hydrofoil Meteor to Nikolaevsk-na-Amure. After one night stop in Vogoratskoy we arrived at the goal in the morning after two days. It was really an unnecessary stop to stay in a village only for sleeping, if there were

only something like a transport network in Nikolaevsk in the late evening. But the so-called urban intra-structure in our sense does not exist in the late Soviet region.



There is a flight to Nikolaevsk, too. From the domestic part of the Khabarovsk Airpor it cost only four hours to Nikolaevsk, provided the machine Tuborev 154 would fly safely and troubleless. But an airplane is too expensive for the majority of people having no connection with deep pockets, say, small Russian mafias.

Now, from Nikolaevsk to the village Kalima ca 30 kilometers south-westward, we have to take a meteor again, this time in reverse direction. The ship stopped at some spots on the way to arrive at Tyl.

Tyl is an old famous village we know from an old document, though it was called with a different name: Santankoe according to MAMIYA 1809. He writes : "there is a spot we passed by on that day (i.e.1809.07.26) called Santankoe. In a recent time Russians bandits sailed down the river Honko to settle down here for a while. They wanted to govern the inhabitants to rob of their product. But Manchu attacked them to banish from there (but it is unknown when). People build then two stone towers on the river side hill. They stood in the distance, so that Rinzo (i.e.Mamiya) could not read what was engraved on the surface. Passing by the spot, the people in the ship threw offerings of rice, barley, chestnuts and fruits into the water making a bow to the towers. Why I did not know." (Todatu-Kikou vol.2. pp.155/156)



They are the towers of Eineiji temple, which stand today not on the hill, but in the Uladi-Bostok Museum, as we see in the picture on the right side (photographed by KUREBITO Megumi). This Santankoe is the old name of our Tyl and the Honko the river Amgurn, which flows into the Amur at this point, so that the river is too wide to look over the other shore.

In our travel to Kalima in the summer of 1993, we arrived at Tyl with a Meteor. I stood on the bridge perfectly at a loss for a while to find there is nothing to carry us to Kalima, nor taxis, nor boats. In the next moment I saw a boat

landed on the shore with full speed. One of the riders of the boat shouted something loudly. He ran up to the wharf and held Taksami tightly in his arms. Taksami sent a glance back to me saying "It's my cousin Grisha. 15 years since." It was Grigory Chida, the present head of the famous Kalima family Chida. In this way, our difficulties disappeared, now, we have a ship to Kalima and a lodge in the village.

### **Hill of Chida Family**

The family Chida lives on the hill about 100 meters on the west from the shore since ancient times. There scatter the log houses of the relatives; next door to the main house lives the family of Grisha's daughter, in front of it but



some steps down stood another house where Taksami was born. And across the street in the oblique position stands another house of Grisha's sister.

Walking up to the hill, we crossed over a brook. Taksami told me with somewhat sentimental nostalgia to his childhood he drank the water scooping by hand, at that time water was richer and clear. enough to taste. But now it almost dries up. The reason why is difficult to give; the forest sustains, no factories were allowed to build, but the wood fire is repeated every year, it snows less and less in every winter, water is reserved less in the wood, perhaps due to global warming, he assumes.

Approaching Chida's hill, we felt to be observed at. By the window of a log house sat a woman looking out. Grisha spat out: "It's a lotcha living alone since some years ago. Her man worked for the antenna complex in the center of the village. It's only iron scrap now." The word "lotcha" means Russian in Nivkh language. It is a normal naming for Russian in general. But in many cases it expresses some emotional nuance, a mixture of scorn and hatred. It has been accumulated constantly in Nivkh's mind, perhaps except for some years between Revolution and World War II.

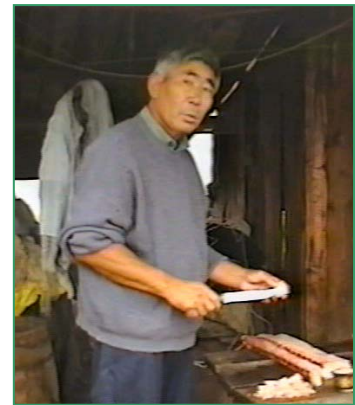
Taksami and I stayed in a wooden house on the top of the hill for more than a week by Grisha Chida who live alone now after he lost his wife. The house stands in the old estate of the family Chida where most family members have grown up. It spreads out wide to the mutual grave place far from the shore to the forest in the eastward and long along the river side until the road end into the mountain where bears and beasts live in the northward.

Over the street in front of the house lives a family of a Nanai and his Jew wife. One day he sent a message to invite us, for they live on the place where Taksami was born. We visited them in the evening, but as soon as Taksami open the gate, some back thing sprang at him attacking him in the arm. It was a shepherd left loose in the



garden. Nivkhs keep a lot of dogs free without chain; everywhere in the village dogs are walking and sitting on the grass with cows together. They are for Nivkhs the most important transport instrument and often work for Nivkhs as best friends on frozen roads. Taksami got urgent medical treatment and came back to our house without any reasonable reception. To hear the accident, Grisha got angry; putting a bandage on the arm anew he made a talk for an hour: they, the Nanai and Jew know nothing to come along with dogs, pst! military dogs as shepherds have of no use for sleighs. The Nanais have to understand how to live in our Nivkh village; their commercial activity has to be in accord with our fisher cooperation. Mixed living of indigenous peoples cannot continue without mutual understanding of culture of native peoples, etc. etc.

### Grisha a genuine Nivkh



Mr. Grigory Nikolaevich Chida is the head of the prestigious Chida family. In the boat from Tyl he proposed to call him as Grisha, saying "I am Grisha, Tohru, you came from the land as this motor of the boat, Yamaha, you are not only a Japanese here." A logical consequence.

Grisha lost the wife several years ago. The daughter was brought up alone by him. But a trustworthy Nivkh has taken her away from him; the condition was that they live in the neighborhood. They kept word: they built a two stories house next to Grisha who lives yet in a old small lodge as widower. He is not an expert to clean his own living place. I borrowed the room his daughter she used until marriage. Her slippers remained yet under the bed I used. On the bedside desk were scattered books and magazines she read. The kitchen was not necessarily in order, that is understandable to some extend. In a pot splendid berry kelm was fermenting. He surely wanted to make jam from it. But it was already a sort of liqueur. He spread it on black bread yet as jam, though, with a comment it tastes better than a normal berry jam.

Usually his daughter comes twice to him to make meals ready for father. But as we stayed for the first time, she was in Nikolaevsk to bring her son to hospital for treatment of asthma, surely because of the wood fire which has been repeated every summer in these ten years. She could not come home more than a week, because the meteor stopped. The wood fire in this year was so furious that the local government prohibited all kinds of river traffic. In

fact the smoke was very thick, so that visibility on water reached less



then 100 meters. Furthermore, fire came nearer and nearer almost to the back yard of the village. People living nearby the forest pouched and piled up their household goods and many of them refused on the shore. They even took shelter on the riverside around the office of the old fisher kolkhoz.

Grisha was the chief of the Fishermen Cooperation Kalima. His bureau was in a cottage on the shore in front of the wharf. It is used also as a tool place and a vodka-bar. Going out at four o'clock of early morning in the river they get sturgeons and some other fishes. He has to manage to distribute the game. When they get a big game, they need often bottles of vodka for celebration. Every morning he comes home around nine o'clock with a big bulk of sturgeon meat and raw caviar for us to breakfast. After the second breakfast daily meeting of coop starts in the afternoon. They have always many difficult problems accumulated especially since the Soviet system collapsed. They make fishing rules, e.g. to regulate according to kinds fish sorts, fishing spots and quantify; they have to make market research in a pretty wide region from Nikolaevsk to Khabarovsk, they have to make good relationship with factories owned by Russian mafias and to buy fishing materials and instruments in reasonable price. Every morning come up new troubles to discuss about. Above all, fish in Amur is remarkably decreasing in number and many fishes have their tail bent, perhaps because of water pollution. A severe and careful limitation has to be introduced for sturgeon fishing in order to sustain the resource. This inevitable measure conflicts with the yield amount. The preservation measures are often in contradiction with fishing itself. If they have something against Russian mafias, say from a moral reason, no salmon nor caviar will be exchanged with Ruble, that is, any salmon brings about no morning bread to Nivkh child. In the recent years, salmon coming upstream decreases in number as well as quantity drastically. Many of them are even malformed, they have often bent tails, too. Yet we do not know when, where and why the deformation and under- development was caused; the defect was cause already before they reached the Amur or during swimming upstream during a couple of days? If it is caused by general and complete pollution of the Amur, the existence of the fishery itself will be impossible in the very near future. Grisha is very uneasy. If it is really the case, the present situation of resource destroys the Nivkhs' life completely, for they rely on fishing almost in perfect, that has been for them traditionally the main protein source. The present crises tells us directly in a word, Nivkh cannot keep living any more? You say, Tohru, the language is in danger? You may be right, Mr. possessor of the language. But you must see here, the people themselves, is now dying here. Its existence

itself is seriously endangered. And we do not know yet what should be done against this overwhelming destructing tendency. I don't know really what to do. Lenin once wrote *What to do* in order to teach us what to do. But now I cannot imagine what to do for us to survive, I mean the people as a whole in this situation.... Grisha put us many serious questions without expecting any answer. Taksami as well as I were, of course, completely unable to say something reasonable.



I found *Textbook of Economics* in his bookshelf on bedside. It was published in 1955, The book was just the same I had read in one seminar long time ago when I was a student. The book was full with red comments he wrote into. He, too, had once believed he can learn from the book how to construct a communist society. But the dogma of this socialist economy has proved that it was totally inapplicable to the village of Nivkh in Low Amur. The only possible organization of a Soviet type was a fisherman kolkhoz. It continued to play a role to organize the fishing collectively as long as Soviet control system existed. But when it collapsed it, everything of kolkhoz was totally robbed of by Russian managers who ran away in the night with truck-full of instruments the fisher and worker had every day used. The almost same was the case with other Soviet projects: the local administration tried once to construct a satellite communication base in the main park of the village. They imagined American missiles could be encountered in the sky over Kalima. The poor village of the Amur coast would have been destroyed both by American and Soviet missiles. A huge parabolic antenna and the communication tools have been left in the village center covered with red rusts. It is a strange contrast to see cows eating grass in peace surrounded by the iron rubbish of missile base.

One night Grisha said to Taksami: "Chuner, you are lucky. You went out of the village when were young, and you have become an international scholar. You have done a great contribution for our people. Nivkhs are proud of you. Pravda (it is true). It's OK. But the fellows who live here have been as happy as the dogs they keep. You, O No! better to say We ourselves must throw light on a possible future of our people. But how? Cto delat' (=what to do) again? "It is a lazy lie to say that the old days were good. The truth is that it has been worse constantly after Locha (=Russians) came. And sfter communism came, everything was taken to Moscow and Locha's mafia. After the Soviet collapsed, we tried to build a cooperative organization on the ruin of the kolkhoz, but they robbed even the last one kapek and disappeared within a night. We remained without anything to eat until the next salmon came

up. You talk about Nivkh's culture, that is precious to preserve. But wait a moment. We must eat. Our language is endangered. Sure. I will speak our language any time you want to hear. But, first, we must establish a human life, you know!

Chuner, you and your friends are welcome here any time you come. But I don't know when we could talk about our life and culture on an equal level. I am sure we can get rid of our present troubles some time to establish a commercial and cultural ties with Japanese. If Nivkh culture and language survive until the time, it is really a good luck, Man-tsai, you say? But at present we have only one serious question: what to do today"

Tow years after I visited Grisha again. The situations have not become better any more. Only his daughter has now the second son, but on the garden of her house stood huge towers of vacant vodka bottles. Grisha's relatives, young men living vis-a-vis, have red faces in the early morning. Fishery was not successful, there are no other jobs, they have nothing other than spending time with alcohol. Chronic alcoholism spread in the whole village.

Coming back to Japan I dreamed once a nightmare. I waked up and reconstructed it and wrote a mail to Taksami: Grisha and I had rifles, crawling on the stomach side by side, in a gunfire with Russian soldiers landing ashore one after another on the shore of Kalima. All Nivkh friends on our side were fallen. We two were exposed to overwhelming fire of Russian. We had to get back to the front door of the wooden schoolhouse where Grisha and Chuner had once learned. The village Kalima, or, here may be Grozny, has been already annihilated; the last house is yet in flame. At that moment a bomb has fallen to us. Grisha glanced at me. No more? I waked up.

### **Mr. Dekhal, a Nivkh teacher**

One afternoon Taksami visited Mr. Gregory Mikhailovich Dekhal, who was one of his old friends. His wife was a Hanti we met on the street in the early morning (see the picture on the section above). The family lives on a pretty log house in a small side street of the village. He was teacher of the primary school in Kalima (see the picture in the section above). He taught mainly the history of Nivkh people and their language for more than 45 years so that practically the whole village and its surroundings was his pupils. He is a famous and even a monumental person not only of the village, but also to all Nivkh people. He retired from the principal of the school a little earlier for



sickness. He was writing a biography describing his precious experience of pedagogical career. The book will be a valuable document of the people's history.

In the first period after the Revolution there was a time of dream. In the center of the dream there was an official organization North Committee which offered many sided aid to minority peoples in the Soviet North. The best aid was a new faculty in University Leningrad, named as Faculty of Northern Peoples, which was organized and guided by Prof. Bogoraz-Tan a specialist of Chukchee language. Around him gathered young men from all the part of the young Soviet districts. They made wall-papers in 15 different mother tongues, published reports and reportages in a magazine *Taiga i Tundra* (1929-1933). Textbooks for mother tongues were made, too. They were written in latinized letters. The Nivkh text *Juru Bitghu* was published in 1933 edited and written by A. Kreynovich. This textbook was used in Kalima for many years. But in summer 1935 the North Committee was dissolved. The faculty of Bogoraz was moved from University to the Pedagogical College (now Geltzen named Pedagogical University). Prof. Bogoraz-Tan died in 1936. The idealism of the young Soviet also died. Then began the general slaughter of nationalist and Trotzists under Stalin regime: almost all the active students of the Faculty of Northern Peoples became the victim.

Mr. Dekhal belongs to the second generation of the Northern Faculty students, but he knew yet the latin-lettered Nivkh textbook. It stood yet in his book-shelf. The first cyrillic written Nivkh text book was published some years after the War. He had to teach his mother-tongue with Russian letters in the school in Kalima. Then came a hard time. The mother tongue education was forbidden officially. But he wanted to continue his mother tongue education in various ways in school; sometimes as an optional course but more often in his family house. In 70 years under Brezhnev regime all the people were compelled to become "soviet-men", a total assimilation into Soviet-Russian nation. Those who wanted to do something for ethnic education were condemned to be nationalists, i.e. enemy against Soviet policy in general, they were called trotzists who were executed or, in lucky case, sat in jailhouse for a long time. Mr. Dekhal had to go to police in Nikolaevsk many times in this period.

In an academic world, on the other hand, a piece of liberty survived. It was possible to research culture and languages of minorities in many districts in the Soviet territory. Some type of high education was yet recommended for northern minority students: The Geltzen University in Leningrad was always full of the students coming from provincial villages of Soviet states. Best pupils were gathered there to be indoctrinated at least four years long in order to get back home to teach Russian language and Russian culture simply admiring communism and Gagarin. It



is only after the Perestroika and Glasnost' that the wind blew in somewhat agreeable way. Mr. Dekhal got a chance again to teach his mother tongue in a normal course. He got also a colleague working with him in school. Marina Nikolaevna Potkan (right in the picture) assisted him in the hard time, but now officially as a teaching staff in the school. She has taught the Nivkh with Dehal together in the last 20 years. The teaching materials she made herself in many years piled in the library room of the school. The textbooks she used here was mainly *Bukvari* (Letters) by Taksami/Pukhta 1991 for the first class with *Nivkh-Russian Dictionary* by Taksami 1983. Ms Potkan was happy to say that all the peoples concerning the Nivkh education come from the same village Kalima: the writers of the books, the teacher and pupils and the school master are Kalima natives. She was happy to report us, too, that now she got a younger assistance Slava Petrovna Kalimasama helping her to make teaching materials just like as she did for Dekhal a long time ago.

### Mis. KADNA a folklore-teller



In front of the family Dekhal over a lane there lived Galina Shalin KADNA, one of the genuine folktale-tellers in Nivkh society. She had been a teacher of young Taksami, who learned by her to learn his own mother tongue brushing it up from boys' jargon into honorable language of Nivkh. Some folktales selection he once published go back the time when he learned from her.

As we visited her, she was preparing to escape the house from wood fire coming nearer to the back yard. The rooms were full of bags, but they began to talk about everything they experienced in the last years. Except for necessary Russian terms, their conversations went on in Nivkh language. If Taksami said some word in Russian, then, she repeated it translating into a right Nivkh language, perhaps not only due to her educational habit, but because she wanted yet to convey Taksami the traditional usage of her language and to make him record of Nivkh legend. But when we make ready to record her with a video-camera, she interrupted saying that she want to choose a better circumstance in a calm atmosphere. We promised, yes next time. However, the next time has not come. At the end of 2005 we heard of her death.

## FamilyVAZGUN

In the east end of the village, pretty near to the wood, there lives family Vazgun. Nikolay Dimitory VAZGUN is a Nivkh and his wife Nadejida Selgaevna a Negidal. The home language is Russian or Nivkh, they said. The



language Negidal was not used, because Nadejida was brought up in Nivkh circumstance. Nikolay retired from Kalima school a few years ago and was doing his favorite literary work. Nadejida was yet in an active service in the school as the chief of the school museum and library.

Nikolay is a poet. He gave us a pamphlet newly published. It contains an interesting poem about the origin of the village name "Kalima":

### **Kalima legend**

The big sun has given us Summer every year

Since very long time ago,

From old times for a long time

A child has told it to his child so.

Our ancestor did not speak.

They only murmured with hesitancy if necessary.

But they had a pain in the heart;

They appealed to God every day.

One day a terrible storm came.

Sea gulls made a fuss in surprise.

Large waves rise by a frightening power.

Even to heaven stood up bubbles.

The water roared and shouted,

Waves hit and beat rocks and shore.

But in the next morning the wave becomes quiet, and on the shore

Many dolphins were cast on the shore.

People jumped for joy and began to dance.  
 Dolphin's tongue was boiled with the pan.  
 Everyone divided the delicious food equally.  
 People thanked the Heaven for the treat and ate.  
 They happened to notice, what occurred  
 Everyone sings splendidly.  
 We got song and tongue. Let us call our village as  
 QUALM, Dolphin, in the future.  
 Thus, the word was carried over to their children.  
 It glittered to them and further to their children.  
 They said on that day dolphin's tongue  
 fell down from the Heaven.

Note: Nivkhs distinguish dolphins with big size as *pord'*, middle ones as *qen* and small ones *qualm*. The dolphins in this poem are the small dophhins in the Amur. They got tongue, i.e. language, of the small dolphins, i.e. the language of qualms.

## Kalima Primary School



Nadejida Selgevna VAZGUN guided us to the Kalima Primary School. It was quite the same wooden house as Taksami once learned as a small boy 60 years ago. However, the floor dropped



already, the window tore, and the stairs were broken, so that the house as a whole was not possible to repair. In front of the house was built a one-storied house of an Internat, a boarding school, in an early year of 1970's though it was said to be unnecessary to Kalima, for all the boys were living in the village. But the Soviet government had a strategic aim to build an unnecessary one: they wanted to gather children of various nationalities together in order to assimilate them into one nation called Soviet People. It was practically a miracle institution for russifying them



in one generation. Children learned Soviet doctrine with a nationwide single textbook (see the page of the textbook above) decorated with a Pioneer flag with a red written slogan "Create soviet people" from Kaliningrad in the west to the Bering Strait in the far-east.

However, circumstances were a little different in Kalima. "Our Internat was a sort of camping house. Village children have fun with a few children from other villages near by. The old school stands only in front of it, it is totally unnecessary but they only want to do the same as other villages in the country." so laughed Nadejida Selgevna. "Anyway we have a new house Internat, because the old school building was even dangerous to walk on the floor".



At the end of the corridor on the second floor there was a corner they call school museum (the picture right) . It might have been red decorated several years ago, but it looked like a lumber room with various kinds of junks. It remained yet a poster on the wall to praise the heroes of Kalima, the war dead soldiers and social contributors. On the top there stood Nikokay Chida, father of Grisha, i.e. uncle of Taksami, and the picture of Taksami himself, too, with a remark, "the director of Anthropological and Ethnological Museum in memorandum of Peter the Great in Sankt-Petersburg (Kunstkamera)". The picture of Maria Nikolaevna Puxta was on it, too, with the comment as pedagogical instructor of Nivkh language and culture.



Many books they wrote were in the shelf of the school library in the building (the picture left). The documents concerning Nivkh culture and language appeared to be considerably complete. A lot of official papers were kept in files, educational documents of children for many generations, Nivkh language written wall newspapers and many other highly precious papers filled the shelves and boxes on the floor. Nivkh language textbooks and dictionaries were arranged by a dozen copies for the purpose of letting children use in the classroom. Among many articles on

village life many poems were written in Nivkh language by pupils which decorated the wall papers.

It was awfully hot in the summer of 1998. The Amur river has been completely covered with the smoke of a wood fire. The flame reached Kalima village. The old schoolhouse got fire, too. It stood too near to the forest. In the next moment Intelnat blazed up, too. The flame swallowed both buildings. Nothing could be rescued. The treasure of Nivkh culture as well as the beautiful works of children artists became ashes completely.

In the summer on 2000 our group visited the village again. We bought a television and video set to make a gift to the children of the school. From the shore of Kalima we started toward the school, but someone said there was no school any more. It was burnt down to ashes owing to the wood fire last year. Another boy shouted "Now the Nivkh language class is by teacher Dekhal". We changed the route and marched to him. The living room was not wide enough for 30 children, so the bedroom was added to it so that it appeared a small classroom.

NAKAGAWA Hiroshi conveyed a message in Nivkh language. We wanted to give the audio set as present to all Kalima boys and girls with wish to learn the language not only for yourself, but also for the next generation of you." But we heard that they wanted at first to see some Japanese animation films we had not brought. We had, therefore, to promise to give them in the next time. We got a new task to do for them: an animation text in Nivkh language has to be made. But the task has not been completed only in a half way yet.

### **Wood Fire of Amur**

The water of the Amur is dark, just as is called as Heilongjiang (Black-water-river) in Chinese. On Sakhalin it is called En Ura (Black River), too, according to the naming borrowed from Manchu. Mamiya called it Mankoo in the meaning the river of Manchu.. The Amur is only one river in the North-east of Eurasian Continent which flows from the west to the east. It starts from the mountains of Buriyat Mongol, through the Za-Baikaliya (beyond Baikal), gathering water from big rivers like Son-Hoa-Xiang and Amgung and pours into Mamiya Strait. It flows more than 3,000 kilometers long absorbing all kinds of botanical and animal nutrition which enriches the Okhotsk sea to a rich breeding fish farm. The Okhotsk freezes over in winter because of its salinity thin water, and the drift ice flows to the Hokkaido. The ecological features of the Amur and the Okhotsk condition the life style of the peoples living in this ecological circumstance. The rich forests and waters have sustained their hunting and fishing so rich as to afford the remainder product for exchange. The Amur peoples were famous of their commercial activity until Russian colonialists destroyed their life and turned them into poor natives (cf. SASAKI Shiro *Trade people from the North*' NHK books No.772, 1996).



As Taksami and I visited this village in the year 1993, thick smoke of wood fire covered the surface of the water of the Amur. The fire was repeated every summer in these years on the both sides of the river, but this summer was serious. One morning the radio spoke that the Nikoraevsk Water Transport Office declared general blockage of water transport on the Amur and prohibited entering any ship into Nikolaevsk harbor and that the schedule of the blockage release is not planed. It was serious for our trip to Amur district, because our visa of entering Russia was valid only for more tree days . It was the case, too, for our Japanese colleagues who were working in a Negidal village near Nikokaevsk. The airplane reservation of Russian colleagues to Sankt Petersburg was also very difficult to change. We had to be in Nikolaevsk, anyway, so that we could manage to do something reasonable to prepare our way back. We discussed about the possibility to get over the blockage with Grisha who was the only person to understand our position. He consulted at once with his colleagues about a loophole if there is any. Coming back home from the Fisher Cooperation he told us that in any way it was totally impossible to reach Nikolaevsk port with a normal means; all the official routs were strictly watched on. The only possible way was to sail on the Amur in an early morning tomorrow in a small boat for maximally 4 persons.



At 5 o'clock next morning there was a heap of goods outside of the front door: ca 10 kilo surgeon raw meat, 10 pieces of dried salmon, a bucket full of red ikra, several block of black bread and 4 bottles of vodka, and, not forget to add, 4 overcoats of dog fur. We went down to riverside carrying these goods. There worked a Nivkh checking the engine of the boat. He was Sergey an expert of sailing the Amur: he know everything of the river, where it flows fast, where there are some dangerous rocks to avoid and where how many cranes gather to rest in water bush,

etc. He said "the boat has Yamaha, a Japanese engine, so take it easy, no problem!" As soon as we set ourselves on the rear seat in dog fur coats, it started to run with a terrible speed. The sight was limited at most ca. 50 meters, practically nothing was visible around the ship sliding on the water more than 50 kilometer per hour. After sailing about 2 hours Sergey stopped the ship for breakfast. Heaping up red ikra on a thickly sliced bread, we swallowed down it with vodka into the stomach. For protein we had plenty of raw surgeon-sashimi. In reed marsh nearby crowded a huge group of cranes resting with many wild geese swimming around. After breakfast Sergej started the engine again. He shouted "attention! round to the north side of the river" Then, after 2 hours sail in dense fog we found a wharf. Mago. But a police ship anchored. We sailed further half an hour. Grisha sentenced that we could not go further; we were already in Nikolaevsk harbor. We landed ashore in village Innokenchefka, 15 kilometers from the city.

We took dog-coats off and handed them Grisha, we all were glad to have reached shore alive. Kharasho! Spasivo! Serjey answered : "Normal'na" (as usual). We parted with promise meeting again, perhaps in the next summer. They sailed back to Kalima on the same rout. We climbed up the bank of the river into the village in order to take a bus to Nikolaevsk

## **2.2. Nivkhs in Innokenchefka**

### **The Late Lenin fishery kolkhoz**

There is a village named Innokenchefka in the north side shore of the Amur. The Amur in front of this village is really vast. The other side shore is only slightly visible when the sky is cleared up. Here it changes the flow from the north to the west, so that it scrapes off the north side shore to broaden the width more. Furthermore, another big river flows into it in this spot from the north. It is the Amgun. Salmon and trout coming back to home from the sea must decide here which river they swim up further. Nivkhs say they choose now rather the Amgun than Amur because the former is less dirty. Fish swimming up the main stream will soon bend the tail because of serious heavy metal pollution. The fishery village Innokenchefka is located just in the position where fishes must decide where they swim up further. Indecisive ones are swimming around in front of the village. This is why Nivkhs gather to this shore in late summer every year from ancient times. Soviet Russia duly established the fishery organization, the Lenin Kolkhoz. Nivkhs in the villages nearby were compulsorily gathered to make a fishery settlement. Their main product is salmon cans to be consumed in every cities in Soviet Union and partially for export. However, when the Soviet Union collapsed, the Russian managers of the kolkhoz disappeared in the night with cars, trucks, tractors, machines and all the daily necessities altogether. There remained only native Nivkhs originals and some migrants of other northern peoples. They had no other means to survive than to continue the work as it was. Instead

of Lenin, a new Fisher Union was established. According to statistics of our colleague Galina Lok, the village consists of 280 inhabitants as a whole in the year 1998. Nivkhs are 168, 4 Ulchis, 5 Evenkis, and 5 Yakuts. The rest are Russian workers who have no home town to go back to.

A regular bus is running four times in a day from Nikolaevsk to Innokenchefka. But we took a car because we must come back home very late. At the corner turning to right into the village stood yet a big signboard "Lenin Kolkhoz here". We turned the corner and stopped in front of the wooden built city hall. We were at once invited in the city office. Perhaps, Nikolaevsk telephoned Innokenchefka that Taksami comes. He was after all the head of the Northern Peoples Conference of Russian Federation, a VIP for a small village in the "Far East". In front of the city hall a dozen Nivkh people gathered talking about something in loud voice. In a minute a stout Russian woman appeared with a stretched hand introducing herself as Maria so-and-so, the village chief. She asked Taksami whether he had come here with some special interest with anxiety examining us at the same time with arrogance. Taksami explained that our aim lay especially in linguistic investigation. The word released her and promptly began to chat: she had just changed her post from Magadan, comparing with there, the economic situation here was worse after the kolkhoz was disorganized. Facilities have not been repaired by means of our own original resources, the money for that purpose lacked completely and people lacked willingness, too. Official money from Moscow came only a little, if any etc. etc.



In some minutes late the people having waited outside were invited in, then the atmosphere changed entirely. They turned out to be in fact representatives of the Nivkhs of the village. The village chief would have intended merely to introduce them to her guest Prof. Taksami as the national hero of your people, or so, but she has come to recognize that he is in reality an old reliable friend of Nvkhs. They began to protest her about village policy in general, indicating concrete statistics in hand that the communal enterprises delayed the salary for these 3 weeks, the improvement request of public facilities had long been ignored, the working conditions of indigenous people became rather worse than the yet remaining Russian workers, and so on. The village chief was daunted toward their sharp remarks and had nothing other than saying that the problems would be discussed in the town meeting in the afternoon.

## **Gudan family**

Taksami was scheduled to make a lecture and to attend the the succeeding discussion on the afternoon of the day. We had still some hours until then. The family Gudan, one of the famous indigenous families of Nivkh, lived in this village. They came Kalima. Taksami some generations ago. A Nivkh lady invited us to tea as is usual in Nivkh society. But “tea” is in reality a banquet in their traditional sense.



We met Anna Nikolaevna Gudan, the oldest lady of the family, who still speaks very well her mother tongue. An old lady living next door was invited to tea, too, as a talk friend of Anna Nikolaevna. Both spoke mainly in Nivkh language fluently. Our colleague Galina Lok joined in the conversation. It went on in mother tongue except for some necessary foreign words. We estimated the neighbor lady as old as Anna Gudan, but in reality she said to be yet 65 years old. But the next generation could understand almost no word they spoke, except one person: Valentina Selgeena, Anna's granddaughter. She was practically bilingual, so that she talked with both parties on the lunch table. It was full of dishes of salmon and sturgeon, their red and black ikra and of berries in various menus. Rice is favorite to young generation. It comes from China and sells in SPAR markt in the village. They cook it in various way, also in Lapsha as Russian, but better in traditional Nivksh way, etc. etc. We made photos and recorded mother tongue talk for more than 3 hours. A precious document, we wish to give it back to them after editing. We hope it will be of some use for language education in the village.

### **Village Meeting**

A boy came in to tell us we should come to Meeting Houses at once when we were chatting in the tea time in Gudan house. We found there more than fifty people waiting us. The village chief came in with some Russian colleagues, a school director of village internat and some others. She introduced us to the people in an official way.



Taksami began a speech in a quiet manner: "I was born in Kalima. As I was yet young I went to Leningrad to study history with a wish to know about Nivkh much more than I learned in the school. Some years after I married a Russian girl I was acquainted with in Leningrad. We got a daughter. She never visited my birth place which seems to be a alien planet to her as Russian girl in genetic as well as mental sense. But her father cannot forget his home though he had not visited it for a very long time. In short, a Nivkh has a Russian daughter..."

My village I saw after long interval has changed only a little comparing with my image some 20 years ago. Soviet era had contributed almost nothing to make better the village life. If "if" in the history were possible, Nivkhs could have surely created a much better life in the last century, if Soviet were not existed. After it had collapsed, I expected a better life in vain. There must exist many things to have to collapse and much more things to have to create a new...



There were a series of economic difficulties which administration can solve more or less effectively, such as faire distribution of labor, control of dismantled kolkhoz, scientific investigation and division of fishery spaces, etc. There were also a lot of social problems we have to solve for ourselves with our own creative initiative, such as cooperative organization of labor, impartial division of communal property, gradual creation of organizations for Northern Peoples, etc. Many of the problems require a long and patient work form ourlves indigenous peoples, but our future depends on our intelligence and efforts...

One thing more, my Japanese friend sitting with us here came from an only politically distant country with his academic colleagues who were very much interested in our Nivkh culture and language. We have to know, they are not insane with such a curious interest, but our language and culture is as valuable as they want to investigate. Then, why not to maintain it not only for them but also for our descendants...?"

Taksami talked out of heart and gave a deep impression. He reported also some important national wide issues he also committed with in Petersburg and gave necessary information about other Northern Peoples in Russia. After some questions and answers, a young man stood up with a question to the village chief, saying that the present distribution according to fishing right is not fair. Another man protested her, saying that the contribution payment to Fishers Cooperation established after the collapse of Lenin kolkhoz was too much, it is in unbalance with our gain delivered to families; family share can be more. And other questions were concerned with the payment delay for no fishing periods last year and with false indications in the village budget, and questions about the distribution plan of nets and gasoline, about education cost and teachers' salary, etc. After economic matters questions were made about education and culture. The budget for education kept decreasing in the last years, especially the cost for textbooks. The village administrators could only answer like that it was due to the decreasing budget of the national expenditure.

Afterward a Nivkh told us that they thanked us for giving them a chance discussing our actual problems which they had wanted to make open in a meeting like today. We were also glad that we were able to make ourselves useful in such a way.

## Language Education in Innokenchefka



The primary school of this village has a plan to teach Nivkh language. They searched teachers; the old lady Gudan is not healthy enough for the job, it was the case with her friend, too. They had to wait pretty long time. But the granddaughter Gudan, having finished her study in Khabarovsk, married and finished her most busy duty to care her little daughter and now got time to study again. They consulted with her about the possibility and schedules. She hesitated long, but she came to understand the situation and at last decided to undertake the duty.

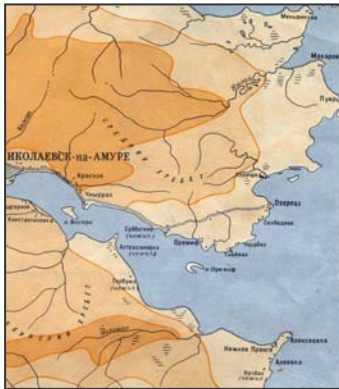
Walancheva Selgeevna Gudan chose a solid way of teaching the language. She selected the textbook for children: *Nivkhgu Bukvari* (Nivkhs' Letters) of Taksami/Pukhta/Vingun 1991-. She had yet only one class for beginners now,





but in the next year she had to more classes with advanced knowledge. She had no suitable textbook for them. The existing ones would be useful in schools with many teachers and assistants, but in Innokenchefka they were only one in this beginning stage, they have yet no effective education system. She had now more than 20 pupils who would increase in a few years, so that she would need more teaching colleagues and assistants. As I asked her what she wished to get, she answered at once: “more colleagues”. Taksami and I talked about the problem. Really it is an actual task. But the question where and how to produce teaching staffs for Nivkh language is crucial to be discussed seriously. It is one of the questions no one can easily solve, especially here in continental part of Nivkh territory.

### 1.3. Nivkh Villages in Amur-Mouth



Our team consisted of 6 colleagues when we visited this region in the summer of 1998. We divided it into two groups according to our concrete purposes of investigation. One group stayed mainly in a village Mago to make an oral documentation of Negidal language, and the other visited Kalima as reported above and some other villages in Low Amur district. The main aims of the second group lay on the survey of social cultural situations the Nivkhs in this district. We concentrate on taking an audio-visual documentation of linguistic activity of the people living in this district. The members of the second group, Taksami, Lok and Kaneko, were making once a short trip to some villages in the Mouth of Amur, which is called Amur Liman in Russian mouth. The villages are located on both sides of river, northern and southern coast of Mmiya Strait. As there is no public transport, we had to hire a car and if necessary a boat. We asked the colleagues of Northern Peoples' House (cf. 1.5.) in Nikolaevsk for the possibility. The director of the House Maria Kandinko, a Nanai lady, managed to solve the problem kindly. She provided us with a car and a chauffeur. The chauffeur was her husband, Dimitri Kandinko who is an Ul'chi. The car belonged to their property.

We started to the east with the car. According to our first plan we ran to the village Ozerbakh, where we took a boat to Puir on the northern coast of Liman, then, if possible, crossing the Strait to the southern coast to Nizhinie Pronge and Aleefka. But we were too optimistic. The natural condition of this part of the world was not so friendly

as we expected. Wind, wave and fog hindered us to practice the plan; weather changed suddenly, the blue sky was covered with dense fog in a few minutes, then a boat was impossible to overcome furious waves. As we started Nikolaevsk, the weather was somewhat friendly, but the wave in Strait was now dangerous enough to give up shipping to northern coast. However, we decided to go as far as we could.

### **Nivkhs in Oremif**

About 10 kilometers to the east from Nikolaevsk there is a village named Paravinka. It is an old Nivkh-village where the family Nivdii had lived since a long time ago. According to Taksami some acquaintances of his must have lived yet who spoke Nivkh language very well. But entering in the village we found no one in the street. We asked around to find at last an old lady who told us that the all of the family were in a hospital in Nikolaevsk and the other villagers were on ship, for they had got a news in the morning that salmons came up.

We started again to the east. The next village, Oremif, lay about 30 kilometers from Paravinka. The village had about 250 inhabitants, of which ca 140 Nivkhs in 30 families, ca 60 Negidals in 20 families. And some multi-ethnic families were living, consisting of Nivkh-Russian Negidal- Russian, and Nivkh-Negidals. It is a rare village almost with indigenous population even in his region of Low Amur. However, this village could not be excluded from the general poverty prevailing in the far-east part of Russian Republic. Unemployment and chronic alcoholism prevails



in younger generation. Many of them do not want to help fathers fishing, although fathers' boats afford to get on board some more persons. They gather around kiosks wanting to get bad vodka. After destruction of Soviet type fisher kolkhoz indigenous peoples organized a new Fisher Cooperation System also in this village. But it did not seem to be powerful enough to get all young men who found no future in the present society. They chose rather to indulge in alcohol from early morning on. In comparison to boys the elder generation was working, but they have to often visit hospitals. After Russian doctors had disappeared, the village built a sanatorium with small numbers of medical assistants. They had with luck succeeded to find some new medical specialists to work together with them. But nurses were selected from indigenous villagers. In the facilities of this village many important posts were occupied by them, e.g. the chief accountants of Cooperation, school teachers, managers of all the three shops in the village. They were proud of their own administrative ability which they had not been aware of themselves in Soviet

time.

### Anna Ivanovna Vuzgun



Anna Ivanovna just sliced salmon into five pieces when we visited the family Vuzgun in Ormif. Ma, a dried salmon in slice in Nivkh word, is an indispensable food for Nivkhs, or one should say, is one of the fundamental culture components. They have two ways to make ma: most usual is the way to slice into three pieces, namely, cutting off the head, the washed body is sliced into two pieces of meat with skin on both sides and into the middle part with bone. This middle part is given to dogs in raw as usual. Slices are hanged for drying. They are carefully stocked for food until the next summer. Ma is, in fact, the main protein nourishment for Nivkhs. Slicing into five pieces is of course more difficult, it is rather pedantic because they belong to delicatessen for guest or banquet dishes. Both meat and skin slices are now sliced two pieces without skin. We get then two pieces of meat only slices.

Anna Ivanovna was practicing this technique just as we went in the front door. After exchange of greeting Taksami joined her in working: taking a small iron net, he put a lump of spawn on it. He rubbed it softly, red pieces of spawn fell into a bucket, this ikra was then salted a little and was brought on the supper table afterwards. The salmon spawn was often dried. It gets a proper naming, *komk* in Nivkh language, and is used as soup ingredients. The gristle of salmon head is one of delicatessen, it has also a special naming *buk* which only the head of a family can appreciate to eat. As we visited her all if these delicatessen were arranged on the table to welcome us, unexpected guests, that, however, belongs to traditional habits of Nivkh society.



Anna Ivanovna was yet 64 years old. But taking into account that the women's life expectancy of this country does not exceed 65 years old, she was regarded as great senior. She lost her husband. It is impossible to ask how one lost one's life partner in this country, for everybody has his own tragic past. It comes from illness, an accident, war, persecution, etc. Anyway, everywhere full of tragedy. She had two sons. Both were more than 40 years old. The elder had no job for a long time and lived separately. The younger shared the old house and worked as captain of pelagic fishery. But he was now in off-time. He expected the next shipping in Okhotsk sea around Kuril islands.



Anna's house was a little old log-making one. It was partitioned into three big rooms, kitchen and a working room. All furnishing goods were pretty old; she does not seem to worry about them. She had, in fact, no mental space to care his house and the son sat watching TV all day long. She had to support herself by making crops as many as possible to minimize her household consumption. Almost every Nivkh has a back yard garden with more or less than 100 square meters. Potatos, root vegetables and green leaves were grown. She got practically sufficient vegetable foods and additionally the seeds for the next year, too. Magazines were utilized only to buy black bread, cereals, seasonings, etc. and, not to forget, dried noodle cups made in Korea. The protein is basically taken from salmon, which is, however, officially restricted to 10~20 fishes for a family. In the year 1998 the amount was limited to 22. It is clearly insufficient. Therefore, every family had to manage to get more salmon from relatives or friends working in Fisher Cooperation. Judging from this way of life, the family of Anna Ivanovna lived in extreme poverty if we compare with European standard . She had practically no money, but it does not mean that she would be threatened with starvation. No. In a sense, she lived a traditional life in Nivkh style, working gaily in friendly contact with her friends in the village. The serious problem for her and for Nivkh society is rather general unemployment and alcoholism of younger generation. To solve the problem, she said, they must be able to dream about their own future, which lacks now completely.



According to Anna Ivanovna there lived two or three Nivkhs who speak yet their mother tongue fluently. However, next generations after hers began the notorious internat education which crushed down the tradition and convention of Nivkh life-style as was usual in other regions of indigenous peoples, too. For younger generations Nivkh language is nothing but one of foreign languages they must learn in school. They have tried to Introduce Nivkh language class in primary schools, but they had not yet succeeded. They found no supporters in administration nor any suitable teachers. From traditional cultural components of Nivkh almost everything was lost, except the traditional method and technique of salmon fishing, Fisher Cooperation here preserved it intentionally.

When we wanted to get in cars, Anna Ivanovna shouted she would like to go together. She wanted to gather berries: "əγəs (empetrum nigrum) is just ripe now". She only knew the spot where they grew. We decided at once, we went alltogether. Our car ran into a bush near the shore. A wonderful picnic. In the evening Anna Ivanovna came back home with baskets full of berries.

### **Village Cherdbakh**

There is a poor village called Cherdbakh, ca 10 kilometers from Oremif to the east. This village faces the Amur Liman. The water flows here to the north into the Okhotsk sea. In a fine weather the west coast of Sakhalin was visible from the shore, but we were unlucky: instead of fog, dense smoke of wood fire prevented us to look over the sea. Wind became stronger. Our colleague driving the car advised us to remain on the shore. He was correct, it would have been too risky to take a boat in this weather. Surely, it might have been a suicide to attempt to cross over the Liman to the south coast. We had an information that in Ozernakh and Puil in some 10 kilometer to the north there lived ca 10 Nivkh families. But the road to the north was blocked because of wood fire. We had practically nothing but to say "next chance".



The population of Cherdbakh doesn't exceed 100 people now, though it was right little Nivkh village where about 10 Nivkh families, a few Negidal and Nanai families lived before. It had abundant fisheries because it opened to the Mamiya Strait directly, and it functioned as a base of an active salmon fishery and the processing. It was said that the fishery kolkhoz had been voluntarily established by the Nivkh people in 1970's years and the cooperative activity went very smoothly.

But unhappiness came at the beginning of 1980. Nikolaevsk's local administration constructed a regional fishery training centre near by the kolkhoz office. It was a long wooden one-storied house partitioned into 20 poor chambers into each of which 5~6 Russian young boys were crowded in order to exercise fishery technique like setting nets, fishing, cutting salmon, taking out ikras and so on. Their labor was limited to fishing seasons and all the products they made were carried over to Nikolaevsk, but nobody knows how the products were treated afterwards. Due to this mass production in this small fisher village, its fishery went to bankrupt. Most families left the village to get a job in Nikolaevsk, the rest moved somewhere nearby to their relatives. After Soviet Union had collapsed, the training center was shut, no body of the old villagers came back. Here remained now only two old Nivkh families Kalfs and Hotkons and some very poor indigenous families on the shore. Innokenchi Mikhailovich Kalf (most left man in the picture below), an old friend of Taksami, was the head of Kalf family. They both lived in Kalima about forty years ago. His wife was in bed because of a chronic disease. There was no hospital in this village, but she was too weak to go to the city nearby. Innokenchi and his sons brought home her medicine when they succeeded to buy fishes. The oldest son was at present jobless, so he had nothing other than helping father fishing and carried fish to near towns with his old side-car to get some cash earning, if he had good luck. The nourishment they got was fish from the sea before the house and vegetable from backyard garden. To our question: how about heating in winter? They answered: driftwood on the shore and vacant houses of Russian.



The family lived on the hill overlooking the sea, on the best site of the village. The other Nivkh family Hotkons had a larger plot on the other hill where there was a big Nivkh settlement before. Hotkons had a daughter all the sons of Kalf admired. She lived in Nikolaevsk. Father was anxious about, if she does not come back to the village after school, the village would not sustain in the next generation.



Down from the hill, several wooden shacks were sticking to the shore. There lived families of Negidal and Nanai who were driven away by Russian, too. Every family kept dogs and pigs as a Tungus family usually does. Children were chasing them on the shore; all of them were barefooted, searching dead salmon washed up on the shore. Some of the children appeared to be already in school age. But the nearest school stands in Oremif, 10 kilometers to the west. No public transport, no cars, no motorcycles in these families. In winter, the Amur is frozen completely. Who of them can survive the next winter?

The village Cherdbach consists of two Nivkh families, several Tunguse families and some Russian dropped-outs. Here was an indigenous community before. It had existed for many thousand years until Russian made the fishing training center. Viewing from the disaster today, that has to be condemned as an unreversable crime of Russians and their Soviet system having lasted for 70 years. On the shore of the Amur, Taksami and I could do nothing other than to sigh "Catasrophe!" We witnessed in this village a representative case of indigenous peoples in the late Soviet Union, one of the worst situation ever seen. Innokenchi Kalf murmured many times "No way out, no exit. We cannot find it." He said it only in his mother language. I would ask him some more things in his lanuage, but I could not.. Not only language, rather human life itself was seriously endangered here.

## 1.4. People of Nikolaevsk-na-Amure

### To Nikolaevsk



Nikolaevsk is only a big city on the Low Amur. It lies on the north shore about 30 kilometers upstream from Mamiya Strait. The city was formed when a marine port was made in the beginning of the 20th century. After 1920 it became the main naval base for Far-Eastern Fleet in the Soviet time. The city was full of the soldiers of navy forces, fine houses for officers were built in the main street, all kinds of public facilities stood in a line. The population at that time was said to exceed 50,000 people. However, after the dissolution of the Fleet, solders and whole the related people returned home to somewhere in Russia, hospitals, official buildings and officer houses were totally destroyed. The ruin was scattered on both sides of the main streets. The total of the dispersed people

amounted to more than 20,000. There remain in the city ca. 30,000 populations. Among them there are counted also Russians who had lost chance to get out of the city. Some of them got jobs like road works, but the most poor Russians were jobless or working dark in connection with small mafias which make illegal trade of fishery products. The local administration was totally dominated by Russian bureaucrats just as before. Old communists are seizing power in the central organizations of politics and economics just as in Moscow. Even our colleagues had to visit them for greeting only for the purpose to get guarantee to perform our research work without friction. We were lucky that they had requested no cash money from us, we laughed.

At present, in this town indigenous peoples are still a minority among Russians. According to the account of our colleague Galina Lok, Nivkhs were 417, Ultis 55, Evenkis 50, Negidals 37, and others 187 persons in the year 1998. The amount of the indigenous population in this city is, therefore, estimated ca. 750 people. This coincides with the members organized by the House of Northern Peoples (cf. bellow), if we take into account the members living in neighboring small villages like Mago and others.



There are two ways to go to Nikolaevsk. One is the flight from Khabarovsk to Nikolaevsk airport. It flies once a day. When we used this route, the machine was Tupolef 154 (see photo). It is not only old, but has been never cared of on the ground, and the pilot also takes care of nothing just as he is driving a war tank. The flight is something opposite extreme to travel pleasure, which will be once more crushed down after arrival by the censorship and inspection on the gate.

Another way to go to Nikolaevsk is the high-speed hydrofoil craft called Meteol (see the second picture above). It goes fast and loud without any comfort expected from a normal ship journey. The ship could conquer the distance ca. 600 kilometers in 10 hours. But it stops on the way at a village called Bogorodskoy, where nothing exists except an old scrapped ship. The passengers are requested to sleep on dirty beds of the scramble ship only to wake up in the next morning at 6 o'clock and to start again finally to Nikolaevsk harbor. This last trip finishes in less than 3 hours. But the reason why we have to spend a night in ragged rugs is related to the poor infra-structure of the city Nikolaevsk: if the ship would arrive at the city late in the night, no one could come home because no public transport is available and no hotel stands around the port. It is of no need to mention a possible commercial reason why Russians scheme this unnecessary stop over.





Nikolaevsk is originally a beautiful city which has been built in the beginning of the 20th century. In former times there had been a small sentry post of Russian Empire watching the water route to Okhotsk. But the international conflict summing up to the Japan-Russian War attached military importance to the city as the naval base over Okhotsk sea as far as the Russian military strategy is concerned.. On the Japanese side, however, Nikolaevsk was regarded merely as salmon fishery base. Symbolic was Shimada Trading House built in the year 1910, which stands still in the main street of the present city and is now used as supermarket. The Shimada House was an international trade center already at that time, for Nikolaevsk was an international city where not only Russian but also other Asian populations were settled down with various aims. According to the census in the year 1919, the total population of the city was 12,248, among them were Chinese 2,329, Korean 916, Japanese 291; many of Chinese and Korean were working in mines in the neighborhood, but the Japanese were said to be mainly merchants. (cf. HARA Teruyuki 1989, p. 523)

### **"Nikolaevsk Affaire"**

Russian Revolution started in Petergrad (Sankt-Petersburg) at the end of 1917. It was followed by partisan wars in various places in Russian territory. It advanced gradually eastward expelling counter-revolutionary powers such as the Korczak army corps. In the Far-Eastern region, revolutionary political powers were established in various places by the end of the year 1919. Allied with western counter-revolutionary powers, Japan sent military power to main cities in the Far-East. The Japanese intervention corps succeeded to keep the city under military control until the summer of 1918. In February 1920, Red Army Nikolaevsk Region marched into the city, but they were not strong enough so that they were compelled to accord a temporary peace agreement with Japanese defense corps. There continued often serious discussion between them, however, Japanese corps attacked the red army in the midnight of 11th March 1920. But the Japanese corps was defeated. There remained ca.700 dead bodies including some of non-military citizens voluntarily participated in the attack. After this event, a more radical partisan group grasped the political-military power of the city oppressing and slaughtering reasonable parties who supported the idea of Far-Eastern "buffer" Republic by Lenin. Just in this moment Japan sent war-ships to recover the once lost control on the Amur. As they approached the harbor, the partisans judged they had no chance to win and decided to

retreat into the background mountain. Before escape they slaughtered all the reasonable revolutionists and 130 Japanese citizens in prison and set whole the city on fire. After some months after this slaughter, the radical sects of partisans were caught by orthodox partisans in the wood around the river Amugun. At the same time Japanese intervention ceased, so that Nikolaevsk came to be ruled by Russian revolutionary government. This was the story of the so-called Nikolaevsk affaire which has not been written in Soviet official "documents" (cf. HARA Teruyuki 1989).



In Nikolaevsk Museum one room is specialized for "Nikolaevsk Affair". The exhibitions contain some old original photos and written documents. But the explanations do not coincide with them very often; the mistake was caused perhaps by linguistic or, furthermore, ideological reason. On the exit of the Museum Taksami proposed me to go to see the monument of the affaire, which had stood in Gorky Park on the north side of the city. However, it did not exist any longer, anywhere in the part. Where it had stood until 1970's we found an exaggerated statue "For heroes of the Great Fatherland War". Taksami was offended saying "it is inhuman to annihilate a historical monument concerned with foreigner victims in such a way."

### "North Peoples' House"



"North Peoples' House" (right picture) stands at the center Sovetskaya Ul'tsa, the Main Street of the city. We call it in short "Center", but its full name is "Indigenous North Peoples' Culture Center" directed by the Conference of Northern Peoples, Nikolaevsk Branch, namely an official establishment. The neighboring house was the famous Nikolaevsk Museum, but it moved to the present place in Gorky Street, so that it belongs to the Center officially. The director of the Center, Aleo Aleksandrovna KANZINKO waited us on the harbor and took us to the house directly.



She is a Nanai, his husband Dimitri is an Olcha. He brought us then to a hotel nearby which was called Sever, namely the North. After one hour's rest we were called to the Center for reception. While we were looking at the exhibition of various ethnic goods on the walls and desks, various nationalities were arriving with some ethnic cuisines in a pan, in a bowl or on a big dish. From village Mago, 10 kilometer westward from the city, came two old ladies who speak Negidal language very well. Our colleagues Tsumagari and Kazama began to talk with them making an appointment that they would stay in Mago for weeks to make conversational documentations of Negidal language. We found a lady from the village Innokenchefka, Mrs. Gudan, who we met in the ship. We made an appointment, too, to go to the village the next day, while Mrs. Kanzhinko (center in the picture) had called us to table. A lady spoke to me, whether I know an Ainu, "I am an Ulchi, No, not Olcha, born in Vravo, a village upwards the Amur, to say truth, perhaps a Nani, but my grandfather was an Ainu as I heard from Mother". I was bewildered, but we promised to visit her the day after. Now, the welcoming speech of the director. Began.

In the Center various meetings were held: nationality courses almost everyday, for making ethnic artifacts, practicing traditional dances, etc. They have sufficient specialists in any branch of the praxis. But there is no language course yet, though they have good leaders at least for Negidal, Nanai and Nivkh language. The reason they mentioned could be summarized as that it was not popular. But we thought the problem did not depend on popularity. In such a city as Nikolaevsk where many different nationalities live together, a common language is needed, but not a diversity of indigenous languages. The convenience of communication is preferred to a general understanding with one another. A mutual communication means is necessary and justifiable in any viewpoint. Who can recommend a multilingual conversation in this House? A bilingualism of Russian and one indigenous language is perhaps acceptable for many people, but imagine that at least trilingual communication is rather usual in many families, for example in the family of Kanzinko. Who can compel her to speak Negidal and Nivkh when she works in the Center? If such a language burden is a daily situation in the Center, indigenous languages should have to be confined within families or in museum? A local principle should be deliberately thought out.

### **Annual Meeting of Traditional Songs and Dances**

The Annual Meeting of Traditional Dances was scheduled the next day after our arrival at Nikolaevsk. It was held

in the hall of the Center. Many dance teams brought their original repertoires from neighboring villages. Every team showed the result of one year's training which should be estimated pretty well. However, it remained some sense of unacceptability in our mind. The costume, the basic melody and the gesture of dancing were surely extracted from the heritage of indigenous tradition. But they were no more genuine, the choreographic manner was totally Russianized: the Russian type of chromatic preference was dominant in all songs, the action of Russian folk dance in an ethnic dressing. We should ask, whether this kind of cultural forgery results from gradual national contact in many centuries, i.e. it is caused from peaceful acceptance on the side of indigenous peoples, or rather it is due to the short term cultural invasion during and after the Great Fatherland War, i.e. to the nation wide patriotism in the time of the movement for creating "Soviet man". We thought the latter interpretation was correct. Then, we could solve the problem, the ethnic groups themselves should make an effort to maintain and to innovate the ethnic tradition from their own initiative. We had another problem special in this city: the multi-ethnic co-existence. This situation contributed surely to diminish ethnic specificities in traditional heritage of each group. However, the problem could be solved by way of mutual understanding and reciprocal acknowledgement under a mutual roof of the North People's Center.

### **Nivkhs in Nikolaevsk**



**Dinaina Nikolaevna Chida** is dentist who worked in a naval forces hospital. She comes from Kalima, namely the eldest daughter of the family Chida. She is namely the sister of Gregory Nikolaevich, i.e. Grisha. She is one of the Nivkh ladies with rich intellect of noble manner I ever met. While the Okhotsk Fleet yet existed, it possessed everything it needed: hospital, school, market, etc. which could be utilized by citizens, too, so long as they had some connections with navy. But as it was dismantled after the Soviet collapse, the everything vanished, too. She lost her job, but it remained for her the apartment floor she had used. It is an old house of Khrushchov type which has no anti-earthquake resistance. Into the apartment, she collected every useful medical instrument for dental praxis, so that it changed into a dental clinic for citizens. Not only northern people but Russian living nearby consulted her for professional treatment. They often sat longer in her guest room to drink tea chattering about private and public affairs. Dr. Chida required only a minimal fee, but she gets everything necessary as rewards. Many of them she cannot consume, therefore, she send almost all of the gifts to her daughter in the boarding house of Khabarovsk University.

There are a considerable number of ethnic people who lost the employment after the destruction of the fleet. Some of them opened retail shops or barbers in the city center, and the others earned a few rubles joining black market on the old harbor square, and more people are jobless.



There are a lot of old Nivkhs who live practically on pension from the time on when he worked in the naval fleet. **Tamala Nikolaevna Bavlrenko** (right picture) is one of such Nivkhs. She comes from a village Aleefka on the Pronge peninsula on the south coast of Liman. She lived in an apartment of five stories for more than 30 years. Her sons were working on fishing ship out in Okhotsk Sea. Taksami and I borrowed rooms in her apartment for weeks. She was delighted to hear that Japanese eat fish roe like Nivkhs, she prepared roe fish 3 times for a day; for breakfast roe caviar, for supper red ikra and for dinner surgeon and salmon meat in roe or in sashimi. Tamara is a complete native language speaker, so that the conversation between her and Taksami was genuinely native up to borrowing style of Russian phrases. I recorded it for my personal use, but not for documentation of any purpose. Anyway that was a good language schooling to listen to their conversation.



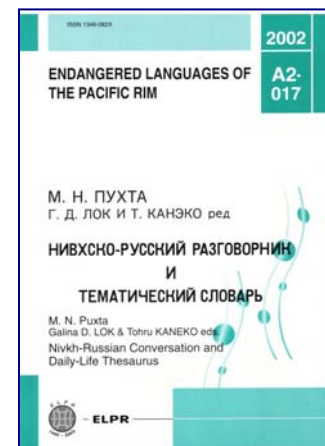
We have got acquainted with **Nonna Petorovna Zolodrova** at the Center. One day she invited us to her splendid new wooden house in the suburbs. She was born in Brava, pretty upwards the Amur in a family of Ulich. Her parents told her that her grandfather was an Ainu who had lived in the middle Amur for a long time, she said. She regretted, however, she lost his name completely. She remembered only that his grave stood yet in her home village. She had now a happy family with Nanai husband with a daughter and two sons.

**Maria Nikolaevna Pukhta**



It was in the year 1998 to meet the late Maria Nikolaevna Pukhta for the first time. Mrs. Pukhta attended in the evening party which the Center organized to welcome our team. I knew her name since long time. In the linguistic work of Panfilov published in 1965, it is mentioned that the linguistic material of the language was collected

from the speech of main informant Maria Nikolaevna who was yet a girl in Kalima. After the acquaintance with Panfilov, she went to Leningrad to study in the Gerzen Pedagogical Institute. She came back to the Amur and worked in schools as specialist for Russian language and culture. But she never forgot her mother language. She saw Nivkh mothers being no more capable to bring up her children in Nivkh language with impatience. She told me that is also the case in her village Kalima. The next day she called me on to say that she had something to talk about with me. In that afternoon we sat in the conference room of the Center. She began that she finished writing a language text



book for Nivkh mothers and children. But she found no good publishers until now, and asked me if our team had a possible means to help her. Our team had planed at that time an audio-visual publication from our materials we gathered in Amur and Sakhalin during our expedition, but no book in normal sense. I explained her our plan and practically asked her understanding that we had no possibility for a moment. But her voice stuck in my ears even after we returned home in Japan. In the next summer, I visited her again at her house. I begged her pardon and promised her to help her making a Nivkh textbook. However, because I had to go to Leipzig in the next year, our editorial work had to be prolonged for two years more. In the year 2001, our national project for endangered languages in the Pacific Rim could provide us with the chance for publication at last. After editorial meetings with our colleague Galina Lok in Nogliki several times, the book was published in the year 2002. It was delivered to schools where Nivkh language was taught, namely, Kalima, Nekrasofka, Nogliki and others.

Maria Nikolaeva was already sick when the books arrived at her hand. We got a report of her death in the next summer 2003..

## 2. Nivkhs in Sakhalin

### 2.1. Mourning to Lidia Deremyanovna Kimova

#### Four Sisters



Lidia Deremyanovna Kimova (former name Tevku) was the eldest of four daughters. The second daughter is Natalya, handicraft specialist and musical artist. The third is Galina Lok, the best colleague of us, vice director of the Noglik National Museum. The last is Aleksandra Fliyun, the most active editor of the Newspaper (monthly) *Nivkh Dyf* (=Nivkh Language).

Lidia was born and grew up in a small village Ten'gi on the north-west coast of Sakhalin. She spoke north-west Sakhalin dialect perfectly. She told "I learned Russian in Leningrad for the first time." Yes, Lidia went to the city at the age of 15. She studied in Gertzen University mathematics and drafting in the new building along the canal

Moica. After graduation she taught mathematics in a high school in Ulan Bator. There she acquainted herself with her present husband Buryat Ullman Kimova.

But she could not forget the north wind sweeping over the white floe while living on Mongolian step, she recollected. She decided to come back to Sakhalin with her husband together in the beginning of 1970's. She got a position in a junior high school Katangli in the suburb of Nogliki. After she returned home, her interest was concentrated on Nivkh culture. Beside the teaching activity she trained herself on handicraft of birch bark and of fish skin. Her talent was manifested; her products were praised everywhere. Then she began to work on embroidery. The clothes with splendid embroidery were created one after another. The exhibitions were held at first in local and then gradually in international extent. She received international praise everywhere she held exhibitions in the beginning of 1990s. Some of her early works are now found in National Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology in Sankt-Petersburg (so-called Kunstkamera), National Ethnological Museum in Osaka, Ainu Museum in Shiraoui/Hokkaido, etc.



She drew pictures, too. She seemed to be fond of drawing abstract pictures. On the wall of her room hung some abstract études she herself liked very much. But she drew watercolors, too. They recall her gentle mind about her nature circumstance and her people living in it. One example we see in the picture on the right. Here is drawn Tumi river in winter along which some Nivkhs are fishing smelts out of ice holes.

Lidias daughter lives in Sicilia in Italy. I do not know how it happed. Anyway, this made her family much more internationalized. She flew to Helsinki for her own exhibition and returned via Sicilia to Sakhalin with some bottles of black wine. When she felt appetite for olive dishes, she would fly to Palermo airport the day after tomorrow. Her global behavior like this causes an agreeable wonder for us in the meaning that a small ethnos with ca. 4000 persons as a whole has many persons with such a global network to bind them with the world. Lidia was a window of her ethnos open to the world.





Lidia died on August 28, 2003. She was still young, 64 years old yet but sick of a liver tumor. The last time when we met was at the Shtenberg Conference in Yuzhino Sakhalinsk in November 2002 at which she made a big report on the effort for maintainnce and revival of ethnic culture on Sakhalin. At the reception party in the evening she pulled me to a table on the other side, saying "there is Italian one, though not Sicilian", with a big wineglass. It is impossible to imagine that I could see her nowhere again.

### **Theater "Land of North Wind"**

Lidia felt strong nostalgia when she was in Buryat. It was surely not owing to her husband, but she helplessly came to miss everything of Sakhalin where the north wind blew over the sea full of drift ice on it. She wished to make birch boxes, shoes with embroidery, ethnic costumes, boots of salmon leather, everything familiar to herself since childhood. Once she made a hat using Buryat felt with Nivkh embroidery, it was beautiful, but not genuine. The atmosphere of Tumi river lacked. The Baikal is beautiful, but there is no wood sables living in it, nor sea with draft ice on it.

With handcraft work she got entitled as Master for National Artists. But she was not satisfied with her single activity. She mobilized her acquaintance to organize a theatre group. It was named Ari La Myf, i.e. Land of the North Wind which she longed for while she lived in western Russia.



The program of the theatre was manifold, but the main one was traditional ethnic music and dance in ethnic costume made by the theatre members for themselves. The most music instruments were self-made, too. Natalya Deremyanovna, Lidia's younger sister supported her in program making as well as in performance; she belongs to most famous artists of the ethnic music instrument tungrung, Nivkh viola with one string (center in the picture of performance). She is also a master craftsman for embroidery, so she makes costumes and shoes for the stage (shoes in the picture bellow).



The theatre group Land of North Wind directed by the Deremyanovna sisters had given performance many times in various places in Russia. Their first performance in foreign country was held in Hokkaido in the year 1993 at the UN World Indigenous Peoples' Year. This Sapporo stage gave the sisters some inclination to come to Hokkaido if there is a chance. They have acquainted themselves with Ainu friends who invited them afterward often to festivals of indigenous peoples. And Natalya visited often Abashiri in such occasions to stay there on the mountain nearby the North Peoples' Museum. She liked to overlook the Okhotsk sea from the entrance of the museum. She felt herself being in home land, she told me once. They may be descendents of people who Okhotsk culture had made.

### The dream of Nivkh Culture Center

After dinner in an evening Lidia put a bl



ack mass on a table asking me if I know what it is. I knew it from photos about traditional Nivkh culture: What lay on the table was a model of reduced scale 1/25. It looked like a cellar of the half underground type, the stairs of several steps attach to the south, and it leads the earth floor of about two meters. The frame is made of logs bound in a special way. A furnace is located at the center of the earth floor and the chimneys projects diagonally. It might be very warm in winter.



Next morning we visited Nogliki Museum in the east end of the city. There we found the model of the house again, which was of twice bigger size than that we saw last night. Next to the winter house a model of summer house in the same size was exhibited, too. Pointing to the model houses, Lidia told me that she planed to build them in real size in front of the Nivkh Culture Center she dreamed of. The Center should consists of a big museum, educational facilities, a theater and some other necessary rooms. In the educational rooms it was planed to teach ethnic music and dances as well as Nivkh language. But the language should be taught, to her regret, just as foreign language in two main dialects, in South-East Sakhalin and in Amur region. We should plan to bring up teachers,

too. She already had the plan drawn. But the place was not yet determined, it could be in the city or somewhere in the suburb. "But Nivkhs are all poor, so we cannot realize the plan with own funds. At the off-shore of us Netherlands, United States and Japan, too, are digging oil and gas, the pollution of our land is really a catastrophe, should they pay us some money for that, at least some funds to build the Center?"

Coming back to Japan, I spoke this story to as many enterprises as I had chance to visit. However, I have heard no reasonable reaction. Nobody has the ear to hear 'a small wish of a regional minority. Surely, some of the oil enterprise has provided Nivkhs with various services like newspaper publication. Some international conferences held in Sakhalin were supported by Sakhalin Energy and some others. But now when they had been swallowed away by Russian official mafia, should we conclude Lidia's dream could have no more chance to be realized?

## 2.2.Vladimir Mihailovich Sangi

Mr. Sangi was born into the house of the fisherman in a small village Nabil in Nogliki region in 1935. He is among others a writer with international appraisal Sakhalin ever has given to the world. He is also an opinion leader of the minority; he carries crucial problems of his people in the northern province of Sakhalin, he also is very often consulted with by the central government of Sakhalin province state. In the following we choose only some aspects of his manifold activity with only necessary short comments

### Writer Sangi



Mr. Sangi studied ethnology and history in Gertzen University in Leningrad. After six years study there he returned to Nogliki where he was born. While working as education inspector of the district he taught in a junior high school the cultural history of northern peoples in the Soviet Union. Besides official works he collected ethnic folktales and legends of Sakhalin with immense enthusiasm. The first collection *Nivkhskie Legendy* (=Nivkhs legends) was published in 1961 as he was yet 30 years old. This small book got a wide reputation also in Moscow though it was published locally in Sakhalin. Due to the book he was nominated as candidate of Soviet Writers Association in 1962. After the training course of the Association he was recognized as a Soviet Writer and debuted with the novels collection *The First Hunting* Moscow in 1965, the part of which was translated also in Japanese as

*Sakhalin Nivkh Monogatari* in Sapporo 2000. Later Sangi wrote a lot of important works, which suggest the history of his kinsman and nationality. What had driven him to write them was his quest into his own roots in the society of Nivkhs. He looked back to the times two generations before, i.e. the era of his great grand-father. It was about era when Chekhov wrote *the Sakhalin*. But wrote them not from the view of Russian, but of the indigenous people in the region Amur and Sakhalin. In a work Sangi's forefather was named Kevong who went wandering among various peoples to meet an Avong's daughter. A roman *Kevong's Marriage* described a period of the life a young Nivkh experienced in the beginning of the last century more vividly than any historical documents. One day he handed me a volume of his newly published Collected Works, with the comment, "This is our story, that is, my story, too."

Once I found an attractive poem in a news paper *Nvkh Dyf* (=Nivkh Language) 2002-2 which remembered me of *Kevong's Marriage*; it was signed by Sangi himself. Instead talking about the book let us read it:

#### KYS and KUS

The mountains of unmeasured Taiga and granite/have separated us since old time./wise creatures, words often/integrate words and names in one with similar tones;

Old Nivkh word KYS/ represents happiness and luck/has a mirror image in the gentle Yakut word KUS, a girl;

Different peoples image the same./different peoples think the same./so they wish the same:/ KUS a girl /and KYS happiness;

At any place and at any time/happiness and dream warms us./With love given us let us sing /as precious teachings of mother;

I believe, I know/Yakut finds a way to her mind/ with the warm light at home,/with the word KUS./

But why, my girl, so obstinate and malicious/put the sculls on boat?/keeps me away with cool eyes?/into distant place separating us?

Into separate worlds with separate fates/ it pulled me from you apart forever./Ah you were really near to me,/ but you rowed into fogs apart from nearby;

You do not try to see me scream,/but the echo follows your boat,/ it clings to the wave of the fog running after,/I hear the fog crying for me;

The word of KYS and KUS, two words of love,/ each has a gentle mind./whatever Yakut says or cries/ Nivkh can understand and reply it.

(W.Sangi: KYS i KUS in *NIVKH Dyf* 2000-2, p.3)

Wladimir Sangi wrote a lot of works since 1961. But two books *Kavong's Marriage* and *Nivkh Poems* have to be mentioned. He wrote most works in Russian, but he is an expert of the Nivkh language. As a complete bilingual he

can manifest his mind any time in both languages. He writes Nivkh language mainly in pedagogical purpose, to maintain and revive the language as much as he can in textbooks and in newspapers like the poem above. We wish his effort succeeds.

### Author of Nivkh Textbooks Sangi

Mr. Sangi made many textbooks of Nivkh language. With later Galina Aleksandrovna Otaina († 1995), Nivkh linguist, together, he made two beginners' textbooks for Nivkh Sakhalin dialect in 1989 and 1994. He writes poems in the textbooks, too, as we see bellow: (Nivkh Textbook 1989 :p.107)



### T'ilf (autumn)

#### T'ilvait.

T'atuj oztot n'i p'aχtoχ t'ərd --  
 Cχaruχ t'omrkun kukukyun.  
 Kutluroχ p'ut t'ləroχ t'ərd --  
 Pujjayun yuroχ vidyun.

(prosaic translation: **Autumn came.** When I got up in the morning I saw through the window. Leaves had fallen. When going outside, I looked up at the sky, birds flew to the south.)

Sangi wrote also many other booklets for educational use. They are folk tales and legends he collected for many years. But interesting is his Nivkh translation of Pushkin's "Priest and his foolish servant". Perhaps he tried to transfer the aesthetic value of the original into his mother tongue. Anyway, his official experience as pedagogical director immediately after his return from Leningrad found a positive influence on his work to make language texts for children. Sangi is now working on making a dictionary for Sakhalin dialect of Nivkh language. Based on the late Otaina's detailed notebook he collaborated with Svetlana Polet'cheva who has rich experience in teaching Nivkh language in Nekrasovka. It will contribute for maintenance of this language as one of the most important means like the Sab'eleva-Taksami 1970 for Amur dialect.

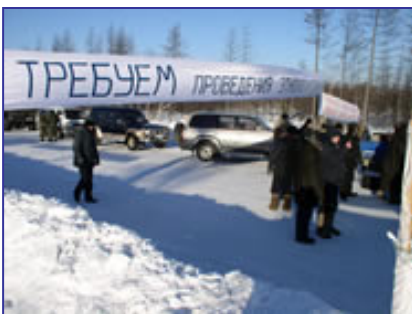
### Ecological activities of Sangi



The most important environmental problem for indigenous peoples in Sakhalin is at present the oil-gas exploitation projects in Nogliki offing. The oil-gas resource in this district was known since long time, and Japan had acquired the exploitation immediately after World War I. But after 1991 the Sakhalin-I by Esso Mobil of US, Sakhalin-II by Royal Dutch of Netherland and Mitsubishi Japan et al and the following project Sakhalin III had worked in Nogliki/Venskoe offing. But in April 2007 Russian government declared that Russia controls its resources by and for own country. It wanted to plunder whole outcome the multinational enterprises had managed to produce, together with all facilities like pipe lines, roads, etc. so to speak, in a hyena way. Russia seemed to have waited until the work had successfully completed in a sufficient degree to snatch off in its hand. Then it calculated pretty accurately that the time has come to give the result over to its own national enterprise GASPLOM which should monopolize whole the products and facilities donated by the government. Everyone knows that such an act of plundering is typically Russian way of "business", but the international opinion protested against it. At present, it is not yet clear if and how the international intervention would bring about a reasonable restraint.

The environmental destruction of Sakhalin has already been serious enough to be protested by many environment NPO groups. They have pointed out the following chief aspects in sum:

- 1) Catastrophic influence on coast region where endangered kinds of animals like sea eagles and gray whales are living and some kinds of herrings lay eggs periodically;
- 2) Possible outflow from oil mining site and pollution of oil-gas mining site itself;
- 3) Actual disruption of ecosystem and ground pollution by pipeline construction, possible water pollution by earth-sand outflow, negative influence on egg-laying of salmon caused by cutting river streams;
- 4) Damage to fishery resources, i.e. the negative influence on the bottom of the sea and on the draft ice and underwater which characterize the typically delicate features of Okhotsk Sea;



5) and last not least, serious negative influence on the life environment of the indigenous people, especially on half island chain in Nogliki offing where fishery damage has been already often reported concerning less upstream swimming of salmons and pink-salmons in Nogliki/Nuivo regions and about abnormal ecological behavior of sea animals, etc.

Indigenous peoples have already demanded the assessment from affiliates of Sakhalin Energy many times to practice exact investigations and to take thorough measures. In January, 2005 indigenous peoples Nivkh, Evenki, Nanai, and Uliche decided to do a joint protect action "Road Blockade" requesting an comprehensive ethnological investigation "Ethno-Assessment" to Sakhalin Energy and other oil-gas companies. In preparing this action they drafted a letter to request mediation for the assessment to International Cooperate Bank, Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and some others (cf. FoE Japan, development finance and environmental program). We can find the name of Mr. Sangi in the signatures of this letter. It is remarkable to see the title of his: "chief of Geronto-conference of indigenous peoples" and "Geronto-representative for working group of UN human right committee". Geronto is, of course, an ancient ruling system of indigenous society which has been thought to have died out completely in the last century. But Sangi has revived this organization in a new system to collect power of indigenous peoples for ecological actions.

Sangi's activity is not limited to the natural environmental protection movement. He has the base for political activities in Sakhalin local government, too. He acts as a member in various committees and conferences. He is treated from the government as leaders of indigenous peoples, though he has no fixed official position in the local government. He receives respect as a regular member of the Russian Writers Club. It seems to be sufficient for him. In addition, he has Nivkh friends, among others Mrs. Raigun and Mrs. Machotkina within the government, who cooperate with him in many cases of actual problems. Sangi is really a valuable activist for the environmental protection of Sakhalin.

### **Territoria of Nivkh**



In a summer day of 2003 when we were working on the manuscript of Pukhta textbook in Lok's house in Nogliki, Mr. Sangi visited us in an early morning. According to Nivkhs' convention, tea was served with a few traditional dishes. It was a good opportunity to hear from him about various aspects of his activity. The talk began from the issue about maintenance and preservation of Nivkh language and culture. The action for maintenance of the language is at present a really actual problem, for good native speakers are age-ing rapidly and become less in every hour. On the other hand, it can not be expected to bring up young generations to native speakers in the present educational situation on both sides of Mamiya Strait. On the east side of it, namely in Sakhalin, the total

situation appears to be somewhat better than the lower Amur, but it has to be judged as catastrophic in any way. Sangi mentioned a decisive plan to solve the problem: he planned a concentrated pedagogical plan for native language education in a comprehensive framework. He wanted a territory of Nivkh. It is not a simple idea for chattering, but a concrete national policy for indigenous peoples which corresponds to long term discussions in Human Right Council of United Nations. He had proposed various schemes of territory plan to Sakhalin government when he got a chance to do, e.g. when he came back from Geneva. However, he has not yet succeeded to get positive consciousness from Russians. In this moment also his plan for education reform for indigenous peoples. It lay on the desk in charge for. He scheduled to go to Yuzno-Sakhalinsk to discuss about it in the next morning.

Sangi's plan for Nivkh territory includes a set of concrete necessary requests. The basic framework should cover ca. 30 square kilometers, 32 kilometers long Okhotsk coast and at least two rivers where various salmon sorts swim upstream regularly. An ecological system for plants and animals must be preserved in an inherent way. The natural systems of sea and rivers which guarantees marine resources for traditional life style of Nivkhs must be maintained effectively. The sufficient living space for traditional life culture and, of course, the native language must be reserved for the people living permanently or visiting there only temporarily for some purpose. The educational facilities must be built not only for language learning but for language use in daily life circumstance. Traditional cultural heritage, tangible as well as intangible, will be succeeded in this territory. For the time being, they will need a relatively small area which will be enlarged and intensified if their effort succeeds in organizing the people effectively on the both sides of the Strait.

“This plan was opposed first from everywhere. Sakhalin Government said No. Nature Conservation Committee opposed, too. Highest Ecology Council was in negative position. The Oha District Assembly to which Nogliki belongs also has got angry. But he kept fighting, said Sangi. I keep insisting that we need own Territory, without this ecological autonomous region the ethnos Nivkh will die out.” “But at last Sakhalin Government sent my draft to Nature Conservation National Committee (Goskomoriod) in Moscow. The committee sent me an invitation in order to hear the details from me directly, saying that it agrees with me in basic points. I have to prepare to explain them what I have in mind since 1988.”

When the ethnic ecology autonomous region will be established, Nivkh language gets the status of "national" language at least in this region. Sangi planned it will be taught in every stage of schools, from kindergarten to middle school. He had once proposed a school reform of Sakhalin Government that the poor current education system had to be changed into a reasonable one in which “a nation making” has to be pursued to preserve ethnicity. “The ethnic self-consciousness should not be confined within a local specificity, but had to change into individual value for the diversity of humankind.” Sangi was in full conviction that it is possible if the territory established.



The conditions exist already, he thought. First, Russian Federation officially guarantees the indigenous peoples' rights according to the proposals of UN at least in legal way. Second, it had legally decided to protect the rights of indigenous peoples since the birth of the Soviet Union. And, third, they have already legal guarantee for nature conservation in general. Really some years later, in May, 2003, two laws passed in Sakhalin Government which will have positive effect for effective aids to ethnic minorities. This will help promoting his effort for the establishment of territory.

## Sangi and Japan

Sangi often visits Japan. Recently, he invited the Slavic Research Center in Sapporo to give a lecture on "Exploitation and Ecological Crisis of Sakhalin". In the year 2005 he worked in the Research Institute of for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa in Tokyo for more than 3 months with the aim to document Nivkh language materials he stocked in old tape recorder into digital form. In other chances he came to Hokkaido very often to meet Ainu friends in order to exchange opinion about mutual strategic problems of indigenous peoples. He seems to have fun to visit Hokkaido because its natural circumstance and atmosphere resembles to Sakhalin saying he realizes himself being the descendant of Okhotsk Culture.

## 2.3. Galina Derebyanovna Lok

### Lok-san

Galina Deremyanovna Lok is our Nivkh colleague since we began Nivkh research project. We have called her simply Lok-san, for she used to call us X-san which is a most usual honorative naming in modern Japanese). Lok-san accompanied us in most travels into Nivkh-districts. But this expression does not reflect the reality. The fact is that our investigation and documentation were not impossible without her planning, advice and guidance. She proposed us always whom we meet where, when and how. We learned from her every time how Nivkhs come to meet one another, what they would be pleased to get as present in case of a sudden visit, etc. In short, she was a best travel guide, a skilled interviewer and a practiced audio-visual documentarist.



Once our team visited a Nivkh village in North Sakhalin Nekrasovka, after having finished our common research

in the village, we decided to divide the team into two groups: one group should go over to a village Alevka on the other side of the Mamiya Trait and the other should remain in Sakhalin to continue contact with Nivkh people there. In the next morning, Lok-san chartered a car from somewhere else and told us to get in it without saying where to go. After some hours' drive the car stopped in front of a big condominium. She invited us into the first floor apartment saying we should stay there for a week. The hostess was Lidia Deremyanova, the elder sister of Lok-san. On the dinner table Lok-san told us we should go to Nuivo, and then to Katangli village, etc. in the next days.

### **Lok-san as chief curator of Nogiki Museum**

Lok-san is a famous ethnologist in Sakhalin. She was vice-president of the Nogliki City Museum for Regional History and Ethnology. Her favorite field is the botanic features in Sakhalin and the food culture of Nivkh. She has already published some interesting papers on this topic. One of them was the booklet "Nivkh Gastronomy" According to it, Nivkh gastronomy is classified into the following types:

- 1) Appetizer: Fish soup, wild bird's soup, and salmon roe soup, seaweed soup, soup with salmon roe and parsley,
- 2) Dry fish dish: Dish of *ma* (dried salmon) with skin, of chopped *ma*, ground *ma*, and threefold sliced *ma*
- 3) Fish dish: Dish of broiled fish, of cooked fish, and of boiled guts
- 4) Seal dish: Boiled seal meat, grilled/skewered seal, grilled internal parts
- 5) Fish and fruits: *mos* (jelly of crow-berries), dressing of fruits and fish, many sorts of *kholadj* (dressing of berries)

There are, of course, a lot of variants for each dish sort; regional and personal variations are almost uncountable. But the basic types of traditional Nivkh dish can be classified as above mentioned. She is now writing a more detailed description about each type and its variants. Confer especially the item on late Pugsk Vera Hain ( † 2008.06.06) bellow.

### **Our Teacher on Nivkh language**

Lok-san is our teacher of the Nivkh language. Once she read us textbooks three days long. It was in a small hotel at the beach of Kujukuri coast that we had a preparatory conference for Nivkh research plan in the next years (Grant-in-Aid project for an international scientific research of Minister of Education). She stood on the beach admiring the scenery with a comment that the Pacific is somewhat bigger and blue-er than Okhotsk But she was called in the room in the next moment to read all kinds of language materials we had at that time, Bukvari, Nivkh Dif and some other brochures. Another case we obliged to her very much was her aid she gave me when we were editing Puhkta's Conversation and Thesaurus. I stayed by her in Nogliki many days to consult with her about each sentence of the original. She often found a word which is not usual in North Sakhalin with the comment that it may

be possible in Amur dialect or can be a regionally specific in Kalima and so on. Such a lesson went on many hours a day. But when we had the book published in the year 2003 many mistakes were found, though I am solely responsible to them.

Our colleague Shiraishi published several audio-documentations for North Sakhalin dialect of Nivkh; each of the book was made with cooperation with Lok-san. The detailed information of his work can be found in his home page: [ext-web.edu.sgu.ac.jp/hidetos/indexjapans.htm](http://ext-web.edu.sgu.ac.jp/hidetos/indexjapans.htm)

It was for me at the first time that I heard a living conversation of Nivkh language, when Lok-san and his sister Lidia changed the conversation language promptly from Russian into Nivkh after we had dinner in Lidia's dining room. The language change was so smooth that I hardly found it when and how. But I had an impression it was just



as two children change topics from one to another during a daily chattering. I asked Lok-san whether they had a special motivations to change the code afterwards. She answered that the topic came to the story of their old friends in their childhood, so that they felt rather at home to chatter about in the language they used as girls. The picture on the right shows a scene I photographed at the moment she made excuse for the code change in that evening (left Lok-san and right Lidia).

### Documentation specialist Lok-san

Lok-san is an investigation specialist of superlative degree. Once when Taksami and I went to Kalima in the summer of 1999, Lok-san had stayed in Nikolaevsk without any special task. We hoped rather that she could have a rest for a while. But afterwards it was proved that she is not of such a type. She seemed to have run about the city to collect a data about indigenous population in the city and around. The population list she showed us was so detailed and accurate as no national census can give. I show it below with her consent:

Indigenous population in city Nikolaevsk and around (G.. D. Lok 1999)

Region/Nationalities	Nivkh	Negidal	Uliche	Evenki	Udehe	others
Nikolaevsk.n.A.	417	37	55	50	1	? 187
Krasnoe/Palovinka	87	?	3	7	9	Nanai 11, Alyut 3, Mansi 4
Oremif	55	3				

Gnyrrax	24			3		
Tnejbax	29			5		Yakut 5
Ozerbax	14	3	2			Nanai 7
Puir	68		7			
Makarovka	43					
Innokencevka/ Saxarovka	163			5		Chukchi 4, Yakut 5
Vlasvevo	17					Nanai 11
Mnogoverninnoj	108		17	22		Nanai 22
Clya	26		6	4		
Orelj/Clya	15	3		3		
Mago/Ovsjannoe Pole	98	41	11	3		Yakut 2
Nidzni-Pronge	180					Nanai 7
Alevka	83					

## 2.4. People of Nogliki

### 1. To Nogliki



There is an old railway in Sakhalin built by Imperial Japan. The night train from Yudino Sakhalinsk is only one reasonable transport route to Nogliki. It is a sleeping train, but the beds are difficult to say to be comfortable. But it arrives in 10 hours at the terminal station. If we have a chance to good friends sharing the compartment chatting about with Valtika bottles in hand, it is not an unpleasant night. The Nogliki station building looks as deserted as it really is a terminal. There is no house around it except some kiosks which are shut almost always. No bus stop, no taxi waiting, so that travellers have to expect someone could bring them to the city centre which is some kilometers apart from it. The train ends here, but a truck way goes on further to Okha, the most northern city in

Sakhalin. Because this railway had originally been constructed to transport oil products from the northern tip of the island to Japan in the 1920s years of the last century.

Nogliki is an important place for Nivkh people from old time. At present it is yet the base of daily life for the peoples of North Sakhalin. The river Tumi, longest river in Sakhalin, pours here in Okhotsk Sea. People living along the river have moved down the river to take fish, to hunt, to exchange goods and to visit friends. The most of old tales of North Skahkalin were born along the river, the many topics of the legends are related to the Tumi. People come down the river to reach an inlet Ny where the marine resource of Okhotsk gathers. At the east end of the inlet a long sandbank protects the inner sea from the furious waves of the sea. On the inner side of the sandbank scatters small summer houses of Nivkh where they cut and dry fish for winter. Many sorts of seals are there in the shallow inlet. People made box traps with net which are set in shallow spots where seals come to catch fish. Seals are indispensable to the people: they provide with fat and the skin to make the people survive the hard winter. The estuary of the

Tumi is so fertile that it practically provides with everything they need. Nivkhs have gathered here since long time and regard it as the centre of commerce, mutual communication, in short, the natural life itself.

The inhabitants of Nogliki is estimated ca. 1000 people. But people move around about the district always: they live in a city house in winter but in summer most of ladies in the small houses in Nyvo (=village in Ny) on the sandbank. Therefore, a rigid population census rather does not reflect the reality. Besides Nivkhs there live a group of Uilta, another important minority of Sakhlin, live in neighborhood of Nogliki. They are not original in the island, but they supposed to have moved here from the Continent along with their rein deer in a pretty early time. In the last centuries they became an independent nationality in this island, so that we regard them as inherent ethnos in Sakhalin parallel to Nivkhs. In the district Vall, ca. 50 kilometer in the north from Ngoliki, they live rather concentrated with rein deer breeding. The population is estimated about 200 people. Some of them get job in a factory or public facilities, etc. and some others work in the city Nogliki.

The majority of the people in Nogliki are not original inhabitants of the district. They have gathered from various regions. Most of them left their home villages in various motivations. They wanted to get jobs in an urban circumstance. In the Soviet period the compulsory migration was organized to guarantee the labor power in fisher kolkhozes and factories of various sorts. Most of them came mainly from villages up the river Tumi, so that they speak even now Tumi river dialect of Nivkh language, i.e. a branch of the so-called South-East dialect of the language. But the present Nogliki citizens include many people from the northern or northern-west regions of Sakhlin. These Nivkhs speak rather the so-called North-west, which resembles the Amur dialect in the Continent. Therefore, in view of dialects Nogliki is like a watershed between the East and West dialects. Even in a family we

can notice often some deviation of dialect use. They understand each other with different speech, though the dialects are pretty distinguishable in each parts of grammar.



In a northern part of the city there is an old living area where a lot of small wooden houses stand on line neighboring one by another in a peaceful nostalgic way. Each house has a vegetable garden with ca. 200 square meters, it is perhaps large enough to yield potatoes and spinach for a small family. The region spreads near to the mouth of Tumi, it is also convenient for fishing in the bay and sailing it over to the summer house on the sandbank. Many of the families living there has a small boat with an Yamaha motor. Nivkhs are fond of the motor just as fishers on the Low Amur. The difference lies that here they take care of the boat at home and carry it to the river with a car.



In this area of Nogliki, there live many Nivkhs who are working for ecological and cultural activities to contribute for preservation of their national culture and language. Our colleague Lok-san lived once here, her sister Natalia lives near by, too. Family Tanzhina neighbors to family Nitkuk. They use yet Nivkh language with one another in an ordinary life. Our friend Lena Nitkuk has grown up in this circumstance; in her mind there remains yet this traditional way of life together with peaceful scenery of the vegetable garden. In a summer afternoon her father used to stand at the entrance of the house taking a rest after his daily work for garden and his ship. This picture on the right is a memory of his when he was still healthy.

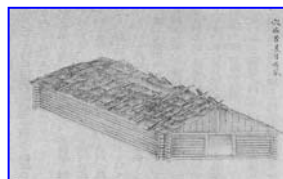
This northern region of the city Nogliki is very precious for Nivkh people from another point of view. Nogliki has two theatre groups working in an international scale. Many of the theatre members live in this area practicing rehearsals often in members' houses. They often gather in the city museum, too, which stands practically at the entrance to the area.

## Nogliki City Museum



The Nogliki City Museum stands at the north-east end of the Soviet Street, which is the only one main street of the city. It is a half broken wooden house standing on the precipice of the road side. It appears one stock house, but the entrance hall leads us to an underground halls full of treasure which is found in no other places in the world. The first one the museum curator showed us astonished us: it was a wooden ship with a plank on the front bottom. It was just the ship Mamiya Rinzo drew in his *Hokui-Bunkai-Yowa* (Essais on Northern Peoples) 1810? We compare his picture with the existent ship on the museum floor.

There are other objects we can compare with Mamiya's documentation. On the desks of the underground floor there were exhibited 1/10 models of Nivkh summer and winter houses made by Lidia Deremyanova Kimova. A traditional summer house has a raised floor with rat-guards, it has a verandah around the house body. It appears to be of a southern type. The house of Mamiya's picture has stones on the ceiling perhaps against strong wind from the sea, as is the normal makeup of a summer house on the shore like those which we saw on the sandbank Nyvo.



A winter house of Nivkh is, in contrast to a summer house, of typically northern type. It is a sort of a basement house. But the ground is dug out pretty deep, ca. 150 cm high. The roof of the model is covered thick with earth. So it looks like an underground shelter. It has an opening to the south-east, as far as can be judged from the model,

from which several steps go down to the wide room on the ground. Compared to the model the house of Mamiya's picture (bellow) is not covered with earth, the house body appear to stand on the ground higher than the model. The difference may due to regional variance: Mamiya may have drawn a house on the west coast of Sakhalin, but Kimova's one may reflect one on the east coast. In modern life of Nivkhs, the winter house is not used, of course, even in case of hunting in winter. It belongs to typically commemorative goods of traditional ethnic life.



The museum has many other ethnic goods exhibited. Among them is a traditional musical instrument named Tungrung, a one-string "viola". It appears to be a new made one, not for actual performance but as an artificial product. Because the drum is made of birch with ornament and stretched with white marten skin.



There were, of course, many other old used ethnic goods gathered from villages in North Sakhalin. The important one is, among others, orong/orung, a wooden vessel to make mos, jelly cake. (About mosthis see the item Nekrasovka bellow).

In order to exhibit these ethnic treasures in more beautiful way, the museum house has to be renewed: it has to be newly built in some modern way. Nivkhs in Nogliki have made effort for that purpose, but at present a financial difficulty prevents them from realization. When their dream of a Nivkh Culture Center comes true, these treasures will get their proper place in it.

### **An old man in Katangli**



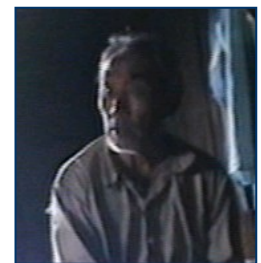
About 10 kilometers to the south of Nogliki there is an old Nivkh village Katangli. On a summer day in the year 2003 we visited some old Nivkhs in the village. They received us friendly in an old Nivkh manner with tea and



some fish dishes. Our main aim was, however, to visit an old man on the sandbank over the Nabili bay which extends on the east of the village to the Okhotsk sea. The sandbank is a thin peninsula connecting the southern with north capes which thrust out into Okhotsk sea just like a breakwater, so that the Nabili bay is guarded against fierce waves and drift ice in winter.

On the peninsula there stood a ragged hut. As we got on the shore, we found the chimneys giving smoke and some nets and clothes hanging nearby. Mr. Anatoli Kavozg is surely at home. His son Stefan made the leant door wrenched open. We entered the hovel calling him aloud.

Anatoli Kavozg appeared out from darkness and invited us to come in. In the dark room stood a famous actor who has been appreciated on stage and in films. Especially at the beginning of 90's, he gained reputation in the films of Son Cinema, produced mainly in Almatoi of Kazakhstan. In the branch of documentary films he made splendid films, too. In "On the last stage" he told and showed the endangered situation of his own ethnos, Nivkh, very impressively. He told in the film: "Nivkhs' mother tongue? We talked with it, but one day it was prohibited. Nivkh textbooks were there in schools, but they were taken away; were they burned away? I didn't know. The general inspection at that night was catastrophic. The house was completely plundered. It is said Locha will drive Gilyak away into the sea. However, many Nivkhs survived. They worked in kolkhoz. They recognized they were kept alive for that purpose." He continued to talk about how he escaped from the island to Kazakhstan, where he was acquainted with new friends who were driven there from their home land, too.



After Soviet collapsed, he dreamed he could do something in Sakhalin. He came back to his home land. But his dream was difficult to realize. He drank more and more day after day and came more often to the sandbank hut without doing anything but fishing and drinking. As we visited him, he sat in the dark corner of the room drinking vodka. He was speaking something, perhaps texts of a drama or poems he made. Our colleague Lok requested him to talk about his opinion on the recent tendency of cinemas and dramas in the Russian continent regions. But he reported about his personal participation in recent years in a moderate way. He talked some old episodes and sang old songs of Nivkhs.

Behind his hut the chains of trucks raised dust and noise carrying construction materials for Sakhalin II. Russian troops' car were running about from unknown reason. He stopped his talk and got out from the hut shouting curses at them. He did not want to continue the talk. Instead he proposed to find seals in traps. He checked the fixed nets

on shallows, we found many sort of fishes, but he wanted only salmon letting others into water again saying that Nivkhs eat only definite sorts of fish, interesting. Then we took a boat to check



the cages for seals which he had set several days before. In a cage a seal has been captured. Sergey hit it on the head in order to let him go to the heaven as soon as possible. We took it to the shore to dismantle it. The work was practiced skillfully and speedy. The skin was spanned on a plank, meat and fat were conserved each in separate pots. After the work we took seat again in the hut in order to drink a toast for the success of hunting.

Anatoli Kavozg lived in such a way on the sandbank alone. He visited occasionally Noglki to visit friends and his son Sergey. But the celebrated intellect of Nivkh people, the actor of international reputation lived alone in despair. We made farewell promising to see again in the next year. However, we received a black letter in the next spring.

### In Nyvo village



Tumi pours into the sea in the north of the Nogliki. It makes a big bay in front of the city. The bay was closed against Okhotsk sea with a peninsula, practically a long sandbank stretching from north to south ca. 20 kilometers. The bay is called Ny, meaning perhaps "work". On the peninsula there is a village, a group of summer houses of Nivkhs who work fishing and processing of fish. The village is called "Nyvo", namely working village, an old, famous village where many traditional customs are recorded.



One day we heard that the family Tandina was working in Nyvo. We decided to go over the bay to the peninsula to

visit them. Brat, the son of Lidia Kimova helped us to bring us with his boat which is bigger than normal ones in this district, It was made of duralumin for 8 persons. We started from the harbor against strong wind and wave. On the bay we got wet to the skin; we had to make effort to protect our present goods for Tandina from water. In about half an hour we got on the sandbank. Tandinas waited us on the shore.

A lot of *ma*, dried salmon, had queued up around the house. They were *ma* cut in three pieces. They said that three pieces *ma* is hard, strong and convenient to stock and carry. Nadegida Tandina is surely one of the most skillful *ma*-maker among all Nivkhs who know traditional techniques very well.



Family Nadegida has a house in the north quarter of Nogliki and is shuttling to Nyvo in fishing season. They catch some seals occasionally, which are necessary for making traditional shoes and other skin products. As we visited them, they caught a pretty big one of which skin was stretched before tanning. Tandina taught us all the names of skin parts and of instruments for stretching it in Nivkh language. Our colleague Tangiku wrote all the terms down in field notes. It will become a detailed glossary for ethnic terminology of fishing and sea animal hunting of this old nationality.

Nadegida Tangina is one of the best speakers of Nivkh language. She talked with her old friend Nina Nitkuk only with their mother tongue. More precise to say, their daily conversation is possible only in Nivkh, for they have an ethnic mind which can be expressed only in the Nivkh language They say many things are impossible to translate in Russian. But Nina Nitkuk died in the summer 2006. Nadegida lost her best friend and the world lost one of the best speakers of Nivkh language.



While Nadegida sliced salmon, we made a walk around on the hill, a slightly elevated place in the center of the sandbank. The Okhotsk has come into view to the east We climbed from the west side by only ten meters. The wave surges considerably rough. The wind is quite different from the west side as we realized when we were standing on the hill. It is cold and even painful. The smell of the rusted machine has mixed, too. When walking to the south on the hill we found a place where big stone were irregularly displayed. In the center of stones there stood

a wood pole, a mark for some memory. Lok-san explained that it was a memorial place where an aerial sepulture was performed. It might be a special case necessitated by a particular situation, for Nivkhs have a various options to hold a funeral; it depends on how a person died. In general they choose cremation or burial as custom, but in this case it might be necessary for them to do it. We understood her explanation.

In the evening wave became higher. Even in a bay like Ny it was not safe to get transverse wind in a small boat. We left family Tandina and returned to the Nogliki port. In the boat Lidia praised Nadegida for her *ma*, it was not only due to her technique, but the wind and air on the Nyvo was, in fact, different. The wind contained suitable salt and moisture to make the taste.

### In Venskoe

In the northern end of the Ny-bay there raised a wide plateau. Here is the old village of Nivkh named Venskoe which has a fine view over the bay and the Okhotsk. In the Soviet period there was a big fishers' kolkhoz. A lot of Nivkh and Ulta were compelled to work in it. Many of them were forced to live near by the factories and others were carried over from neighbor villages with busses. In the 1970-80 years it seemed to work well. Canned salmon made in Venskoe became famous even in Moscow. But when the Soviet collapsed, a catastrophe came to this village, too. The huge stock of cans disappeared within a single night, even the roof board of factories was stolen. Along with all the goods and materials of the kolkhoz together Russian administrators and laborers vanished. At present there remained only two families in the place where there was once a big kolkhoz, family Myvtik and its relatives.



In a summer day we visited the family Myvtik in village Venskoe. Mr. Myvtik was not at home, but his wife Lidia was working in the garden. She was born in the year 1941 in a village Chaivo which is on the peninsula beyond Chaivo bay. On the west east is a village Val, the residence center of Uiltas who are traditional reindeer breeders in Sakhalin. The Chaivo bay is an important region in an ethnic relationship in Sakhalin in the sense that two ethnic minorities which have each different occupations have been lived for many centuries in common. The village Chaivo is also famous in that the north-west dialect of Nivkh language which involves the Amur dialect stretches to this village. In other words, the boarder line of the dialects runs in this village; it spreads from Low Amur in the

west to Chaivo in the south-east, as far as the standard view is concerned.

Ms. Myvtik has grown up still in the time when Nivkh language was used in daily conversation in Chaivo; she is a genuine native speaker of the language in personal as well as social circumstance. In Chaivo remained not only language, but also the old cultural tradition pretty long time. Lidia Myvtik is also an expert of traditional knowledge in ethnic daily life.



As we visited Venskoe she was working on making *ma*. She was very much delighted to see us, especially our native colleagues, Ms Galina Lok and Ms Lena Nitkuk. She knows both well. Especially she loves Lena Nitkuk since she knew her since a little girl. Lena has been an idol of Nivkhs, for her picture (on the right) decorated once the cover of the world famous Soviet journal "Ogonek". This pretty girl had visited Lidia often with her mother Nina Nitkuk who was one of the best friends of hers with whom she could chatter about every thing in an ethnic way. Lena visited Lidia often afterwards, too, with many professional questions she wanted to learn from Lidia.



It was a Nivkh way reception. Lidia served us tea with a variety of fish dishes. Lena helped her as usual. They talked

about in native language, but often mixing Russian in order to let understand little boys and girls playing around them. It was a long conversation of a living language. We almost forgot that Nivkh language is one of the most endangered languages of the world. Sometimes difficult issues were on the topic. In these cases they mixed some Russian terms, but the basic stream of conversation continued in Nivkh language. Before becoming dark we made farewell to family Myvtik and came back to Nogliki.

## 2. 5. People of Nekrasovka

### The north village Nekrasovka



Nekrasovka is a small village on the northernmost coast of Sakhalin island. It is in north latitude 5.40 and east longitude 142.30, i.e. about 1200 kilometer northwards from Sapporo. At the neck of Schmidt peninsula, the northernmost land of Sakhalin, there is a pretty big bay named Pomr'. The village spreads on the west coast of it. It is divided into two part: the old village lies near the coast, but the school, offices and shops gathers on the hill some hundred meters in the forest upward.

The climate is not severe, it can be compared to the north-east Hokkaido/Japan where e.g. *salicornia europaea* (akkeshi-so in Japanese, see the picture above) bloom in summer. However, it is not easy to reach the village: The only one Railway goes to Nogliki, from there to the town Oxa there is a trolley way for goods transport. We have to take an only one transport means, a rout-bus to Nikrasovka. It is only a one hour trip in an almost broken car.

We had three reasons why we decided to go to the northernmost village. First, in Nekrasivka there live still some legendary ladies who know their ethnic language and culture very well. We intended to see them and possibly take documents with some audio-visual materials. Second, the Nikrasovka primary school has been only one pedagogical institution where Nivkh language education has been consistently continued since the second world war. We wished to know how it has been possible. Third, the main editor staffs of the Nivkh monthly paper *Nivkh Dif* live in this village and are working very actively. We intended to meet the staffs in order to hear how they edit the newspaper in this village.

### **Nikrasovka Primary School**



We visited the Nikrasovka Primary School in summer 1998 for the first time. Our team consisted of eight colleagues, a pretty big party for a small village. We arrived at the village pretty late in the evening. Because the village has no hotel, we had to live in bedrooms of the boarding school. There is no restaurant in the village, so we

had to open some cups of dried noodle for dinner.

At eight o'clock in the next morning we were called up to come to a class room. The teachers and staffs for native language education program were waiting for us. Most of them looked like Nivkhs; and it soon turned out to be the case. Not only language teachers, but also teachers for mathematics and history were indigenous. They had once studies in Khabarovsk or Yuzhino-Sakhalinsk but returned to the village school which they had graduated when they were children. Young language teachers had grown up with Russian language, but after study they learned their native language from their grandparents as the second language. They made up their mind then to transmit it to the next generation in the primary school.



The preparation for morning meeting today was already complete. They welcomed us and each of them made a small talk about her pedagogical experience. We got knowledge that Nivkh language class has been optional, but it has continued in the last 25 years. Children learning Nivkh language voluntarily have been 75 persons on average. In most years four classes are prepared for the first and second year children. They use various materials in the classroom. Some of them make pamphlets for their own purpose. But they prefer one textbook for common use, namely Polet'eva/Taksami: *Lyj Betash/Raduga* 1992. This favorite textbook has some remarkable characteristics: first, it begins with Nivkh sentences from the first page describing daily life of Nivkh people. It appears to be utilized in a Nivkh society where the language is yet used in daily life. This is not an illusion, its editors and users intend to take a future image in advance by using this textbook. Second, in connection with this principle, it is not constructed in a progressive way. Sentences are not arranged from easy to difficult ones, but a variety of topics are put into texts in the order according to the interest of learner. It appears to be made just in the way as a grandmother talk to her children watching on the street or just as a grandfather is telling old tales around the stove in a winter night. Third, words and sentences seem to be selected not necessarily in a pedagogical way, but according to daily convenience. For example, we find the sentences bellow in an almost last page of the book:

**N'yng vo** (Our village)

**N'yŋ voukh Nekrasovkauth q!at'-q!at' nivkhgu khumd'yu. Voukh kolkhoz "Krasnaya zarya" jivd'.**

(In our village Nikrasovka many Nivkhs are living. In the village there is a kolkhoz "Red Morning Glow")

**Ghuŋ choŋyŋ-nivkhgu orbott'yu. Choŋyŋ-nivkhgu t'ulf qangi nyŋta. Tolvytngan tengyo, velyo, lygyo nyŋta.**

(There fishers are working. In winter they take saffron cods. When summer comes, they take pink salmons, summer salmons and autumn samons. )

**Voukh pila shkola jivra, pochta jivra, pekarnya jivra, sel'sovet khara, profiraktorii jivra, nykř magazin khara jivd'.**

(In the village there are school, post and bakery, there are village office, clinic and shops, too. )

**N'yŋ voukh tyfku namata, potyurta, pila stadion jivra khad'.**

(In our village houses are many and pretty, there is a big stadion.)

**Voukh Dom kul'tura jivra, nivkhgu ansambl' "Pila q!eŋ" jivra had'. Ghy ansambl'ukh yky umgu O.A. Nyavan-Yartyuk p!lisid'. Ansambl'ukh nivkh umguyu khara, locha khara umguyu p!litite, lute had'**

(In the village there is a culture hall, there is a Nivkh ensemble "Big Sun". This ensemble was founded by lady O.A.Nyavan-Yartyuk. In the ensemble Nivkh ladies and Russian ladies also are participated and sing together. Not only Nivf person's woman but also Russian's woman participates in the ensemble and perform. )

<edited by S. Poleicheva>

Children of the village Nekrasofkaa are learning the mother tongue of their ancestors in such a way like a foreign language. The Teacher Poleicheva is really excellent and often very severe as a teacher as well as a text writer, the colleague's teachers understand the severity enough and respect her.

## Editors of 'Nivf Dif'

Monthly paper '*Nivf Dif*' (cf. III-3) was first published in 1990. The chief of the paper was Lima Khailov in Okha in North Sakhalin. It was explicitly recorded that the paper was the succession of 'Sakhalin Oil Employee Newspaper' issued in Okha. But the publication was irregular in several years and at last in 1996 it stopped to issue completely. Afterwards, there was some attempt to revive it. And at last in May 1999 the paper came to life again. For the newborn *Nivkh Dif* (the picture bellow) Lalisa Ivanovna was appointed to the chief editor by Sakhalin State

Government. Lalisa has a splendid colleague





who helped her in every function of paper making, it is Aleksandra Vladimirovna Furion, an excellent journalist (the picture bellow left). Both live still in Nekrasofka, but both appear everywhere in Sakhalin when there is something to be reported. One day in the primary school in Nekrasofka we were interviewed by her, in the next week we saw her picturing folk dance festival in Chil-Unvd in middle Sakhalin and on the other day after the festival we read her report on state assembly from Yudino-Sakahlinsk. She has a good friend in Yudino-Sakhalinsk, it is Lena Nitkuk, an excellent curator in the Sakhalin Museum, who writes many important items in the paper.

The small village Nekrasofka is one of the cultural centers of Nivkh people of whole island Sakhalin, in the sense that the newspaper *Nivkh Dif* was not only born in the village, but also it is edited here still now.

### The late Vera Eremeevna Khain



In Nekrasofka there are still living some people who speak Nivkh language neatly. The late Vera Khain (died in 2007) was one of them. She was born in the year 1929 in a village of Vaidukov island which lies ca. 30 kilometer off from Amur Liman northwards, as the daughter of continental Nivkh father and North-Sakhalin mother. She grew up with genuine north-west dialect of Nivkh language. Our team visited her first in the year 1991 (Murasaki-project) and in 1998 (Kaneko/Nakagawa-project) in the second time. Our colleague Shiraiishi and Lok visited her many times also afterward in order to document her linguistic knowledge. It has been collected in *Voices from Tundra and Taiga, Sound Materials of the Nivkh Language 3 - Pugsk* - (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2004). "Pugsk" in this title is her Nivkh name, it means *cast away*. By means of this naming her parents wished that devils should imagine the girl were too ugly to take away.

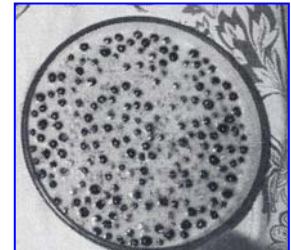
Vera plays mukhuri, bamboo jew's pipe. The small musical instrument is known as Ainu origin. But she said that Nivkh had it, too, since old time. In fact, Nivkhs have lived side by side with Ainus every time in their history. It is in the moment not to decide who borrowed from whom and when. According to *A World with Resonant Jew's Harp* by Tadakawa Leo 2005 the bamboo instruments existed in a wide region already in the time of Amur trade. There is no wonder that they play it in various districts in the eastern territory. of Eurasian Continent.



Vera Hain was an excellent cook of Nivkh traditional cuisine. Our team was once invited to traditional dishes. She demonstrated us the whole process how to make the famous dessert *mos*. This dessert is explained in *Nivkh-Russian Conversation and Daily-life Thesaurus* by M.N. Puxta 2003 like as follows. "This dessert is made from recipe: First, making gelatin by rubbing fish skin, then to add milk, sugar and butter to it. Then add various sort of berry, raspberry, cranberry, etc. to keep it cold to make hard."



Vera Hain started the preparation for *mos* making from the early morning. She took out a special wooden vessel which is named *ron/oron* in Nivkh language. It was about ten 10 cm. high, 80 cm long, and 25 cm in width, traditional Nivkh patterns are sculptured at both ends.



The skin of the salmon is put in the *ron* with some water. It is rubbed with a stick called *mamas*. Of course, it takes a long time to get gelatin with this method. When it is extracted well, she added milk very slowly to make the *oron*. The berry is put into there while mixing a white liquid slowly further, then sugar is added. When just good stickiness has reached, it moves to a glass container. This is put on a chilly place to lay out for a while. The highest class among many berry sort seems to be a crowberry, it make the *mos* somehow dark purple. When it becomes hard enough, the pudding *mos* is completed. But we must wait to appreciate it for a while, because *mos* is a dessert which is served after meal. However, it is a high light of whole hospitality; after the last dish the host announces loudly "now, it's time of *mos*!"



The *mos* was really delicious. But our team had eaten in Vera Hain's house not necessarily every time. She told us some old tales prevailed in the district between the continent and the island Sakhalin, namely the Liman-area in north-west dialect of Nivkh language. Some valuable records were made in her language. Our colleague Shiraishi has published some of the records which he edited afterwards. Here we have evidence to show we had made a linguistic investigation with her.

Her husband Petr Hain is fisherman. He proposed us once to go to the shore where we helped her to repair net. But it has turned out soon that we are not able to do the work.. Petr, doing his work, complained that the number of fish decreased drastically in the recent years. Moreover, ships and equipments have not been maintained after the fisher-kolkhoz was annihilated. Nekrasovka is no more suitable for fishery. He said "It may be good to make effort



to maintain language and culture, but you must see a necessary social condition to continue basic life of us. That must precede to anything other." He continued to repair nets alone.

## 2.6. Nivkhs of Poronaisk



There was once a railway line named Karahuto-To-sen (Sakhalin East Line) of Japanese National Railways. The train ran from Oodomari (present Korsakov) in the south end of Karahuto through Toyohara (present Yudino Sakhalinsk) to Shisuka (present Poronaisk) when South Sakhalin belonged to Japan. Shisuka in 49°10" was the

northernmost station of Japanese Empire. The station was a small wooden house which was bare enough to remind the visitors that they were at the northernmost boarder of the country. At present, however, in the same place there stands an ugly dirty concrete building which is typical to Siberian standard in the Far Eastern Russia now. It is the Poronaisk railway station.

In order to reach Poronaisk we travel by train from Yudino-Sakhalinsk from south-ward. We can take a train from the other terminal Nogliki in the north, In both cases the train arrives at Poronaisk in very inconvenient time, namely about three o'clock in the morning. But neither taxis in front of the station, nor any light-upped hotel around it as it has been completely standard in the Soviet society. Therefore, it is practically impossible to visit this city alone without any acquaintance who comes to meet at the station with a car in the midnight. But this inconvenience matches the controlling policy in the Soviet time which seemed to be maintained even now intentionally. Poronaisk was a flourishing city with many nationalities where ca. 30,000 citizens lived, but it has changed into a deserted village in the hand of talented specialists of destruction in these 50 years. However, what cheers us up there is the active movement of indigenous peoples of this city which sustains the cultural base of the people of the city.

### **Regional Museum Poronaisk**

As I arrived at Poronaisk with Galina Lok together, two young persons named Nakagawa and Minato waited at the entrance of the station with an old Japanese car. The car ran in a pitch-dark town for about ten minutes and stopped in front of an apartment house. Family Sangi waited for us preparing dish full of treat in the midnight. Mr. Sangi comes from Nogliki, a younger brother of the writer Vladimir Sangi and his wife Svetlana is Nivkh, too. She is at present a superintendent of the Poronaisk Regional Museum.

The museum is officially a regional subdivision of the Sakhalin Museum of Yudino-Sakhalinsk, but it is managed with its original operating policy made by the steering committee. It has a lot of articles collected from indigenous minorities of the whole Sakhalin: skins and stocks, fish skin clothes, handicraft articles of various sorts classified regionally, especially in the central part of Sakhalin. Among them there are important articles left in Otasu district where indigenous peoples were settled in at the time of Japanese Empire (cf. the following paragraph about Otasu).



We found there some peculiar things which seem to have been left by Japanese who escaped immediately after the

surrender. Among others there are many photos and letters of Japanese families. Of course, there are other important historical documents, e.g. the collection of obsidian stones. Some of them, they say, come from Hokkaido Japan, but they have to be examined with recently developed method, if we want to decide from where and when they were carried over to Sakhalin.

The museum has a lot of valuable things which are yet waiting at scientific investigation in detail. For the future of the museum, international cooperation with Japanese specialists is indispensable in various branches. The curators wish it. They eagerly wanted especially the communication with Japanese colleagues. But it is not easy to carry it out successfully. For the curators of indigenous people, including the director Svetlana Sangi, the difficulty is doubled: they have to negotiate with Local Government to get any positive decision from it. They have to discuss the matter with Russian colleagues in order to let them discuss with the Local and Central Government, because the native colleagues are too little to have influence on any political decision so long as international affairs are involved even in case of a foreign travel. They have tried to bring up as many indigenous curators as possible. This plan has succeeded in half a way; in almost every local museum we find native collaborators who possess necessary knowledge enough to satisfy foreign visitors. Most of indigenous curators wish to have higher education rather in Japan than e.g. in Moscow. But their wish falls through in most cases not only because of stiff diplomatic policy on both sides, but also because of language, namely because of the lack of necessary English education.



The chief curator of Poronaisk Svetlana Sangi (left in the picture below) is very guest friendly. She has a wide connection with of native peoples in Sakhalin as well as guest travelers from Japan and Korea. TANAKA Ryou, a historian who wrote, e.g. *Northern Peoples and the War* 1994, is one of her important guest. He visited her many times in order to write a life history of an Ulta, Dahinien Gendano (KITAGAWA Gentaro 1926-1984). Rs Sangi helped him gathering crucial materials.

The family SANGI is practically the center of indigenous peoples in Poronaisk. When we visited her for the first time, Lyba KITAJIMA (a uilta, in the picture above) and Kim MASAKO (a nivkh) came to see us and chattered with us about their many native friends. Our colleague TANGIKU Itsuji stayed by Sangi family many times to hear from them and their friends important information about native peoples living in Central Sakhalin. He found many of histories which otherwise would have remained hidden. The dark terrible past of our peoples has to be written in some way, we are not forgiven merely to forget what they have suffered from.

## Otasu Village

Poronaisk is a town at the mouth of river Poro-nai ("large river" in Ainu language). It is not clear why it is renamed to Shiska (Shiska/Shikuka) in Japanese era (1908-1945). Once there was a village named Otasu on the west side hill of the river, several kilometers upward from the sea. The name seemed to be related to Ainu ota (=sand), which often appears as a local name *Otasut* in Ainu folklores. But precise etymology is not known.

In the years of 1920 there lived some indigenous families in this village. The imperial government wanted to gather indigenous peoples to this island village in behalf of administrative controllability and tourist attraction. In the year 1930, the first elementary school for native children was here established. The Local Government even invited imperial family to demonstrate this village as the north-most imperial city of the Empire.



In the beginning of 1940 years, a Japanese linguist HATTORI Takeshi, who had very much interested in Nivkhs' language and culture, visited this village often to learn the language and make documentation of tales and legends. He was at that time a German teacher in Hokkaido University but, at the same time a rare specialist of this language. In his collection of many papers and memorandum we found a photo which shows a young researcher taking a memo from a young man who appears to be a nivkh. It is not mentioned who took this photo, but it must be perhaps Robert AUSTERLITZ who went to Sakhalin often with him together.

HATTORI writes about Otasu as follows: "at about 1 kilometer from a tiny port of New City Shisuka, there is a small island. Landing at it, you take a way into a shrubbery field only with some big trees which was named as Otasu-forest at that time. People are fond of taking a rest in summer days. It was also a center of the city life for indigenous peoples of South Sakhalin except for Ainus. The second numerous natives in this district was Orocco, a Tungus nationality, ca. 250 members, there were a tribe Kiren, also tungus about some more than ten people. Gilyaks, now named as Nivkhs, were also ca. 100, who live there for the sake of daily life convenience. It was said that the Otasu forest was a pleasant place for many native peoples." When HATTORI could visit here, it is surely a quiet and pleasant corner of the city. But during the war their life became difficult: the imperial military troops hit on a plan to utilize the native people as military spy. They sent native spies into Soviet territory northern than 50. latitude. It is said that some were commanded to go spying in Soviet Port Aleksandrovsk. Not only owing to this terrible job, Otasu inhabitants had been gradually involved in military action until the war came to the tragic end in

the year 1945.

When the ended in August 1945, Japanese inhabitants of the city headed for the south with the train to leave Sakhalin as soon as possible. Otasu was said to be fired by the army. Many of the inhabitants succeeded to slip back to their original villages, but some were captured by Russian. These people were sent to labor camps in Amur district and lost any further information for ever.



Soviet Russians made a big fishery combinat with a kolkhoz in Otasu. The production activity seems to have been managed to continue until 1980's. But the Soviet economy began to collapse already at the time. In the years early 1990s, there remained nothing but ruins abandoned just as many old factories fabrics everywhere in Sakhalin. As we visited Otasu in 1996, we wished to have a walk in the quite forest just as the artist KIMURA Yasuji (esp. pictures in Abasiri City Museum) drew. But there was no hills, or forest any longer, but only scattered rubbish iron materials which was produced by Japan Empire and Soviet Union.

## 2.7. Nivkhs in Yuzhino-Sakhalinsk



Yuzhino-Sakhalinsk is the capital of Sakhalin Province (Oblasti') in Russian Federation. This administrative region covers the whole Sakhalin as well as the whole Kuril islands. The region reflects the borderline decided by the Soviet Union at the end of the II World War, without any bilateral diplomatic agreement. In this district we are yet in a war situation. Russians have always maintained their territorial ambition to conquer the East in the past five hundred years notwithstanding the change of ruling systems, imperial, soviet or some others.. Their dream has come true when Japan lost the World War II. They snatched the islands and then firmly determined never to let

them go to anyone. The Japanese-Russian territorial dispute has obtained no result until now because this kind robbery logic cannot be got rid of except by some communal security system in the future.

The first official contact between these countries goes back to the year 1855, when the Trade Treaty between Japan and Russia came to agreement in Shimoda/Japan. The territorial articles said, first, the southern Kuril islands up to Etorohu belong to Japan and the other northern islands to Russia, and, second, the Sakakhlin was left as it was, i.e. in mixed population without boundary. However, after 20 years, the new Japanese government proposed to change the border. The Sakhain-Kuril Exchange Treaty (Sankt-Petersburg Treaty) decided in 1875 that the whole Sakhalin island belongs to Russia while the whole Kuril islands to Japan. Because of this Treaty, the Ainu people in Sakhalin who had lived in various district on the island had to migrate to Hokkaido (most to Tsuishikari village).

The Sakhalin in the end of the 19th century became then a prison island. The imperial Russia made use of it exclusively for this purpose. The description of Anton Chekhov *Sakhalin Island* (1895) seems to have been yet a moderate literary reflection of the reality. And like his description, the native indigenous peoples there played a role of forest animals in the back stage of a terrible theatre.

But among the people sent to Sakhalin, most of whom were heavy criminals, there were mixed those intelligentsia who rebelled against Russian Empire, namely, the political exiles. They were by nature friends of the indigenous people. They lived with native people and left the valuable records about language and culture of the district. To list up only the two of them: Vladimir SHTERNBERG (1861-1927) and Blonoslav PILSUDSKI (1866-1918). Shternberg was sent to Sakhalin in 1889-1897 due to the suspicion as the organizer of narodniki movement and. Pilsudski was arrested under conspiracy for the assassination of Aleksandr III and spent life as exile in Sakhalin in 1891-1897. They left most valuable scientific data about Nivkhs and Ainus in Sakhalin. Both are yet indispensable academic guide for our cultural and linguistic research.

### **City Yudeno-Sakhalinsk**

During the period from Russo-Japanese War (1905) to the end of the World War II (1945), this city was named Toyohara where the prefecture government of Karafuto was placed. The plan of the city was determined in this period. You arrive at Toyohara-station, main station of Karafuto East Railway, and see a large hill over there in the east, Asahi-ga-oka (Hill of the morning sun). On the both sides of the avenue from the station to the hill, stand official buildings and the Prefecture Museum. Across the avenue in front of the station, another big street runs in the north-south direction. It is the commercial center of the city, where many big shops and banks stand in row. The administrative and educational zone lies in the east, while the daily-life district spreads in front of the station along the commercial street. The map remains yet in this way. However, the names have been changed: the station is



called Yuzhino-Sakhalinsk and the Asahi-yama is Gagalin Park. In the shopping center stands a city museum .The building is valuable in artificial sense. It was the old Takushoku-Bank. The city was enlarged: it has got now many tiny centers around the old core. But everywhere we find yet some residue of old Soviet type of destruction. An example is the main station: a cheap concrete building without any cultural atmosphere; people



utilize the place only for convenience and have no care to make it clean and comfortable.

In front of the station, there stand a lot of pretty flower shops which are managed by Korean ladies. In the neighborhood, some native old ladies sit side by side to buy house-made dried fish.

### **Nivkhs in Government Sakhalin**



Neither Nivkh nor Uilta lived in this district of Sakhalin inherently. But now in this modern city, a lot of indigenous people are at work, in the museums, in university and colleges, in shops and among others in administrative offices. We take up here two prominent Nivkh ladies who play a very important role in political life of Sakhalin: The one is Mrs. Nadedzida RAIGUN (right above), the chief of the department for indigenous peoples of the Government. The other is Mrs. Antonina NACHOTKINA (right bellow), a member of the Government Assembly. Mrs Raigun is in the position in the Government to be totally in charge of the



indigenous problems in Sakhalin. Therefore, practically all the problems concerning the indigenous peoples gather

into her competence. The old cases like fishing rights, compensation because of oil contamination, troubles on landownership, etc. as well as new problems about industrial pollution in the pipe-line area of Sakhalin I and II are put on her desk. Moreover, there is a crucial problem for the indigenous peoples themselves: the territoria as Vladimir Sangi proposed, the revitalization of their culture and languages. There are too many difficult problems to solve by herself, but she has not only many supporters, but also a reliable discussion friend in her special competence.. That is Mrs. Nachotkina, who works in the same building. She is the representative Assembly member of the indigenous peoples Sakhalin, it appears they stand on the opposite position, one in the administration, the other in parliament. But they share the basic position in common: they work for the sake of the indigenous peoples. The first fruitful collaboration of them goes back to 1993/1994 when the Protocol between Sakhalin Government of Indigenous Peoples Conference was made. This is one of the most important documents about indigenous problems in general, even for those peoples in Russian district it has to be estimated as our good model. In order to realize such a document, a lot of people had taken part in various stages. The whole history how it was realized will be written some day. However, it is for us important now to look into it:

### **Protocol concerning cooperation of Sakhalin state government and Sakhalin state north minority conference regional committee**

In recognizing the culture and multi-lateral social organization of the North Indigenous Peoples of Sakhalin, in considering the improving autonomy efforts, the administration of production of life resource, the importance of the conference with indigenous peoples, and the necessity of a financial, material support by the Government, paying attention to the situation in which various problems have been accumulated about life and occupation of indigenous minority peoples, in considering the United Nations General Assembly resolution No.48.163 (December 21, 1993), to name these ten years as the International Indigenous People, and the resolution No.367 of Russian Republic (April 23, 1994) to execute the resolution, Sakhalin Prefecture Government (hereafter, it was called, "Government"), based on the Fundamental Law of Sakhalin Government, making Governor F.I. Pavrovich one side and L.A. Genajevits of the Indigenous Minority Society (hereafter, it is called, "Society") on the other, agreed to the following protocol:

#### 1. Purpose of protocol

1.1. This agreement aims at the consolidation of the economic and social situation and the stronger

cooperation with the North Indigenous Peoples for the sake of the solution of the problems in the spheres of the legal protection under the condition of the economy reform, the protection of inherent occupational means, the development of traditional field of economic activity, the revitalization of mental fields, at the maintenance and development of ethnic culture and language.

## 2. Object of protocol

2.1. The object of this protocol lies in the cooperation of the government and the society concerning the following problems:

- to prepare and execute appropriate measures in order to rouse concern onto government and public organizations about real life problems of north minority peoples,
- to provide with laws and rules for the sake of the consolidation of traditional behavioral modalities and of the maintenance of traditional jobs, culture and language of indigenous peoples,
- to accomplish the federal and local programs for socio-economical development of indigenous peoples, and at the same time to consolidate and guarantee the use of the earth and to protect the rights of nature use of them.

2.2. The object lies in helping the Society from the Government for the action.

## 3. Both parties' obligation:

### 3.1. Obligation of Government

- The Government promotes the Society to make and accomplish federal and local plans for the socio-economical development of north minority peoples,
- The Government executes a joint action concerning the Ten years of International Indigenous Peoples,
- The Government induces the Society to execute the scientific ecological assessments for making the natural resource usage plans and to protect the natural environmental resource in traditional life of minority peoples
- The Government gives the Society .methodical, informational and other kinds of help.

### 3.2. Obligation of the Society

- The Society is guaranteed and obliged to participate its representative members in the works for changing rules and regulations in the socio-economic fields, and in the works making laws and regulation concerning north minority peoples as well as their making and accomplishing,
- The Society proposes a regional plan concerning the socio-economical and cultural development of north minority peoples which has been made by the Government,
- The Society gives information to regional Societies of north indigenous peoples about the possible delay of policy together with the Government,

- The Society gives information to the Government through its representatives about general, ethnical and tribal life situation based on the data it got from local offices of the Society,
- The Society, with the Government together, participates in auditing determined and executed by the Federal Republic of Russia concerning the life and jobs of north indigenous minority peoples, as is decided by laws and regulations of the Federal Republic as well as by the regular policy of the federal Government concerning the traditional life situation of north indigenous minority peoples,
- The Society participates in the execution of ecological environment assessment related to use and protection of the natural resource which exists in the traditional life-economic area of the indigenous minority peoples,
- The Society sets the meeting with the leading staffs of the Government and the representatives of the Society,
- The Society makes proposals and supplements to the decision and laws and regulations of the Government concerning interest of the indigenous minority peoples so far as its competence allows,
- The Society receives the explanation about the policy of the Government which has been decided in parliament through its regional organizations.

#### 4. Special issues

##### 4.1. This protocol expects the following joint organizations::

- A conference of the Government and the Society to confer on problems of directly relating to this protocol
- Working groups to confer and to execute concrete program in the frame of this protocol.

4.2. In order to change or supplement this protocol, another protocol is needed which has been discussed and signed by both sides.

#### 5. Effectuation and invalidation

5.1. This protocol comes into effect when it is signed by both parties.

5.2. The protocol stops the effect by the following matter:

- When both agree in it
- When one side secedes from the protocol, it is necessary to tell it to the other beforehand (before two months or more).

5.3. This protocol was concluded on June 28, 1999 and was made twofold, and both parties who have the same legal right owns one, respectively.

#### 6. Legal address of both parties:

693011 Yuzhino-Sakhalinsk-City Sakhalin, Comunischicheskije ploshazdj 39 Government of Sakhalin Prefecture

693011 Yuzhino-Sakhalinsk City Sakhalin, Mir ploshchazdi 107, 45

There are many points to remark in this protocol. The most remarkable is among others that the Sakhalin Prefecture Government stands on the same line with the Society, the organization of indigenous peoples. They set this position on the proposals of the Human Right Council of the United Nation. It could be surely the case, not only of Sakhalin, but also of all regions in the Russian Federation which approved the position in a very early stage. We should compare this result to many other cases in an international scale.

### Sakhalin Regional Museum and Nivkhs



A beautiful building stands in the central part of the city Yuzhino-Sakhalinsk. The Japan-Korean style of reinforced concrete building was built in the year of 1937, it has three floor exhibitions halls with storage rooms in the ground floor. The front garden is of Japanese style. The façade reminds us yet of the time (see photo right). According to an official pamphlet from the year 1941, the first floor exhibits the collection of botanical, zoological and mineral specimens specific in Sakhalin. The second was divided into three parts: the division 1 for fishes and marine animals and the division 2 for archeological and historical materials and the division 3 for native peoples, it had two rooms, one for Ainu, the other for Gilyak, Oroko and others. The basic collections and the manner for exhibition of them remains yet in the present museum just as it was in the Japanese era. The collections have been enlarged and some archeological findings are added, but the fundamental features of the present exhibition reminds us of the pamphlet of that time, except for some unreasonable description about the modern history of the island. In the website of the present museum, it is said that the history of the museum goes back to the year 1896 when a tiny investigation center for this new prison island of Russian Empire was built in the harbor Aleksandrovsk. However, it had no aims nor equipment inherently necessary for a museum, but it was only an organization to control and administrate the newly established prison island. The truth is that the Sakhalin Regional Museum was established in the year 1937 when the city was called Toyohara.

The Museum possesses a pretty rich collection of the material culture in various fields as the content list of the present website shows. But, on the contrary, the non-material culture, i.e. linguistic and literary materials do not seem to have been collected systematically. Especially, linguistic materials of Sakhalin Ainu lack almost completely. The materials which were collected before 1945 cannot be found. The same is also the case about

materials of other minority peoples, of Nivkhs, Uilta and others. However, the present members of the Museum make effort to correct this short-coming of old type of museums. The clear evidence is that the Museum established an annex “Institute of Branislava Pilsudski Inheritance.” It held an international congress on them “Far Eastern Peoples and Culture from the Sight of 21 Century” in the year 2001. The congress had a sub-aim that it commemorated the 140<sup>th</sup> year after the birth of L.R. Shternberg. Both scientists in the 19th century left the first class materials on the language and culture of Sakhalin Ainu and Nivkh. Surely, the scientific research of them belongs to inherent tasks of the Museum. Besides, the almost all inheritance of a Petersburg linguist A.E. Krejnovich was gifted to the Museum. At present, it is at work to examine his materials.



A Nivkh scientist works in the Museum as curator, Mrs. Lena Nitkuk who was born and grown up in Nogliki. She belongs to the youngest generation of Nivkh speakers (right in the photo, left Tatiana Roon, the director of the Museum). She is responsible among others to congresses and conferences as well as to communication with indigenous organizations in the world. She is also active as regular writer and correspondent of the monthly paper *Nivkh Dif* (Nivkh Language).

Lena Nitkuk is one of the contact persons with local museums in the cities in Sakhalin. In Okha, Nogliki, Aleksandrovsk, Kholms and Poronaisk there are local museums with the rich collection of the indigenous peoples and local material culture. The museums in Okha, Niogliki and Poronaisk were directed by native indigenous colleagues and are estimated as local centers of the district.



After collapse of the Soviet Union, the Sakhalin Museum has regularly published the annual reports of research. Every volume contains excellent papers in various branches. At present, more than 15 volumes have been issued. But it is not easy to obtain the book; in the kiosk of the Museum we can often find some volumes, but a corresponding approach is yet impossible.

The Museum opened recently a website ([www.museum.sakh.com/eng/17.html](http://www.museum.sakh.com/eng/17.html)). which functions as a guide

book to the Museum. We must wait a bit to get scientific information.

Anyway, as far as we see the excellent activity of Lena Nitkut and other indigenous elites, we can have yet dream that indigenous peoples in Sakhalin as well as in Low Amur will construct their own future in a (North) Eastern Asian Community.

