

Imre GALAMBOS*

A Hungarian Visitor Among the Ainu

A Translation of Benedek Baráthosi-Balogh's Travel Reports to Sakhalin and Hokkaidō

Introduction

Benedek Baráthosi-Balogh (1870-1945) was a public school teacher in Budapest who carried out a series of ambitious trips to various parts of Asia during the first decades of the 20th century. His main aspiration was to document the cultural and linguistic links of Hungary with the Orient, although today he is primarily remembered for the ethnographic material he acquired on his trips, the most important of which are the ones he collected among the Ainu and the Siberian tribes of the Amur. His critics, and there have been many, invariably referred to his lack of scientific training, linguistic in particular. But no one has ever questioned his perseverance and enthusiasm that drove him to explore newer regions despite financial difficulties, physical hardship and unsteady political situation in the areas he visited.

He was a great admirer of Alexander Csoma de Körösi (1784-1842) who had walked to India in 1820 in search of the roots of Hungarians.¹ Just like Csoma, Baráthosi was born and raised in Transylvania, and he moved to Budapest only in 1899, with the explicit aim of being able to prepare for his journeys better. There he worked as a public school teacher and did some of his shorter explorations in between school terms. Although by this time he had traveled extensively through Europe, his first trip to Asia was in 1903 when he spent a year and a half in Tokyo. It was during this longer stay in Japan that he visited the Ainu for the first time, trying to assemble an ethnographic collection. He was accompanied by his wife who traveled with him on most of his trips, and a close Japanese friend from Tokyo by the name of Katsura Tasobu. Before leaving Tokyo he had contacted Professor Matsumura Shōnen 松村松年 (1872-1960) at the Sapporo Nōgakkō 札幌農学校 who promised that he would send a young Ainu with him to the villages to help

* Overseas Project Manager, International Dunhuang Project, The British Library

1. Csoma found no traces of Hungarians in Asia but made himself a name in Tibetan studies. After a four-year stay in Ladakh on British support, he settled in Calcutta and continued his studies there. This is where he worked on his Tibetan grammar and dictionary, his main achievement for which he is remembered today. He died in Darjeeling at the age of 58, amidst preparations for a journey to Lhasa.

him with his purchases.² However, he was not able to meet with the professor in Sapporo and thus could not make any larger purchases. Instead, after a short survey of the island, he decided to return there later.

Although Baráthosi's main quest in his travels was to find cultural and linguistic links between Hungarians and the regions he explored, this was not the case with regard to the Ainu. His interest in them was primarily pragmatic: he was trying to collect material for his sponsors in Europe. Thus in 1903 when he could not get in touch with Professor Matsumura in Sapporo and thus realized that he would get no help for his acquisitions, he was ready to leave the island: "To be honest, this was an unpleasant surprise and I did not feel like spending more time in Yeso [Hokkaidō] anymore. I was not going to be able to make any purchases, and what I have seen so far was enough for a preliminary orientation." (Baráthosi-Balogh 1906: 296)

But in February 1904, the Russo-Japanese War broke out and problems began to emerge. He could not get his monthly allowances from home and soon found himself facing a financial crisis. In addition, with the country at war, all non-Japanese were being viewed with increasing suspicion and it was not long before Baráthosi was accused of being a Russian spy. These charges originated from the daily newspaper *Niroku Shinbō* 二六新報 which also published his name and address. This immediately turned the entire neighborhood against him, especially when the following day the allegations were repeated. The newspaper wrote that he and his wife had come to Japan a year earlier through Siberia and although they claimed to be Austrian citizens, in reality they were German and Russian subjects. A police house search and questioning confirmed that he was an ethnologist and an Austro-Hungarian citizen. Eventually the newspaper apologized and issued a short notice informing the readers of the real objectives behind his stay in Japan:

Hungarian linguistics. – The Hungarian professor Benedict investigates the long-standing question of the similarity of Hungarian and Japanese languages. He has come to this country in June of last year via Siberia and is engaged in the comparative linguistics of the Japanese and Hungarian languages. Early next month, the Imperial Educational Society will be hosting a meeting for him. (*Niroku shinbō*, Feb. 26, 1904)

As part of the same apologetic effort, a month or so after this the *Tōkyō Niroku Shinbun* 東京二六新聞 published a picture of him and his wife on the front page (Fig. 1), once again explaining the reason for his being in the country.³

The war also prevented him from realizing his future plans. Initially from Japan he intended to go to Korea, then to Manchuria and finally to Siberia. The Japanese government agreed to supply him with a passport to travel freely in Korea but the Russian ambassador in Peking rejected his appeal even after a personal request

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2. Professor Matsumura has been teaching at the College since 1902. Before this appointment, he had studied in Berlin and Budapest, which would explain the connection with Baráthosi.
 3. The *Tōkyō Niroku Shinbun* was the successor of the *Niroku shinbō* which was terminated in April of that year, to a large extent in connection with a Russian espionage incident.

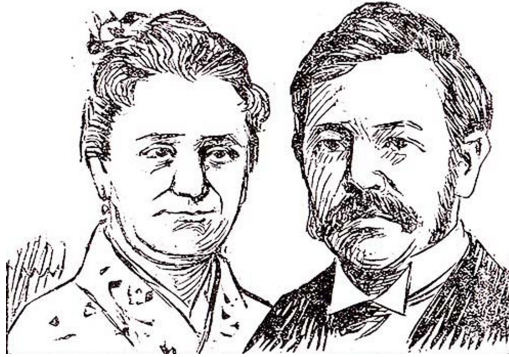


Fig. 1. Baráthosi-Balogh and his wife on the front page of the *Tōkyō Niroku Shinbun* (May 4, 1904). The caption read, “A Hungarian senior high school teacher Mr. Benedict and his wife. This time he came to this country to conduct research in the fields of comparative linguistics and ethnology. He is very enthusiastic about the intellectual bond between Japan and Hungary and is to be remembered by the Japanese people with affection. He is 33 years of age and his wife, who is German, 28.”

by the Austro-Hungarian ambassador. While waiting for his Russian passport, he traveled up north for another visit to the Ainu. Although he managed to obtain the necessary travel documents from the Japanese government, by the time he arrived in Aomori the ferry service to Hokkaidō was already suspended because of the appearance of Russian navy in the region. Realizing that the war was not going to end any time soon, he decided to return home at the earliest possible date. Since the Russian embassy would not give him a permission to take the overland route, he had to travel by sea, going through Singapore and Port-Said to Fiume (today’s Rijeka), and from there taking a train to Budapest.

His second visit to the land of the Ainu was in 1914 when he traveled to Sakhalin and Hokkaidō to collect artifacts for the National Museum of Hungary. His other important mission was to gather and record linguistic data from the region for documenting differences between regional dialects. Once again, he traveled through Siberia to Japan, this time not with his wife but his 16 year old son. In Tokyo he went to see his old friend Yamaguchi Kotarō 山口小太郎 (1867-1917), a German specialist at the Tokyo Foreign Language School, who recommended one of his students for the trip as a German interpreter and assistant. The student was Imaoka Jūichirō 今岡十一郎 (1888-1973) for whom the meeting with Baráthosi determined the course of his life. Imaoka met Baráthosi again during his 1921-22 stay in Japan, and this time followed him to Hungary. In his book on the Turanian people,⁴ he describes his connection to Baráthosi the following way:

4. Turanism, Turanianism, or Pan-Turanianism was an intellectual movement aiming to unite the Turkic and Uralic peoples under a supposed common origin. The ethnonym “Turanian” used as an umbrella term for all ethnicities linked with this movement comes from the word “Turan,” a Persian word for Turkistan. Baráthosi was one of the

“The first time I came across the word Turan was in 1914 when I interpreted from German during a lecture given by the Hungarian ethnologist Professor Benedek Baráthosi-Balogh. At the time I was facing considerable difficulties not knowing how to render the word into Japanese – should it be *Tōran*, *Turan*, or *Torān*? Based on how the word actually sounded and what felt natural for Japanese ears, I chose to transliterate it as *Tsuran*. Later on, in 1921 Professor Baráthosi came back to Japan with the grand plan of promoting the Turanian movement and I was asked once again to assist him in this. In the course of working with him, I also gained a much deeper understanding of the concept of Turan and when he was returning home in the spring of 1922, I accompanied him to America and Europe. I eventually settled in Hungary where I saw how the Turanian awareness among the Hungarians generated a pro-Japanese sentiment. Since then my interest in this issue gradually deepened.” (Imaoka 1942: 5)

After his prolonged stay in Hungary, Imaoka became one of the main proponents of Turanism in Japan. During this 1914 trip, however, he was only a young man who caused a considerable amount of frustration to his mentor. Just like on his first visit in 1903, this time Baráthosi again spent a relatively short time among the Ainu. During this time he managed to assemble an important ethnographic collection, take photographs, and gather linguistic data. Due to the limited amount of time he spent among them, some of his narrative regarding Ainu mythology and customs must come from published sources. By this time a number of works on the subject have been published in European languages, many of which had to be known to Baráthosi. He certainly knew of the travel account by the Austrian geographer Gustav Kreitner that appeared in 1881, especially since this had been a trip carried out as part of an expedition led and financed by the Hungarian Count Béla Széchenyi.⁵ Other more specialized studies available to Baráthosi included the scholarship of the English missionary John Batchelor, who had lived, on and off, among the Ainu since 1877.⁶ Apparently, he did not meet Batchelor in 1903, only described him as having been able to achieve very limited results in preaching to the Ainu after spending a lifetime with them. During his

major advocates of Turanianism in Hungary and during his 1921-1922 visit also actively worked on spreading these ideas in Japan. Geographically, the Japanese in the East and the Hungarians in the West represented the two extreme poles of the Turanian family.

5. See Kreitner 1881.

6. John Batchelor (1854-1944) was an Anglican missionary and also the first Westerner who had studied in depth Ainu language and folklore. Although his main calling was his missionary work, during the 63 years of his life on Hokkaidō, he collected and published a wealth of material about the Ainu, including *The Ainu of Japan* (1892), *An Ainu-English Dictionary* (1889), *Ainu Life and Lore* (1927), etc. In his article titled “John Batchelor: Missionary and Friend of the Ainu,” Hugh Cortazzi writes that “Batchelor’s observations and accounts, even if tinged by his own prejudices, remain the single most valuable source of information about the Ainu and their folk-lore which for the most part can no longer be observed in a natural setting.” (Cortazzi 2000: 121)

1914 trip, however, Baráthosi met the “English apostle of the Ainu” in person and described him in a decidedly more favorable manner, claiming that during his 30 years on the island the Englishman had managed to convert all of the Ainu.

On 16 July 1914 Baráthosi crossed over to Siberia to continue his work among the local tribes in the Amur region. With the outbreak of the First World War he was arrested on 12 August on suspicion of espionage. Following his release he crossed over to Japan and from there returned home via America and Italy, arriving in Budapest on 18 November. The 35 cases of material he acquired during this trip, however, stayed behind in Khabarovsk and Japan. Although the Khabarovsk part of the collection was never recovered, he was able to locate and salvage some of the material left in Japan during his 1921–22 trip to Tokyo. The Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg agreed to pay for the shipping costs in exchange for the third of the collection. Another third was donated to the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest as a compensation for providing the funds for the acquisitions. Baráthosi himself was left with the remaining third.⁷

Baráthosi authored twenty some books, mostly popularized accounts of his travels. The majority of his writings were part of the self-published series he named “Baráthosi’s Turanian Books” (*Baráthosi turáni könyvei*) that were planned to come out in 24 volumes. Eventually 18 books came out about his encounters with various Asian ethnicities and supplemented with his views about their connection with Hungarians and Turanism in general. The books were written in an easy to understand language, with a strong nationalistic and Pan-Turanian flavor. Although his pseudo-scientific speculations hold little academic value today, some of his experiences and observations are worthy of attention. This is especially true with respect to his descriptions of less-traveled areas of Asia, such as the Amur region, Sakhalin, and Korea.

Because all of Baráthosi’s books were written in Hungarian, these have been largely unavailable for those outside Hungary. The only exception is a recent Korean translation of his book on Korea about a trip he took there in 1907.⁸

The two accounts below retell his visits to the Ainu. The first one is a record of the 1903 visit published in his monumental three-volume *Dai Nippon*, the first volume of which described his life and travels during his one and a half year stay

7. See Wilhelm 2004. Some of the Baráthosi material in the collection of the Hungarian Museum of Ethnography can be viewed at the online exhibition of the Museum: <http://www.neprajz.hu/bbb/coll.htm>.

8. Baráthosi-Balogh 2005. In addition to this Korean translation, there is yet another foreign publication associated with Baráthosi, namely, the Russian translation of the ethnographic writings of Galimzhan Tagan. Tagan was a native of Bashkorstan and during the Russian Civil War fled to Manchuria and later to Japan, from where in 1922 he followed Baráthosi to Hungary. His writings were included in Baráthosi’s book on the Bashkirs and Tatars. (Baráthosi-Balogh 1932) This Russian translation was published recently in Ufa under the title *Ethnographic notes on the Bashkirs and other Turkic peoples* (Tagan 2005). The book includes only Tagan’s writings and consequently Baráthosi is not listed as an author.

in Japan.⁹ The second account detailing his 1914 visit appeared in a book titled *Bolyongások a Mandsur népek között* (Wanderings among Manchu peoples),¹⁰ which was a compilation of his travels in north-east Asia.¹¹

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9. Baráthosi-Balogh 1906: 287-303.

10. Baráthosi-Balogh 1927: 72-84. A shorter version of this trip also appears in the book called *Japan, country of the rising sun* (Baráthosi-Balogh 1930) but this description includes no additional information with regard to the Ainu.

11. In the translation all proper names were left in the form they appear in the original text, even if these differ from modern ethnological usage. At the same time, Hungarian phonetic transcriptions were adapted to fit the rules of English spelling.

Translations

A Visit to Hokkaidō (1903)
(Excerpt from the book *Dai Nippon*)

In the morning we went to the railway station. Here I had a big argument with my friend Katsura. He wanted to move along the shore and visit the Ainu villages of Horobetsu, Tobetsu and Shiraoi from where, should we feel dissatisfied with what we have seen up until that point, we could go on short, one or two days' trips to Chitose, Usuba or Abuta. Each village has at least one Ainu who speaks Japanese, and a few of them even have Japanese residents and a Japanese school. This should make things much more convenient for us, we would have nothing to worry about. I, on the other hand, wanted to go to Sapporo. The reason for this was that back in Tokyo I had received a letter from Professor Matsumura, director of the local College of Agriculture, promising to provide me with an able young Ainu man who would accompany me everywhere I went. As this man knew his own people very well, he would have been of great service.

Eventually we decided to follow my plan and soon boarded the small train that would take us through the long journey, at least a third of which was going to be along the sea shore. We began passing Ainu villages. Immediately at the first stop a whole local family joined us on the train. We had to reason with the conductor who initially did not want to let them aboard because the Ainu did not want to part with their bags, even though these would have been transported in the luggage carriage free of charge.

I went over to their carriage to take a closer look at them. They withdrew into a corner and barricaded themselves away with the bags they did not want to part with. The Japanese passengers were continuously ridiculing them, following their every move with new bursts of laughter and talking with disgust about these uncivilized wild people who, on the account of being lazy and stupid, opposed the spread of Japanese culture among themselves.

To be honest, they looked quite pitiable. Their rough clothes were similar to the shirt worn on the Hungarian lowlands and had a loose sleeve which revealed their hairy arms. They wore no shirt but two layers of robe-like coats, tied together at the waist by a cloth belt. The edge of their top garment was ornamented with bluish cotton stripes. Exposure to the sun and the lack of hygiene made their skin darker than that of the Japanese passengers. I had a rather favorable impression of them, apart from the woman who wore a dirty blue tattoo above her mouth in a way that resembled a moustache.

The man would have counted a short or mid-size person back home. In fact, he would have been handsome if only he bathed and dressed appropriately. From time to time he lifted his shy but expressive eyes to peek at us, particularly at my wife. His gorgeous beard stretched down to his breast; the straight and eloquent lines of his eyes were enclosed by beautiful thick eye lashes, and their inner corners seemed

European, unlike Japanese eyes which appear to have been carved into the skin with a sharp knife. His nose was also quite regular, although it was more of a Mongoloid type, just like his cheek bones. His shoulders were as wide as mine and the line of his arm sticking out of his clothes was stunningly beautiful. I offered him a cigarette which he accepted with a smile and gave it to his wife. I offered him another one and had a hard time convincing him to keep this one for himself. He did his best to explain to me that he had already taken one and that was enough. Their language sounded truly pleasant and, considering its undeveloped stage, we can be sure that it would have evolved into one of the most beautiful tongues of the world.

Soon after this there were more Ainu boarding the train and they all became engaged in a loud conversation. I remained among them. Before long the pack of cigarettes and the bottle of cognac I brought with me were empty but at least I could take my time observing them. We got so friendly with each other that they willingly showed me all the items they carried on them.

One of them knew some Japanese and was very keen in trying to persuade me to visit his village. In fact, this was not such a bad idea. We validated our tickets and got off at the Tomakoma station, hoping to resume our trip with the night train.

These were truly unforgettable hours. The friendly Ainu were literally trying to read our minds. I had to go from door to door and they showed me everything they owned, including their household utensils, clothes, old swords and bows, fishing tools, domestic animals, etc. They offered us their food, fruits and when I gave a few *sen* to the children, they even brought out the smallest infant so that he might also receive something.

Naturally, at this occasion we had to dispense with our smelling faculties and a number of biases, accepting the standpoint of my boarding school teacher who, when we complained about the horrible food, comforted us with the words, "My dear sons, pay no attention to this, everything in the world is just a combination of different chemical elements."

Despite the cold winters, the Ainu home is perhaps worse than the Japanese in protecting the inhabitants from bad weather. They drive poles into the ground and use the branch stubs or some wooden nails to support the horizontal beams. The roof consists of the same type of thick branches which are tied together on the very top and to the poles below. The walls of this house are then woven in with some hay or stalks of some rough grass, and the top is covered with a roof made of hay and reed. The whole thing resembles a gypsy hut. The walls usually have two openings, a larger door and a smaller window. There is also another opening in the roof for letting the smoke out. Inside, the floor of the room is made of hard beaten earth. Along the wall, there are low but wide wooden benches, used for sitting and sleeping, as well as storing household utensils. One of the walls is used for hanging the bows, swords, hunting and fishing tools. This is where the head of the household sleeps, which is also the prime area in the house. My hosts were so friendly with me that I had to sit at this place in every house I entered.

As I have already mentioned, the Ainu do not like to work. But this is true only of their men. Women work from morning till night, from night till morning. They

carry the responsibility of all housework, whereas all the husbands have to do is to go fishing or hunting once in a while. It is like the playful song “I need the kind of wife ... ,”¹² since the Ainu woman works even if she is ill, toiling all day around the house no matter what. She can have no rest until she is dead.

Social interaction between the Ainu is just as ceremonious as among the Japanese. This is a common Eastern trait. There are lots of aspects in this people’s behavior which are truly admirable. They show great respect to their parents and the old in general, and are very particular about observing traditional customs. Before eating, they always say some sort of prayer, lift the plate high into the air, as if offering the food to the gods. Their food consists of game and fish, the supply of which has considerably diminished in recent years, as well as various fruits and some pulses and other vegetables. They are no great farmers, only the wives occasionally cultivate a tiny garden around the house. Other than this, they might have a couple of small rye or barley fields, and they eat the crops cooked, similar to how the Japanese consume rice. The Ainu also like rice but it does not grow in Yeso [Hokkaidō].

Their religion is nature worship with lots of superstitions – the sun, moon, stars, storm, wind, earthquake are all gods who are partly friendly, partly hostile towards man and each other. The most feared creature is a dragon-like monster who is the enemy of the benevolent sun god. This monster is always on the prowl, trying to swallow the sun and thus bring about the end of the world. At the time of a solar eclipse, the entire population comes outside in terrible fear, the women and children use various utensils to make a great noise, the men use their bows and guns to shoot towards the sun, all this amidst incredible clatter. This continues until the eclipse is over, and then the Ainu have a great feast to celebrate their victory over the dragon and that the world did not end.

Their celebrations end with great feasts. Of these the most beautiful and fascinating is the bear feast. The Ainu, just like most half-wild peoples of Northern Asia, treat the bear with utmost reverence and respect. They regard it as some lower rank deity, but they also hunt it and if the hunt is successful, eat it. When spring comes, the biggest ambition of every village is to get a bear cub. If they fail to do this, the people are aggrieved and worried because they think that the village will be struck by danger.

If they can catch a bear cub, they lock it in a beautiful but strong wooden cage at the center of the village. If there is a woman at the village who has lost her child then she is assigned to the cub to breastfeed it as if it were an infant. If there is no such woman then all child-bearing women take turns feeding the cub. When the bear has grown a bit bigger, they feed it with fish and meat, and by autumn it turns into a large, heavy animal. Around mid September, they wreath and slaughter the animal amidst various ceremonies, then place it on an ornamented catafalque in a specifically designated tent. This is when the great celebration begins. They sing

12. This refers to a Hungarian game where the men sing, “I need the kind of wife who gets up even if she is ill, prepares the dinner...” In reply to this, the women describe what kind of husbands they would like, and so on.

songs while dancing in pairs in front of the bear, until the songs become louder and the people offer *sake* and strong liquor to the bear, also drinking plentifully themselves. Then the whole village forms a circle around the bear and continues to dance. Finally they remove the bear from the platform, have it skinned, carved, fried and finally eaten. Such feasts usually last for days and it is not unusual for the people to exhaust all their food and drink supply.

The feasts are usually accompanied by various games. Especially the men are active in participating in sports. They contend in archery, running and wrestling; the winner is celebrated all day long. One of their strange games is when one of them stands in the middle and two others begin to flog his behind. He endures this as long as he can, without uttering a sound. Once he had enough, he cries out and runs further. Then comes the second man, the third, as many as are willing to participate in the game. In the end the lashes are counted and the one who endured the most wins; he is the hero of the day.

Generally speaking, the Ainu must have been a very tough race, since they are still stronger than the Japanese, not only in terms of their physical build but, as I have heard from an officer, also in enduring hardship. While the Japanese left them alone, they had their own ancient law which was always embodied by the verdict of the village chief. The punishments were severe and often resembled the trials by ordeal in medieval Europe. Beside using hot iron and water, sinners were also hung by their hair or their arms, sometimes even mutilated. I also saw an old Ainu who had had the tip of his nose cut off for stealing when he was young.

The Ainu love life and greatly fear death. They have thousands of superstitions related to illnesses, and these are tried out one by one because they believe that an evil spirit has descended on the ill and it can be expelled only through incantation or other superstitious magic. If the condition of the patient turns grave, they make a great fire so that the evil spirit waiting for the soul of the newly deceased may dare not come near. If the ill person dies, they wrap him in a mat and place by his side his weapons, his hunting and fishing tools, eating utensils, a bit of his favorite food, and the inevitable pipe and tobacco set. The body then is buried with these items, usually quite far from the village, because the Ainu are greatly afraid of the spirits of the dead. They never go near the tomb and mark it with a jousting pole.

In this respect their faith is exactly the opposite of that of the Japanese who respect the spirits and believe that those spend most of their other-worldly time among the living.

Those returning from the funeral take part in a great feast lasting for days, until they have eaten up everything owned by the family of the deceased. Naturally, they drink until they are completely drunk and in this elevated state discuss the glorious merits of the deceased, as well as his great physical and mental qualities.

The next day we arrived in Sapporo, the capital of the island. Our overnight train ride was the worst possible. Japanese trains are utterly unfitted for longer travel and this is particularly true for the ones in Yeso (or Hokkaidō, as the Japanese call it), especially the overnight train we took. There were only two passenger carriages and these were similar to the horse drawn trams used in Budapest in the old days.

Sapporo was established 36 years ago. Its geographical location is not so favorable, as it is located far inland near a small river. Today the city has a population of 50 thousand, the only reason for this being that the civil and military offices on the entire island are concentrated here. The streets are wide and straight, intersecting at a right angle. We liked its pretty, villa-like buildings, almost every one of which had a nice little garden. The city center, on the other hand, is less regular. This is the older part of town and this is where the newly emerging commercial and industrial center is located. It appears almost foreign, without the light paper-walled Japanese houses. These would not be adequate because of the tough winter. All the houses in Sapporo are built in American style, with thick walls, proper doors and windows; only the furnishing is Japanese, although not entirely.

Our inn resembled a fortress and was located in the city center. It was furnished in the European style but was not expensive. After having spent several months in Japan, we enjoyed our room with its westernized comfort, limited as it was. My wife could not help commenting, "It is nice to be home!" Home! This short word triggered a long fit of sobbing. I could hardly suppress the tears myself, while my wife was still shaking an hour later when we left for our meeting with Director Matsumura. She did not suspect that a few minutes earlier I had received a sad letter from home informing us about her mother's grave illness. Who knows, there really might be some truth to telepathy.

We did not find the Director in his home. He left for Kyushu on important family business with the same steamer that brought us to Mororan. To be honest, this was an unpleasant surprise and I did not feel like spending more time in Yeso anymore. I was not going to be able to make any purchases, and what I have seen so far was enough for a preliminary orientation.

Nevertheless, we were shown the college. This modern school boasts a total of 300 some students. It also manages a beautiful orchard, farm lands, animal stock, all in very different fashion from what can be seen in other parts of Japan. Its objective is to assist in the colonization of the island, partly using its experience, partly by training skilled farmers.

35 years ago the population of Yeso was under 150 thousand but today it is already a million. The increase is due to settlers and volunteer immigrants. The three main Japanese islands are only partially livable and cannot support the sudden boom of population. Masses of people emigrate every year and part of these people is lost for the nation. The government has made every effort to keep the surplus population at home. Initially it gave them free land, built them houses, brought in cattle and horses under exceptionally favorable conditions. These efforts were not very successful because the unusually cold climate scared everyone away and even some of the earlier settlers have migrated back to their old villages.

Then the government tried military colonization and this was more successful. These settlers are army personnel obliged to participate in training once a year. The government provides them with the things necessary for farming, and also builds their houses. In the past, investors have bought large territories and they are selling these now at cheap prices, while still making a good profit. Today the land along the

railway is quite densely populated and the primeval forests have suffered considerably. As a general custom, settlers burn the forest because although the trees are large and yield high quality timber, the lack of roads and the expensive work force make regular forestry impracticable. Cruel as it is, burning the forest is much cheaper. During my stay in Japan a large consortium was forming with the aim of utilizing the wood resources of Hokkaido. This was a company with enormous capital but perhaps the war has put an end to this, like it was the case with many other things.

The islands of Japan have never been enough for the nation. They have always needed land, as they do today. The island of Formosa which they received as a compensation after the war with China brought some relief but did not end the problem. Undoubtedly, the subtropical Formosa (or Taiwan, as the Japanese call it) is truly a precious jewel in terms of its natural resources and products, but the climate is unhealthy and part of the first wave of Japanese migrants died, while the rest fell ill and moved back home. Most outsiders are attacked and killed by malaria. The Japanese government spared no effort in bettering these conditions and managed to effect some changes. The mortality rate has decreased and once again the number of immigrants is growing. Today there are about 50-60.000 Japanese in Formosa. Another problem beside the bad climate is that Japanese farmers do not come here because they do not receive free land, and they cannot compete with the Chinese farmers who have lived here for centuries and are familiar with the climatic changes. The majority of immigrants are industrialists, traders and office clerks.

An hour and half train ride from Sapporo brings us to the town of Otaru located by the seaside. This little town is most likely to play an increasingly important role in the future. Nearby there is a cuneiform-like rock inscription on a cliff, the origin of which is a mystery to everyone. To this day, nobody has been able to decipher it. I brought back with me a life size, authentic copy of this interesting inscription and anyone can examine it at the Ethnographic Section of the National Museum.

We began our journey back to Tokyo but this time not by train. A small Japanese steamer was leaving Otaru for Niigata and, after a short hesitation, we decided to take this boat and proceed towards Tokyo from the center of the main island.

We left the interesting Ainu. I was clear in my mind that the next spring I would be able to come up here again and spend a few weeks among them. The plan, however, did not come to completion. The war broke out and although I was in possession of a government-issued passport, by the time I arrived in Aomori, they stopped passenger traffic between the two islands. The reason for this was that a few ships from the Vladivostok fleet appeared on the western waters and sank a fishing boat.

The Ainu have no writing system. Accordingly, they do not remember their history, and only a few mythical legends passed down through oral tradition. Nevertheless, these stories at least partially preserved the memory of their original greatness and power. Japanese historiography is somewhat more knowledgeable about them but most of the accounts are fragmentary and inconsistent.

What we can ascertain is that this tribe of 17.000 souls controlled the Japanese islands before the arrival of the Japanese. In all probability, they were also the original inhabitants here.

An Ainu myth also talks about another people, called the Koropkoguru, who supposed to have inhabited the islands before the Ainu. According to this myth, there was a tribe living in the woods, the people of which were so small that a hundred of them could find shelter from rain under a leaf of a burdock-like plant. These were friendly and good willing people who lived on good terms with the Ainu. They used to come to their houses and asked for fire, salt and other small things, exchanging them for wild berries and mushrooms, etc. Because they were very shy, they never entered the houses, only handed in the things they brought through the window, and when the Ainu looked out the window, they immediately ran away. Once an Ainu, driven by curiosity, reached out the window and grabbed one of these small people and lifted her into the room. The rest of them ran away amidst terrible clamor. The captured dwarf was a pretty little woman who had a beautiful blue tattoo around her lips. This is why the Ainu women still tattoo themselves in a similar fashion. From this time on, the little people completely disappeared and nobody has seen them anymore.

This myth is historically inaccurate. The bones of stone age humans found in Japan are anthropologically identical with the modern Ainu, which proves beyond doubt that they were the original inhabitants of the islands. There has been a considerable debate about racial identity of the Ainu. Some believe that they are Mongoloid, others identify them as Caucasians. The most likely theory is that, together with the Kamchadals and Koryaks, they used to belong to an extinct people which was pushed out of the Asian continent by the Mongolians to the Amur region and from there further on to the northeastern islands.

The Japanese have fought a deadly war with them for centuries and in this fight the Japanese were not always successful. However, little by little they pushed them northwards and a thousand years ago the Ainu were driven off the main island to Yeso, the Kurill Islands and the southern part of Sakhalin. These were most likely extremely bloody battles. Despite their advanced culture and weaponry, the physically smaller and weaker Japanese were sometimes defeated by these tough and strong people. About 30% of Japan's place names today still preserve the old Ainu names, not only on the main island but also in Kyushu and Shikoku.

The Ainu as an ethnic group are dying out. Civilization deprived them of their fishing and hunting habitat, and soon their changed living conditions, chronic inbreeding and uncontrollable drinking will wipe them off the face of the earth. Soon their memory will be preserved only in books and ethnographic collections.

The Japanese government is trying to protect them. Their lands can be neither sold, nor mortgaged. Schools are established in the villages – in the Teacher's College at Sapporo there is a second-grade Ainu student. According to his Japanese teacher he is a hard-working, talented boy, who might one day become the savior of his people. I am rather skeptical of this, since John Batchelor, the English missionary had spent most of his life among them and was able to achieve very few temporary results and only in the village he lived himself.

On the Island of Sakhalin (1914)

(Excerpt from the book *Wanderings among Manchu peoples*)

When I began my trip in the spring of 1914, His Excellency Minister Jankovits supplemented my travel expenses with the condition that I should first proceed to Sakhalin and acquire a collection for the Museum from the local Ainu tribes. I was also asked to gather, with the inclusion of other regions inhabited by the Ainu, enough linguistic material to make a distinction between the three Ainu dialects. Therefore, I rushed through Siberia and went to Japan where I was warmly greeted by old friends. At the time of my arrival, Japan's great empress Haruko just passed away. I stayed through the funeral and it shall remain an unforgettable event for me as both an ethnographer and a common tourist.

Yamaguchi Kotaro, Director of the foreign language school and my most loyal friend was extremely glad that this time I was going to be able to gather material from the Tungus tribes living on Sakhalin. He suggested to take along a student of his who just graduated with a degree in German language and who was very diligent, poor and modest. I was to have lots of difficulties with this student. He could hardly understand German and this caused constant misunderstandings. He never wanted to interpret when I was bargaining over prices during my purchases, claiming that it was a shameful thing to do. He had no physical endurance and once exhausted, he became morose and complained.

At Otaru, I visited the rock inscriptions to take photographs of them. Here he angrily confronted me saying that this was useless work since Professor Koganei has already had these drawn by a sketcher at the university and I had bought photographic reproductions of these myself from the town's photographer. I felt the need to verify the reproductions but by this I was hurting the national pride of the Japanese. For our trip to the north where no vegetable food was procurable I bought a small sack of pears that originally came from southern China. This is a sweet but extremely hard fruit, of the size of two fists. The Japanese eat it like this but Europeans wait until it ripens in about 3-5 weeks' time and becomes soft. From time to time my student took out a pear from the sack and ate it. I was not concerned with this, since there were plenty of them. When we arrived in Sakhalin and I felt like having something vegetarian, I asked him to bring me the sack. The sack was delivered but without a single one of those hard pears in it. I asked what happened and he told me that he threw them all into the sea because they turned soft and could not be eaten anymore.

On one occasion we went on an Ainu boat to an Ainu village 20 km away. The houses were all relatively new, since the inhabitants moved here during the Japanese rule, as the newcomers occupied their old village and turned it into a Japanese town. The poor Ainu were forced to flee and build a new village out of one of their fishing camps. In this village there was a man called Yamabe, who was the pride of the Ainu. When the Japanese led their expedition to the South Pole, they took

many Ainu dogs with them, and Yamabe traveled along to take care of the dogs. He encouraged me to visit his village. He said that I could buy lots of things for the museum there, and that he was going to tell the people what a museum was, since he had seen one in Australia.

I stayed in his village for five days because the sea became so stormy that we could not risk riding in one of those boats carved out of a single piece of wood. On the fifth day I hired some people and set off through the woods along the sea shore, trying to reach the Japanese harbor from where I was to continue my journey. I also bought a lot of valuable Ainu pearls and jewels. I put all these into my backpack. The wooden objects and clothes were carried by five other people. At first we waded through dry sea sand, sinking in shin deep. It was a hard hike, and I was exhausted after half an hour. It seemed that I was not going to be able to walk another kilometer. But then I saw how the small Ainu step kept moving forward relentlessly with huge bags on their back, and felt a sense of shame because in comparison with them I was a giant with bulging muscles. So my pride drove me forward, and I carried the heavy luggage through sand and forest, up and down the cliffs, until we arrived in the village of Tonnaichi.

The next day we took a trip to Shishka located at the mouth of the Poronai river. Beside the Ainu, the place was also inhabited by some Sakhalin Tungus. From my boat, at the mouth of the river I saw a village consisting of 10 tents. I visited the Orok village on the day of our arrival. Aydanuk was right. I am reasonably fluent in the Olcha dialect used along the Amur and when I addressed the people here in this language we understood each other quite well.

While staying in my Japanese hotel I was visited by a young Japanese trader who had been appointed by the Japanese government as the protector of the Oroks. Frankly speaking this simply meant that the local tribes had to buy everything they needed through this person, and had to sell everything to him. This is how an official appointment turned into business.

The protector was still sipping sweetened European tea in my room, when the judge of the Orok village arrived. He was bare-headed, in a flawless Franz-Joseph overcoat and trousers, but underneath it wearing a fish skin traditional coat instead of a shirt and fish skin boots on his feet. He had dressed up in this manner specifically for me. He also spoke good Russian so we did not need an interpreter. We agreed that I would visit them the next day and do some shopping on behalf of the museum.

When the next day we sat down in his tent, the protector of the Orok intruded on us and demanded that every transaction should be conducted through him. Unwillingly, I concurred. This brought about the following situation. I told what I wanted to my student in German. The student reiterated this in Japanese to the protector, and the protector, who could only speak Ainu, conveyed my message to a young Ainu-speaking Orok, who then translated this to the judge in his native tongue. This is how every single sentence went and came. It was already noon and I only managed to purchase three fish skin tents and a few items of clothes. The protector took every opportunity to disagree with the price I offered or requested,

and tried to make himself indispensable. I asked him three times in Japanese to stop bothering us but he pretended not to understand it. Then I told my student to stop him. They went into a long discussion. In the meantime, first using Russian, then Olcha, I came to an agreement with the judge regarding the price of all chosen items. So when my student told me that it is the protector's right and duty to do what he does, I also told them that we could go. Both my student and the protector were petrified. In response to their complaints, the village judge shouted at them in anger, "Leave us alone, we can communicate in two languages, we have no need for you and do not want you to pocket our profit."

The judge took me to four or five settlements, then he and a couple of his friends worked with me for days on compiling a handsome word list. I also recorded a few sample sentences for my grammar, although I was not successful in acquiring continuous texts from them. At this point I decided to trick them and told them how when I was a child the men used to go to the forest to cut wood. When they came home with the sledge loaded with wood, they would also had two bears laid atop the wood. Then I told them, "You know, when two of our men come across a bear, the bear simply has no chance against them. One of them attacks the bear and hits it with an ax. The bear then charges at him in fury, and this is when the other man hits him in the head with an ax from behind. The bear turns around to charge at this man but then the other one hits him from the back. This is how the beast is defeated." The Oroks got all excited and soon I had my texts. They recounted four or five bear stories in succession, and in each of these they were eager to show that they were no less brave than the men in Transylvania.

One day the judge brought me an Orok man with a blond mustache and blue eyes. He was half Russian but came from his relatives who lived far towards the inside of the island. His language was considerably different from the dialects I had heard so far, making me believe that his native tongue was Russian. But he could not speak a word of Russian. Just to be sure, I asked to speak with his father and yet another man from the same village. I noticed that their speech differed from the dialect I recorded during the previous few days and so I convinced them to go through the vocabulary I already recorded. They called themselves Uilta and came in town for only two days. What was I to do? I worked with them all night and the entire next day, for thirty-four hours straight, using a different man every three or four hours. But in the end I managed to record the dialect.

The mayor of Shishka, a Japanese gentleman, invited me to his residence and asked me to give a lecture to the intelligentsia who lived in his town. There were many officials and soldiers here who lived with no entertainment in this desolate place. This was a difficult task. My knowledge of Japanese was limited. Finally we came up with the solution that I would speak in German and my student would translate my words into Japanese. For nearly 48 hours we worked hard on translating my speech into Japanese, writing down each and every sentence. The school auditorium was packed with people. I spoke about the kindred relationship between Turanian people, and the audience was thrilled. There was a wild ovation and applause. My student was showered with questions and this otherwise mostly

tired and morose young man suddenly came alive, and there and then, in front of the audience, asked me to take him with me back to Europe so he may see and learn what there was to learn. From this moment on, he remained in a pleasant mood which led me to forget the many annoyances he had caused me. In a few days we parted and I only saw him again in 1921.

My conversation with the Sakhalin Tungus solved the mystery of two types of peoples who disappeared from the Amur region. We knew about the Jurchen from Chinese sources; their language and writing were introduced to the world, also based on Chinese books, by Professor Grube. Today in the village of TÜR located by the Amur there is a Russian church built atop a picturesque cliff. In this village I found two Olcha families who claimed to belong to the Jurjoan clan. The village is entirely Russian but there used to be a Chinese fortress where the church stands today. The ruins of the fortress are still traceable and I collected a number of ornamented pillar capitals. Today these can be found in the collection of the Vladivostok Museum because the Russian government did allow them to be shipped to Hungary. But the Museum also has a 130 cm stone obelisk which had been brought to the Museum from this cliff. Two sides of the stele bear a Chinese inscription, one side a Mongolian, and the forth an inscription in an unknown script.

When the Jurchen Chinese material were published, it turned out that these were written in the same script and language as the undeciphered writing on the obelisk. The inscription was made during the time when China was under Mongol rule. The Mongolian and Chinese inscriptions have long been deciphered, both of them containing the exact same text, and now it became clear that the third inscription was also identical. The Chinese emperor had erected this monument to mark the northernmost border of his empire. It says that his domain reached until this point and that he erected this stele in commemoration of this, carving inscriptions in three languages. The first two were Chinese as his country and Mongolian as his family. But the third inscription was in the language and script of the people who lived here, who possessed not only military power but also a high culture. The Jurchen people disappeared altogether, and it seems that the two families I found in TÜR at the Amur region were their last remains. Their language matched that of the other Olcha tribes who live by the Amur.

When I asked the local Tungus on Sakhalin whether they had any idea when and how they got to the island, they claimed to have retained the memory of this. According to their tradition, the Tungus tribes known under the name of Jurchen came to the island fleeing from the Chinese conquerors. This tradition is confirmed by the fact that the Tungus of Sakhalin call themselves Ulcha, whereas the Tungus of the lower Amur, who are called Olcha by modern researchers, are unaware of such appellation for themselves, and whenever I asked them about the whereabouts of the Olcha tribes, they always claimed that those lived on Sakhalin.

When I observed the dialectal changes among the Tungus tribes of Sakhalin, I also asked them about the reason for the differences. This is what I was told. Those who speak differently, came to the island recently. Just as their ancestors once fled from the Chinese, another group was chased away by the Russians.

Historical records confirm this flight. Prior to the Russian conquest, the Mangun and Negidalchi people lived at the Amgun river mouth. By the time the Russians arrived, one of the tribes had disappeared. Russian written sources repeatedly mention this fact, and a certain amount of research has been conducted regarding the fate of these people. My own data reveals that they moved to Sakhalin and today form part of the local Tungus tribes there. The material I collected on my trip supplies conclusive evidence that the languages spoken by the Ulcha of Sakhalin and the Olcha of the Amur region exhibit only minor dialectal differences.

While in Sakhalin, I met a Finnish zoologist by the name of Münsterleinen. He traveled there under the auspices of the Helsinki Academy to study bird migration. Needless to say, we became close friends. When he learnt the nature of my mission, we decided that he would accompany me on that part of my journey that ran around the Arctic Sea. Both of us sent a report back home saying that we would begin our joint cooperation before the end of the summer. But the war put an end to this. He went home and I was arrested. I am convinced that we could have brought back an unparalleled zoological material which would have surpassed the collection of any of the world's museums.

In one of the Orok villages there was an old female shaman with whom I soon became good friends, on account of the many shamanic chants I knew by heart. She showed me her idols and I showed her some of mine. As a token of our friendship, I gave her as a gift a small porcelain doll which she was very fond of. It was a tiny doll the size of a little finger, the kind of thing we give to children. The next day, when I returned to the village, the shamaness's tent was gone and the people were rather unfriendly towards me. It took a while before they told me that the spirit of the little doll I gave to the old woman had tortured her all night long, and in the end six men rowed far out to the sea and threw it in the water. In addition, the shamaness moved to the neighboring village. This is how superstitious these people are. Although this is nothing to be surprised about since, God knows, there are thousands of superstitions in our own great civilization.

On one occasion we were in the Tatar Strait, and the ice floating down from the north locked our small ship in the mouth of a little river. We were stranded for four days. Although the ice cleared away after a day and half, our ship could not come out of the river mouth. We had to unload part of the cargo so we could free it, and then load everything back again. This floating ice around Sakhalin is a great danger for ships which often perish here. Generally speaking these are old wooden vessels weighing only a few hundred tons and many of them are unsafe even without the ice. In addition, the fog at the southernmost top of Sakhalin can also be very dangerous.

We went for a few days to two Ainu villages, called Avta and Otsu. In both places I was successful in collecting rich ethnographic material. I also met a native Ainu priest and he came with me on my excursions for a few days. He urged me to visit Bishop Batchelor, the English apostle of the Ainu. He came to the island as a simple missionary and during the 30 years he lived here he converted the entire Ainu population to Christianity. However, their Christian faith is not much deeper

than that of the native tribes on the continent. They still retain all of their idols and superstitions.

The village of Otsu lies on the slopes of a living volcano. It has already been destroyed by the volcano many times but the inhabitants, despite their fear, always rebuild the village. Here I was received extremely kindly. The people were well off, they all spoke Japanese, and the younger ones were strongly Japanized. I was invited in by a young Ainu teacher whose parents were the richest people of the village. Once they learned that I was involved in ethnographic research, they gathered the villagers and organized a feast in a true Ainu tradition, lasting late into the night. This is when I saw how non-Christian these people were. Indeed, they ate, drank, made sacrifices and even danced the ancient way. The mother of the young teacher was a well-built woman of 40 who was unusually tall for an Ainu and had strikingly beautiful black eyes and a gently arched nose. At first, she sang a few songs accompanying herself on an Ainu string instrument, then she burst into dancing. Her vigorous dance reminded me of the old Hungarian *toborzó*. One by one the other women joined in, and eventually even the younger girls started dancing. The whole village gathered around. As for myself, I caught the Ainu woman and, to add the general jolly mood, attempted to synchronize their Ainu dance with our *czardash*. The effect was overwhelming. Everyone was rolling with laughter because, as it turned out, Ainu men never dance. Thus it was not the dance they found funny but the entire situation.

The next morning I decided to climb the volcano. I had read quite a few descriptions of it, as many visitors had gone up there before me. The old man the villagers recommended as a guide was not home at the time, and no one else would accompany me, no matter how hard I tried to persuade them. But my efforts were not entirely futile because I had the opportunity to make some unexpected observations. At around 10 am we had a small earthquake, and the smoke emanating from the mountain top increased. Everyone came out to the front of their house and began singing with raised arms. I perceived that this was some sort of prayer which they offered to the volcano god with hands raised in the air, moving those in a dance-like fashion. A few men had swords in their hands. According to the local belief, one of the swords had been spat out by the volcano, and now they held these up as part of the ceremony.

We left the village on the third day, amidst plenty of hugging and drinking, having to exchange kisses with nearly everyone who had a mustache. The Ainu men wear a thick black beard and mustache, while the women, not wanting to fall behind, have a thinner mustache tattooed above their lips. So this is how it is. It seems that not only our women like to imitate the men; just like back home they wear their hair short, here they wear tattooed mustaches. I wonder when this custom of tattooing will come into fashion among our women. On the other hand, an Ainu man would never shave his manly adornment to become more like a woman.

Southern Sakhalin is home to many Japanese settlers who try to live in a completely Japanese manner. Their houses, clothes are all purely Japanese and even though they continuously complain about the terrible winters, they still would not

alter the way they build their houses or wear more suitable clothes. The poor Ainu are being pushed out of the better places. In this respect the Japanese are no better than the Russians. Interestingly, the Japanese were quite successful in their farming attempts on both Southern Sakhalin and the island of Yeso. In Japan there are very few domestic animals. Because of the climate, European fruits either do not grow there or are completely tasteless. But on the island of Yeso apples and pears are just as delicious as back home. Fruits from Yeso are famous all over Japan.

Both Yeso and Sakhalin are rich in pasture land. Raising cattle has grown into a booming industry and today these regions supply half of Japan with butter. The College of Agriculture at Sapporo has a separate department specialized in livestock and food processing. The college played a vital role in establishing the large canned milk plant that supplies the whole of Japan, acting as a strong competition for the Americans. Indeed, over the past two decades it has become quite common for Japanese children to drink milk, and the positive effects of this can already be seen in the new generation.

On account of their hairiness and short stature, the Ainu differ from the people on the continent. The body of older Ainu men is entirely covered in hair, whereas continental men only grow facial hair when they reach full adulthood and even then this is rarely thick. The Ainu have intermixed with the peoples around them; their language is agglutinative, but their relationship to other ethnicities is still unclear. Bishop Batchelor explained to me that the names of all rivers and mountains in Siberia originate from the Ainu, who were the original inhabitants of the east coast but were pushed out to the islands by other tribes. The Japanese who came much later could defeat them only after extended fighting. The physical features of the population of northern Japan show a strong Ainu influence. These people are more energetic and handsome than the generally less attractive southern Japanese who come from a Malay race. Some observers go as far as claiming that the northerners are also superior in terms of their moral attitude, in contrast to the cunning and calculating people from the south.

The beliefs and customs of the Ainu are closely related to those of their continental neighbors. Finally it is worth noting that the Ainu believe that the original inhabitants of their present home were a small dwarf people called Koropkoguru. From them the Ainu inherited the customs of tattooing and building earth houses, some of which can still be seen today.