

1 FORTY YEARS AFTER THE PARIS COLLOQUIUM "SIBERIA 1582-1982:" THE ITELMENS' THORNY ROAD TO SURVIVAL

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Ten long years apart from relatives and friends in Kamchatka

I would like to stipulate first that I am primarily a social activist, and on two fronts: Germany and Russia. A few months ago, I enthusiastically agreed to write about my own experience over many years, and about projects carried out together with representatives of Itelmen and non-governmental organizations, scientists, and other concerned individuals in Russia, Germany and other countries. But the war affected me very strongly: I felt that I had turned into a broken chain, the beads of which scattered in all different directions. Every time I sorted out the materials for an article, I began to weep and then abandoned even the attempt to begin my article. Erich Kasten, with whom I've been working on projects together for more than 30 years, consoled me each time by saying that maybe I could write it for the next volume in his co-edited series. And thus, I decided to do so.

In May 1983, at the invitation of anthropologist and organizer Boris Chichlo, I took part in the International Colloquium "SIBERIA – 1582-1982" in Paris. My report was boldly titled "The truth about my people. The Itelmens in Kamchatka." It was published first in German (Zaotschnaja 1985), then later in French (Zaotschnaja 1999). My speech ended pessimistically: "... perhaps by the year 2000 there will be no Itelmen speaking their native language and preserving their own culture."

Let me explain briefly. In central Kamchatka Itelmen was not spoken anymore; only fragments of the language were preserved (Braslavets 1968, 1977). Yet still, until I was five years old, I heard Kamchadal spoken, when my father and his relatives communicated with each other.¹ But after two forced relocations within Kamchatka in the 1950s, my father found himself removed to a new village, separated from his brothers and sisters. He had no one to talk with in the Kamchadal language. We children had been passive bilingualists, understanding but not speaking Kamchadal, probably because adults used it when talking about their own topics. In the new place we were interested in the new life.

When I became an adult and left to see the "wide world" I began to think about who the Itelmens were and are. In 1970s together with my husband E. Nikolaev I traveled to the western coast of Kamchatka in search of speakers of the Itelmen lan-

1 Kamchadal is a local vernacular of Itelmen, spoken in the Kamchatka River valley by a population of Itelmen and Russian descent.

guage, which we found. However the State Security Committee (KGB) and the police forced us to leave these settlements on the first airplane or boat. In 1980 in Moscow, during a search of our apartment, they seized three handwritten dialects of the Itelmen language, collected by Benedict Dybovsky during his stay in Kamchatka from 1879 to 1883, and published in Krakow by his colleague Ignacy Radliński (1892), as well as microfilms, tape cassettes with recordings of samples of Itelmen speech and a home-produced language course for the Itelmen language that we had developed.

After the search, and shortly before the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow, we were deprived of our Soviet citizenship and expelled from the country. Once in Germany, we appealed to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In an Open Letter, published in German in the journal *Pogrom* (Zaotschnaja and Nikolaev 1981), we wrote:

In 1975 and 1977... we visited eight villages inhabited by Itelmens, with the aim of recording samples of spoken Itelmen on tape. ... On 15.1.1980, the KGB confiscated the recordings as slanderous and posing a threat to security... the damage is hard to overestimate. It was the destruction of not only our own labour, but also the labour of many Itelmens of the older generation...

Participating in the Paris Colloquium inspired me to tell the German public about the Itelmens because when I said I was from the Soviet Union, many people referred to me as a Kazakh. After my paper was published in the journal *Pogrom* of the *Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker* (Zaotschnaja 1985), I was invited to give papers, and students wrote master's theses based on these.²

Perestroika. The “wind of change”³ also touched the Itelmens of Kamchatka

After ten years of heartbreaking separation, I was finally allowed to visit my mother and relatives in Kamchatka in December 1990. After that, I spent my vacation there almost every year. From Kovran – the unofficial Itelmen capital – those Itelmen I knew responded, and new friends appeared. Judging by the newspapers, not only Itelmen, but also other Kamchatka residents began to put forward ideas to change the situation.

In 1991 I held in my hands a copy of the newspaper *Znamia Lenina* (Lenin's Banner) of 6 March,⁴ which was almost entirely devoted to preparation for the third con-

2 Brigitte Mielke, Bonn, 1994; Dorothee Wunder, Marburg, 1998; Ulf Meinel, Passau, 2005.

3 “Wind of Change” was the title of the song by N. Olev, music by M. Dunaevskii, in the Soviet film “Mary Poppins, Goodbye,” 1984. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gxs2hh68I4>.) [accessed 29.01.2025]

4 The Socio-Political Newspaper of the Tigil'skii rayon of the Kamchatka Oblast “*Znamia Lenina*,” No. 19 (4629), Wednesday, 6 March 1991.

ference of the Council for the Revial of the Culture of the Itelmen People "Tkhsanom," under the general heading "Let's Not Let the Hearth of Itelmen Revival Die Out." In one of the articles, titled "There is No Other Way," Oleg Zaporotskii, the chairman of the Kovran Village Council, provided statistics on the living conditions of Itelmens in villages on the west coast of Kamchatka, and gave a short historical review of the formation, or rather non-viability, of administrative formations in Tigil'skii rayon since 1927. Zaporotskii also wrote:

The bread of the Itelmen was fish. The closure of villages (Sopochnoe, Moroshechnoye, Utkholok, Napana, etc.), which was generally aimed at improving the lives of Indigenous people, led to the destruction of the traditional economic way of life. ... Forced resettlement in the 50s and 60s led to relocation and, as a consequence, to the undermining of fish resources on the Kovran River.

...

Locals also lost their jobs in the fur trade. Ignoring the ethnic specificities of the small-numbered people led to a severe crisis.

...

The restoration and strengthening of the national self-government and statehood of the Itelmen. ... will not only contribute to the preservation of centuries of accumulated values, but will ultimately prevent the disappearance of the Itelmen people as an ethnos.

Klavdia Nikolaevna Khaloimova, Chairwoman of the Tkhsanom Council, wrote in the same newspaper in an article, "Only by Our Own Efforts Will We Save Our Future":

... a mortal wound has been inflicted on the nature of the North, of which we ourselves are a part. Advocating for a cardinal revision of the principles of industrial development of the territory that requires our participation, we demand legal priority be given to traditional nature management. ... It is very important not to ignore the language problem. In the program of the Council for the Revial of Culture "Tkhsanom" there are 5 points addressing the function of education of our children, on the revival of the Itelmen language. ... The language can be revived through regular classes with children in kindergarten, school, local radio programs, publications in local and regional newspapers. ... Attempts have been made, but they remain attempts. The main reason is that there is no family and economic base, no conversational situation when our native Itelmen language would be simply obligatory.

Long before that, since 1985, Khaloimova, a native speaker of the Itelmen language, and junior researcher in the Department of Schools of the Peoples of the Far North, and Alexander Pavlovich Volodin, doctor of philological sciences, had been developing an alphabet of the Itelmen language based on the Cyrillic alphabet. Having traversed a long scientific and bureaucratic path through the authorities, both in

Kamchatka and at the federal level, the alphabet of the Itelmen language was approved by the Kamchatka Oblast Council of People's Deputies on 5 June 1989. I remember how uncomfortable it was to read Itelmen words and sentences in A.P. Volodin's book, *The Itelmen Language*, and then how easy it became for the Itelmens in Kovran and other villages of Kamchatka to read the familiar native words in the *Itelmen-Russian and Russian-Itelmen Dictionary* (Volodin and Khaloimova 1989).

In 1992, Itelmens Victoria Petrasheva and Georgy Zaporotskii, and American scholar David Koester made the trek from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii to Kovran on foot. From that time Koester, along with graduate students Ingrid Summers and Jonathan Bobaljik, began to study Itelmen culture, language, life, and traditional activities in Kovran, Tigil, Khairiuzovo, and Sedanka.

The American group of scientists gave Kovran people a computer, thanks to which in 1994 they started to publish the newspaper *Кэвэ́лхатном* – *The Newspaper of the Itelmens*.⁵ The newspaper covered events in the village, in Kamchatka, and also in the Russian and international arenas. I would like to emphasize that through the newspaper people also began to look for relatives, friends, whose fate was not known after the closure of villages and resettlement. The second issue of the newspaper had information about the project “Ethnic Processes” (headed by Erich Kasten and Sergei Longinov), which, among other things, was supposed to “survey the local population of the village of Kovran ... with the aim of obtaining the necessary data for planning the future development of traditional sectors of the economy of an Itelmen ethno-territory.”⁶

The donated computer was also very popular with Kovran children. The children played computer games in their native language with great interest and enthusiasm.

As a gesture of gratitude, in 1996 during the holiday “Alkhalalalai” in Kovran, a performer presented the puppets “David” and “Ingrid”. David Koester's attentiveness and friendliness won over adults as well as children of the North. A seventy-three-year-old Itelmen woman, Alexandra Petrovna Krasnoyarova, composed and performed a dance dedicated to him under the title “David the Black-Browed is Coming...”: “David, David, my darling / I miss you / We'll always be together / Inseparable friends...”

As mentioned above, in the 1980-90s the residents of Kamchatka felt the wind of change and began to take bold steps. The question of the status of Kamchadals became acute. Who are they – are they Itelmen or a distinct ethnic group? If we remember the beginning of the 18th century: Stepan Petrovich Krasheninnikov in his book *Description of the Kamchatka Land* calls them Kamchadals (1949 [1755]). George Wilhelm Steller wrote in *From Kamchatka to America. Life and Customs of the Kamchadals in the 17th Century* (*Iz Kamchatki v Ameriku. Byt i nnavy kamchadalov v XVII v.*):

5 The first issue was called *Крэ́вэлхатнас*, but this seems to relate to the peculiarities of the Itelmen language.

6 *Кэвэ́лхатном* – The Newspaper of the Itelmens, № 2, 21 March 1994.

"The Cossacks called the natives Kamchadals, but although they are all inhabitants of the country, apparently of the same origin, they do not agree at all when they are designated by the common name of Kamchadals" (1927:13). Since then, the name "Kamchadal" has become established both in scientific circles and among the different tribes/clans of Itelmens.

If we take into account that the number of Itelmens was catastrophically decreasing – during the first 40 years of the conquest alone, according to Steller's assumptions, 12-15 times (Steller 2013 [1774]), and later also due to forced relocations of Itelmens from the western coast to the central and eastern parts of Kamchatka – it is quite understandable that they lost their language and economic activities distinctive to their former habitat. I wrote a short essay on this topic: "Georg Adolf Erman: excerpts from his travels in Kamchatka" (Zaotschnaja 2010). By the onset of Soviet power in Kamchatka, the process of assimilation of the Itelmens/Kamchadals was approaching, one could say, the last stage.

At the time of the Polar Household Census (1926-1927) there were about 8 thousand Kamchadals and old-timers in Kamchatka. This included 3800 Kamchadals and 899 Itelmens, who were singled out from the Kamchadals in the Tigil'skii *rayon*. ... in 1927 by the Resolution of the Okrug bureau of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks Kamchadals were excluded from the number of "native peoples", and in 1939 they were all registered as Russians. In 1991, the Kamchatka Oblast Council of People's Deputies tried to restore the ethnic rights of the Kamchadals, but the status of Kamchadals was never legalized (Murashko 1997: 3).

In the 9 April 2000 issue of the magazine *Aborigen Kamchatka* [*Aboriginals of Kamchatka*], we read: "KAMCHADALS AND ALUTORS ARE RECOGNIZED! At last, it has happened. The Government of Russia on 24 March 2000, by the Resolution № 255 "On the Unified List of Indigenous Numerically Small Peoples of the Russian Federation" approved the Kamchadals (*rayons* of the Kamchatka Oblast) and the Aliutors (in the Koryak Okrug)), among 45 peoples." But recognition did not mean that a Kamchadal person would immediately be issued the corresponding document by the institution dealing with nationality issues. Each family member had to obtain an excerpt from the Kamchatka Krai archives confirming that at least one of their ancestors belonged to the Kamchadals. With this certificate a person then went to court. Some people managed to quickly get the unfortunate document; for others it took months or years. For example, the daughter of one of my brothers won a lawsuit about three or four years ago. For all these procedures, people had to pay money.

It is known that the Itelmens/Kamchadals were fish-eaters. Despite the fact that the central and southern parts of Kamchatka were recognized as their territories of traditional habitation, Indigenous communities were not able to carry out their traditional economic activities there. In their appeal to the Governor of the Kamchatka Oblast, representatives of the Indigenous peoples wrote: "we cannot fish to feed ourselves, teach our children and grandchildren. ... You have left us without means of

subsistence. This is the ETHNOCIDE of small[-numbered] peoples” (Representatives 2000). Unfortunately, the problem of fishing for the Indigenous peoples of Kamchatka remains acute to this day. Fish is a resource that has been and is still being managed by Moscow. In 2024, Indigenous peoples in Kamchatka were outraged by the limitation of fishing season and reduction of salmon catch limits.

But let's go back to the now distant 1990s. Kamchatka had been a closed zone because of the Cold War. After its long isolation, there was a great hunger for literature on its history and language, because books on Itelmen topics could be found in many countries. During the years of my life in Munich, where there is a wonderful Bavarian library, and also thanks to acquaintances at the Paris Colloquium in 1983, I accumulated materials, copies of which I began to share with my fellow countrymen with great pleasure. I will name just one of them as an example. *Description of the Land of Kamchatka* by S. P. Krasheninnikov (1949, in Russian) is a voluminous 840-page tome.

In 1993, the Itelmens asked me to translate Benedikt Dybovsky's Itelmen dictionary from Polish to Russian. The dictionary recorded a dialect still spoken on the west coast of Kamchatka (Dybovsky 1998). It took me five years to complete this work, as I could attend to it only before or after an eight-hour working day. In addition, I was raising a child alone. Finally, in 1998, as a tribute to their countryman, the Poles published all three dialects of the dictionary, although with a lot of errors (due to technical reasons). Thanks to the dictionary, Itelmens rediscovered forgotten words, the most important of them greetings: тхууэн (*tkhuuen* – hello) and токэльч (*tokel'ch* – how are you?).

In 1995, by decision of the Kamchatka Oblast Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, a newspaper was created to cover and discuss the problems of the Indigenous peoples of Kamchatka. In June 1995, Valentina Ivanovna Uspenskaia (1941-2004) assumed the duties of editor-in-chief of the newspaper, *Aborigen Kamchatki* [Aboriginal of Kamchatka].⁷

In the first issue the editorial board promised to cover the problems of the Indigenous people of Kamchatka, to impart information about the culture and art of northern peoples, to provide reference materials, statistics, etc. Later, the newspaper also published pages in Itelmen, Koryak, and Even languages. Valentina Ivanovna asked me to send materials on various topics: about G.W. Steller, about Indigenous peoples discussing their rights in the UN (Geneva), about struggles against the development and use of uranium, etc.

Thanks to the fact that Kamchatka was also opened to scientists from North America and Germany, who had a special approach of communicating with the people being researched, the Itelmens in remote villages could show and tell these scientists about their life, culture, and language, and in turn, learn from these foreigners about

7 “October 2021 would have marked the 80th anniversary of the birth of Valentina Ivanovna Uspenskaia (Bekkereva),” the first editor of the newspaper *Aborigen Kamchatki*. <https://indigenous-russia.com/archives/35415>. [accessed 29.01.2025]

their own history, which they were not taught in schools. A deeper acquaintance with Georg Wilhelm Steller's materials made an impression on the Itelmens when in 1996 Erich Kasten organized a large delegation of Itelmens to come to Halle (Saale) Germany.⁸ This seems to have reinforced their decision to refuse to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Kamchatka's annexation to Russia in 1997 (Fig. 1).

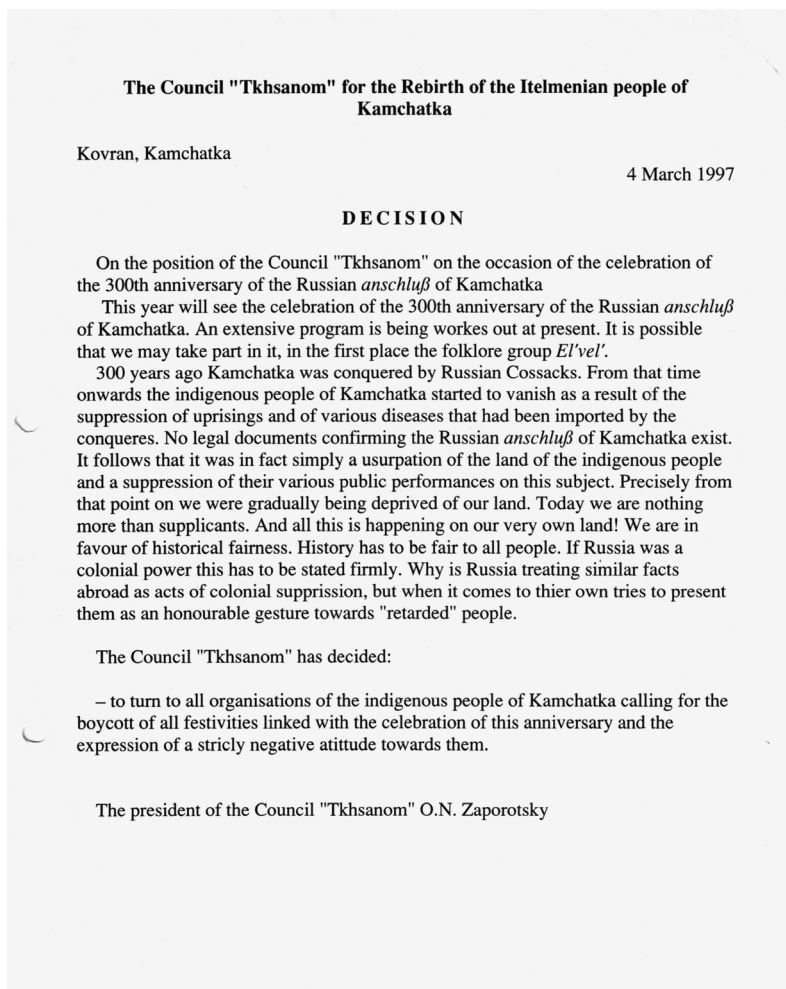


Fig. 1 Decision 5: On the position of the Council for the Revival of the Culture of the Itelman People "Tkhsanom" toward the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the annexation of Kamchatka to Russia (1997).

8 See the tour of the ensemble *El'vel'*: <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/gastspielreise-des-ensembles-el-vel/en>. [accessed 29.01.2025]

Then, in 1998, residents of Kovran village and neighboring settlements created the Territory of Traditional Nature Use to engage in fishing, hunting, gathering plants and berries (Zaporotskii and Murashko 2000). However in 2001, the new governor of the Koryak Autonomous Okrug, formerly a geologist, canceled the territory (Murashko 2001). The Itelmen sought restoration of the territory through the courts, even reaching the European Court of Human Rights, but failed in all instances.

Traditional fishing revival project

In March 2000, "Tkhsanom" asked me to help in finding funding for the "Project for the revival of traditional fishing": "... It is dangerous to go out on boats even in the river ... one has to wait for years for financial assistance from the state. ... [Tkhsanom] is trying to find any source of funding to improve the economic life of Indigenous peoples..." We from the Munich Regional Group of the *Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker* actively joined the search. We contacted various organizations, and went on trips, giving reports in Germany, South Tyrolia and Austria. We eventually found funding. We were very pleased that the Itelmen youth actively joined in bringing material from Central Kamchatka to Kovran and building boats (Fig. 3).

Финансирование для проекта Лодки традиционного речного и морского лова найдено. Из: Nachrichten für Freunde, Förderer und Mitglieder der GfBV, 2003

Bootsbau bei den Itelmenen kann beginnen

„Danke für Ihr Verständnis! Danke für ihre Hilfe! Danke für Ihre Unterstützung!“ Und: „Uns ist so vieles verloren gegangen. Aber wenn jemand bereit ist, uns zu helfen, dann wollen auch wir aktiv daran arbeiten, unsere Wirtschafts Traditionen zu erhalten.“
Bewegende Dankesworte der Einwohner des Itelmenendorfes Kovran und des Präsidenten der regionalen NGO „Der Rat der Itelmenen Tchsanom“ an die Niedersächsische Lotto-stiftung. Sie hat unseren Projektantrag bewilligt, den unser Vorstandsmitglied Heiko Wächter für dieses kleine Ureinwohnervolk auf Kamtschatka gestellt hatte. Jetzt wird der Bau der Fische-



Verrottetes Fischerboot der Itelmenen
Foto: Tjan Zaotschnaja



ЛОДКИ ДЛЯ ИТЕЛЬМЕНОВ
Спасибо за поддержку Bingo-лотереи
и Ассоциации по защите
репрессированных народов

Dank der Itelmenen an Bingo-Lotto
und die GfBV

reifflottille von zehn Booten großzügig gefördert. Zurzeit wird das Bauholz zur Werft transportiert, wo die Boote von Einheimischen gebaut werden. Damit sind die Itelmenen der Verwirklichung ihres Traumes, mit einer Fischereikooperative für den Lachsfang wieder eigenständig zu werden, einen großen Schritt näher gekommen.

Auch von der Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker ein herzliches
Dankeschön für die Unterstützung des Projekts an BINGO LOTTO

NIEDERSÄCHSISCHE
LOTTOSTIFTUNG

Projektförderung
durch Erträge aus



Fig. 2 "Für bedrohte Völker. Sichern wir ihnen eine Zukunft!" Nr. 2, April 2004, p. 4



Fig. 3 Finished boats. Kovran, 2004.

Having built 11 boats, the Itelmens hoped to catch smelt among other things. However, businessmen from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii, smelling big money from the proceeds of this fish, proceeded to lease the Kovran River. Thus, the Itelmens had to be satisfied with only a small part of it, for personal use and folklore festivals.⁹ But the Itelmens are cheerful, optimistic people, as G.W. Steller noted in the 18th century. Every autumn they still organize the Itelmen holiday *Alkhalalalai*, but now it lasts only one day, with performances, dancing and, maybe, fish soup (*ukha*) for the participants.

Project for the revitalization and development of the Itelmen language

In 2008, a conference on the state of the languages of the Indigenous peoples of Kamchatka was held in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii. There, after 33 years of being separated, I met with Galina Afanasyevna Zaporotskaia, a native speaker and teacher of the Itelmen language at the Palana Pedagogical College.¹⁰ She complained that there

9 It is written beautifully: "Smelt is a fish, what a smell!" <https://www2.tigil.ru/2820-koryushka-rybka-zapakh-kakoj> [accessed 29.01.2025]. But I know from many years of experience that the Itelmens and other Indigenous peoples, not only in Kamchatka, "have only one song left."

10 In 1975, E. Nikolaev and I visited her in Palana. Galina Afanasevna was happy to speak her native language, since the Itelmen language was not taught at that time.

were practically no students studying the Itelmen language at the college in the town of Palana in the Koryak Autonomous Okrug (which has become part of Kamchatka Krai in 2007). Firstly, it was easier for students to go to Petropavlovsk than to Palana, and secondly, the financial situation in the Okrug was such that they could not even be provided with food during their studies.

Having the sad experience of studying the Itelmen language on my own, it did not take me long to inspire like-minded people in the organization ‘Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker,’ which back in 1981 published an Open Letter written by Evgenii Nikolaev and myself to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (noted above, p. 22). The Kulturstiftung Sibirien (Foundation for Siberian Cultures, which I want to refer to in particular – see below), the organization *pro Sibiria e.V.*, and many individuals also contributed to the project. The project paid for the travel and expenses of Victor V. Ryzhkov, associate professor of the Itelmen language at the Herzen Pedagogical University in St. Petersburg, and the publication of a phrasebook in Itelmen and Russian, *KHBBЭЧУ* (brook) (Fig. 4) (Ryzhkov 2012).

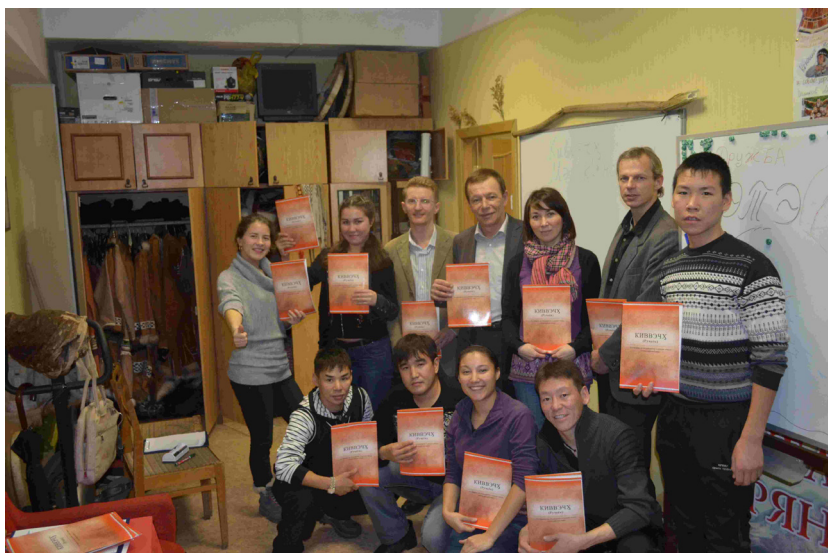


Fig. 4 Youth ensemble *Koritev*, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii, holding V. Ryzhkov's Itelmen phrasebook, 2012.

As noted above, Khaloimova and Volodin developed an alphabet for the Itelmen language based on the Cyrillic alphabet. In addition to a dictionary, they prepared and published textbooks for elementary school children. But the Itelmens lacked materials in their native language about everyday life and traditional culture. They turned to the scholar Erich Kasten for help. Residents of the village of Kovran, as well as activists of the club “Kamchadals” from the village of Milkovo in Central Kamchatka were

actively involved in the preparation in the first textbook, where particular words for special situations were recorded. At the “Alkhalalalai” festival in 1997 in Kovran there was a presentation of the book, *Historical and Ethnographic Teaching Materials for the Itelmen Language* (Fig. 5), which was in subsequent years supplemented and reprinted (Khaloimova et al. 2012 [1997]). Gradually further collected audio and video materials were digitized and published in more books and on the Kulturstiftung Sibirien Foundation website.¹¹



Fig. 5 Presentation of the first edition of the book *Historical and ethnographic teaching materials for the Itelmen language* at the Alchalalalai festival in Kovran, 1997.

In June 2012, an “Itelmen language week” was held in the village of Malki. Three women from Munich, who actively supported the Project, attended. It was important for us to meet those involved in the revival, preservation and development of the Itelmen language. Since the 1990s the Itelmen language has been studied on a voluntary basis in Petropavlovsk, Elizovo and other settlements of Kamchatka, by both Itelmens and representatives of other nationalities. Since 2008, negotiations have been underway on teaching Itelmen language and culture at the Kamchatka Pedagogical College and at the Vitus Bering Kamchatka State University. During my short trips to Kamchatka I was involved in these negotiations. On 23 July 2024 good news arrived:

¹¹ <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/itelmenische-sprache/en> [accessed 29.01.2025]

This year, the Master's program at Vitus Bering Kamchatka State University this year opens training in 'Ethnolinguistics'. Ten people will be able to receive a degree with this special focus. ... The training program includes the Koryak language and its dialects, Itelmen, Even ... Chukchi and others.¹²

Therefore, I retract my words "... perhaps by the year 2000 there will be no Itelmen speaking their native language, preserving their own culture", which I spoke in 1983 at the Paris colloquium on Siberia.

But I can only rejoice for them from afar, because I haven't traveled to Kamchatka since 2014. On that last trip, I found it more than strange that some of those with whom we had worked for many years, not only on the projects mentioned above, but on others as well, suddenly acted as if they didn't know me. If anyone greeted me, it was with a small gesture or a nod from afar. Only before leaving did my closest friends tell me that after I left Kamchatka they would be contacted by the FSB and asked about what we had discussed. Of course, I remembered the 1970s: even then, KGB representatives questioned acquaintances and relatives about what my husband and I had talked to them about. But I was not the initiator of breaking ties. The war started by Russia against Ukraine in 2022 has had a great influence on maintaining or not maintaining ties. Moreover, my circle of friends, mostly consisting of people of my generation or a little younger, includes many who have left this world.

I hope that the students of Ethnolinguistics will not only learn words and grammar, but also will study traditional cultures. Their parents and their grandparents, who actively participated in projects to preserve and develop their native languages, were at the same time recovering traditional knowledge. Thanks to the help of scholars and enthusiasts, is now documented in books, disks, and the Internet.

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Figures

- 1 Decision 5: On the position of The Council for the Revial of the Culture of the Itelmen People “Tkhsanom” toward the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the annexation of Kamchatka to Russia, 1997.
- 2 “Für bedrohte Völker. Sichern wir ihnen eine Zukunft!” Nachrichten für Freunde, Förderer und Mitgliedfer der GfbV Nr. 2, April 2004, p. 4.
- 3 Finished boats, Kovran. Photo: Oleg Zaporotskii, 2004.
- 4 Youth ensemble *Koritev*. Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskii. Photo: Albina Morilova, 2012.
- 5 Presentation of the first edition of the book *Historical and Ethnographic Teaching Materials for the Itelmen Language* at the Alchalalalai festival in Kovran. Photo: Erich Kasten, 1997.