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2 FROM POLITICAL EXILE TO OUTSTANDING ETHNOLOGIST FOR NORTHEASTERN SIBERIA: JOCHELSON AS SELF-TAUGHT FIELDWORKER DURING HIS FIRST SIBIRIAKOV EXPEDITION 1894–1897.

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The scientific exploration of the peoples and cultures of northeastern Siberia entered a new phase towards the end of the 19th century with Waldemar Jochelson. During the preceding 150 years, traveling scholars—mostly natural scientists of German or German-Baltic origin—had dedicated themselves to these tasks on behalf of the Russian authorities (Kasten 2013).[1] Jochelson, however, had a different background. First and foremost, his socio-critical convictions and his early career as a political activist distinguished him from most mainstream scientists of that time. Clearly, this had a considerable impact on his first encounters and acquaintances and his later research collaborations with indigenous people in these remote areas. Throughout his fieldwork he elaborated new methods of his own that, in some cases, gave direction to the emerging new discipline of Ethnology.

Due to intense experiences in extreme situations Jochelson's life took distinct turns: from an activist against social injustice to a political exile in Siberia, where he became interested in the indigenous peoples among whom he had to live. Then, many years later, he concluded his academic career in New York with his monumental opus in the form of significant monographs on the cultures of several peoples of northeastern Siberia. Throughout this time, he was substantially involved in the early shaping of Soviet ethnography.

Jochelson participated prominently in three major ethnographic expeditions in northeastern Siberia: the Sibiriakov Expedition (1894–1897), the Jesup North Pacific Expedition (1897–1902) and the Riabushinskii Expedition (1908–1911). The Jesup North Pacific Expedition under the direction of Franz Boas has attracted considerable recent international attention (Krupnik and Fitzhugh 2001). In these and following discourses Boas's potential influence on Jochelson's later field research and the elaboration of his published works was a substantive issue though probably at times somewhat overestimated (Kasten and Dürr 2016:27ff.). However, this view may be more qualified and rated differently if one considers Jochelson's earlier writings that have so far been less well known, as they were

1 See also the new editions of earlier monographs from the 19th century in the series *Bibliotheca Kamtschatica* at the Foundation for Siberian Cultures: http://www.siberian-studies.org/publications/bika_E.html

difficult to access. He wrote these articles immediately after his first fieldwork during the Sibiriakov Expedition, where main features of his unique and often innovative research approach were already visible. This study will therefore focus on Jochelson's earlier works that were initially published not only in Russian but also in German language. As Jochelson's life and complete works have already been extensively presented and discussed elsewhere,[2] only a brief biographical outline will be given here. In the following, the period of his early ethnographic work during the Sibiriakov Expedition will be investigated and analyzed more closely with regard to his primal attitudes and approaches from which he gradually developed his distinct methodology.

Biographical outline

Waldemar Jochelson [Vladimir Il'ich Iokhel'son] was born in Wilna (Vilnius) in 1855, where he grew up in a Jewish-orthodox family. Due to his revolutionary activities (see next paragraph), he was arrested in 1885 and first served a prison sentence at the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg. Thereafter he was condemned to ten years in exile in northeastern Siberia.

During his years in exile he became acquainted with Waldemar Bogoras, who was sent there for the same political reasons. Both were obviously looking for intellectual challenges, and they discovered their common interest in ethnography. This also dovetailed with their unbroken revolutionary calling "to go into the people", and a long-lasting friendship evolved. Thus, Jochelson and Bogoras gratefully accepted the invitation, sanctioned by the authorities, to participate in the Sibiriakov Expedition, whose purpose it was to conduct ethnographic-historical research in this region. The experiences ensuing from this work clearly gave rise to some noticeable turns or shifting ambitions in Jochelson's later life, in that an academic career became a possibility, and his former political activities faded into the background.

After his return to St. Petersburg in 1898, Jochelson went first to Switzerland to finish his studies there. But shortly afterwards a new opportunity arose which tied in with his ethnographic interests and gave him the prospect of expanding them. For Franz Boas had invited him—at the recommendation of Friedrich Wilhelm Radloff, the director of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography in St. Petersburg—to participate in the Jesup North Pacific Expedition. During the years 1900 to 1902 of the expedition, Jochelson and his wife Dina Brodskaia worked with the Koryak on the northern coast of the Okhotsk Sea and on the Taigonos Peninsula. On the way back he sojourned for some time with the Yukaghir near Verkhnekolymsk, who he knew from earlier, lengthy visits.

2 See Winterschladen 2016; Knüppel 2013; Brandišauskas 2009; Vakhtin 2001. The first two paragraphs will summarize and draw mostly on these earlier works.

After the expedition, Jochelson secured with Boas's support a temporary appointment at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, where he began to work up most of his research materials. The Jochelson couple also stayed for some time in Zurich, London and Berlin, where Waldemar Jochelson took part in various international congresses. Subsequently, he worked for a short time at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology in St. Petersburg. Eventually, in 1908, Jochelson was appointed director of the ethnological branch of another wide-ranging expedition. During the years 1908 to 1911 of this expedition, named after Russian entrepreneur and sponsor of the expedition Fedor Pavlovich Riabushinskii and organized by the Imperial Russian Geographical society, Jochelson investigated together with his wife and other collaborators the archaeology, culture, and language of the Aleut and the Itelmen on Kamchatka. At the same time, other members of the expedition devoted themselves independently to research in natural science.

After their return to St. Petersburg, the Jochelsons again found themselves in a precarious professional and economic situation (see this volume, 66f.) and the decided in 1922 to move and settle in New York once and for all. There again, Boas helped them to establish themselves by means of minor appointments at the American Museum of Natural History. Before his death in 1937, Jochelson managed to publish most of his research materials, though some of them came out only after his death. All of them still rank among the most significant ethnographies of this region.

Socio-critical ideas and revolutionary activities

The rabbinic seminary that Jochelson attended in Vilnius was not just an educational institution for Jewish clergymen. It was there that in his youth Jochelson came into contact with the socio-critical and revolutionary thinking that fascinated him. After initial attempts by the government to close this facility, resistance to the Russian authorities arose there. From these student circles emerged—with recourse to the writings of philosophers und publicists such as Nikolai Chernyshevskii, Petr Lavrov and Aleksandr Gertsen—the *Narodnik* ("Friend of the People") movement, a forerunner of later organizations such as *Zemlia i Volia* ("Land and Freedom") and *Narodnaia Volia* ("The Will of the People") that Jochelson joined. Members of the rabbinic seminary also offered "continued political education" to the public at large and disseminated socio-critical circulars of their own.

After attracting the attention of the secret police in 1875, Jochelson managed to escape arrest and went to Berlin, where he worked as a lathe operator in an engineering factory. Before then he had acquired shoemaking skills—as part of his endeavor to see things from the laborers' perspective. At the same time he attended open lectures and other events by social democratic organizations to upgrade his education in philosophy and political economy. On those occasions he met with distinguished

social democrats such as Eduard Bernstein and Karl Johann Kautsky. Already at that time, Jochelson was publishing his first articles in Berlin on the situation in Russia for *Vorwärts* and *The Social Democrat,* journals of the social democratic party, as well as for a Russian language journal released in London.

In 1876, Jochelson traveled illegally to Russia, where for some years he pursued political agitation in the Ukraine. Later, revolutionary missions took him back and forth between Moscow and St. Petersburg. He helped with the manufacture of fake passports and other documents, and organized the transport of illegal writings abroad. In the meantime, Jochelson again traveled to Kiev to learn more about agriculture and to study land surveying. Acting on his maxim "to go into the people" he attempted to better understand even this group of people—the peasants who had to suffer in particular under the rule of the Czar—while staying with them most of the time for agitation purposes. Aside from all this, there is the rumor that Jochelson also worked in a dynamite factory to acquire—the same as other activists—knowledge of the manufacture of explosives. As dynamite was later found in the apartment that the revolutionary organization had provided him, he would have been within the neighborhood of the terrorists who were responsible for the assassinations of the Head of the Secret Police N.V. Menzentsov (1878) and Czar Alexander II (1881). However, direct involvement by Jochelson in these events could never be proven, as he left the country again in 1880.

Jochelson then sojourned in Switzerland, where he taught children of wealthy Russian families at a school on Lake Geneva while at the same time studying social sciences at the University of Bern.[3] Aside from that he assisted in editorial work for various Russian propaganda newsletters. At that time, Jochelson also authored articles for the journal *Der Sozialdemokrat* (The Social Democrat), in which he reported on the trials in Russia of the organizers of the successful assassination of Alexander II on March 1, 1881. As Jochelson was in some cases well known to the defendants, he was able to write thoroughly and authentically about their history (Jochelson 1881; see also Jochelson 2017:35–38). His clearly expressed sympathy for the convicted revolutionaries probably led to his being arrested once more at the Russian border when he tried to enter the country again in 1885. The authorities were obviously informed beforehand and found illegal writings with him. He managed to escape through the window of the guardhouse, but was captured again only a short time later and brought to St. Petersburg.

He spent the first two years of his prison term at the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg. Then he was condemned to ten years in exile and sent to remote places

3 In the short curriculum vitae that he compiled in the USA, Jochelson mentioned that he had studied philosophy, which corresponded at that time to the human sciences with its broad curriculum in German-speaking countries. With regard to his teachers at the University of Bern, who could have had an impact on Jochelson's later academic interests, see Krumholz and Winterschladen (2016:230ff.).

in northeastern Siberia, where he again met with many former fellow campaigners of the revolutionary movement. Jochelson went first to Olekminsk via Tobolsk. After the local police found something suspicious in his correspondence he was sent to even more outlying locations. As Bogoras reported, Jochelson had mentioned in the particular letter that the exiles should pay particular attention to the indigenous people of these northern territories. It is said that the mocking government officials consequently had sent Jochelson to the Kolyma region; not to Srednekolymsk, where exiles had already established a small community of their own, but to even more remote places, where living conditions were much more difficult (Shavrov 1935:7).

With the help of the local population Jochelson acquired skills in fishing and hunting to survive in the wilderness. But in spite of surveillance by the authorities, the exiles traveled freely to nearby trade fairs. During this time—1894 and 1895—Jochelson was able to publish notes of his impressions (Jochelson 1894; 1895). In these works he discussed at length the question of agriculture in Yakutia, while trying to show new prospects for its possible further development in even such regions of the far north. In appreciation, he received the silver medal from the Imperial Russian Geographic Society in 1895 (Slobodin 2005:97).

The fact that Jochelson had already gained firsthand knowledge of the Yakut, Even, and probably also the Yukaghir languages, underlines his interest in and desire to empathize with the difficult living conditions of the indigenous people, whose everyday life practices and worldviews he sought to better understand by means of their own narratives. Thus, Jochelson could hardly have been better qualified for the upcoming opportunity to participate in the Sibiriakov Expedition, which turned out to be a particularly lucky happenstance, not only for him but also for science.

The Sibiriakov Expedition

The East Siberian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society in Irkutsk had organized the Yakut Historical Ethnographical Expedition for the years 1894–1897,[4] during which Jochelson had to conduct fieldwork in the area along the Kolyma River. The expedition was later named after its sponsor, Innokentii M. Sibiriakov, a businessman and philanthropist from Irkutsk whose family had made their fortune in gold mines.[5] Among other things, Sibiriakov was interested in the impact of gold

4 Often, 1894–1896 is given as the time period for the expedition, whereas Jochelson had—according to his field diary (cf. Gurvich 1963:249–251)—conducted his fieldwork from 1895–1897. Jochelson set off for the first of his altogether eight journeys on December 15, 1894 from Yakutsk. The last trip he made from January 15 to July 15, 1897 (Jochelson 1898b:10f.). One reason for the diverging dates could be that Jochelson and Bogoras carried out some census work directly after the expedition in the region while also making use of that time for further ethnographical investigations.

5 I.M. Sibiriakov was apparently not involved with these affairs, but as a member of the family

mining on the indigenous people. As a result, the expedition had practical development aims as well as scientific ones (Sirina 2007:91). Thus, the expedition followed the tradition of former ethnographic research in northeastern Siberia, by such scientists as the agronomist Johann Karl Ehrenfried Kegel (1841–1847) and the geologist and mining engineer Karl von Ditmar (1851–1855) on Kamchatka (Gülden 2011; Ditmar 2011a,b; Kasten 2013).

According to Dahlmann (2016:44), the composition of the 26-person research team alone marked the beginning of a new era in the scientific exploration of northeastern Siberia. The participants were no longer recruited from the "classical imperial military and scientific elites of Russia" (ibid.), but the team was formed by civil servants and intellectuals from the Yakut region, among them—with special permit of the government—mostly political exiles and "enemies of the state". Besides Jochelson and Bogoras, these were well-known ethnographers such as Eduard K. Pekarskii, Ivan I. Mainov, Sergei V. Iastremskii and Nikolai A. Vitashevskii. One of the two directors of the expedition, Dmitrii A. Klements, had served his term as an exile in the east Siberian town of Minusinsk. Klements and Jochelson had already gotten to know each other in Vilnius in 1875, whereupon they worked together for some years in the revolutionary movement. Jochelson wrote later that Klements had at that time "influenced the direction of my revolutionary activities, and 20 years later he recruited me as a participant for the Yakut expedition. By doing so he opened up the possibility of a scientific career to me" (Jochelson 1922:45).

These "enemies of the state" were now needed as an "intellectual resource" (Dahlmann 2016: 45), which—as a result of increasing scientific isolation—had been thinning out after the decay of the "transnational phase" of ethnographic research (Schweitzer 2013) that was characterized by collaborative international research. Furthermore, the Sibiriakov Expedition was a research initiative that originated in Irkutsk, the new and growing intellectual center of Siberia in the second half of the 19th century. The expedition was conceived of there by the East Siberian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, and was also regionally financed and organized. For this expedition one had to draw upon the existing intellectual potential of that region to which belonged above all well-educated political exiles.

Through the control of Andrei I. Popov, loyal imperial public servant, later vice-governor of the Yakut district and second director of the expedition, the authorities came to the understanding that they could risk this unusual association. At least, there was no known interference by the government, whereas later, during the Jesup North Pacific expedition, obstruction by the secret police was reported, which Jochelson attributed to his former political background, among other things (Jochelson 1903; see also Jochelson 2017:153–158).

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he held shares in the enterprise and dedicated himself more to charitable activities.

Fig. 1 Political exiles, 1900. Jochelson (to the right), presumably at Olekminsk [EK]. Image #11092, American Museum of Natural History Library.

For a long time, Jochelson's fragmentary publications on the results of the Sibiriakov Expedition in the form of articles for various journals received little notice, as outside Russia special attention was directed mostly to Jochelson's later monographs that were published as a result of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition (Jochelson 1908a; 1910–1926; 1933). In the Soviet Union, the journal *Sovetskaia Etnografiia* published an article for his 80th birthday in 1935, in which Shavrov (1925: 7–8) wrote about the organization and the course of the Sibiriakov Expedition. He emphasized that one of its main outcomes was that Jochelson had discovered "the communistic sharing of the kill and other rare characteristic traits of primitiveness" among the Yukaghir.

First comprehensive studies of Jochelson's Sibiriakov Expedition were authored by Gorokhov (1958; 1965), and were based on local archival materials. Gurvich (1963) directed our attention to Jochelson's field diaries in Russian archives and presented some of them in more detail.[6] For Jochelson's 150th birthday, Slobodin (2005) honored his academic merits in a substantial article in *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie*. An important discovery of his correspondence—that for a long time was believed to be lost —was made by Anna Sirina during her work at the State Archive of the Irkutsk District (*gosudarstvennyi archiv Irkutskoi oblasti*) in 2005–2006. This entails 18 letters by Jochelson and Bogoras (11 of them by Jochelson) that they sent from their expedition to the administration of the East Siberian Branch of the Imperial Rus-

6 These diaries will be published in the forthcoming volume by Kasten and Sirina (2019).

sian Geographical Society in Irkutsk, and which were published by Sirina (2007) and Sirina and Shinkovoi (2007).[7] Most of the unique photographs that Jochelson had taken during the expedition are now stored in the archives of the Regional Irkutsk museum of local history (see Manushkina 2019), at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology in St. Petersburg, and at the American Museum of Natural History in New York—where some of these photos were mistakenly attributed to the later Jesup North Pacific expedition.

For a comparative evaluation of Jochelson's earlier articles and later monographs, the above-mentioned diaries and letters shed much light on the way Jochelson, like Bogoras, first developed his fieldwork methods, more or less autodidactically, and eventually brought them to great mastery. From these sources it also becomes apparent how—in comparison to later expeditions—the successful realization of such fieldwork methods was dependent on the particular local conditions, which obviously turned out to be very beneficial for Jochelson in his work with the Yukaghir.

In his preliminary research report Jochelson emphasizes that he has taken two different kinds of notes during his trips. First, he noted comments regarding the given research questions. Second, under the rubric "travel notes" (*Putevye zametki*), his diaries contained besides travel routes spontaneous impressions and sentiments, or "what appeared simply interesting to him" (Jochelson 1898b:25). And especially the latter notes contain insightful information, not only about the country and the people, but above all also about Jochelson's personal perceptions and sentiments, and how he interacted with indigenous people.

First, Jochelson's main interest was directed towards the Yakut of the Kolymski district (Argounova-Low, *this volume*). Only during later trips, which took him to the Yasachnaia River via Verkhnekolymsk, did he become more intensely involved with the daily practices, languages and folklore of the Yukaghir (Miller, *this volume*). In his diary he notes that the Yukaghir—like the Evenk (Tungus) and Even (Lamut)[8] —follow similar ritualized rules during the sharing of the kill *nimat* (cf. Sirina 2012: 316–335), as also in social interaction between the sexes (Jochelson 2017:53–55; cf. Gurvich 1963:251).

The diary also reveals that Jochelson devoted much of his time to the study of the Yukaghir language by recording texts with their translations, as well as individual Yukaghir words. During his stay with the Tundra Yukaghir, Jochelson was also interested in their relations with the Chukchi, and which impact their reindeer herding had on the decline of reindeer hunting among the Yukaghir. Some of the Yukaghir

7 See also their comprehensive publication in Kasten and Sirina (2019).

8 Jochelson's use of the ethnonyms Tungus and Lamut is sometimes confusing, as both belong to the same tungusic language family. By "Tungus" Jochelson usually meant Evenk and by "Lamut" Even. But according to Anna Sirina (personal communication), he didn't always use these terms consistently, especially if these ethnonyms were used by others, for example by K.P. Patkanov.

subsequently switched to reindeer herding as well—which he does not mention in his official reports (Gurvich 1963:251). Jochelson describes in his diaries the course of the devastating pox epidemics from which the local people suffered, and questions why certain areas were spared. Furthermore, he notes how he and Bogoras developed methods to study the cultures and languages of various groups of people. However, the extent to which this turned out to be useful during the later Jesup North Pacific Expedition, as mentioned by Gurvich (1963:253), is questionable (see p. 69, *this volume*). A central point for Jochelson was the knowledge of indigenous languages:

> "Above all it became apparent that without a knowledge of the languages any ethnographic work is inconceivable, to which not only superficial observations of the daily routines belong." (Jochelson, in Gurvich 1963:252)

The organizational difficulties under which the expedition suffered are described by Sirina (2007:92). Obviously, the number of participants, named "excursionists" (ekskursanty), was too high. As these were in most cases political exiles, their status did not always clarify, if or to what places they had a permit to travel. With the early withdrawal of the important initiator and patron Sibiriakov, who retired in 1896 to the monastery Athos where he died in 1901, interest in the expedition soon faded. Apparently, strong leadership was missing, one which should have been committed to the further and well-structured elaboration of the results. No means were foreseen for publications, with the result that these came out only later—and if at all—in a dispersed way. Little attention was given by the leadership of the expedition to the whereabouts of important research materials, such as the valuable photographs, which are therefore today scattered over many different collections and not archived in any coherent form.

In particular the letters by Jochelson and Bogoras to the East Siberian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society in Irkutsk reveal obvious shortcomings in communication between the administration and the members of the expedition, which affected their work in the field considerably. In each letter there are complaints that money and needed equipment had not yet arrived, and that therefore certain trips could not be taken, while these had to be undertaken within the strict time constraints of the seasons. In one case, Jochelson had to procure a loan in the community to proceed with his trip (in Sirina 2007:95). It's also informative that Jochelson repeatedly—and often in vain—ordered special literature to further his study of ethnographic methods while he was already in the field (in Sirina and Shinkovoi 2007: 343f.). What obviously irritated Jochelson most was that many of the letters remained unanswered. Again and again he pointed out the uncertainties of mail delivery, reaching Srednekolymsk from Yakutsk only three times a year. Climate and weather conditions exacerbated this uncertainty (Jochelson 2017:44–45, 91ff., 115ff.). From the letters we can also learn a lot about his travel logistics and his routes at certain times of the

Fig. 2 Post boat, Lena River, 1897. Image #11006, American Museum of Natural History Library.

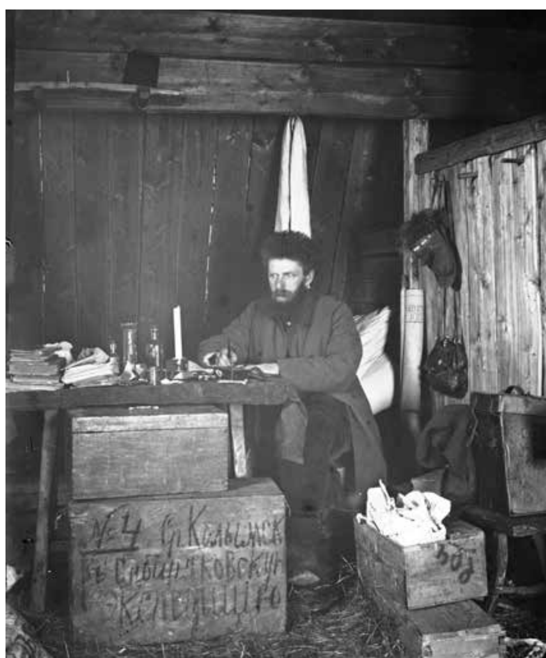

Fig. 3 Jochelson [presumably at Srednekolymsk, EK].
Image #11016, American Museum of Natural History Library.

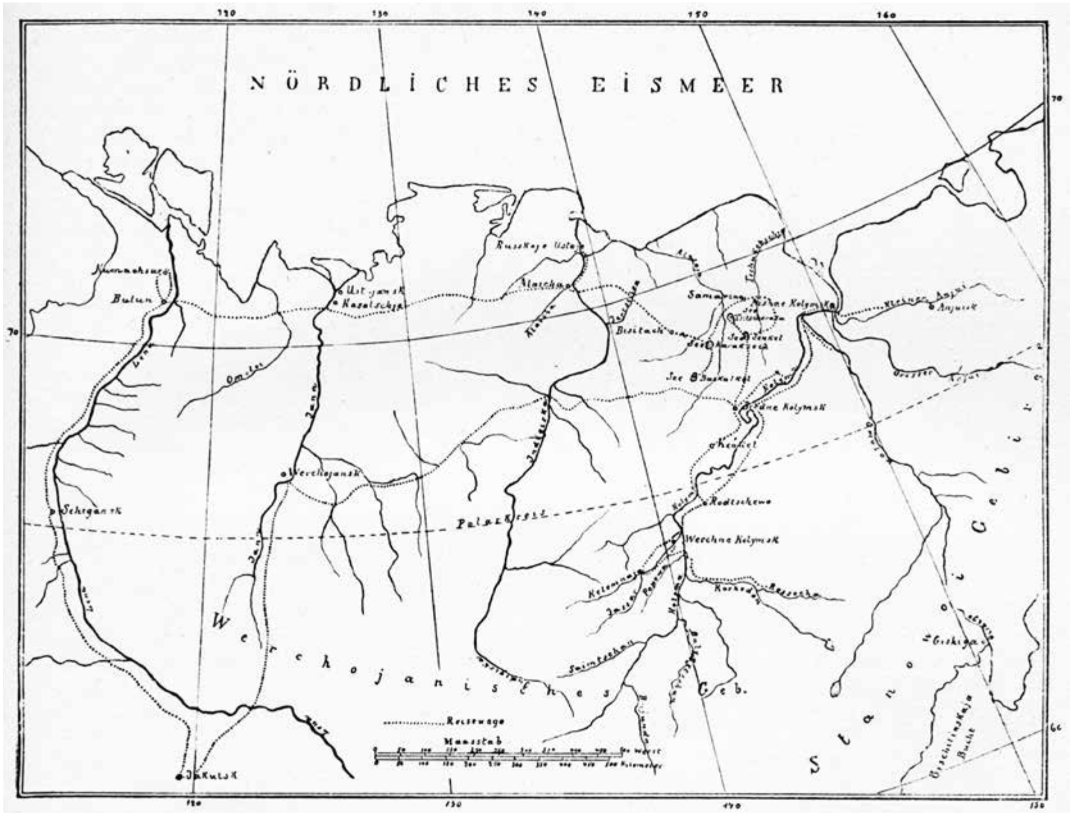

Fig. 4 x x x x x x x Yukaghir settlements.
• • • • • • • • • Areas, where still Yukaghir is spoken. Between Alasei and Chukochia a tundra vernacular is spoken. (Jochelson 1899a: 7)

year, and how Jochelson and Bogoras divided up their work with regard to various ethnic groups (in Sirina and Shinkovoi 2007:341).

Jochelson gives more details about how his activities proceeded, in particular in his letters from 1896–1897 (in Sirina 2007). For example, on January 20, 1896, Jochelson went to Verkhnekolymsk (ibid.:92f.), where he collected some economic data on two Yakut settlements. At the same time, he also became interested in shamanism, and recorded the full text of a shamanic ritual. In the beginning of February he returned to Srednekolymsk. Together with his companion Aleksei Dolganov, who came from Verkhnekolymsk, he set off a few days later for the middle upper reaches of the Omolon River, where Yukaghir lived. From there he traveled further by himself to the Aniui outpost (*krepost'*) to meet Bogoras. Both visited the seasonal trade fair (*iarmarka*) there. After that, Jochelson undertook a short trip up the Aniui River to investigate some burial sites. Finally, he returned to Yukaghir settlements along the Omolon River.

In another letter dated July 25, 1896, Jochelson again mentions his keen interest in the exploration of the burial sites, after he had found a skeleton with special funeral clothing (in Sirina 2007:94f.). From April 18 until June 15, 1896, he stayed at the confluence of the Omolon and Kolyma rivers, where he devoted himself "almost exclusively to linguistic work" (ibid.)—in fact concurrently with speakers of Yukaghir and Evenk (Tungus) languages living in the area. From there he reports:

> "My knowledge of the Yukaghir language has improved so much […] that I hope to soon be capable of drafting a grammar. But I will not hurry with that, i.e. for this I need further theoretical preparation. My Yukaghir word list is growing so much that I have already stopped counting the words. Furthermore, I can now generate all word forms from each template. My assumptions with regard to the language of the Kolymski Tungus [Evenk] have proved to be completely true—they speak a Yukaghir dialect. […] In general, the composition of the language is completely Yukaghir, but it differs from Yukaghir in a considerable number of Tungusic words and the consonant change. […] Tungus [Evenk] live in the Tundra, but along the Yasachnaia River the Lamut [Even] have switched to the Yukaghir language, while at the same time the Yukaghir tribe has declined. Further research, one should hope, will provide more data that will confirm this situation." (ibid.)

Thereafter Jochelson traveled further up the Omolon River to document more gravesites. While writing this letter, he had already stayed three weeks in Srednekolymsk, where he was awaiting urgently requested money for further travel to Verkhnekolymsk. Yukaghir from the Korkodon area were waiting for him, with whom he wanted to travel upstream.

Eventually he enclosed several photographs with the letter, two of gravesites, one view over the settlement and a fourth image that shows "his teacher, the Tungus and Yukaghir from Verkhoiansk, Dolganov. Dolganov was also one of the boatmen with whom Jochelson traveled to the Korkodon, and he wrote that he would have wished to take him along later to Yakutsk. There he could have been of much use to him as an interpreter, as besides his Yukaghir mother tongue Dolganov had also mastered the Yakut and Lamut [Even] languages, as well as some Russian. Jochelson also thought that he could have regularly practiced Yukaghir language with him. Dolganov was prepared to join him, but that would have cost Jochelson 200 more rubles. Therefore it had "under the given circumstances to remain a dream" (ibid.:95).

In his letter of October 25, 1897 to the East Siberian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, Jochelson requested accounts of earlier travels that he needed for comparative studies (ibid.:96). In the same letter he also introduced Aleksei Dolganov as his most valuable collaborator, together with Vasilii Shalugin, with whom he was underway along the Yasachnaia River, as well as Ivan Spiridonov and Fedos'ia Sontseva from the Korkodon River area. He appealed to the administration to confer

an award through the general governor to the first two of them for their special merits, and to make specified presents to the latter in the name of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. In another letter dated November 11, 1897, Jochelson lists in detail other assistants from the Cossack population (ibid.:96).

Fig. 5 Jochelson's Yukaghir collaborators.
Image #22188, American Museum of Natural History Library.

As soon as the expedition had come to an end, Jochelson published first results in the form of some articles for Russian journals (Jochelson 1898a,c,d) and a preliminary research report (Jochelson 1898b). In the latter he describes in detail his travel routes (Jochelson 1898b:10). He eventually also drafted a plan for how he meant to proceed with the elaboration of the collected materials and their publication (Jochelson 1898b:43). He also addresses some first important insights to the effect that for the—according to his estimate—700 Yukaghir "within about 50 years it could be too late to restore their language, religion and social system (Jochelson 1898b:19), but he was obviously wrong about that. Jochelson also provided important clues in this report to the decrease in multilingualism of the indigenous people—from an often-encountered capability of four languages (Yukaghir, Yakut, Even and Chukchi) from east to west, to usually only two languages (Even and Yakut) beyond the Indigirka River, while west of the Yana River, only Yakut was spoken (Jochelson 1898b:32). Also remarkable are Jochelson's assessments of the cultural dynamics and overlays between different ethnic groups, which were at the center of his investigations. In one case, for the Yukaghir and Even, this led "to a compromise between both influences" (Jochelson 1898b:36).

Shortly afterwards, in 1899, Jochelson used German versions of his first publications for lectures in Switzerland. These lectures were published there in the reports of meetings of prestigious scientific societies (Jochelson 1900a,b). Jochelson had already published parts of one lecture (Jochelson 1900a) in *Mutter Erde* ("Mother Earth") (Jochelson 1899a), one of those popular scientific journals that were in vogue among the general educated public at that time. There he also released other, less scientific-ethnographic reports that described more empathetically the everyday life of the local people, and which provide valuable insights into how they dealt with each other (Jochelson 1899b–e; also in 2017:91–137). One of these articles had been published previously in a similar popular scientific Russian journal, *Niva* (Jochelson 1898c).

Only many years later were Jochelson's research results from this time released in a complete publication, his monograph *The Yukaghir and Yukaghirized Tungus* (Jochelson 1910–1926). He wrote this comprehensive work later in New York after another period of research in that area during the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, though it contains for the most part results from the Sibiriakov Expedition. In this monograph Jochelson eventually takes up themes in which he was obviously particularly interested during the Sibiriakov Expedition, for example gravesites and funeral customs that were often mentioned in his letters (see p. 45, *this volume*), but which he did not follow up on in his early articles in the aforementioned journals. However, before the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, his second research trip, Jochelson was able to publish a text collection in St. Petersburg that contains about 150 stories and song lyrics, which he had recorded in Russian and Yukaghir languages during the Sibiriakov Expedition (Jochelson 1900c). His Yukaghir word list had more than 9,000 entries that revealed to him, as he wrote, basic insights into the grammatical composition of this language. Whereas the Yukaghir were considered among scientists at that time to have already become extinct, Jochelson discovered that the Yukaghir language was split into two different dialects, the Kolyma und the Tundra Yukaghir (Jochelson 1905). Furthermore, Jochelson ascertained already in 1899 a "relationship between the peoples of northeast Asia and tribes on the northwest coast of North America" (Jochelson 1900a; see also 2017:47)—which, Franz Boas also made independently at the same time as the basic paradigm for the Jesup North Pacific Expedition.

Jochelson's results from the Sibiriakov Expedition in relation to his later works

Particularly revealing is a more in-depth study, most notably of his early publications from the years 1898 and 1899 in comparison with his later works that originated many years later in connection with the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, and obviously under some influence by Franz Boas in New York. This underlines an oft-suggested assumption (Vakhtin 2004:36) that there probably was a distinct turn in Jochelson's life towards an expected career as a scientist, which had already become apparent

during his earlier stay in Switzerland, i.e. shortly after his return from the Sibiriakov Expedition. The reason for this can only be guessed at. There were certainly ample reasons for his disappointment with the later course of the revolutionary movement, but these he experienced during his later stays in St. Petersburg in the early 1920s. Another reason could have been his acquaintance and marriage to Dina Brodskaia, who he got to know in Switzerland shortly after his expedition, and keeping up with her academic profile could have been another incentive for him. However, after a closer look, foremost into his letters and diaries, one gets the impression that he had already shifted his interests towards science at an earlier stage in the light of his desire to study autodidactically the languages and knowledge systems of these peoples, which obviously fascinated him tremendously and which he wanted to explore more deeply with scientific methods. The question to what extent Jochelson had already come into contact with ethnography during his university studies, must remain unresolved. Arguing against this possibility could be the fact that he first obtained (or ordered) specialized ethnological literature during his fieldwork. On the other hand, he might have already received important incitements in this direction during his studies in Bern, where he attended classes with professors who taught geography with a clear connection to Russia (see footnote 3). Reinforced by his immediate experiences in the field, Jochelson's scientific interests obviously moved into the foreground, but without him giving up his earlier socio-critical attitudes and outlooks.

Thus, one sees in his earlier writings Jochelson's clearly expressed empathy for the local people, which helped him to see their often precarious living situation from their own perspective. He was evidently following here his former revolutionary approach, to improve the wellbeing of deprived and suppressed people. Furthermore, he could not conceal his emotional involvement, as he had himself lived under most difficult conditions among the indigenous people. He had experienced first-hand the ever-present dangers of their travels, when he, for example, got separated from the caravan for some time while he was en route on his sledge in hazardous weather conditions (Jochelson 1899c; see also 2017:101). His account of how he had to deal with his fellow travelers while all of them were starving (Jochelson 1900a; see also 2017:72ff.) opened his eyes to similar situations that were reported to him, for example, when a person who was starving to death refused to allow the last remaining reindeer of a friend should to be slaughtered for him (Jochelson 1899c; see also 2017:112). Jochelson describes with striking sensitivity how indigenous people treated community members who were suffering from pox and were doomed to die, and how they organized special caring facilities outside the settlement for these lepers—while they of course also had to protect themselves. In the face of his affection for and attachment to the indigenous people, however, Jochelson also describes in very measured words certain traits that divide humans in extreme situations, such as selfishness and the greed of a helper at the funeral of a wealthy person who had died of pox. Afterwards he secretly took the festive funeral clothing of the deceased—and

the thief later fell ill himself from the same disease after wearing the coat (Jochelson 1899d; see also 2017:123f.).

Fig. 6 Yakut with leprosy expelled from village.
Image #1953, American Museum of Natural History Library.

He openly criticized the “crooked tradesmen”—also a frequent motif in Russian literature in the late 19th century—with whom indigenous people were confronted. Thus Jochelson accused the government of not caring about these people, but instead “brought so much alcohol into the Kolymsk region that half of the income of this poor district went to vodka“ (Jochelson 1898a:274).

It is remarkable that these deeply sympathetic descriptions are mostly missing in his later extensive monographs on the Koryaks and Yukaghirs. However, it is unlikely that Jochelson’s attitude could have fundamentally changed in the meantime. It is more likely that he would—during his later close collaboration with Boas—have adapted his writings to a “scientific” style, which he might have perceived more useful to academic recognition and his career in his chosen new professional environment. Reports containing the author’s emotions were, at that time, certainly not compatible with such aims.

It is also disconcerting that he no longer acknowledges the contributions of local collaborators in his later monographs (see Kasten and Dürr 2016:18), whereas he still expressed this clearly, most notably in his letters during the Sibiriakov Expedition (see p. 46f., *this volume*). The same thought occurred to Igor Krupnik (2017:32) with regard to Waldemar Bogoras’s work *The Chukchee* that was published—like Jochelson’s *The*

Koryak, after the Jesup North Pacific Expedition. In the case of Bogoras, Krupnik explains it as follows:

> "As Bogoras returned from his JNPE [Jesup North Pacific Expedition] field-work loaded with data and ideas, he was persuaded to accept a Boasian template of 'basic ethnography' for his writings for the JNPE series" (Krupnik 2017: 30). … [He] "was pressured to present his data under an academic template not quite to his personal liking" (2017:31).

That the last sentence might also apply to Jochelson can hardly be assessed. On the other hand, during the Sibiriakov Expedition Jochelson already anticipates a lot of what Boas later made essential to his method:

> "Therefore it appeared to be very important to me to document the ethnographic material by means of its unbiased representation in the narratives [Mitteilungen] of the indigenous people in their own words und in the original language, as only in this way does one become aware of the original meaning" (Boas 1910:7).

In his diaries and letters (see above) Jochelson underlines in 1894 how important it is for the understanding of indigenous cultures to record their narratives in their own languages, as he had done for his own text collection.

Beyond this, Jochelson studied the origin of indigenous communication systems from pictographic scripts that could have been guided by close monitoring of natural phenomena, in particular animal tracks (Jochelson 1900a; see also 2017:85ff.). In his detailed descriptions of hunting behavior Jochelson captures elementary human-animal relations that are characteristic of the given (and other indigenous) peoples:

> "There is a mysterious tie between hunter and animal. If the hunter did not love the animal, he could not kill it. What a strange kind of love to offer oneself for consumption! But the guardian spirit of the animal, *Pädshul*, who treats the hunter with indulgence, who kills the animal for consumption, is upset if people kill animals pointlessly" (Jochelson 1900a; 2017:55).

With regard to fishing, Jochelson makes the not irrelevant observation that one lets pass the first school of fish ascending from the sea in order "not to frighten the fish", and only after that does the fishing begin (Jochelson 1900a; see also 2017:60). This behavior—even if reasoned here in a different way—reflects traditional ecological behavior and knowledge to let pass sufficient fish for spawning and for other settlements at the upper reaches of the river.[9] All this reveals Jochelson's intimate understanding of indigenous knowledge systems that an outsider can only grasp during long periods of participatory observation.

9 Similar ecologically motivated behavior in fishing was also observed by Georg Wilhelm Steller in the mid-18th century with the Itelmen on Kamchatka (Kasten 2012:70).

Also in other cases the particular quality of Jochelson's early writings becomes apparent. He describes in detail trade disputes in which he became involved (Jochelson 1900a; see also 2017:74–75), and notes characteristic behaviors and traits of different ethnic groups. While these may be valid, Jochelson avoids talking them up to ethnic stereotypes, as often happens. With remarkable intensity he captures—as also on other occasions—interethnic relations that underlie exchange networks of the five different ethnic groups in that area (Yukaghir, Even, Evenk, Yakut and Russians) that are obviously indispensable for survival under the given conditions.

It is striking, however, that such detailed descriptions and explanations are missing in Jochelson's later writings on the Koryak and Itelmen. The reasons may be different to the above-mentioned case, where certain emotional statements were not appropriate to his later scientific template. For in contrast to Jochelson's many years of travel within a relatively confined area during the Sibiriakov Expedition (and already before that), the Jesup North Pacific Expedition suffered from a number of shortcomings. One of them was the extreme time pressure as a consequence of Boas's demand to follow up a multitude of research questions for wide-ranging cultural comparisons. The latter caused in particular Bogoras's far-flung travel activities that made it impossible for him to stay in any one place long enough to conduct serious stationary or participatory observation. Therefore his Boas-style ethnographic method evokes more the impression of a hectic "collecting trip" in accordance with "salvage anthropology", the prevalent paradigm of that time.

Regarding Jochelson's research with the Koryak during his later Jesup North Pacific Expedition, it stands out by contrast to his earlier work with the Yukaghir, how difficult it obviously was for him to build up similar trusting relations with Koryak people, while these are clearly reflected in his earlier writings. In his later monograph on the Koryak he himself expresses his frustration after he felt cheated by a shaman, who he had commissioned for a performance, while certain important seasonal ritual practices such as the Kilvei feast remained concealed from him (Kasten and Dürr 2016:25). The anthropological measuring of indigenous people that was part of the prescribed research program sometimes provoked severe resistance.[10] This could often only be broken by some—also known from Boas—"tricks of the trade", by which the indigenous people were promised that the Czar would have fine clothing custom-made and sent to them as a gift (Kasten and Dürr 2016:20).

In general, one gets the impression that the Koryak viewed the taking of body measurements—perceived by them as a senseless transgression of their intimate sphere—as occurring under the orders of government authorities that Jochelson had to execute. That must have created even more distance between them, as Jochelson was already sometimes addressed this way (ibid.). His relations with the Yukaghir

10 Cf. the commentary by Dina Jochelson-Brodskaia who was mainly in charge of this task during the expedition: "Then not even pleas or gifts could persuade the stubborn and wild Koryak women to take off their clothes for the purpose of measuring" (1906:1).

during the Sibiriakov Expedition differed significantly from this. Among other things, Jochelson's earlier status as an exile probably played a part, when—in the eyes of the indigenous people—he suffered from the despotism of the authorities, just as they did.[11]

In contrast to his later difficulties with getting body measurements, it is revealing how sensitively Jochelson tried to explain to the indigenous people during the Sibiriakov Expedition the procedure of taking pictures that was completely unknown to them—in order to make it understandable to them. In their view, each person had a "shadow", and they imagined this to be captured in the photograph. However, what was then irritating for them was the fact that Jochelson could take a photo of a person who had just died, as—in their understanding—the shadow had left the body already (Jochelson 1899e; see also 2017:133).

Another handicap during Jochelson's research with the Koryak could have been that he didn't have sufficient time to concern himself with the Koryak language, and that he obviously was not always satisfied with the proficiency of his interpreter. First and foremost one can see the difference that it made that Jochelson was accompanied during his work with the Yukaghir by a team of local experts whose members were knowledgeable of specific regional conditions. For that he could draw on a wide pool of well-suited and knowledgeable local collaborators, with some of whom he was already familiar from his earlier stay in the area as an exile and with whom he had maintained long-standing mutually trusting relationships.

The obvious lack of adequate local experts during his later expeditions might have caused irritation and frustration for Jochelson, as is reflected in his emotionless descriptions of the Koryak. Even more striking is this in his ethnography of the Itelmen (Kamchadal) during the Riabushinskii Expedition in the years 1910–1911 (Koester and Kasten 2019). Here one can even assume some sluggishness or resignation,[12] when for example it seems that Jochelson in his remarks is almost more interested in his „Kamchadal" dog than in indigenous people themselves. From the beginning of this expedition there was a stronger interest by Jochelson in the archaeology, language and culture of the Aleut (Jochelson 1908b; see also 2017:150). With regard to the inclusion of Kamchatka into the research program, he was likely responding to the wish of the donor F.P. Riabushinskii. Hence Jochelson's ethnography on the Itelmen did not bring forward particularly illuminating new insights—which could be the reason he postponed again and again the publication of the results, and finally

11 In the most remote settlements of the Kolyma area, where Jochelson was not known from before, he was received, however, with deep respect and submissiveness, as was common with Russian authorities.

12 A reason for this could also have been that towards the end the expedition was facing financial problems, after the concealment of money in Petropavlovsk after the death of the sponsor F.P. Riabushinskii, who initiually wanted to participate in the expedition himself (pers. communication M. Winterschladen)

for so long that he never did complete this work during his lifetime. Besides his shortcomings in mastering the Itelmen language, another fact might have contributed to Jochelson's disappointment—the strong Russian influence under which Itelmen culture had apparently already been for a long time.[13] This had already made ethnological research with these people less attractive.[14] But the question arises—did this have its origin in the new scientific *Zeitgeist* that was also shaped by the Boas school? In the beginning— before and during the Sibiriakov Expedition—Jochelson had worked unbiased and with great interest even with old Russian settlers (Jochelson 1899a; also in 2017:50f.) as he wanted in particular to learn more about the specific linguistic-cultural dynamics between all ethnic groups of this area (Jochelson 1900b,c).

In light of the publications on the results of the three expeditions in which Jochelson took part, clear differences can be seen in the kind and quality of his ethnography. Any judgments—from various perspectives—should be left aside here. However, there are indications as to how such significant variations might be explained. In any case, we did not only learn more about Jochelson's successful methods during his early ethnographic fieldwork that pointed the way forward to this new discipline, but also about the conditions under which these could be applied with good results.

In his manifold publications on the Yukaghir, it appears that Jochelson intentionally highlighted different themes and chose different genres in presenting them, as these publications were first directed to a heterogeneous readership. For example, in his articles on social movements in Russia that were published in German journals he aimed to appeal to revolutionary circles in western Europe, with the German social democracy as its driving force at that time. His first scientific reports were published in Russia in order to immediately inform the East Siberian Branch of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society and other participants of the Sibiriakov Expedition, as well as other scientists in Russia of his research results from this expedition. Shortly afterwards, he had used German translations of these articles for lectures at prominent scientific societies in other countries with the aim of recommending himself for a possible academic career in western Europe. That he had already published these articles a year earlier in popular scientific journals such as *Mutter Erde* could be explained by a possible shortage of money, as even Boas had to finance his first field trips this way (Kasten 1992:11). Beyond that, these journals provided Jochelson with the opportunity to become better known within a wider well-educated public.

Jochelson's later publications, in which he—as in his monograph *The Yukaghir and the Yukaghirized Tungus*—again drew on materials from his earlier Sibiriakov Expedition, were directed again at another audience that he then had in mind in his quest

13 Already during his planning Jochelson added "that much could still be done there in spite of the Russification of the Kamchadal" (Jochelson 1908b; 2017:147).

14 See Bergman (1928:175ff.), who evidently was relieved to stay again with his "wild people" (the Even) in the interior of the peninsula, after his side trip to the Itelmen on the west coast. These people "had already been mixed with the Russians."

for a future professional career—namely international colleagues from the new discipline of cultural anthropology that had authoritatively been shaped by Franz Boas in America.

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