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# НИКОЛАЙ НЕВСКИЙ: ЖИЗНЬ И НАСЛЕДИЕ

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В сборник вошли статьи отечественных и зарубежных ученых, основанные на докладах, представленных в рамках «Невских чтений» — международного симпозиума в честь 120-летия со дня рождения выдающегося российского востоковеда Николая Александровича Невского (1892–1937). Проблематика статей определена разносторонним характером исследований, которым посвятил себя ученый: мифология, синто, айноведение, язык и культура Рюкю, тангутоведение и др.

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## РАЗДЕЛ 3. ЯЗЫК И КУЛЬТУРА АЙНОВ

*Tangiku Itsuji* (丹菊逸治)

### AINU FOLKLORE STUDIES TODAY AND NIKOLAI NEVSKII

#### Preface

How important are Nikolai Nevskii's works for today's studies of Ainu Folklore? I would like to point out several things from three view points, 1) his advance based on wide perspective; 2) importance of his materials; 3) significance of his study: can we learn something from his old works now?

#### **1) His advance based on wide perspective**

Nevskii recorded Ainu folklore texts by himself, not Japanese texts but Ainu texts, though Ainu people at that time already used Japanese language in their daily life. His knowledge of Ainu language made it possible for him to study Ainu rhetoric, stylistic and songs. His studies — especially song studies — were supposed to be quite excellent ones compared with those by Kindaichi Kyosuke (1882–1971) who was his Ainu language teacher.

He was not merely a follower of J. Batchelor and B. Pilsudski. His studies always had strong tendencies to describe overviews. When he started his study of Ainu folklore, he prepared many texts of many genres. He attached importance to relations between styles and stories, styles and genres. After his death, Ainu rhetoric and stylistic study became a part of linguistic studies and folklorists in Japan stopped thinking about it.

Nevskii was a forefront folklorist in his time and his point of view was almost the same to today's researchers. His research covered all over Japanese archipelago, from Hokkaido to Okinawa, and other south islands. Even now, very few Japanese folklorists turn their interests on Ainu. They have been not good at "multi national" studies. Before the World War II, Japanese folklore studies had failed to include Korean, Chinese and Ainu

folklore. After the World War II, they lost Korea and Manchuria, and they stopped thinking about them. And in the same time, they lost interest for Ainu folklore.

Nowadays after a long sleep (Ainu and Japanese) folklorists (re)started “multi national” (or cross-ethnic-border) studies in some fields; rituals, material culture and folk stories, etc. For example, some researchers have just (re)started a co-operative research on wooden figures of several ethnic groups including Ainu. Nevskii’s study of *Oshirasama* was the first attempt to compare Ainu and Japanese wooden figures (wooden idols). His letters about it were published in 1971. His study of *Oshirasama* intended to investigate the origin of those wooden figures, but his point of view was not limited on the origin of them. He recommended Lev Shternberg’s study of *inaw*. *Inaws* are ritual wooden sticks which Ainu people offer to great spirits. Shternberg’s study showed that those ritual sticks were used among several peoples: Ainu, Nivkh, Tungusics. Those three languages were originally (genetically) unrelated each other. Genetic relation is not the most important point. Precise description itself is important. In Nevskii’s *Oshirasama* study too, the investigation of its origin was only a part, only a possibility though he himself was interested in its origin. Not only his *Oshirasama* study, his researches always covered rather wider area just like Shternberg’s study. As for his study of Japanese folklore, he studied “from Ainu to Okinawa” and he expected to find some traces of common origin of ethnic groups of Japanese archipelago, but he did not have any strong preconceptions about that. He always started from the data without preconceptions. Data in studies of un-material folklore are languages. He learned languages, recorded texts, compared and analyzed them.

## **2) Importance of his materials: Ainu folklore texts recorded by Nevskii**

We know that he recorded at least about 30 Ainu folklore texts. He recorded many genres of texts, but he especially attached importance on *Menoko-yukar* (“women’s epic”). Other than him, Kubodera Itsuhiko (1902–1971) recorded many texts of this genre, but there have been very few studies about it. *Menoko-yukar* is a neutral, ambiguous sub-genre between two big genres; *Kamuy-yukar* (“great spirit’s song”) and *Yukar* (epic song). But this genre is not merely a temporal genre. In the eastern part of Hokkaido, *Kamuy-yukar* is called *Macukar* (“woman’s epic”). It suggests that this kind of sub-genre had had certain stability.

His “Upaskuma”(legend) texts are also important. “Upaskuma” is not a solid genre. Any stories could be called “upaskuma” if they includes

references about origins of something. Sometimes those texts have unique features.

His texts are one of the oldest collections. The comparative study of them with their contemporary texts recorded by Kindaichi Kyosuke, Chiri Yukie (1903–1922) and of Kubodera Itsuhiko has not been finished. Some of them were recorded by the same storytellers. It is an important study to be done.

Nevskii (1972) contains 21 texts in Ainu language. They are important materials for linguistic research too. In Japan, there are thousands of texts, but sometimes they were written in Japanese *kana* characters. We can reconstruct by comparing texts by these two different characters. Nevskii wrote that he was not finished analyzing Ainu phonetic system when he recorded the texts. It is rather useful for us because we could suppose the sound he heard, not only phonemes he determined.

For example, Nevskii wrote *korō* for the Ainu verb “have”. From this writing, we could suppose two things.

First, we can suppose his being aware of “R-ending”. We know that this verb does not have the last vowel “o” and we write *kor*. He wrote “o” at the end with a mark shortening the vowel. At that time, Kindaichi and Batchelor thought that Ainu language doesn’t have R-ending syllables, so they always write unnecessary vowels after R. Pilsudski was a very careful linguist and published Ainu texts with narrow transcriptions which show the sound in fact, but unfortunately, he studied Sakhalin dialect and it really doesn’t have R-endings. So nobody in the world was aware of R-ending of Hokkaido dialect of Ainu language. Nevskii’s writing shows a possibility that he was aware of the R-ending syllables in 1921, a year before a famous young Ainu storyteller Chiri Yukie taught Kindaichi that Ainu language had R-ending in 1922.

Second, we can suppose how the text was sung. Some of the texts were songs (“*Kamuy-yukar*” or “*Menoko-yukar*”). When singing those songs, singers often pronounce R-endings with vowels in fact. For example, /koro/ or /korō/, not /kor/ nor /korō/. You can clearly hear the attached vowels. Problem is that researchers today may write *kor* even if they hear /koro/, so readers cannot know how they were pronounced in fact. Nevskii’s writing *korō* shows that it was really pronounced /korō/.

### **3) Significance of his study: can we learn something from his 77 years old work?**

Nevskii did not leave us many writing works, but not only his Ainu texts but his studies themselves are important even today. He wrote

several important things on Ainu folklore. I would like to refer two points he wrote about Ainu songs.

Study of Ainu traditional songs has not progressed very much these several tens of years. We have some recordings and texts of songs, but we don't know much about functions of songs nor forms of songs.

Nevskii wrote Ainu texts correctly. It was possible for him to analyze the form of texts, and surely he started rhetoric, stylistic, and poetic studies. It is a pity that he did not write many things about them. He wrote important things in the short commentary of Ainu folklore genres in Nevskii (1935). He wrote that melodies of "*Kamuy-yukar*"s differ from person to person, but melodies of "*Oyna*"s (a hero-god's epic song) are the same. (Исполнительницами этого цикла сказаний обычно бывают женщины, причем напев в большинстве случаев за такой "божьей песней" не закреплен и каждая исполнительница поет на свой лад.)

He used an Ainu word "sa" when he referred to melodies of Ainu songs, just like Kindaichi and Pilsudski. "Sa" is an important concept of Ainu traditional music.

Ainu traditional music is different from European, or Japanese ones. In Ainu music, melody itself is not very important. Scales are not fixed when you sing together. As in music of other cultures, you can divide an Ainu song into notes, into sounds according to pitch. So when written on musical pieces, an Ainu song consists of many notes, many sounds. But the melody of a song is not fixed. Every sound of the song can be changed within a certain range. In old times traditional singers might have distinguished only relative "high/low" tone compared to preceding sounds. In this way, melodies are not very important. On the contrary, tremolo, vibrato and throat closing are as important features as high/low tones. An Ainu song (or a music piece) is an arrangement of those elements (tremolo, vibrato, throat closing, high tone, low tone). In other words, rhythm is the most important thing in Ainu music. It is meaningless to separate the melody of a song and regard it to be a special feature of the song.

Kindaichi and other researchers wrote that every singer had his/her own individual unique arrangement of those musical elements. They also wrote that it was called "sa" ("knot" or "tune") and traditional short songs and "Yukar" (epic song) were sung with those individual "sa"

But Nevskii pointed out that "*Kamuy-yukar*"s were sung with individual "sa" and "*Oyna*"s were sung with the same "sa".

This is an important observation on "*Kamuy-yukar*" and "*Oyna*". This may sound curious to today's researchers. Every "*Kamuy-yukar*" has unique and fixed melody today. And on the contrary "*Oyna*"s are thought

to be sung just like “Yukar”. In other words “Oyna”s are thought to have different melodies by individual.

What does this difference mean? Was Nevskii’s observation wrong? Or styles of Ainu songs have changed?

As for “Kamuy-yukar”, it may be rather new style to fix melodies of “Kamuy-yukar”s. In fact, there are some old recordings of the same “Kamuy-yukar” sung with different melodies. Researchers must analyze old recordings again. As for “Oyna”, we have no answer now. In fact, we know really very little about “sa” of each genre. Nevskii must have known something we do not know now.

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**НИКОЛАЙ НЕВСКИЙ  
И СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ  
АЙНСКОГО ФОЛЬКЛОРА**

В статье резюмируются заслуги Н. А. Невского в исследовании айнского фольклора. Автор пытается по-новому взглянуть на записи айнского фольклора, сделанные Н. А. Невским в начале XX в., и выяснить, чем они могут быть полезны для исследователей сегодня.