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ETHNOGRAPHICAL COLLECTION FROM NORTH-EASTERN SIBERIA IN THE NÁPRSTEK MUSEUM

VĒRA HALĀSZOVĀ

Until about the beginning of the 20th century the North-Eastern Siberia represented an important cultural unit inhabited by various ethnical groups.

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The people of North-Eastern Siberia made their livelihood in three ways: as hunters of seamammals with seats on the coast of Arctic Ocean and Bering Sea, as well as fishermen and hunters of wild reindeer with moving settlements along the rivers, and finally as herdsmen of domesticated reindeer.

The same way of subsistence assembled parts of different ethnical groups to form neighbouring settlements, while another part of the same units resisted in distant territories together with other groups.

The ethnical groups separated geographically as well as by different way of living accommodated themselves to the culture of their nearest neighbours, and very often — with the exception of the language — there were no differences between them. But as cultural contacts with related groups were being maintained, the whole area of North-Eastern Siberia was keeping its uniform cultural character. In the Czechoslovak ethnographical collections North-Eastern Siberia is represented in a not very significant way. In the Anthropos Institute of the Moravian Museum, Brno, there is a small collection from the Chukot Peninsula.¹ A larger collection was kept at the National Gallery in Prague, but was destroyed by fire in 1969.²

In the Náprstek Museum collections only several objects identified as Siberian were being kept. They came to the museum in various ways and from various sources, the first one as early as beginning of the 20th century. With the exception of three objects from the Even group from the Milkovo region in Kamchatka,³ the objects were not properly documented and were therefore of no great ethnographical value. But later it was possible to fill in certain gaps in the collection and to work it up by comparing the specimens with another collection which was at least partially documented, but its provenance was for years being misinterpreted.

In 1936, when according to older records the catalogue of foreign ethnography was being written down, a donation of a certain Mr. František Poledna was registered and given Nos. 22.627—29 and 22.633—49. According to a marginal note the objects were originally provided by leaflets containing descriptions by F. Poledna. The curator treated this information arbitrarily giving his own interpretation whenever the meaning of Poledna's note was not clear to him. Several Czech terms given in the inventory seem to be derived from Russian words which Poledna probably transcribed in Latin alphabet and thus gave them a seemingly Czech character ("Ledovistij" instead of "Ledový"; "čuchonský" coming apparently from Russian "Chukotskij").

The term "Chukhons" is and old and somewhat vague denomination of groups living in the Northern Europe. In a strict sense this term corresponds to the Saáms (Lapps) who reside as far as on the Kola Peninsula. But Poledna assembled the collection on the Chukot Peninsula and sent it from Vladivostok to Prague and not from Petrograd as would have been more appropriate in case of collecting in Europe. Therefore and in view of the comparative material, the "Chukhons" are absolutely excluded from the consideration.⁴

It is difficult to trace the places where Poledna acquired the Chukchi objects. A note attached to one of the objects (a leathern belt, Inv. No. 57.501) gives Wrangel Island as the place of its origin. But there is no evidence for a Chukchi settlement on that island. The Chukchi knew about the existence of that island. as in bright weather it was visible from the shores of the Arctic Ocean, and F. P. Wrangel actually introduced the island into his map according to the information he got from the Chukchis. The island was, nevertheless, colonized only in 1926 by a group of Asian Eskimos.⁵ In case the Chukchi settlements on Wrangel Island will not be confirmed by archaeological evidence, it will be necessary to suppose that Poledna acquired the objects from Chukchis residing on the mainland who came to the Wrangel Island for hunting or trade only. In any case the Wrangel Island as a possible place of origin cannot be omitted: the inscription "a product of Chukchis from Wrangelland" is clear and allows no other explanation. If Poledna was actually witness of a Chukchi settlement which later disappeared, his collection would be of unique significance.⁶

As far as the date of Poledna's collecting is concerned, it could have been established on the basis of the entries in the Archives of the National Museum, Prague, and of several Poledna's biographical data.⁷

At the beginning of this century František Poledna participated in a polar hunting expedition in Kamchatka and Chukot Peninsula. During his stay there, at the latest in 1909,⁸ he acquired a collection from the Coastal Chukchis, which he sent as a sample to the Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom (the National Museum of today). The museum management did not show any interest in the purchase of the whole collection and Poledna probably turned to other institutions. In this way the second part of the collection got to Brno, but the original collection must have been more extensive. It was not possible to find out, however, who Poledna finally sold it to. During the following years F. Poledna made his livelihood by grewing ginseng roots and by producing drugs from its extract. He lived on the Askold Island near Vladivostok, later also in China and Japan. After World War I he returned to his native country, where he died in 1951.¹⁰ If a collection of a certain cultural area has to be handled from the ethnographical standpoint, it requires documentation. In collections, which were assembled from the viewing angle of ethnographical evaluating criteria, and were obtained by a specialised or at least expertly informed museum-worker, a written and photographical documentation is usually sufficient and no special problems should arise, when handling them. The situation is different with collections assembled incidentally, originating from various collectors and from different periods, where there is an unsufficient or even no documentation. The question arises, what are the possibilities of an expert aproach in such cases.

On the basis of literature and by comparison with analogous collections of other museums it is sometimes possible to identify single specimens but only rarely to create a collection which could bear witness of a certain culture not only as far as its material side but also its social organization, as well as its spiritual overstructure are concerned. In the positive case, on the other hand, such collection presenting a - N. B. - extinct culture is unvaluable.

In searching after missing data concerning the Siberian collection of the Náprstek Museum a lucky chance helped. As mentioned above the documentation of its part collected by F. Poledna was preserved, even if partially impaired during the writing up of the catalogue. Nevertheless it was possible to come to a correct interpretation as far as the place and the date of the collecting was concerned thanks to the fact that the collection originated at the same time as the comprehensive collection of Bogoraz-Tan, the great expert in the Chukchi question and author of an important monograph on the subject.¹¹ On the basis of this excellent source it was possible to evaluate and reconstruct the entries of the catalogue.

The collection of F. Poledna comes from the Coastal Chukchis of Northern Group, i.e. from those who had their settlements on the coast of the Arctic Ocean. In the time the collection was formed there were about 1.600 Chukchis living in 41 localities. Neither in the list of localities given by Bogoraz, nor in the material he had at his disposal, Wrangel Island is mentioned. If F. Poledna acquired his collection there, it would be possible

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to explain certain discrepancies betwen his and Bogoraz's observations by the exceptional character of the Chukchi settlement on an island lying some 180 km off the mainland.

The Coastal Chukchis belong to the group of the hunters of sea-mammals. The Chukchis and Eskimos from the coast of the Bering Sea make their living in the same way. Both groups of Coastal Chukchis maintain their family- and trade relations with Chukchis who are nomadic herdsmen of reindeer and who move with their herds in the inland area between the Indigirka and Anadyr rivers. The population of ,,Reindeer Chukchis" is three times larger than that of the Coastal ones. They keep up contacts not only with the Coastal Chukchis and Eskimos, but with other ethnical groups too, as e.g. with Koryaks, Itelmens, Evenks and Evens, who are also herdsmen of reindeer.

The continuous contacts of the two Chukchi groups living in distant areas may be one of the reasons of the uniform character of various phenomena both of material as well as spiritual culture of North-Eastern Siberia. Moreover, the Chukchis living in immediate vicinity of Eskimo settlements or even in common settlements with them serve as intermediaries between the arctic cultures of Siberia and America. Through their mediation the cultural elements spread in both directions so that a direct relationship and often an almost startling identity of the objects of Chukchi and Eskimo material culture can be found. Very often only thanks to literary or other documentation it is possible to identify a product as of Chukchi or Eskimo origin.

The Náprstek Museum collection from North-Eastern Siberia comprises forty objects; the specimens of F. Poledna can be safely determined as of Chukchi origin, the three pieces from J. Čekan as coming from the Evens from the Milkovo area in Kamchatka. By their mutual comparison and on the basis of literature it was possible to ascertain the provenance and function of other items of the collection, which evidently come from the same cultural sphere. The same material used, the technological procedures, as well as the types of final products with the decoration showing local ethnical variants can be traced.

At the present time the collection of F. Poledna contains 18 objects. We do not know to what extent they represent the composition of the original whole, whether it ever contained objects of the common inventory of Chukchi life — instruments and weapons, larger pieces of clothing, dwelling equipment or ritual carvings made from wood and bone. Nevertheless, the collection bears witness of various materials for manufacturing of utensils; as far as the interpretation of their usage is concerned the respective notes — with some reservations — can be relied on.

Leather and bone are the most often used materials. Leathern products are sewn together in two or more layers. On the lower layer made from reindeer skin the hair is kept, while the upper layer from sealskin is smoth and decorated with appliqués. Further dog- and sea-bear skin were used. The tanned skin was softened by human urine and dressed by chewing before being sewn. For connecting of single pieces veins and sinews were used only when the unpermeability of the final product was aimed at (e.g. in shoes). But most often the products were sewn with threads of various plants of foreign origin.

The basic decorative technique is appliqué of design from cut sealskin. It is either smooth or haired, in case that the skin of unborn cubs, the so-called mandarka, was used. Other materials used for decoration appear only to a negligible extent and in a very unconspicuous way (textile bands, e.g. in a cap, Inv. No. 22.646, and fringes with small glass pearls, e.g. in a purse for hunters' paraphernalia, Inv. No. 22.633).

At first the appliqué is carried out on small pieces of skin of some geometrical shape — a square, a triangle or a circle which are further sewn on the object in such a way as to form other geometrical motifs. Very often a chessboard arrangement or circles and stripes composed by triangles can be met with.

According to some authors, the appliqué of patterns made of skin changed the dress into a ceremonal one as the design had a magic significance. Also certain diseases were cured by wearing of a dress with magic ornaments.¹² To this category a cap described as belonging to a shaman with appliqué in form of human eyes (Inv. No. 22.644) can be included, as well as a small carpet which is divided into fields filled with circles made of skin appliqués (Inv. No. 22.644). According to Bogoraz¹³ in the Chukchi symbolism the circle represents a star, so that the whole sky may be illustrated in the carpet. The shaman's shoes (Inv. No. 22.627) are decorated with appliqué composed of wave-lines which probably represented rivers. In an engraving decorating one of the pipes (Inv. No. 22.640) the tail of a whale can be identified. It may have suggested the whole whale as it was the case in objects used for hunting ceremonies. F. Poledna, however, did not leave any note concerning the meaning of the decoration found on the objects and the attempts to find parallels in the observations of other authors could have lead to conjectures only.

The appliqués on leather products — may they have a magical meaning or not — disclose an outspoken aesthetic intention which can be classified as an effort for purity of style. A certain strictness of geometrical lines given by predominance of angular motifs is even more accentuated by subdued colours of the material. Only white and brown colour and no other colour-shades are consistently used in one product. Even the threads used for sewing were chosen to harmonize with this two-colour system.

The second material the Chukchi preferably used for production of tools and weapons was bone. The collection of F. Poledna, however, does not include any tools or weapons made of bone with the exception of a club made from the joint of some large animal (Inv. No. 22.639). On the other hand, several objects cut from walrus tusks could be identified. Also two polished, plain walrus tusks representing only the material for carving were originally comprised in the collection. In the time of Poledna's stay in Chukot Peninsula tax was payed in such polished tusks. instead of skin, which was used for the same purpose in Siberia.¹³ From the walrus tusks the Chukchis manufactured tools and weapons and carved miniature ritual sculptures. (Several such specimens were kept at the Oriental Department of the National Gallery in Prague.) But at the time of F. Poledna's stay carvings made of the whole walrus tusk were unknown.14 It was only in the twenties that business with carved walrus tusks started. The collection which F. Poledna assembled before 1909 reflects its beginnings only and can serve as an interesting document of the process by which the traditional art deteriorated into an object of souvenir trade only.

In addition to the walrus tusks in the shape prescribed by tax collectors there are several Chukchi products made of this material in Poledna's collection which were evidently intended for sale: a cigarette holder (Inv. No. 22.637), two pipes (Inv. No. 22.640 and 22.641), a clasp-knife for cutting paper (Inv. No. 22.647) and a pen-holder (Inv. No. 22.639). The Chukchis themselves did not use such objects but could exchange them for other useful things with whale fishers because since the end of the 19th century there was a great demand for walrus-tusk carvings both in Europe and in America.

Only one of the above-mentioned specimens (the penholder) is described in the catalogue. According to this note it was used by a shaman as a drum stick. Bogoraz actually described bone sticks belonging to shaman's drums¹⁵ but they were longer (20 - 30 cm) than the object in Poledna's collection. The object is too short (14,5 cm) to produce sounds which would help the shaman and the participants in the ritual to fall into trance. The curator apparently misplaced the description pertaining to some other object which was lost.

There are two other objects made from walrus tusk (a watch, Inv. No. 22.643, and a mallet, Inv. No. 22.642) which were certainly neither used by the Chukchis nor meant for sale. They are exact imitations of European objects disclosing the total ignorance of their maker as far as their function is concerned. He did not produce them for white sailors but for himself, to enhance his own prestige.

In Poledna's collection there is one object (a hunter's pouch, Inv. No. 22.633), obviously made for personal use. The parts made of bone — a clasp of the pouch, a case for capsules and a gun-powder measure — show an engraved outline of a reindeer surrounded by scratched dots and short lines, probably indicating the catch.

There is only one object from vegetable material in Poledna's collection, namely a small basket (Inv. No. 22.649). It contains 18 pieces of two-colour pebbles and perhaps for this reason was identified as a purse in the catalogue. Because the property of Coastal Chukchis consisted of skin and walrus tusks and the contents of the purse suggests rather the registration of living property, a tradesman can be considered as the original owner of the object. Among the Coastal Chukchis only the tradesman owned reindeer and could have used the pebbles either for counting the animals or remembering his debtors.

The original descriptions of F. Poledna contained also notes on the purpose of individual objects. This valuable information unfortunately got lost during the writing of the catalogue so that now it ist not possible to discern the observations made by the collector from the additions of the museum curator. It was necessary, therefore, to confront systematically the notes with the data derived from literature.

The collection comprises tree pieces of shaman's outfit: a cap (Inv. No. 22.646), shoes (Inv. No. 22.627) and the abovementioned drumstick. On the peak of the cap there are human eyes in appliqué and an embroidered nose. The peak of the cap probably served as a mask and the schematically rendered face represented a second ego of the shaman. The richly decorated shoes correspond with the cap. According to Bogoraz the Chukchi shamans did not wear any special dress for the ritual but only their normal clothing which was modified for the occasion. This seeming discrepancy needs explanation. It is possible that in the locality where Poledna acquired his pieces a shaman made himself ready for the ritual by putting on a special cap and shoes without modifying his normally worn coat; or perhaps the cap and the shoes were modified for the ritual by sewing on special motifs not found in normal clothing. But the motifs used as appliqué for the object are too tiny and therefore unsuitable for repeated sewing and unsewing so that the second conjecture seems improbable.

Two other objects are identified as having served in ritual, too: a carpet (Inv. No. 22.644) and a sleeveless jacket (Inv. No. 22.648). The vitual significance of the carpet is given in detail: the Chukchi chieftains used it when evoking the spirits of prominent ancestors. This fact agrees with the observations of Bogoraz who wrote that in each Chukchi settlement there was a chieftain who — not being identical with the shaman — was a respected authority for communication with spirits, the lords of the universe. The capacity of a Chukchi chieftain was derived from his long stay in the settlement which he or his ancestors founded. He was on intimate terms with local spirits and through their friendly attitude was able to protect the inhabitants of the settlement against any unfavourable influence. For this reason also his cottage was situated as the first one in the row to protect the whole settlement.¹⁷ The jacket is not accompanied by such a detailed explanation but its ostentatious decoration shows that it also could have served the chieftain for the same ritual as the carpet.

A leather ball (Inv. No. 22.629), on the other hand, is described in detail. It was stuffed with the hair of a sacred reindeer, sewn by a girl who wanted to get married the same year and offered as a challenge prize for the winner in a sport contest. Similar balls are known with Chukchis and Eskimos of both continents but as a sport item only. Neither the habit of girls to choose husbands in such a way on their own initiative has been described. From this point-of-view Poledna's observation can be considered a valuable contribution to the cultural history of Chukchis.¹⁸

Even if Poledna's notes accompanying his small collection do not suffice to provide a picture of the structure of Chukchi society, at least several of its elements can be inferred from them. In the settlements property differences existed, on which the authority of the powerful chieftain was based, notwithstanding the fact that he derived it genealogically. He performed several functions of the shaman, too. About the social background of the last mentioned the collection does not give any information. Also specialized tradesmen lived in the communities who did not know the general means of exchange yet.¹⁹

In the time of Poledna's stay a traditional strict division of work between men and women existed among the Coastal Chukchis. Poledna repeatedly points that out, e.g. when commenting upon leather objects he wrote "a product of Chukchi women". He obviously wanted to emphasize the difference from European practice where leather-work was done by men. When writing about this question Bogoraz states that the division of work was so strict that neither men nor women knew the expressions for tools used by the other sex, or they were at least expected to pretend their ignorance.²⁰

From Poledna's collection an interesting observation concerning the degree of foreign influence in the Coastal Chukchi culture can be drawn. Many products show similarity with analogous articles serving the same purpose which come from ethnical groups residing by the coast and making their livelihood as hunters of sea-mammals. The objects are indiscernible from leather or bone products of Asian Eskimos and it is possible to find even certain paralelles among the American Eskimos. It is evident that Chukchis who represent the last colonization wave of the arctic coast, took over from Eskimos not only the way of making their livelihood but also knowledge of manufacturing various objects of everyday use. On the other hand the Chukchi products show similarity with analogous objects coming from reindeer raising nations. This conformity is most conspicuous in clothing. The Coastal Chukchis who do not raise reindeer themselves, often use reindeer skin for the manufacturing of clothing. The reindeer skin as material for parts of clothing is highly appreciated and represents the main object of barter with the inland people. According to Bogoraz²¹ the Coastal Chukchis acquired not only reindeer skin for sewing of clothing but often even finished products which had already served to their original owners. This observation of Bogoraz increases the importance of Poledna's notes on Chukchis own products; the fact that they exclusively concern sealskin objects, is certainly not incidental. The parts of clothing made of reindeer skin must be looked upon with caution. Even those which do not show a traditional Chukchi design might have been used by them, being probably acquired in exchange.

In Chukchi products, besides the influence of the neighbouring ethnical groups, traces of both Russian and American cultures can be clearly identified. The first contacts with Russia date from the middle of the 18th century; from that time onward the influence of Russian culture can be traced. Already at that time the Chukchis acquired metal tools and firearms from Russians. In Poledna's collection this ancient Russian influence is exemplified by a pouch for hunting utensils with three leaden bullets.

The needle, a typical women's instrument, is not represented in the collection: the type of threads used, however, shows that Chukchi women worked with metal- and not bone needles. The pouch for hunting utensils is decorated with several glasspearls. The use of glass-pearls for decorating in Chukchi products of the beginning of the 19th century is confirmed by lieutenant Matyushkin, one of the participants of Wrangel's expedition.²² The glass-pearls were brought to the Chukot Peninsula by Russian tradesmen who purchased them from our countrymen from the Turnov area in Petrograd fairs.²⁵ On the thong of the pouch a glass-pearl similar to the Japanese ojime is strung. Although a direct Japanese influence cannot be excluded, it is more probable that it was mediated through some other ethnical group from Sachalin or Kuril Islands.

Since the end of the 19th century American ships were fishing in the Bering Sea and in the Arctic Ocean. Several times a year they landed in Chukchi settlements on the coast to replenish their supplies of drinking water. Many ships made agreements with Chukchis to pass a part of their catch as a compensation for the use of the sea. The Americans even hired the Chukchis to work on their vessels and brought them as far as the American ports. Bogoraz described the enthusiasm of the Chukchis in acquiring various technical contrivances. As compensation they offered their own products which gradually changed their character in accordance with the demand. In Poledna's collection this tendency can be traced especially in the articles made from walrus tusks. Some of them can be classified as souvenirs while others were evidently inspired by objects seen by the Chukchis among white sailors.

The second part of the collection from North-Eastern Siberia kept at the Náprstek Museum is similar to Poledna's collection mainly as far as the material used is concerned. Also here mainly leather and bone are represented, but in the types of objects certain differences could be traced.

Sealskin was used for a leather belt (Inv. No. 57.501) and man's shoes (Inv. No. 57.503). Also the decoration by ornaments composed of geometrically arranged leather appliqués, in contrasting colours corresponds to the character of Poledna's collection. The Chukchi origin of both objects is corroborated by their provenance from the Brno collection.²⁴

The flat soles of high boots made from reindeer skin (Inv. No 57.502) are joined to the top by a leather band. The sole is soft, without any sign of treating by human teeth, as it is usual in the hard sea-bear skin of Chukchi boots. From the comparison with shoes of other inhabitants of North-Eastern Asia²⁵ the Reindeer-Koryaks turned out to be most probable manufacturers of the boots.

Also in boots of renideer skin (Inv. No. 46.462), with similarly affixed soles, the Chukchi origin can be excluded. The ornament embroidered in silk on the vamp did not appear in the products of Coastal Chukchis before the thirties of the 20th century. The appliqué of textile stripes in combination with embroidery which is found also in decoration of leathern mittens and tabacco pouch from the collection of J. Čekan (Inv. No. A 13.047 and A 13.048) speaks for the Even origin of the boots.

The bone knives for cutting snow (Inv. No. 49.028 and A 13.049) undoubtedly come from Arctic Ocean area. They occur both in Chukchis and Eskimos of both continents which makes a more precise determination impossible.

There are two needle-cases made from hollow reindeer bones in the collection. One of them (Inv. No. 59.102) is decorated with an engraved outline of a reindeer and contains a metal needle wrapped in a piece of leather. On the surface of the second one (Inv. No. 59.101) numbers were engraved which probably indicated a date. The needle-cases made of reindeer bone were common not only in North-Eastern Asia but also among nations of Northern Asia and Europe, so that the Chukchi origin offers only one of many possibilities.

A pendant made from the tooth of a beast of prey (Inv. No. 57.514) is finely cut in a style that does not correspond with Chukchi artefacts. The conventionalization found in Chukchi carved figures stresses the characteristic traits of the depicted animal and suppresses the detail which is not essential. The pendant seems to be composed of both zoomorphic and anthropomorphic elements so that it is difficult to determine what kind of animal it represents. It was cartainly made by an able artist coming from a milieu with long carving tradition, which was absent in the reindeer-breeding ethnic groups. For this reason the Chukchi or Koryak origin of the object is most improbable.

A fishing-rod with a metal hook and a bob of walrus tusk (Inv. No. 4.163) corresponds to the type used by Chukchis and Eskimos. Because Poledna's collection does not include any similar object, the rod represents an important example of a working tool of coastal hunters.²⁷

Two carvings made of mammoth tusk (Inv. No. 57.515 and 57.516) were acquired by the museum in the seventies of the 20th century. They were produced much later than the majority of the

collection. In style they agree with modern Chukchi art as it developed in the thirties of the 20th century.

The décor painted on the toes of the snow-shoes (Inv. No. 59.075 ab) suggests that they were made only after the founding of the Soviet Union, most probably not earlier than after World War II. The shoes belong to the Asian type which differs from the American racket type with one cross-piece. They come from some ethnic group of North-Eastern Siberia, possibly even from the Coastal Chukchis.²⁹

In certain points the second part of the collection complements Poledna's objects. The knives for cutting snow, the needlecases and the fishing-rod serve as examples of working tools which are not represented in Poledna' collection. Three pairs of shoes — one for men, two for women — enrich the clothing items. Although they differ in material, kind of sewing and decoration, they all keep the classical binding of thongs around the ankles.

The second part of the collection brings some new types of products as well. Their restricted number does not allow any conclusions concerning the current cultural changes in the respective area to be drawn, but they at least show the possible way for future collecting.

- 1 In the Anthropos Institute there are six objects from Wrangel Island identified as coming from Chukchis:
 - 1. A leathern bag, 22×29 cm, Inv, No. E 270
 - 2. A leathern bag, 15×19 cm, Inv. No. E 271
 - A small round leathern carpet, Ø 40,5 cm, Inv. No. E 272
 - 4. A leathern bag, 29×31 cm, Inv. No. E 273
 - 5. A leathern bag, 16,5×14 cm, Inv. No. E 274

6. Leathern shoes, without number

- 2 In the National Gallery Prague there was a collection of 71 Chukchi products from the end of the 19th century coming from the inheritance of Rudolf Hejný. The collection consisted mainly of miniature bone carvings probably used in rituals or as toys. Some of them were published in Hájek, L., Forman, W.: The art of Four Continents and Hájek, L.: At the Remotest End.
- 3 The objects were donated to the Museum by Jaroslav Čekan in 1911. They were indentified as Tunguz products from Milkovo region (Inv. Nos. A 13.048, A 13.047, 45.566).
- 4 Archives of the National Museum, carton 59, 31/11. A copy of the reply of Museum management to Poledna's consignment is adressed to Vladivostok.
- 5 Zubov, N. N., pp. 210-225
- 6 In 1975 archaeological research was performed on the Wrangel Island which proved the existence of a settlement of seamammals' hunters of already three thousand years ago. The settlement was evaluated as proof of the oldest Palaeoeskimo culture in Asia. It is probable that also later there were settlements even if not continually on that island with such favorable living conditions.
- 7 The information was given by Mrs. Olga Pazderová from Vlkov and from the municipal office of Osová Bítýška. František Josef Poledna-Vlkovský was born at Vlkov in Moravia in 1877 and died in Prague in 1951.
- 8 On original labels of Poledna's collection the date of 28 Juy 1909 was written. It was perhaps the date of the dispatching of the consignment from Vladivostok. The consignment was delivered to the Museum on 12 April 1910.

- 9 Archives of the National Museum, carton 59, 31/1. A letter addressed to F. Poledna says: "Our Museum of Ethnography accepts exotical objects as donations, but — having very restricted means — is not able to purchase them." The suggestion that F. Poledna offered his collection to Museum in Brno, is corroborated by the fact that Poledna's signature was found on one object from the original collection of Brno and that the same object (Inv. No. E 275) is one of the specimens identified as coming from the Chukchis.
- 10 References to Poledna-Vlkovský can be found also in Nykl, A. R., pp. 82-84 and Malý, J., pp. 14-15
- 11 Bogoraz-Tan published his monograph in two volumes under the title of "Chukchee" first in English; later it was translated into Russian. The collection assembled by the expedition on the basis of which Bogoraz-Tan wrote his book is kept at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.
- 12 Ivanov, S. V.: p. 459
- 13 Bogoraz, W.: chap. XII
- 14 Ivanov, S. V.: p. 419
- 15 Bogoraz. W.: chap. XXIII
- 16 Jefimova, A. K., Klitina, E. K.: pp. 5-6
- 17 Bogoraz, W.: p. 357
- 18 The donation of Poledna-Vlkovský is registered under acqusition numbers 128—147/1911, two walrus-tusks were put under one number. In the catalogue each tusk has its own number and because 20 objects autogether are catalogued, one is evidently missing.
- 19 Bogoraz, W.: chap. XXI
- 20 Bogoraz, W.: chap, XI
- 21 Bogoraz, W.: chap. IX
- 22 Bogoraz, W.: chap. X
- 23 Matuškin, F. F.: pp. 57-68
- 24 Kotler, M.: pp. 133, 259, 423/1842; p. 259/1843
- 25 Karuzt, R.: pp. 31-44
- 26 Bogoraz, W.: chap. VII Himmelheber, H.: p. 142, Bild 6
- 27 Himmelheber, H.: p. 154, Bild 27
- 28 Jefimova, A. K., Klitina, E. K.: illustrations
- 29 Karuzt, R.: p. 29

Catalogue of the Collection from North-Eeastern Siberia

- I. Collection of František Poledna from Coastal Chukchis
- 1 František Poledna, a picture taken after World War I.
- 2 Shoes made of sealskin, decorated with appliqué of pieces of skin of geometric character. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.
 - Original note: Shaman's shoes, made by Chukchi women, softened by human urine and modelled by human teeth.
 - L. 25,5 cm Inv. No. 22.627 ab
- 3 A ball of two-coloured pieces of sealskin with appliqué of stars in contrasting colours. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.
 - Original note: Such balls were donated by girls who wanted to get married to winners of sport competitions (racing, javelin throwing etc.)

Ø cca 20 cm Inv. No. 22.629

- 4ab A belt of brown sealskin decorated with appliqué of geometrical forms. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.L. 109 cm, W. 5 cm Inv. No. 22.628
- 5 A carpet composed of 25 squares of light-coloured and dark-coloured sealskin in chessboard arrangement. Appliqué of leather in contrasting colours. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

Original note: The carpet was used by a Chukchi chieftain during the communicating with deceased persons.

87×81 cm Inv. No. 22.644

- 6 A small carpet composed of 33 squares of brown and white sealskin with appliqué in geometrical arrangement. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.
 34×35 cm Inv. No. 22.645
- 7 A cap composed of pieces of sealskin, reindeer- and dog-skin. On the peak human eyes in appliqué and an embroidered nose. Ear tabs with straps for binding on the sides of the cap. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909. Original note: The cap was used by Chukchi shaman for rituals.

H. (including tabs) 28 cm Inv. No. 22.646

8ab A sleeveless jacket from various kinds of skin and fur (seal, dog, mandarka, reindeer), decorated with feathers of sea-ducks. Coastal Chukchis. before 1909. Original note: The jacket was used for rituals.
H. 50 cm Inv. No. 22.648

9 A hunter's pouch, made of reindeer skin decorated with fringes with glass-pearls. It contains three leaden bullets. The clasp is carved of bone. To the thong a small case for capsules with an engraved reindeer, a gunpowder measure and a yellow glass bead with two red dots are attached. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

L. 20 cm Inv. No. 22.633

- 10 A club of walrus (?) joint with slightly bent handle and a thicker working-part. It was probably used for skin trimming. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.
 L. 17 cm Inv. No. 22.639
- 11 A watch carved of walrus tusk with engraved numerals XII, I, II. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.
 Ø 4,7 cm Inv. No. 22.643
- 12 A mallet of walrus tusk, without handle, suggestive of shoemakers' claw hammer. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

L. 6,5 cm Inv. No. 22.642

13 A four-edged cigarette-holder carved of walrus tusk, decorated with two rings of whale bone. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

L. 12,5 cm Inv. No. 22.637

- 14 A pipe made of walrus tusk with bird foot in relief. The stem is decorated with a ring of whale bone. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.L. 14,5 cm Inv. No. 22.641
- 15ab A pipe made of walrus tusk decorated with engraved whale tail, pair of boots and two boxes. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

L. 14,5 cm Inv. No. 22.640

16 A pen-holder (?) composed of four pieces of walrus tusk with three rings of whale bone. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

L. 14,5 cm Inv. No. 22.636

- 17 A clasp-knife, carved of walrus tusk, decorated with a ring of whale bone. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.L. 7 cm Inv. No. 22.647
- 18 An amulet composed of two teeth of polar bear, a beak of a curlew (Numenius), and a grey stone with several holes, all strung on a leathern thong. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

L. of the tooth 10 cm Inv. No. 22.638

19 A basket made of a band plaited of vegetable fibres, with a circular base made of leather. 18 pink and grey flints of various sizes. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

H. 7,5 cm Ø (bottom) 5,5 cm Inv. No. 22.649

- II. Collection from North-Eastern Siberia Originating from Various Collectors
- 20 A pouch made of reindeer skin decorated with silk embroidery. Kamchatka, Evens from Milkovo region, before 1911.

Original note: Tobacco-pouch, Tungusic product from Milkovo region (collected by Jaroslav Čekan).

H. 24,5 cm Inv. No. A 13.047

21 A pair of gloves, made of reindeer skin lined with white fur, decorated with silk embroidery and appliqué of cloth. Kamchatka, Evens from Milkovo region, before 1911.

Original note: Tungusic product from Milkovo region (collected by Jaroslav Čekan).

L. 28 cm W. 12 cm Inv. No. A 13.048 ab

22 A pair of mitten made of reindeer skin, lined with white bear fur, decorated with textile bands and silk embroidery. Kamchatka, Evens from Milkovo region, before 1911.

Original note: A Tungusic product from Milkovo region (collected by Jaroslav Čekan).

L. 34 cm W. 16,5 cm Inv. No. 45.566 ab

23 Women's boots of fine soft reindeer skin, hair inside. On tops appliqué of white leather triangles. A thong for binding around ankles. Chukoti Peninsula, Koryaks, end of the 19th century.

H. 37 cm L. 27,5 cm Inv. No. 57.502

- 24ab Women's boots made of light reindeer skin, silk embroidery of flowers on the vamp. Leathern thongs. Chukoti Peninsula, Reindeer Chukchis, Evenks, Evens, Koryaks, end of the 19th century.
 - H. 42 cm L. 27 cm Inv. No. 46.462
- 25 Men's boots, brown with white rim. Hard sole made of sea bear skin is treated by human teeth. Geometrical appliqué, leathern thongs. Coastal Chukchis, end of the 19th century or beginning of the 20th century. H. 29 cm L. 26,5 cm Inv. No. 57.503
- 26ab A belt composed of two (brown and white) layers of sealskin, decorated with geometrical appliqué. Coastal Chukchis, before 1909.

Note on the belt: A product of Chukchis from Wrangelland, František J. Poledna-Vlkovský (from the Brno collection where registered under Inv. No. E 275). 107×5 cm Inv. No. 57.501 27 A knife for cutting snow, made of bone, with notched edge, the handle with a bored hole, the blade decorated with simple incised motifs. Coastal Chukchis or Eskimos, end of the 19th century.

L. 19,5 cm Inv. No. 49.028

- 28ab A knife for cutting snow, a hole in the handle for hanging up, engraving of a reindeer on the blade. Coastal Chukchis or Eskimos, end of the 19th century or beginning of the 20th century.
 - L. 25,5 cm Inv. No. A 13.049
- 29 A fishing rod with a metal hook and a plummet of walrus tusk in the shape of a fish (a seal?). Coastal Chukchis or Eskimos, end of the 19th century. L. of the plummer 10 cm Inv. No. 4.163
- 30 A needle-case made of a hollow bone, decorated with an engraved outline of a reindeer and the three notches, containing a steel needle wrapped in a piece of leather. Inhabitants of Arctic coast. end of the 19th century or beginning of the 20th century. L. 6,5 cm Inv. No. 59.102
- 31 A needle-case made of hollow bone. On one end a leathern thong for attaching to the belt, on the other a small flat flint which secures the thong. Decorated with geometrical engravings and an inscription: 1928 13 7 (probably a date). Inhabitants of Arctic coast.

L. 10,7 cm Inv. No. 59.101

- 32ab A pendant made of the tooth of same beast of prey, inside hollow. The upper part is shaped into human head with eyes and ears of an owl. A drilled hole with an iron ring for hanging. Fishermen-hunters of North-Eastern Siberia, end of the 19th century. L. 11 cm Inv. No. 57.514
- 33 A figural carving from mammoth tusk, with a stone stand, representing an archer, a duck and a dog. Chukchis, thirties of the 20th century.
 H. 10,5 cm Inv. No. 57.516
- 34 A figural carving from mammoth tusk, representing a sleigh pulled by a reindeer and driven by a man in a fur coat. Chukchis, thirties of the 20th century.
 L. 27 cm Inv. No. 57.515
- 35ab A pair of snowshoes made of two piece of wood bent into the shape of a bow, a drawing of a radio station with two masts with red flags and three wooden buildings. Chukchis, Eskimos or Koryaks, middle of the 20th century.

L. 100 cm W. 23,5 cm Inv. No. 59.075



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4b











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