

## LANDSCAPES, FACES, AND MEMORIES: ESKIMO PHOTOGRAPHY OF ALEKSANDR FORSHTEIN, 1927–1929

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**Abstract:** The paper addresses the legacy of a young Russian Eskimologist, Aleksandr Forshtein, whose professional career was destroyed by his arrest and 10-year sentence to the labor camps in Siberia in 1937. Forshtein's contribution to Eskimo studies has been almost erased, except for his collection of some 150 photographs taken in several Siberian Yupik communities in Chukotka in 1927-1929. The collection has been preserved at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Forshtein's home institution; it has never been studied or published. A joint project launched in 2003 brought Forshtein's photographs to life and also offered them for the first time to the descendants of the Yupik people featured in his photographs. The paper discusses the role of historical photographs in modern efforts in heritage preservation and the attitude of today's Native knowledge experts towards old images of their communities stored at distant museums.

**Keywords:** Historical Photographs, Siberian Yupik, Heritage Preservation

One of the many outcomes of Native-European contacts in the Bering Strait region over the last 300 years has been an exponential rise in the various types and sources of documentation on Native cultures. Sketchy accounts and hand-drawn maps of the early 1700s were soon replaced by extensive reports written by trained naval explorers and naturalists; those were illustrated with professionally made drawings, word lists in Native languages, and detailed charts with local place-names. By the late 1800s, several new types of records had been added, such as ethnographic and landscape photography (pioneered by Edward W. Nelson in 1878-79); population censuses; ethnological collections; linguistic data for Native grammars and dictionaries; recordings of Native stories and myths; and sound recordings on wax cylinders (first by the Harriman Expedition in 1899). The early decades of the 20th century introduced individual body and facial measurements with portrait photos (Waldemar Bogoras in Chukotka in 1901 and Riley Moore on St. Lawrence Island, 1912); use of movie camera and documentary footage; and stratified archaeological excavations (Diamond Jenness on Diomedede in 1926 and Henry Collins on St. Lawrence Island in 1928).

Those early records on many local communities in the Bering Strait region were usually well cared for, processed, published, and researched by generations of scholars. At the same time, several new factors added pressure against many traditional forms of Native cultural transmission. Because of rapid economic change, government schooling, loss of indigenous languages, and missionaries' activities, people's knowledge of their history in many places is now weaker than it used to be just a few decades or generations ago. As a result, scholars and museum workers now routinely operate with objects, texts, songs, stories, art designs, and images that Native people do not use anymore or cannot even recollect.

This situation is particularly true in the realm of visual imagery from the North. In the old days, elaborate stories about places and distant lands had been commonly recalled. They helped memorize local features via hunting and voyage narratives, place-names and associated stories, travel and navigational instructions. A similar mechanism in terms of personal or family stories helped preserve visual memory of ancestors, their particular features, and character. As those mechanisms weakened, visual memory also shortened, so

that today's people often cannot recognize images of the old places and faces they have not seen themselves. This literally puts the limit of Native visual memory at about 1910 in Alaska and around 1925 or even 1930 in Chukotka, because of the shorter life span of elders on the Siberian side.

It also explains why local people are so anxious these days to get access to historical photos of the old places, sites, and faces from the region. Some Native families have personal photographs going back to the 1940s or even to the 1920s (Norbert 1998); but very few have earlier pictures or old books with their reproductions. So, very few people have had a chance to see the images of their grandparents (or even parents) as young people and children, and hardly anybody could recognize the face of his or her great-grandfather or a long-abandoned ancestral site from an old photograph. Historical photographs, thus, emerge as a crucial source to expand community memory and people's personal knowledge of their deceased ancestors.

In recent years, many historical photo catalogs, illustrated books, and other forms of visual repatriation became available to local audiences. Special projects have been launched to publish collections of old stories illustrated by photographs and maps with old place-names, and other historical records in what has been called "knowledge repatriation" (Krupnik 2001a; 2001b). Again, the situation is much better in Alaska and Canada, where scores of such source-books and historical photo catalogs have been produced (cf. Burch 1981; Campbell 1998; Crowell et al. 2001; Ellana and Sherrod 2004; Fair 2004; Fienup-Riordan 2000; 2005; Gagnon et al. 2002; Hart 2001; Hart and Amos 2004; Krupnik et al. 2002; Laugrand et al. 2000; Lopp Smith and Smith 2001; Schaaf 1996; Senungetuk and Tiulana 1989; *Sivuuqam* 1985-89), compared to Chukotka, where there are but a rare few (e.g., Krupnik 2001a; Leonova 1997).

This paper describes a recent effort aimed at knowledge (visual) repatriation of one historical collection of about 150 photographs taken in several Chukotka Yupik communities between 1927 and 1929 by the Russian ethnologist and linguist Aleksandr Forshtein (Aleksandr Semionovich Forshtein, 1904-1968—Fig.1).<sup>1</sup> Prior to our project, Forshtein's name was all but unknown in Chukotka and no local resident had ever seen any of his photos. The photographs have been stored as glass negatives for 75 years at the Museum of Ethnography and Anthropology (MAE—Kunstkamera) in



Fig.1: Aleksandr S. Forshtein, 1904-1968. MAE collection.

St. Petersburg (then Leningrad), Russia. They had not been researched or published since they were taken in the 1920s.

Forshtein's contributions to Yupik (Siberian Eskimo) ethnology and linguistics have been all but erased from the scholarly record. An aspiring Russian Eskimologist, a favorite student of Waldemar Bogoras (1865-1936), Forshtein was arrested in 1937, at the age of 33, and sentenced to a 10-year term of forced labor in the GULAG prison camps. Although Forshtein survived his ordeals, he neither came back to Leningrad nor returned to his earlier work on Yupik language and ethnology. None of his papers were published after 1937. For more than twenty years, his name was literally stricken off from the official history of Soviet northern studies (cf. Levin and Potapov 1956; Menovshchikov and Rubtsova 1949; Vdovin 1954).<sup>2</sup> His Yupik textbooks and other publications were reportedly lost or destroyed during the 1930s; none of Forshtein's several language textbooks and folklore collections was ever reprinted.

<sup>1</sup>A Russian version of this paper has been submitted to the journal *Antropologicheskii forum* (Krupnik and Mikhailova 2006: 184-220), published by the MAE—Kunstkamera in St. Petersburg, in order to make it more accessible to Russian readers. We use here the Russian, rather than the anglicized version of Forshtein's name (i.e., Alexander Forstein). All Russian names are given in the Library of Congress transliteration system, except for a few names that have established American transliteration, like Waldemar Bogoras (Vladimir Bogoraz), Waldemar Jochelson (Vladimir Iokhel'son), and Leo Shternberg (Lev Shternberg).

<sup>2</sup>The earliest exception was Mikhail Sergeev's (1955) seminal monograph that included a reference to one manuscript by Forshtein titled "The Asiatic Eskimos" (with no date). Forshtein's name was publicly listed again in the early 1960s but merely in passing (i.e., Ivanov 1963:221-223; Menovshchikov 1962:9), and more explicitly in 1975 (Gagen-Torn 1975:199, 205).

This paper is a synopsis of what is known today about Forshtein and his short-lived career in Eskimology (cf. Krauss, *this issue*), and more. Its special focus is on the story of Forshtein's photography from the four Siberian Yupik communities of Chaplino (*Ungaziq*), Naukan (*Nuvuqaq*), Imtuk (*Imtuk*), and Sireniki (*Sighinek*) taken between 1927 and 1929. Both present authors had first learned about Forshtein's photos stored at MAE in the 1980s. It was not until 2002, following a project in knowledge repatriation with the St. Lawrence Island Yupik communities (Krupnik et al. 2002), that one of us (I.K.) suggested a similar initiative be undertaken on behalf of the Yupik communities in Chukotka. It eventually became a collaborative effort of the MAE-Kunstkamera, Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center (ASC), the local Beringian Heritage Museum in Provideniya, Chukotka, and the Chukotka Yupik association "Yupik." In 2003, ASC and the Museum of Beringian Heritage provided financial support to the MAE-based scanning of Forshtein's photographs; these were later sent to Chukotka and offered to local experts for identification, comments, and storytelling (see *Acknowledgements*). Our paper reviews those efforts and uses some of the recently recorded stories as illustrations.

### Alexander Forshtein—a Life Shattered by the GULAG

Little information has been preserved on Forshtein's personal life and academic career. His meager documentary files at the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) and at MAE contain few records beyond some standard personal forms and a few memoranda to the MAE administration. Reshetov (2002) summarized most of this information in the only brief biographical essay on Forshtein published to this day. Few personal letters, no diaries, and hardly any manuscripts, field notes, or other records pertaining to Forshtein have been recovered.<sup>3</sup> Whatever we know of Forshtein from those sources may be summarized in the section below.

Forshtein was born on December 26, 1904 in Marseille, France to a Russian-Jewish émigré family. The family returned to Russia in 1911, to the southern city of Rostov-on-Don, where Forshtein attended local school between 1911 and 1919. Forshtein obviously came from a well-educated family. Between 1919 and 1926, he traveled widely and combined or alternated several short job stints with occasional college and university classes. Forshtein also held

numerous clerical and teaching positions at a fairly young age, including his short-term teaching tenure in a village school on the Kola Peninsula. There he contracted scurvy and was decommissioned to Leningrad. In August 1926, he was admitted to the Ethnography Division of the Leningrad University, where he joined a group of students in Siberian and Northern studies supervised by Waldemar Bogoras and Lev (Leo) Shternberg (Reshetov 2002).

There are many reasons to believe that both Bogoras and Shternberg tutored some of these young students as their prospective heirs in ethnology of Native Siberian nations they had studied themselves in the late 1800s and early 1900s as political exiles and during the Jesup North Pacific Expedition (Krupnik 1998:206-7). After a few years of training, those young men and women were rushed to Siberia to be stationed in local communities as teachers, low-level administrators, and cultural workers (Antropova 1972; Gagen-Torn 1975). Upon return from fieldwork, they became experts in ethnology and social change in their regions: e.g., Erukhim Kreinovich (Kreynovich) on the Nivkh, Sergei Stebnitskii (Stebnitsky) on the Koryak, Nikolai Shnakenburg on the Chukchi (Krupnik 1998). Forshtein was Bogoras' disciple in the study of the Yupik people of Chukotka, whom Bogoras had visited during the Jesup Expedition in 1901.<sup>4</sup>

Forshtein went to his own fieldwork in Siberia at the age of 22 in summer 1927, just after his first year of anthropology training with Bogoras and Shternberg. In spite of his short classes in Northern languages, Forshtein listed in his professional record a brief Chukchi grammar textbook he compiled with another classmate, Sergei Stebnitsky in 1927, under Bogoras' supervision (Reshetov 2002:276). Forshtein had spent almost two years, 1927/28 and 1928/29 teaching and traveling along the Bering Strait coast of Chukotka (see below). All his Yupik photographs at MAE originated from that trip. He then returned to Leningrad in summer 1929 to take his university exams and to defend his senior thesis of some 150 pages, "Asiatic Eskimos as Sea-Mammal Hunters," that was recommended for publication (RAS Archives 4, p.36). We may assume that he graduated externally, without taking all his required classes.

<sup>3</sup>A few pages of Forshtein's linguistic notebook from Sireniki happen to be preserved in Bogoras' personal file at the RAS Archives in St. Petersburg (File 250 – see Krauss, *this issue*); more records may be probably retrieved from this and other Academy's documentary sources. Sergei Slobodin recently recovered and published three letters by Forshtein to Waldemar Jochelson in New York from late 1936 to early 1937 (Slobodin 2004a; 2004b). Three personal letters by Forshtein to Georgii A. Menovshchikov have been preserved at the Magadan Provincial Archives in Magadan; copies were kindly forwarded to us by Svetlana V. Budnikova. Other prospective sources, the file of Forshtein's interrogation and trial in 1937–38 (partly copied by Vakhtin), and a tiny collection of Forshtein's papers in Copenhagen, still await a thorough study.

<sup>4</sup>In his essay on the Yupik (Siberian Eskimo) language for the Russian handbook of Native Siberian languages (1934), Bogoras cited Forshtein's data alongside his old field notes from 1901, particularly with regard to population figures and some first-hand information on the Yupik communities in Chukotka.

From his personal record and the dates on his photographs, we see that Forshtein returned to Chukotka in late 1929 and stayed there until 1933. This time, he was positioned as a teacher and school principal in the Chukchi communities along the Arctic coast: in Uelen, Cape Shelag-sky (in 1930/31),<sup>5</sup> and at the mouth of the Kolyma River in 1931/32 (Reshetov 2002:277).

In late 1933, he was hired at the Institute of Anthropology and Ethnography in Leningrad (the then-official name for MAE). He also taught classes to northern indigenous students at the Leningrad Pedagogical Institute (since 1933) and at the Institute for the Peoples of the North (*Institut narodov Severa*) in 1933-35 (Reshetov 2002:277). He also managed to find time to make good use of his linguistic skills and field materials. According to the list compiled by Michael Krauss (1973; *this issue*), Forshtein published or edited about a half-dozen textbooks, primer, readers, and folklore collections in Siberian Yupik for local schools. His memorandum of January 1934 (RAS Archives 4, p.36) refers to several ethnological papers he had written or that were under preparation (Forshtein 1927; 1929; 1930a; 1930b; 1930c; 1934; n.d.-a; n.d.-b; n.d.-c; n.d.-d). Unfortunately, his unpublished manuscripts are presumed lost after his arrest in 1937. Reshetov (2002:278) also argues that Forshtein played a key role in the design of the exhibit on the history of technology of Arctic peoples at MAE in 1936 (MAE Archives, F. K-IV, op.8, no.131).

The pinnacle of Forshtein's career in Eskimology was his three-month stay at the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen in April-July 1936. By that time, it was an extraordinary case for a Soviet ethnographic specialist to visit European or North American research institutions on a prolonged individual trip. In Copenhagen Forshtein evidently worked under Kaj Birket-Smith, then the Head of the Ethnology Department at the National Museum. He also made personal contacts with other Danish Eskimologists, such as William Thalbitzer and Louis Hammerich,<sup>6</sup> and he might have been introduced to several other Danish northern scholars, including Wilhelm Schultz-Lorentzen, Peter Freuchen, Helge Larsen, and Therkel Mathiasen.<sup>7</sup> Forshtein brought as a gift

from the *Kunstkamera* a substantial collection of prints of contemporary photographs from Siberia (including several dozen prints of his own photos from Chukotka) and a small set of carved ivory objects and Native drawings; both are still preserved at the National Museum, with extensive Russian hand-written captions made by Forshtein. We have little information on what he actually did in Copenhagen over three months in 1936, but he clearly understood the vulnerability of his status. In June 1936, Forshtein made a desperate appeal to Franz Boas asking for a chance to extend his stay in the West for a year or two, after he learned of Bogoras' death in Russia (Krupnik 1998: 213-214). Unfortunately, it was too late; Forshtein's life was to change dramatically in less than a year after his return from Denmark.

In May 1937, Forshtein, Kreinovich, and several other faculty members of the Institute for the Peoples of the North, including its Director, Ian Koshkin (Al'kor), were arrested and charged with "espionage and terrorist conspiracy" (Reshetov 2002:278; Roon and Sirina 2003:61; Vakhtin n.d.). Forshtein and Kreinovich were accused of being members of the "Japanese spy network," presumably recruited during their early work as teachers (!) in the Russian Far East in the late 1920s. The absurdity of the charges is quite obvious. All imprisoned researchers received death sentences as "spies and terrorists" in January 1938; Koshkin and several others were executed shortly, whereas Forshtein's as well as Kreinovich's sentences were commuted to ten years of forced labor in the deadly GULAG camps in East Siberia (Reshetov 2002:279; Roon and Sirina 2003:62). Remarkably, they survived and were both released in 1948.

Unlike Kreinovich, who returned to Leningrad and went back to academic life—to be re-arrested and sentenced again a few years later—Forshtein dropped out of any academic activity. He remarried, changed his last name, and reportedly worked as an employee in local economic agencies in the southern regions of the Soviet Union: in Georgia, Armenia, and, later, Uzbekistan.<sup>8</sup> According to his daughter, he died in Tashkent in 1968, at the age of 64 (Reshetov 2002:279). As far as we know, he never returned to his Siberian Yupik studies.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup>In 1930/31 Forshtein was reportedly teaching at a small Native school with four(!) Chukchi students at Cape Shelag-sky, Chaun Bay (Kaltan 1931). The classes took place in a Chukchi skin-tent, which was also used as a residence for Forshtein, his wife, and their small child.

<sup>6</sup>Three personal letters by Forshtein to Thalbitzer written between December 1936 and April 1937 (all in Danish) are currently preserved in Thalbitzer's letter collection at the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Hammerich is known to be the first foreign scholar who started inquiring upon Forshtein's whereabouts in the late 1950s, when the contacts between Russian and Western northern specialists finally resumed, evidently because he remembered Forshtein.

<sup>7</sup>According to Hans-Christian Gulløv (personal communication to IK, 2005), Forshtein most certainly was introduced to Schultz-Lorentzen and Larsen, who both worked closely with Birket-Smith, and to Mathiasen, who was then the curator of the Danish prehistory collections at the National Museum. Other Greenlandic specialists, such as Eric Holtved and Eigel Knuth, could have been available during Forshtein's stay in Copenhagen, if not on their summer fieldwork in Greenland. Peter Freuchen, not associated with the museum, was also very active at that time, always seeking out new visitors from the North, particularly someone as exotic as Forshtein, with his first-hand knowledge of the Russian Eskimos and other Soviet indigenous peoples.

<sup>8</sup>That phase of Forshtein's professional career is described in three of his letters to Georgii Menovshchikov written in 1965, though probably in a slightly exaggerated way.

<sup>9</sup>Michael Krauss kindly shared his record of talking about Forshtein with Danish linguist Louis Hammerich in the 1970s. Hammerich, who should have remembered

Despite Forshtein's abrupt disappearance and no further contribution to the field of Eskimo studies after 1937, his name and the memory of his work in Chukotka never faded away completely. It was preserved within a small group of his elderly peers as well as among the next generation of Eskimo linguists and ethnologists. Both authors learned of Forshtein's name during their graduate research in Yupik ethnology in Russia in the 1970s, mostly through references in earlier publications and manuscripts. On the Alaskan side, Michael Krauss at the Alaska Native Language Center in Fairbanks, recovered titles and copies of Forshtein's publications of the 1930s (see Krauss 1973; *this issue*), which he later shared with his Russian colleagues. Krauss was also the first to come across a reference to Forshtein's visit to Copenhagen in 1936 and to his communications with Birket-Smith and Boas. He kindly shared a copy of Forshtein's letter to Boas from Copenhagen that was eventually published by one of us (Krupnik 1998: 213-214). Reshetov's short recent paper (Reshetov 2002) helped re-establish Forshtein's name among the Russian Siberian specialists as well (Slobodin 2004a, 2004b; Vasil'kov and Sorokina 2003).

This account may be slightly livened by some personal recollections of the late Russian Eskimologist, Georgii A. Menovshchikov, shared with Michael Krauss in 1990. Menovshchikov (1911-1991), the dean of Soviet Yupik studies and another former schoolteacher in Chukotka in 1932-34 to become a Yupik linguist, received his professional training in Leningrad between 1934 and 1936. He most certainly had plenty of chances to interact with Forshtein; we now know that the two also corresponded in the 1960s and had met around 1965, when Forshtein visited Menovshchikov at the Institute of Linguistics in Leningrad. According to Menovshchikov, Forshtein's linguistic publications had minimal impact. His Yupik textbooks were printed in the Roman Yupik orthography that was abolished and replaced by a Cyrillic-based orthography in 1937 (see Krauss, *this issue*). Menovshchikov claimed that Forshtein's textbooks were lost in shipment and never reached local schools anyway, thus were not known to Yupik readers (Michael Krauss to IK, June 2, 2003). Yupik elders interviewed in the 1970s remembered Forshtein's name but vaguely and with no personal details (Krupnik, field notes). His was indeed a life and career aborted by the GULAG, one of many shattered lives in the tragic record of Russian academia under the Stalinist regime.

The recovery of Forshtein's life story opens another intriguing aspect of the scientific legacy. It has long been as-

sumed that it was Nikolai Shnakenburg, Forshtein's colleague and fellow Bogoras student, who was the first to report on the unilineal kin units, clans or gens, among the Siberian Yupik of Chukotka. Shnakenburg's unpublished manuscript, "Eskimosy" (The Eskimo, 1939) had been originally written as a chapter for a four-volume handbook on the peoples of the Soviet Union in preparation prior to World War II. That handbook was never published (its manuscript is preserved at the MAE Archives); in the 1950s, some of its early contributions were re-used for a far more monumental 18-volume series, *Peoples of the World* published by the Russian Institute of Ethnography. Its 1100-page volume on the peoples of Siberia (Levin and Potapov 1956) had a section on the Asiatic Eskimos written by Menovshchikov, "with the use of materials by N.B. Shnakenburg" (Levin and Potapov 1956:8). In his chapter, Menovshchikov (1956:941) recycled a description of clan-like kin-groups among the Yupik, including the very list of clan groups from Shnakenburg's paper of 1939. Menovshchikov later published another clan list of his own in a special paper dedicated to the clan system of the Chukotka Yupik people (Menovshchikov 1962b).

The problem is that we have no records of any fieldwork by Shnakenburg in the Yupik communities referred to in his manuscript. He was primarily a specialist in the Chukchi culture, stationed on the Arctic coast of the Chuckhi Peninsula (Reshetov 1995:3) and he hardly had any first-hand knowledge of the Yupik language and social system. Even if he had passed through some Yupik villages on his route, he had no clues to look for a social system that had eluded many researchers before him, including his mentor Bogoras (Krupnik 1996: 35-36). Forshtein, on the other hand, had both the required knowledge of and the rapport with local Yupik communities. We now have references that he indeed had been working on several papers focused on the Yupik social structure, including a paper titled "The Formation of the Clan (Russian: *rod*) among the Asiatic Eskimo" (RAS Archives 4, p.36, see Forshtein n.d.-a).

There are other reasons to believe that it was in fact Forshtein who collected data on Siberian Yupik clans, including their names, either on his earlier fieldwork or from the Yupik students he later worked with in Leningrad. One of his hand-written Russian captions to the drawings he donated to the National Museum in Copenhagen in 1936 reads as follows: "Drawings by the Eskimo Majnga from the Lakarmit group (community, Russian 'obshchina') in the village of Ungazeq on Cape Chaplin" (Forshtein Collection, 143/36, p.7, translated by I.K.). This is the earliest known reference

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Forshtein from 1936, referred to his meeting with "an unnamed former German World War II prisoner," who reportedly saw Forshtein as "a broken man" in one of the GULAG camps. According to Hammerich, Forshtein never went back to his Yupik studies and had become a textbook writer (?) in Tashkent (Michael Krauss, personal communications to IK, 2003, 2004). Hammerich most certainly received this information from some of Forshtein's Russian colleagues during the 1960s, presumably from Georgii Menovshchikov, at the 5th International Ethnological Congress in Moscow in 1964, or after that.

to the largest clan in Ungaziq, Lakarmit (*Laakaghmiit*) that was later listed by Shnakenburg (1939), Menovshchikov (1956; 1962), and all further students of the Siberian Yupik social system. After Forshtein's arrest in 1937, some of his manuscripts might have been preserved and later used by his colleagues, in order to get his data published. This had been a common practice in those dark years, when so many scholars vanished in the GULAG and their writings stood no chance to get published unless under someone else's name. Thus, we believe we should credit Forshtein as the most likely pioneer to "discover" the clan system among the Yupik Eskimo of Chukotka. Most certainly, it was he who also compiled the first list of Yupik clan names that was later cited by Shnakenburg (1939) and Menovshchikov (1956:941).

### Forshtein Photo Collections at MAE

At present, there are three photo collections attributed to Forshtein at MAE in St. Petersburg. The first collection (# И-104, 66 units) contains the pictures of the Chukchi people and Chukchi villages and camps, primarily from the Arctic coast of Chukotka, dated between 1928 and 1931. Most of the photographs were in fact taken in 1931, when Forshtein was stationed at Chaun Bay, near Cape Shelagsky, East Siberian Sea. The second and by far the largest collection of some 140 photos (И-115) titled "The Eskimos," is made of pictures taken in various Yupik (Siberian Eskimo) communities between 1927 and 1929. The small third set of 12 negatives and prints (И-429) is registered as "objects from personal collection; Asiatic Eskimo, Cape Chaplin"; it features some twenty ivory carvings obviously purchased by Forshtein during his trips. In all three collections, photographs were labeled, dated, and registered by Forshtein himself.

In the MAE Accession records, Forshtein's Yupik photo collection is listed as a "gift from A.S. Forshtein received in 1929." All original images were large-size glass negatives (9 by 12 cm). The collection was processed seven years later, in 1936, when Forshtein made a full list of 147 images with captions. The original accession of 1929 listed 150 negatives; the 1936 registry had 147 items (the original nos. 30, 126, and 127 were already missing). The 1936 inventory supplied a short caption for each negative: the name of the village or camp where a photo was taken; a brief description of the scenery or activities, usually of a few words; and the name(s) of the person(s) on portrait-style photos. Since Forshtein was familiar with recording of Yupik language materials, people's names are usually easy to recognize from his brief captions.

No dates are available for individual photos, only the reference to the origins of the whole collection, "From the

expedition of 1927-1929; Asiatic Eskimos of the Chukchi Peninsula." The lack of dates is a sad omission compared to his Chukchi collection, in which every image is supplied with a day, or at least a year, obviously from Forshtein's field notes. This may be explained by the time when Forshtein processed his Yupik photos at MAE. That happened on April 10th, 1936, or barely a week prior to his departure to Copenhagen for the Danish National Museum. Forshtein was obviously very short on time and under pressure from MAE administration to clear off his museum duties in advance of a long trip. His prints presented to the Danish National Museum have identical captions, also without specific dates.

Luckily, all Forshtein's photographs at MAE survived his arrest and his disappearance into the GULAG camps. Most of his negatives were backed up with medium-size contact prints (9 by 12 cm) and remained safely in the MAE Siberian collections as prospective illustration materials. They were hardly ever used for research and were never published under his name. We were able to trace just a few of Forshtein's images used in MAE publications: in the handbook "*Narody Sibiri*" (Levin and Potapov 1956:937, 939) and in another monumental volume, *Istoriko-etnograficheskii atlas Sibiri* (Levin and Potapov 1961:196). None of the three photos bear Forshtein's name or offers any reference to his work.

When the Forshtein collection was retrieved and re-researched in 2003, seven of the original 147 glass negatives were found missing or broken without backup prints and 15 more were lost or broken, but had prints available for scanning. The remaining 140 images, 125 negatives and 15 prints, have been scanned and enhanced (edited) by the personnel of the MAE Visual Anthropology Lab (see *Acknowledgements*). The glass negatives are of a fairly good quality and generally remain in better shape than the backup prints. Scanned images were recorded on CDs, organized by communities; copies were mailed in 2003 to the Arctic Studies Center, Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and to the Beringian Heritage Museum in Provideniya, Russia, for further work with local experts in Chukotka and St. Lawrence Island.

### Tracing Forshtein's Chukotka Routes through Photos, 1927-1929

Forshtein's Yupik photography from 1927-1929 is probably our best source to reconstruct his field routes and to shed some light on his relationship with the local people. We know that Forshtein went to Chukotka in summer 1927 under a two-year teaching contract with the Far-East "Committee of the North" (*Dal'nevostochnyi Komitet Severa*). He had been offered a position at the school in the Chukchi village of Uelen, just north of Bering Strait. Forshtein's route

to Chukotka in late spring 1927 was by train to Vladivostok and then by cargo ship *Kolyma* to Bering Strait. In his published letter to his university professors of June 1927 he reported: "I am going as a Chukchi teacher to [the village of] Uelen at Cape Dezhnev. Will reach Uelen by July 20th. Will stay at Chukotsky Nos [Cape Dezhnev–IK, EM] at least for a year, until I can get myself deeply immersed in Chukchi life; then hope to make a trip along the Arctic Coast" (Anonymous 1927:39; Reshetov 2002:276). Every contracted student was required to serve in the North for at least two years, before one could return to Leningrad to complete one's education. Eventually, Forshtein's teacher's contract with the Committee of the North lasted for six-and-a-half years: from May 6, 1927 till October 28, 1933 (RAS Archives 142:6), with just a short break for a trip to Leningrad in summer 1929.

We believe that Forshtein's first tenure of 1927-29 was not that of a teacher in Uelen but rather of a traveling inspector for the District Educational Office (that included all of the Russian side of Bering Strait) or even of a substitute teacher in some other communities. His employment record from his personal file indeed stated that he had worked "with the educational institutions under the Far-East Educational Office as a head (principal) of native schools (at Ungaziq, Chaun, and Pokhodsk) and as an inspector for native education of the region from May 20, 1927 till October 28, 1933" (RAS Archives 142:5, 6). We assume that something did not work for Forshtein's initial position in Uelen in 1927 (or in early 1928) and that he swiftly shifted his interest to the Yupik communities in southern Chukotka. His university senior thesis of 1929, "Asiatic Eskimos as Sea-Mammal Hunters," and all of his later publications and linguistic work on the Yupik language were good testimony to that shift in his research interest.

Once can see the same shift in his photography of 1927-1929, though indirectly. There are hardly any pictures of 1927-1929 among his "Chukchi" photographs, except for two photos that feature school building and the wireless station in Uelen, and three other pictures of the new cultural center in the nearby Lavrentiya Bay. On top, there are two photos dated 1928 from Chukchi villages near Senyavin Strait, some 150 miles south of Uelen. That means that by 1928 Forshtein was either traveling through or had moved from Uelen to southern Chukotka.

Indeed, his largest single set of images from 1927-1929 of 62 photos came from the Yupik village of Ungaziq

("Ungazek" in Forshtein's captions) at Cape Chaplin. We believe that Forshtein might have been working as a substitute teacher or even as principal at the Ungaziq village school at least by winter or spring of 1928. Forshtein's photography from Ungaziq includes images from almost every season: from fall hunting to mid-winter scenes and rituals to the beginning of spring to mid-summer communal activities. Eight photographs from the nearby village of "Sekluk" (*Sigluk*) were also taken in both summer and wintertime. It looks like Forshtein could have spent a full year (or more?) in and around Ungaziq; at least he was there for a much longer time than at his initial job placement at Uelen.

Forshtein's Yupik folklore collection published in 1935 and 1936 (see Krauss, *this issue*) has a subtitle "Recorded by A.S. Forshtein in the village of Ungazek." Also, Georgii Menovshchikov (1977:124) in his memoirs from his early teaching years in Chukotka referred to Forshtein as a teacher "at the first regular school in Ungaziq in 1928." Nikolai Shnakenburg's manuscript, "The Eskimo" (1939), which, as we assume, might have been written with substantial use of Forshtein's texts and notes, refers extensively to an anonymous "schoolteacher from the village of Ungaziq at Cape Chaplin" and his observations of spring and summer 1928. One extended quotation, for example, described a bowhead whale hunt and the following distribution of bales among five crews in Ungaziq in April 1928. We believe that in this and other cases Shnakenburg's manuscript cited Forshtein's field notes or some of his later writings that were somehow available to Shnakenburg in the late 1930s.

The main argument, however, can be taken directly from Forshtein's photos from Ungaziq and also from other Yupik communities. Despite hardly a year of his university training in ethnology, Forshtein proved to be an avid field photographer as well as a competent ethnographer. Forshtein was clearly following the path of his famous mentor, Waldemar Bogoras, who also took some 150 photos in Ungaziq in 1901 (Bogoras' photo collection from Ungaziq is now preserved at the American Museum of Natural History in New York). Either advised by Bogoras or thanks to his personal intuition, Forshtein took his photographs in several thematic "sets" of images, such as building a dwelling, launching a boat, documenting shaman performance, or a certain ritual (see below). Among those are six thematic sets from Ungaziq that feature specific rituals, both inside a family dwelling and outdoors, often taken in a sequential order.<sup>10</sup> Those pictures, plus several more images of family meals and tea-drinking parties taken in the inner living quarters of Yu-

<sup>10</sup>Forshtein was clearly interested in the documentation of Yupik ritual practices and in attending ceremonies that took place during his sojourns in the villages. Sergei V. Ivanov (1963:221-23) quoted a long and very detailed description of the Yupik winter ceremony that had been reported to him by Forshtein in 1936, who observed it first-hand. "Unfortunately," as Ivanov admitted, "those highly valuable field notes (!) remain unpublished."

pik houses, testify to Forshtein's rather intimate rapport with local villagers, who were at the same time his students and their parents. Bogoras obviously did not have such a rapport during his three-month stay in Ungaziq; at least, we have no evidence for this in his photography of 1901.

Besides Ungaziq and Siqluk, Forshtein visited other Yupik communities in southeastern Chukotka, including the two westernmost villages Imtuk (*Imtuk*) and Sireniki (*Sighinek*), where he took 23 and 13 photographs, respectively. He made this trip by dogsled, as Bogoras had in 1901, as there are several images of dog-teams. He traveled presumably in late spring, since some of his Imtuk and Sireniki photographs featured melted snow and people moving from winter houses to lighter summer tents. That usually happened in late May or June (Krupnik 2001:37, 190). We may assume that he stayed at Imtuk and Sireniki for some time in June, since some of his pictures showed very little snow on the ground and a full row of summer tents erected along the beach. Forshtein made this trip either in May-June 1928 or a year later, which means that he stayed in Ungaziq until spring 1929.

Besides southern Yupik villages, Forshtein also visited two Siberian Yupik communities in the North, Naukan (*Nuvuqaq*) at East Cape (23 images) and "Imaklek" (*Imaqliq*) on Big Diomed Island (4 images), which are close to Uelen. Pictures from both places depict mid-late summer scenery, with some floating sea ice but no snow. As seen from the pictures, Forshtein had visited both places by a steamer or large motorboat. In Naukan he made several personal portraits (all taken in school or outdoors) and documented the construction of a new stationary winter house, which was usually a late summer activity. No pictures were taken inside family dwellings; that speaks of a fairly short visit. The time could have been summer of 1928 or 1929, most probably on Forshtein's return trip to Uelen for his subsequent departure to Leningrad.

We know that in summer 1929, Forshtein returned to Leningrad, in order to graduate from the university. Besides his photographic collection, he also brought some ethnographic specimens that he later donated to MAE. A larger collection of 67 objects (# 4211), all from the Yupik Eskimo, was registered and processed in 1933; the accession date is listed as November 1, 1929. Forshtein's other accession consisted of one object, Yupik skin boots from the village

of Imtuk (# 5116), and was also dated 1929. These dates confirm Forshtein's short stay in Leningrad between his two stints in Chukotka, as he had to catch the last steamer out of Vladivostok no later than mid-September. The man evidently returned to the city for just a few months, after two years spent in the North. He passed his university exams, left behind the objects and the images he collected on his trip, got married, and stormed out of the city to go back to Chukotka for four more years.<sup>11</sup> Things were indeed moving fast for Aleksandr Forshtein, who was then twenty-five years old.

### Old Photos, Today's Memories: Forshtein's Photos Revisited, 2004

Of the four Chukotka Yupik communities most extensively documented by Forshtein in 1927-29, Chaplino (*Ungaziq*), Naukan (*Nuvuqaq*), Sireniki (*Sighinek*), and Imtuk (*Imtuk*), only one, Sireniki, remains today at its old location.<sup>12</sup> Naukan and Chaplino were closed by the Soviet authorities in 1957 and 1958, respectively, and their residents were forced to relocate to other villages. Imtuk was abandoned even earlier, in 1932-33, when its residents moved to Sireniki, where a new school and a bigger store had been built. Even Sireniki, the only remaining village, has been dramatically rebuilt and little of the old site is recognizable in the town of today.

Despite several decades of abandonment, strong memories and numerous stories are still associated with each of the former Yupik villages (cf. Krupnik 2001). They all refer to the past "cultural landscapes," that is, to the realities that ceased to exist some fifty or even more years ago. Here the power of historical photography and of human memory meet and often make a perfect match. This section reviews today's stories associated with some of Forshtein's photographs. They have been recovered from various sources—as narratives of today's elders, child memories, comments of experts, and recordings kept in earlier field notes.

#### 1. *Landscapes from Sireniki—"Ruins of an old pit-house"* (U-115-60 to 62—Fig. 2).

The ruins of the old underground houses built of large whale jawbones and skulls, once used to cover a large area at Sireniki. Yupik elders in the 1970s recalled stories associated with the old houses and with traditional rituals once performed

<sup>11</sup>Forshtein married his fellow ethnology student Klavdia Myl'nikova, a specialist in Tungus-Manchu people of the Amur River valley. She went with him to Chukotka and stayed there for almost four years. A student of Leo Sternberg, Myl'nikova-Forshtein made her own name in the studies of Tungus folklore and linguistics. Her career was broken, however, after Forshtein's arrest, as she was fired from the Institute, pushed from academic studies, and even forced to leave Leningrad. On Myl'nikova's life see Khasanova 2002.

<sup>12</sup>Four other Siberian Yupik communities featured in Forshtein's photos, Imaqliq on Big Diomed, Siqluk, Avan, and Tasiq, are similar "virtual" cultural landscapes. They all had been closed by the 1940s and 1950s, and their residents were removed to other villages.



Fig.2: "Ruins of the underground house-pit." MAE, И-115-60. Sighinek/Sireniki, spring 1928 or 1929.

there by their ancestors (Krupnik 2001:36-37, 316-317). A written comment of 2004 to Forshtein's photo by Klavdia (Klava) Makarova (née Skhaugwi/*Sighaawyi*, born 1959), adds more recent memories to the old picture:

These are old underground houses, *nenglu*; that's how they are called (in Yupik). My mother Vera Kawawa, born 1929, once told me a story about how she used to work at the construction of a community ice-cellar. It was around 1945; she was a young girl back then. They dug the ground at the hill near the shore called *Saaygu*, which used to be an observation site for our elders. They always sat there in the old days and watched the hunters at sea with their binoculars.

When they dug deep into that hill, they found an underground house, an old *nenglu* inside. It was oval in shape and was well preserved. It was flanked with bowhead whale skulls all around and it had many ribs and whale jaws placed on top for the roof. It had a long entrance that was going toward the shore. Look, they also found human remains in that pit-house—of two women and a child. One woman, as my Mom recalled, had black hair with bead head decorations. We call

them "*qopaget*" (*qupaget*). That woman was lying inside the living portion of the house, *aagra*. The other woman was gray-haired; she had a wooden dish, *qayutaq*, next to her, with the leftovers of whale blubber. The child's skeleton was probably that of a 4-5-year-old; it was put on a small sled. They found so many objects inside, like spoons, combs, and house utensils made of bone, wood, and clay. Some of them were decorated. It was a well-to-do family, Mother said, as seen from the house stuff and also from the bead jewelry.

We have been told that in the old days they left the houses with all the stuff inside if somebody died in the family of an unknown cause and passed quickly. They never entered such houses, just abandoned it; they never even walked around (February 2004; translated by I.K.<sup>13</sup>).

Klava Makarova is 47 years old and, thanks to her late mother, Vera Kawawa, who was an accomplished storyteller, she preserves the memory of the old site that is now almost obliterated by the later construction work. In several written comments to Forshtein's photographs taken 30 years prior to her birth, Klava repeatedly referred to her mother's stories about the "old life" in Sireniki and Imtuk. Some of her sto-

<sup>13</sup>This and other translations of today's comments to Forshtein's pictures follow a more colloquial Russian style in which they have been written or recorded.



Fig.3: "Family of Iyain, the Eskimo." MAE, И-115-25. Naukan, summer 1929.

ries quote Kawawa's father Numylen, Klava's late grandfather, whom she never saw. Numylen, who passed away in the late 1950s, is remembered as a much-esteemed elder and cultural expert. He was a successful middle-aged hunter in 1928 or 1929, when Forshtein visited Sireniki. To Klava, Forshtein's photos offer a priceless link to her mother's childhood years, to the memory of her grandfather Numylen, and to her own Yupik cultural roots.

2. *Faces from Naukan—"The family of Iyain, the Eskimo" (И-115-25—Fig. 3) and others.*

Eight portrait and family photos were taken by Forshtein in the northern Yupik community of Naukan in the summer of 1928 or 1929. Most of Forshtein's captions to family pictures list the names of adult men only. Elizaveta Dobrieva, who was born in Naukan in 1942 and who now lives in Lavrentiya, identified all of the people featured on Forshtein's Naukan photographs; she also offered extensive written comments to the village and scenic images from the old village:

*Iyayen* (Iyain) was an esteemed sea-mammal hunter. He was born, got married, grew old, and died in Naukan.

The little girl sitting at his lap is his youngest daughter *Atutuwyi/Atutugyi*. She is an elderly lady today, Irina Nikolaevna Tsukanova. Since the 1950s and to this day she has been living in Provideniya. She worked as a nurse at the local hospital for many years. She had no children of her own. The other girl's name is *Atangiq*; she was the second of Iyayen's children (August 2004).

On the back of the 11 by 8.5" photocopy of the image, Dobrieva drew a genealogical chart of *Iyayen's* family going back to *Iyayen's* grandfather *Uqoya*. It goes down to some of *Iyayen's* grandchildren, who are now in their 50s and even 60s. *Iyayen* was a middle-aged man during Forshtein's visit; so, he was probably born around 1885. *Uqoya*, his grandfather, could have been born around 1830 or 1840. Five generations of his lineage, or some 180 years of Naukan history, are preserved in that short written comment by Dobrieva. *Atatugyi/Irina Tsukanova* (born 1926 or 1927) remains the only living person featured on Forshtein's 140 Yupik photographs and, thus, it would seem the only Yupik person in Chukotka today, who personally met Forshtein, although as a very small child.



Fig.4: "Tlingeun, the schoolgirl." MAE, И-115-28. Naukan, summer 1927 or 1929.

Forshtein's photos also featured some people whom Dobrieva and almost all of today's living Naukan people have never seen. Three pictures feature young schoolgirls. To one of the photos ("Tlingeun, the schoolgirl"—Fig.4), Dobrieva wrote a short caption:

Llingeun was a daughter of Anaya and Qutgegun. After she graduated from the village seven-grade school, she and another girl, Singegeun, daughter of Iyayen (see Fig.3), went to study at the medical school in Khabarovsk. They both got sick and passed away there; they were buried there (August 2004).

The picture of another young woman, *Alperagtenga* carries a similarly sad caption:

Alperagtenga, Llingeun, and Sitngegun were the activists in their generations. Alperagtenga, upon graduating from the village seven-grade school, went to study in Leningrad, at the Institute for the Peoples of the North. She got sick and died there; she is buried there (August 2004).

These are probably the only pictures of these three young Yupik women, who died 70 years ago. They will be eventually shared with their families, as the only pieces of memory of young lives cut short. To Dobrieva and other members of her community, these and other photos taken by Forshtein are of immense value. The former Naukan residents have hardly any photographs of their old site or of their relatives from that early time. Also, they have no easy access to other early photography from Naukan that exists elsewhere, particularly in Alaska.<sup>14</sup> After being evicted from the old site in 1958, they have heroically preserved the legacy of their homeland for almost fifty years (Leonova 1997). Forshtein's photographs provide a strong visual link to the old memories and fathers' landscapes, despite more than two generations of physical separation.

3. *Images from Ungaziq—"Attyrak festival by Matlu, the Eskimo: ritual objects"* (U-115-124 and U-115-125—Fig.5).

Two images in this series of eight photographs depict the so-called *Attyrak* festival held by "Matlu, the Eskimo." Both the name of the person and of the festival can be easily identified. Matlu (*Mallu*) was a well-known hunter in Ungaziq and also a prominent local Soviet activist in Forshtein's time. *Attyrak* (*Ateghaq*) was the Yupik name of the early spring ceremony that marked the beginning of

spring hunting. Each boat captain performed it separately, though the ritual, reportedly, was more or less uniform (cf. Voblov 1952). We found clues to the pictures in the story of the *Ateghaq* festival recorded from *Uugsima* (U.I. Ukhsuma, 1915-1989) in 1977 and 1979 (Krupnik 2001:267-268; translated by I.K.):

In the spring, just before they started hunting, they usually killed a dog. Not a lead-dog, of course, but a full-grown dog. Grandpa always did the killing for our family. They watched how the dog was dying: if it passes quickly, it's good. If it is dying slowly and barks a few times, that's a bad signal. Grandpa knew, how to make the dog to die fast.

[...] They did this festival in the spring, mostly in April; usually, it was held inside the house (skin-tent). They made a large pile in the middle of the inner room: they put the pokes (seal-skin floats, *awataghpaget*), the mast from the whaleboat, the sails and skin lines. They pulled it all in the middle. They also put in that pile a big wooden bowl full of meat. They used to cover it with a sail—I don't know why they did it and I don't remember it clearly. I was a little girl then. My Grandma used to prepare this meal for the festival. She boiled reindeer meat in the evening and then she made it into sort of ground meat, mixed with blubber and seal oil. Almost like a paté, but with no salt. We called it *perara*, *peraramen*. They made five lumps, sort of, on the surface of the ground meat; they put it for the night on top of the sleeping chamber, where it's warm at night.

In the morning, they open it up and they check the bowl carefully. If one or two of the lumps are missing, that means they are to get a whale or a polar bear this spring. Because we regard the whale and the polar bear as "god-given animals." They are given by God to a few people only, to those whom He wants to reward. So, they check: if all lumps are still there—well, no whale or polar bear comes this season.

Then they take the skin-boat and move it to the shore, with this bowl of meat and other stuff, like tobacco. Up to the festival, they usually keep the skin-boat near the house during wintertime. Just made a temporary boat-rack of four paddles or

<sup>14</sup>See, for example photos from C.W. Scarborough Collection of the 1920s (88-130-36N) preserved at the Archives and Manuscripts, Alaska and Polar Regions Department, University of Alaska Fairbanks, that have been reproduced as cover images in the recent Naukan Yupik Dictionary (Dobrieva et al. 2004).

oars. They usually break this temporary rack during the festival and put the boat on its permanent rack at the shore. I don't know what else they did it up there—they probably ate the meat and gave the pieces (to the spirits). Small pieces. They usually brought the leftovers back home from the shore, so that we could eat it in the evening. That's it, that's the festival. They start spring boat hunting after that.

The sequence of events described by *Uugsima* is featured in minute detail on Forshtein's photographs from 1928 or 1929. That same festival is also depicted on nine other images labeled "The First Hunt Ceremony by Yata, the Eskimo." Altogether, those seventeen photographs in the MAE collection illustrate all of the phases of the *Ateghaq* ceremony, including the killing of the dog; the boat stored near the house; the moving of the boat down to the beach; the boat launch in a small patch of open water; and the elderly women feasting on the meat inside the house at the

One could hardly look for more different settings than those of a dim Yupik skin-house, where the original Forshtein's photos were taken; the neat modern apartment in Provideniya, where the elderly *Uugsima* recalled the ceremony some fifty years later (Fig. 6); and of the museum storage in St. Petersburg where the old glass negatives of the event were recovered twenty-five years after that recording. Still, all of the puzzle pieces miraculously came together. *Uugsima*, the storyteller, had been featured herself as a young girl on one of Forshtein's photos in 1928 or 1929 (Fig. 7). She had lived a long life and is fondly remembered as a cultural expert and social activist by Chukotka Yupik people.

### Conclusions: The Life and the Legacy

Our study of Forshtein's photography at MAE offer ample illustrations both to the opportunities for "knowledge repatriation" and to its limitations. We have retrieved substantial new data on the professional career and life of Alexander Forshtein, particularly on his days and deeds in



Fig.5: "Attyrak festival by Matlu, the Eskimo. Ritual objects." MAE, И-115-125. Ungaziq, spring 1928 or 1929.

conclusion. The "ritual objects" featured on image И-115-124 turned out to be pieces of ordinary Yupik hunting gear as described by *Uugsima*: seal-skin float, manila and skin lines, retrieving hooks, whaling darting gun, walrus harpoon shafts, a decorated paddle, and several wooden bowls with food.

Chukotka, and on his visit to Copenhagen. His photos at MAE are now safely backed by high-resolution electronic scans that allow easy reprints for future publication, display purposes, and outreach. Forshtein's photography is currently one of the best-documented files among MAE historical photo collections from Siberia and the only one that is ac-



Fig.6: *Uugsima* (U.I. Ukhsima) around 1988. Photographer, V.I. Mostiaev. Museum of Beringian Heritage, Provideniya.

accompanied by comments and writings of local Yupik experts from Chukotka and Alaska. A new CD of Forshtein's pictures was produced by MAE in 2005 (Fig. 8); its cover features a picture of a young Yupik woman from Naukan, *Alperagtenga*, whose short life was described by Dobrieva in her written comment collected as a part of our project.

Also, copies of Forshtein's images and of the recently produced CD were mailed to cultural institutions and several families in Chukotka; they hopefully will be used by the local museums in Anadyr, Provideniya, and Lavrentiia for future exhibits and sharing with the families. Some 30 of the best Eskimo photographs by Forshtein will be featured as illustrations in a new collection of papers on Chukotka cultural heritage, with a brief life story of Forshtein, to be published soon (Bogoslovskaya and Krupnik n.d.). We hope this will mark a beginning of a "return journey" of Forshtein's photos from St. Petersburg back to Chukotka Yupik communities. Local people long for old images; they enjoy both writing down stories associated with historical photos and reading the narratives of others. The emotional significance of such personal "reunions" with the past often goes beyond the value of any scholarly records.

Our study also revealed many deep memory and knowledge losses that, unfortunately, cannot be repaired. Unless or until some new troves of Forshtein's personal papers are recovered, we have to operate with pieces of scanty records only (see Krauss, *this issue*). It may well be that Forshtein's professional legacy has been obliterated by the GULAG beyond repair, since, after his arrest and ten years of forced labor he never returned to Eskimo studies. Hence, his knowledge and talents were lost to his colleagues and prospective students, and his full scholarly potential never materialized. We now know from his letters that, following his trip to Denmark in 1936, Forshtein had started to forge contacts with Western scholars, such as Thalbitzer and Jochelson, by mailing to them copies of his publications and those of his fellow students of Bogoras and Shternberg. These emerging professional contacts were terminated by Forshtein's arrest and imprisonment. We may only guess what would have been his contribution to Russian Eskimo studies if, blessed by his experience, training by Bogoras, and his contacts with many Western colleagues, Forshtein had enjoyed a full professional career—as did some of his peers and fellow teachers-cum-linguists, like Georgii Menovshchikov (1911-1991), Ekaterina Rubtsova (1888-1971), Elizaveta Orlova (1899-1976), Petr Skorik (1906-1985), Innokentii Vdovin (1907-1996), and others. His old tragedies are our today's losses; both cannot be rectified even if Forshtein's professional name can be restored some 70 years later.

The history of the Siberian Yupik communities visited by Forshtein followed a tragic path of its own. The residents of most of the villages featured in his photographs, Ungaziq, Naukan, Imaqliq, Siqluk, Avan, were forcibly removed from their homes, often with no chance to revisit their old places for decades and generations. This inflicted irreparable damage to people's memory of their former landscapes, place-names, hunting grounds, and ritual sites, consigning entire blocks of cultural knowledge to oblivion. Many personal lives were also shattered by the relocations of the 1940s and 1950s, as alcoholism, poor health, and depression ravaged Yupik elders and young adults alike. Today's elders often express frustration about their inability to identify many faces in old photographs. They complain that the untimely passing of so many has left "hardly anybody around who still remembers those old days."

Although some stories about abandoned Siberian Yupik villages have been put in writing and published (i.e., Aivangu 1985; Krupnik 2001; Leonova 1997), many more have been lost. As generations that used to live, hunt, feast, marry, and play at old sites gradually pass away, their children, who are today's elders, preserve only pieces of the old traditions associated with their ancestors' landscapes and their former homelands. In this regard, Native oral tradition



Fig.7: "Ukhsima, the schoolgirl." MAE, И-115-19. Ungaziq, 1928 or 1929.

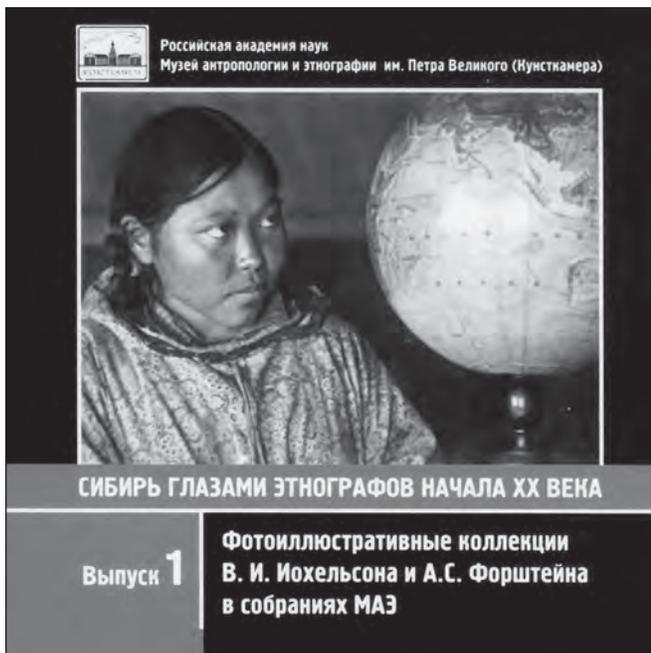


Fig.8: Cover of the CD, *Siberia as seen by the ethnographers of the early 1900s*. Photo collections of V.I. Jochelson and A.S. Forshtein at MAE. Pt.1 (MAE 2005).

and culture were shattered as the advance of Russian Eskimo studies had been arrested by the loss of Forshtein in 1937.

Still, this article features for the first time a rare personal photo of Forshtein (Fig. 1), so that new generations may now visualize a face behind the name. In a few Yupik houses in Chukotka and at several local museums and schools people may now enjoy the images of their great-grandparents and of their long-abandoned home sites preserved in Forshtein's photographs, something their parents never had a chance to do. If those modest steps help fill some voids inflicted by the past century, our effort in "visual repatriation" was worth undertaking.

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