= Sakhalin Koreans =

Sakhalin Koreans are Russian citizens and residents of Korean descent living on Sakhalin Island , who trace their roots to the immigrants from the Gyeongsang and Jeolla provinces of Korea during the late 1930s and early 1940s , the latter half of the Japanese colonial era . At the time , the southern half of Sakhalin Island , then known as Karafuto Prefecture , was under the control of the Empire of Japan ; the Japanese government both recruited and forced Korean labourers into service and shipped them to Karafuto to fill labour shortages resulting from World War II . The Red Army invaded Karafuto days before Japan 's surrender ; while all but a few Japanese there repatriated successfully , almost one @-@ third of the Koreans could not secure permission to depart either to Japan or their home towns in South Korea . For the next forty years , they lived in exile . In 1985 , the Japanese government offered transit rights and funding for the repatriation of the original group of Sakhalin Koreans ; however , only 1 @,@ 500 of them returned to South Korea in the next two decades . The vast majority of Koreans of all generations chose instead to stay on Sakhalin .

Due to differing language and immigration history , Sakhalin Koreans may or may not identify themselves as Koryo @-@ saram . The term " Koryo @-@ saram " may be used to encompass to all Koreans in the former USSR , but typically refers to ethnic Koreans from Hamgy?ng province whose ancestors emigrated to the Russian Far East in the 19th century , and then were later deported to Central Asia . The issue of self @-@ identification is complicated by the fact that many Sakhalin Koreans feel that Koreans from Central Asia look down on them .

= = History = =

= = = Under Japanese colonialism = = =

= = = = Origins = = = =

Korean immigration to Sakhalin began as early as the 1910s , when the Mitsui Group began recruiting labourers from the peninsula for their mining operations . In 1920 , ten years after the annexation of Korea by Japan , there were fewer than one thousand Koreans in the whole of Karafuto Prefecture , overwhelmingly male . Aside from an influx of refugees from the Maritimes , who escaped to Karafuto during the Russian Revolution of 1917 , the number of Koreans in the province did not rise very rapidly ; as late as the mid @-@ 1930s , there were fewer than 6 @,@ 000 Koreans in Karafuto . However , as Japan 's war effort picked up , the Japanese government sought to put more people on the ground in the sparsely @-@ populated prefecture in order to ensure their control of the territory and fill the increasing demands of the coal mines and lumber yards . Recruiters turned to sourcing workers from the Korean peninsula to take advantage of the low wages there ; at one point , over 150 @,@ 000 Koreans worked on the island . Of those , around 10 @,@ 000 mine workers were relocated to Japan prior to the war 's end ; present @-@ day Sakhalin Koreans ' efforts to locate them proved futile .

The Imperial Japanese Army in Karafuto frequently used local ethnic minorities (Oroks , Nivkhs , and Ainu) to conduct intelligence @-@ gathering activities , because , as indigenous inhabitants , their presence would not arouse suspicion on the Soviet half of the island . Ethnic Koreans could also be found on both sides of the border , but the use of Koreans as spies was not common , as the Karafuto police were wary of the support for the independence movement among Koreans . Soviet suspicion towards Korean nationalism , along with fears that the Korean community might harbour Japanese spies , led to the 1937 deportation of Koreans from Soviet @-@ controlled northern Sakhalin and the Russian Far East .

= = = = Soviet invasion and Japanese massacres = = = =

The Soviet Union invaded the Japanese portion of Sakhalin on August 11 , 1945 , resulting the deaths of 20 @,@ 000 civilians (see Soviet ? Japanese War (1945)) . In the confusion that ensued , a rumour began to spread that ethnic Koreans could be serving as spies for the Soviet Union , and led to massacres of Koreans by Japanese police and civilians . Despite the generally limited amount of information about the massacres , two examples of massacres are comparatively well @-@ known today : the incident in Kamishisuka (now Leonidovo) on August 18 , 1945 , and the incident in Mizuho Village (now Pozharskoye) , which lasted from August 20 to August 23 , 1945 .

In Kamishisuka , the Japanese police arrested 19 Koreans on charges of spy activities ; 18 were found shot within the police station the next day . The sole survivor , a Korean known only by his Japanese name Nakata , had survived by hiding in a toilet ; he later offered testimony about the event . In Mizuho Village , Japanese fleeing Soviet troops who had landed at Maoka (now Kholmsk) claimed that the Koreans were cooperating with the Red Army and that they were pillaging Japanese property . Though Koreans and Japanese worked alongside each other in the village on farms and construction projects , the Japanese civilians turned against their Korean neighbors , killing 27 between August 20 and 23 . Other individual Koreans may have been killed to cover up evidence of Japanese atrocities committed during the evacuation : one woman interviewed by a US @-@ Russian joint commission investigating the issue of Allied prisoners of war held by the Imperial Japanese Army in camps on Sakhalin reported that her ethnic Korean lover had been murdered by Japanese troops after he had witnessed mass shootings of hundreds of American prisoners of war .

= = = Integration into the Soviet Union = = =

= = = = Repatriation refused = = = =

In the years after the Soviet invasion , most of the 400 @,@ 000 Japanese civilians who had not already been evacuated during the war left voluntarily under the auspices of the US @-@ USSR Agreement on Repatriation of those left in the USSR , signed in December 1946 . Many of the 150 @,@ 000 Koreans on the island safely returned to mainland Japan , and some went to the northern half of the Korean peninsula ; however , roughly 43 @,@ 000 were not accepted for repatriation by Japan , and also could not be repatriated to the southern half of the Korean peninsula due to the political situation ; The Soviet government initially had drawn up plans to repatriate the Koreans along with the Japanese , but the local administration on Sakhalin objected , arguing that incoming Russians from the mainland would not be sufficient to replace the skilled labourers who had already departed . The indecision about the ultimate fate of the Sakhalin Koreans persisted until the outbreak of the Korean War , after which repatriation became a political impossibility . Some sources claim Stalin himself blocked their departure because he wanted to retain them as coal miners on the island . In 1957 , Seoul appealed for Tokyo 's assistance to secure the departure of ethnic Koreans from Sakhalin via Japan , but Tokyo took no real action on the request , and blamed Soviet intransigence for the lack of progress in resolving the issue ; Japan continued its earlier policy of granting entrance only to Sakhalin Koreans who were married to Japanese citizens , or had a Japanese parent .

During the late 1940s , the ranks of ethnic Koreans on the island were augmented by another 8 @,@ 000 North Korean expatriates , recruited by the Soviet government to work in state @-@ owned fisheries .

In an effort to integrate the Korean labourers , who were unfamiliar with the Soviet system and unable to speak Russian , local authorities set up schools using the Korean language as the medium of instruction . However , the Sakhalin Koreans were believed to have been " infected with the Japanese spirit " , and so for the most part the authorities did not trust them to run any of their own collective farms , mills , factories , schools , or hospitals . Instead , these tasks were left to several hundred ethnic Koreans imported from Central Asia , who were bilingual in Russian and Korean . Resentment towards the social dominance of Koreans from Central Asia over the Sakhalin

Koreans led to tensions between the two groups ; the latter developed a number of disparaging terms in Korean to refer to the former .

The Sakhalin government 's policy towards the Sakhalin Koreans continued to shift in line with bilateral relations between North Korea and the Soviet Union . During the 1950s , North Korea demanded that the Soviets treat Sakhalin Koreans as North Korean citizens , and , through their consulate , even set up study groups and other educational facilities for them (analogous to Chongryon 's similar , more successful efforts among the Zainichi Koreans) . During the late 1950s , it became increasingly difficult for the Sakhalin Koreans to obtain Soviet citizenship , and a growing proportion chose instead to become North Korean citizens rather to than deal with the burdens of remaining stateless , which included severe restrictions on their freedom of movement and the requirement to apply for permission from the local government in order to travel outside of Sakhalin . As of 1960 , only 25 % had been able to secure Soviet citizenship ; 65 % had declared North Korean citizenship , with the remaining 10 % choosing to remain unaffiliated despite the difficulties this entailed . However , as relations between the Soviet Union and North Korea deteriorated , the authorities acted to de @-@ emphasise Korean language education and reduce the influence of North Korea within the community ; by the early 1970s , Sakhalin Koreans were once again encouraged to apply for Soviet citizenship .

= = = = Attention from the outside world = = = =

In the late 1960s and early 1970s , the situation of the Sakhalin Koreans improved as the outside world began to pay much more attention to their situation . Starting in 1966 , Park No Hak , a former Sakhalin Korean who had earlier received permission to leave Sakhalin and settle in Japan by virtue of his having a Japanese wife , petitioned the Japanese government a total of 23 times to discuss the issue of the Sakhalin Koreans with the Soviet government . His actions inspired 500 @,@ 000 South Koreans to form an organisation to work towards the repatriation of their co @-@ ethnics ; in response , the South Korean began radio broadcasts targeted at the Sakhalin Koreans , in an effort to assure them that they had not been forgotten . At the same time , Rei Mihara , a Tokyo housewife , formed a similar pressure group in Japan , and 18 Japanese lawyers attempted to sue the Japanese government to force them to accept diplomatic and financial responsibility for the transportation of the Sakhalin Koreans and their return to South Korea .

Additionally , the Soviet government finally began to permit the Sakhalin Koreans to naturalize . However , as many as 10 % continued to refuse both Soviet and North Korean citizenship , and demanded repatriation to South Korea . By 1976 , only 2 @,@ 000 more of their population had been able to obtain permission to depart from Sakhalin , but that year , the Sakhalin government made a public announcement that people seeking to emigrate to South Korea could simply show up at the Immigration Office to file an application . Within a week , they had received more than 800 such applications , including some from North Korean citizens ; this caused the North Korean embassy to complain to their Soviet counterparts about the new emigration policy . The Soviet authorities in the end chose for unspecified reasons to refuse to issue exit visas to most of those concerned , leading to the unusual case of public demonstrations about the refusals by Korean families . This level of open dissent provoked the authorities to completely reverse their liberalising stance towards the Sakhalin Koreans ; they arrested more than 40 protestors , and in November 1976 deported them , but to North Korea rather than to the South as they desired . Further purges and intimidation of those seeking to emigrate also followed . Through to the early 1980s , locally born Korean youth , increasingly interested in their heritage , were seen as traitors by their Russian neighbours for wanting to know more about their ancestral land and for seeking to emigrate . The nadir of ethnic relations came after the 1983 shooting @-@ down of Korean Air Lines Flight 007 by the Soviet Union .

= = = Perestroika , glasnost , and the post @-@ Soviet period = = =

= = = = Improving relations with Japan = = = =

In 1985 , Japan agreed to approve transit rights and fund the repatriation of the first generation of Sakhalin Koreans ; the Soviet Union also began to liberalize their emigration laws in 1987 . As of 2001 , Japan spends US $ 1 @.@ 2 million a year to fund Sakhalin Koreans ' visits to Seoul . The Foreign Ministry allocated about $ 5 million to build a cultural centre in Sakhalin , which was intended to feature a library , an exhibition hall , Korean language classrooms , and other facilities , but as of 2004 , the project had not begun , causing protests among the Sakhalin Koreans .

On April 18 , 1990 , Taro Nakayama , Japan 's Minister for Foreign Affairs , stated :

" Japan is deeply sorry for the tragedy in which these (Korean) people were moved to Sakhalin not of their own free will but by the design of the Japanese government and had to remain there after the conclusion of the war " .

The foreign trade of Sakhalin with Japan is still roughly four times that with Korea , and Japanese companies greatly outnumber their Korean on the island . As a result , while members of the first generation still carry anti @-@ Japanese sentiment , the younger generations have developed an interest in Japanese culture and have taken up the study of the Japanese language , much to the consternation of their elders . On October 28 , 2006 , a Korean student from the Sakhalin State University placed second in the All @-@ CIS Japanese Language Students Competition .

= = = = North and South Korean influence = = = =

During the 1990s , commerce , communication , and direct flights opened up between Sakhalin and South Korea , and the two Koreas began to vie openly for influence among the Sakhalin Koreans . Television and radio programmes from both North and South Korea , as well as local programming , began to be broadcast on Sakhalin Korean Broadcasting , the only Korean television station in all of Russia . North Korea negotiated with Russia for closer economic relations with Sakhalin , and recently sponsored an art show in Yuzhno @-@ Sakhalinsk . They have also permitted delegations of Sakhalin Koreans to visit relatives in North Korea . Scholarly studies suggest that roughly 1 @,@ 000 Sakhalin Koreans have opted to repatriate to North Korea , but the rise of the South Korean economy combined with the ongoing economic and political turmoil in the North have made this option less attractive . Sakhalin Koreans have also provided assistance to refugees fleeing North Korea , either those who illegally escaped across the border , or those who escaped North Korean labour camps in Russia itself .

South Korea and Japan jointly funded the building of a nursing home for elderly Sakhalin Koreans in Ansan , a suburb of Seoul , and under the auspices of the Korean Red Cross , 1 @,@ 544 people had settled there and in other locations by the end of 2002 , while another 14 @,@ 122 had travelled to South Korea on short @-@ term visits at Japanese government expense . South Korean investors also began to participate in the international tenders for works contracts to develop the Sakhalin Shelf , as they are interested in the potential supply of liquefied natural gas . By the year 2000 , South Korean missionaries had opened several churches , and South Koreans comprised the majority of international students at the Sakhalin State University . The Korean Residents ' Association on Sakhalin , an ethnic representative body , is generally described as being pro @-@ South Korean , analogous to Japan 's Mindan . In addition to the elderly , a few younger Koreans have also chosen to move to South Korea , either to find their roots , or for economic reasons , as wages in South Korea are as much as three times those in Sakhalin . However , upon arrival , they often find that they are viewed as foreigners by the South Korean locals , despite their previous exposure to Korean culture in Sakhalin . As one returnee put it , " Sakhalin Koreans live in a different world than Sakhalin Russians but that world isn ? t Korea " . In general , younger Sakhalin Koreans , especially those lacking fluency in the Korean language , prefer to stay on Sakhalin . Of the 1 @,@ 544 Koreans who repatriated to South Korea as of 2005 , nearly 10 % eventually returned to Sakhalin . Conversely , some foreign students from Korea studying in Sakhalin also reported difficulties in befriending local Koreans , claiming that the latter looked down on them for being foreigners .

= = = = Local interethnic relations = = = =

In the late 1980s , suspicions against the Sakhalin Koreans remained . With the relaxation of internal migration controls and the dissolution of the Soviet Union , Russians began moving en masse back to the mainland , making ethnic Koreans an increasing proportion of the population ; there were fears that they might become a majority of the island 's population , and seek an autonomous republic or even independence . However , the rise of the regional economy and the cultural assimilation of the younger generations drove more than 95 % of Koreans to stay in Sakhalin or move to the Russian Far East rather than leave for South Korea , as they have come to consider Russia their home country . The Sakhalin Koreans ' family connections in South Korea have benefited even those who remained on Sakhalin with easier access to South Korean business and imports ; trade with South Korea has brought the Sakhalin Koreans a better economic standing than the average resident of Sakhalin . By 2004 , inter @-@ ethnic relations between Russians and Koreans had improved greatly and were generally not described as being a problem on Sakhalin . However , Sakhalin Koreans who have travelled to the mainland of Russia , or have relocated to there (a population of roughly 10 @,@ 000) , report that they have encountered various forms of racism .

Among the Koreans who remain on Sakhalin , roughly 7 @,@ 000 of the original generation of settlers survive , while their locally born descendants make up the rest of the local Korean population . They are highly urbanized ; half live in the administrative centre of Yuzhno @-@ Sakhalinsk , where Koreans constitute nearly 12 % of the population . Around thirty per cent of Sakhalin ? s thirty thousand Koreans still have not taken Russian citizenship . Unlike ethnic Russians or other local minority groups , Sakhalin Koreans are exempted from conscription , but there have been calls for this exemption to be terminated .

= = Culture = =

= = = Personal and family names = = =

See also List of Korean family names and Cyrillization of Korean .

Korean surnames , when Cyrillized , may be spelled slightly differently from the romanisations used in the US ; the resulting common pronunciations also differ , as can be seen in the table at right . Furthermore , Korean naming practices and Russian naming practices conflict in several important ways . While most members of the older generations of Sakhalin Koreans used Korean names , members of the younger generations favor their Russian names . However , with the increasing exposure to South Korean pop culture , some younger Koreans have named their children after characters in Korean television dramas . The use of patronymics is not widespread .

In addition to Korean names , the oldest generation of Sakhalin Koreans are often legally registered under Japanese names , which they had originally adopted due to the s?shi @-@ kaimei policy of the Japanese colonial era . After the Soviet invasion , the Sakhalin authorities conducted name registration for the local Koreans on the basis of the Japanese identity documents issued by the old Karafuto government ; as of 2006 , the Russian government uniformly refused requests for re @-@ registration under Korean names .

= = = Language = = =

Due to their greater population density and expectation that they would one day be allowed to return to Korea , the Sakhalin Koreans have kept something of a sojourner mentality rather than a settler mentality , which influenced their relation to the surrounding society ; even today , they tend to speak much better Korean than those who were deported to Central Asia . A weekly Korean language newspaper , the Saegoryeo Shinmun (??? ??) , has been published since 1949 , while

Sakhalin Korean Broadcasting began operation in 1956 . Korean @-@ language television programmes are broadcast locally , but typically with Russian subtitles . Additionally , during the Soviet era , Sakhalin Koreans were often hired to act as announcers and writers for official media aimed at the Koryo @-@ saram in Central Asia . However , unlike the Koryo @-@ saram , the spoken Korean of Sakhalin is not very closely related to Hamgy?ng dialect or Koryo @-@ mar , but is instead descended from Jeolla and Gyeongsang dialects . As a result of the diplomatic situation up until the 1980s , during which South Korea had no relations with the Soviet Union , Korean @-@ language instructional materials were provided by North Korea or developed domestically . Oddly enough , as a result , Sakhalin Koreans ' writing , like that of Koryo @-@ saram , follows the North Korean standard , but their spoken Korean in radio broadcasts has come to resemble the Seoul dialect of South Korea .

= = = Religion = = =

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union , there has been significant growth in religious activities among the Sakhalin Koreans ; the establishment of churches was noted in scholarly articles as early as 1990 . Christian hymns have become popular listening material , supplementing the more typical Russian , Western , and Korean pop music . Korean churches also broadcast religious content through Sakhalin Korean Broadcasting ; a Baptist church run by ethnic Koreans sponsors a journalist there . However , large @-@ scale religious events can be subjected to restriction by the government authorities : in June 1998 the local Russian Orthodox Church and the regional administration of Sakhalin successfully pressured Korean Presbyterian missionaries to cancel a conference of more than 100 Presbyterian and other Protestant missionaries from around the former Soviet Union . Ethnic Koreans are numerous among the church @-@ goers of the Roman Catholic parish of St. James in Yuzhno @-@ Sakhalinsk . Catholic missions in Kholmsk and Aniva have also a fair amount of Korean parishioners .

= = = Music = = =

In one survey , a third of the Sakhalin Korean population expressed a preference for traditional Korean music , a far higher proportion than in any other ethnic Korean community surveyed . However , despite their better knowledge of Korean language , the same survey showed that Korean pop music is less widespread among Sakhalin Koreans than among ethnic Koreans in Kazakhstan , possessing about the same degree of popularity as in Uzbekistan . Sakhalin Koreans also reported listening to Western popular and classical music at much lower rates than Koreans in the rest of the former Soviet Union . Study of traditional Korean musical instruments has also been gaining popularity across all generations . The Ethnos Arts School was established in 1991 in Yuzhno @-@ Sakhalinsk to teach children 's classes in traditional Korean dance , piano , sight singing , and the gayageum , a zither @-@ like instrument supposedly invented around the time of the Gaya confederacy .

= = Prominent Sakhalin Koreans = =

Park Hae Yong , head of the Korean Residents ' Association on Sakhalin
Kim Chun Ja , editor in chief of Sakhalin Korean Broadcasting
Lee Hoesung , Zainichi Korean author , born in Karafuto and later repatriated to Japan
Nellie Kim , world and Olympic champion in artistic gymnastics