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# HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

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Vol. 11 Nos. 3-4

July - December 2007

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## **BURYATIA SPECIAL**

**Culture of Buryatia: An Introduction**

*V. B. Prokopyev*

**Buryatia and Buryats through Time and Space**

*V. L. Kourgouzov*

**Buryatia's Ethnotoponymical Dimension**

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**The East Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts: A Review**

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*Z. A. Serebryakova*

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## HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

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## CONTRIBUTORS

**Dr. V. B. Prokopyev** is Minister of Culture and Mass Communications, the Republic of Buryatia, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Prof. K. Warikoo** is Director, Central Asian Studies Programme, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

**Prof. V. L. Kourgouzov** is Director, Faculty of Culture Study and Sociocultural Anthropology, the East-Siberia State University of Technology, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

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**Dr. S. M. Tulokhonov** is Senior Lecturer, the Faculty of Cultural Science and Sociocultural Anthropology, the East-Siberia State University of Technology, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Dr. Sharad K. Soni** teaches at Central Asian Studies Programme, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

**Dr. I. I. Soktoeva** is the Senior researcher of the Institute of the Mongolian Language, Buddhist Studies and Tibetology, the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Science, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Prof. N. D. Khosomoev** is associated with the East-Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Prof. O. I. Kunitsyn** is associated with the East-Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Prof. V. V. Kitov** is associated with the East-Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Prof. V. Ts. Naidakova** is associated with the East-Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Dr. O. B. Buksikova** is Senior Lecturer, the Faculty of Choreography, the East-Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

**Dr. Z. A. Serebryakova** is Senior Lecturer, the Faculty of Theory and History of Art, the East-Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts, Ulan-Ude (Russia).

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**Republic of Buryatia, Russian Federation**



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## *Editor's Page*

Covering an area of 3,513,000 sq.kms. and situated in the southern part of East Siberia to the southeast of Baikal Lake, the Republic of Buryatia has its borders touching Mongolia in the south, the Republic of Tuva in the southwest, the Irkutsk *oblast* in the northwest and the Chita *oblast* in the east. The major part (about 60 per cent of coastline) of the 636-kms long Baikal Lake, the deepest freshwater lake in the world, falls within the territory of Buryatia. Buryats, Evenks and Soyots constitute the main indigenous nationalities, besides Russians, Ukrainians, and other nationalities. By 2002, the number of population crossed ten million.

Buryatia is rich in natural resources, minerals, precious, semi-precious stones, luxuriant forests, medicinal herbs and thermal springs. Forest land constitutes 27.2 million hectares and all forests are situated in the mountainous areas. The beauty of Alpine meadows, Baikal sunsets, hot springs in the north of Baikal and Kurumkan that stretches along the Khamar-Daban ridge, large number of domestic and foreign tourists. Over 167,000 foreign tourists had visited the Republic of Buryatia in 2006. This city of Ulan-Ude which is the administrative, political, economic and cultural centre of the Republic of Buryatia, is one of the oldest cities of Siberia and the Far East.

From ancient times, Zabaikalye - the richest part of Siberia - has been an integral part of the historical and cultural processes in Central Asia. The Huns (late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC - late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC) established a powerful state of Central Asian nomads in Zabaikalye. Until the establishment of the Mongol Empire, different forms of nomadic states had subsequently appeared and vanished over the centuries. In 1206 AD, Genghis Khan completed

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the unification of all major Mongol tribes. The nomadic tribes of Zabaikalye and Predbaikalye (the region west of Baikal) remained a part of this state. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Russian empire began to expand its boundaries towards the East. In 1666 AD, Russian Cossacks built a wooden fortress on the bank of the Uda River, which turned into a large city Verkhneudinsk and later became the capital city of Buryatia under the new name of Ulan-Ude. The capital city of Ulan-Ude is the administrative, political, economic, and cultural centre of the Republic of Buryatia. It is one of the oldest and large cities of Siberia.

Though the Tsarist government had its own system of administration in Zabaikalye, local administration remained in the hands of Buryat nobles. Traditional caravan routes connecting Russia to the countries of Southeast Asia, as well as the construction of the Trans-Siberian railroad that crossed the territory of Zabaikalye contributed to the economic development of the region during the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The October Revolution of 1917 led to further integration of Zabaikalye with Soviet Russia. The Buryat-Mongolian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was established in the year 1923. In 1936, the official name of Buryatia became Buryat Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and in 1937, Buryatia was rechristened as Buryat Autonomous Socialist Republic. On 8 October 1990, the state sovereignty of the Buryat Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed. On 27 March 1991, the Republic was named as the Republic of Buryatia. The Buryatia Republic has its own Constitution, legislative and executive authorities. In 1994, the first President of Buryatia was elected.

Despite having a long chequered history, Buryats have always demonstrated benevolence and respect to their neighbours, who arrived in the Baikal region at different periods of time. Today, cultural, religious and social traditions of different peoples in



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Buryatia are closely interwoven forming a unique pattern of peaceful coexistence. The heroic epic *Geser*, whose 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated in 1995, glorifies the idea of equality and collectivism of the people.

The modern outlook and religious attitudes of Buryats are rooted in their history: the ancient pagan perception of the world by steppe nomads merged with the fundamental principles of Buddhism emphasizing the idea of compassion for all living creatures. In 1741, the first Buddhist Temple was established in the region. By 1914, there were 36 Buddhist temples in Buryatia, each being a spiritual and cultural centre. Russian Orthodoxy and Old Believers' Orthodoxy had come to Buryatia in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Russian churches and chapels that remained in many villages testify to the spread of Christianity in Buryatia. Today there are fourteen Buddhist *datsans* (Buddhist temples) twelve Buddhist communities, seventeen Orthodox temples and parish churches, seven ancient Russian Orthodox communities, and over twenty religious denominations and movements of various kinds in Buryatia. There are also Krishna and Bahai communities in Ulan-Ude. In Kizhinga, there was opened a temple complex called Jarun Khashor, which unites different Buddhist sects, in the year 1991. The past several years have witnessed the revival of the old traditions in Buryatia. Old *datsans* are being restored and new temples and Christian churches are being constructed. Today cultural traditions of the peoples in Zabaikalye are preserved in all its aspects, be it national cuisine or theatre.

The combination of the influences of Buddhism, Shamanism of indigenous peoples, and *Staroobryadchestvo* (Old Russian Orthodox Christianity) has enriched the spiritual sphere of the society in Buryatia. The most ancient traditional religion of Buryats and Evenks has been Shamanism since ancient times. In mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, first Russian Orthodox churches and chapels

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appeared in Buryatia, and some time later, Mongol and Tibetan Lamas came to Buryatia to spread Buddhism.

Inhabitants of the Republic have strong ties with Buryat ethnic groups in other cities and countries. Buryat Culture Societies are registered in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev and Irkutsk. Over 300 public organizations and associations are registered in Buryatia. In 1991, the Buddhists of the Republic celebrated the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of official recognition of Buddhism in Russia. Today, the Republic is the centre of Buddhism in Russia, *Ivolginsky datsan* (Buddhist temple), being located in Buryatia. The Republic has been rightfully considered as one of the popular cultural centres of East Siberia. The glorious traditions and cultural activities of the Republic are preserved and promoted existence and functioning of theatres, writers, ballets and dances. This Buryatia Special Issue of *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies* highlights the traditional history, society, culture and fine arts development in the Buryatia Republic of Russia. It is a result of academic collaboration between the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation and the East Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts, Ulan-Ude, Russia.

**K. Warikoo**

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## CULTURE OF BURYATIA: AN INTRODUCTION

*V. B. Prokopyev*

Opening up the given collection of scientific articles devoted to different aspects of the development of culture in Buryatia, it is necessary to emphasise that the contemporary society and culture of Buryatia constitute an important aspect of economic and social development.

It is known fact that as an integral expression of a human being's existence, ethnos, nation or a particular territory, during particular age, time and conditions, culture allows people to make their choice, relying on historical experience, and taking into account the consequences of their decisions. Therefore, preservation and development of spiritual traditions, which developed in Buryatia since ancient time, are not only the Republic's contribution to world civilization, but also a means of protecting the identity of its population in the integration processes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The uniqueness of culture of Buryatia is the integration of Asian and European peoples. Values, ideals, tradition and standards of nomadic civilization, northern wood hunters, and European people, which are reflected in this culture, are closely interwoven with the Buryat people's culture. All this has resulted in religious and cultural syncretism. At the same time, the basic features of ethnic cultures have preserved their originality and primitiveness till today.

One of the most interesting layers of culture of the Buryat people is the system of religio-philosophical ideas of the world structure and human being's place in it. It has found reflection, in particular, in Buryat Shamanism and mythology. One of the most outstanding samples of mythology is the heroic epic *Abai Geser*, the millennium of its creation was celebrated in 1995. The main layer of culture belongs to Buddhism and the Buddhist tradition was brought to Buryatia from Tibet and Mongolia. The Buddhist doctrines including philosophy, Tibetan

medicine, astrology, painting, written language and printing of books have developed in Buryatia.

The Russian culture in Buryatia has retained its traditional features due to the efforts of the representatives of the Russian population – *Semeyskie* (Old Believers). Representatives of the Russian culture have done a lot for promoting mutual understanding between Russian and Indian people. An outstanding contribution to this noble cause was made by the Russian artists and public figures – father and son Roerichs. The art of Transbaikal Cossacks is famous for its originality.

The cultural heritage of Buryatia has unique importance not only for Russia, but also for the world due to its being an integral part of the global cultural heritage. The modern layer of culture developed as a result of the establishment of national cultural centres and public associations in Buryatia which have been actively engaged in bringing the European culture within the reach of the people. It is represented by the important aspects of culture including literature, opera and ballet, drama, cinema, musical art, sculpture and painting, stage art, circus, folklore etc. National art of other peoples living in Buryatia is presented by folklore ensembles from Korea, China, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Poland, Germany, Ukraine etc.

The most unique samples of material culture are stored in the museums and libraries. Samples of classical and modern art are presented in the activity of theatres, cultural centres and clubs, the Buryat State Philharmonic Society. The museums organize international and inter-regional exhibitions displaying rich collections. The Ethnographic Museum of Trans-Baikal people has exhibited “Material Culture of Buryat people” at Inter-regional Ethnocultural Festival *Yordynskie Igry* (Games in Olkhon Island. The Art Museum named after Ts. Sampilov has organized exhibitions *Taiga, Lake, Steppe* in Krasnoyarsk) and *The Modern Art of Buryatia* in Moscow. Buryatia’s Museum of Nature has carried out Inter-regional Museum Festival *Ozernye Ludi* (Lake People).

The Kiakhta Museum of Regional Study named after Academician

## *CULTURE OF BURYATIA: AN INTRODUCTION*

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V. A. Obruchev, History Museum of Buryatia named after M. N. Khangalov and the Museum of the Buryat Centre of Science of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences have presented an exhibition *Aziatskiye Gunny* (Asian Hunns) at the European Festival “Evropalia-Russia-2005”, organized in Brussels, Belgium. The first school of the Tibetan medicine (*Atsagatskiy Arshan*), where archeological, ethnographic, natural complexes describing history and culture of Buryatia are concentrated, is yet another inexhaustible source for the development of culture and tourism infrastructure.

In the territory around Lake Baikal of the Republic of Buryatia, there are several national parks and reserves. The eastern coast of Baikal, with its ‘stone necklace’ of orthodox culture - *Selenginskaya Dauria* – owes its importance to the diplomatic, trading and economic activities between Russia, Mongolia, and China through history.

Today culture of Buryatia is in a process of continuous development. It is enriched with new achievements. Though there are new directions and aspects, it retains the heritage of the previous epochs. The year 2006 was declared as “Republican Year of Reading” with the theme “Reading and Preservation of Book as a Cultural Value”. A comprehensive plan in this regard was developed by the ministries and departments, republican and municipal establishments of culture in Buryatia. Within the framework of the Year of Reading, the project “The State Support of Book Publishing in the Buryat Republic” of the Presidential programme “Preservation and Development of Culture and Art in the Buryat Republic (2004-2007)” is also being developed. The sub-project is devoted to the publication of the Russian and world classical literature, the art and children’s literature in languages of the native peoples of the republic, masterpieces of contemporary writers and poets of Buryatia.

Creative activity in the sphere of professional art is also flourishing. The State Circus of Buryatia has been awarded Gold Medal after its recent performances in Mongolia and it secured first place at the most prestigious festival of Circus Art in Monte Carlo

***V. B. Prokopyev***

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(Monaco). It won the “Gold Lion” prize and secured the third place at the 10<sup>th</sup> Chinese International Festival of Circus Art. The Buryat State Academic Drama Theatre named after Kh. Namsaraev participated in Inter-regional Theatrical Festival “Siberian Transit” in Krasnoyarsk and carried out performances in the Aginskiy Buryat Autonomous Region. The Republican Puppet theatre *UIger* went on tour to the cities of Khabarovsk and Blagoveshchensk. The State Russian Drama Theatre named after N. Bestuzhev went on tour to Abakan.

Other festivals include the International Festival of Folklore and the Second International Festival of Ballet in honour of the People’s Artist of erstwhile USSR, L. Sakhyanova and the People’s Artist of the Russian Federation P. Abasheev. The First Nomadic International Theatrical Festival *Zhelannyi Bereg* (Desired Coast), devoted to the theme *Liki Chingiskhana* (Faces of Genghis Khan) has been a spectacular success. Buryat State National Theatre of Songs and Dance “Baikal”, called “*Ugeim Sulde*” (“Spirit of Ancestors”) earned accolades in the cultural sphere of the republic.

The development of art education is an important activity in the sphere of art and culture. Children’s Schools provide the initial vocational training and carry out the task of development of children’s abilities and interests. Today 73 Schools of Arts impart education and training to over 7,000 pupils in the Republic of Buryatia.

With its unique pluralistic and universal character, the rich cultural heritage of the Republic of Buryatia brings the people of the whole republic together as it is considered to be a ray of hope for the new generation. It can also assimilate into the cultures of all nations of the world by adopting their universal qualities.

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## BURYATIA AND BURYATS THROUGH TIME AND SPACE

*V. L. Kourgouзов*

In the recent years, international scientific, philosophical and political community has been actively discussing characteristics of a new era – the post-modern era. Thousands of books and scientific articles, devoted to this theme, have been published, which arouse serious discussions and make contradictory conclusions. However, in this controversy the voices of those, who are called representatives of traditional cultures, are hardly heard. It happens not because they lack conceptual ideas in this field, but because the roar and tempo of globalization coming from the West, which is actually striving, willingly or unwillingly, for unification of traditional cultures of the world, and thus constitutes an actual threat of their disappearance, suppressing all ideas coming from the countries of the East concerning preservation of their centuries-long cultural heritage, value systems and traditional psyche of their people. One of such cultures is Buryats, who have been closely living with other ethnic groups in the Republic of Buryatia, and whose spiritual fate vividly depicts many common trends of the development of not only the cultures, inhabiting the neighbouring Central Asia, but of the entire Indo-Buddhist region. It is imperative here to deal with the ethnic and cultural characteristics of this eastern region of Russia in more detail.

Buryats, who represent the most northern group of Mongolian branch of Ural-Altai language family, are the largest ethnic group of indigenous people of Siberia. The territory of their habitation comprises huge areas to the northwest and to the southeast from Lake Baikal. The eastern borderline of Buryat settlements comes along the Uda river (the left tributary of Angara) in Irkutsk region, and in the east-along the river Argun in the Chita region. In the north, Buryat settlements reach the river Lena, in the south they border on Mongolia.

The ancient Buryat people, who have an original culture, have

passed through a chequered path of their historical development. During many centuries, Buryats had shared their living with other Mongolian tribes in the united Mongolian state, mostly engaged in nomadic cattle breeding as well as in traditional handicrafts. In the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the major part of Buryat people joined the Russian empire, some Buryats stayed abroad, in Mongolia and Inner Mongolia region of People's Republic of China.

There is hardly any doubt that, as Buryat historian T. Mikhailov has fairly noted, "culture of the Buryat people is a part of the common Mongolian culture, but it has some local peculiarities. The common Mongolian culture in its main features represented an alloy of cultures of different epochs and peoples of Central Asia". This alloy included permanent elements that had formed a stereotype of culture of Mongols and were transmitted from generation to generation. To determine the complex of those elements, stereotype means to establish a prototype of the traditional culture of Buryats, formed in Buryatia after it joined the Russian state.

Thus, formation and development of the Buryat culture is directly connected with political and ethnic history of the region, with the process of its development as a new ethno-social entity. So it is necessary to take into account that joining of Trans-Baikal with Russia changed the political, social, and legal status of the indigenous people. The Russian colonization of the region resulted in the following situation:

- a vast territory on both sides of Baikal was separated from the Mongolian world and the social political system of Mongols;
- the dominant ethnic group in this territory happened to be Mongolian speaking tribes, clans and sub-groups, which remained cut off from the main ethnos;
- all these groups were to turn over a new page of their history by interacting and uniting under new conditions;
- Ethnic territories of the Buryat people were thus determined. Within these territories, the language began to change, it was isolating itself from the original Mongolian, experiencing ever



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increasing influence of the Russian language, but at the same time preserving the existing dialects. The contacting groups started to share the commonalities of material and moral cultures, specific psychological mentality, stipulated by the mode of economic, social and political life and expressed in art, traditions, symbols, rituals and the entire behavioural patterns.

Formation of the Buryat people evolved rapidly, within 150 to 200 years, i.e. six to eight generations. This process resulted in the shaping of national identity, the ethnonym “Buryats” having become an expression of the new identity. However, the aborigines, for a long time after joining Russia, used to perceive themselves not as Buryats, but as Bulagats, Khondogors, Hornets and Tsongols. From 40s to 80s of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the Russian scientists I. Gmelin, G. Miller, P. Pallas, G. Georgi and others visited Buryatia, Mongols from Selenga and Kiakhta did not identify themselves as Buryats, but as Russian Mungals, and as for Buryats from Horinsk they identified themselves as Hori-Mongols. All this makes it evident that ethnic self-identity of Buryats at that period was not clear, but dualistic.

Based on this, a very important conclusion can be made: in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the process of formation of the Buryat nation had not been completed yet, and it were Russians and their Siberian authorities, who played a decisive role in spreading and consolidating the ethnonym “Buryats”. Alongwith the new administrative system, innovative socio-economic relations, ethnic structure of the population witnessed changes and Buryats developed new ideas, behaviour and new types of relationship leading to the inter-cultural dialogue.

Under these circumstances, a new psychology, new normative and communicative culture took shape. The Russian two-headed eagle, the Christian Cross, the White State Flag, the name of Tsar-emperor, striped milestones became part of peoples’ system of symbols and also a part of the natural cultural image of the region. The expansion of the sphere of interaction and mutual influence in a family kinship life had its impact on the rise of assimilated Russian-Buryat and Buryat-Russian families leading to the emergence of new domestic values. It is noteworthy

that it were the folks from assimilated families (Russian-Buryat), who played a great role in the development of culture and self-identity of Buryats. Many representatives of such families later became distinguished Russian scientists and public figures, A. Shapov and A. Bobrovnikov being prominent among them.

Speaking about the formation and development of Buryat culture during the Russian period of its history, one should not run to extremes: neither ignore and underestimate the influence of Russian culture nor exaggerate its role and importance. It seems to be right to take into account specific historic situations, the objective state of culture of the aborigines of Siberia at a particular period and general condition of the Russian culture prevailing at that time.

For more than three hundred years of being a part of the Russian state, Buryats have achieved much. In 1923, under the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the former USSR, the Buryat-Mongolian Soviet Socialist Republic was founded. It united the majority of the Buryat population of Trans-Baikal and Pribaikalia. During the Soviet period, Buryatia had become the eastern region of the country with highly developed infrastructure of education, health care, culture and arts, modern industry and agriculture. However, much has been lost. The events of 1937 can undoubtedly be considered a great loss, when the Republic was split into three parts (separating national Buryat autonomous areas: Ust-Ordynskiy in Irkutsk region and Aginskiy in Chita region), that had a negative impact on the process of consolidation of the Buryats.

Culture of the Buryat people is a constituent part of the general world heritage. It is historically based on the values that had been created for centuries. The Turkic, Chinese-Confucian, Indo-Buddhist and Russian-European components are clearly distinguished in the culture, testifying to active contacts of the ancestors of Buryats with other ethnic groups in different periods of history. An important role in the formation and development of Buryat culture was played by various religions and faiths- Shamanism, Buddhism, Lamaism and Christianity.

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They added to self-identity and mentality of the Buryat people. However, it is important to point out that due to its geographical location and peculiarities of the historical development, Buryatia is a specific channel of communication in the dialogue of cultures of the West and the East. Being related to the East by its ethno- genesis, it is tied up to the West via Russian language and culture.

The Buryat culture, forming an integral part of the culture of the East due to the “topology” of its mode of life, experiences the moral influence of the West. But at the same time, it does not lose its essential oriental world perception, and demonstrates by its own example as to how two moral tendencies can interact within one common culture, shaping oneself in the world image, not reconstructing the universe, but building oneself into regulated universe. The current situation quite clearly shows that eastern, i.e. Central Asian and Indo-Buddhist parameters of the Buryat culture, which used to be significant in the past, could not only determine the ways of development of the Buryat society, but also provide an original example for other cultures towards the dialogue of the East and the West.

Buryats of Russia, having successfully adopted the codes of two cultures (the eastern and the western ones) to greater extent, proved by their own example the possibility of practical implementation of the concept of Indian philosopher Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan on creating a universal system of “dialectical realism”, that could become the foundation for the union of the whole human race, international consortium of nations on the basis of synthesis of cultures of the West and the East.

The notion “East”, from our point of view, has no strict limitations in terms of geography, but is related to European culture. It supposes mostly cultural experiences of India, China and Persian speaking countries. And by its content, the notion “East” is historically polysemantic. It is too diverse in time and space to speak about it as something strictly definite. This notion is rich in content and has a successful performance in cultural and philosophical systems. The

“East” in this sense is reduced by European cognition as the whole complex of cultural forms, not similar to the culture of European region, and often even opposite to that. Though these differences can not be admitted as absolute, but they do exist.

Since the national specifications of character and psychology evolve against a social background and are formed irrespective of genetic heritage, the social, economic and political unity, common world outlook lead to the rise of psychological characteristics, which are common for all nations. National specifications are formed of the given life materials and its expressions.

Every ethnic group (and Buryats are not an exception), having developed for centuries under definite geographical, natural-climatic, socio-economic conditions, shares not just a specific economic community of people, but the community mode of life, world view and mentality. Russian literary publicist V. Belinsky once stressed that “the secret of every nationality is not in its dress or cuisine, but in its, so-called, manner of comprehending things”. He attached great importance to the originality of a nation, which lies, in his opinion, “in specific, unique mentality and views on things, in religion, language, and, moreover, in traditions that play almost the most important role and are the most typical characteristics of those”.

A man constantly establishes definite relationships with his environment, social components of which are the result of vital activity of previous generations. One lives, creates under these conditions, adopting and reproducing in his activity the forms of relationships, typical and natural for the given conditions. The entire complex system of relationships between man and environment develops definite human qualities and features that are natural and acceptable in this environment.

Before the October Revolution of 1917, when socialist reforms started in Russia, the peoples of Siberia (including Buryats) had been experiencing the stage of patriarchal tribal and feudal system. Many people, who had nomadic mode of life, were isolated from the outer

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world and were totally illiterate. Capitalist relations didn't develop in the structure of economic activity of these peoples. This leads to the conclusion that capitalist social formation left practically no noticeable traces in the structure of Buryats' personality as well as of other small peoples of Siberia, Far East and Far North.

One of the factors of the Buryat people's life, which undoubtedly had its impact on the formation of their national character is geographical isolation from the centre of Russia, territorial and economic disconnection of people. Settlements were established at significant distance from each other on a huge territory. The settlements were sparsely populated and they often comprised a few houses. Such situation can be explained by the traditions of household management. They had traditional kinds of economic activity like sheep, horse breeding and hunting. Development is connected with dislocation of people in order to have rational use of land, pasture and forests. Arising from this fact, isolation, alienation and separation from each other had their essential impact on the formation of psychological traits of a person. It also contributed to the development of dialects that impeded the process of communication between people of the same nationality.

Low level of productive forces, economic activity being oriented to nomadic cattle-breeding and hunting, made the Buryats totally dependent on the forces of severe climate. All this resulted in preserving archaic social relations, which in turn affected the development of various rituals, traditions, and which regulated all activities of the people determining the peculiarity of their cultural and intellectual life.

Meanwhile, the dependence of people on natural forces had its positive impact on the formation of a human personality. The point is that while worshipping the elements, a person learned to treat flora and fauna with care and understanding. Thus, a Buryat hunted only those animals, which either were old, not able to give offsprings, or which were dangerous for their peers or other animals. Buryats would not kill animals without any need, since the next day, people would need them more.

The whole complex of various factors such as economic and

geographic disconnection of Buryats on the huge territory, people's dependence on nature, severe climate, etc. contributed to the formation of specific traits of national character. Many travellers and researchers, who visited the Buryat land in different periods – Venice merchant Marco Polo, Gillyom Rubruck envoy of King Loudovic IV, Russian noble revolutionaries-Decembrists, Bestuzhev and Kuchelbecker, who had been exiled to Siberia by the Tsarist government, traveller Przhevalsky, Academicians Obruchev, Efremov, Okladnikov and others noted the melancholic and phlegmatic temperament of the aborigines, their emotional traits and vulnerability, along with liveliness, cheerfulness, energy and initiative.

Classical philosophical works quite often emphasise the dependence of the temperament of Buryats on climate and nature. Thus, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian writer N. Chernyshevsky, reflecting on a national temperament, wrote: “the climate of the country, undoubtedly, assumes a great, almost always dominating power. The residents of rainy and cool England can not, of course, have a choleric temperament of Italians. A Dutchman is due to the nature of his country more phlegmatic than a Greek”. A contemporary researcher of the problem V. Kostetsky notes that severe conditions of Siberia and Far North don't bare “hasty decisions, unclear thoughts and verbosity”, that is why people here are “serious, careful and at the same time sluggish”. The characteristics of national character of Buryats and their psychology, described by the researchers of the past, are fully proved by contemporary sociological studies and are supplemented by observations of psychologists.

According to the data collected by the scientists, 70 per cent of the respondents, representatives of various nationalities, residing in Buryatia, note that contemporary Buryats are kind, responsive and modest. More than 80 per cent mention their sluggishness and touchiness being the most prevailing characteristics. Analyzing the findings of the researchers, anthropologists, culture experts and sociologists, the empirical contacts with Buryats and their behavioural culture, it is also noticed that along with such dominating traits as

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respect to people, kindness, responsiveness, unselfishness, some representatives of indigenous people demonstrate both heightened national sensitivity and secretiveness, suspicion, quickness to take offence, revengeful attitude, hot tempo, cunningness, unreliability, “servility” for the power bearers according to their time-serving factors. This proves the scientists’ conclusion that features of human psychology are conditioned by the peculiarities of historical, economic and social development of a nation.

Touchiness, as a trait of character, is typical for all formerly oppressed nations. In this connection V. I. Lenin formulated the idea that former oppressed people are not as sensitive to anything as to violation of equality, “even by negligence, even in the form of a joke. So, there is only one thing to be advised: to express maximal respect, compliance, more tolerance, attention, sensitivity to people of other nationality”. These recommendations guarantee a success in finding adequate ways of establishing normal relationships between people in the process of inter-cultural dialogue.

Buryats, as well as other ethnic groups of Siberia, as compared to the people of central regions of Russia are not only less hot tempered, but possess other valuable qualities that form the basis of their national character. Without having important qualities such as collectivism, mutual assistance, diligence, hospitality and patriotism, one cannot survive in one’s struggle with the forces of nature.

Collectivism, as a trait of character, is the result of hard life under conditions of isolation and disconnection from others, the struggle for existence in severe climate, where people have to live in minus 40 degrees with frost bites or summer heat. Friendship and comradeship have always been highly valued by Buryats, but solitude has always been condemned. All peoples of Siberia have such sayings and proverbs, as “A good person has many friends, a good horse has many masters” (Tuvinian); “If you help others, it will be of use to you” (Buryat).

Mutual assistance has always been an important form of relationships between the Buryat people. Its content is rather rich. It

includes everything: hospitality that was perceived as a source of sympathy, mutual understanding and support; pity for old people, small children, orphans, poor, weak people with physical disabilities was an expression of compassion for the misery and needs of such affected people. It would not be an exaggeration to say that mutual help and support among peoples of Siberia has also been developed by the status of the population having been under colonial regime. People got used to sympathise with the unfortunate and the deprived.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian writer I. Goncharov wrote after his visit to Siberia: “I am very well received in the poorest *yurt*. The wood was put into the fire-place, I was let to seat in the front corner and was offered some milk... The nature is as cold and severe, as kind and gentle the people are...”. The relationships between people are regulated by a number of moral rules, e.g.: “don’t make seniors complain, don’t make juniors cry”; “always warm the frozen one, feed the hungry one, give shelter to the homeless”; “don’t gloat over the ill one, don’t mock at orphans”; “don’t emphasise deformity of people while talking” etc.

Originality of national character of Buryats is traced in many particular cases. Everybody, who has communicated with Buryats and has lived in this place for a long time, knows very well that any person is received here as a welcome visitor; neighbours always share food and instruments etc. These qualities, representing elementary democratic forms of contacts between people are an integral part of characteristics of the local people though they can be found in various forms in every nation.

A special priority in psychological characteristics of Buryats is given to sustainable traditions of the cult of ancestors, parents and seniors. One should stress that respectful attitude to seniors is a specially valued quality of many Asian peoples (for example Confucian doctrines in Chinese culture). People of senior age personified wisdom and were the main treasurers of life experience and norms of behaviour. Even today Buryats under any difficult circumstances come to old people to seek advice.



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Traditional Buryat etiquette dictates juniors to make way for seniors while entering the house, not to speak loudly at their presence, especially not to interfere in their conversation. Children and younger people must everywhere demonstrate respect and obedience to older people. In traditional culture, such obedience and respect to older people is based on the belief that only those, who have done the most for others, should be most respected in the society and the reward should be given to those, whose contribution to the communal labour is the greatest. Cultural tradition of disrespect to older people is supposed to be morally more dangerous, than over-respect.

The cult of the ancestors and parents is closely connected with love for homeland. Buryats' affection for it is based on the fact that they live in everyday contact with nature, otherwise their self-identification is impossible. "Birds always have their own nest, and a man has his homeland", Buryats say. Close, mutually gentle relationship between a person and nature gave rise to many valuable human qualities. The most valuable one is the care for flora and fauna of the homeland.

Buryats bring up their children to care for nature by means of the taboo *seartey* (One mustn't, because it is sinful), that partially has a religious origin. Thus, it was considered sinful to defile fire and water (for example, one mustn't throw litter, dirt in the fire, spit on it"; "one mustn't pour milk, blood or something into the water that could pollute it"). One mustn't break trees, on the contrary, one should give them "gifts", hanging coloured pieces of cloth on its branches, this way expressing worship of the master of the forest; one mustn't kill animals and birds without need. Moreover, it was a sin even to speak loud, to laugh, to yell in the forest, otherwise you would wake up "evil spirits" and make the spirits of forest, air and water angry. Every Buryat since infancy learned a wise advice: be always kind with nature – "the Earth feeds our sheep and the sheep feed us".

One of the important values of Buryat traditional culture is attitude to labour. A Buryat proverb says, "A man has been a man since childhood, a leader of the herd-since being a foal". Adults always take

small children to work, even if they are not still able to give any help. In this case, parents follow the folk wisdom: “let the eyes get used to work”. It is a common thing for Buryats as well as for other peoples of Siberia to teach boys since early age to do male labour and girls – the work entrusted to them, i.e. household chores. An ideal Buryat man was to possess the following abilities: to wrestle, to make crafts, to plait a whip out of eight small straps, to plait a tripod for a horse, to draw a bow string, to be a rider, to hunt, to know blacksmith’s work, to break a spine of a cattle by a stroke of an arm. An ideal woman was to be able to process skins, to milk the cattle, to sew clothes, to cook, etc. It was not without reason that the first gift for a boy in shepherd’s families was a lasso, and to a girl- a basket with coloured threads.

At the same time, children were raised in the spirit of high morality. They were always given an idea that an ideal person (a man or a woman) must not indulge in his/her life ten “black deeds” which include three actions of a body theft; adultery and murder; four actions of a tongue: slander, lie, idle chatter and ribaldry; three actions of thought: self-interest, envy and anger.

Sometimes trivial things, not significant at first sight, details of national culture play a big role in the development of inter-cultural dialogue. Ignorance of these things determines both success and failure of the dialogue. This includes peculiarities of space orientation (i.e. dwelling, *yurt*), time orientation (i.e. calendars), traditions of having meals, holidays and holiday games, sacred meaning of numerals, a role and meaning of colours in any culture. The Buryat culture is not an exception in this sense.

Let us take, for instance, colour. At first sight, there seems to be no difference what colour of suit we are wearing, while entering Buryat’s house for some occasion. The gift of what colour we present him/her for a wedding or on his/her birthday. But if we know the national symbols or even the sacred meaning of the colour, we will, undoubtedly, put some corrections in our dress code before visiting somebody for one or the other occasion.

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Colour follows a person everywhere. It has a psycho-physiological influence, making him feel various sensations: warmth or cold, cheerfulness or depression, joy or anxiety. The basic functions of colour-the magic, informative and decorative ones-most probably influence definite traits of national character. Within centuries, Buryats have developed specific colour symbolism. Favorite colours of the people are red, yellow, green, blue and white.

Great importance in moral and material culture of Buryats is given to black and white colours. White colour is the colour of sanctity and well-being. The most valuable things for a man are ones coloured in white: milk, dairy products, *yurt* etc. Nomads have many superstitions and beliefs, connected with the word "white" (*saagan*). Bokhan Buryats consider it a lucky sign for a woman to have a cattle with a white spot on the forehead. Such an animal may not be sold. According to the beliefs of Ungnisk Buryats, if a person sees a white mouse, he/she must kill it, take the skin off, dry the skin and always hold it by him/her. This will bring wealth and fortune, especially in trade and business.

Black colour has an opposite semantics, the most complex one. For Buryats, it symbolizes unhappiness, grief, death for everything that moves and breathes. Black colour is the colour of night, and at night a human life is under the greatest danger. Black eyes are considered to be dangerous and envious.

Since ancient times, Buryats have been attracted to red colour, that symbolized the image of the oldest object of worship for all nations - the Sun and related to it are fire, light and warmth, without which life on the earth is impossible. Buryats believe that red colour brings joy and happiness to a family, gives peace and well-being to people. In the epics of the nomads, the word red (*ulaan*) is associated with some significant cult. So the words *Ulaan-Baatar*, *Ulaan-Ude*, *Ulaan-Hongor* characterized a warrior, an athlete, a standard-bearer respectively. The red also signifies power and greatness. In China, the Emperor signed documents with purple ink, he sat on a purple throne, only the Empress had the right to wear red boots.

Yellow colour, as the white and the red ones, symbolises the solar colour. It is associated with gold, which since ancient times has been perceived as a sun ray. Special place is given to yellow colour within the palette of colours in Buddhism, which is first of all expressed in the name of religion – “yellow faith”, in garments of lamas-a yellow dress with red cloak orhimzho. This colour makes a warm and pleasant impression on a person, as if yellow surface emits the sun light, that everybody can feel.

Blue colour is associated with two higher powers – the Eternal sky (*Huhea munhea tangri*) and water. According to Buryat myths, the sky is the symbol of male origin. Together with female Goddess *Urgen Delhey Eahe* (Mother Earth), they are the foreparents of all living beings in the universe. Blue symbolizes eternity, endlessness not only in the world perception of Buryats and Mongols, but of other nations as well. Besides, the male (western) part of *yurt* is marked with the blue colour. Where the armour, hunting arm and pieces of horse harness were traditionally kept.

Green colour, the colour of grass and leaves, the blooming earth, is associated with the beginning of nature awakening, coming of warmth, abundance of dairy products. So it is the symbol of the earth, symbol of unfading growth and reproduction in nature and human society. Such notions as fertility, mother’s and woman’s generosity, unselfishness, happiness and joy are related to green colour. The green colour is the symbol of female (eastern) part of the housing, where a woman’s bed, trunks, home utensils and stuff for long term use were put.

Today, when there is a strong need and natural interest in national century-old roots of traditions and rituals, which along with mother tongue constitute the main contents of ethnic culture, it is very important not only to master the knowledge, but retain unique traditions of one’s culture in everyday life and transfer it from generation to generation. They, as a rule, contain all that is wise and extremely important for the present day life. Ancient Chinese wise man said, “What are you looking for in your neighbour’s house? Do you want to sew somebody else’s

head on you? What are you lacking in yourself? You have everything... Have a better look”.

The above mentioned characteristics do not, of course, exhaust the whole diversity of values of Buryat traditional moral culture. They are just some factors which should be taken into account by representatives of other cultures in their communication with the Buryats. Buryat people have some demerits. For instance, some characteristics, noted by Dr. V. Antonov as typical ones for representatives of his culture, are hardly worth ignoring: envy, mutual unsociability, unreliability, predisposition to hierarchical superiority, swaggering etc. Antonov was right to draw a conclusion on the ‘gap’ in mentality of contemporary Buryats, especially among senior and middle generations, and availability of three levels of identifications: clan/kinship based, territory/location based (western and eastern Buryats) and all nationality based.

Examples of groundless treatment of some representatives as “strangers” undoubtedly make the process of inter-cultural communication development more complicated, “preserving” some stereotypes, which become, to some extent, barriers on the way to normal contacts between people, stipulated by the time and socialization of contemporary people. However, the future does not belong to them. The future belongs to the harmony in relations between all nations and nationalities, layers and groups of society; to the ability of people to build their activity on principles of tolerance, sharing common interests.

Anyway, the dominating trait of the Buryat national character is, striving for compromise. Such national characteristics of Buryat people as tolerant attitude to each other, accepting the right for diverse world views, respecting senior people prove this once again. These characteristics were repeatedly noted by historians and travellers of the West and the East, for instance, Jouenville in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Marco Polo in early 14<sup>th</sup> century, I. Rank, G. Lam, Hara Daban in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jawaharlal Nehru in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, J. P. Rou and others at the end of the past century.

Striving for compromise is a dominating value of Chinese culture, since there is no culture in the world that could be compared in this quality with the Chinese one. The outstanding Confucian follower of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Lian Shumin, Professor of Beijing University, said that a Chinese, if it were necessary, would rather tell flagrant lie for the sake of saving consensus. There is a common genetic background of Buryat and Chinese cultures, which has reached us from ancient times and facilitated the inter-cultural dialogue of these nations.

To sum up, one can answer the main question, regarding the contemporary historic cultural space of Buryatia. First of all, one can affirm that peculiarity of contemporary historical cultural space of Buryatia is a combination of various types of cultural impacts. The oldest tribal culture of Mongolian speaking people has existed in Trans-Baikal since ancient times. The most significant holy centres of the entire Mongolian area of the huge Central Asian region were situated on the territory of contemporary Buryatia. The unique spiritual potential of this place, connected with worshipping the ancestors and ancient patrimonial sanctuaries has been preserved here till today. The northern Buddhism (Lamaism) that had started to spread actively in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was able to integrate traditional beliefs and was adopted throughout the entire area of Buryat (Buryat-Mongols) settlements. Later Buryat religious figures and scientists made a sufficient contribution to development of theory and practice of Buddhism.

Russian colonization of Siberia, Trans-Baikal and Far East brought Orthodox Christianity to these lands as well as the influence of various strata of Russian culture: peasants, Cossaks, nobility, bourgeois-democrats and Marxists. A special impact was made by the culture of Russian old-believers (*semeyskie*), who once had resisted unification of their faith and culture and had been exiled to Siberia by the Russian Tsar. Traditional culture of *Evenks* - aborigines of Trans-Baikal - presents a unique sample of careful treatment of nature, the significance of such attitude is fully comprehended only today.

Soviet times constitute an important historical period in the fate of

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Buryats and Buryatia. The development of free market economic relations, initiated in the past few decades and free enterprise caused intensive and ever-growing influence of Western mass culture, which is destroying traditional values of all peoples inhabiting Buryatia. Moreover, one can not exclude the dangers of direct sale of national cultural heritage, as it already happened in many other regions of Russia.

Considering historical cultural space of contemporary Buryatia, one can not limit oneself just with the territory of the Republic. In the area of traditional residence of Buryats in Irkutsk region (Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Okrug) and Chita region (Aginskiy Buryat Autonomous Okrug), there are sites that are of significant for history and culture of the entire Buryat ethnic group. Actions of Buryat heroic epic literature (*Geser* and *Alamzhi-maergen*) and events, described in historical chronicles of the 12<sup>th</sup> and the following centuries, took place on these sites. The mountain Alkhanai, honoured by all Buryat people, is included into the list of the world sacred places of Buddhism. Many outstanding figures of culture and arts of the Republic of Buryatia come from these places.

Historical cultural space of Buryatia is inseparably linked with its geographical location and unique landscape. It is determined by several factors: its specific geographical location – being situated on the borders of Russia, Mongolia and China and on the borderline of cultural influence of the Buddhist world, first of all Tibet and pagan culture of northern people; Lake Baikal, which is considered to be a site of the UNESCO World Heritage.

One can not help mentioning a legend about northern Shambala, the Land of Light, Knowledge and Kindness. Historically and geographically, Buryatia has been included into the system of notions, myths, mystery-plays, meditation, connected with sacred space mystery. Although notions of such kind can not be investigated within the framework of rational science, their role in cultural processes should be taken into account due to the great and global interest in esoteric studies.

In conclusion, one can possibly agree with the opinion of Buryat philosopher Z. Morohoeva that “many centuries-long co-existence of Buryats with Russians and other nations, their adaptation to other cultural mentality, saturated with the spirit of discreetness, created new opportunities for the development of Buryat culture” (it can imply partial correction of the traits of national character – V. K.). “The Buryat personality”, Z. Morohoeva emphasizes, “since it was able to understand codes of several cultures at the same time, has become undoubtedly richer today, more polyphonic and, consequently, possesses more vital capacity. It adopted a lot from European rationality via Russian culture. It goes without saying that Russian classical culture, first of all, great culture of Russia of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, enormously supplied an educated Buryat person with high spirituality, having given him access to masterpieces of music, painting, literature and ballet. The Soviet art was also rich with works of extra class, which had preserved universal human values that corresponded in many aspects to the values of cultures of the East”.

If contemporary Buryat culture that is purposefully and logically developing the process of inter-cultural communication, is able to strengthen all ties with the West and the East by means of various technologies, in the nearest future it will become a complex combination, an alloy of the best, the highest, the lightest and the noblest that mankind has created during its historical development.

The “framework” of this “alloy” has already been established and it has had a significant influence on the change of traits of a contemporary Buryat national character. It can be assumed that basic foundations of this “framework” have been more and more adapting to the traits of Western patterns. However, the revival of Buryat culture can not be meant to be as a mere repetition of the past. Any culture must develop, otherwise it will turn into a set of hardened samples, dead prescriptions and dogmas. As Z. Morohoeva notes, “It is this kind of culture, the traditional culture of Mongolian speaking tribes would have become now, if it had been preserved as the entity, in which the place and responsibilities of a personality had been once and finally



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determined, and a personality – individual could exist only as likeness of Buddha, in the image of Lama. Our culture requires recognition of pluralism of individual being as it has already been done in contemporary Japanese culture”.

However, while creating a building of contemporary Buryat culture we should always have a reliable key to the understanding of values of its traditions and traits of national character. These values are often concentrated in sayings and proverbs, the wisdom of the nation, accumulated for centuries. Some of them, which are, in my opinion, a specific “visiting card” for understanding mentality of Buryat ethnos and its culture will be cited here as an example.

- Don’t drop a bone between two dogs. Don’t start a quarrel between two people.
- A long gown tangles legs, a long tongue entangles everything.
- Having grown up, don’t plume yourself; having set a *yurt*, don’t boast.
- A child does not like tough meat, people don’t bare tough treatment.
- A horse gets learnt on the road, a man gets learnt in friendship.
- One can not crack a bone twice, one can not leave a friend twice.
- Friendship with a good person is shining of the moon. Friendship with a bad person is poison of a snake.
- A person, who has many friends, is as wide as a valley; a friend, who has no friends is as narrow as a palm.
- What fathers sow, the sons will reap.
- A tree can not grow without roots, a man can not live without genealogy.
- Who doesn’t respect a junior, doesn’t respect a senior.
- A horse will fall, a tethering rail will stay.
- A ray of the sun shines tenderly through the sky, mother’s look is the dearest in the world.

- Farther's word must be remembered, mother's word must be respected.
- Respect a senior, educate a junior.
- Give a shelter to a senior, wipe the tears of a junior.
- Don't saddle a foal, don't scare a child.
- Birds fly to a branchy tree, people gather in a hospitable *jurt*.
- It's better to be a slave of a knowledgeable person, than be a *noijon* (a noble), who knows nothing.
- A clever person tells about what he has seen, a stupid one - about what he has eaten.
- Strength of an eagle is in its wing-spread, strength of a man is in the depth of his knowledge.
- To study without reflecting is the same as to eat without chewing.
- Grown flowers decorate steppe, an intelligent person decorates the society.
- He who has many sheep is beautiful. He who has many cows is full. He who has a horse is quick.
- He who is early to get up, finds a horse and a saddle.
- A lassoed bull gets skinny, a lazy person gets poor.
- A horse is as quick, as how well it is looked after.
- If there is the cattle, there is meat.
- A lazy person will get wet from tiredness even in his own *jurt*.
- Not that man lives longer, whose lifetime is longer, but that one who has done more work.

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## BURYATIA'S ETHNOTOPONYMICAL DIMENSION

*L. V. Shulunova*

In the course of its historical development, the human race created an artificial environment that has become the main form and expression of its own existence – culture. The path that leads from the real world to notion, and further to verbal expression differs from one people to another. This process is determined by historical, geographical and ethnographic peculiarities of the life style of a particular ethnic group. In the era of globalization and cultural integration, modern society seeks new and better ways of establishing inter-cultural communication. However, cultural interaction is often accompanied not only by linguistic, but also by cultural difficulties.

Language is the product of culture. As the most important part and condition of cultural existence, it provides for the translation, storage and reproduction of information. New living conditions put forward new requirements in the study of language. Contemporary linguists consider language as a means of knowledge and communication, as well as a cultural code of nation. Thus the speaker's culture, his or her mentality and worldview are objects of a linguists' observation. Linguistics occupy *avant-garde* methodological positions in the field of humanities. This approach views a person and his place in culture as constituting an anthropocentric paradigm. Such an approach helps reveal the complex nature of language as a result of the cognitive activity of people and society.

The development of society is possible only if its knowledge does not go into oblivion. Knowledge is reflected in notions and notions are named by words. The human knowledge has always been followed by words. For instance, people have always named all their discoveries and victories. Indeed, it is impossible to imagine how to store knowledge and pass it onto succeeding generations without the use of such names. Whatever the phenomena of nature and society we are

studying, be it within the framework of biology, physics, cosmology, history, philosophy or morality, we inevitably have to think about how to express this knowledge so that it could become accessible to others.

“Proper names” hold a special place in the world of words and in the transfer of knowledge as they contain invaluable evidence of past cultures and ancient history. The history of human civilization has been revealed through many vivid examples of using “proper names” to study various aspects of inner and material culture. For example, French scholar Jean François Champollion accomplished the task of decoding of Egyptian hieroglyphs on the Rosette stone in 1821 AD. This discovery allowed Champollion to define the decoding principles of the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Due to their conservatism, “proper names” are able to keep information about the history of languages, ethnography and social organization. Therefore, we simultaneously live in the real world and in the world of words that define our reality and all its elements. It is known that the toponymy of each part of the world is formed as a puff-pastry in which there are layers in different times by peoples speaking different languages.<sup>1</sup> The territory of ethnic Buryatia, which includes the Republic of Buryatia, Irkutsk and Chita regions of the Russian Federation, and parts of China and Mongolia, is the region where contemporary Buryats live, and historically speaking it is the home of various Central Asian and Siberian ethnic groups.

While learning the geographical landscape and defining his own place in it, a person through his activity will often give names to the landscape elements. As noted, every person sees the environment through the prism of his or her own culture. This vision is fixed in geographical names. In course of time, as a result of complex and in many respects, obscure process of migration, assimilation and wars, some nationalities have disappeared. Names, however, are often sustained, transferred from generation to generation, borrowed and assimilated by the new settlers. The polyethnic structure of Buryatia is reflected in the complex toponymic system of geographical names that now exist.

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The use of toponymic material as a source of information for comparative linguistic research is very fruitful. However, toponyms possess linguistic value and the information is useful for many other disciplines such as history, cultural anthropology and geography. Indeed, toponymic data plays an important role in clarifying the nation's history and its social organization.

Toponym provides a vivid evidence of an ethnic group that lived on a particular territory. Let us consider the toponymy of Buryatia from a linguo-historical aspect. For example, if we take one of the ancient toponyms, Siberia (*sibir* / *shibir*), it provides the foundation upon which many geographical names such as *Olon-Shibir* 'Mukhor-Shibir', and *Shivertuy* have been built. As a topographical foundation, the ethnonym *sibir* / *shibir* is widespread within the Siberian region. In course of time, this ethnonym turned into the category of geographical names. For instance, in Buryat language, it is used to designate marshy places (*sheber* / *shiver* "low-lying, marshy place"). V. Nikonov points out that very often inhabitants are called according to the area where they live.<sup>2</sup> So, the existence of the geographical term *sheber* / *shiver* allows us to claim that the ethnonym *sibir* is related to the name of the nationality that lived in low-lying, marshy places.

There are many geographical names on the territory of Buryatia that are formed using the stem *shiv* / *shib* such as *Shiveshin Arshan*, *Shiviya*, *Shivki*, *Shivey*, and *Shivetuy*. It is possible to conclude that proto-Manchu tribes have given the newcomers the exonymic name *shi-vey* by analogy with *toba-vey*, *mo-khey*. In this connection, we can assert that the ethnonym *sibir* / *shibir* has Turkic origin.

The most interesting findings take place when we compare the words with the stem *shiv* / *shib* with analogical words in the modern Chuvash language and explain their semantics from the Chuvash *shive* 'water'. Consequently, the people coded under the name *sibir* / *shibir* and exonym *shivey* could be those mysterious "Water Mongols" that once lived on the Onon and Kerulen rivers and were mentioned by Wilhelm Rubruk and Plano Carpini. In addition, A. Okladnikov points

out that monuments of “*burkhotuy* culture of Zabaikalye belong to the first period of history of su-Mongols or water Mongols.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, based on the ethnographic data and linguistic parallels, we can suppose that the pre-Buryats and pre-Tunguses called “alien tribes”, who brought in their own culture, as is reflected in the archaeological findings of *burkhotuy* culture.

The complex analysis of geographical names that make up the toponymic system of ethnic Buryatia shows the presence of stratigraphic layers formed by the activity of ethnic groups that had lived on this territory. Historical and ethnographic data, as well as etymological analysis of geographical names in Buryatia, allows us to differentiate the following stratigraphic layers in the toponymy: Paleoasian, Turkic, Ugric, Mongolic, Tungusic-Manchu and Slavic.

It is known that the people who lived in the pre-Hun period of discovering of Trans-Baikal belong to the Paleoasian tribes.<sup>4</sup> To the Paleoasian ones have been ascribed Ketts, Yughes, Assans, and other peoples whose ethnic origin has not yet been defined. In the toponymy of Buryatia, geographic names stemming from Paleoasian languages constitute the most ancient layer. For instance, the Kett formant *ul* – is present in the names of water objects: *Uley*, *Ulutuy* and *Uldurga*.

The most reliable toponymic facts giving evidence that Kett-speaking Jughes and Kotts (Assans) had been settled on the territory of ethnic Buryatia is a bounty of hydronyms (names of water objects) and oykonyms (names of settlements) with the stem *assa(n)*: rivers *Asakan*, *Aashenga*, *Ashagley*, places *Verkh-Asakan*, *Asinovka*, *Osinovka*, as well as oronyms (names of mountains), such as the mountain *Asakanskiy Golez*. B. Dolgykh points out that at the time of Siberia’s colonization, Arins (Yarins) “... first called Kotts Assans, and Assans called themselves just Kotts”.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, oykonyms *Kotyi*, *Kataevo* can be referred to ethnonymic geographical names. There are also many names with the component *ket / kit* “man” found within this territory: the river *Kitoy*, the village *Kitoy*, the natural boundary *Kit*, and the mountain *Kitkay*.

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The Kett stem *ku*'s "idol, the imprint of a ghost in wood"<sup>6</sup> contains such geographic names as *Kusochi*, *Kusotuy*, and *Kusoty*. Researchers interpret the etymology of such names as *Kugo*, *Kuso*, and *Khuso* from the point of view of ritual traditions. For instance, V. Balabanov defines the etymology of the toponym *Kusoty* as 'stone women' – ancient stone sculptures.<sup>7</sup>

The ethnic Buryats belong to the region the history of which witnesses political, climatic cataclysms, epidemics, inter-ethnic wars and migration of peoples. This resulted in mixing and rise and decline of entire nationalities as the ancient Paleoasian tribes were forced out to the east and north. Chinese analysts gave the earliest written testimonies about the territory of Buryatia. For instance, it is written in the chronicle *Tan-Shu* that Pribaikalye was settled by Hun (S'un) tribes during the second century BC.<sup>8</sup> Monuments of the Hun culture were found in the valleys of the rivers Selenga, Chikoi, Khilok and Djida. Archaeological findings confirmed that formerly the territory of ethnic Buryatia had occupied the northeastern outskirts of the Hun *Kaganat*.

Tribal unions of S'an'bi in the second-third centuries AD, Zhuzhans in the fourth-fifth centuries AD, Turkic-speaking peoples in the fourth-seventh centuries AD and Uyghurs in the eighth-ninth centuries AD settled themselves on the territory of Central and South Eastern Asia. In the middle of fifth century, the territory of Eastern Zabaikalye was under the command of Turkic tribal unions.<sup>9</sup> This historical fact has been confirmed by such geographical names or hydronyms: *Adjak*, *Uraga*, *Urov*, *Uryum*; oykonoms: *Arashantuy*, *Arta*, *Kashtak*, *Kyra*; and oronyms: *Bom*, *Bomnaya*. Many Turkic names were affected by more recent language contacts. For example, *Izara-Gorkhon*, *Azim'e-Gorkhon*, where Turkic stems *Izara*, *Azim'e* are primary ones, while the Mongol component *Gorkhon* is a secondary one.

In Buryatia's geographical names, Turkic ethnonyms are imprinted, like the name of a *Teleut* tribe or a *Turan* nationality. The Turkic toponymic stems with the meaning 'man, people, and tribe' have such geographical names, as *Ara-Kizhi*, *Kizhinga*, *Novokizhinginsk* (from

Turkic *Kizhi* – ‘man’); *Telemba, and Ust’-Telenguy* (from Altai *tele* – ‘man’). In addition, there are many geographical names with the old-Turkic stem *tur* – ‘land, town, fortress’: *Tura, Turan, Turkhul, and Turov*.

Etymological analysis of geographical names allows us to refer a number of toponymic stems to Ugric languages, to the Nenets, Enets, Nganasan, Selkup and Obsko-Ugric languages in particular. To the Ugric toponymic layer belong the hydronyms with the Khanty stem *n’arym* ‘marsh: *Narymka, Malaya Narymka and Sredn’aya Narymka*. As E. G. Bekker notes, Selkups, Khantys and other aboriginal peoples of the North known in the ethnographical literature as Ostyaks and Samoeds, “for a long time associated themselves with marshes, diversity of which is astonishing.”<sup>10</sup> Names that make up the Ugric layer of Buryatia’s toponymy can be classified as toponyms with the final *-ya* with eventual meaning ‘river’ (Khanty, Mansy): *Akuya, Alkheya, and Vereya*. There are also a large number of hydronyms ending with *ga/nga*, that may mean “dwelling or settling”: *Zheltuga, Uruga, Ishaga; Ashinga, Karenga, Kurenga, etc.* To this group also belong toponyms ending with *-va*: *Saiva and Yakhva*; *-durga*: *Duldurga, Uldurga, and Mundurga*; *-gra/khra*: *Imangra, Ungra, and Khoncherga*; *-sat*: *Apsat*; *-sha*: *Iksha and Shaksha*; *-ma*: *Olekma and Tilishma*; *-da*: *Elkinda, Unda, and Saunda*. Toponyms built on the base of the Nenets language can be considered as names of rivers and lakes with the component *yakh(a)/yakhr-* “river”: *Yakhva, Bolshaya Yakhra and Yakhakta*.

The name of a Selkup-Ostyak tribe *yastynzy* may be interpreted as an exonymic name based on the Mongolian *yastan* ‘nationality’ and is reflected in such geographical names in Buryatia, as *Yasutkan, Yasytai, Esutayskiy* and *Ust-Yasytay*. As regards the territory of Eastern Zabaikaye, where pre-Mongolian tribes had lived, and for the ethnogenesis of Buryats, the study of the rich Mongolian toponymic layer has become more important. The Mongolian toponymy in Buryatia is divided into two periods: The first period was from 9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, whereas the second one started from the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present. The first period includes geographical



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names where historical and political events of the Mongolian world were reflected.

In the ancient times, warlike nomadic tribes called *Mengu* 'silver' lived between the Amur and Sungari rivers. Researchers suggest that Genghis Khan and his associates selected this ancient warlike tribe's name to define their own tribal union that had been transforming into the state.<sup>11</sup> At the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Kidans (nationality close to Mongols) rose in Manchuria forcing out the Uyghurs from Mongolia and expanded their possessions toward west including Altai.<sup>12</sup>

Mongolian tribes inhabited Mongolia and lands near the Lake Baikal in the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries. When describing this period, scholars refer to the notes of the medieval historian Rashid-ad-Din who divided Mongolian-speaking tribes of the 12<sup>th</sup> century into two groups: "forest", or fur farming that lived near Lake Baikal and "steppe", or cattle-breeding that roamed on steppe and mountain pastures from the Chinese borders to the Altai mountains and were more in number than "forest" Mongols.<sup>13</sup>

The most salient characteristics of the Mongolian period are toponyms that are derived from proper names defining old kins or tribes. The names of Mongolian tribes once living on the territory of ethnic Buryatia are reflected in the following geographical names: *Abagatuy* – from *abagaad*, *Alaguy* – from *alaguy*, *Borzhiyantay* – from *bordjigin*, *Darkhita* – from *darkhaad*, *Naymagut* – from *naymangut*, *Oloy* – from *oloy*, *Ongoy* – from *ongoy*, *Ulan-Sarta* – from *sart(a)uul*, *Khorchitoy* – from *khorchiid*.

Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Mongolian tribes held together despite all the civil staggering events that occurred over the centuries. However, the rise of the Manchu empire in China, coupled with the Russian expansion to the east and inner centrifugal forces, changed the international situation and led to the collapse of the Mongolian state. One outcome, following the establishment of new political boundaries, was that Buryats were "discovered" to live within the Russian state. It

was eventually realized that the toponymy of the Buryat region had the names reflecting religious and mythological views of Mongols, the names that exist at present. As ceremonies are one of the most stable elements of a religion, toponyms that have religious sources have helped fix objects related to ceremonial activities. As a rule, these objects are places that have a striking geographical characteristics, such as all types of heights (hills, mountains and cliffs), water objects (rivers and springs), and picturesque parts of landscape (forest or meadow glades), for instance: *Uhanai ezhen* (water host or master), *Khadain ezhen* (mountain), *Oin ezhen* (forest), etc.

The other ancient inhabitants of Buryatia's territory were the Tunguses, ancestors of modern Evenks and Evens. Their nomadic way of life made them move from the Angara side to Trans-Baikal where they came to live next to the Mongols and Buryats, called *murchen* or 'horse-breeders'. Apart from the Tunguses-*murchens*, there were Tunguses-*oro-chens* – 'reindeer-breeders', although, strictly speaking, *Oro-chens* (Oro dwellers) had been called Tunguses, those who had opened up the Oro area (above Albazin). As a result of their interaction with Buryats, the Tunguses-*oro-chens* evolved from a nomadic wandering way of life to nomadic cattle breeding.<sup>14</sup> Cattle breeding led to the assimilated Evenk clans settling in the south steppes of the Trans-Baikal. During this time, they began to be called *Ongkors*, *Solons* and *Khamnegans*, although their initial names of Evenks and *Oro-chens* still exist.<sup>15</sup>

The Tungusic-Manchu layer of Buryatia's toponymy is represented by numerous names in the Evenk language. The frequency of Evenk toponyms is especially high in northern and northeastern districts of Eastern Zabaikalye, the traditional place of living of the Tungusic tribes. Examples of geographical names existing on the territory of ethnic Buryatia, classified according to the type of toponym-building affixes, are:

- kan* (diminutive suffix), e.g., *Angara – Angarakan*, *Aya – Ayakan*, *Vitim – Vitimkan*, *Chita – Chitkan*, *Zypa – Zypikan*, etc.;
- nga* (adjective suffix): *Kiringa* from *kiri* 'dirt', *Turunga*, etc.;

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- ndya/-nda** (magnifying suffix): *Bira* 'river' – *Birandya* 'big river';
- chan/-chon** (scorning suffix): *Buguchan* 'bad place' from *buga* 'area'; *Birakhachan* 'small river', etc.;
- kit** (suffix meaning the place of an activity): *Ollokit* 'fishing place' from *oolo* 'fish'; *Urikit* 'the place one can stop at and rest from *uri* 'nomadic camping place';
- ma** (adjective suffix): *Moma* (*Mama*) from *mo* 'tree'; *Chulama* from *chula* "get green", etc.;
- tli/-li** (suffix building river names): *Ashagli* from *ashi* 'fir', *ashig* 'fir-grove'; *Talali* from *tala* 'saline-soil', etc.;
- кта** (suffix meaning something numerous): *Marakta* from *mar* 'stunted, petty birch grove', *Arbakta* from *arba* 'bank';
- dyak** (suffix for building adverbial nouns): *Alandjak* from *alan* + *dyak* 'place of passing over the ridge'; *Inandjek* from *ingan* + *dek* 'place with much sand, pebble', etc.;
- gda/gde** (adjective suffix): *Aktragda* from *aktre* + *gde* 'fir- or larch-'; *Maregda* (*Marigda*) from *mari* + *gda*, *marnik* 'birch shoots on a peatbog';
- ngda** (adjective suffix): *Nerungda* (*Nirungda*) from *niru* + *ngda* (*niru* means 'grayling'); *Dektonda* (*Diktonda*) from *dikte* + *ngda* where *dikte* 'berry', 'blueberry';
- chi** (possessive suffix): *Inache* (*Inachi*) from *inga* + *chu* 'with sand' (*inga* 'sand on a bank', 'sand- or pebble-bar'); *Kovachi* from *keve* + *chi* 'meadow, marchy' where *keve* 'meadow, march'.

The Slavic toponymy on the territory of ethnic Buryatia is the most recent layer, represented by words which not only reflect the climatic conditions and geographical peculiarities, but also various aspects of human life and activity. For instance, Evenk and Buryat toponymic stems refer to hunting and gathering, Russian and Buryat stems refer to stock-raising, and field-crop cultivation is only reflected in Russian stems.

In conclusion, the use of toponymic names can be even more productive than the use of archaeological and ethnographic data.

Geographical names can serve as a reliable source for studying the history of a region's settlement and to trace the contacts of various ethnic groups through time.

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## THE EAST SIBERIA STATE ACADEMY OF CULTURE AND ARTS: A REVIEW

*R. I. Pshenichnikova*

The role played by the East Siberia State Academy of Culture and Arts (ESSAC&A) in the process of multi-dimensional cultural and educational development in Eastern Siberia has not been investigated properly. Only one book, in which a retrospective analysis of this educational establishment's role concerning the training of specialists in the field of culture in the East Siberian region has been discussed, is devoted to this Academy. The book by Sergei Ivanovich Nikiforov, who was the head of this institute for 22 years, is the first attempt in this regard. Under the current situation, the Academy's status has reached a new stage. Not only its structure, contents and teaching methods but also the functions of this educational establishment, its role and significance in the region have changed due to its new relations with rest of the Eastern Siberian region in the sphere of culture, education, economy and government structures.

Under the existing socio-economic, historical-cultural, ethnic, educational and market conditions, the ESSAC&A is becoming a special centre for imparting training to specialists in the field of culture, professional artists and scholars. The launching of the Post-Graduate courses with specialization in: "Theatrical Art", "The History and Theory of Culture" (Culture Study), "The History of Russia", "Ethnology, Ethnography and Anthropology", "Museum Study" and "Musical Art" have cardinally changed the Academy's role in the formation of the cultural-educational and information space. Specialized Learned Councils are a feather in its cap. Various activities of the Institute of Preparatory Training, additional courses, qualifying courses, crash courses and distant learning system have enriched the Academy further.

For the purpose of scientific approach to the mechanisms of the regional, cultural, educational and information space formation, the

study of socio-genetics, which is a new scientific trend dealing with social study of human beings has been incorporated. In this respect, fundamental researches by A. Subetto, V. Bibler and G. Batishev are of considerable interest. These authors give philosophical, historical, cultural, psychological and economic viewpoints showing two ways of mankind getting out of any crisis. The first way is connected with getting into “non-classical” history, the epoch when the Law of Outstripping Development of Man’s Qualities is enacted, with the development of social intellectual quality and the quality educational system in the community. The second way is connected with the present state of mankind’s development within the framework of classical history, where the Law of Distortion of Generous Ideas is valid. According to this law, a human being becomes the limit of his own self-development. Classical history can be explained by the balance of exchange processes between the society and nature, where the increase of energy is marked with insufficient growth rate of forecasting, projecting and programming quality as the main indicators of social mentality, and this growth leads to the problem of survival and mankind’s evolution.

It is imperative to define the essence of the concept “Non-Classical Existence of Man” in Non-Classical History, which covers non-classical education, non-classical science and non-classical culture. The term “non-classical” means that man and his intellect do occupy the central part in the process of development and also the central part of the community’s productive forces, science and culture. For this reason the status of social projecting increases and the accents of the concept “Man’s Development” are displaced. The main idea of the concept is to understand the necessity of overcoming one’s own limit of development. In other words, it is the transition from “partial man” (narrow professional or a particular specialist) to a universal, creative person, who is capable of solving problems, being a highly educated expert. This demands an overview of all the concepts of education and man’s development and, first of all, taking orientation towards complexity and human intellectual system by means of a “leap”. Then the problem of intellectual and information resources and education quality come forward.

“Non-classical” education is a vector of revolution in the sphere of education all over the world. It is oriented towards the formation of a self-creating and self-transforming personality. The essence of the concept of “non-classical culture” deals with the change of the main functions of “classical culture” which is used to perform the function of bringing into harmony the social, spontaneous and natural evolution. Besides, it serves as a means of transmitting the world-wide human experiences for the century-old history, while the older generation performs the function of experience retaining and ensuring its transmission in the process of education.

Today in this age of information, communication and entertainment, the rate of socio-transformational activity and socio-economic dynamics takes over the rate of experience accumulation within man’s life span. Under these conditions, education becomes a means of transmitting experience and knowledge. “Classical Culture” has now ceased to fulfill a protective role in man’s life. It is replaced by “non-classical” culture, the essence of which is in its keen ecology aimed at the formation of a new psychological type of man. The latter means the rise of an individual’s intellectual potential, science and the society’s education as a whole, and the formation of a single social organism that ought to live in harmony with biosphere.

The problem of social and ecological tension is linked, according to some scholars, with the culture transmission dynamics, social experience, which is lagging behind the innovation processes, scientific, technological and socio-economic development. A rapid devaluation of the older generation’s experience under the innovation revolution affects the social mechanism of experience inheritance, which had been generated for centuries. This, in turn, increases the processes of the youth sub-culture, which often escapes the reality of being. This crisis, expressed in the form of father-and-son conflict, has caused the need for the reform of education as an inherent part of socialization and continuous intellectual-cognitive-sensitive adaptation.

Thus, education and educational establishments began to slowly

and unconsciously fit themselves into the role of the centres transmitting culture, science, art and social experiences. It is necessary to understand this role, the contents and educational technologies as well as the formation of a single multi-dimensional, cultural-educational and information space, built on the basis of the dialogue of cultures and the regional and national components of the state educational standards and experiences. A new approach to the problem of education can be found in the works by L. S. Vygotsky. The essence of his approach is expressed in investigation and comprehension of the mechanisms of a person's relation with the cultural-educational space in the process of "self-image" formation under the conditions of the dialogue of cultures.

Today, the regional-cultural space is characterized by the actively ongoing process tracing back one's roots, traditions and culture at different levels: the level of knowledge, patterns and rituals of behaviour, thinking, man's self-realization, phenomenological-esoteric perception of the world, time and space, authentic folklore revival etc. If one starts analyzing all the processes forming this part of cultural space, one will be able to discover how versatile and contradictory they are. It is necessary to think about the role and functions of modern institutions of culture – palaces/houses of culture, cultural and recreational centres, the centres of national culture, libraries, etc. – how we misunderstand their importance. The same can be said about the institutions of professional art (theatres, museums, concert halls, etc.).

This mixed and multi-dimensional picture is exactly reflected in the ESSAC&A. The higher educational establishment being the subject matter of our investigation is likely to scan all the processes. It compresses and accumulates them in order to comprehend and interpret this multi-dimensional information. As a result, the ESSAC&A has got a broad spectrum of fields for students. Along with this, the problem of restoration of authentic folklore and still dominating "museum" approach to culture brings about misconceptions and deformations in the process of sense formation. The latter is the essence of culture as the sphere of images, senses, forms of activity creation. A closed cultural space does not give a human being any new ideas



and awareness of time and space, relationship between people and the logic of behaviour. The need to take out man out of this closed space dictates the necessity of making research in the sphere of the past cultures and to observe how the things of the past function today. The solution of the problem lies not in reviving the past, but in the new comprehension of original combination of different historical types and the types of cultural relations correspondingly.

It is, therefore, important to find out and investigate the processes of man's evolution, i.e., the task of integrating various ethno-cultural components into a single and new pluralistic society engaged in reinterpretation of human values and incentives. The revolt observed in the field of people's social relations, when the former isolation of the group cultures is replaced by more closed ties, material and cultural consumption, styles of life, the sources of information make it necessary to look for new forms of communication between people in various systems of education. Above all, education and upbringing take place against comparative culture study background, being a means of new self-identification and self-development of a personality.

The ESSAC&A, which trains specialists for Eastern Siberia, is characterized by representing the place where the interaction of the two cultures- East and West- occurs. Through this interaction, the Academy is involved in the process of mutual enrichment of various ethnic cultures. A favourable geographical location of the Academy adds to the contents of its educational, scientific and creative activities. In future, it is supposed to be reorganized into Eurasian University of Culture and Arts.

Judging by the above-mentioned statements, one can arrive at the conclusion that the ESSAC&A has got a qualitatively new role in outlining the entire multi-dimensional cultural-educational and informational space in East Siberia. The first thing to be marked here is assimilation into the new field of activity, namely culture and art development monitoring with the purpose of defining the major indicators of their development both within a particular territory and in

the region as a whole. There are two stages of differentiation of cultures in East Siberia. The first stage came during the first decade of *Perestroika* period. During this period when all the republics and regions began to intensively revive and restore the once neglected national traditions, customs, rituals, ethnic cultures and distinctive kinds of national art, a multi-level, many-sided and poly-ethnic culture was created. The ESSAC&A played an important role in this complicated process. The second stage started with the integration process in parallels. It can be marked as harmonization, integration and dialogue of cultures at a qualitatively new level. The ESSAC&A was able to react to these processes and become a prominent centre to form a single, multi-dimensional and informational space in East Siberia.

One should emphasize the role played by the Ministry of Culture of Russia to promote this work besides the Federal Agency of Culture and Cinematography of the Russian Federation. The regional and national components of the state educational standards make the mechanism of such integration on the one hand, and on the other, it is the creation of inter-regional scientific-educational joint associations with research institute in the sphere of culture and art. For instance, such a joint centre of culture study has been launched at the Academy in collaboration with the Russian Academy of Culture Study (Moscow). The integration of the research programmes at the regional and national levels combined with educational process managed to create a unique situation of setting out a cultural-educational and informational space in East Siberia.

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of the ESSAC&A in this unexplored and underdeveloped sphere. It is the educational services that provide the integration mechanism of building up a new and multi-dimensional cultural-educational space in East Siberia. Through diversified educational services, some other traits and qualities of a person's character, his spiritual and cultural values will be discovered and developed within the new space. Hence, the ESSAC&A takes a crucial responsibility before the future generations for the quality of the aforementioned educational services, which to a

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certain extent determine the ways of Siberia's current development. To conclude, one should stress the fact that the ESSAC&A's activity has resulted in the creation of East Siberian and Northern academic complex of culture, art and social technologies.

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## DEVELOPMENT OF BURYATIA CULTURE

*S. M. Tulokhonov*

Development of Buryatia Culture is the result of historically natural and logically determined processes of both Buryat and All-Russian, and in a wider sense- of Asian and international character. The world influence was stipulated, on the one hand, by unprecedented increase of the scientific and technical progress as well as the increase of the material sphere of culture and on the other hand, regress of morality which was reflected especially in the totalitarian opposition of cultures, having resulted in two World Wars. One of the most important results of the World War I was the process of self-identification of nations, which manifested itself in evolution of national ideologies and emergence of new states, national-territorial formations and cultural autonomies.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century is characterized by the formation, development and collapse of the former USSR – the state with creative and progressive (in many respects), but extremist ideology, aiming at the expansion of its sphere of influence. As a direct consequence of such policy, the creation of militarized economy as mighty as capable of defending its conquests and providing tremendous power to Moscow took place. This could not but result in numerous changes in Russia's national cultures. These values, which emerged as a result of the October Socialist Revolution of 1917, include the achievement of total literacy, cultural enlightenment, scientific achievements, the development of health protection service and most importantly, the discovery of Siberia. The Soviet period was also characterized by the total introduction of atheism and assimilation of national cultures. So much so ethnic Buryatia is imagined today not exactly within the borders of the former Soviet Buryatia, but a considerable part of it stretches both westwards and eastwards.

The national consciousness of Buryat-Mongols, the essence of which embodied, first of all, in language development was formed within

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the framework of general Mongolian self-perception (Pan-Mongolism). By 1917, the original Buryat written language did not exist. In practice, the process of cultural-national formation was implemented in the form of all-state cultural revolution (*soyolun kubiskal*), unanimously admitted by the Buryats. The most important peculiarity of Buryat culture is its multinational composition, the main elements of which – Buryat and Russian, who determine the character of its development. Evidently, this object had always been considered by Buryats' mentality through the prism of national identity, that is not simply as the territory of the former Trans-Baikal and Irkutsk regions of the Russian Empire, but as the administrative-territorial unit of the former USSR and now the Russian Federation.

The character of the All-Union (international) and Buryat (national) interests and their inter-relation development was ambiguous. There were four stages in it, each of them was very important and relatively independent:

- The first stage was interesting because of the fact that the Buryat national-territorial entity, which had long been awaited by the Buryat intelligentsia, was established. This event developed in parallel with the process of self-identification in the former USSR fulfilling the requirements of that time, though contradictions showed themselves in the frequent changes of the first and second persons (P. Dambinov, M. Amagayev, V. Trubacheev, Baldorzhiev, M. Sakhyanova, M. Erbanov, K. Ilyin, B. Dabain, D. Dorzhiev and I. Dampilon), who did not satisfy the demands of the supreme power of the state to various degrees.
- The second stage (1937 – 1952) corresponds to the World War II period, which first manifested itself in the form of political repressions of 1937 in the former USSR, and then by military collisions in 1939-1941 (the then Khalkhin-Gol events had a direct impact on Trans-Baikal, namely the Ulan-Ude-Mongolia Railway construction). The Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 caused the most severe hardship in the life of the country in general, and Buryatia in particular. The course of

events in Ulan-Ude during that period was fully determined by the emissaries from Moscow who were frequently replaced – namely S. Ignatyev and A. Kudryavtsev with the help of the local figures – G. Belgaev, S. Ivanov, I. Borsoev and D. Tsyrempilon.

- The third stage, which is known as the most favourable and long period (1951-1983), is connected with the names of A. Khakhalov, V. Philipov, and A. Modogoev as well as their close associates K. Bardaeva, N. Pivovarov and B. Semenov. During this period, Buryatia culture flourished in its modern form. For example, two volumes of *The Grammar of the Buryat Language* were published. However, the Buryat steppe valleys was flooded by the Bratsk power-station artificial sea, which was considered as a national tragedy.
- During the fourth stage, the nation's development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century ended in withdrawal from the ideas of social transformation of reality and returning to the bosom of Russian statehood and culture. One can associate this period in the history of Buryatia with the following names: A. Belyakov, L. Potapov, A. Badiev, S. Buldaev and V. Saganov.

Numerous statesmen of Buryatia played a significant role in the development of its culture in various degrees. In this case, their lives and destinies fully reflect the peculiarities of the national-regional development. Among these statesmen, it is worthwhile to mention the names of Mikhei Nikolaevich Erbanov, Semyon Denisovich Ignatyev, Andrei Urupicheevich Modogoev and Leonid Vassilyevich Potapov.

**Mikhei Nikolaevich Erbanov** (1889-1938): His national self-identification during eight years of rule (1928-1937), set the initial stage of the development of Buryatia culture. He focused on general Mongolian problems. His achievements were quite impressive as progress in all sectors was evident. However, due to the conflict at the national and international level, he had to take repressive measures.

**Semyon Denisovich Ignatyev** (1904-1983): Good administrative skills symbolized his rule from 1937 to 1943. The military industry got

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a facelift, and locomotive industry flourished. Buryatia supplied the army with canned meat, cloth and timber. Ignatyev had become the Chief of the State Security Committee under Stalin.

**Andrei Urupkheevich Modogoev** (1915-1989): His rule (1962-1983) was based on the clear understanding of historical moments. His long and stable rule of more than two decades was supported by the authorities from the Centre.

**Leonid Vassilyevich Potapov** (1935-): Political ingenuity and reasonable action (in power since 1990) helped him keep the status quo during the 1990s, a difficult period both for Russia and Buryatia after the collapse of the former USSR. Consolidation of power, economic and cultural development are the highlights of his career.

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## ROLE OF BURYAT INTELLECTUALS IN PAN-MONGOLISM

*Sharad K. Soni*

Twentieth century has witnessed significant changes in the political status of what is today known as the Russian Federation Republic of Buryatia. Initially a few years after the fall of Tsardom in Russia, two autonomous oblasts of the Buryat region were proclaimed. The first one was formed as a Mongol-Buryat Autonomous Oblast within the RSFSR by a decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee issued on 9 January 1922. In the same year, second one was created as a Buryat-Mongol Autonomous Oblast within the Far Eastern Republic. However, following the incorporation of the Far Eastern Republic into the RSFSR on 15 November 1922, the two Buryat Oblasts were unified on 30 May 1923 to become the Buryat-Mongol Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, with Verkhneudinsk now known as Ulan-Ude as its capital. After over three and a half decades in 1958, China's attempt to extend its influence over Mongol people led Moscow to drop the word "Mongol" from the Buryat region which then came to be known as the Buryat Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. But the most significant change in the status of Buryatia took place after the disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Union, when in March 1992 Buryatia's Parliament decided to sign the Federation Treaty of Russia on the condition of ensuring the republic's sovereignty. It was then also decided to drop the words "Soviet Socialist" from its official name to call it simply "The Republic of Buryatia."

The Buryats have a unique history of their participation in the movement for Pan-Mongolism. The educated ones among the Buryats particularly in the twentieth century were Mongolian nationalists, who were influenced by the ideas of European nationalism and independence. It was more so due to their all round development which took place largely under Russian influence. However, they tried to apply European



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ideas into Mongolian concepts, without losing their traditional culture. It is true that these Buryats dreamt of a Pan-Mongolian state, but at the same time they also helped the Russians, both the Tsarist as well as Communist in their efforts to extend influence in the Far East.<sup>1</sup> As such Russian influence on the lives of Buryats resulted in producing a number of intellectuals and leaders who “occupied a unique position in the Mongolian world as a cultural bridge between the Russians and the Khalkhas of Outer Mongolia.”<sup>2</sup> Referring to the role played by the Buryats, a Buryat politician in the 1920s stated that they “formed the cultural *avant garde* among the Mongol tribes and introduced and directed the revolutionary ideas of our time.”<sup>3</sup>

It is in this background that this paper seeks to analyse the idea of making a unified state based on Pan-Mongolism in which Buddhism too had a major role to play. However, the key focus remains on highlighting the role played by the Buryat intelligentsia in bringing the ethnic Mongols together to have a Pan-Mongolist state.

### **BUDDHIST FACTOR IN PAN-MONGOLISM**

Though Pan-Mongolism has a much longer history, this concept came into prominence in the early twentieth century. During this period Pan-Mongolism represented the desire of indigenous Mongols to have a united state based on the model of the Empire of Genghis Khan. This concept was so deep rooted that it called for reunification of all the Mongols wherever they lived as well as all the Mongolian areas into a single “Greater Mongolian state.” The idea of creating such a state that would essentially be a Pan-Mongolian in nature, primarily focussed on including territories comprising of not only Outer and Inner Mongolia as well as Buryat region of Siberia but also the territories of Tibetans, the Kyrgyzs and Kalmyks of Central Asia, thereby stretching the whole area from the Caspian Sea to Lake Baikal. However, Pan-Mongolism could not grow into a movement for a single unified state against the desire of the native Mongols whose region was now separated in different areas by different powers. The key factor behind this denial was the geopolitical importance of Mongol areas which attracted

various powers mainly Russia, China and Japan to establish their hegemony over there. In doing so these powers exploited the concept of Pan-Mongolism in various situations for their own benefit and the Mongols were left with nothing but a dead desire of having a Pan-Mongolian state.

There is no denying the fact that the Pan-Mongolist vision of ethnic Mongols regardless of their inhabitable areas was to include the inhabitants of a vast region, the main entities were the Khalkhas of Outer Mongolia, Inner Mongols, Buryat Mongols and Kalmyks who were to be assimilated into a new politico-cultural set up. In this endeavour both the legacy of Genghis Khan and the distinct nomadic culture appeared to have played a significant role. Genghis Khan became a role model as it was under his leadership that the first unified Mongol state emerged in the thirteenth century. Apart from the religious factor, the idea of unifying the ethnic Mongols also meant to have one single Buddhist culture. Thus Pan-Buddhism as a variant of Pan-Mongolism, was advocated by a leading Buryat Lama Agvan Dorjeev (1853-1938). Several other Buryat leaders like Jamtsarano, Baraadin, Agvan Dorjeev, Tsybikov and Bato-Dalai Orchiv too made constant attempts to use Buddhism as a tool of unification and nationalism.<sup>4</sup>

Pan-Buddhism seemed to have strengthened the feelings of nationalism among the Mongols who withstood both the Chinese as well as Russian control of their respective areas. Such a concept based on religious attitudes gained further momentum as “Russian pressure on the Buryats (and Kalmyks), and Chinese pressure on the Inner Mongols, increased.”<sup>5</sup> It is to be noted here that since its introduction into Mongolia in the seventeenth century, Buddhism or in more specific term Lamaism (Tibetan Buddhism) served the Mongols not only as a prime source of common identification but also as a tool utilized in various ways for political purposes.<sup>6</sup> Religion, thus, demonstrated political orientation in all the key Mongolian areas- Outer Mongolia, Inner Mongolia and Buryatia. As regards Outer Mongolia, in 1912 a Russian observer noted: “No Mongols have any notion about the Chinese Emperor, but every Mongol even the children, knows about the Bogdo Gegen

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[Jebsun Damba Khutukhtu], who unites both temporal and spiritual power.”<sup>7</sup> So, the urge for Pan-Buddhism aimed at establishing inter-relations among Outer Mongols, Inner Mongols, Buryats, Kalmyks and also Tibetans so that Pan-Mongolist vision could be realised.

It was also due to the extension of Pan-Mongolism to Pan-Buddhism that Tibet was planned to be included in the unified Mongol state. However, effectiveness of Pan-Buddhism proved to be futile in unifying the Mongols at least before 1917, i.e., before the fall of Tsardom in Russia. Rupen points out following factors as the reason behind this set-back:<sup>8</sup> (a) the inclusion of Tibet into the Mongolian area which desired independence; (b) the use of the Tibetan language in the Lamaist Church instead of Mongolian; and (c) the rivalry between the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Lhasa and the 8<sup>th</sup> Jebsun Damba Khutukhtu of Urga. Besides, several other developments taking place in almost all areas inhabited by ethnic Mongols contributed much to damage the Pan-Mongolian aspirations. Commenting on the issue of Pan-Mongolism before 1917 Rupen states that “Mongolian unity did not really exist.”<sup>9</sup> He cites the following reasons to support his assertion:<sup>10</sup> a) Russian influence provided the Buryats with interests and sophistication unknown to the Khalkhas and caused them to suspect the Buryats of un-Mongolian activities; b) Chinese influence similarly divided the Inner Mongolians from the Khalkhas; c) some Buryats and some Inner Mongolians were de-nationalized by Russian and Chinese contacts; d) Irkutsk Buryats often disagreed with Transbaikalian Buryats; e) the Kalmyks were too far away for any real cooperation and Oirats resented domination by Khalkhas; and finally f) the Mongolian area best suited to independence, i.e., Outer Mongolia had the least developed nationalism and the greatest apathy, due in large part to the curses of illiteracy and disease.

### **RUSSIAN-BURYAT CONTACTS**

The historical background of Russo-Buryat contacts suggests that as far back as 1609, the Russians first heard of the Buryat people from Turkic peoples living along the Kan and Yenisei rivers.<sup>11</sup> The Turkic

name of the Buryat, *birat* or *pirat* was soon adopted by the Russians as *bratskie ljudi* (Buryat people), which due to its resemblance with the Russian word *brat* meaning “brother” came to be called as “the brotherly people.”<sup>12</sup> The first direct contact between the Russians and Buryats occurred during the former’s eastward penetration across Siberia to the Pacific in the Lake Baikal area. The Buryats who are of Mongolian descent lived around the shores of Lake Baikal and farther eastwards inside the former Soviet Union, at least since the days of Genghis Khan.<sup>13</sup> Initially, the Buryats offered serious resistance to the Russians who were advancing to gain control of the region around Lake Baikal. But in the period between 1641 and 1652, the Russians slowly conquered them and brought them into the system of Tsarist tribute.

Having subdued the Buryat Mongol group, the Russians marked their victory by constructing the town of Irkutsk in the west of Lake Baikal in 1652, which later proved to be of strategic significance. Soon Russian settlements came up in all the Buryat areas, which led to what has been described by the western scholars as the Russification of nomadic life style and traditional “Mongolian” culture of the Buryats. Thus the Russians were alleged to have become instrumental in the political separation of Buryats from other Mongols. It was the Nerchinsk Treaty of 1689 and the Kiakhta Treaty of 1728 that placed Buryat areas under Russia.<sup>14</sup> But at the same time, establishment of a Russian protectorate over the Buryats saved them from Manchu-Qing invaders, who overran most of the ethnic Mongol inhabited territories. Buryats were thus, “the only Mongolian people besides Kalmyks who did not submit to the Manchu rule.”<sup>15</sup>

However, some degree of difference was noticed between Buryats of the two main Buryat regions – Irkutsk in the west of Lake Baikal and Transbaikal in the east and south of Lake Baikal. While the Irkutsk Buryats were more Russified, the Transbaikal Buryats were “typically Mongol” in their characteristics.<sup>16</sup> The former were engaged in agriculture and lived in wooden houses and fewer of them were Buddhist in religion. The latter, on the other hand, lived in *ger* or *yurt* (felt tents) and most of them were Buddhists. Rupen describes Buryats

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of the two regions in the following words:<sup>17</sup>

Politically active Irkutsk Buryats tended more to take an active part in *Russian* political parties; [while] the Transbaikal Buryats stressed to a greater extent *Mongolian* self-consciousness and formed Mongolian political groups and associations. The strongest and most active Mongolian nationalists were Transbaikal Buryats

Russians, however, did not distinguish between different Buryat groups and in fact they were the ones who helped in one way or other to unite Buryats irrespective of their clan and tribal identities. During this course, the Russians even assimilated other Mongol groups as Buryats into the Russian administrative control of the Baikal area. It may be pointed out here that these Mongol groups had settled down in the Baikal area in the seventeenth century after fleeing from Outer Mongolia due to wars and internal strife there. A few years after signing of the Kiakhta treaty, the Buryats became the most “trustworthy and loyal Russian subject” and continued with the same status until 1860s when “some Buryats advocated Pan-Mongolism and separation from Russia.”<sup>18</sup> This kind of feeling among Buryats was generated primarily from a strong reaction against the Russian penetration into the Buryat territory as well as Russification of the Buryat people including conversion of their religious faith. The Buryats began to look beyond Russia’s borders in order to secure support for them which also encouraged the Pan-Mongolian idea.

### **BURYAT INTELLECTUALS AND PAN-MONGOLISM**

The idea of Pan-Mongolism deepened further among the Buryats especially the intelligentsia who studied in Russian educational institutions. Under Tsarist Russian rule, Buryats’ role in Pan-Mongolism as well as in extending Russian influence to Outer Mongolia can best be described in terms of Pan-Mongolism (as espoused by the Buryats) being double-edged.<sup>19</sup> Firstly, as a Buryat expression of separatism, there was a threat that the Buryats would leave the Russian Empire and join Greater Mongolia, and hence it promised much to the Khalkhas [of Outer Mongolia].<sup>20</sup> But secondly, Buryats were considered to be

valuable in extending Russian influence to the other Mongolian region, and, therefore, “the Buryats were credited with filling the gap between Russian and Mongolian thought and ways.”<sup>21</sup> It is widely acknowledged that the Tsarist Russian Government generally “recognized the potential usefulness of its Mongolian subjects, and often employed Buryats as agents in Outer Mongolia and Tibet.”<sup>22</sup>

It was also the Buryat intelligentsia who introduced new ways to Mongolia especially during the period between 1921 and 1930.<sup>23</sup> Some of the most intelligent Buryats played a leading role in “the new revolutionary movement” (1921) in Outer Mongolia, and since then continued to be in prominence in running affairs there.<sup>24</sup> These Buryats, few in number but of utmost importance, not only assisted Tsarist Russia but also the Soviets in handling the situation in Outer Mongolia, “which was far from settled in the first years of the new regime.”<sup>25</sup> In a sense, Buryats were used to fulfill both the Tsarist Russian as well as Soviet policies towards Mongolia, and hence, the new regime was influenced by the Buryats both in its composition and its aims. However, majority of the Buryats pursued aims which ran contrary to the Soviet aims as they were “bourgeois nationalists” who worked for a Pan-Mongolian state.<sup>26</sup>

The key figures among the Buryats who nursed the Pan-Mongolian vision included Bazar Baraadin, E. Rinchino and Ts. Jamtsarano. In order to advance the agenda of Pan-Mongolism, Bazar Baraadin brought out “the first alphabet to transcribe the Mongolian language in a way that would better reflect the modern pronunciation of the language.”<sup>27</sup> While doing so his plan was to provide a unique means by which Mongols of all regions could be able to communicate easily amongst themselves. This was a major breakthrough in the direction of Pan-Mongolism. Several Mongolian scholars still believe that Baaradin’s alphabet using Roman letters is the best ever developed for Mongolian language.<sup>28</sup> Another Buryat Ts. Jamtsarano who drew up the “Kiakhta Platform” in 1921 for the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party (MPRP) was a staunch supporter of Pan-Mongolism. It is evidenced by the fact that the second point of the

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“Kiakhta Platform” itself states:

In view of the fact that the peaceful existence of the Mongolian popular masses and their joining in the culture and knowledge of enlightened peoples depend on the formation of an independent, sovereign state of the Mongolian nation, not on enslavement and oppression by foreign imperialists, our People’s Party strives ultimately toward the unification of all Mongolian tribes in one independent state....<sup>29</sup>

Jamtsarano founded a secular school in the Mongolian capital and even published from there a Mongolian language newspaper known as *Šine toli kemekü bicig* (New Mirror), besides establishing the Mongolian Committee of Sciences in Ulaanbaatar in 1921, which was later named as the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. He contributed a lot to enhance Mongolian cultural and intellectual life and thus he remained a dominant figure in this field. The Third Congress of the MPRP which took place in August 1924 provided an opportunity for several Buryat leaders to express their “Pan-Mongolian sentiment”. E. Rinchino, a Buryat nationalist and an ardent Pan-Mongolist, raised his voice at the Congress in favour of Pan-Mongolism when he said that “we must also keep in mind the fact that millions of our race, the ‘Inner’ Mongols, are groaning under the oppression of China.”<sup>30</sup> In November 1924, at the First Great *Khural* of the Mongolian People’s Republic he further stated that “we must be the cultural centre for our races, we must attract to ourselves the Inner Mongols, Barga Mongols, etc...”<sup>31</sup>

It was during the same *Khural* that an earnest urge also came from Baraadin who said that “be firm in your work of uniting all Mongolian races...”<sup>32</sup> Similar hopes were shared by most of the Mongolian intellectual including the Buryat ones. In 1927 Rinchino wrote an article in *Refvolyutsionnyi Vostok* (The Revolutionary Orient), in which he put forward an idea of an “ethnographic Mongolia.” He argued that contemporary Mongolia was “a people and a country possessing all the elements necessary for building a national state,” and referred to the 1921 Kiakhta Platform statement with regard to formation of a

Pan-Mongolia, stating that “this platform had already been approved by the Far Eastern Secretariat of the Comintern.”<sup>33</sup> However, opposition from within the Buryats led to severe criticism of the whole Pan-Mongolian idea. There was a sharp division of opinion between the Buryat leftists and the Buryat rightists. Being followers of communist ideology Buryat leftists seemed to have been more interested in following the Soviet system rather than supporting the Buryat rightists who were opposed to Russification or Sovietization and even Sinification of Mongolia and the Mongols of other areas.

As a result, pro-Soviet Buryats openly attacked the views expressed by the Buryat rightists not only related to Pan-Mongolism but also to other issues that ran contrary to Soviet views. But, in the 1930s, Buryats as a whole lot fell victim to Stalinist purges and began to be eliminated from the Comintern’s appointed posts in Mongolia, followed by their arrests, imprisonment and even execution. Such victims included Baraadin, Jamtsarano, Rinchino, Amagaev, Agvan Dorjiev and many others who were charged of acting for the cause of Pan-Mongolism. Besides, a “Pan-Mongolia” case was opened in Leningrad against the lamas of Mongol group which was originally formed by Peter Badmaev, a Buryat doctor and diplomat of Tsar Alexander III, and it is believed that 6,267 people were implicated and finally executed in this case.<sup>34</sup>

To conclude, although several Buryat leaders played a leading role in the cause of Pan-Mongolism, it proved to be futile due to the circumstances of that time. The idea of seeing a unified Mongolia incorporating Buryat region apart from other areas was not realised. Indeed, as Rupen concludes, “independence of mind and sincere devotion to their people caused their (Buryats) downfall when a new generation of more supple instruments of Communist control was ready to replace them.”<sup>35</sup> It was true both in the case of Outer Mongolia as well as Buryatia because, both regions followed their own directions in polity, society, culture and economy.



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## THE FINE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE IN BURYATIA

*I. I. Soktoeva*

Many people interacted around the unique Siberian lake Baikal and the migratory waves spread in different directions. Since ancient times, the region's inhabitants obtained food by gathering, fishing, hunting and reindeer breeding in severe natural and climatic conditions. They kept to nomadic life and, having tamed animals, learned to use their scent and habits in search of foliage and seasonal pasturable lands. In this manner, the preconditions for advanced nomad cattle-breeding evolved.

Vital energy of people, vigilance and accuracy of their observations were embodied in various arts and crafts, petroglyphs including typical reliefs and natural materials like stones, clay, metals, furs, hides, bones, horns and tusks of animals, roots of bushes, trunks and branches of trees. The processing techniques were being improved from generation to generation.

It was natural for the ancient people to attribute soul not only to the living beings, but to the constantly changing environment as well. The people comprehend the universe in its integrity, interaction and cohesion of various phenomena and objects. Such thought processes also developed the first ideas about the identity of microcosm and macrocosm. Mythological thinking became a powerful motive force of creative potentialities of the human consciousness all along its further development.

From time immemorial, people drew on vertical planes of rocky mountains. They depicted bulls, deer, horses, birds and other local animal species, anthropomorphic figures and scenes of hunting as well. Quite often they used a rough surface of stone, its salience and hollows for drawing, as if imaginary figures had been concealed in those natural volumes and forms, and by using cutters made of hard rocks and rubbing red ochre in the contour lines the ancient artists had visualised

images created by elements of the nature itself.

The drawings executed on a spatial scale were originally connected with the sacrament of hunting and sacrificing rituals, which were performed at the foot of a rock, around a pile and must have been accompanied by magic spelling, chanting and dancing.

The earliest local metal instruments were made of copper and tin; the bronze casting centres and mines found by archaeologists and dated by them to 2000 B.C. testify to this fact. Knives, swords and daggers, hafts of which were decorated with sculptural images of rams, mountain goats and birds became widespread throughout the Eurasian steppe zone.

The history of the Central Asian peoples was enormously influenced by the militant tribes of Khunnus. They established the first state union and founded several settlements on the territory of Trans-Baikal. In the first century AD, the Khunnus lost their integrity as a result of armed conflicts with other nomadic tribes. They partially assimilated with the aboriginals, but most of them were now known as the Huns who had moved westwards.

The descendants of the several tribes, which inhabited Western Pribaikalye, can be considered cultural and genetic successors of the vivid Khunnu art in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages. They were able to manufacture very pure puddling iron, which could be perfectly hammered and managed to defend their independence in the time of the Turkic state (*Kaganat*).

When the Scythian tribes of Iranian origin occupied the Altai and Sayani upland region, the basic artistic plots acquired ornamental patterns; a three-dimensional and recognizable animal on the handle of a knife was replaced by its symbol in the form of rings only. At the same time, many tribal groups of Pribaikalye preserved “the Scythian-Siberian animal style” for a long time enough; bronze overlays on harnesses, details of a belt set and the weapon testify to the fact.

The nomadic way of life determined such characteristic clothes as

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a wrapped-up dressing gown made of hides or felt with a belt girdle, to the superimposed metal platelets on which articles of armament were fixed.

In Mongolia and Buryatia, the so-called “deer stones” dated back to the 8<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, the advanced Bronze Age. In those days, a three-part structure of the world was reflected, where the top of the universe was formed by the sky and stars, the middle was represented by ungulates (mostly galloping deer), and the lowest level was filled by snakes and fish. The represented animals are supposed to have been communicative images of large tribal groups and implied the solar symbols related to a calendar cycle.

The architectural complex of the Konduiski Palace in the Chita region, the other ethnic homeland of the Buryats can be referred to as one of the monumental memorials of the Mongol empire. The original granite sculpture in the form of dragons’ heads later on became a prototype of the adornments of the Imperial Palace in Beijing.

Thus, pictorial, decorative and applied arts, though formed on the basis of different historical and genetic layers preserved its integrity in the Baikal region, as each of these layers occupied a certain niche and they had coexisted for a long time in various ethnic groups located far from each other in the vast forest-steppe, tundra and steppe territories of Siberia and Central Asia.

It is no wonder that the religious concepts based on shamanism, certain system of ideas and views about magic forces of nature, society and a human being, still play an important role in the world outlook of the indigenous peoples. The pantheon of Buryat shamanism is hierarchically ordered with the supreme deity called Eternal Blue Sky. All geographical objects - mountains, rivers and lakes, natural phenomena and elements, as well as the spheres of human activity have been assigned to the numerous spirits and deities acting as hosts and lords. The inhabitants of Pribaikalye believed the souls of their fellow tribesmen to get reincarnated in birds and animals after death. This fact clarifies the cult of animal-ancestors deeply rooted in the antiquity.

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It also explains the mythological plot, when a woman becomes a spouse of an animal and has descendants from it. Totems of different kinds, such as Bull-Master, Motley Burbot, Swan, Eagle- the first shaman's ancestor and others are noted in the Buryat mythology as well.

The rite during which a shaman goes into ecstasies (*kamlanie*) is a real performance. During the rite, the shaman, like an actor, is singing and reading hymns aloud, dancing to the tambourine, playing one of the national strings, hypnotizing and ventriloquying. The suit, head-dress, tambourine, cane and other cult things were considered to be sacred and were to be used very carefully. The best sorts of leather and the most expensive furs were intended for the shaman's cloak, to which tassels made of animal skins were suspended. The tassels fluttered faster and faster like snakes, while the shaman was going into ecstasies. Symbolic trinkets like human figures, a horse, a bird, disks and little bells were also suspended to it. The shaman's head was crowned with an iron helmet with a crosswise covering and two lamellar horns atop. As a whole, the attires made a furiously expressive dancer look like an animal or a bird. It is needless to say that the onlookers were impressed very much.

On shaman's tambourines and altars, the vault of heaven is depicted as an arch. There is the sun on the one arch end, the moon on the other, points and circles around them represent stars. Figures of men and women, horses, weapon, bows and arrows are depicted schematically between the heavenly bodies.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the contacts between Siberia and Central Asia were developing due to Buddhism that was especially practised on a large scale among the eastern Buryats. During more than two thousand years of its history, Buddhism periodically permeated among various nomadic and settled peoples and within each of them acquired a special colouring affected by traditional local beliefs. The comparative analysis of individual elements and monuments of the ancient and medieval culture in the above named regions shows as to

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how the religious and cultural heritage of the people of India was spread in the vast lands of the Asian continent.

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, historical and geographical conditions, specific economies of the western and eastern Buryats had an impact on regionally peculiar folk creative activities that developed in a unified trend on the whole. A wedding ceremony significantly contributed to the preservation of traditional household goods and general appointments of the *yurt*. A rich bride's dowry consisted of bedding (mattresses, blankets and beautifully designed pillows), a bed, chests with both festive and everyday clothes and footwear, rugs, small low tables for having meals, etc. The bridegroom and participants of a wedding procession had a ride on ornate horses, all armed. Silver quivers glittered on archers' left hips. A special woman's sleeveless jacket was covered with metal plates along the waistband and skirtings. A box for storing arrows with a horn-shaped pattern embroidered on its cover was put at newly-weds' bed-side in the *yurt*. In the past, the store served as a case, in which reserve hunting arrows were kept. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Buryats still used to equip a bride with a bow and arrows. That custom reflected ancient hunting traditions, when girls took part in it too.

Besides, the bride put on a decorated head-dress, the "wreaths" of two wide belts, on which silver plates were laid. With the "wreaths" on, the bride was to worship the shaman images (*ongons*) and the fire, in which slices of fat were put.

Herdsmen and hunters' way of life produced handicrafts made of leather, fur, wool of domestic and wild animals. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women had retained the skill to knit patterned stockings and sewed fur mosaic rugs. Natural tints of materials were chosen carefully, simple (squares, parallel lines, rectangles) creating amazingly harmonious patterns.

Trimmings of men's outer clothing were not merely decorations, but were signs of the regional and kin identity. Women's festive attires were made with the use of a multi-coloured band, fur edging, appliqué

work and embroidery at the corner of a skirt, on footwear and mittens. Most of the patterns were initially designed as a volute, circles, rosettes and rhombuses being secondary motifs. Solar symbols can also be observed in the figuration of quivers, bow cases and mobile headrests. Carving on the kitchenware made of wood and birch bark, paintings on chests and other utensils display the same symbols and patterns.

Reindeer breeders, hunters and herdsmen were quick to catch atmospheric fluctuations in the severe and sharp continental climate. They remained alert watching the distinctive behavioural features of the living beings, while trailing in the twisting spurs of the Altai-Sayanski and Barguzinski mountain ranges. The advanced cattle breeding economy, a different stage of the natural resources development in comparison to gathering and trapping, determined a particular structure of human spatial and flexible reasoning. Figures of people and animals can be referred to as a peculiar module of measuring flat and hilly country. In a dynamic aspect, horsemen can be considered as such, since on riding a horse the steppe inhabitants could measure not only distances, but time en route as well.

Herdsmen spent most of their time in the open air; a dwelling stay meant their getting away from outdoor cares and joining the hearth that was highlighted. The design of a dwelling *yurt* reflects their being accustomed to centric forms of the horizon and firmament. A collapsible dwelling served the vital needs of nomadic herdsmen in the best way. Round in the base, trellised frame made of flexible strong rods and a felt coating with a hemispherical top formed a hermetically compact construction.

Like a more ancient shelter of branches, the *yurt* was imagined as the universe. Its internal space was divided according to the vertical and horizontal structure of the universe. The *yurt* proportions, furniture and all utensils were balanced with the inmate's figure to fit his daily life. All household goods were characterized by smooth shapes, convenience and expediency of which had been adjusted through the centuries.



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By the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the western Buryats had replaced their portable dwellings by the permanent ones. Wooden *yurts* with four, six and eight walls were summer dwellings, houses of the Russian type became winter accommodation. However, the traditional interior was, in general, the same for a long time. For example, a saddle, harnesses and other man's attributes as well as kitchen-ware employed by the women were kept in strictly fixed places.

Wood is one of the ancient ornamental materials. Great skills were required to manufacture such things as multiple bows and arrows, saddles, sliding trellised *yurt* walls, capacious mortars for tea and salt, which were hollowed out of an unbroken birch trunk, churns, boats for meat, buckets, scoops, twirling sticks, scrapers, etc.; also tea cups were turned of roots and birch burls. Dimensions of the chests usually depended on the owner's height as fur coats, *caftans* and dresses were to be put there at full length. The carpenters not only made the chests themselves, but also adorned their exterior walls.

Dichromatic paintings like black pattern lines against the red background can be referred to as the ancient models. The red paint was made of the Indian ochre, pieces of which were found in abundance in the river pebbles. The black was taken out from tumours forming in horses; a tumour of a white horse was searched for first of all.

From time immemorial, smith's craft was honoured among all Turkic and Mongolian peoples; skilled masters were endowed with special rights and privileges, and were even exempted from taxes in Genghis Khan's time. It is indicative that the ancient metallurgy centres and the mines developed by the Buryat tribes till the 18<sup>th</sup> century were located at the same sites. Smiths were ascribed a heavenly origin in myths and legends; they were quite often compared with shamans, and even competed with them. Like shamans, smiths were divided into white and black. The former were jewellers, goldsmiths and the latter produced iron and steel goods, household goods of iron, cast iron, non-ferrous metals and alloys. The folk memory has preserved the hymns glorifying the work of smiths. The Buryats knew such ancient technical

and artistic methods as forging, casting, notching with silver and tin on iron, silver coating of iron, polishing, and engraving. Later there appeared such techniques as stamping, openwork and superimposed filigree works, combined with inlaying with semi-precious stones, enamel and gilt.

This craft became specialized too. The saddle-makers who used silver notching were very popular. The craft technology remained the same, as it was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A specially prepared thin silver plate or a wire was driven into an iron surface preliminary processed with a chisel (hammer). The festive saddles with high pommels for riding in the mountainous terrains of Òunka and Oka were remarkably beautiful; quite often the same master also made a complete set of saddle-cloth and leather fans on each saddle side, decorated with multi-coloured embroidery.

The folk ornament has always possessed deep meaning of an image, in which everything is conformable to the nature and space. Each ornamental motif on an article denotes best wishes, happiness, joy, pure and noble intentions, blessing, vigour and might. For example, the “eternal knot”, symbolizing prosperity was located at the centre of an ornamental composition. In Mongolian and Buryat works of oral folk art, welfare was frequently wished on various occasions, for instance “ten thousand years of happiness” or “longevity and infinite happiness!”, Meander motifs and the Chinese hieroglyphs, such as *shou* – “longevity”, *fu* – “happiness” and others were used to mean the same. The materialized symbol was being comprehended not only during a wedding ceremony, but also during the entire human life. It was typical of the nomad’s objective environment and reflected his aesthetic ideals.

One of the basic patterns in the range of Buryat ornaments is “ram horns”. Distribution area of the pattern under consideration is wide enough and exceeds the bounds of nomadic cultures. It can be found in India, the Middle East and East European countries. Yet it has been especially popular among the nationalities that have inhabited the Central Asia region, a cradle of many nomadic tribes. The pattern

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symbolizes well-being and prosperity. Works of folk arts were dominated by natural colours. Blue, the colour of the sky, symbolized fidelity; green, the colour of grass, stood for growth and reproduction, pure and noble intentions, etc. The white colour, implying permanency in Buddhism, has been of a principal concern, an important token in many folk ceremonies and holidays (e.g. celebration of “White Month”).

By the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Buryat carpenters managed to constructively remake the style of Buddhist architecture, having introduced the traditional modes that had already taken roots in Trans-Baikal by then. Craft centres specializing in different kinds of art began their formation, many of them continued to evolve in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well. The art of casting ranked high among the Buryat craftsmen’s activities; apart from household utensils they cast spiritual items as handbells, icon-lamps, ritual vessels, sceptres (*ochir*), etc. There were no prescribed recipes; each master defined his own makeup proportions, especially for musical instruments, colour and sonority of which were the main criteria of customers’ choice. Purity and melody of the sound of handbells were achieved by inserting silver into a bronze alloy at casting. A set of cymbals underwent the following qualification check; one cymbal was taken outside and struck on, while another one left inside was to start resounding.

Images and themes of the Buddhist art were originally interpreted in the people’s perception of the universe too. There are plenty of artistic interpretations of a lion, but even with a furious grin, it is kind as a matter of fact. That is what a real defender and people’s assistant “in suppressing the evil and gaining wisdom, fearlessness and a good name” should be according to the folk conception.

The image of White Old Man (*Sagaan Ubugun*) found a special popularity. He patronized all the living beings and granted longevity to them. The craftsmen depicted him looking confident fondly, smilingly and kindly. The surroundings of the Old Man’s cave look like a true paradise, abounding in flowers and fructiferous plants, with well fed animals walking in couples. Certainly at all times, each nation has an

ideal of a beautiful and harmonious world, where the man and nature are united.

The Buddhist legend about the Mongolian Prince Dugar-Zaisan was also given a folk interpretation. The known scene of tiger taming is represented as an everyday reality. The Prince is holding the tiger by an ear with one hand and is caning the animal with another one. The scene was executed in an ornamental way again. Trees, flowers, clouds and groups of camel with their younger ones were painted in bright colour stains.

The School of Orongoi Masters had already manufactured Buddhist sculpture professionally and still portrayed kind gods, instead of the angry ones. The gods of mercy look harmoniously lucid, endowed with physical and spiritual perfection. The works are remarkable not only for their particular plasticity and superfine elaboration of details, but also for spirituality intrinsic to the images.

National School of Temple Interior and Home Altars Decoration in the Baikal region was quite active in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. During this period, the Buryat masters constructed buildings according to the traditional forms of Buddhist religious architecture. Architectural appearance of the *datsans* was to a great extent defined by the shape of a roof, design of an eaves and entablature and the number of porticoes. The decorative means were deeply rooted in the history of the Chinese and Tibetan architecture and originally had a rational constructive purport, but in Buryat edifices, they were mainly used as adornments, yet containing substantial symbols of the new belief adopted by this region.

At first, the silhouette of the Gusinooserski *datsan* was similar to that of the Russian hip church with straight-edged roofs. Later on, they built with corners cocked, which became one of the distinctive features of Buryat religious architecture. Symbolic figured endings of cupolas, circular galleries on columns, fretted multi-colour decor and murrey walls increased the original character of the architecture. Art workshops were attached to the *datsan*, where mysteries *Tsam* were performed.

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In 1913, ecclesiastics Agvan Dorzhiev and Choinzon Dorzhi Iroltuev founded the Tibetan Medicine School near the Atsagat mineral spring, which had curative properties. It was a unique complex with an infirmary, a pharmaceutical laboratory and a building for studies, where the divine services devoted to Lord Buddha were held.

The roofing corners ended with gilded dragon heads containing handbells in their jaws. The frieze was adorned with symbolical mirror disks. Manuscripts and stone images of special purpose (*burhans*) were embellished with the so-called precious dyes of coral, gold, amber, malachite, lapis lazuli, silver and beads.

At that time, craft centres commenced to develop in some *uluses*, masters from Orongoi being especially renowned. Eight months a year the Orongoi masters constructed residential and public buildings and even the Russian churches in towns and villages, making all the exterior and interior decorations. They built more than a half of all *datsans* in Buryatia.

Skilled carvers from the Eravninski district specialized in the manufacture of xylographic plates and printing books intended both for the monastery and the rich parishioners. It is necessary to mention that the Buryat masters played an important role in building the Russian churches. In the Staroselenginski Spasski Cathedral, constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, stucco mouldings on the window openings somewhat resemble curvilinear outlines of the Buryat ornament, though it could be just a fortunate coincidence of the national and baroque stylistics in design.

Formation of the Buryat-Mongol Autonomous Republic (1923) was a very significant event in the political, social and cultural life of its population, just as of all peoples of Russia and the former Soviet Union. Correlation of traditions and innovations was one of the key problems of the Soviet art development throughout the Soviet period. The works of the founders of professional easel painting of the Soviet period remain impressive till now. Here the image of Buha-Noion and the picturesque canvas *Buha-Noion-baabe* should be mentioned.

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The former was created in the spirit of the Buddhist icon by R. Merdigeev in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The latter was painted by I. Daduev in 1927. The folklore and epic principles are incorporated in the works of Ts. Sampilov, among which the painting *Curious Bulls* (1935) is of great importance.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the folk art continued to develop in the course of traditions, succession of generations and was rested upon the rich cultural heritage. The masters actively participated in the Days (*Dekada* in Russian) of the Buryat art and literature held in Moscow in 1940 and 1959. In 1940, articles manufactured by chasers, carvers and embroiders from all the regions of Buryatia, which excelled in the flawless technique of workmanship, were exhibited. The exhibited articles were rings, combs with inserted gems, bracelets with engraved ornaments, knives, plates for embossing on leather, suits of women's trappings and the toilet sets notable for delicately elaborated details. Despite the interdiction to depict the Buddhist motifs, masters still employed some of them in the settled composition schemes. They decorated their works with neatly executed Buddhist ornamentation including luxuriant vegetative and zoomorphic motifs, e.g. traditional images of lion heads on a scabbard. At the same time, they introduced elements of the State Emblem symbols that reflected the contemporary themes.

Many professional artists who mastered the principles and methods of realist art successfully interacted with the amateur craftsmen. In particular, the relief wood pictures *Collective-farm trotters* and *Squirrels* succeeded greatly at the *dekada* exhibition. They were framed with motifs of fruit, leaves and flowers, symbolising the riches of Taiga. Their authors were hereditary masters, who worked in the spirit of national traditions. Many of them showed their talents simultaneously in several kinds of applied art. That also testifies to continuity of the century-old traditions among the Buryat people, who were able to work with different materials.

The ear-rings, bracelets, pendants and brooches made by Dolgor

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Loginova, daughter of the well-known silver chaser of the past, have a refined silhouette and elaborated filigree details. In 1940, many visitors of the Moscow exhibition remembered the wonderful openwork earrings with long chains and hand bells ringing on their ends. The other well-known master of that period, Dimbril Badmaev made wooden canes with silver figured knobs for the exhibition. He also presented traditional trappings, hair pendants and breast amulets (*guu*). Even the Buddhist ornamentation was not without embellishments (e.g. the motif of two small fish, symbolical jewellery, etc.)

The masters always took into account the potentialities of practical application of the things they made that is why their *pialas* (hemispherical or truncated-conic widening upwards bowls for drinking), pipes and canes were very strong. The works of D. Sirenova and E. Yaptueva aroused the feeling of unabated succession to the folk art. The saddle-clothes manufactured in the technique of application and embossing on leather are traditional in their form, motifs and composition. There was a network and longevity sign *shou* in the centre, framed with geometrical and vegetative patterns.

G. Lenkhoboev (1907-1991), one of the masters of the famous Orongoi Wood Engraving School, displayed a wine set consisting of a jug and six *pialas*, a little table to put the set on, a flower vase and a casket. There was a network encrusted with multi-coloured sorts of wood in the centre of the round table cover. The jug was decorated with the relief, ornamentally conventionalized clouds, mountains, flowers, and a silhouette of a horseman. Except for the service, the master carved a lot of vessels of burl.

Numerous discussions about the possible ways of development of folk art, the position and role of the ornament in the artistic system of the Soviet art, interest in the national heritage defined the situation in the artistic life of the country in 1960s and in Buryatia as well. Quite often the folk masters themselves got involved in the process of systematic study of the Buryat people's artistic heritage (G. Lenkhoboev in the 60s, M. Erdineev in the 70s-90s). The problem of the attitude to

the Buddhist heritage was being gradually reconsidered and particularly, its correlation with the folk art was admitted.

The famous Buryat jewellery-makers still worked in the second half of the 60s till the beginning of the 70s. Their traditions were successfully continued by their descendants and apprentices. Secrets of the ancient craft were imparted from generation to generation and concerned metal working methods and techniques, ability to skillfully manufacture a thing, adorning it with national patterns and insertions of semi-precious stones as coral, lapis lazuli, malachite and nephrite. Sossor Sanzhiev (1900-1972) was famous for his expertise, perfect technique, a skilful combination of chasing, openwork filigree and granulation. The effect of a fine filigree design was achieved due to silver wire imposed and soldered on the rib. The master immortalized himself in the elegant women's trappings, pipes and knives. His son, Dimbril Sanzhiev, continues his father's traditions. In the set of a knife and a fire steel bending wavy grooves and lines constitute the entire asymmetric pattern resembling conventionalized tongues of flame.

Many hereditary chasers distinguish themselves with innovative approaches to manufacture of jewels. The white colour of silver is quite often changed, heavier plates are formed; large ornamental patterns assume relief and the metal surface is darkened.

The favourite motif in women's ornaments is a rosette. It is used with good effect in breast trappings, both in superimposed pendant elements repeated many times, and as a pendant itself. Rich incrustation with coral and turquoise intensifies the impression of particular solemnity. The decor of knife wrapping is made by similar means of inlaid oval-shaped coral. The framing border ornament has something in common with the outline of links of the chain that a knife is suspended to. Thorough making, search for new forms and motifs are characteristic feature of V. Urizchenko, V. Tsizhibon, B. Bazarov, A. Chinbat and B. Zhambalov's expertise. These masters have considerably expanded the ware assortment, taking into consideration modern aesthetic tastes and combining different materials.



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Folk craftsman P. Simpilov resorts to ornamentation in the form of a carved decor along the brims of *pialas*, vases, etc., enhancing the design of each thing from the wooden sets of utensils. Introducing relief details, such as a lotus flower on the cover of a butterdish, the master emphasizes the smooth chiselled wooden surfaces. He skilfully displays peculiar properties of the natural material, e.g. the birch texture is surprisingly silky, the fibre pattern sparkling in the light. Such works convincingly prove viability of the folk traditions of artistic wood processing and inseparable continuous bond of generations. So it is no wonder that network, meanders and floral patterns are still widely popular.

In the 70s-80s, there originated a new kind of arts and crafts, based on horse hair application – gobelin tapestry. Both professionals and amateurs are engaged in this realm. Their works testify to the increasing number of ornamental plots woven of horse hair of natural colours with longitudinal transitional strips from light to dark tints, with spectacular motifs of large volutes and rosettes, frequently with a long fringe along the edges .

At present, the largest Buddhist temple and monastery is the Ivolginski *datsan*, the ensemble of which includes several buildings. In recent years, there have been erected memorials (*suburgans*), the greenhouse containing the Bodhi tree, the residential house of Pandido-Hambo Lama, a museum, a hotel, dwellings and service buildings; numerous barrels for praying have been arranged within the premises. The main palace with four gates, turrets and columns is richly decorated. There is a clay relief with the image of Shri Chakrasamvara at the centre. Thirty two anthropomorphic statuettes and twelve miniatures of animals are placed around the palace. Many other *datsans* are also being revived; the sacred Deer Stone (stored for some time in Novosibirsk) has been returned to its former location.

At the beginning of the 90s, artists and folk craftsmen worked successfully under the patronage of the All Buryat Association of the Development of Culture (VARK), which aimed at the revival of the

national trades. They mastered techniques and figurative symbols of Buddhist icon-painting and sculpture, skills of sewing, appliqué and fancy work, traditional methods of stone, wood and metal processing.

In 1995, Ts. Tsizhipov and D. Batuev carved match wooden thrones of epic hero Geser and his wife. Based on the fact that in Tibet, Mongolia and Buryatia, Geser Khan is included in the pantheon of deities, the masters recreated truly regal thrones in the Buddhist tradition. The thrones were well decorated, adorned with dragons located symmetrically on each side. Stars and the fabulous bird *Garrudi* surrounded by an aura of flame tongues were represented on the top of the backs. It can be considered as an innovation that animal figures from the twelve-year calendar cycle, totem ancestors of the Buryats and the typical group of “five kinds of domestic cattle” were included in the figuration. The ornamental motifs were used as structural, connective, framing, emphasizing and symbolic details. Geometrical, cloud-shaped, vegetative, mountain-like patterns were made in the technique of thorough and relief woodcarving. Bright, clear painting with the golden dye against the red background also made the whole composition look solemn and serene.

Certainly, with relation to expediency it may seem controversial to execute the thrones only, without a temple complex or other architectural object it could be put into. Yet, the animalistic genre has highly developed in the Buryat art, being characterized by the life-asserting emotional content and professionalism of the masters, which has always been appreciated and respected by people. Thereby in ancient times, splendid hymns and chants were composed in honour of the creators of man-made ware. The fine and decorative arts of the peoples of Buryatia are not declining at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century either. However, their further development is closely connected with economic, ecological, moral, spiritual and aesthetic problems of the Republic, just as throughout the Russian Federation.

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## THE BURYAT LITERATURE (1956 – 1995): A REVIEW

*N. D. Khosomoev*

During the forty long years (1956-1995), Buryat literature underwent a significant change. Due to dramatic events, in the past few decades, the former Soviet people's mentality witnessed radical changes. Because of the fast changing life and transformation in community as well as individual psychology the horizons of literature were expanded.

The Buryat literature of the period under review is remarkable for the following novels: B. Mungonov's *Khilok nash burlivyi* (The Stormy Khilok), A. Bal'burov's *Poyushie Strely* (Singing Arrows), Ch. Tsydendambaev's *Vdali ot rodnykh stepei* (Far away from Native Steppes), D. Batozhabai's *Pokhishennoye schast'ye* (Stolen Happiness), I. Kalashnikov's *Poslednee otstupleniye* (The Last Withdrawal), Z. Baldanzhabon's *Golubye sopki* (Blue Hills), M. Stepanov's *Noch umiraet s rassvetom* (Night Dies at Dawn), V. Kornakov's *V goltsakh svetaet* (It is Dawn in Rocky Mountains); verses and poems by N. Damdinov, D. Ulzytuev, D. Zhalsaraev and Ts. Dondokov; tales and stories written by T. Galanov, B. R. Beloglazova, S. Metelitsa and Ts. Shagzhin's plays etc.

The emergence of the young characters in Buryat literature of 1930s - 40s, who have little in common with the literary characters (e.g. *Imya otsa tvoego* (Your Father's Name) by N. Damdinov, *Golubye sopki* by Zh. Baldanzhabon, *Sovest* (Conscience) by Ts. Shagzhin), was influenced by the Soviet incarnation of Russia. In those days the firmly embedded tradition of realistic approach to depicting life, and the facts and new realities, became one of the powerful aspects of Buryat literature.

On a deep insight into the way of life of Buryats one observes that they were not leading a secluded life, but a smooth one having

continuous friendly dialogues with other people, most often with the Russians. Another progressive tradition of the literature in the period under consideration is its striving for description of the contemporary life. Despite its shortcomings, the Buryat literature always tended to show the most vital and pressing issues, the process of forming of the Soviet man's new spiritual image.

In 1959 B. Mungonov's novel *Khilok nash burlivyi*, the first ever attempt to depict a Buryat village, was published. Historical novels as *Vdali ot rodnykh stepei* by Ch. Tsydendambaev, *Pokhishennoye schast'e* by D. Batozhabai, *Poslednee otstupleniye* by I. Kalashnikov, *Istoki (Poyushie strely* in its final addition) by A. Bal'burov and several other works marked a new stage of artistic maturity in the evolution of the Buryat literature.

An increased attention to disclosure of a human being's psychology and aspiration to convey his inner state, particularly his thoughts were expressed, besides moral and ethical problems concerning various shades of life. These problems occupy a considerable place in the tales and stories by the Buryat authors, in which we can find a new attitude to the toilers, the woman, the state property, the relation with people, the staggering events as well as trifles of one's personal life. Often novelties are shown in comparison or collision with old moral principles. Sometimes new things are just asserted as a joyful illustration of the new life.

A deep interest in the problems of today's life is noticeable in the Buryat authors' narratives. Around 40 works were published during that period, while only ten works had been written within 30 years before. The narrative became a favourite genre of the Buryat authors. Both the well known writers famous for their novels, plays, stories and verses, and the young authors, making their first steps in this field, contributed largely to the Buryat literature with an increasing interest.

The Buryat novels of those days are diverse and seem to have embraced all facts of reality. *Sovest* by Ts. Galanov, *Litso cheloveka* (Man's Face) by N. Damdinov and to some extent *Belyi mesyats*

(The White Month) by B. Mungonov dealt with the problem of reassessment of values. Among the works devoted to the patriotic theme like *Prikazyvayu zhit* (I Order that you Should Live) by A. Bal'burov and D. Khiltukhin; historical tales like *Dorogoi v budushee* (Along the Way into the Future) by B. Sanzhin and D. Dandarov; the tales about the bygone days: *Snezhnyi obval* (Snow-slide) by M. Zhigzhitov and *Buryatka* by Ch. Tsydendambaev may be cited as examples.

Several Buryat authors' narratives deal with different moral-aesthetic problems of contemporary man's image formation. *Zrelost prikhodit ne vdrug* (One does not Reach Maturity Right Away) by Ts. Galanov, *Spasibo, druzya!* (Thanks, Friends!) by S. Angabaev, *Pered polyotom* (Before the Flight) by Ts. Khamaev, *Kto tvoi uchitel'?* (Who is your Teacher?) by D. Batozhabai, *Krylya* (Wings) by Ts. Nomtoev, *Zolotoye kol'tso* (Gold Ring) by Ts. Damdinzhapov, *Ego zvezda* (His Star) by A. Zhambaldorzhiev, *Ogon' na vetru* (Fire down the Wind) by S. Metelitsa, *Neokonchennaya rukopis* (Incomplete Manuscript) and *Pervaya Chetvert* (The first Quarter) by R. Beloglazova mainly focus on this issue.

The development of the novel genre is the most vivid and convincing testimony of continuously improving artistic perfection of the Buryat literature. The emergence of large scale art canvases in literature covering entire epochs of the people's history implies a high stage of society's consciousness and culture. The epic of contemporary period, i.e., the novel, is on the top of the people's artistic culture development, incorporating all the achievements of the previous stage.

Buryat topical novels like *Khilok nash burlivyi* by B. Mungonov and *Golubye sopki* by Zh. Baldanzhabon describe the collective-farmers' life in the 1950s. Both novelists focus on the young characters, trying to convey to the reader the beauty and poetry of freedom of toiling people as a direct result of their grand revolutionary deeds, what the older generation dreamt of, and their striving for new ideas. The thought that the youth are implementing their forefathers' deeds, multiplying and preserving their traditions, are mentioned in both novels.

Buryatia literature of the 1950s-60s is also characterized by the creation of a number of voluminous works on historical themes. The following novels contributed to the history of the lives of Siberian people: Ch. Tsydendambaev's second part of the trilogy about the first Buryat scholar D. Banzarov, D. Batozhabai's trilogy *Pokhishennoye schast'ye*, A. Bal'burov's *Poyushiye strely*, Zh. Baldanzhabon's *Gudit parovoz* (Locomotive's Whistle), I. Kalashnikov's *Poslednee otstupleniye*, M. Stepanova's *Noch' umiraet s rassvetom*, V. Kornakov's *V goltsakh svetaet*, etc. Ch. Tsydendambaev was renowned for his numerous stories, novels and poems of his trilogy *Dorzhi Banzarov*, the first volume *Dorzhi, syn Banzara* (the novel about the scientist's childhood), was published in 1952. It was widely circulated and repeatedly published in Ulan-Ude, Novosibirsk and Moscow.

The second volume of the trilogy *Vdali ot rodnykh stepei* was published in the journal *Svet nad Baikalom* in 1957 and 1959. The third part of the trilogy was published in 1962 and later reprinted several times. The trilogy *Pokhishennoye schast'e* by D. Batozhabai represents one of the most significant historical works in the Buryat literature. In this work, the author portrays the scene of action in the native steppes, then takes it to Mongolia, Tibet, London, Tokyo, Peking, Petersburg and again to Buryatia. With its incredible "medley of clothing, faces, tribes, accents, conditions" this work depicts tremendous influence of kings and ministers, princes and Tsars, statesmen, adventurous people, high-ranking priests and low-ranking police officers, spies of every rank, Orthodox religious believers, Buddhists, Catholics etc.

On the other hand, there are the working people – the Buryats, Mongolians, Russian nomads and shepherds, humble people and rebellious ones, robbers and conscientious political fighters, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. However, in spite of the mixed characters, diversity of colours, the novel is read by the readers with great interest, since the author managed to reinforce the trilogy action and all the characters around one theme – the search for stolen happiness, to create lively, motley, polyphonic and multi-image picture of the world in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Batozhabai's work attracts the reader's attention to the focal moment in the people's history and he concentrates on the popular mass movements. It is the people who make the history, which is viewed with broad and profound coverage of the reality through the novel. Its philosophic profoundness in solving the problem of man and history denotes the birth of a new genre in the Buryat literature – historical epoch. The trilogy *Pokhishennoye schast'e* is neither of psychological, nor adventurous type. It is not even the novel of everyday life. It incorporates all the three types taken together. Different genre features were not just mechanically mixed, but various genres organically merged into a single one thus making a kind of synthesis. At that time, the Buryat prose aroused an increased interest in man's inner world, which caused the transformation in poetry. Creative search for fresh genre forms and expressive means was carried out in the folklore traditions which were interpreted afresh, the system of figurative and image-bearing reflection of man having enriched it. A rapid development of the genre of the narrative took place in the same period. In the previous decades, it considerably "forced out" the novel and the story genre. Now-a-days it has, no doubt, become the leading one.

In the 1970s, a series of narratives about the events at the home front in the eyes of a child, a teenager maturing during the war years, was published. The memory of childhood had not been out of one's mind for a long time, therefore, for the generation of the authors, who had lived over those formidable years, it was not quite easy to get rid of the hard reminiscences of those days. And their experiences and personal feelings splashed onto the pages of books. The prose authors inclined to disclose the evolving psychology of a child. The hardships of the war years made children take the burden of back-breaking toil, utmost care of the elderly and younger family members, and also take the responsibility of their fathers who had gone to the forefront. As a rule, these narratives are based on autobiographies and, the authors, whose childhood coincided with the war period, were the main characters.

The decade of 1970 is notable for the creation of the war period works, when lyrical prose became prominent. Ts. Zh. Zhimbeev's *God*

*ognennoi zmei* (The Fire Snake Year) published in 1972 was followed by the lyrical-narrative trend within the genre of the novels, represented by B. Yabzhanov's *Kuda uskakal kon* (Where the Horse has Galloped away) in 1974 and S. Tsyrendorzhiev's *Gde ty, moya utrennyaya zvezda?* (Where are you, my Morning Star?) in the year 1972. Emphasizing characteristic features of this style – relaxation and freedom from the genre stereotypes, sincerity and passion, emotional impact of the word, A. Bal'burov stresses its significance: "...lyrical prose flourishing could not but leave its traces in literature. One could not write in the habitual manner any longer after the publication of *Dnevnye zvyozdy* (Stars of the Daylight)".

Psychological insight and realistic approach to the rural prose by F. Abramov, V. Rasputin as well as of the urban one by Y. Trifonov, metaphoric and symbolic means, the elements of associative composition and publicist wit apparent in the novels of Ch. Aitmatov and N. Dumbadze have enriched the Buryat literature. The impact of the lyrical prose on the Buryat literature shows that the latter was being developed within all-Soviet literary process. The increase of lyricism in the prose has influenced the speech of the author and character, which is expressed in various forms: in the inner monologue, self-analysis, the character's traits through other's perception, spiritual unity or contrasting feelings of two or more heroes. The inner monologue embedded in the Buryat prose in the 1970s, united with the author's narration, and expressing its main idea, performs the function of psychological analysis.

Along with other peculiarities, inherent in the lyrical prose, the above mentioned works have enriched the Buryat literature with new approaches and expressive means capable of depicting the reality. The narrative's intensive development, which had grown to be the dominant form at that period, did not slow down the functioning of the novel genre. One can distinguish such genre varieties as the novel about the contemporary period: *Krasnyi den* (The Red Day) and *Luna za oblakom* (The Moon behind the Cloud) by V. Sergeev, *Litso cheloveka* and *Kruglyi god* (All the Year Round) by Sh. S. Badluev,



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*Kogda nachinaetsya utro* (When Morning Begins), *Yego rodnoye imya* (His True Name in the second edition) by K. Balkov, *Veshiy tsvet* (Eternal Colour) by A. Angarkhaev, *Shedroye serdtse* (Generous Heart) by B. Mungonov.

There are a number of works, which give a two-temporal cut of the narration: *Argamak ishet khozyaina* (Argamak looks for his Master) and *Bol'shaya rodoslovnaya* (Big Family Tree) by D. Erdyneev, *Dolina Bessmertnikov* (The Valley of Immortals) by V. Mitupov, *Rubezh* (Boundary) by K. Balkov, *Techeniye* (Current) by Ts. Zhimbeev, etc. can be put in a special group of contemporary-historical novels. M. Zhigzhitov's trilogy *Podlemorye*, I. Kalashnikov's *Razryv-trava* falls within the group of historical, epoch-type novels like *Zhestokiy vek* (Severe Age) by I. Kalashnikov, *Untovoye voisko* (Fur Boots Troops) by V. Sergeev as well as V. Kornakov's second book of trilogy *Krasnye Beryozy*. Novels such as *God ognennoi zmei* by Ts. Zhimbeev and *Na Turgen-reke* (On the Turgen-River) by M. Stepanov also belong to the historical novel genre. And finally, historical-revolutionary novels *Mat'-lebeditsa* (Swan-Mother) by Ts. Galanov, *Gornye orly* (Eagles of the Mountain) by D. Batozhabai, *Inspector zolotoi taigi* (The Inspector of Gold Taiga) by V. Mitypov have left an indelible stamp on the Buryat literature.

It should be noted that the problem of reflecting national and international issues has been successfully dealt with in many works of the period. The Buryat literature was more and more convincingly asserting the idea of the native author's role when he expressed national ideas through international idiom, through a lively illustration of his native people's history, everyday life and destiny. The Buryat authors' novels of the 60s-70s, briefly analysed in this article, are, like other works, merely a part of the literary process developing in the Republic. They truly recreate the Buryat people's past and that of the neighboring areas.

Buryatia's literature of 1985–1995 persuades us that it is impossible to resurrect "History of Literature" of the period under discussion. The literary process as it is, seems to run short. Sporadically

issued artistic works, being occasional phenomena, rather exist by themselves. The decade (1985–1995) will remain in the history of Buryat Republic as the time of great shocks and collapses, which had a decisive impact on the world history. Three literary works are of certain interest in this regard. A historical novel *Belye ptitsy* (White Birds) by Ts. Zh. Zhimbiev was published in the journal *Manchzhurskaya Zastava* in 1992. It conveys the events of the first 30 years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, connected with the establishment of the Russo-Chinese borderline; *Desyatyi rabdjun* (The Tenth Rabjun) by V. Garmaev, a historical novel about Khori-Buryats, who were oppressed by Tumetskyi Altan-khan claiming the all-Mongolian Kaghanat was published in 1991 in *Baikal Journal*. V. Syrenov's novel *Reka – krutye berega* (The River's Steep Banks), depicts the contemporary country-side life and also the characters and the boom of the late *Perestroika* as well as the Communist Party's and the Soviet Union's collapse within the post-*Perestroika* years.

As we see, during the period under consideration, creative literary activity of the Buryat republic's authors was notably impoverished as compared to the very prolific productions during the previous decades of literature development. Nevertheless, we hope that notwithstanding all the difficulties, the well of literature is inexhaustible. Though it is now running as a faint rivulet, one can cherish the hope that this feeble stream will again become a big, full-flowing, turbulent river, carrying its waters into the vast and deep ocean of culture. One hopes that new names of poets, playwrights, novelists – the people, who cannot imagine their lives without working in the field of literature will appear. If they have not created any substantial works yet, the works which are capable of enthusing the people, they will probably do it in the near future.

The creations by a number of prose writers and playwrights, who have staged interesting performances, have a tendency to synthesise the European (Russian) poetry traditions with those of oriental culture, thus producing the literature of Eurasian mentality. The latter is quite natural for the representatives of the ethnic groups of Buryatia – the region at

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the junction of West and East – that have assimilated the best qualities from both sides. And most probably the Buryat literature and culture of the third millennium will find its “ecological niche” while establishing and developing the European rationalism and the Asian intuitiveness based on century-long history of the peoples inhabiting Russia.

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## THE BURYAT PROFESSIONAL MUSIC

*O. I. Kunitsyn*

The professional Buryat national music, with over a seven-decade long history, first appeared in 1930. The compositional creativity, as in the case of all national musical cultures, emerged from the traditional (folk) music of the Buryats. During many centuries, a number of genres crystallized in it, the main being *ulighers* – the epic legends, which are performed by professional folk storytellers – *ulighershins*, like humming chant; lyrical songs, which are distinguished by the width of range, flexibility of intonations and a highly-skilled performer everyday life songs, which don't demand special vocal training; *yokhor* tunes (the name comes from the folk circle-dance accompanied by dancers' singing). In Buryat folk musical instruments, all the types are represented – strings (bow *khur*, *chanza*), winds (*limba*, kin to flute, *bishkhur* related to oboe) and percussion instruments. The ancient octave basis unites Buryat musical folklore – angemitonic pentatonica (semitoneless five-stage octave). Quarter-quintic structure of verticals are based on them – in folk vocal and for two instruments. The given song and instrumental genres as well as their numerous variants give the composers an unlimited intonational-rhythmical, timbral and structural richness, which constitute the “national music of Buryatia”.

The history of the Buryat national professional creativity of the composers may be divided into three stages. During the first stage (1930 till mid-1940s), the works of national style based on the Buryat musical folklore were created by Russian masters. During the second stage (the second half of 1940s till 1950s), the Buryat works appeared in collaboration with the Russian and Buryat composers. And in the third stage (since 1960s till date), creative activity of the Buryat composers has remained in its proper form. One can not draw a definite line between these three stages, various forms of creativity existed in each of the stages. It is worth noting that all the national musical cultures in Yakutia, Tuva, Transvolgian region, North-Caucasian

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and Buryatia Republics of the former USSR began to develop only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Naturally, the Buryat professional music like other national cultures and its language (means of musical expressions) were formed under the strong influence of the Russian music, which in turn, adopted many traits of European musical system. That is why the direction of the development of the Buryat music, in terms of its expressions, moved from mechanical addition of diverse elements to the organic synthesis of the national and international (universal), what was found in the best works of the Buryat music. The definition “national music” or, to be more exact, – “national musical work” is ambiguous and complicated. It depends on the synthesis of national and universal elements in the language of music and recognition of the work by a rather wide range of listeners, on a number of circumstances.

The beginning of the first period of the creative compositions in Buryatia was initiated by P. M. Berlinsky (1900-1976) - the outstanding musician, composer, pianist, conductor, researcher of music and ethnography. Berlinsky became one of the founders of musical education; a few performing collectives, including music and drama theatre, carried out a number of ethnographic expeditions in the districts of the Buryatia Republic, recorded more than one hundred Buryat folk melodies and collected folk musical instruments. Simultaneously, he looked for the musically talented youth among the indigenous population. He trained singers, musicians – practically all the Buryat musical workers of the older generation, including national musicians, D. Ayusheev and B. Yampilov were Berlinsky’s pupils. He created the first ever manual in Buryatia – *The School of the Piano Playing*, which was fully founded on the pentatonic folk and composed material. Berlinsky laid the foundation of vocal-scenic genre in the Buryat music. His first work was translated into a musical drama *Bair* (1938) – by G. Tsydynzhapov and A. Shadaev. *Bair* was based on the folk song material, treated with great mastery. The composer found harmonic and polyphonic means, adequate to the Buryat tunes and also “peeped into future” - one of the drama performances (choreographic

scene *Tsam* - a reproduction of the religious Lamaistic (Buddhist) ceremonies is an example of the modal organization of the material. Later on, the Buryat composer Yu. Irdyneev applied it in 1970s.

The other Russian master V. I. Moroshkin (1909-1942), who heroically died in the battle of the Great Patriotic War, contributed to the musical culture of Buryatia both as a composer and pedagogue. Among his works, was a musical performance *Erzhen* (play by N. Baldano and M. Edel), which is the first musical-scenic piece on the contemporary topic (the scene is laid in the collective farm in 1930s), symphonic suite and numerous treatments of the Buryat folk songs.

The first national opera on the local subject – *Enkhe-Bulat-bator* by M. P. Frolov (1892-1944), was based on the motif of an ancient Buryat epic. Frolov, Professor and Director of the Sverdlovsk Conservatoire and also the teacher of a number of the Buryat musicians, visited Buryatia to study national musical folklore and to get acquainted with everyday life of the people of the Republic. *Enkhe-Bulat-bator* is a big-scale opera, including all the traditional opera elements from chants to massive opera choruses. The musical characteristics of the main and even minor characters are bright, as for instrumental episodes – the overtures, dances and marches left an impression on the listeners. It has become a phenomenon of the national culture and it is still the most favourite opera in the Republic and “an identification card” of the Buryat opera theatre. Frolov, having used the material of the Buryat folklore tunes, intensively treated by him, created a piece in the traditions of the Russian classic opera, having combined epic and drama features.

The musical drama *Bair*, musical performance *Erzhen* and opera *Enkhe-Bulat-bator* became the central events of the First *Dekada* (ten days) of the Buryat-Mongol art in Moscow (October 1940). During the days of the *Dekada*, the music and drama theatre performed (it was reorganized into an opera house in 1952), the orchestra of folk instruments (with large repertoire ), a number of choruses gave performances in the capital. The *Dekada* turned out to be an effective stimulus for the development of the national musical culture.

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During the post-War times, some more popular works, based on the Buryat tunes were created by the Russian masters- opera *U podnozhya Sayan* (At the Foot of the Sayan Mountain) and ballet *Svet nad dolinoi* (The Light Over the Valley) by S. N. Ryauzov (1905-1983) and opera *Na Baikale* (At the Baikal) by L. K. Knipper (1898-1975). These works contributed largely to the development of the Buryat music.

The second stage in the history of the Buryat professional music witnessed joint work by the Russian and Buryat composers on the large pieces in the second half of 1950s, when the question of holding the Second *Dekada* of the Buryat art in Moscow was being discussed in 1959. During the preparation for this important event it was found out that experience of the Buryat composers was insufficient to create large musical-scenic works – opera and ballet, which were supposed to be shown at the *Dekada*. Thus, operas *Krasavista Angara* (Angara the Beauty) by N. Baldano and *Vo imya lubvi* (For the Sake of Love) by Zh. Batuyev and B. S. Maizel (1907-1906), *Libretto* by Kh. Namsaraev and L. Linkhovoin, as well as *Pobratimy* (Twin brothers) by Ayusheev and Maizel libretto by N. Baldano were performed. All these three works were written with incredible mastery. Though *Pobratimy* was out of repertoire soon, the ballet *Vo imya lubvi* was performed about one hundred times and the ballet *Krasavitsa Angara* is still running, with full house for every performance both in Ulan-Ude and the cities where the Buryat theatre goes on tours. More than five hundred performances were held, and *Krasavitsa Angara* competed with *Enkhe-Bulat-bator* to be the “identification card” of Buryatia’s Opera House.

Such a long and successful run of *Krasavitsa Angara* is due to Knippers’s highest skill (especially in orchestra arrangement), who could create subject material, without applying to the folklore melodies and develop it in such a way that the ballet is recognized as “the Buryat ballet”. It was facilitated by M. S. Zaslavsky’s successful choreography, the outstanding Buryat dancers L. P. Sakhynova (Angara) and P. T. Abasheev (Enisei), whose traditions are continued by the young

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performers. The success of the performance is also due to A. I. Timin's colourful decoration. The second version of *Krasavitsa Angara* got the Russian State prize in 1972. The composers, ballet masters, painters and two performers of the lead roles became the laureates.

The third period is still continuing and is characterized by the independent work of the Buryat composers on the pieces in various musical genres and may be divided into two sub-periods:

1. 1960-1970: This period witnessed the creative activity of the composers of the older generation – D. D. Ayusheev (1910-1970), Zh. A. Batuyev (1915-1995) and B. B. Yampilov (1916-1989), who continued the traditions of Russian masters and laid the principles of harmonic and polyphonic treatment of the Buryat melodies.
2. Since 1980s till now: The middle-aged generation – G. D. Dashipylov (1937-1980), A. A. Andreev (1941-2004), Yu. I. Irdyneev (b.1941) and then, the younger one – P. N. Damiranov (b.1958), B. B. D. Dondokov (b. 1958) and L. N. Sanzhieva (b. 1966) were prominent during this period. This period is marked by creative activity of the Russian composers V. A. Usovitch (b.1959) and A. A. Pribylov (b. 1953), who quite often turned their attention, and not without success, to the Buryat style tunes and to the corresponding harmonic, polyphonic and orchestra means.

D. Ayusheev actively worked in the genre of opera, continuing the works of the Russian masters. His opera *Bratya* (The Brothers) in 1962, libretto by A. Mashistov and the composer himself, narrates the events of the Civil War in Trans-Baikal in 1920s. Obviously the composer used the experience gained in the joint work over *Pobratimy*. D. Ayusheev's opera *Sayan* (1957) is devoted to the life of the collective farm village in Buryatia in 1960s, and the main character - a young surgeon Sayan Zhambalov – acts for the sake of justice and good human relations. The three operas –*Pobratimy*, *Bratya* and *Sayan* composed the trilogy, the scene of which covered 300 year-long history of the region. There are no analogues to this work



in all opera literature in Russia.

B. Yampilov actively enlarged the opera repertoire of the Buryat theatre, having written some operas, various in plots – the comic one *U istoka rodnika* (By the Spring) in 1959, *Libretto* by A. A. Arsalanov and Ts. G. Galsanov, (an exposure of the village parasite), lyrical-psychological opera *Prozreniye* (The Enlightenment) (1957), *Libretto* – by L. L. Linkhovoin, N. E. Logachyov and Yu. A. Khazanov (everyday life of the character, who lost his eyesight and regained it), *Chudesny klad* (The Wonderful Treasure) in 1969 for children, *Libretto* – by Yu. A. Khazanov, based on the play by P. Malyarevsky; dramatic one – *Tsyrempil Ranzhurov* in 1974, *Libretto* by Yu. Khazanov (revolutionary events in 1916 in Trans-Baikal) and *Groznye gody* (Terrible Years) in 1977, *Libretto* by Yu. Khazanov based on the play *Klyatva* (The Oath) by Ts. Shagzhin (the events of the Civil War in Trans-Baikal) and lyric-epic opera *Silnee smerti* (Stronger than Death) in 1983, *Libretto* – by Yu. Khazanov based on the play P. Malyarevsky's play of the same name (the wording of the ancient Buryat legend about a fellow and a girl, who sacrificed their lives to save their people). As for the language of music, all the operas are of national character. The stage life of the *Chudesny klad* (1977), staged by Moscow Central Theatre for Children, turned out to be longer in its musical variant.

A few background episodes in V. Usovitch's opera *Noch umiraet s rassetom* (The Night Dies Away at Dawn) in 1984, *Libretto* by E. Shkolnik based on M. Stepanov's novel of the same name had Buryat tones. After a long break, when new Buryat operas were not created, A. Andreev offered the work based on the epic *Geser* – opera with the same name (1999), *Libretto* by Mongolian writer Tushbat (translated into the Buryat language by G. Chimitov). This opera, staged in the Buryat theatre with huge expenses on the accessories, was a kind of transfer of the traditions of the “song opera”, popular in the Russian music in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, on the ground of the Buryat tunes.

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## SPHERE OF THE BALLET MUSIC

Zh. Batuev had been actively working, using the experience, gained in collaboration with B. Maizel, and having composed the ballets *Tsvety Zhizni* (The Flowers of Life) in 1960, *Libretto* by M. Zaslavsky, *Geser* in 1967, *Libretto* by N. Baldano, *Vechny Ogon* (The Eternal Fire) in 1976, *Libretto* by M. Zaslavsky. The first three operas are based on the fairy-tale and epic plots and the fourth one is devoted to the events of the Great Patriotic War. Many of the episodes of the ballet music by Zh. Batuev acquired an independent life in the concert programmes, for instance one should mention his *Vals Tsvetov* (Waltz of the Flowers) from the ballet *Tsvety Zhizni*. Zh. Batuev made his contribution to the ballet music of other peoples, having composed *Churumchuku* in 1964, *Libretto* by M. Zhornitskaya and S. Ellyai and *Dolina strahkov* (*The Valley of Fears*) in 1988, *Libretto* by I. Gogoleva for Yakutia, and for Kalmykia – the ballet – *Jungar* in 1970, *Libretto* by A. Badmaeva and Zh. Batuev). His ballet *Churumchuku* was recognized at the national level. In Yampilov's ballet *Patheticheskaya Ballada* in 1979, *Libretto* by M. Mnatzakyuan, one can find out the same means of expressions, as in his three operas mentioned above.

But the Buryat ballet music was essentially updated in Yu. Irdyneev's *Liki bogini* (The Image of the Goddess) in 1979, *Libretto* by G. Maiorov based on the novel by the Mongolian writer B. Rinchen. It revived tragic events in the life of the Buddhist monastery in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by means of choreographic flexibility. The prototype of the main character – the monastery artist, was a real person – the religious leader of Mongolia, that's why the ballet was staged only in 1992, when the ideological orientation in that country changed. For *Liki bogini*, the composer used a number of new methods for the Buryat music such as abruptly dissonant accords, organized on modal principle, sonority, controlled aleatorica, non-traditional use of the orchestral means, having organically combined the given means with the Buryat pentatonic melodies. The characters of the ballet are impressive, the mass scenes are bright, especially the scene "The prayer and ritual means." But the

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composer is more excited by the reproduction of the spirit of the old times, than by the embodiment of the eternal theme of the struggle of good and evil (according to the plot the main hero loses his beloved because of the intrigues of his enemies).

For half of a century, there appeared quite regularly new vocal-symphonic pieces in Buryatia, mostly composed on some occasions like holiday dates of the Republic and the state, for example, *Zdravstvui, Moskva* (Hello, Moscow) by B. Yampilov (1959), text by Ts. Galsanov and Ch. R. Namzhilov – for the second Moscow *Dekada*, *The Song of the Great October* by Yu. Irdyneev (1977), text by Zh. Nimbuev, oratory *Appassionata* by Yu. Irdyneev (1980), text devoted to 100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of V. I. Lenin – the material compiled from the government documents, *My Rodine slavu poyem* (We Sing Praise to Our Motherland) by S. Manzhgeev (1962), text by A. Shchitov, oratory *Portret Ilyicha* (Ilyich's Portrait) (1980), text by D. Zhalsaraev and others. These works have the pathos and sometimes pretension, in common, which is due to the ideological content of the texts. According to the musical style, these cantatas and oratorios are close to the style of the operas and ballets of the same authors.

The patriotic theme is present in the oratory *Gudyashie Sosny* (The Buzzing Pinetrees) by B. Yampilov in 1985, with the text by N. Damdinov. It is a large-scale seven-part “cloth” for soloists (soprano and bass), chorus and the symphonic orchestra. The oratory represents musical images of Trans-Baikal's nature, but the main thing is the admiration of the beauty of the native land. This piece has been done with great mastery, its instrumentation, polyphonic episodes are composed brilliantly, among them fugato for chorus in the final part of the oratory. *Gudyashie Sosny* is one of the top works of the Buryat professional music up to the present. The oratory *Letnie Prasdnestva* (The Summer Feasts) by P. Damiranov (1987), text by G. Chimitov reproduced the procedure of the old time folk rituals of worshipping guarding spirits of the given place. The composer convincingly realized genre images of the Buryat folklore in the episodes.

## CHORUS MUSIC

Chorus song was promoted by the spread of chorus singing in Buryat folklore, and one could observe heterophonic split into two voices (rarely into three voices) in unison. Besides, chorus unison already contains potency for polyphony with its various timbres. The earlier chorus songs of the young composers of Buryatia in 1930s show the continuation of the given folklore tradition. Later there appeared songs with more developed chorus structure as well as the experience of polyphonic treatment of the folk songs. The first significant pattern of this genre was *Suite on Motives of the Buryat folk Songs* for mixed chorus without accompaniment by D. Ayusheev (1958). The Buryat folk melodies different in genres develop in the four parts of the suite – lyrical *Barguzinskaya*, dance tunes in different rhythms – “You gallop, my horse!” and others. The composer used both harmonic and polyphonic means of the treatment of melodies, flexibly varied chorus structure. Since 1970s, A. Andreev has become prominent as a master of chorus music, having composed chorus cycle and separate miniatures, in all of them the verses of the Buryat poets were used. In these works, the formulae of the polyphonic and chorus structure are different. He reproduces the tradition of the Russian cant (female three-voice chorus *Nochyu v stepi* (The Night in the Steppe with verses by D. Zhalsaraev). There are also various miniatures, more complex in structure and with contrasting elements.

During the period of from 1992 to 1998, Yu. Irdyneev worked on the large-scale pieces with significant contents – chorus cycle for the mixed chorus without accompaniment *The Buryat-Mongol Spiritual Chanting*, using the texts of the Buddhist prayer mantras, the verses of the Buryat poets and the composer himself, devoted to the religious and moral-ethical themes. A few original Buddhist chants-hymns recorded by the composer in the *datsans* (Buddhist monastery) of Buryatia, were included in the melody of the cycle and the main part consists of the composer’s own melodies, according to the style of Buryat folk songs as well as composed songs of Buryatia. Being a true Buddhist himself, Yu. Irdyneev treated the wording and melodic material

with great piety wishing to appeal to the audience. He refused to use those complex means of musical expressions, which he employed in other pieces, especially in the instrumental ones. The composer alternates choral octaves with the polyphonic ones in the 60 pieces of the cycle (60 is a sacred Buddhist figure), turning more often to the canon, which goes on with the traditional repetition of one and the same prayer-thought in Buddhism. Irdyneev's cycle became an important event in the cultural life of the Republic, and also opened a new chapter in the Buryat professional music – the spiritual music.

### **MUSIC FOR A SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA**

In the Buryat music for a Symphonic Orchestra, there are three schools in the entire history of the national music:

1. Orchestral music, called “symphonic” on account of performing cast, they are orchestral pieces (marches, dances, programme pieces) by S. Manzhigeev, G. D. Dashipylov, Zh. Batuev and others.
2. The works of the genre-pictorial symphony, which do not suggest big contrasts and intensive development. We'll give as an example the four-part suite *Tsvetushaya dolina* (The Flourishing Land) by B. Yampilov in 1953, where one can find colourful description of nature and everyday life of the Republic such as landscapes, dawn, competitions of the fellows in horse racing and a festive day (The Greeting Song). There are bright melodic images, two folklore melodies are cited – of old times and a contemporary one, treated with great tact and taste. In spite of their simplicity, delicate instrumentation is performed brilliantly. Zh. Batuev's *Kolchoznaya suita* (The Collective Farm Suite) in 1949, in which rhythmic and dancing melodies sound temperamental, is a significant one.
3. The pieces with the features of symphonic principle proper offer contrasting themes and intensive development. The beginning of this school was laid by the Russian masters – M. Frolov in the poem *Bratstvo Narodov* (Fraternity of Peoples - 1944) and V. Moroshkin in the *Symphonic Suite* (1940). Later it was

continued in the Symphony (1943) and in the poem *Bogataya Dolina* (The Rich Valley - 1970) by D. Ayusheev, in the poem *Geser* (1969) by A. Andreev and in a number of other pieces. *Geroicheskaya Simfonia* (The Heroic Symphony) in 1975 by Yu. Irdyneev refers to the brightest phenomena of this line, devoted “To the victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War”. The means of expression, which were spoken about in connection with the ballet *Liki Bogini* (The Image of the Goddess), are fully used by the composer for the first time in the symphony. The composer did not turn to the traditional images for the pieces, conveying the theme of war – there are neither marches, nor “battle” sound imitation. The furious sound stream pictures the general image of war in the first and the third parts, the second one, as the composer said, is “people’s wails over the dead”, the manner of the ancient weeping songs is creatively refracted. Final part of the Symphony depicts the people’s victorious fest, here the hymnal melodies are cited. There are also expressive details, for example, rondo performing the role of refrain, the image of the “big human mass” (composer’s explanation) .

One more bright piece is the symphonic poem *Tibet* by V. Usovitch (2000) – which reflected oriental motives in the creative activity of this Russian composer, who explained that N. Roerich’s paintings were the source of musical images. A number of episodes alternate in a free form and are resounding roll-calls of the winds, recalling in imaginative pictures of the mountainous country, and in the spirit of the old-time Buryat melodies, and triumphantly-elevated accorded row of the strings (the lyric centre of the poem). The impact of the Buddhist cult melodies, the Buryat epic legends (*ulighers*) and Japanese music *gagaku* have organically melted in the musical language. It is common knowledge that *gagaku* was influenced by the musical cultures of Central Asia. The peculiarities of the theme of the poem *Tibet* caused the emergence of sonority in partita, non-tertian accordance and on the whole, organization of the musical material.

**INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

Instrumental Music is represented by single pieces in the Buryat music: Concert for violoncello (1987) and for the piano (1990) by B. Dondokov, Concert *On the Themes of the Buryat Folk Songs* (1973), *Fantasy* (1993) and *Romantic Concert* (2004) by V. Usovitch (all three for piano). In the Concert for piano and orchestra, B. Dondokov widely and variously used the expressive capability of a soloist and a collective “duet”, and the solo part is composed rather in a “pianist way” (it was edited by famous Buryat pianist D. Linkhovoin). If we use comparison from the sphere of graphic arts, then the music may be characterized as “graphics” and only in the final part (there are two parts in the Concert without break), the sound “flood” comes down on listeners. The national colouring, characteristic of the music of the Concert is connected with pentatonic of the melody, with the prevailing accord of quartered and second structure, including genuinely folk melodies, and the religious ones (Buddhist themes). The image of the first part may be understood as a musical landscape of the Buryat steppe: the transparent duet of flutes, “drops” of figuration of the piano, this is the theme of variations, in the form of which the part is built. The process of movement from variation to variation is in the development of the melodic beginning, the reinforcement of pianist-soloist’s “work”, an expressive climax ends the part, and transition to the second part is at the same time the soloist’s cadence, solved in an unusual way – traditional virtuoso soloist episode is supported by a continuous shot of timpani. The second part is more difficult for semantisation, though one can observe some generalized features of dancing in it, at least, in movement, in emission of energy. The initial theme “gives tone” to the whole part (the main part – there are features of sonata). The unbreakable movement of the theme, abrupt contrasts, increasing of sounds leads to climax, where, as it was mentioned, the sound storm bursts, and the calm music of the beginning of the first part reminds of itself in the laconic code.

*Romantic concert* by V. Usovitch is an interesting experiment, in which the composer succeeded in that the piano competes here with

the Buryat folk instruments orchestra. The Concert is a bright example of V. Usovitch's work with the thematic material in Buryat character – there are no folk melodies here, but the theme is clearly national, and pentatonic and diatonic flexibly alternate in it, timbre variations are used, and traditional formulae of the piano structure are adapted to the natural-accorded and non-tertian accordance, the combination of the piano timbre with original timbres of the Buryat national instrumentation sounds fresh and colourful.

### CHAMBER MUSIC

Chamber music (instrumental and vocal) of Buryatia is underdeveloped. This genre is distinguished by the depth of the contents and demands creative maturity and mastery from a composer. That is why composers did not apply to chamber music at the early stage of its development.

The *Poem for Violin and Piano* (1953) by B. Yampilov became the beginning in the instrumental sphere, where the old Buryat melody *The Motley Colt* is successfully worked out (a lonely woman describes the pain of her soul to the colt, having not found sympathy in anybody). Here one can find a lot of impressive findings - the initial statement of the theme without accompaniment of the bass string of the violin, which makes an illusion of the heart-breaking singing; colourful variation of the song melody, delicate structure of the piano part. For a long time after the *Poem* there appeared pieces for chamber performance, but according to musical contents representing the plays with simple themes (more often of the song and dance character), simple structure and absence of development. *Sonata for Violin and Piano* by G. D. Dashipylov (1967) is significantly sharper by its harmonic language and development of the violin part, than a number of works by Buryat authors. One-part piano quintet (*Music for Two Violins, Viola, Violoncello and Piano*) by A. Andreev (1958), containing contrasting thematic material (melodiousness of two themes, related to the Buryat folk melodies contradicts the energetic, sometimes rigid movement of the main theme). The composer defined the contents of the quintet as



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“the images of formation of a young man’s personality”. The string quintet *In memory of the Poet* by Yu. Irdyneev (1973) was devoted to the memory of the composer’s friend and talented poet D. Ulsytuev (1936-1972). The quintet begins with abruptly dissonanting accord, as if it were a cry out because of sudden sad news. Then there appeared images, expressing now impulse of a soul, and then the feeling of hopelessness. The composer’s intention is reflected in the subtitle *Elegicheskie Stansy* (The Elegiac Stanzas) and in the form of the piece – one-part, it consists of nine divisions, which change each other freely (it is a kind of strophic structure). The lyrical episodes contrast to the sad and dramatic ones, where the prima violin performs solo expressively, and its melody seems to anticipate the rhythm of Ulsytuev’s verses and recalls in one’s mind the familiar lines: “The wind brings fragrance of the steppe flowers from southern hills”. And quartet ends in the sad “choral”, gradually melting away in silence”. And at last, *Trio for Violin, Violoncello and Piano* by L.Sanzhieva (1993) deserves attention, the idea of which was expressed laconically. It may be understood as ascent of mastery in the sphere of artistic creativity, of one’s self-perfection, nearing to superior powers of the universe. There are three thematic elements: i) lyrical melody (it is an image of the human soul), ii) tart quarter thickness in piano play, doubled through three octaves ( it is a kind of outer personal being) and iii) very rigid discording sequence of the verticals of the whole composition ( this is an image of evil power, preventing from ascent). All three elements develop actively in contrasts and in interaction so that harmonic sharpness gets milder under the influence of melody). There appears “an image of hopelessness” in the climax but on the spot a new burst achieves the aim and the highest registry of a violoncello as if it carries away a listener into the heavens...

The sphere of the Buryat piano music is more extensive. Technically uncomplicated miniatures prevailed in the creative activity of the older generation composers, often of instructive character, and the possibilities of the piano are used limitedly in them - they’ve no sense to the timbre possibilities of the instrument. The representatives

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of the second generation improved the piano play a lot. The first large pieces for the piano: *The Buryat Toccata* by Yu. Irdyneev appeared in 1962, who used technically rather complicated methods and performed his work brilliantly. *The First Piano Sonata* belongs to the same author (1971), three parts of this composition are united by the traditional principle of contrasts. Yu. Irdyneev used modal methods for treatment of angemitonic tunes for the first time in *Sonata*, widely used non-tertian accordance. The second part of the *Sonata* reflected the national character in the Buryat music. Of other pieces for piano, we shall distinguish *Variations* by P.Damiranov (1984) - so far the only large piece in the given kind of the piano genre. The theme of *Variations* is a melody of wide range, including characteristic angemitonic turns of the Buryat folk songs. There are 12 variations in the cycle, to the last of which adjoins *coda*, where the theme returns almost to its initial kind. The composer combined different types of variation – ornamental, polyphonic, Glinkian as well as free transformation of the theme, and having revealed its possibilities, achieved the necessary contrast between variations. *Variations* by P.Damiranov – is an interesting piece and is included in the repertoire of the pianists of the Republic.

The pieces from cycles *Pieces for Children* by A. Andreev (1977), *Children's Album* by V.Usovitch (1984), pieces by P. Damiranov, L. Sanzhieva and others are traditionally used at art schools in Buryatia as instructive repertoire.

Chamber-vocal music began to develop in 1960s in Buryatia. For a long time, the pieces, defined as “romance” by genre, turned out to be songs with a little more developed structure and corresponding accompaniment in reality. The pieces by A. Andreev may be considered romances proper – the cycle on D. Zhalsaraev’s verses and a number of pieces to the verses of other poets were used. Among the best pieces of the given genre in the Buryat music is his romance *When the Snow Melts in the Mountains* (1972), verses by D. Ulsytuev – it is a miniature, in which love lyrics and poetic perception of native nature are delicately combined. V. Usovitches cycle *Buryat Tunes* (1983), verses by D. Zhalsaraev in which intonations and rhythms of the Buryat songs

produced a great impression; besides folklore and composing are used. The cycle *Four Recitatives on B. Dugarov's Verses* by B. Dondokov (1954) is notable by the freshness of means of expressiveness, where national colouring is embodied with vocal and instrumental methods.

### **GENRE OF MASS SONG**

Genre of mass song is more extensive, more various in themes (the patriotic theme, images of motherland's nature, everyday life, lyrics, humour etc.), and accordingly, in diversity of means of embodiment, all the Buryat composers, without exception of all generations, paid tribute to it. It originated in the treatment of folk melodies in 1930s, then it was composition of songs, the melodies of which were variants of folk ones. Later on there appeared original compositions. The song *The Buryat-Mongolia* by G. Daduev at the end of 1930s, verses by Ts. Zarbuev belong to such kind. The composer successfully combined folk tunes with new ones for Buryatia rhythmic-intonational elements of the general Soviet mass song *Buryat-Mongolia*. It continues to be popular even today, and since the middle of 1950s, the fragment of its melody has become the signal of the Buryat Radio. It is worth noting that among D. Ayusheev's songs – *Baikal* (1950, verses by Ts. Galsanov), *The City over the Selenga* (1960s), verses by N. Nimbuev are being distinguished on national grounds. Zh. Batuev's songs are always melodious and expressive, especially popular is his lyric *Lullaby* (at the end of 1940s), verses by Ts. Galsanov. The song *I Sing Praise to My Republic* (1950s), verses by N. Dorizobecame a success. Since the middle of 1960s, S. Manzhigeev's songs had become popular, such as his song *To You*, verses by Ts. Zh. Zhimbiev, particularly due to convexity of the melody, dancing preciosity of the rhythm, simplicity and distinctness of the character. Among S. Manzhigeev's songs we'll mark *The World is on My Palms*, verses by Ts. D. Dondokova *Here I go to My Beloved*, verses by C. Angabaev. Among A. Andreev's songs, which were popular in the republic in 1970s, we'll mark *My Motherland – the Barguzin Valley*, verses by N. Damdinov, *Brother and Sister*, verses by G. Chimitov, *About My Native Land*, verses by D. Zhalsaraev. And in 1990 it was affirmed as State Hymn of the Republic of Buryatia.

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Many songs on the patriotic theme are included in Yu. Irdyneev's song composition – *We Glorify the USSR, My Motherland* (both on own verses). There is also the penetrating lyrics – *Only You*, verses by N. Zakusina. Yu. Irdyneev's songs for children are quite popular. L. Sanzhieva's songs on the verses of many Buryat poets are distinguished by heartfelt lyrics.

The songs of the non-professional composers are also popular in Buryatia. In this category mention should be made of B. Tsyrendashiev. *The Selenga*, verses by D. Dambaev is still one of the most favourite during the four decades. Its melodiousness and the "speaking" recitation are flexibly combined in the melody. *The Song of Love*, verses by D. D. Dondokova), *In Spring*, verses by D. Ulzytuev, *By Grove's Rustle*, verses by D. D. Dondokova and many others are the favourites, and attract due to their rich melody. One can't but mention the song *The Snowdrop* by the chorus master N. Damiranov, the song-duet *Where Your Beloved is From?* by drama actor D. D. Zhalsaraev, verses by Ch.-R. Namzhilov, *The Song about the Motherland* by conductor of the Buryat national orchestra Ch. Pavlov, verses by Ts. Zh. Namzholov, *The Youth* by the chorus master K. Radnaev, verses by Z. Gombozhbai. Recently a number of talented non-professional composers have come forward, song books have been published, and song has become the most successful in genres of the Buryat national music.

To sum up, almost all the genres of the modern art of music are represented in the Buryat music. Their genesis and development is not the same, but there are some works, deserving attention in each of the genres. That's why the Buryat music has gone out of the borders of the Republic. Many compositions have been performed in various regions of the country and abroad. The Buryat music is included in the curricula of the country – in the higher education course "the history of music of the peoples of Russia", college and school education course "Musical literature of the peoples of Russia". As it is recognized everywhere, the main virtue of the Buryat professional music is its originality. Buryatia's music is striving for synthesis of both national and international features, in its course of development.

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## INSTRUMENTAL ORCHESTRA IN BURYATIA

V. V. Kitov

In the 20s-30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of folk instrumental orchestra organization cropped up in Buryat-Mongolia, which marked the emergence of Buryat professional musical art. The Buryat folk music performance, in general, was of individual (solo) character as there existed no ensemble traditions. Judging by the records of ethnographers, there was traditionally a solo accompaniment to singing (with brief interludes).

There were two points of view in this Republic on the designing of the orchestra: a type of *datsan* (Lamaist monastery or temple) orchestra and a type of the Russian folk instruments orchestra. Those who supported the first approach – D. Ivanov, B. Badrino, N. Dambinov, etc. - insisted that “only Buddhist art, its peculiarities and only *datsan*-type theatre is available and understandable for a Buryat cattle-breeder”.<sup>1</sup> Probably, this approach can be explained by the tendency to radically change everything as well as a strong desire to retain the old *datsan*-type orchestra.

The other viewpoint which was against the old tradition, was persistently pursued by P. Berlinsky. He put forward the following arguments: “Long ago life itself showed absolutely different ways to the *datsan* and folk music development which contradict each other both ideologically and technologically. The *datsan* and folk music are based on different musical systems; one cannot physically play any folk melody using a *datsan* instrument, even *bishkhur*, the richest one in melody.”<sup>2</sup> Berlinsky’s idea was to combine all Buryat national instruments (folk and temple) according to the Russian folk instruments orchestra principle. In other words, it was a traditional scheme that had been formed in Old Vienna Symphony School in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. And the Russian folk orchestras implemented it intensely and vividly in Buryatia. The striving for the principles of the Russian orchestra structure,

by no means, denoted either “Eurofication” or “Russification” of the Buryat music as it appeared to those who supported the *datsan* music. V. Andreev, creating his Velikorussky (Great Russian) Orchestra took the example of the classical symphony orchestra but he added some special peculiarity to it. No doubt, national features depend not on the scheme, but on the instrumental composition, interpretation of technical qualities and expressive means of the instruments and to a greater extent, on the repertoire.

With the final decision to set up the Buryat folk orchestra, there arose two important tasks – unification and reconstruction of national instruments. Unification of folk instruments was absolutely necessary as those made by the musicians themselves did not have a standard size. Of course, one could not achieve striking results in the field of art using self-made instruments – a limited capability of a one-stringed *khur*, a weak sound, inharmonious timbre (probably because of a tin body and an ox bladder). Apart from this, the instrument had a plain look. The same can be said about other Buryat folk instruments: they differed much from each other in their shape and sound parameters.

Reconstruction of national instruments was put into process at the Buryat-Mongolian Institute of Culture as early as in the 1930s. Three such instruments - *khur*, *khuchir* and *limba* - were thoroughly studied. The technique of performance, used by musicians, the timbre characteristics and a possible improvement of the three instruments were being investigated at that time. The data obtained was generalized and the samples sent to the Leningrad Research Institute of Musical Industry, where the improvised instruments were made. Musician and singer N. Khalbaev was the first to improve *khur* of a rectangular resonator-case made from one piece of wood and two sheep-gut strings. These innovations improved the sound colouring, the wood having added some intensity and melody to it. The idea of setting up the Buryat instrumental orchestra began to acquire some workable design when in 1939 the Government of the Buryatia Republic decided to establish such a company within the philharmonic society which had been organized here in 1938. The decision was connected with the

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preparatory work for Buryat-Mongolia's ten days of art (*dekada* in Russian) to be held in Moscow. The task before the orchestra was to perform during the events and demonstrate the Republic's achievements in the sphere of folk instruments.

I. Ryk, a violin player and a conductor who already had a great deal of experience in Leningrad and Almaty, was invited to Ulan-Ude as the leader of the orchestra. He was an expert in both traditional symphony orchestra and the folk instruments orchestra as he had worked with the Kazakh Orchestra of Folk Instruments named after Kurmangazy, which was set up in 1934.

The intention of creating an orchestra was announced over the radio. Almost all prominent musicians and artists listened to playing the *khur*, *limba* and other instruments. The population of the Republic became immensely interested in the idea. Amateur musicians who passionately aspired to participate in the exciting musical activities started arriving in Ulan-Ude from every part of Buryatia. However, they faced great hardships as they did not know the rudiments of music. The majority of performers, who used to perform solo, were not accustomed to listening to their partners and hence, could not understand the conductor's gestures. To overcome these difficulties, student groups were formed at the musical school. They had both theoretical and instrument study classes plus individual training for the orchestra's core group of *khurists*, conducted by violinists B. B. Boldyrev, R. A. Andrus and N. N. Tikhonov and viola player M. Y. Kolodny.

As M. Dondukova recalls, the classes were conducted for the whole. The orchestra was tuning up under the supervision of I. Ryk and N. Khaludorov. Then the student groups had rehearsals. In the afternoon, the music school teachers conducted theoretical (in groups) and practical (individual) classes. After that the musicians again gathered together and were trained till midnight. Intensive studies and support of the orchestra associates and enthusiasm of teachers yielded good results.

Gombo Tsydynzhapov, who directed the preparatory work for the Days of Art in Moscow, brought a set of instruments from Mongolia

including *khuchir*, *shanza*, *limba* and *yochin*. *Khuchirs* and *limbas* were familiar things for Buryats, but *shanzas* (three-stringed fretless) were given to those, who could play pizzicato musical instruments. As for *yochins*, they were given to the pianists and the students of the musical vocational school. The orchestra was replenished with *bishkhurs*, *ukher-bure* and percussion instruments: *dudarma*, *khengereg* and *tsan*, which were brought from the temples. By 1940, the orchestra of 84 musicians was equipped with the string instruments – a set of *khurs* (soprano, viola, tenor, bass and double-bass), *khuchirs*, *shanzas*, *yochins*; wind instruments – *limbas* (transversal and piccolo), *surs* (big and piccolo), *bishkhurs*, *ukher-bure*; percussion instruments – *khengereg*, *dudarma*, *gong* and *tsan*.

The score of the Buryat folk instrumental orchestra was composed by I. Ryk. He arranged the setting up of the orchestra on the stage which combined a century-long experience of the symphony orchestra and the Buryat-Mongolian instruments. I. Ryk also directed the orchestra. In the book devoted to the *dekada*, he wrote: “A flood of sounds of 16 types of instruments distributed among 25 voices at first caused a notable embarrassment for the young musicians and only persistent industry and their individual training and then again returning to the orchestra helped the conductor and the musical company.”<sup>3</sup> The process of improvisation of instruments – first of all of the *khurs* – was continuous. At the beginning, they used Khalbaev’s and Batorov’s instruments. The improved samples were elaborated at the Leningrad Research Institute of Musical Industry. After a good deal of work, they were produced by designer P. Shoshin in the experimental workshop of the Arts Office at the Soviet of People’s Commissars of the Russian Federation. He made 52 instruments in all, including 22 soprano, 8 viola, 8 tenors, 6 basses and 8 double-basses, *khurs* and 3 *surs* made from a beech-tree.

A new orchestra was certainly in need of a special repertoire, which was being elaborated with the organization of the company. P. Berlinsky composed the dance music: *Tanets Malchikov* (The Boys’ Dance), *Buryatsky*, *Evenkiysky*; V. Moroshkin – *Kolesukha* (Wheel)



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and *Liricheskaya* (Lyrics), I. Ryk – *Shutochnaya* (Making Fun). The young Buryat composers were doing their first step. B. Yampilov composed a dashing music of *Yokhor* (old traditional dance), *Tanets Pastukhov* (Shepherds' Dance) and lyrical *Devichya Pesnya* (Maid's Song). Almost all these works were either orchestrated or edited by I. Ryk, as he was the only person who was aware of the potentialities inherent to the newly born orchestra. The company's repertoire had the arrangements of classical works: *Norwegian Dance* by E. Grig, *Ecoses* by L. Beethoven, *Symphony N 94* by J. Gaidn.

The Days of Art were fixed for 20-27 October 1940. *Dekada* proved to be a true festival of Buryat-Mongolian national art. The Musical-Drama Theatre staged the first Buryat opera *Enkhe-Bulat-Bator* by M. Frolov, musical drama *Bair* by P. Berlinsky, musical performance *Erzhen* by V. Moroshkin. The young Buryat singers, musicians and composers became well-known all over the country. The joint choir of the theatre, Philharmonic Society, Pioneers' Palace, the original Old-Believers Company (directed by A. Krynkin) and the Evenk (aboriginal ethnicity) group were a great success.

The concerts by the Folk Instruments Orchestra of the State Philharmonic Society of the Buryat-Mongolia ASSR were a genuine triumph. The performances were given in the Bolshoi Theatre's branch hall, in the House of the Workers of Art. But the final concert of the Days of Art in the Bolshoi was most impressive. The orchestra produced *Yokhor*, *Tanets Pastukhov* by B. Yampilov and *Andante* from Y. Gaidn's 94<sup>th</sup> Symphony. The Musical-Drama Theatre's ballet dancers showed *Yurta* by B. Yampilov. Various singers sang different songs: A. Arsalanov (folk "Song of the Youth"), A. Baklanova (song *Na Beregu Selengi* – On the Selenga River Bank – by B. Yampilov), S. Dugarova (song *Stalinskaya Konstitutsia* – Stalin's Constitution – by V. Moroshkin), S. Tsydenova (song *Prisyv Konya* – My Horse Calls Me up – by V. Moroshkin). The orchestra's soloist G. Daduev played the *sur* having performed the folk melody *Toroi Bandi* and Ts. Khoborkov sang the song *Komsomol* by N. Khalbaev. And finally, trio of *limbists* – G. Tsyrendashin, Ts. Rinchinov and S. Tamzhitov –

performed a fantasy based on Buryat folk melodies.

The orchestra's success was widely published in the central press. It is interesting to note that Gaidn's *Andante* got rave reviews. Evidently a well-known work of classics presented in an unusual way produced the timbre peculiarity that prominently stood out against its traditional phonation. "Big Orchestra performed folk songs well arranged for folk instruments and after that it produced *Andante* from the 94<sup>th</sup> Symphony by Gaidn."<sup>4</sup> "The orchestra's original performance added a special fascination to the pearl of classical music."<sup>5</sup>

Several pieces enunciated by the orchestra, including *Devichya Pesnya* (A Maid's Song) by B. Yampilov, were recorded to the gramophone plate. In Kremlin, there was a celebration party in honour of the participants of the first Buryat-Mongolia *dekada*. During that reception by the former Soviet Government, the Orchestra performed *Kolesukha* by V. Moroshkin. The directors and many participants in the events were awarded, I. Ryk having been conferred the order *Znak Pochyota* as the Orchestra's director and conductor.

Thus the performances by Buryat-Mongolia's Philharmonic Society demonstrated that the cast, its structure, repertoire and interpretation stood a serious test before the strict specialists of Moscow and the capital's audience.

In January 1941, the Philharmonic Orchestra continued its rehearsals, though the cast was reduced to 52 musicians. They learned part I of the 94<sup>th</sup> Symphony by Y. Gaidn, two waltzes by E. Grig, a number of scores by V. Moroshkin, M. Frolov, B. Yampilov as well as Buryat folk songs. Two groups from the Orchestra made trips round the Republic (Khorinsk and Kabansk districts) and got tremendous response for their performances. But this creative work was interrupted because of the Great Patriotic War. There were only 18 people in the Orchestra, 16 of them being recruited in the Army. Some had already been recruited and killed in the battles, A. Bardamov, Ts. Zarbuev, talented khurists among them. I. Ryk was appointed Director of the Orchestra of the Zabaikalsk Military Okrug's (district's) Song and Dance Company.

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In 1945, the Orchestra of Buryat-Mongolia's Philharmonic Society was restored. The conductor organized 30 music numbers, edited the scores with a number of new scores. The conductor's utmost efforts were awarded with Honours (1946). However, it failed to achieve the pre-war time artistic level and, therefore, I. Ryk left for Mariyskaya ASSR in 1947. After his departure, G. Zaikov became the Orchestra's Director. In 1949, the staff of the Orchestra consisted of 27 musicians: a group of soprano-*khurs* (11), tenor (2), bass (2), double-bass (1); wind instruments – *limba* (2), *sur* (1), prime-*shanzas* (3); percussion (2); inspector and a worker (2). Under G. Zaikov's guidance, the Orchestra performed 90 concerts.

The Orchestra's activity is of great interest for musicians of today as it has created a new musical genre in Buryatia. Its success is attributed to the cast of today's companies (they exclude whole groups of wind-pipe instruments *surs*, *bishkhurs*, *ukher-bure*, *khuchirs*) as well as to the proper timbre balance holding by the Orchestra groups.

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## THE THEATRES OF BURYATIA

*V. Ts. Naidakova*

Nowadays Buryatia's theatre culture is represented by seven professional companies, each having its own interesting history. The State Russian Drama Theatre named after N. A. Bestuzhev is the oldest one in Buryatia. Its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be celebrated in 2008. The Buryat State Academic Theatre of Drama named after Kh. Namsaraev is approaching its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Then comes the republican art leader – the Buryat State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet which has been on the scene since 1939. The younger companies include the Republican Puppet Theatre *Ulger*, the City Youth Art Theatre, the State Theatre of Song and Dance *Baikal* together with the already renowned Theatre of Dance *Badma Seseg* in 2005, and finally “the Young Ballet of Ulan-Ude” that has celebrated its third anniversary.

There has been rapid development of theatre art in Buryatia, in its capital Ulan-Ude and the former *uezd* (a Russian word standing for ‘regional’) town of Verhneudinsk. There are several reasons for the development of theatre. Firstly, throughout the country, the former Soviet government provided conditions for the development of people's culture as a whole, starting with eradication of illiteracy and encouragement to various kinds of professional art. And secondly, since antiquity, the Buryats, like many other nationalities of the world, have enjoyed their original ethnic culture incorporating labour, holiday, ritual and ceremonial religious traditions rich in artistic and creative reflection of the reality. Folk song musical culture, folk choreography with a wide range of different dances, theatrical performance of the heroic epics by fairy-tellers (*ulegershins*), solemnity of the ceremonies connected with the life of an individual, a family, a clan on the one hand and also of the entire clan or ethnic group comprise the different elements of Buryat culture.

Having adopted Buddhism's Tibetan version (Lamaism), along with a ritual of divine service, the Buryats mastered the Buddhist

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mystery *Tsam* (sacred dance). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Buryat folklore displaying theatrical character encountered the European (Russian) type of the amateur and professional theatre. The Buryats assimilated the European form of dramatic art and theatre.

Opening of the professional Buryat Drama Theatre on 7 July 1932 had an enormous cultural significance for Buryat-Mongolia. The troupe included the first graduates of the Theatre Department of the College of Arts. For the initial period, young directors were invited from Moscow – A. V. Afrikanov, S. F. Benkendorf and A. V. Mironski. In 1934-1935, they were succeeded by the first indigenous professional directors, graduates of the Stagecraft Faculty of the State Institute of Theatre Art (GITIS) in Moscow – M. B. Shambueva (the first woman Director) and G. T. Tsydynzhapov, who worked a lot to perfect the acting technique of the troupers. They were the first to present the foreign classics in the Buryat language – Molier's *Tartuf*, Goldoni's *Servant of Two Masters*, helped the authors create the national original repertoire, and produce on stage such plays as the comedy *Mergen* by A. Shadaev, Zh. Tulisnov's drama *Sesegma*, the plot of which was about the woman's destiny in old-time Buryatia. Drama *Odin iz mnogikh* (One of the Many) by N. Bayad was devoted to the civil war events. Besides, they translated the Soviet plays *Platon Krechet* by A. Korneichuk, *Pad' Serebryannaya* (Silver Fold) by N. Pogodin, etc. into the Buryat language.

The year 1938 was a turning point for the young theatre, as two important performances were presented: Shakespeare's tragedy *Othello* (*Othello* - G. Tsydynzhapov, *Dezdemonna* – M. Shambueva) and the musical drama *Bair* by A. Shadaev and G. Tsydynzhapov. The drama was based on the folklore plot about a courageous hunter, Bair secured the release of his bride Bulgan from Khan's captivity. For the first time, the Buryat drama actors accompanied by the symphony orchestra performed vocal parts: Bair – V. Khalmatov, Bulgan – N. Garmaeva, Bair's rival Suuta-Mergen – Ts. Shagzhin, Bair's father Khutarman – Ch. Geninov. *Bair* was a great success with the audience because of its melodies, colourful ceremonies and powerful acting. In December

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1939, the Buryat theatre achieved the status of “musical drama” conferred by the Republican government.

In 1940, the first *dekada* (the Russian word for ‘Ten Days of Art’) of the Buryat art and literature was held in Moscow with tremendous success. Muscovites were shown three performances - the musical drama *Bair*, the first Buryat opera *Enkhe-Bulat-bator* by M. Frolov, the musical play about the workers of the state animal farm, *Erzhen* by N. Baldano with V. Moroshkin as Music Director. As a result of the performances, the musical drama theatre was rewarded with the Order of Lenin, and actors were given honorary titles and various awards. The Art Director G. Ts. Tsydynzhapov was conferred the rank of the People’s Artist of the USSR.

During the Great Patriotic War, the musical drama theatre mastered the world classical opera and ballet repertoire, *Eugeni Onegin* by Chaikovski, *Rusalka* (Mermaid) by Dargomyzhski, *Faust* by Gounod, *Traviata* and *Rigoletto* by Verdi, *Chio-Chio-San* by Puccini, and *The Barber of Seville* by Rossini were staged. Under the direction of ballet master M. S. Arseniev and T. K. Glyazer, the troupe performed the ballets such as *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* by Asafiev, *Vain Precaution* by Gertel, *Corsair* by Adan, *Lebedinoye ozero* (Swan Lake) by Chaikovski. Marvellous ballerina L. Sakhyanova, dancers Ts. Badmaev and F. Ivanov were the distinguished artistes. In 1949, the Musical Drama Theatre was officially divided into two creative companies: the Opera and Ballet Theatre and the Buryat Drama Theatre.

The Buryat State Academic Theatre of Drama was named after Kh. Namsaraev (1949-2005) in 1959. For nearly two decades, the founders of the national theatre evolved into prominent masters of the stage – N. Gendunova, V. Khalmatov, Ch. Geninov, M. Stepanova, Yu. Shangina, S. Khaltagarova, N. Garmaeva, P. Nikolaev. Later on they were joined by G. Losev, S. Rabsalov, Ts. Shagzhin, B. Rinchino, B. Vampilov, Ts. Damdinov, S. Gonchikova and L. Abusheeva. The company successfully produced Schiller’s dramas, Shakespeare’s

tragedies and comedies, plays by Ostrovsky, Gorky and Russian and Buryat authors. Their creative work was based on everyday psychology and realistic performance with a tendency to combine lyricism and romanticism.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the company employed young graduates of three theatre studios of the Leningrad State Institute of Theatre, Music and Cinematography (1958, 1969 and 1988) and of two studios of the Far East State Institute of Arts (1975, 1980). Six directors, GITIS graduates, B. Ayushin, F. Sakhirov, Ts. Tsyrenzhapov, V. Kondratyev, L. Tsydenova and Ts. Balzhanov worked well, displaying mastery of stage performances as well as the skill of organizing creative work. The Theatre of Drama went on three large-scale tours in Moscow (1959, 1969 and 1976) and Leningrad (1973). Those artistic demonstrations were so significant, that in March 1977 the company was given the rank of “academic”. The plays *Gore ot uma* (Intellectual’s Sorrow) by A. Griboedov, *Budamshu* by Ts. Shagzhin, King Lear by Shakespeare (1969, 1994), were staged. *Knut taishi* (Whip of Taishi) by Kh. Namsaraev (1976), *Damdin the Lama* by B. Erdineev and R. Badmaev, *Ghenghis Khan* by B. Gavrilov, *Chaika* (Seagull) by A. Chekhov were the main landmarks.

Under the leadership of Chief Director Ts. Balzhanov and manager D. Sultimov, the Theatre of Drama coped with the difficulties of the 90s and is approaching its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The theatre has been successfully participating in the international festival of the Mongol-speaking peoples. For instance, in 2001 the play *Ghenghis Khan* was shown there and once again in 2002, at the festival *Siberian Souvenir* at Irkutsk. In 2004, Brecht’s *Three-penny Opera* was presented in Krasnoyarsk. The company also took part in the international festival *Chekhov of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* in Ulaanbaatar (2004).

**The Buryat State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet (1949-2005):** In the 1950s, the theatre art matters were guided by G. Tsydynzhapov, who promoted the idea of founding of a professional musical theatre in the republic. Tsydynzhapov devoted much of his life

to realize this project. In 1954, the group of young Buryat singers, having graduated from the Opera Studio of the Leningrad Conservatoire returned to the theatre. Among them were: L. Linkhovoin, V. Manketov, D. Kyshtimova and N. Petrova. E. Konchevski had mastered the profession of an opera producer. In 1955, the theatre recruited the graduates of the Leningrad College of Choreography. Soon after A.L. Vaganova, the ballet troupe became independent and got principal male dancers – P. Abasheev and B. Vasiliev. Young choreographer M.S. Zaslavski became the head of the ballet troupe. M. Bukhbinder and V. Maimeskul, talented musicians from the central cities, were invited as the conductors. The Board of Directors was headed by experienced G.T. Belgaev, who was succeeded by the talented musician D. Sh. Yakhunaev who had been educated at the conservatoire.

Considerable progress of the Theatre of Opera and Ballet was noted and discussed during its tour to Moscow in November 1959. The theatre invited Muscovites to Borodin's opera *Knyaz' Igor* (Prince Igor) staged by A. Kireev, where a very impressive personality of Khan Konchak represented by L. Linkhovoin as well as the part of Prince Igor performed by V. Manketov attracted the audience's attention. Buryat composer D. Ayusheev's *Pobratimy* (Blood Brothers) and the two original national ballets – *Krasavitsa Angara* (Angara the Beauty) by B. Yampilov, L. Knipper and *Vo imya lyubvi* (In the Name of Love) by Zh. Batuev and B. Maizel, both based on Buryat legends were highly appreciated. The ballet master M. Zaslavski was the choreographer, I. Moiseiev produced two adagios for Angara and Yenisei in the first and fifth scenes. Larissa Sakhyanova, ballerina with astonishing flexibility, graceful movements and lines, superfine musical talent and lyricism was the frontrunner among the performers. In the 1960s and 1970s, the musical theatre of Buryatia achieved maturity with the best works of the world, Russian opera and ballet classics having been included into the repertoire. They toured all over Siberia from Omsk and Barnaul to Khabarovsk and Vladivostok to perform the opera. Since 1967, the ballet troupe has been enriched with the graduates from the Buryat College of Choreography and the graduates



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of the metropolitan conservatoires including talented singers such as K. Bazarsadaev, D. Dashiev, D. Dashitsyrenova, L. Linkhovoin's disciples – S. Radnaev and V. Buruev. They were skilled guest conductors like I. Chudnovski, E. Kiviloo, V. Goresnik, M. Morozovski and talented Buryat musicians M. Baldaev, V. Galsanov and A. Arsalanov. The directors N. Logachev, E. Shkolnik and S. Budazhapov became prominent. The ballet master A. Batubaeva staged ballets such as *Legendy o lyubvi* (Legends about Love) by A. Melik, *Spartak* by A. Hachaturyan, *Per Gyunt* with music given by E. Grieg. In 1965, L. Sakhyanova and L. Linkhovoin demonstrated their creative abilities in the Kremlin Theatre. They toured foreign countries and achieved great success.

In 1979, the Buryat Theatre of Opera and Ballet toured Moscow, Leningrad and Stavropol. They performed *Enkhe-Bulat-bator* by M. Frolov, *Prozreniye* (Discernment), *Chudesnyi Klad* (Wonderful Treasure) by B. Yampilov, *Khovanshina* by M. Musorgski, Othello by J. Verdi, *Krasavitsa Angara* by B. Yampilov and L. Knipper, *Zhisel* by L. Adan, and *Legendy o lyubvi* by A. Melnik. In Moscow, L. Sakhyanova gave three performances, and each time the house was full. In November 1979, by the resolution of the Ministry of Culture of the former USSR, the Buryat Theatre of Opera and Ballet was conferred the rank of "Academic".

The contemporary period (1983-2005) turned out to be the most difficult one. *Perestroika* in the former USSR, and later ushering in market economy hampered theatrical tours even to the Siberian cities. However, the theatre has been trying to maintain its credibility. In the 90s, there were festivals held in Ulan-Ude in memory of L. Linkhovoin and L. Sakhyanova. The festival of Verdi's operas, five of which have been performed in the theatre, was a great success. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the company has already made tours of the cities of Irkutsk, Chita and abroad in Ulaanbaatar.

Today the repertoire of the musical theatre of Buryatia represented by classical operas and ballets such as *Eugeni Onegin*,

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*Pikovaya Dama* (Queen of Spades), *Doch' Korolya Rene* (Daughter of King Rene) by P. Chaikovski, *Don Paskuale* by G. Donitsetti, *Carmen* by Zh. Bize has been further enhanced with rare productions like *Zori zdes' tikkiye* (Dawns are Serene here) by K. Molchanov, *Sorochinskaya Yarmarka* (Fair) by M. Musorgski, and *Samson and Dalila* by K. Sen-Sans. The same stage saw *Zhisel* by L. Adan, *Lebedinoye ozero*, *Francheska da Rimini* by P. Chaikovski, *Karmina Burana* by K. Orf, *Krasavitsa Angara* by B. Yampilov and L. Knipper, and *Tsytyacha i odna noch* by F. Amirov. The rich ancient national cultural traditions and the mastery over European classics by the artists of the Buryat stage are poised to promote the company scaling new heights with the support of theatre administration.

**The State Russian Drama Theatre after N. A. Bestuzhev:** Verhneudinsk (nowadays Ulan-Ude) had no professional Russian theatre up to the end of 1920s. The town was witness to the performances of visiting companies and practice by local amateur groups. Establishment of the Russian permanent drama theatre in Buryatia began after the arrival of the Moscow Organizational Theatre in 1928. During this tour, the plays of the Soviet authors *Volchya tropa* (Wolf Path), *Malinovoye varenye* (Raspberry Jam) by A. Afinogenov, *Kvadratura Kruga* (Squaring the Circle) by V. Kataev, *Chelovek s portfelem* (The Man with a Briefcase) by A. Faiko, and *Tempo* by N. Pogodin were performed in Verhneudinsk. The classics were shown as well: *Bez viny vinovatye* (Guilty though Guiltless), *Les* (Forest) by A. Ostrovski, and *Guile and Love* by F. Schiller. At the request of the town authorities, the theatre worked in Verhneudinsk for several seasons (1928-1932) and left in 1933. In 1934, the new Russian troupe was formed, which in 1936 got actors from Moscow and Leningrad, moved to a new building and opened the season with a premiere of *Aristocrats* by N. Pogodin. The company was headed by Chief Director, A. E. Larionov.

In 1936-1941, plays were staged by directors V. Ya. Gofrat, A. N. Borisoglebski, L. N. Itskov, N. N. Novikov, A. V. Mironski, N. G. Reznikov, L. P. Kaverin, G. A. Mirski, P. L. Leontiev and M. D.

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Rakhmanov. Prior to the beginning of the World War II, these masters strengthened fundamentals of the realist theatre of the emotional experience school within the troupe. In 1941, the Kharkov Theatre of the Russian Drama led by A. G. Kramov was shifted from Ukraine to Ulan-Ude by fascists, where it stayed till 1944. Half of the local drama troupe joined the Kharkov company, the other part replenished the Theatre for Young People (TUZ) which was opened in Buryatia in 1940 by V. A. Zakatov.

After the war till 1948, the Theatre for Young People run by P.N. Rozanov merged with the troupe of the Russian Drama Theatre (RDÒ), offering the productions of A. Kanin, A. Donatti, A. Sobolshikov, G. Mandelshtam, P. Velyarski, and Yu. Korshun. The troupe was headed by chief directors P. N. Rozanov, Ya. M. Urinov, and G. A. Yofin, who managed to stabilize the troupe and unite the creative company with common ideas and aspirations.

Gorky's *The Zykovs* and M. Aliger's *Skazka o pravde* (Tale about the Truth), in which the role of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya was outstandingly played by D. Kovalchuk, V. Vishnevski's *Optimisticheskaya Tragediya* (the part of the Commissar was played by N. Topornina-Bedlinskaya), *Poslednyaya zhertva* (Last Victim), *Zhenit'ba Belugina* (Marriage of Belugin) and *Vasilisa Melentieva* by playwright A. Ostrovsky were the significant productions of the period between 1940s and 50s. To display the RDÒ activity, the latter was included in the repertoire of the *Buryat Art and Literature Review* in Moscow in November 1959, where the part of *Vasilisa Melentieva* was implemented by A. Golubchikova, Tsar Ivan Grozny and Yu. Korshun. The RDÒ also performed M. Kichakov's *Skvoz' grozy* (Through Thunder-storms) portraying V. I. Lenin's exile to the Siberian village of Shushenskoe, the role of Lenin was played by M. Glazkov, N. K. Krupskaya and K. T. Nikulina.

The period from 1960s to 1990s, particularly from 1980-1990, was the period of social cataclysm, *perestroika* and the impact of market reforms. However, the theatre managed to keep its tempo only

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because of the efforts of its chief directors I. I. Prokhanov (1961-1967), K. A. Petrov and A. D. Nikitin (1967-1972), Z. F. Vnukova (1973-1976) and A. A. Burkov (1984-1991). The troupe remained relatively stable and stuck to the traditions. During that period, the harmony in the work of actors and their desire to remain within the RDÒ became evident. V. S. Gusev, P. R. Gofman, R. S. Benskaya, K. T. Nikulina, I. V. Yuhnevich, M. S. Chernova, O. K. Mizevich, M. N. Zheleznova, Ò. F. Stefanescu, O. N. Khlebnikova, G. D. Shelkova, N. K. Tumanova, L. E. Arkhipova, S. G. Ryzhov, I. S. Babchenko, M. M. Lanina, G. B. Kharitonova, and others continue to work successfully contributing immensely to the enrichment of RDT.

During the 1980s, significant productions of classical and modern works appeared in the repertoire. Among them were Shakespeare's *Hamlet* staged by I. Prokhanov (1965), A. N. Tolstoi's *Ivan Grozny* by A. Nikitin, *Chelovek s ruzhyom* (The Man with a Gun) and *Kremlyovskiye kuranty* (Kremlin Chimes) by N. Pogodin.

Interest in the works by local authors also increased. Among the works, which were staged, included *Angarsky voenkom* (Angarsk Military Commissar) by L. Nikoforov and S. Metelitsa, Ts. Shagzhin's *Klyatva*, I. Kalashnikov's novels *Razryv-trava* (Breaking Grass) *Inspector zolotoi taigi* (Inspector of Gold Taiga) by V. Mitypov. Talented playwright Stepan Lobozerov's plays presented in the RDÒ were staged in many regional theatres, and in St. Petersburg as well, which made him very popular throughout Russia.

In 1983 and 1988, the RDT company performed in Moscow. The play *Medea* staged by A. Burkov evoked a special response. The title part was played by N. Tumanova, who profoundly revealed the traits of the character. The theatre toured the western cities of the country such as Kostroma, Voronezh, Cherkassy and Minsk. In 1991, Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Buryat ASSR decreed that the Russian Drama Theatre be named after N.A. Bestuzhev. In 1995, the RDT successfully participated in the second International Festival of the Russian Drama Theatres in Yoshkar-Ola (the Republic of Mari-El)

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Molier's *Tartuf* produced by director B. Gorbacheski and G. Gorin's *Pominal'naya molitva* (Prayer for the Dead) directed by L. Titov were performed there.

On the initiative of enterprising manager L. N. Namsaraeva, "The American Project" was carried out in 1998. The company had a rather successful trip to the American cities of California and Oregon, with performances like *Iz Ameriki s lyubov'yu* (From America with Love) and *Shamanskiye snovideniya* (Shaman Dreams) by playwright N. Matkhanova. In 1998-1999, the citizens of Ulan-Ude celebrated the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Russian Drama Theatre. Chief Director A. N. Shteiner presented *Na dne* (In the Lower Stratae of the Society) by M. Gorki, *Malen'kiye tragedii* (Small Tragedies) by A. Pushkin, and *Zdes' zhivut lyudi* (Here People Live) by A. Fugard. New theatre manager P. G. Stepanov replaced L. N. Namsaraeva, who was appointed as Director of the Theatre of Opera and Ballet. Under the renewed leadership and supported by the Republican President L. V. Potapov, the theatre has entered the new century with optimism.

In 2003 and 2004, Schiller's *Maria Stuart* and Chekhov's *Vishnyovy i Sad* (Cherry Garden) staged by Irkutsk director S. Boldyrev were performed. The plays caused a sensation over the original interpretation of the classics and excellent performance by the lead actors, once again showing the troupe's maturity and presence of distinguished actors.

**The Republican Puppet Theatre Ulger:** History of this theatre is reckoned from September 1967, when its first performance *Sestritsa Alyonushka i bratets Ivanushka* (Sister Alyonushka and Brother Ivanushka) by Yu. Dantsiger was shown. The company was led by the RDÒ actor P.V. Ralchuk, graduate of the Higher Stagecraft Courses at GITIS, who had trained at the State Puppet Theatre headed by S. V. Obraztsov. Another RDÒ actor F. Gavrilov was appointed manager. In the first five years, the theatre performed about 20 shows including *Ivan Tsarevich i seryi volk* (Ivan Tsarevich and Grey Wolf) by R. Beloglazova, *Slonyonok* (Young Elephant) by G. Vladychina,

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*Medvezhonok Rim-Tim-Ti* (Bear-cub Rim-Tim-Ti) by Ya. Vilkovski, *Malenkaya Feya* (Little Fairy) by V. Robdan, *Vosstavshiye dzhungli* (Revolted Jungle) by S. Kochan. Leading actors were V. Shulgin, L. Chumakova, whose performances were highly appreciated. The theatre made many tours across the republic's districts, cities of Siberia and the Far East.

When the Buryat group of actors was recruited in 1976, *Angaakhe* (Gosling) by N. Gernet, translated into the Buryat language by Ts. B. Badmaev, was performed, then followed *Zolotoi kozlyonok s serebryannymi kopytsami* (Gold Kid with Small Silver Hoofs) by Sh. Shanzhinbat, translated from the Mongolian by G. Chimitova, Zh. Zimin's *Kamen' ptitsa* (Stone-Bird), Ts. Shagzhin's *Budamshu* (a puppet theatre version); by director P. Tsybanov, designers – L. Sumatokhina, V. Zavyalov.

In 1977, director V. P. Ralchuk, actors V. D. Shulgin and L. D. Burdukovskaya and lead actors were awarded with the Buryat ASSR premium for the plays *Medvezhonok Rim-Tim-Ti* by Ya. Vilkovski (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), *Tarkhai Krasnyi Malakhai* (Tarkhai Red Malakhai) by Ts. B. Badmaev, *Kashei Bessmertnyi* (Kashei Immortal) by M. Valentinov. S. Stolyarov staged *Kto zapletaet grivy loshadyam?* (Who Braids Horse Manes?) by N. Azov and V. Tihvinski. In the theatre review of *Siberia and the Far East*, 1987 the performance was very much appreciated and V. D. Shulgin was given the best actor award.

In the middle of the 80s, the company was given the former building of the Buryat Academic Theatre of Drama and moved to a rather cosy premises. There the company performed *Malenkaya feya* by V. Robdan, *Slonenok* by G. Vladychina, *Volshebnyaya trost* (Magic Cane) and *Kamen' -Ptitsa* by Zh. Zimin, *Krasnaya Shapochka* (Little Red Riding Hood) by Sh. Pierro, *Angaakhe* by N. Gernet, *Chudesa dlya Alisy* (Miracles for Alice) by A. Veselov and N. Gol and *Malchik s palchik* (Tom Thumb) by V. Zhukovski.

In 1988, the graduates from the Theatre Art Department of the East Siberian State Institute of Culture, today – the Academy of Culture

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and Arts (VSGAKI) joined the troupe. Talented actors like A. Natansson, T. Smetanina, A. Timofeev, E. Matveeva, E. Baranova and B. Konstantinov became popular. In the middle of the 90s, graduates of VSGAKI Dramatic Studio joined them. With theatre masters such as V. Shulgin, S. Buneev and M. Urbazaeva, they formed the main body of the company with good creative potential. The excellent performance *Sobaki* (Dogs) by director V. Kokorin, presented successfully at the festival “Baikal Meetings at Vampilov’s” in Irkutsk testified to this fact. B. Konstantinov’s production of *Duimovochka* (Inchlong Girl) was a great success. It was shown at different puppet theatre festivals in Russia and was performed at the international festival in Lebanon (1998-1999). In 2002, the Buryat Dramatic Studio returned home after graduation from the Puppet Department of the St. Petersburg Theatre Academy and today constitutes the troupe’s backbone. Chief Director of *Ulger*, V. Zhaltsanov produced creative performances which were permeated with the images of the Buryat folk arts both for children and adults. In 2006, one of his last productions *Poyushaya strela* (Singing Arrow) won two nominations at the All-Russian festival “Gold Mask” in Moscow.

**The Youth Art Theatre:** In 1980, a group of students and teachers of the East Siberian State Institute of Culture under the leadership of director and teacher A.B. Baskakov worked hard to set up the Youth Theatre Studio in central Ulan-Ude. The Ministry of Culture of Buryatia supported the initiative and allocated funds to continue reconstruction of the premises. The City Youth Theatre Studio was officially opened in 1985. The theatre produced E. Schwarz’s *Drakon* (Dragon) in 1986, V. Merezhko’s *Proletarskaya melnitsa schastyia* (Proletarian Mill of Happiness) both staged by A. Baskakov. These plays initiated the formation of the company. The latter play was awarded with the prize of the zonal creative laboratory of folk theatres in Barnaul, then with the winner’s prize and medal of All-Union festival II during the All-Russia *dekada* of amateur theatres in Moscow. In October 1988, the Youth Theatre-Studio became the laureate of the premium of Buryatia’s Komsomol. In 1989, the theatre participated in

the International Theatrical Festival in the city of Svitavi, Czechoslovakia.

From September 1988 till September 1991, the theatre-studio was undergoing a three-year experiment trying to solve its creative and economic problems. There were two directors on the staff - D. Batorova (Manager at the same time), A. Baskakov (the Chief Director), and Art Director V. Kruglov. For the period from 1988 till 1992, A. Galin's *Zvezdy na utrennem nebe* (Stars in the Morning Sky), B. Brecht's *The Most Respectable Public*, V. Korkiya's *Chernyi chelovek, ili ya, bednyi Soso Dzhugashvili* (Black Person or I, Poor Soso Dzhugashvili), N. Erdman's *Samoubiytsy* (Self-Murderers), O. Genri's *Coach Ride*, N. Sadur's *Zamerzli* (Have Frozen), L. Petrushevskya's *Den rozhdeniya Smirnovoi* (Smirnova's Birthday), *Nashi* (Ours) based on F. Dostoevski's novel *Besy* (Demons), *Vremena goda* (Seasons of the Year) were produced.

Together with the Union of Theatre Workers of Buryatia and Ulan-Ude City Council, the Theatre-Studio was the initiator and founder of the first International Theatrical Ecological Festival *Baikal-Michigan: Save the Lakes!* held in Buryatia in August 1990. Three persons from the Youth Theatre Company (A. Baskakov, V. Kilin and D. Batorova) were members of the delegation to the USA. They worked in Chicago, state of Illinois and other neighbouring states. The festival supported by the Union of Theatre Workers of RSFSR was a great success.

In the autumn of 1991, the Youth Theatre opened another season with the performance *Zamerzli* by N. Sadur (A. Baskakov's production). The premiers followed: T. Williams's *Steklyanniy zverinets* (Glass Menagerie) staged by V. Vitin, L. Petrushevskya's *Den rozhdeniya Smirnovoi* produced by D. Batorova. The theatre commanded regular audience which actually enjoyed each performance. It seems to be the only company, which did not yield its artistic positions to the market forces, did not follow the tastes of that part of the post-Soviet society, whose moral principles had been



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shaken. Financially, the poorest theatre company was overcoming its hardships from season to season, but was steadily meeting its aesthetic and ethical criteria of art. To a considerable degree, high standard of acting, vigour and purity of the company were brought in and maintained by its leader, A. Baskakov.

The theatre graduates also produced shows based on classics. The composition based on the chapters of the novel of F. Dostoevski *Besy* has been staged under the title *Noch*. Two theatre editions of N.V. Gogol's comedy *Zhent'iba* (Marriage) directed by A. Baskakov were appreciated in the theatre circles.

The performance *Vremena goda*, including two miniatures – I. S. Turgenev's *Na bolshoi doroge* (On the Main Road) and A. P. Chekhov's *Ved'ma* (Witch) was delicately polished up. A. Baskakov worked on N. Erdman's *Samoubiytsy* and *Zamerzli*, the play by N. Sadur, produced together with V. Vitin. In all these productions the key actors who performed were: S. Guschina, L. Ivanov, O. Fomenko, E. Khabarov. The cumulative experience and high performance level have led the company to be referred to as the "Art Theatre".

In 1997, the Youth Art Theatre was named "The Theatre of the Year" in the competition "Window to Russia", organized by the Ministry of Culture of Russia and the newspaper *Kultura*. In 1998, the company was invited to the prestigious international festival "Passage" in France, where it was applauded by the audience of Nancy. In 2000, the Youth Art Theatre from Ulan-Ude and the theatre company *Linsolite Traversee* from Toulon realized the International French-Russian theatrical project *It is Possible*.

In September 2005, the Youth Art Theatre celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary; the theatre lovers from distant and neighbouring Moscow, Irkutsk, Chita and other towns of Siberia arrived for this special occasion. The Art Director and Theatre Manager, A. Baskakov had already been rewarded with the Gold medal "Property of Siberia". Baskakov has been teaching stagecraft in the East Siberian State Academy of Culture and Arts. His students - directors and actors have

dispersed over Russia, disseminating the enlightenment of true art.

**The State Theatre of Song and Dance *Baikal*:** The distinctive professional theatre was amalgamated at the beginning of 2005 from the two remarkable companies – the Buryat State Theatre of Dance *Badma Seseg* and the State Theatre of Song and Dance *Baikal* of the Republic of Buryatia. This project of the Republican Ministry of Culture was undoubtedly launched to preserve the people's cultural heritage. Sixty years of creative activity are behind the song and dance ensemble *Baikal*, which has combined the achievements of composers Zh. Batuev, B. Yampilov, Ch. Pavlov; singers - T. Khobarkov, Ch. Shanyushkina, K. Shulunova, N. Tarova; ballet masters - M. S. Arseniev, T. G. Glyazer; dancers – T. Gergesova, V. Tumurova, B. Egorov; and the orchestra of the Buryat folk instruments.

The Buryat State Theatre of Dance *Badma Seseg* was introduced in the season of 1992-1993. Dandar Badluev, who trained at the Academy of Dance in Calcutta (India) in 1977 was the initiator of setting up this theatre. In the repertoire there were *Yokhor* (the Buryat national dance) of various kinds from different regions of Buryatia, dances of the North and Mongol-speaking peoples, the one-act plays *Oda materi-lebedi* (Ode to the Swan-mother), *Posvyasheniye Shive-Nataraje* (Dedication to Shiva-Nataraja), concert programme *From the Sayani to the Himalayas*, being a great success at home, in Buryatia, and abroad - in Holland, Canada, Belgium, Spain, France and Taiwan.

The renewed State Theatre of Song and Dance *Baikal* began its season of 2005 having launched a great theatrical project – *Uigam Sulde* (The Spirit of the Ancestors), the performance developing like elemental forces, based on myths and legends of the Mongol-speaking peoples. Academic ethnographers, philologists studying folklore, philosophers and experts in folk music played an important role in its production. D. Badluev, B. Bayartuev, Chief Scientific Adviser D. Dugarov, the designer of the totem costumes and set Ch. Shonkhorov, Choreography Director - D. Badluev, Chief Director - B. Borhuu were

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the main persons involved. During two acts of the grand colourful action, the forces of light and darkness are fighting, spirits of the sky, earth and people are being merged into the atmosphere of colour, light, sounds playing and variously combined rhythms. The audience is being captivated by the waves of ancient energy, inflows of historical memory and struggle of feelings. *Dukh predkov* (The Spirit of the Ancestors) has proved very impressive and the authors of this project are likely to continue their artistic research further as the performance has been perceived as an aspiration to profoundly recreate the ancient traditions on the stage. The successful month-long tour to Holland testifies to the vitality of this performance.

**The Young Ballet of Ulan-Ude:** This company was set up as a municipal theatre quite recently in April 2003. V. Ganzhenko became its Art Director. In the past, he was a splendid dancer of the Buryat Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet, performing all the lead male parts of the classical repertoire with the wonderful ballerina, O. Korotkova. The theatre troupe is really young both in age and experience, and all its members graduated from the College of Choreography in Ulan-Ude, which in its turn adheres to the traditions of the Petersburg Academic School of Classical Dance. Young ballet dancers demonstrate their creative achievements to the theatrical community of the city and have already twice (first together with *Badma Seseg*, then with *Baikal*) gone to Taiwan.

This brief review of the theatres of Buryatia testifies to the creative companies' desire not only to survive under the competitive conditions of market economy, but also to march forward in their efforts.

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## TRADITIONAL ETHNIC DANCE OF BURYATIA

*O. B. Buksikova*

Dancing, one of the forms of spiritual culture, is determined by ethno-cultural and socio-economic factors. It has its own distinctive features. Century-long traditional culture of dancing is the people's heritage. In its artistically abstract form, dance expresses the essence of the people's national character, their global perception, a peculiar etiquette and tempo-rhythm of a particular ethnic group. Dances reflect the life of the ethnic groups, their everyday life styles, traditions and customs. The term "tradition" means "an oral transmission of historical knowledge, an usual order of things, the rules of movement passed on from generation to generation."<sup>1</sup> The peculiar features of Buryat dances can be explained by, first of all, the complicated nature of ethno-genesis and ethnic culture. The development and conglomeration of the Mongolian, Turkic, Tungus, Samodiysky and Ketsky ethnic components, imply genetic heterogeneity of culture of dancing of the local Buryat groups.

The most widely spread among the western Buryats is the ritual dance *Yokhor* performed in a kind of circle, which symbolizes the community's unity on one hand, and the reflection of the solar circle on the other. This ritual dance is a sort of syncretic event, including all the participants' movements clockwise to the accompaniment of the song. *Yokhor* has a three-part structure of tempo-rhythmic and kinetic composition: a slow swinging and shifts from foot to foot in the first part, then speeding up of the pace of movements, which gradually change to leap-and-rush movements in the final part. The performance of a ritual dance also means participation of specific sex and age groups. The *Yokhor* rituals are notable for their movements and slow tempo, performed by the elders only. After that the festive part of the rituals goes on. Maidens dressed in festive clothes perform in circles. The girls' attires are usually decorated with sets of silver adornments

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which serve as tokens.<sup>2</sup> The young participants perform habitual dances, games and other kinds of entertainment.

The Eastern Buryats have a ritual dance *Neryelge* performed in two rows by young people, approaching each other: young men in rows are divided on the basis of their sex (men-on the right, women-on the left). The comparative analysis of kinetic and verbal contexts of the Buryat ritual dances *Yokhor* and *Neryelge* shows that integrity of the community is embodied in their actions, which are marked by the identical texts of the songs and similar dance movements of all the participants. A contest is the major motif of *Neryelge* which according to archaic ideas, has been a means of promoting the community's well-being and the soil fertility. Besides the Buryat dance, the ritual circle dances by the Yakut, Dolgan and Evenk ethnic groups are variations of the term *Yokhor*.

The dance culture of Siberia's indigenous group – the Evenks – has not been the subject matter of a special investigation yet. There is some information about the Evenk traditional dances in the works by Y. Lindenow (1743), A. F. Middendorf (1843-1844), but these works do not describe the movements. The Tungus people's dances are mentioned in the works of several travellers and scholars such as R. K. Maak, V. S. Seroshevsky, P. E. Ostrovsky, E. K. Pekarsky, V. P. Tsvetov. A profound analysis is given in the works by ethno-choreographer M. Y. Zhornitsky. A. I. Melnik's book *Evenki Vodyat Khorovod* (The Evenks Perform a Circle Dance) is a teaching guide for choreographic companies, in which he gave the description of the Krasnoyarsk region's Evenk dances.

The Evenk dances are divided into the following major groups: mysteries about hunting of many days with the mass circular *shingkele*, dancing in the center (they imitated chasing of an animal and his magic killing); solo Shaman dances; solo, couple and imitation mass performance dances *Krokhal*, *Otyshal* (Fish Dance), *Karav* (Crane), *Khorogdo* (Crane) and *Eagle's Dance* of Yakutia's Evenks as well as the circle mass song-and-dance *Iken* or *Ikevun* (Khagan, Evin), known

*O. B. Buksikova*

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to many Evenk groups as *Yokhoryo*.<sup>3</sup> Today the Evenk circle dances of imitation hardly resemble the ancient family ceremonies. Having lost their original meaning, they have become part of traditional entertainment and are usually performed by grown-ups and children during spring and autumn mass gatherings called *Suglans*.

In traditional mass circle dances, *Yokhoryo* and *Ivekun*, all the participants slowly move clockwise hand in hand, their elbows close to each other. Then the tempo gradually accelerates followed by the counter-clockwise leaps, their body movements expressing the running deer. A special role is played by a bard who starts singing and the rest of the people follow him. These songs are improvised by really gifted bards. If it is autumn before the hunting season, then the songs will be definitely about hunting. During *Suglans* in the spring time, admiration of the warm weather, the sunshine, the deer and the hunters' luck in their trade is manifested. They often praise a beautiful girl as described below:

Girl ! Who are you?  
Your eyes are like Black Berries,  
Your voice is like a bird's singing,  
Like the singing of a brook.

The people's mood and their feelings are vividly expressed by the Evenk traditional dance *Ikevun*. It is of ritual, ambivalent character and performed either slowly or rapidly depending on the event it is devoted to. *Ikevun* is performed slowly accompanied by mournful singing in case of someone's death or an epidemic among the reindeer herds, etc. However, in the case of a good hunting, on a child's birthday or on the occasion of moving to a new camp of nomads, this dance is performed at a brisk pace, accompanied by joyful singing. According to the existing tradition, melody produced by *Ikelen* performers is strictly differentiated by sex and age – definite melodies are to be hummed only by old and elderly men and women, while some other specific melodies are to be sung by elderly women only. The young people sing a totally different melody.

The traditional dance culture of the Evenks got closely entangled with the dance cultures of rest of the Siberian people such as the

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Yakuts, Buryats, Russians, etc. Despite this fact, it still retains its originality, ancient spontaneity and spirit. *Khorogdo* (Wood grouse dance), one of the Evenk mysteries of hunting is known among the Buryats as *Khoer naadan* (Wood grouse dance). This dance has analogy with a number of dance cultures of ethnic groups in Siberia and the North. Imitation dance form like “Playing of Bears”, which is also an important constituent of totemic ceremonies, is also known to the Evenks, Buryats, Nivkhs, Aines, Ulches, etc. According to A. N. Veselovsky, in the past theatrical festivities in honour of the Bear, the master of the *tiga* (Siberian wood), was widely spread among the people of Western and Eastern Siberia. The dance of the Bear was the central part of these festivities. Similarly, “the dance of the bulls” which figured the kangaroo hunting by North American Indians or Australians<sup>4</sup> is also widely practiced and performed.

Having preserved the elements of local peculiarities, the traditional dance culture of the Evenks has long been absorbing the elements of dances and plays of other ethnic groups in Siberia. The habitual dance culture of the Russians (Semeiskiye) in Trans-Baikal also takes a syncretic effect, including the dance, song and acting of various plots. The circle dances *V khorovode byli my* (We Performed a Dance in a Circle), *Ya vokrug stolba khozhu* (I trot around the Pole), *Podushechka* (Cushion), *Karavai* (Russian Pie) and others are most widely spread and have archaic style. It should be noted that the dance folklore of Trans-Baikal’s Semeiskiye is inseparably linked with Russia’s central, southern and northern regional elements of traditional dance culture. The Trans-Baikal Semeiskiye have managed to preserve unique features of archaic content and form of dance.

Important data about the tradition of dance culture of the Semeiskiye can be found in F. F. Bolonev’s publications in respect to their rites and observation according to the calendar. The calendar rite cycles show cosmic-sociological functions. Also the transition from chaos to space, harmonization of relationship of an individual and community as well as communication with the ancestors takes place. During *Svyatki* (Christmas-tide) holiday, Semeiskiye used to perform

play-dances of circle type, in which vegetative, zoomorphic and magic symbols are presented. The circle play-dances include *Zainka* (Young Hare), *Lyon* (Flax), *Olen* (Deer), *Dryoma* (Somnolence) and *Vokrug stolba khozhu* (I Trot Around the Pole), *Khoronyu Zoloto* (I am Hiding Gold).

As for the kinetic context of such circle dances, it is pretty simple: steps, stamping one's foot, clapping one's hands. The main figure is the circle reproducing the cosmic symbol of erecting the world tree, its analogues being mythological characters "Deer", "Somnolence", "Hare" etc. These characters are at the same time the symbol of genitals. The circular movements around the centre have the meaning of hierogamy, the latter providing the establishment of the proper world order, integrity as well as the community's welfare. The *Svyatki* circle dances are performed by the young people in the lead. This is the evidence of space revival which is flourishing and getting prolific. For many centuries, the Trans-Baikal Semeiskiye managed to preserve the circle dances, with semantics being the unique form of the people's spiritual heritage.

The traditional ethnic dances have enabled us to discover a number of functional, semantic and kinetic similarities based upon cosmic and sociological functions of East Siberian people's ritual performances. The distinctive culture of the East Siberian people – Buryats, Evenks, Trans-Baikal Semeiskiye – is vividly interpreted in spectacular performances staged by both the renowned choreographers and the young ones. The major task facing all choreographers is to preserve, develop and to impart this priceless spiritual wealth to the spectators all over the world.

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## THE BURYAT CHARACTER AS PORTRAYED BY THE BURYAT NOVELISTS

*Z. A. Serebryakova*

In this era of inter-regional and international integration process, national peculiarities of ethnic activism have come to the fore. F. Abramov writes in this context that “Many things in the life of any ethnos are explained by their peculiar national features, both upward movement and historical failures are concealed in them”.<sup>1</sup> In his creative work, he tried “to avoid the simple nature of characters” and he did not take into account... “all the constituents which form one’s nature...”<sup>2</sup>

History testifies to the significance of the national traits in the life of states and their peoples, and also to certain relations between them and the history of one or the other country.<sup>3</sup> This phenomenon is rather complicated and controversial. It synthesizes “spiritual peculiarities and valuable orientation of the people, on the basis of which the people’s activities take place. They become apparent in one’s emotions, feelings and mood, their reaction to the events, behaviour and manners, thoughts, mindset, customs, tastes of large and small groups of people”.<sup>4</sup> National traits of character are manifold and not quite easily comprehended. Fiction enables us to analyse people’s nature as it is, embodied in behaviour, orientation, ideas and feelings, to investigate transformations, to reveal and to study its types.

Although Buryatia’s literature during the Soviet period, like the Russian literature, was striving to imprint a new socialist type of character till mid-1980s, many aspects of the national traits of the literary characters have been created in it. They all are reflected in large scale epic genres, primarily in the novels. This genre allows us to trace the dynamics of national disposition.

The Buryat novel, the history of which began in 1949, is represented by a considerable number of works. Some novelists

managed to reflect the essential aspects of the Buryats' nature in their interpretation of contemporary themes. Those who worked to create historical novels had more opportunities. The authors reflected such conventional human features as kindness, response, dignity, industry, etc., but somewhat refracted in the national peculiar form. A. N. Myreeva writes that human values are common to all mankind and the national values do have peculiar features. 'National' is most often being understood as the basis of generally accepted human features."<sup>5</sup>

Prose writers emphasise in their heroes those qualities which they consider to be typical ones for the Buryats. Their values and peculiarities have been stressed upon. Family values receive the major attention since family is assumed to be the basis of all fundamentals. The priority of the family, or in a broader sense, a clan is indisputable for the majority of the characters. It implies responsibility before their ancestors to groom the younger generation, as the essence of a person's reputation. Family relationship in the Buryat novels is confirmed by Ch. Tsydendambaev's novel hero: "There is nothing better than our mothers" (*Dorzhi, syn Banzara*). In his novel *Vdali ot rodnykh stepei* Tsydendambaev writes about a researcher at Kazan University, the first Buryat scientist, the main character, who recalls his parents and relatives with deep affection, his heart being heavy and sad, especially about his mother. One says about the hero in A. Angarkhaev's novel *Vechnyi tsvet*: "When doctor Ayusha starts speaking we listen to him with delight. It's a must, they say, for a Buryat to know his cousins ten times, and he himself will name more than ten ancestors". In the family of his friend Sharaldai, they remember their ancestors – hereditary peasants, one of whom was known for his industry: he was able to mow down *dessiatina* (Russian unit of land measure equal to 2.7 acres) of corn within one night and no one could keep pace with him. In *Balta Bol'shaya rodoslovnaya* (Big Family Tree), D. Erdyneev writes about honours and sacred notions for any Buryat, for example, *nebo nagasy* (Grandfather's Sky).

Much more attention is paid to children. D. Batozhabai, in his trilogy *Pokhishennoye schast'e* (Stolen Happiness), describes childless

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women asking for a Lama's (a Buddhist monk) blessing by his prayers to God and spirits with the hope to give birth to a child. Possessing a careful attitude towards children, the trait inherent in the Buryats, is displayed in Ts. Zh. Zhimbiev's novel *Techeniye* (Current), the characters being called, according to the Buryat custom, by the names of their children: *Zandan's father*, *Bairma's mother*, etc. Bodi is anxiously waiting for his son's demobilization, he is very deeply attached to his grandson and also helps his daughter-in-law a great deal. Feeling compassion for his grandson, he gives an advice not to tell him the sad news about his father's death for the time being. Serentsu loves her son very much. Pagma, who has several kids, brings them up and never complains of the burden placed on her shoulders.

Sharaldai (*Vechnyi tsvet*) fell ill after taking his sons' problems too close to his heart: one had left for northern areas in search of big money, the other had given up his scientific work without gaining the expected results. The main character of D. Batozhabai's trilogy, Alamzhi is a devoted father who tries his best to win the prize at the competition. When in a foreign land, he becomes emotional about his wife and children, and misses them very much. Honest by nature, he even made an unsuccessful robbery bid as he did not see the way out to return home soon. Having lost any hope to find his family, Alamzhi adopted an orphan as his son.

According to the tradition, a guest brings gifts for the host's little kids. Sharaldai took a decision to build a nursery at his own expense. *Uligershin* (the Buryat word for a fairy-tale narrator) teaches and supervises other people's children. Serentsu adopts a girl. The custom of adopting the orphans of one's relative is mentioned in the novels *Dorzhi, syn Banzara, Poyushiye strely* by A. Bal'burov and others. Kheshegte (*Vdali ot rodnykh stepei*), who unfortunately does not have his own children, takes care of the children of his country-men. "...village children stood for his own kids, he loved them so dearly as nobody else would do". He grieves about the death of his country men and gymnasium students.

This shows that the Buryats attach great value to their family. And the words “family tree” were chosen as the title of the novel by D. Erdyneev. For many literary works, the family’s prestige, its unity and honour are comprehended in harmony with freedom, independence and recognition of a person.

The prominent feature of the Buryats is their love for native land and the feeling of unity with their compatriots. These features are clearly seen in Ch. Tsydendambaev’s heroes: Ukhinkhen finds the words of inspiration for her native *ulus* (village), Dorzhi is excited and joyful about the beauty of his native land. Kheshegte carefully keeps a handful of the Selenginsk soil in a tiny pouch. For A. Angarkhaev’s novel heroes, their homeland is the main source of power and hope. The evergreen fir-tree forest around their village gave the title to his literary work.

Despite the injustice meted out to the villagers that had deeply offended him, Uta Markhas (*Poyushiye strely*) loved his *ulus*, and having returned home after a long journey, he could not help being excited. Another character in the same novel is Mikhail Dorondoev, a teacher, who sacrificed legacy and marriage for the sake of his interest in collecting folklores. The material collected by him is believed to be a sort of national monument. For 30 years, he managed to record 19 variants of the heroic epic *Geser*. Mikhail admires the creative power of his people, whom he selflessly serves.

The nature loving Buryats are conspicuous in their skill to rear domestic animals and their careful and delicate disposition. In the song devoted to horse – the race winner, it is compared with fire arrows, russy eagles (*Dorzhi, syn Banzara*). In the works under review, the majority of horses are old, exhausted and of quite ordinary breed, but are still taken care of by their masters. Alamzhi is considerate to his old horse. He rears it, never allows it to be whipped, got emotional while parting with it. The horse appeared to be an obedient and clever animal for the man who is affectionate and kind to it. Bay horse (*Vechnyi tsvet*) having learnt about the tempers of his two mistresses,

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reacts to their attitude accordingly. The range of the figurative and expressive means applied to the image of this horse is wide enough. D. Erdyneev uses the original similes as follows: “Arya has lived to this day like an overridden horse”. “Balshin stopped abruptly, like a reined in horse”.

Man’s attitude towards other animals shows through the novel *Poyushiye strely*: “If a stray dog joins a Buryat and takes to him, its new master will never send it away... No, he will certainly give it some food and look after it. If the dog wants to stay with him, let it stay – such is the will of spirits...” The literary characters representing former cattle-breeders, are figuratively compared to animals: “He looks important like a well-fed cock”. Arya characterizes Tuchin and says jokingly: “By now, I cannot find a place for myself, like a cow on the tramp before calving”.

Most of the characters appreciate their ancestors’ heritage, observe the traditions and customs as follow: hospitality, respect for the elders, fire worship, etc. There are the typical features of the Buryats’ nature in the fiction. In D. Batozhabai’s trilogy, poor Buryat strangers give shelter to Zhalma and her kids. Wandering across Buryatia and Mongolia, Alamzhi could always find board and refuge. A. Bal’burov’s novel tells us about such customs as rendering help to relatives, and keeping of a promise among others. The *ulus* people disapprove of Petre’s breaking his promise, i.e. postponing the wedding day. Both Bata Navaa’s relatives and Altargana’s country-men, according to the tradition, arranged a huge sum as dowry for the bride and gave generous gifts to the fiancé (*Gornye orly* by D. Batozhabai).

Dorzhi’s peculiar traits of character are revealed through his thoughtfulness about the observance of the Buryat traditions, customs and rites. Among them is respect for the elders, which Banzarov himself is not deprived of. Violation of this good, common sense approach caused a deep indignation in him. Devotion, inherent both to the rich and the poor, who sometimes sacrifice their only property, a cow, to the *datsan* (Buddhist temple) is considered as one of the national

values. Observing the habits, norms and social manners, Zhalma is rather modest and shy: she does not interfere in the male business, keeping aloof from men.

Antiques are described in the novels with emphasis on the Buryats' reverence for sacred objects, which are never touched without special prayers. Sometimes the authors' appreciation of rituals is not monosemantic. Thus, the rite *taelgan* is recreated by A. Bal'burov in the positive sense, though a critical tone is dominant in the episode with the shaman ritual performance, since the author had to take into account the official ideology of the Soviet period.

The writers' stress on the thirst for knowledge, the importance of good education and scientific degrees are also indicative of the Buryat people. Ch. Tsydendambaev emphasises this aspect. Dorzhi Banzarov is the son of his people, who has been revering intellectual wealth since ancient times. He tries to have a keen insight into the essence of things and phenomena. Being inspired by science, he is incredibly devoted to it. He thinks time is wasted, if he does not manage to read a book or learn some new facts. He enjoys the process of scientific research. Mikhail Dorondoev is a man of profound knowledge, has good knowledge of German, to which his private collection of books testifies.

Bata Navaa, a man of mixed origin (the son of a Buryat and an aboriginal Evenk woman), easily comes into contact with people irrespective of his origin and nationality. His father does his best to help the Evenks in their fur trade in Irkutsk, since merchants used to befool them in the past. If it were not for Bata, the aborigine hunters would not be able to do their business successfully. The novel tells us that the Buryats and Russians provide international guerilla detachments under Kalandarashvili. Another episode from the novel, when a Buryat woman gives the Russian guerilla Medvadski a fur coat as a gift, speaks for itself. The heroes' acts proclaim strong ties of friendship between the Buryats and the Russians, for instance, Punsok and Ivan, a Russian shepherd. This idea comes through the novel *Step' prosnulas* by Zh. Tumunov. During the Civil War in Russia, the Buryats participated

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in military actions against the Semyonovtsy (the White Russian soldiers under Semyonov).

Leksek and his grandson Balta also have Russian friends (*Bol'shaya rodoslovnaya*). Close relations are especially maintained with Kobzev because of their common views. Such warm relations between different ethnic groups are beautifully written in the novels under discussion. The theme of trans-national friendship is analysed by the Buryat critics. It is evident that the characters in the Buryat novels successfully fit themselves in the international community, demonstrating great interest in other peoples' cultures, their openness, friendship, affection and common values.

The majority of heroes are tactful and of reserved nature and tactful. These traits are characteristic of Serentsu, Bodi, Shagdaron (*Techeniye*), Ondre, Uta Markhas Darba (*Poyushiye strely*), Zhalma and Loksoi (*Pokhishennoye schstye*). For example, the characters are curious to know what Alamzhi was arrested for, what Tuvan-khambo told him, but due to their delicate nature, they do not question him. When exchanging traditional questions about the cattle's health, the poor pretend not to be aware of the man's loss and start complaining of their calf's death to somehow soften the situation (*Pokhishennoye schstye*). In case of a conflict in the family, Arya tries to be reserved and shows dignity. Other family members, having been witness to the conflict, do not meddle in their affairs, but pretend that nothing serious happened. After living in discord for many years, the family finally unites and the representatives of three generations try to be tactful to the maximum as it is conventionally accepted in the Buryat community. "Everyone tried to avoid the questions which could cause offence to any of them. They did not utter a single word about the reason of misunderstanding between the two families – the Ayatans and the Lyksekovs (*Bolshaya rodoslovnaya*).

In the dialogues, there are no categorical statements as it is usual for the Buryats. On the contrary, the authors use many hints. The introduction to the dialogue has nothing to do with the subject matter

as well as the concluding part. Such a peculiar form of conversation is based on tact, delicacy and diplomatic way of speaking, as they wish to hurt the people with whom they live with. It is a kind of intellectual contest between the dialogue participants. If they have been acquainted for a long time, they guess each other's thoughts. Analysing the dialogues in A. Angarkhaev's novels, M. Ochirov writes that the village lifestyle is a source of plenty of ideas, as the elderly people talk to each other strictly maintaining the established diplomatic manner, which is notable for the Buryat countrymen.<sup>6</sup>

Buryats' folklore is very rich. D. Batozhabai remarks about the habit of decorating the days of everyday use: "Even the poorest Buryat has got a knife, steel (formerly used for kindling fire) and a pipe, each item being skillfully carved. The travellers used to note that the best works by the Buryat craftsmen were competitive with those made in Tula (a city in central Russia) and China". Even the wealth of *datsans* and the rich people's *yurts* (Buryat felt-made dwelling) were created by the talented Buryats. Ch. Tsydendambaev's works convey myths, fairy-tales and legends in the form of dialogues. One cannot imagine the *ulus* life without wonderful fairy-tales, inspiring heroes, songs, wise proverbs, sayings and riddles that adorn Buryats' life. In Dorzhi's imagination, there "appears the image of golden grains of *uliger* (fairy-tale), falling down onto the palms. The *uliger* words are compared to floating white birds.

To conclude, the Buryat people's major characteristics are as followed: the family priority, a special care for children, insatiable thirst for knowledge, tolerance, preservation of the ancestral heritage, respect for elders, delicacy, tactfulness, hospitality, care for domestic animals etc. The above stated and other qualities demonstrate the rationality of most of the Buryat traditions and customs, which have been long embedded in the Buryat society and the works of Buryat novelists reflect the same.



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## **BOOK REVIEW**

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### **UNLEARN BEFORE U LEARN**

By Kamekish

Promila & Co. Publishers, New Delhi & Chicago, 2007, 416 pp.,

Rs. 550/-

Books on self development, always in high demand, are essential to shape the individual personality. These books, which have ready acceptability, clearly show innate human desire to develop and grow. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, growing, excelling and achieving success in respective fields is a basic human urge and necessity. Most of the books on self development provide valuable inputs for meeting the increasing human needs. Yet, the quality of life as a result of reading such literature remains a question of discussion. With changing times, the need for innovative materials for personality development and growth keeps increasing. The books on self development address the new intellectual impulses. There is a veritable need to apply new innovative methods in day-to-day life to ensure improvements. And that is the real challenge in the present day world.

Learning is a difficult exercise. Unlearning is even more difficult. The areas of learning are so vast that it is almost impossible to observe the nitty-gritty of learning process. The author of this book who feels that learning has not been able to provide the much-needed break to individuals, organizations, societies and nations, has come up with the idea of “unlearning”. The book provides techniques to learn the process of unlearning, which, according to the author, is imperative to achieve excellence. He underscores the need to accept “unlearning” as a way of life. To give a clear picture of learning and unlearning, the author talks about a study conducted by scientists in the United States in 2003, which revealed that one to two Exabytes (ten to the power of eighteen) of information are created annually in 21<sup>st</sup> century in comparison to only five Exabytes of information till the year 2000. It is a big challenge and even the learning skills of experts may not be sufficient enough to grasp the burgeoning information. The author talks about the new ways and means, emphasizing the process of unlearning, to overcome this challenge.

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Quoting Abraham Maslow, the author says, “The comprehensive study of one person is more useful than the extensive investigation, in many people, of an isolated psychological function”. This aspect has been taken into account in this book to carry out extensive study of complex psychological function through the examples of one person. These studies help in understanding the complex nature of human beings. For any adult development, the author talks about the necessity of a resultant change in the behaviour, thoughts and feelings. According to the author, the key to bring about positive changes in oneself lies in the process of unlearning and not the process of learning. This book is a sincere endeavour to make the process of unlearning simple and easy.

In this fast changing world, it is important that we unlearn things before we try to learn something new or else it will result in contradictions and confusions, which may later become the biggest obstacles for futuristic sustainable ideas. To substantiate his views, cites the famous scientist Albert Einstein, who says, “The thinking that we have has brought us to where we have already been. In order to go somewhere else, we must think in a different way”. This book helps in finding different ways of thinking through the process of unlearning.

Just few generations back, people were not literate enough. With the evolution and development of ideas on literacy, the craze for learning has increased by leaps and bounds. Now, when we have had enough of learning, the author speaks about the necessity of unlearning to achieve success in this age of information, communication and entertainment. In the era of Google and YouTube, it remains a challenge to manage information. Unlearning becomes a simple option or choice to meet this challenge. This book, which is the first in-depth research work, provides tools to achieve excellence.

This book has taken a novel approach to self development by addressing the core issue of Unlearning by unfolding the mysteries of the fine art of Unlearning. The author articulates seven critical factors to analyse the method of unlearning: Thinking and Action in search of Truth; Aspirations - Goal of life; Sex-Human Relationships; God -

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Ethics and behaviour; Parents - As you Sow, so you Reap; Godfather - Sense of Security; and Wisdom Domain - Knowledge Source.

Each of these factors has been elaborated in detail in separate chapters. The treatment of each topic is fairly rigorous apparently backed by intensive study by the author. Many complex issues have been explained with the help of real life stories. Many new concepts have emerged out of these discussions to understand human development in a better way. Each chapter ends with a definite, workable step by step suggested action plan, which makes it a lot more useful for those readers intending to use the philosophy and the process of Unlearning for more relevant learning. The steps indicated in each chapter are simple and practical.

According to the author, it is essential for an individual to create a wisdom domain. This has to be a continuous and changing process. Time and situation change so rapidly that we have to be very dynamic. We must create a wisdom domain to take correct, wise and timely decisions in our life. The author talks about many day-to-day activities, which, he thinks, need to be sorted out for better lifestyle. The source for knowledge needs to be created. The 21<sup>st</sup> century will belong to those who have guts to create innovative wisdom source. It is hard to question the accepted wisdom, no matter how questionable that “wisdom” may be in the present day life, the author adds.

Today, when we talk about globalization, global attitude and global mindset, there is inherent contradiction when we harbour regional feeling and mindset, which tell upon our global attitude and outlook. Instead of regional thinking, the author calls upon the people to become global citizens, to think globally, to act globally and to celebrate global festivals like Independence Day, birthday, anniversary, Valentine’s Day, Father’s Day, Mother’s Day etc. It is imperative, the author adds, to unlearn our regional mentality and traditions to enhance our global tendencies and expand our horizon globally.

The chapter on “Learn to Unlearn” is particularly interesting. Here the process has been described in a very methodical manner which

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provides an insight into the whole process of Unlearning. In order to unlearn, one needs to understand the dynamics of unlearning. Adequately supported by graphics and mathematical models, the chapter provides a clear cut and comprehensive understanding on this subject. A very systematic approach for unlearning and learning based on different situations and aspirations has been worked out in this chapter. Besides, several parameters of the unlearning process have been enlisted.

The problems faced by individuals cannot be solved at or from the same level. The level has to be changed or upgraded before reaching out solutions. Various growth cycles have been prepared and explained and means and methods including “intelligent sacrifices” have been enumerated in the ninth chapter. It is explained that how intelligent sacrifices can be helpful in the process of unlearning. The two categories of people like “Thrust” and “Slog” have been introduced in this chapter, which explain various kinds of people living in modern society. The author has described that how a person behaves in the absence of the control of seven critical factors in life.

The author feels that one who unlearns the old things and gets accustomed to new things easily and swiftly, achieves a success. To justify his claim, the author says that in the last century, the country which unlearned old things faster and learned new things immediately, became developed nations. They exploited new innovations and during Industrial Revolution, they generated wealth. However, many countries of the world were left behind, which could not dare to unlearn old customs, ethos, traditions, cultures and ideas and so far remained developing nations or underdeveloped ones.

The final chapter of this book throws light on the current world affairs. The author explains the steps to achieve a prosperous and progressive individual, society and nation through the process of systematic unlearning. The steps enumerated here are simple to understand and easy to follow. It is very important that we simplify tough ideas and plan our action according to data and statistics. This is

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not a simple task. It can not be achieved through development, supplementing resources or subsidies. By unlearning stiff regulations and archaic policies, the best fruits of growth can be provided to one and all. Besides, there is an urgent need to do away with the social maladies like corruption, illiteracy and ignorance, which have eaten the very vitality of the society. Taking the example of India, which is still reeling in socio-economic crises despite one and half decade of economic growth, the author focuses on the common people and their all round development. He prescribes a people-centric development process to eliminate poverty and other socio-economic challenges.

The book is written in a very simple style which is very reader friendly. It adds great value to the new-age literature through its uniqueness, frank and forthright exposition and a very thought provoking matter. That the book takes up non-traditional issues in a very sincere manner makes it a lot more useful than the normal genre of books on self development. As unlearning has to be integrated in all learning systems, it is important that the systematic unlearning processes explained in the book are considered for being introduced in the course of innovative thinking.

**Mahesh Ranjan Debata**



## Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation

The Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation (HRCF) is a national level multi-disciplinary research, cultural and development facilitative organisation set up by eminent area specialists, environmentalists, development experts, literateurs and cultural personalities, which has been registered as a non-governmental and non-profit body under the Indian Societies Registration Act, 1860. Founded in 1989 at New Delhi, the Foundation has been initiating, coordinating and promoting the systematic and



micro-study of various issues pertaining to the Himalayan and Trans-Himalayan regions in South and Central Asia or parts thereof, connected with its environment, biodiversity, regional development, human resources, history and culture, art and literature, social structures, economics, human rights, peace processes, geopolitics etc. The objective is to make a scientific appraisal of the issues confronting the Himalayan and adjoining region and to make specific policy-oriented studies and need-based recommendations as the means to promote the human, educational and economic advancement of the peoples of the region besides preserving and enriching their ethno-cultural, literary and historical heritage. The Foundation has evolved as a vibrant national centre specialised on the Hindu Kush-Himalayan and trans-Himalayan region in South and Central Asia.

The Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation completed sixteen years of its fruitful existence in the year 2006. During this period numerous environmentalists, academics, areas specialists, cultural personalities, regional development experts, population and settlement analysts, tourism, adventure and communication professionals and social activists have associated themselves with the Himalayan Foundation.

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The Foundation and its members have been involved in multi-faceted activities such as organising seminars, workshops, group discussions, lectures, field studies, cultural programmes/exhibitions, drama and musical festivals, publication of quarterly journal, monographs and books. In recognition of its contribution, the United Nations accredited in July 1995 the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation as “NGO in Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC, United Nations,” thereby bringing it at par with well established international bodies and providing it access to the United Nations and its agencies/bodies.

The Aims and objectives of the Foundation as described in Article 3 of its Memorandum of Association are:

- i) To initiate, co-ordinate and promote the study of various problems of the Himalayan and trans-Himalayan region from the Hindu Kush in the northwest to Arunachal Pradesh in the east and also in the adjoining region of South and Central Asia, connected with and in regard to its environment, geography, living and non-living resources, art and culture, history, society, economies, geopolitics, human rights, etc.
- ii) To take all possible steps for promoting the cause of the preservation and promotion of cultural, literary and historical heritage of the Himalayan States of India.
- iii) To encourage contacts and exchange of knowledge and culture of the Himalayas and adjoining areas, with a view to promote national integration and social justice.
- iv) To undertake, organise and facilitate the holding of conferences, seminars, lectures, cultural shows and workshops from time to time.
- v) To sponsor member researchers to different literary, academic or technical institutions in the country or abroad for study, training or undertaking specific research projects.
- vi) To provide both financial, technical and intellectual assistance to individuals or groups of individuals engaged or interested in taking up specific research projects.
- vii) To cater to the needs of writers, research scholars and



institutions both government and academic, by providing information, documentation and reference services.

- viii) To undertake, facilitate and provide for the publication of Occasional Papers/ Monographs, a research journal, newsletter and also of standard works, original texts, translations, commentaries or even the manuscripts completed by scholars all bearing relevance to the aims and objects of the Foundation.
- ix) To take up the task of identification, acquisition, editing and publication of old records or manuscripts which would throw light on the history, literature and cultural heritage of the Himalayan and adjoining regions.
- x) To establish an appropriate organisational network or chapters in different parts of the country or even abroad and to strive for providing all possible amenities including the library and hostel facilities to scholars interested in promoting the cause of the Foundation.

### **SEMINARS/CONFERENCES**

The Foundation has organised following National and International Seminars:

(1) **Society and Culture in the Himalayas**

Three-day National Seminar held on 9-11 December 1991 at School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. The Seminar attracted wide participation from specialists and literateurs from the Himalayan states of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

(2) **Emergence of New Order in Central Asia**

Two-day International Seminar held on 21-22 January 1993 at School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

(3) **Cultural Heritage of Western Himalayas and its Future**

Two-day International Seminar held on 23-24 March 1994 at India International Centre and School of Social Sciences,

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Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi. More than one hundred delegates from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Universities of Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu, Kashmir, Nainital, Bangalore, Vishwabharti and the Asiatic Society, Calcutta and a number of literateurs, writers and artists belonging to the region participated.

(4) **Human Rights: A View from Geneva**

One-day Seminar at India International Centre, New Delhi on 2 May 1995.

(5) **India and Central Asia in Time and Space**

Four-day International Conference organised in collaboration with Indian Council of Cultural Relations at India International Centre, New Delhi, 17-20 December 1995. Twenty three eminent scholars from Central Asian Republics, Russia and Mongolia participated in the Seminar.

(6) **Linguistic Heritage of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh,**  
Panel discussion (at India International Centre, New Delhi on 4 March 1996).

(7) **Refugee Situation in India**

One day Seminar at India International Centre, New Delhi on 13 May 1996.

(8) **Approaches to Conflict Resolution in South and Central Asia**

Seminar at Palais-des-Nations, Geneva on 22 March 1997.

(9) **Central Asia on the Threshold of 21st Century**

Lecture by Prof. Turkkaya Ataov of Turkey followed by panel discussion on 20 May 1997 at India International Centre, New Delhi.

(10) **Eurasian Landbridge: Imperatives for India**

Lecture by Helga La Rouche, President, Schiller Institute, Germany followed by panel discussion organised at India International Centre, New Delhi on 2 October 1997.

(11) **Hans Christian Ostro Rememberd:** Organised a composite programme on 7 October 1997 at Abhinav Theatre, Jammu in

memory of the Norwegian theatre director Hans Christian Ostro who was killed by the terrorists in Kashmir:

- (i) Staging of a play *Andha Yug* written by noted writer Dharamvir Bharti and directed by eminent Kashmiri theatre director Mushtaq Kak
  - (ii) Seminar on **Impact of Terrorism on Society and Culture.**
- (12) **Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the 21st Century and Threats to Regional Security and Stability: Imperatives for India**

Panel discussion held at India International Centre, New Delhi on 9 December 1997.

- (13) **Hans Christian Ostro Remembered:** Organised a special programme on 10 March 1998 at India International Centre auditorium, New Delhi in memory of the Norwegian theatre director, Hans Christian Ostro, who was killed by the terrorists in Kashmir:
- (i) Video screening of Hans Ostro's work in theatre/dance in India and Norway,
  - (ii) Unveiling of a portrait of Hans Ostro (made by Suman Gupta of Jammu) by Mr. Arne Walther, the Ambassador of Norway in India,
  - (iii) Symposium on **Fundamentalism and Terrorism: Threat to Culture and Art,**
  - (iv) Staging of a play *Pratibimb* (Reflections) written by Mahesh Elkunchwar and directed by Mushtaq Kak.

(14) **Mercenaries: Challenge to Democratic Order**

Seminar at Palais des Nations, Geneva on 30 March 1998.

(15) **Ethno-Cultural Heritage of Gujjars**

Three day National Seminar at Jammu University, Jammu, 8-10 May 1999 organised in collaboration with the National Museum of Mankind (Bhopal) and Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust, Jammu. The Seminar-cum-Exhibition consolidated and projected the distinct ethno-cultural heritage and life style of the Gujjars and Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir, analysed their

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problems and deliberated upon the possible solutions. A unique feature of this Seminar was the enthusiastic participation of Hindu, Sikh and Muslim Gujjar representatives from Himachal Pradesh.

### **(16) Child Labour and Rehabilitation: Some Issues**

Two day National Seminar/Workshop at India International Centre, New Delhi, organised on 30-31 July 1999 with the support of ILO (Delhi). More than 100 NGO representatives, social scientists and population experts participated in this Seminar. The Seminar provided a forum to government agencies, policy planners, experts, academics, manufacturers, educational planners, NFE teachers, released children, NGOs and social activists to come together and share their experiences and views. Representatives of UN agencies like ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, UNESCO, National Human Rights Commission, Ministry of Labour, Textiles and Education, Giri Institute of Development, Institute of Public Opinion, Delhi.

### **(17) The Kargil Conflict: Dimensions and Responses**

One day Seminar at India International Centre, New Delhi on 2 August 1999.

### **(18) The Afghanistan Crisis: Problems and Prospects of Peace**

Three-day International Seminar held in collaboration with Indian Council of Social Science Research at India International Centre, New Delhi on 19-21 November 2000. Prominent strategic planners/area specialists from India and abroad participated.

### **(19) Fifty Years of Conflict in Kashmir, Ladakh, Baltistan and Aksai Chin**

Seminar Organised in collaboration with Indian Council of Social Science Research and a Film presentation on the Kashmir Himalayas titled *The Siachen Conflict (1949-2000)*, directed and produced by Serbjeet Singh at India International Centre, New Delhi on 22 January 2001.

**(20) Cultural Heritage of Indian Himalayas**

Three-day International Seminar was organised by the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation in collaboration with Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manava Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, 3 to 5 March 2001. Prominent academics, social scientists, scholars, literateurs, artists and writers belonging to the Himalayan region as well as other parts of the country participated in this three-day Seminar.

**(21) Bamiyan: Challenge to World Heritage**

Two-day International Seminar in collaboration with the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), Leh, at India International Centre (17-18 September 2001).

**(22) Cultural Heritage of Jammu and Kashmir**

Three-day National Seminar-cum-Exhibition held from 29 February to 2 March 2004 at Abhinav Theatre Complex, Jammu.

**(23) Bangladesh Today**

Round Table Discussion organised at India International Centre, New Delhi on 22 December 2005.

**(24) Energy and Transport Linkages between Central Asia and South Asia**

Three-day International Seminar in collaboration with Central Asian Studies Programme, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi held on 25-27 November 2006 at ICSSR, New Delhi.

**(25) Religion, Culture and Harmony in South Asia**

Organised a Seminar in association with Interfaith International at Palais des Nations, Geneva on 23 March 2007.

**DOCUMENTARIES**

- (1) **Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir**, 30 minute Documentary Film (supported by the Department of Culture and Tourism, Government of India) completed in 2000.
- (2) **Architectural Heritage of Temples of Jammu**, 30 minute Documentary Film (supported by the Department of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture,) completed in 2002.
- (3) **Shrines and Pilgrimages of Kashmir**, 40 minute Documentary Film (supported by the Ministry of Culture) completed in 2006.

**EXHIBITIONS**

- (1) **The Colossal Buddhas and the Ancient Buddhist Heritage of Bamiyan**  
Six-day Exhibition (15-20 September 2001) of unique photographs paintings, lithographs etc. organised in collaboration with the Archeological Survey of India at the India International Centre Art Gallery (Annexe) on the theme *The Colossal Buddhas and the Ancient Buddhist Heritage of Bamiyan*.
- (2) **The Mountain Mysteries**  
Organised an exhibition of paintings by well-known Indian artist Suman Gupta entitled *The Mountain Mysteries* at the Palais des Nations, United Nations Office at Geneva (Switzerland) from 5 to 16 August 2002. The exhibition which was presented under the patronage of the Mission of Mongolia in Geneva to mark the International Year of Mountains, was attended by several diplomats, UN Officials, delegates participating at the UN Sub-Commission for Human Rights, art critics and art lovers from Geneva and adjoining cities. The exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, the Director General of the UNOG at the Palais des Nations.

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**JOURNAL**

**Himalayan and Central Asian Studies**

(Quarterly journal being published regularly since 1997)

Editor : Prof. K. Warikoo

Assistant Editor : Dr. Sharad K. Soni

The Journal is devoted to the study of various issues pertaining to the Himalayan and trans-Himalayan region in South and Central Asia or parts thereof, connected with its environment, resources, history, art and culture, language and literature, demography, social structure, communication, tourism, regional development, governance, human rights, geopolitics etc.

While the principal concern of the journal is on its focal area, i.e. from Afghanistan to Myanmar including the Central Asian Republics of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan; China; Mongolia; Nepal; Bhutan and the Indian Himalayan states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttaranchal and North East states; papers with the broad sweep addressing environmental, social, cultural, economic, geopolitical and human rights issues are also covered.

The objective is to make a scientific appraisal of the issues confronting the Himalayan and adjoining region in South and Central Asia or parts thereof, and to make specific policy oriented studies and need based recommendations as the means to promote the human, educational and economic advancement of the peoples of the region besides preserving and enriching their ethno-cultural, literary and historical heritage. Promotion of human rights, social justice, peace, harmony and national integration are the other key areas in which the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation has been active.

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*Contributions for Subscriptions/Publication of articles and books for review and any enquiries should be addressed to:*

**Prof. K. Warikoo**

Editor and Secretary General (Hony.)

Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation

B-6/86, Safdarjung Enclave

New Delhi-110029 (India)

Tel.: +91-11-26742763, 41651969

Email: kwarikoo@gmail.com

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**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PUBLICATION AND ANY ENQUIRIES  
SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO :**

**Prof. K. WARIKOO**

*Editor and Secretary General*

Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation

B-6/86, Safdarjung Enclave

New Delhi - 110029 (India)

Tel. : 0091-11-26742763, 0091-11-41651969

Fax : 0091-11-26742843

E-mail: [kwarikoo@gmail.com](mailto:kwarikoo@gmail.com)

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**HIMALAYAN RESEARCH AND CULTURAL FOUNDATION**

Post Box-10541, Jawaharlal Nehru University Post Office, New Delhi-110067 (India)

Central Office : B-6/86, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029 (India)

Tele : 0091-11-26742763, 0091-11-41651969, Fax : 0091-11-26742843

E-mail: [kwarikoo@gmail.com](mailto:kwarikoo@gmail.com) Website: [www.himalayanresearch.org](http://www.himalayanresearch.org)