

Survey of the Series Folklore Monuments of the Peoples of Siberia and the Far East

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The Russian Academy of Sciences series *Pamiatniki Fol'klora Narodov Sibiri i Dal'nego Vostoka* [Folklore Monuments of the Peoples of Siberia and the Far East] has survived the fiscal and reorganizational ambiguities of the post-Soviet era, and is progressing well with sixteen volumes now in print. This survey covers volumes 9-16, published 1995-97. For volumes 1-8, published 1990-1994, please see Dauenhauer 1995a, 1995b, 1996a, 1996b for review articles which contain essentially the same information, but have been edited for different readerships.

The series is a project of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Siberian Branch, Institute of Philology, and is being published by Nauka in Novosibirsk. We should appreciate at the outset that the success of the series in these difficult times is due in no small degree to the administrative skills (above and beyond their outstanding achievement as folklorists) of the general series editors and founders, A. P. Derevianko (editor-in-chief), V. M. Gatsak and A. B. Soktoev (assistant editors), and the other members of the editorial board. It is with great sadness that I report the passing last year of our friend and colleague, the Buriat folklorist and assistant series editor, Aleksandr Badmaevich Soktoev, Director of the Folklore Department and Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences. For many of us, the *Pamiatniki* series will not only provide lasting textual monuments and documentation of the folklore genres of Siberia and the Far East, but will also serve as monuments to all the tradition bearers and folklorists whose lives and work helped make it a success. Also to be commended are the series editorial board and all those who contributed to the individual volumes; for reasons of space, I have noted only the managing editors and compilers here. Other important contributors are identified at the front of each volume, as are the many local and regional organizations and funding sources which rallied to support the series.

My reviews treat the series as two sets of eight volumes each. This is the way that the volumes published so far have appeared and been distributed. Editorial remarks in the most recent volumes make it appear that the new organization of the series will be in two cycles of ten volumes each. As an overview, I will list all twenty volumes in abbreviated English translation; then make some general statistical and descriptive observations; and then turn to brief, but more detailed discussion of volumes 9-16.

Cycle One. 1) Evenk Heroic Narratives (1990), 2) Buriat Heroic Epic of Young Alamzhi Mergen (1991), 3) Russian Epic Poetry of Siberia and the Far East (1991), 4) Yakut Heroic Epic of

Kyys Debeliie (1993), 5) Buriat Magic Tales (1993), 6) Russian Tales of Siberia and the Far East: Magic and Animal Tales (1993), 7) Russian Tales of Siberia and the Far East: Legendary and Domestic (1993), 8) Tuvan Folk Tales (1994), 9) Traditions, Legends, and Myths of the Sakha (Yakuts) (1995), 10) The Yakut Heroic Epic of Mighty Er Sogotokh (1996). I note here that my reviews of volumes 1-8 have a different order for volumes 4-7, all published in 1993 and without volume numbers assigned. Actual volume numbers printed on the spine and series title page begin only in 1996 with volume 10. I am sure that all librarians and bibliographers will join me in welcoming this tiny but important feature of volume numbering as a favorable change in the series design.

Cycle Two. 11) Nanai Folklore: Ningman, Siokhor, Telungu (1996), 12) Tuvan Heroic Narratives of Khunan-Kara, and Buktug-Kirish, Bora-Shelej (1997), 13) Russian Calendar and Ritual Folklore of Siberia and the Far East: Songs, Charms, and Spells (1997), 14) Russian Lyric Songs of Siberia and the Far East (1997), 15) The Altaic Heroic Narratives of Ochy Bala and Khan-Altyn (1997), 16) The Khakass Heroic Epic of Ai-Khuuchin (1997). As of this survey, four volumes of the second cycle are still forthcoming: Udegei Folklore, Shor Heroic Narratives, Russian Family and Ritual Folklore, and Dolgan Folklore.

It is no exaggeration to say that each volume in the series is a gem. Each is different and exciting in its own unique way, with appeal to different readers; not all volumes will equally interest all readers. Eventually the projected sixty volumes will cover all languages and folklore genres of the people of Siberia and the Far East, both indigenous and colonial. Volumes published and projected to date are certainly representative.

The breakdown by language is: Russian - 5, Yakut - 3, Buriat - 2, Tuva - 2, and 1 each for Evenk, Nanai, Altai, and Khakass. The breakdown by genre is: Epic - 8, tales - 4, lyric songs - 1, miscellaneous songs, charms, spells - 1, and 2 volumes featuring more than one genre. More Russian genres are forthcoming. Of the sixteen volumes, half present epic and a quarter publish folk tales of all categories or specifically magic tales. The vast majority of the material in each volume was previously unpublished.

As some of the languages other than Russian may be unfamiliar, some background might be helpful. Besides Russian, the languages published and projected in the two cycles to date belong to the extensive Altaic family, and the indigenous languages represent all three branches: Mongolian, Tungusic, and Turkic. Buriat, one of the major languages of Siberia, with 240,000 speakers, is closely related to Mongolian, so close, in fact, that the two dialects of Siberian Buriat are as distant from each

other as either is from standard Mongolian. The Tungusic branch of Altaic consists of many small languages spread over Russia, China, and Mongolia. Evenk, formerly called Tungusic, is the largest of these, with about 30,000 speakers. Nanai, spoken around Khabarovsk and formerly called Gol'd, is the largest Southern Tungusic ethnic group in Russia, with about 2,000 speakers. Dersu Uzala, subject of the Japanese-Soviet film by that name based on the writings of Vladimir Arsenyev, was a Nanai hunter. Udegei, the subject of one of the forthcoming volumes, is a Southern Tungusic language spoken on the Amur River by perhaps no more than 100 people and is one of the many endangered languages of the circumpolar north. Thus, the series represents not only the major ethnic populations of the region such as Russians, Buriats, Yakuts, Tuvans, and others, but also the smaller groups, those designated in the Soviet period as "Northern Peoples," including the Evenk, Nanai, and Udegei.

The most widespread of the Altaic languages is the Turkic family with seven languages in Siberia. These include Yakut (the new ethnonym of which is Sakha) with 230,000 speakers, Tuvan (99,000), Altai (39,000), Khakass. Volumes of the lore of all of these people have already been published. Shor and Dolgan are part of the Turkic family and volumes of their folklore are forthcoming while the volume for Tofa, another Turkic language, is projected. Dolgan, with about 5,000 speakers on the Taymyr Peninsula on the Arctic Ocean, is the northern-most and one of the smallest Turkic languages. It is virtually in opposition to Turkish both geographically and in terms of number of speakers since Turkish is spoken by some 50 million people and its homeland is located on the Mediterranean. In between, of course, are the major Turkic languages of Central Asia, with their rich epic traditions.

The complete projected series also includes at least one volume each of the Uralic languages of Western Siberia, the Paleo-Siberian languages, and Asiatic Eskimo. The series projects one volume each for twenty three ethnic groups (including the Shor, Udegei, and Dolgan in press) and two to seven volumes each for ten other ethnic groups, all of which have made their first appearance, except for Nivkh and Even. We look forward to the completion of the second cycle and to the launching of the third.

With the exception of the Russian volumes, each is bilingual, with the indigenous language on the left page and a facing Russian translation on the right. The Russian volumes have a facing title page in English. Each book features an elaborate scholarly apparatus including detailed introductory essays on history of scholarship, folklore tradition, cultural context, musical style, life and time of the performers, annotations to the texts and variants, a bibliography, maps, ethnographic, and historical and biographical photographs. Attractively hardbound in blue and white, each book comes as part of

a boxed set that includes a small 33 1/3 record, except for the Nanai volume, which has a CD. The sound recordings are amazing and fascinating. For those of us who have worked for years with "oral literature" but are still more comfortable with the transcribed texts, it can be an instructive (not to mention humbling) experience to follow the text as the singer performs.

Volumes 9 and 10 of the first cycle have summaries in both Russian and English, but the second cycle has summaries only in English, most of which are 4 pages long. The English summaries are helpful and generally well done, but can be puzzling in places, so it would also be nice to keep the Russian summaries, as they are useful for checking items that do not translate well into English. The copyright page of each volume features a useful, one-paragraph abstract in fine print. The volumes are all Academy Editions published by the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences through its publishing house, Nauka, which is described in several different ways on the title pages as the series progresses: *Sibirskaiia izdatel'skaia firma RAN* (vols. 9-11), then *Sibirskoe predpriiatie RAN* (vols. 12-16), but with the fuller *Sibirskoe izdatel'sko-poligraficheskoe i knigotorgovoe predpriiatie RAN* on the copyright page of vols. 15 and 16.

Vol. 9. 1995. N. V. Emel'ianov, Managing Editor; N. A. Alekseev, N. V. Emel'ianov, V. T. Petrov, compilers. *Predaniia, legendy, i mify Sakha (Iakutov)* [Traditions, legends, and myths of the Sakha (Yakuts)]. 400 pp. ISBN 5- 02-030901-X.

Volume 9 is devoted to the non-magic-tale prose of the Sakha (Yakut) people. Of the 56 myths and traditions present, forty-one are published for the first time. These historical traditions, legends, stories, and myths are grouped into three cycles. The oldest treat the heroes Omogoy Baari and Elley Bootur (Er Sogotokh Elley), who are the forefathers and ancestors of the later kin and clan groups. Events deal with the migration of this far north Turkic group from the south to the Lena River and with the institution of major cultural traditions such as *kumys* offerings. These describe the Sakha cosmology: a universe consisting of three worlds, with humans in the middle, good spirits above, and evil below. The myths and stories are about totemic animals and birds, and about shamans and their spirits. This information is codified and survives in the epics (*olongkho*) and in the rituals and songs of the *ysyakh*, the *kumys* festival. The second cycle treats the historical figure Tygyn Toyon and other fathers of the more recent lineages who lived at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the time of the arrival of the Russians. The third cycle is associated with the Robin Hood-like Vasily Manchaary, a folk hero and fighter against oppression. The four-page English and Russian summaries give plot outlines.

Vol. 10. 1996. N. A. Alekseev and N. V. Emel'ianov, Eds. *Iakutskii geroicheskii epos*

Moguchii Er Sogotokh [The Yakut heroic epic of Mighty Er Sogotokh]. 440 pp. ISBN 5-02-030900-1.

Volume 10 features the 6,300-plus line epic (*oilongkho*) "Mighty Er Sogotokh" (or "Er Sogotokh the Brave") as performed by V. O. Karataev (1926-1990). (The version appearing here is the 1986 recording; Karataev's performance of this epic was also recorded in 1972 and 1982). The epic is extremely popular among the Yakut (Sakha) and neighboring Dolgans, and thirteen complete and fragmentary recorded variants are extant, of which Karataev's is considered the most complete and artistically perfect. An interesting point is that the hero's horse not only speaks and gives the sage advice one expects of horses in epics from this region, but the singer reserves a special melody or leitmotif for the songs of the horse. There are many similarities between this epic (and Yakut epic in general) and neighboring traditions of Siberia and Central Asia. For example, there are similarities to the Altai song *Maadai Khara*, the Buriat *Alamzhi Mergen*, and the Kirghiz *Manas*. There are magical episodes of shape shifting by the hero, as well as more standard epic themes of weapons and arming, recitation of names, saddling the horse, the journey, battles and tests along the way, winning the bride, returning home, victory over rivals, and a happy life in the motherland. One of the introductory essays is by noted ethnomusicologist E. E. Alekseev. The book is well illustrated with ethnographic and biographical photos, and the sound recording features the performer from whom the published text was recorded. The style varies from song to recitative, with alliteration and parallel structure and lines usually seven or eight syllables long. Unlike the epic tradition of other Turkic and Mongol peoples, the Yakut epics are performed without instrumental accompaniment.

Vol. 11. 1996. E. P. Lebedeva, L. E. Fetishova, Managing Editors; N. B. Kile, compiler. *Nanaiskii fol'klor: ningman, siokhor, telungu* [Nanai folklore: Epics, legends, and tales]. 478 pp. ISBN 5-02-029761-5.

Volume 11 is the first collection of Nanai folklore prose genres ever published. Recorded in ten villages in the Khabarovsk region, sixty-five of the sixty-eight texts in the book are published for the first time. Nanai, spoken around Khabarovsk and in the Amur River basin, and called Gol'd until 1930, is the largest Southern Tungusic ethnic group in Russia, with about 2,000 speakers. The ethnonym Nanai means "People of this land." The three featured genres do not have strict boundaries, and seem to be distinguished by style as much as by content. *Ningman* are the epics and related narratives. They are not metrical, but are told in a stylized, chanted language, with much use of hyperbole, simile, and parallel structure. They often include elements of totemism, shape shifting, and the primordial kinship of humans and animals. *Telungu* are myth and legend; the style is closer to

normal spoken language, without hyperbole and simile. The term implies something that happened in the past. In these there may be vestiges of totemism, animism, and shamanism. *Siokhor* are borrowed tales. All stories are performed to bring luck. *Telungu* and songs are performed by day, and *ningman* in the evening, when evil spirits are most active. Stories often deal with hunting or fishing and luck comes from the kinship between animals and spirits. A common motif of the *ningman* is the blood feud. The hero is often an abandoned or orphaned child who gradually achieves manhood, avenges his parents who had been killed or taken captive, and restores order. Many of the *ningmans* feature warrior women (also found in the epic traditions of the Yakut, Buriat, Altai, Tuvan, and Khakass). These women are often the sister or bride of the male hero, who is in killed or incapacitated some way. The texts in the book include eighteen by one woman tradition bearer who specializes in women warrior stories. The epic *Khalaton Mokhon* is published for the first time, with excerpts on the enclosed CD.

Vol. 12. 1997. V. M. Gatsak, Managing Editor. C. M. Orus-ool, compiler. *Tuvinskie geroicheskie skazaniia "Khunan-Kara," "Boktug-Kirish," "Bora-Shelei"* [Tuvan heroic narratives of "Khunan-Kara" and "Boktug-Kirish, Bora-Shelei"] 584 pp. ISBN 5-02-030899-4.

Volume 12 is a scholarly edition of the two best Tuvan heroic narratives performed by the foremost storytellers O. Mannaia and O. Chanchy-Khoo. The first, "*Khunan-Kara*," was transcribed in 1959 from a tape-recorded live performance. The second, "*Boktug-Kirish, Bora-Shelei*," 6,060 lines, named after the brother and sister heroes, is widely known and exists in seventeen variants. The notes in the volume compare the version selected to the archival variants, and the introductory essays address the linguistic, literary, and musical style of Tuvan epic, as well as the history of scholarship. The heroic narratives have a wealth of ancient beliefs, sayings, charms, proverbs, and other folk wisdom and traditions woven into the main plot. There are two types of performance: recitative (without singing), and vocal, but performed without musical accompaniment.

Tuvan epic is interesting because of the long history of documentation both by outsiders and indigenous scholars, beginning with Radlov in the nineteenth century. As a type, Tuvan oral epic patterns generally coincide with those of the neighboring Turkic groups of Southern Siberia: the Khakass, Altai, and Shor. Subjects typically involve the marriage of the hero (*bogatyř*) and his fight with foreign khans. Also common are three plot types combining different generations: grandfather-grandson, father-son, and the bogatyř himself. An effort was made to include widely differing examples in the Tuvan volumes of the series. "*Khunan-Kara*" is more ancient and mythological. "*Boktug-Kirish, Bora-Shelei*" is the only Tuvan epic with a woman warrior as hero; the

plot is that she saves her brother. It shares much with the style of Mongol and other Turkic epic of Siberia: repeated formulas and themes, color epithets, hyperbole, alliteration, parallel construction, shape shifting, and battles with evil. Lines are usually of six to eight syllables long. It is interesting to note that Tuva is famous for throat singing, and Tuvan travelling groups and CDs have recently become popular in the West, but the sample record with Volume 12 does not include throat singing, which is presumably not used in epic singing, or at least in the three performance styles demonstrated. The book is well-illustrated with photos of collectors, performers, and ethnographic objects.

Vol. 13. 1997. T. G. Leonova, Managing Editor. F. F. Bolonev, M. N. Mel'nikov, N. V. Leonova, compilers. *Russkii kalendar'no-obriadovyi fol'klor Sibiri i Dal'nego Vostoka: Pesni, Zagovory* [The Russian Calendar and Ritual Folklore of Siberia and the Far East: Songs, Charms and Spells]. 605 pp. ISBN 5-02-030895-1.

Volume 13 is the fullest collection ever published of Russian calendar and ritual folklore of Siberia, featuring texts gathered in the field, from archives, and from old and rare publications. The work of many collectors from the 1830s to the 1990s, this volume is a gold mine for Slavic folklorists and will probably be of greater professional interest to SEEFA members than the non-Russian volumes. The book includes songs of all cycles of the folk calendar. There are 354 texts of calendar ritual, and over 370 spells, most published for the first time, and others for the first time since 1917. The folk calendar is a product of the syncretism of old agrarian cycles and the Orthodox liturgical year. The book includes texts from Christmas, New Year's, *Maslenitsa* (Cheese-fare Sunday) Planting and Pentecost, Midsummer and John the Baptist, and harvest. Many of the Orthodox traditions are unfamiliar to Western Christianity, and some of the folk traditions are not even "mainstream" Orthodox, but local and regional. Christmas folklore includes "starring," or house to house caroling following a star, singing hymns and carols called "*koliadki*" or "*koliady*."

As a reviewer's note: the Siberian "starring" tradition was carried onward to Alaska, where it is alive and well in most Orthodox communities. The Carpathian tradition was taken to Pennsylvania. There is also a Central European starring tradition called "Quempas" singing. Also worthy of folklore and ethnomusicology research are the Alaskan Orthodox hymn melodies that are not mainstream Moscow chant, but seem linked with Siberia and the Carpathians.

Maslenitsa (Cheese-fare Sunday, the last day for eating dairy products before Lent) has no counterpart in Western tradition, but meat-fare Sunday parallels Mardi-Gras and Carnival as the last binge before lent. Ivan Kupala parallels the Scandinavian midsummer celebrations associated with the Feast of the Birth of St. John the Baptist, June 24. The charms and spells are arranged by

subject such as good luck in hunting and farming, and warding off a toothache. Each genre has an introductory article, and the volume is well-annotated, indexed, and cross referenced to other collections. There are musical notations, and notes on style, photos of the singers, and, of course, the accompanying record.

Vol. 14. 1997. Iu. I. Smirnov, Managing Editor. S. I. Krasnoshtanov, V. S. Levashov, V. M. Shchurov, compilers. *Russkie liricheskie pesni Sibiri i Dal'nego Vostoka* [Russian lyric songs of Siberia and the Far East]. 524 pp. ISBN 5-02-030896-X.

Volume 14 is another gem and gold mine for Slavic folklorists. This is the largest, most complete, scholarly collection of non-ritual lyric songs from Russian settlements in Siberia and the Far East, from the Irtysh to Sakhalin, compiled by generations of folklorists from the 1830s to 1990s. It features 520 song texts arranged by type: peasant songs; choral, dance and play; cossack and soldier; convict, deportee, and prison songs; workers and miners, and wanderers. There are essays and notes on style, variations, and a history of scholarship. The volume is well indexed and cross referenced to other collections. The characteristics of Siberian songs are discussed, comparing them to those of European Russia, noting where the tradition is innovative and where conservative. The selection is designed to capture and convey the spirit of Russian life in Siberia as reflected in the lyric songs. This is a kind of lyric song encyclopedia, with representative musical transcriptions published for the first time. There are interesting historical and ethnographic photos, and the record features representative local styles.

Vol. 15. V. M. Gatsak, Managing Editor. *Altaiskie geroicheskie skazaniia "Ochi-Bala," "Kan-Altyn"* [The Altaic heroic narratives of "Ochi Bala" and "Khan-Altyn"]. 668 pp. ISBN 5-02-030897-8.

Volume 15 is the longest in the series. It is significant in that it features two monumental epic songs performed by contemporary masters of a living and healthy oral tradition: "*Ochy Bala*," 3,497 lines, sung by Aleksei Kalkin, and "*Kan-Altyn*," 4,275 lines, by Tabar Chachiiakov. I must confess as reviewer that I am more personally attached to this volume than the others, because I had the privilege of meeting the singer A. Kalkin and hearing him perform during the course of a meeting of the series editorial board to which I was invited in Gorno-Altai in 1991. I subsequently translated the conclusion of one of his fragments of "*Ochy Bala*."

Aleksei Kalkin (b. 1925) is one of the best known epic singers, called "*kaichi*" in Altai, after the term "*kai*," meaning throat singing. Kalkin performs in this ancient style, accompanying himself on the topshuur, a stringed instrument. He begins his epic with an appeal to his instrument, and to the

muse. "*Ochy Bala*" [Younger Sister] is the best and most impressive example of the woman warrior figure in Altai epic. She defends her land and people from an evil invading khan and his son. She does battle with them and various monsters along the way. Meanwhile, her horse battles a mythological son of a bull from the underworld.

"*Kan-Altyn*," performed by T. Chachiiakov (b. 1923) involves struggles with enemy warriors and mythological creatures over possession of a magical copper and gold flute that bestows immortality. The plot is outlined in the English summary of the volume: it includes winning a bride for the son; spirits and deities of the upper and lower world are involved, as well as the hero's monumental horse. A fragment of the same epic by another singer, S. Savdin (1916-1985), is included for comparative purposes in both the printed text and on the record. There are four archived versions of "*Ochy Bala*" by Kalkin recorded over a period of 36 years. Likewise, there are four versions of Chachiiakov's "*Kan-Altyn*," ranging over 22 years. The main texts selected are supplemented with material from other performances, and all of this is noted. Additional fragments from other performances from the same and other singers are included as appendixes, and there is a detailed and careful study of variants by the same and other singers. The introduction and notes review the long history of scholarship, beginning with Radlov in the nineteenth century and continuing with the work of indigenous folklorists such as the late S. S. Surazakov and others. The notes include Surazakov's biography of Kalkin. The introduction discusses the poetics and ethnomusicology of Altaic epic, characterized by alliteration and parallelism, and performed in a eight-syllable line. The excerpts on the record are marked in the text, making them exceptionally easy to find.

Vol. 16. 1997. Kh. G. Korogly, Managing Editor. Transcribed, translated, and with introduction, notes, and commentary by V. E. Mainogasheva. *Khakasskii geroicheskii Epos "Ai-Khuuchin"* [The Khakass Heroic Epic of "Ai-Khuuchin"]. 479 pp. ISBN 5-02-030906-0.

"*Ai-Khuuchin*" is the first scholarly publication of one of the most important and vivid Khakass narratives featuring a woman warrior. This version is transcribed from a performance by P. V. Kurbizhekov (1910-1966) recorded in 1964. The complex plot is outlined in the four-page English summary: the heroine defends her people from foreign enemies, challenges divinities, and establishes justice for the world. The epic incorporates a range of episodes of ancient origin. The mythology of horses is central to the epic. Ai-Khuuchin is the child of a skewbald colt and a mare, with relatives in both the human and equine worlds. The action of the epic involves three generations, with focus on the middle generation of Ai-Khuuchin. As with all volumes in the series, this one features a full scholarly apparatus, with introduction and notes dealing with Khakass oral literature in the wider

context of Turkic and Central Asian traditions, the study of variants, ethnographic photos, and a sound recording. The performance alternates prose narrative, singing, and throat singing, accompanied by a seven-stringed instrument called *chatkhan*, similar to a dulcimer, which is plucked and strummed.

The series is available in the United States through the Russian Press Service, Inc., 1805 Crain St., Evanston, IL 60602; tel. (708) 491-9851; fax (708) 491-1440. Prices vary per volume, but each is around \$30.00.

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