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Language and folklore of Tukhalars of Mongolia

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Abstract

The purpose is the description of the live speech and folklore of small ethnic groups of Tukhalars of the Sumon of Tsagaan-Nuur. The main methods are the method of a field research, descriptive, comparative-historical, and comparative and linguostatics ones. Results of research demonstrate that language and folklore of Tuvinians of Mongolia keep so far a number of archaic elements in which there are similarities to maternal tradition. As a conclusion, at small genres of folklore there are original proverbs and sayings which characterize their traditional moral values.

Keywords: Tuvinian, folklore, ethnic, Tukhalars, Mongolia.

Lengua y folclore de Tukhalars de Mongolia

Resumen

El propósito es la descripción del habla en vivo y el folclore de pequeños grupos étnicos de Tukhalars del Sumon de Tsagaan-Nuur. Los métodos principales son el método de investigación de campo, descriptivo, comparativo-histórico y comparativo y lingüístico-estadístico. Los resultados de la investigación demuestran que el lenguaje y el folclore de los tuvianos de Mongolia mantienen hasta ahora una cantidad de elementos arcaicos en los que hay similitudes con la tradición materna. Como conclusión, en los pequeños géneros del folclore hay proverbios y dichos originales que caracterizan sus valores morales tradicionales.

Palabras clave: Tuvinian, folklore, étnicos, Tukhalars, Mongolia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Hubsugul aimag (area) of Mongolia has been founded in 1931, the population is 125274 persons. The ethnic structure of the aimag is darkhats, khalkhas, khotgoys, Buryats, Uyghurs. The aimag contains administratively 23 summons (rural areas), 125 “bags” (smaller administrative territory). One “bag” has about 50 yards of Tukhalars (ed. ethnic Tuvinians). In total there are slightly more than 300 people of them and are presented by three main tribal groups: soyan (kara soyan, kezek soyan), balyqshy (atig balykshy), choodu. Though they themselves call the tukha kizhi 'Tuvinian', but officially

they are registered as Mongols. The distinctive feature of Tsagaan-Nur from other summons of the aimag is that in their territory they breed taiga deer. Only ethnic Tuvinians, maybe, for this reason are engaged in reindeer breeding here, Mongols call them not by their nationality, but by the form of their primary activity – Tsaatans (МОНГ. тсаа 'deer') 'reindeer breeders'. Now Tsaatans in the place of residence are subdivided into two groups: *барыын тайганың ивижилери* 'reindeer breeders of the Western taiga' and *чөөн тайганың ивижилери* 'reindeer breeders of the Southern taiga'. In former times reindeer breeders of the Southern taiga lived more compactly and contacted to reindeer breeders of Todzha district, and Tsaatans of the Western taiga – with close neighbors of the area Kungurtug of the Republic of Tuva. From time immemorial inhabitants of these territories loved and were devoted to the traditional activity – to the breeding of reindeers. This theme group of the lexicon of the related Turkic-speaking people of Tuva and Mongolia has been investigated by the authors of the present article during the 2010-2011 by results of which the monograph «Тыва дылда иви ажыл-агыйының лексиказы» (Lexicon of reindeer breeding in the Tuvan language) in comparative aspect is published (Kuular & Suvandii, 2014). The relevance of this work is caused by insufficient study of language and folklore of ethnic Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur, in comparison with other ethnic groups of Tuvinians of Mongolia in the Summons of Tsengel and Hovd, whose language and folklore is investigated by different scientists from the middle of the 50th of the XX century (Badarch, 2009; Kuular, 2015; Ulamsuren, 2013; Khabtagaeva, 2009; Ukhnaagiin & Khiisiin, 2016).

In the Tuvan dialectology the research and the description of the speech of Tukhalars will help to define its place in the system of dialects and dialects of the Tuvan language. Oral and poetic creativity of locals was not exposed to special scientific research, in this regard identification of the occurring genres is one of the current problems of folklore studies. These materials will promote further comprehensive publicizing of historically existing and nowadays continuing contacts of the Tuvan and Mongolian languages. Also, the fact that for some objective reasons of native speakers and oral creativity becomes less and less from year to year is important. The main objective of article is the description of language features in comparison with the modern Tuvan literary language and its dialects, identification of the occurring genres of oral and poetic creativity at the present stage.

2. METHODOLOGY

The field research was conducted in the Summon of Tsagaan-Nuur of Mongolia with the financial support of a grant of RHSF in different years. In 2010-2011 more than 30 Tsaatans of taiga areas have been interviewed. In 2015 – more than 50 ethnic Tuvinians among whom there are fishermen, pensioners and hunters living in the Summon. At work the complex linguistic technique, including descriptive, comparative-historical, comparative methods is applied, methods of linguostatistics, the component analysis were used. Fixing of folklore works was used in their live natural existing. The descriptive method was used for collecting language, folklore material

and their analysis; comparative-historical – for identification of history, development and the current state of language and folklore with modern Tuvan language, his dialects and materials of folklore of the Tuvan people; methods of a field research were used for collecting primary information by poll, a conversation, interviewing; the comparative method was used for the comparative description of language of Tukhalars in comparison with Mongolian; methods of linguostatistics – for the quantitative characteristic of language units and folklore materials.

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

As it has been stated above, there is a small amount of works which are dated back to the beginning the 21st centuries. The work of the German linguist Ragagnin (2013) is devoted to the language of Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur (Ragagnin & Dukhan, 2011). The articles by Kuular (2015), Suvandii (2015), Suvandii et al. (2017) have also been recently devoted to language and the speech of Tukhalars in which phonetic and morphological features and also separate theme groups of words in comparison with data of other dialects and modern literary Tuvan language are described. In articles of Soyán (2015), Soyán and Ulamsuren (2015), there are samples of folklore works, genres of folklore that are considered.

In Seren's (2014) monograph, customs and traditions of Tukhalars are disclosed. At the end of work samples of their speech

and national songs are given. Besides above the specified works of scientists-Tuva scholars, scientists of foreign countries are interested in life, culture and life of a small group of Tuvinians of Mongolia in recent years. They specify in the works that in the territory of modern Mongolia live Turkic-speaking peoples far from each other. Scientific articles, notes contain in the basic data of ethnographic character (Aiyzhy et al., 2015). In this article theme groups of the dictionary structure of language of Tukhalars are considered. It is known that lexicon of language in comparison with phonetics and morphology is more mobile, it is exposed to fast change of the qualitative and quantitative structure. Basic lexicon of Tukhalars can be subdivided into a number of lexico-semantic groups:

1. Terms of relationship: *adzha* of lit as. *acha* of ‘a father’, *i'khem* lit as. *avam* ‘my mother’, *хөкшүүнү* lit as. *kadayi* ‘a wife’, *бурунгулар* lit as. *ада-өгбелери* ‘ancestors’, *uva* of lit as. *ugba* ‘a sister’, *haka* of lit as. *aki* ‘a brother’.
2. Reindeer-breeding terminology which is absent in todzha’s and tere-hol’s dialects: *ankhai* ‘a deer child’, *уремик* lit as. *suvai ivi* ‘yalovy vazhenka’, *ерчши ivi* ‘vazhenka’, *чүгээр ivi* of lit as. *chaash ivi* ‘quiet deer’, *ivishinner* of lit as. *ivizhiler* of ‘reindeer breeders’, *eterkha kirer* of lit as. *ivi maldyng ederzhir yezi* ‘period of copulation of deer’.

3. Names of fishes: *katyrkhy* of lit as. *kadyrgy* ‘grayling’, *ak-balyk* of letters. ‘white fish’, the names of fishes recorded only in language of tukhalars – *тул, чолдурт, хайтыр*.

4. Names of kitchen utensils: *Yiddish / itish* ‘ware from birch bark’, *demir itish* – an iron tin, *Shai Urar dangkha* of lit as. *khurnek* ‘a teapot’, *talkha kylyr khurnek* – a special basin for the test, *sug aar khurnek* ‘a canister’, *khalbyga* of lit as. *omaash* ‘a spoon’, *khuvy ayak* lit as. *khuva* ‘a cup, big drinking bowl’, *taak* or *khelym* lit as. *pash aqsy* ‘a bowl cover’.

5. Names of traditional food: *bashtaanay* lit as. *aa* ‘vazhenka’s colostrum’, *tosu* – oil on a surface of cervine milk, *buusu* of lit as. *buza* ‘bouza’, *khyyma* of lit as. *kurgulday* ‘gut filled with interiors’, *khurut* lit as. *kurut* ‘dried cottage cheese’.

6. Specific names of household lexicon: *etree*, *dyrpaash*, *syy*, *an eereng* – names of different devices for the manufacture of a cervine skin, *dorooch* ‘path’, *pirseen* ‘tarpaulin’, *ээрмэзүү* ‘children’s cervine saddle’.

7. The phrases expressing the temporary and spatial relations: *am shagda* of lit as. *bo yede* ‘now’, *burun* or *biye shagda* of lit as. *moong murnunda yede* ‘so far’, *sytyg shagda* of lit as. *syt saap turar yede* ‘time, that is months when milk and receive milk’, *cheining bashky ayi* or *dozaar ai* lit as. *alty ai* ‘June’; *pashtyg chyk* – the left side plague where usually put a bowl,

durde charyk lit as. *chadyrnyng durry* ‘honourable place in plague’.

8. Lexico-semantic dialecticisms: (Shai) *Urar* ‘to pour, fill’ lit as. (Shai) *Kudar* ‘to pour, pour’, *kulur kudar* lit as. *dalgan urar* ‘strew a flour’, *soktaash* ‘mortar’ lit as. *Shai Havy* ‘bag for storage of tiled tea’, *ukhek* ‘part of a cradle’ lit as. *ukhek* ‘doghouse; shed; canopy’, *ньяндаң / яндаң* ‘oven, furnace’ lit as. *khoalay* ‘furnace pipe’, *ынджаар* ‘so’ lit as. *ындыг* ‘such’.

9. Separate words dialecticisms: *iltang* from lit as. *ажык* from ‘the fire in plague for cooking’, *oinaashkyn* lit as. *oinarak* ‘a toy’, *kishi-dash* – a stone doll, *кара ньеш* lit as. *shet, dyt* ‘larch’; verbs: *sootanyr* lit as. *chugaalanyr* ‘to speak about itself’, *ak Kelgen* lit as. *ekkelgen* ‘I have brought, I have brought’, *aal bolur* lit as. *өгленип алып* ‘to marry’, *dozaar* lit as. *tos karttaar* ‘to tear off birch bark’, *pashtaar* lit as. *khayindyrar* ‘to cook’.

Collecting, systematization, the analysis and identification of features of the speech of ethnic Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nur are necessary for comparative studying of dialects and literary Tuvan language and for drawing up linguistic dictionaries, in particular, of a dialectological one. Oral and poetic creativity of hubsugul's Tuvinians was not an object of researches until recently. According to Seren's (1993) article «Цагаан-Нуур тываларында» ("Tsagan-nur's Tuvinians", in the Tuvan language there are only lyrical songs "Meeng

churtum", "Hundaga" and "Kirky-le bora derlig turar". Mongush (2010) noted that the Tuvan national songs "Mezhegey", "Samagalday", "Hondergey" are popular with them. In 2014, Seren (2014) has published the monograph in the Tuvan language «Моолда Цагаан-Нуур тываларының ёзу-чаңчылдары (Дылының, культуразының материалдары)» ("Ceremonies and customs of Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur in Mongolia (Materials of language, culture)". The book contains the information about reindeer breeders and deer, about names of meat and dairy products, about traditions and ceremonies. Samples of the speech of Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur also are given in the monograph. In Yusha's (2016) article "Tuvinians of China and Mongolia: the current state of folklore tradition" is noted that:

At Tuvinian reindeer breeders the narrative sphere of folklore is presented by myths, legends; the fairy tales having motives of the Indo-Tibetan origin from the cycle "Panchatantra" ("The magic dead person"). Ceremonial genres include wishful thinking, plots. The lyrical poetry is presented by songs *ыр* ("Odugen-tayga", «Mezhegeyim») (Yusha, 2016: 13).

Thus, about the folklore of Tuvinians of Hubsugul there are several articles Seren (1993), Yusha, (2016) and Yusha & Cin (2014), where genres of folklore are generally noted. During the field research in the Sumon of Tsagaan-Nuur we have recorded fairy tales, wishful thinking, spells, national songs, proverbs and sayings. Their songs are sung slowly, lingeringly. In the Sumon of Tsagaan-Nuur many informants have sung the «*Chamys*» song where the homesickness is expressed. Also «Samagalday» songs, «Mishegeyim» (Tuv.

«Mezhegeyim»), «Artyy taiga» («A Northern taiga»). The main pet of Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur is the deer. Therefore, they have many songs where sing of him. At a sketch of an image of a deer the epithet *чарааш мал* ‘beautiful cattle’ is often used. Besides, his gender and age names occur in texts. In songs also the subject of maternal love is touched.

*Хокаш малдыг мээң авам
Хоют пактап олур-ла боор.
Хоютпааның хоюг черин
Мээ салып олурду боор.*

*Иви малдыг мээң авам
Ирит пактап олур-ла боор.
Иритпааның ирээн черин
Мээ салып олурду боор.*

We will give the literal translation:

‘My mother who has a one-year-old deer,
Likely, sits, drinking hoytpak.
Gentle layer of a hoytpak,
Likely, leaves to me.

My mother who has a deer,
Likely, sits, drinking a skin.
Sour part of a clot,
Likely, leaves to me’.

In this song the image of the reindeer-breeder is created by the developed epithets *хокаш малдыг мээң авам, иви малдыг мээң авам* ‘my mother who has a deer’. Thus, at songs by tsagan-nur’s Tuvinians various subjects: about the Homeland, about destiny, about deer, about family relations. The feature of their songs is that in them the sacral animal – a deer – is repeatedly sung. It is connected with the economic activity of this small ethnic group. Proverbs and sayings of Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur are connected with their history, outlook and language. The main attention is paid to moral values which are expressed in the ideas of these folklore works. In them such values as value of family, friendship, modesty, honor, good, love, and diligence are considered. They raise the children’s sayings with deep, philosophical contents. Since the childhood they are learned to respect parents, seniors, to value a word.

Ава сургаалы – алта,

Ача сургаалы – эртем.

‘Mothers manual – gold,

Manual of the father – science’.

For children lecture of parents is considered the main guide to life. The main function of mother and father is to educate worthy successors. Foreign Tuvinians paid and pay special attention to moral values.

Бак чоруса, бодунга бак.

Эки чоруса, бодунга эки.

‘If to behave badly, then most it will be bad,
If to behave well, then most it will be good’.

They are opposed by way of an antithesis in this proverb the good and evil. The fact that some proverbs and sayings of ethnic Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur, on the one hand, are similar in the sense and compositionally to the Tuvan proverbs and sayings, on the other hand, to the Mongolian is interesting. For example:

Чок мен дээш, чода карты чивес,

Бай кижси мен дээш, баарсык беси кагбас.

‘ I am poor – you do not eat a shin layer,

It is rich – do not rush ferruteros fat’. At indigenous Tuvinians the below-specified option of this proverb is traced:

Чок дээш, чода карты чивес,

Бар дээш, балдыр эьди октавас.

‘ I am poor – dry do not bite into a bone.

It is rich – and meat do not rush’.

The following proverb of a small group of ethnic Tuvinians is identical to the Mongolian proverb:

Эртен турса, бирээни көөр,

Орай удуса, бирээни тыңнаар.

‘Who gets up early, that learns more,
Who goes to bed late, that will hear more’.

By means of this example accustomed to the fact that who gets up early and late goes to bed, manages to make many cases. The similar sense is expressed and in the following proverb which completely coincides with her option of a *чыдында чыргал чок, олутта олча чок*, available in Tuva:

Чытынта чыргал чок,

Олутта олча чок .

‘In lying there is no pleasure,
In sitting there is no advantage’.

Thus, in proverbs and sayings of ethnic Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur values of love, honor, good, diligence, modesty, respect, decency, unselfishness are expressed. The identity of proverbs and sayings of Tsagan-nur’s Tuvinians with the Tuva and Mongolian sayings is caused by the following factors:

a) Ethnic Tuvinians of the Sumon of Tsagaan-Nuur of the Hubsugul aimag of Mongolia historically are natives of the Todzha and Tere-Hol kozhuuns (regions) of Tuva;

b) Their speech is considered a foreign dialect of the Tuvan language;

c) They are citizens of Mongolia and perfectly know Mongolian.

Ceremonial folklore is presented by the following genres: spell, wishful thinking. Ethnic Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nur were engaged in fishery and hunting. Different spells demonstrate to it. We will give the hunter's spell as an example.

*Даг дег мыйыстыындан,
 Дастагар эмглиинден,
 Көрвөс согурундан,
 Баспас майырыындан,
 Сууңардан дашкаарладып,
 Дааңардан ишкээрледип,
 Оруум куду досудуп,
 оран-делегейим, хайырлаңар, бээрледиңер!
 Бээр көргөн бедиктерим,
 Утур көргөн учуктарым!*

‘From having, as the mountain, horns,
 From having a protruding udder,
 Blind, unseeing,
 Lame, clumsy,
 Bringing out of water,
 Lowering from the mountain,
 Removing towards to me,
 My edges, present, bring closer to me!
 My heights looking here

My heights looking at each other!’

Before hunting Tuvinians always asked the owner of a taiga to help them to find production. Therefore, they splashed milk or milk tea on four parts of the world and said a spell. This spell contains allegories *мыйыстыг* ‘horned’, *эмиглиг* ‘having an udder’. The allegory *мыйыстыг* is understood as a wild goat, a maral, an elk, and under *эмиглиг* – females of a mountain wild goat, an elk. Epithets *көрвөс согур*, *баснас майырык* have created an image of an unhealthy, old animal. The hunter asks from the owner of a taiga to present to him a blind, lame, unhealthy animal that demonstrates his careful attitude to the nature. Hyperbolic comparison *даг the таг мыйыстыг* ‘having, as the mountain, horns’ are described large animals. The fisherman's spells also meet at Tsagan-nur's Tuvinians. The fisherman asks from the owner of water for a good catch. The Tuvinians of Tsagaan-Nuur tell wishful thinking when they cut their children's hair in the third year of life and during the wedding. Wishful thinking is one of the widespread genres of the Tuvan folklore. They are still widely used now (Steinarsdóttir, 2015).

4. DISCUSSION

In the published works of scientists it is noted that in the northeast of Mongolia there are small Turkic-speaking groups of Tuvinians living in foreign-ethnic space Ragagnin (2013), P. Seren (1993; 2014), Sukhbaatar (2018), in their works, do not call taiga

residents of the Sumon of Tsagaan-Nuur by nationality but by the nature of their primary activity – Tsaatans. The authors of this article, during the first expedition, have found out that ethnic Tuvinians call themselves *Tukhalar* and in the further works they are called by this term. Tukhalars in the sumon represent three main tribal groups: soyan (kara soyan, kezek soyan), balyqshy (atig balykshy), choodu. It is difficult to establish the exact quantity of Tukhalars as in official documents they were written down either Uryankhays, or Uyghurs, or Kazakhs, and sometimes Mongols. It is necessary to tell that data concerning the number of Tukhalars differ in scientific researches, in general, there are from 343 to 500 people. As a result of the discussion of the published works, it has become clear that the monographic research on the lexicon of reindeer breeding is made by Kuular and Suvandii (2014), customs and traditions of reindeer breeders are described by Seren (2014). In the territory of the Republic of Tuva the execution of ditties is very widespread, and the Mongolian Tuvinians sing only lyrical national songs. Questions are in the field mentioned in the works of other scientists only partially. Samples of several national songs are recorded by Seren (1993; 2014). Thus, the results of the conducted researches will meet a lack in studying of this problem.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The current state of a way of life, everyday life, traditional culture, language and folklore shows that Tukhalars of Mongolia in the majority keep the Tuvan identity. Results of researches demonstrate

that language and folklore of Tuvinians of Mongolia keep so far a number of archaic elements in which there are similarities to maternal tradition. And Tuvinians of the Republic of Tuva in the conditions of globalization slowly lose a traditional way of life and culture. Further carrying out new scientific research and forwarding trips is necessary for studying and preservation of language, the culture of ethnic Tuvinians of Mongolia.

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