

Merle Schatz (Ed.)

Multiethnic Societies of Central Asia and Siberia Represented in Indigenous Oral and Written Literature



Universitätsdrucke Göttingen

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The Role of Private Collections
and Libraries

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A look at a private collection of print and DVD publications that are also used as learning tools in Siberia, along with selected objects from the ethnographic collection, 2022.



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Multiethnic Societies of Central Asia and Siberia Represented in Indigenous Oral and Written Literature – The Role of Private Collections and Libraries: Introduction

Merle Schatz and Johannes Reckel

The online conference “Multiethnic Societies of Central Asia and Siberia Represented in Indigenous Oral and Written Literature – The Role of Private Collections and Libraries” was held February 18th, 2022 at the Göttingen State and University Library (SUB Göttingen). It was organized by Merle Schatz and Johannes Reckel as part of the activities of the Specialized Information Service Central Asia & Siberia.

At the conference, Mongolian Kalmyks, Dungans, Uighurs, Chukchi, Russian colleagues from Siberia together with colleagues from Kyrgyzstan, Hungary, Germany, the USA and England and other countries engaged in a lively exchange of ideas and views on the individual presentations and overarching themes. In the discussion, the conflict between indigenous societies and a science that only uses these autochthonous cultures as a quarry for research of outsiders was addressed inten-

sively. The discussion centered around the question of how useful or helpful Western, Chinese or Russian research is for the local societies and whether it reflects the views and needs of the autochthonous groups of Central Asia and Siberia. Critical questions were raised whether and how terms such as “indigenous”, “local”, “native” should be used at all, since they are often already connoted with contents that may not sufficiently reflect a respectful description of the respective groups and their representatives, or, in other words, of the actors the respective research is based on. Or even more strongly formulated: does the use of these terms and categories create preconceived images about “the other” that might misguide our research from the outset? What can our interest, our research give back to the indigenous groups, so that they are not just objects of research? How can we better be aware of scientific debates within those groups or research institutions in Siberia and Central Asia and additionally make sure that we integrate them in own debates? The participants discussed the difficulty of dealing with these topics carefully and attentively, and at the same time took up the challenge of defining terms for research, with reference to existing disputes within research on precisely these questions.

The conference focused on collections at libraries, in research institutions as well as private collections that are not maintained just for the sake of collecting. What was/is collected and what is the use of the collected material for us and for research, how can we use it under changed conditions in the research landscape, how does it help local ethnic communities to understand and preserve their own culture and language? Do the spatially dispersed but often networked collections support research on the ground? What contribution do these collections make to the local languages and cultures against the backdrop of dwindling attention to endangered groups?

Central Asia and Siberia are characterized by multiethnic societies formed by a patchwork of often small ethnic groups. At the same time large parts of Central Asia and Siberia have been dominated by dominant state languages as official languages, especially Russian and Chinese. On a local level the languages of the autochthonous people often play a role parallel to the central national language. Autonomous regions may even put the local indigenous language into a prominent place in official documents. When no autonomous region, county, district for certain small autochthonous peoples exist and no established tradition of a written language exists either such small languages quickly approach extinction.

In the case of the former Soviet Republics of Middle Asia, now independent nations, the former national language Russian still is dominant but the national language has become more prominent. But even in the newly independent countries like Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan multiethnic societies exist. In eastern Kyrgyzstan Uighur, Sart-Kalmyk, Dungan people live side by side with the Kyrgyz majority and speak their own languages and have their own publications, though these publications are often distributed through ethnic networks and do not surface in

bookshops or on the open market. They resemble underground literature circulated only within a certain ethnic group.

Minority literature is only printed in small numbers and not sold on the open market. It normally does not make it into public libraries and is thus not accessible to the wider public nor preserved properly. In Siberia, and Russia in general, copyright libraries like the State Public Scientific Technological Library (GPNTB) in Novosibirsk receive one copy of each book published nationwide. On the other hand, many university and provincial libraries in Mongolia and the Middle Asian republics do not stock minority literature or only a small selection. Access to libraries in Central Asia is often restricted and difficult for outsiders.

The special situation in Sinkiang was one topic in this conference. But even in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan Uighur literature is hard to find in libraries. It is normally stored in private homes. To address this problem many websites, often based outside Central Asia offer Uighur books and journals as PDF without regard to any copyright laws.¹ Nevertheless, many scholars use these websites to download the material offered extensively for private use. Websites are often short-lived. This is not only the case in politically unstable regions. One example would be the valuable website based at the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences in Bishkek presenting handwritten field reports and other ethnographic material as PDF². This website has been down since 2021 and the answer from the Academy at the end of February 2022 has been:

I found out today that their site is broken, when they fix it, they don't know. While you can use their materials on the site: manuscript.lib.kg they said that this site does not have all the materials, but there is a catalog. Unfortunately, they themselves do not know if everything will work again.

Before 2005 there were more than 4000 Uighur websites. The majority of these have disappeared since. Websites reflect changing political conditions nearly in real time. Therefore, internet archives have been trying to save websites to secure the short-lived material for future research. In the case of Central Asia the change in Afghanistan gave birth to the “Archive-It At-Risk Afghanistan Web Archiving Project (ARAWA): 2021” initiated by the University of California, Berkeley.³ A similar and more comprehensive project at the SUB Göttingen saved mainly Uighur websites within the “Central Asian Web Archive”,⁴ being one topic on this conference. These projects are highly labour and cost intensive and often lack long time funding.

¹ <https://elkitab.org/> (accessed 20.5.2022).

² <http://manuscript.lib.kg/> (defunct 20.5.2022).

³ <https://archive-it.org/collections/17329> (accessed 20.5.2022).

⁴ <https://archive-it.org/collections/13340> (accessed 20.5.2022).

In a changing academic world, collections are increasingly only seen as limited projects with third party funding. Hence, collections of Central Asian and Siberian material cannot any longer reflect long time developments, because funding is limited. They cannot offer reliable support for research of coming generations, because the projects are settled in small time bubbles limited to certain subjects and periods. These bubble collections may not be helpful for a changing research attitude of future scholars interested in other questions than those fashionable at the time of limited projects creating limited collections from limited funding.⁵

If e.g. there should be a future research interest into Kyrghyz substandard language or on stereotypes in society based on pulp fiction known as “Groschenroman” in German, implying an inferior kind of literature, you will find a small collection of these novels in Europe only at the library in Göttingen, but only for prints from a couple of years before the project funding was running out. Pulp fiction often reflects in an indirect manner society and be it an ideal picture of an ideal Kyrghyz world with plenty of “Herzschmerz”. Of course, you could only get the picture for a couple of years and no longtime development visible because libraries have given up on collecting literature with foresight.

A collection of specialized literature is a living organism and not an archive full of dust. Such collections need to be nourished properly to grow and flourish for the enlightenment of future generations. Enlightening is defined as providing or tending to provide knowledge, understanding, or insight. What should the future of libraries in Germany or Europe hold against this background? It has been argued that in the time of global travel a German library does not have to stock literature in Inuktitut, Gaelic or Kyrghyz. Those few scholars interested in such far-fetched fields of research could easily travel to Greenland or Kyrgyzstan or Ireland to look for their literature. Corona, civil unrest, and wars do teach us otherwise.

⁵ <https://www.rcinet.ca/eye-on-the-arctic/2022/01/28/german-project-to-house-everything-published-in-siberian-and-arctic-languages-to-look-for-new-funding/>.

A Resource for the Study of Translation into Uyghur by Modern Chinese Governments: The Historical Uyghur-Chinese Corpus

*Robert Barnett, Jessica Yeung, Ahmet Hojam Pekiniy, Rune Steenberg Reybe, Merhaba Eli and Christian Faggionato*¹

In 2006 Robert Barnett, a co-author of this paper, came across a stack of old journals in a second-hand book market in Chengdu, one of the two cities in China that have long served as entry ways between China and Tibet. Dating from the 1930s, the journal issues were not just in Chinese, but in Tibetan and Mongolian too: they were rare copies of a trilingual publication called the *Mengzang yuebao* (蒙藏月報), “the

¹ This article has resulted from Hong Kong Baptist University Research Committee Initiation Grant–Faculty Niche Research Areas (IG-FNRA) 2018/19-ARTS-03.

Mongolian-Tibetan Monthly”.² The *yuebao*, which ran from 1934 to 1947,³ was an official publication of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (MTAC), the branch of the Chinese government that, under various names, was in charge of China’s policies in Tibetan, Mongolian and, later, Turkic areas during the Republican era (1912–49). Initially published only in three languages, from 1935 the *Mengzang yuebao* began to include translations in Uyghur too, turning it into a quadrilingual publication.⁴ It continued to publish in all four languages until just two years before the collapse of the regime in 1949.

The existence of the *yuebao* points to the growing importance attached by officials in early 20th century China to the translation of Chinese-language reports into what are now called “minority” or “ethnic” languages, and to the use of modern media to convey official ideas and messages in the languages of local populations, at least in areas of major strategic significance. The Republicans were not the first to produce news bulletins in Inner Asian languages in order to win over their non-Chinese subjects: they were continuing a late Qing practice of publishing bilingual news sheets known as *baihuabao* (白話報, “vernacular news”) in colonial or minority regions, primarily Tibet and Mongolia (Vittinghoff 2001; Erhard and Hou 2018).⁵

² Some issues carried the title in Tibetan as *Bod Sog zla re 'i gsar 'gyur*.

³ Barnett discovered 16 issues in the market in Chengdu, which are now in the library of Columbia University. A number of issues of the *Mengzang yuebao* are held by: Stanford (9 issues, <https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/14055358>); Harvard (11 issues, https://hollis.harvard.edu/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=01HVD_ALMA212010380950003941&context=L&vid=HVD2&lang=en_US&search_scope=default_scope&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=books&query=any,contains,meng%20zang%20yue&offset=0); Cornell (4 issues, <https://newcatalog.library.cornell.edu/catalog/398440>); Library of Congress (14 issues, <https://catalog.loc.gov/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=12644&recCount=25&recPointer=0&bibId=13847187>); and Chinese University of Hong Kong (15 issues, https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=CUHK_IJ21767439280003407&context=L&vid=CUHK&lang=en_US&search_scope=All&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,meng%20zang%20yue&offset=0).

⁴ The Uyghur translation given for the title of the *Mengzang yuebao* differs in different issues, even within the same year. These three versions of the title are found in issues from the first six months of 1940: *Manḡul vā Tibāt qomitāsi aylıq mājmu'āsi*, *Manḡul vā Tibāt qomitāsi tārāfindān ıqarılḡan aylıq mājmu'ā*; *Manḡul vā Tibāt qomitāsi tārāfindān ıqarılḡan aylıq mājmu'āsi*; and *Manḡul vā tībāt qomitāsi aylıq mājmu'āsi* / *Manḡul vā tībāt qomitāsi tārāfindān ıqarılḡan aylıq mājmu'ā*.

⁵ These included the *Xizang baihuabao* (西藏白話報, *Bod keyi phal skad gsar 'gyur*, “Tibet Vernacular News”) from 1907 to 1910 and the *Menghuabao* (蒙話報, *Mongolyn sonin bichig*, “Mongolian Colloquial Newspaper”) from 1908 (Zhang 2016, Bai 2018), both of which were bilingual (Chinese-Tibetan and Chinese-Mongolian). Bai 2018 says that a publication called the *Mengwenbao* 《蒙文報, “Mongolian Language News”) began in 1907, and He Jiani says publication of the *Mengwen baihuabao* (蒙文白話報, *Mongol yerü üge-yin sedküil*, “Mongolian Vernacular News”) was proposed before the fall of the dynasty in 1911, but implies that the proposal was not implemented (He 2018: 144). Freeman notes that the Chinese-language *Yili baihua bao* (伊犁白話報, “Ili Vernacular News”) was published for a year

The Republicans had resumed this practice in 1913 by publishing their own Tibetan-Chinese and Mongolian-Chinese *baibuabao*,⁶ as well as producing the *Huiven Baibuabao* (回文白話報, 1913–16), which was printed in Chinese and Arabic.⁷ In 1929 the Republican government produced its first trilingual periodical, the *Mengzang zhoubao* (蒙藏週報, “the Mongolian-Tibetan Weekly”), which ran from 1929 to 1931 in Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan.⁸ It was followed by the *Mengzang xunkan* (蒙藏旬刊, “the Mongolian-Tibetan Ten-day Publication,” 1931–39),⁹ which too was published in those three languages. The Republican administration began to produce bilingual journals in Chinese and Uyghur at around the same time,¹⁰ including *Bianduo* (邊鐸), which was issued from 1934 to 1936, and *Tianshan* (天山, “Heaven Mountains”), which ran from 1934 to 1935. The quantity of official translation into local languages increased exponentially in the PRC era, becoming a key part of nation-building and state-building drives by the new Chinese state in its Inner Asian territories.

The chance encounter with these copies of the *yuebao* in the market in Chengdu led to the formation of a project to address some of the questions that arise in the context of translation by Chinese administrations into the major Inner Asian languages.¹¹ This paper describes one of the pilot schemes for that project.¹² Called in full, “History of Translation: Chinese Public Documents in Inner Asia (Uyghur-

from 1910 “with a sister paper called Ili Prefecture News (*Ile nilayitining qiziti*) printed by mimeograph in handwritten Turkic” (Freeman 2018). Bai describes the Ili paper as published in four languages: Chinese, Uyghur, Mongolian, and Manchu (Bai 2018).

⁶ These were the *Mengwen baibuabao* (蒙文白話報, *Mongyol yerü üge-yin sedküil*, “Mongolian Vernacular News”, 1913–15) and the *Zangwen baibuabao* (*Bod yig phal skad gsar 'gyur*, “Tibetan Vernacular News”, 1913–14).

⁷ Much of the data about these publications is taken from Xu and Li 2006.

⁸ The title of the *Mengzang zhoubao* in Mongolian was *Monggol Töbed-un dolugan edürin sedküil*, while the Tibetan title was *Bod Sog gza' 'kbor re'i gsar 'gyur*. See holdings at Indiana University (1 issue, <https://uicatalog.iu.edu/catalog/7634351>) and at the Library of Congress (25 issues, <https://catalog.loc.gov/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=5472&recCount=25&recPointer=0&bibId=20866797>).

⁹ The *Mengzang xunkan* was issued three times a month from 1931–36 (7 issues held at Stanford, <https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/9724955>). Other multilingual periodicals issued by the MTAC included the *Mengzang xunbao* (蒙藏旬報, 4 issues from 1931 held at Princeton, <https://catalog.princeton.edu/catalog/9948353693506421>), which replaced the *Mengzang zhoubao*. It was superseded by the *Mengzang yuebao* in April 1934. A periodical called the *Mengzang banyuekan* (蒙藏半月刊) was issued from July, 1937.

¹⁰ In this chapter, we have used the term Uyghur to refer to both the modern (post-1949) and earlier forms of that language. See also note 18 below.

¹¹ The HUCC was a pilot module for a proposed project on the use of corpus methodology for the study of modern translation into Mongolian, Tibetan and Uyghur, under development by Robert Barnett (SOAS and Kings, London), Nathan Hill (Trinity College, Dublin and SOAS, London), Agata Bareja-Starzyńska (Warsaw), Ondřej Klimeš (Czech Academy of Social Sciences, Prague), and Franz Xaver Erhard (Leipzig).

¹² For other pilot schemes for this project, see Barnett, Yunshaab *et al.* 2021; Barnett, Hill *et al.* 2021; and Barnett, Faggionato, *et al.* 2021.

Language Module),”¹³ the pilot project focused on the history of Chinese state translation into Uyghur over last 120 years. It aimed to develop a basic resource to facilitate research into the history of official translations from Chinese into Uyghur and into studies of interactions between the two languages as found in public documents. That resource, we hoped, would help answer some of the basic questions that arise in such studies: Why were these texts selected for translation? What messages were they seeking to convey? What were the key terms used in them and how were those terms translated? What were the principles used by Chinese officials or their intermediaries for translating official Chinese concepts and terms into the Inner Asian languages? Why did they sometimes use existing local cultural references to translate new concepts, but at other times introduce neologisms from Chinese?

To help researchers address such questions, and to illustrate the value of corpus methodology in such studies, the project focused on compiling a corpus of selected documents in Uyghur together with their Chinese sources or equivalents. This paper describes the construction of that corpus and some of its potential uses in the study of official Chinese translation practices with regard to Uyghur since the late Qing era.

The Historical Uyghur-Chinese Corpus

In December 2021, the project published its primary output, a parallel corpus known as the Historical Uyghur-Chinese Corpus (HUCC). The HUCC was a small pilot or demonstration corpus designed to show the potential for researchers, scholars and funders of an online compilation of this kind, which, given necessary resources, could be scaled up relatively easily to form a much larger collection in the future.

The HUCC consists of 480 texts issued by administrations (or in some cases, addressed by citizens to administrations) in either Uyghur or Chinese from the mid-Qing period up to the present day. 402 of these documents are pairs—that is, they consist of one Uyghur text together with its Chinese equivalent or source. Of these 201 pairs, 42 were issued as bilingual documents or appeared in a multilingual publication such as the *Mengzang yuebao*, while the rest were published as separate documents at the time and were subsequently paired by us or in modern publications. In addition, the HUCC includes 78 Chinese-language documents which were published in the *Mengzang yuebao* but were not translated into Uyghur. The inclusion of these untranslated articles is intended to allow researchers to explore the reasons for the decisions by editors of the *yuebao* to print these items but not to translate them.

¹³ The pilot project was funded by Hong Kong Baptist University through its Department of Translation, Interpreting and Intercultural Studies.

All of the texts come from what we classify as “public documents”, meaning that they were issued by a Qing or Chinese administration for public use—such as laws, proclamations, announcements, official journals, newspapers, and books— or were addressed to those administrations. The 201 corpus documents in Uyghur are either translations from Chinese or have a parallel Chinese version which we were able to locate.¹⁴ Each of these Uyghur documents is paired in the corpus with the Chinese source from which it was translated or which most closely corresponds to it. Each of these pairs has a separate index number in the corpus (such as QA007 or PA025), followed by a letter indicating the language of the text within that pair (such as QA007_U and QA007_C for the Uyghur and Chinese versions). The texts in the corpus are thus aligned at file level, meaning that a user of the corpus can immediately access the Chinese equivalent or source of each Uyghur text.

The corpus is divided into six sub-collections. Each sub-collection is named with a two-letter code, of which the first letter indicates the administration which produced the document—the Qing government (Q) until its fall in 1911, the Republican government (R) from 1912 to 1949, or the PRC authorities (P) since 1949. The second letter in the code indicates that the document belongs to a particular source or type of document with which it has been grouped to form a sub-collection. The following list describes the types of documents in each of the six sub-collections:

- The QA sub-collection consists of 24 paired texts (twelve in Uyghur and twelve in Chinese) found in twelve inscriptions or archival documents from the Qing period. Nine of the items date from the 1760s to the 1790s, two from the years 1877 to 1880 during the years preparing for the provincialisation of Xinjiang, and one from 1903. All of these items are multilingual (the first seven and QA009 are quadrilingual, hexalingual, or pentalingual, while the remainder are bilingual). Three of the documents are commemorative inscriptions and four are public notice inscriptions, while the others are a legal compendium, a description of a painting, a biography, a government-issued travel document and a commentary on certain imperial pronouncements on morality.
- The QB sub-collection contains 100 paired texts (50 in Uyghur and 50 in Chinese) found in 50 archival documents from the Qing period which were republished in QXDX 2012. These are all documents issued by the Chinese administration at the time, including announcements, appointments, diplomatic documents, orders for arrest, documents or requests relating to debt payment, judgements, and land sales. Some documents are submissions by

¹⁴ A number of the Uyghur-language documents from the Qing era were translated from Manchu or Mongolian. In these cases we identified a corresponding or parallel Chinese version produced at the time. In some cases, these parallel versions appeared in the original inscription or document alongside the Uyghur text or were reproduced alongside it in a modern publication such as QXDX.

local subjects to government offices or courts. The publication dates span from the 1880s to the 1910s.

- Sub-collection RA includes ten paired texts from the Republican Period (1912–49) taken from five archival documents or items with bilingual content. These include the texts found on two issues of bank notes (RA001 and RA002), the texts on a coin (RA003), a preface for a textbook for teaching Turkī (RA004) and a government announcement (RA005). Their publication dates span from 1920 to 1947.
- The RB sub-collection consists of 34 articles in Uyghur published in the *Mengzang yuebao* during the first six months of 1940, together with the texts in Chinese from which they were translated. In addition, for comparative purposes, 78 articles are included that were published in Chinese in the journal but were not translated into Uyghur.
- The PA sub-collection is a set of 100 paired legal texts, being the official Chinese and Uyghur versions of 50 legal documents issued during the People’s Republic of China (PRC) period. The documents are all regulations or laws issued by the PRC government from the late 1980s up to 2007.
- Sub-collection PC consists of 50 articles published in the journal *Izdinib*, the Uyghur edition of *Qiusbi* (“Seeking Truth”), the bimonthly journal published by the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China, together with the 50 corresponding versions of those articles in Chinese. The articles consist primarily of theoretical discussions of official policies, ideology and opinion, together with speeches by state leaders. The publication dates range from 1994 to 2000.

Each text has an identifying code that indicates the sub-collection to which it belongs, and thus the period within which it was produced, followed by the three-digit serial number indicating the document-pair to which it belongs, and a one-letter code indicating if the text is in Turkī, Uyghur or Chinese (the term Turkī is used in the corpus for the form of Uyghur in use prior to 1950). Thus, the text RB005_T is the Turkī version of the fifth document or item in the RB sub-collection, which means it was produced during the Republican period and is an article from the *Mengzang yuebao*.

The texts in the corpus were selected to enable diachronic study of changes in official Chinese-Uyghur translation practices. They include representative texts with administrative, political, or legal relevance. The corpus thus does not include literary works, canonical texts such as the works of major political leaders, or texts belonging to other genres and cultural forms, although these could be added at a later date.

The HUCC has been deposited in both the Github and Zenodo repositories, where it will remain fully accessible to the public (Yeung *et al.* 2021, 2022). The texts can be viewed online or can be searched and analysed in detail if downloaded; notes on the procedure for viewing or downloading the corpus are given in the appendix.

Historical Forms of Modern Uyghur in the Corpus

The process of preparing the documents for inclusion in the corpus provided the opportunity for potential insights in terms of historical and linguistic studies.¹⁵ Among these was an increase in our awareness of diachronic and synchronic variations in script and language in earlier forms of Uyghur.¹⁶ These variations went beyond the major distinctions in dialect and orthography that have already been well documented (Aibaidula and Lua 2003: 229; Aisikaer and Wusiman 2018) and pointed to processes of linguistic evolution that reflected the tensions between actual language practices at a given time and successive attempts, primarily by bureaucracies, to revise written forms of the language. The earlier corpus documents show, for example, the influence of translators working for the Qing court, who were mainly from the regions of Qumul or Turfan or were of Manchu-Mongolic origin and had been pupils of the Qumul or Turfan translators in Beijing. This led to the emergence of a form of Turkic language in Qing official documents that was quite different from Chaghatai Turkic, the traditional Turkic literary style used throughout Central Asia. That style, with its plenitude of Persian and Arabic loanwords, phrases and structural influence, is found in the corpus only in one text – the inscription at the Suleyman Wang Minaret (QA008). Examples in the corpus of Qing bureaucratic Turkic include the texts of six inscriptions from shortly after the Qing conquest of Xinjiang in the latter half of the 18th century (QA001–006). Similar linguistic features are seen in the Uyghur version of “the Chronicles of the Lord of Turfan” (Ch.: *Tufan wanggong shixi*, QA009), dating from the same period.¹⁷ The language in these texts is based on the form of Turkic language found in Uyghuristan (Qumul, Turfan, and Lop) with the addition of syntactical and lexical features from Manchu-Mongolic, which replaced many of the Arabic-Persian features found

¹⁵ The suggestions in this section are based on the forthcoming doctoral dissertation by Ahmet Hojam Pekiniy. On Uyghur language history, see *inter alia* Shaw 1878, Le Coq 1911, Jarring 1933, Tömür & Polat 1986, Polat 1993, Teklimakaniy 2004, Chen 2016, Schluessel 2018, and Brophy 2021.

¹⁶ The term Uyghur (French: *Onigbour*, German: *Uyghurische*) was used in the mid-19th century by western and other foreign scholars, such as Wälikhanov (Valikhanof 1865: 67) and Vámbéry (1870), to refer to the language found in the Tarim basin and Uyghuristan. The term used by local people in Kashgar and Yarkand to refer to their own language is *Turkī* (Shaw 1878: 2; Habibzade 1915; Brophy 2021: 29); in Uyghuristan, the language is referred to as *yärlük tili* (local language). In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, foreign scholars used the term Eastern *Turkī* for the language of the Tarim basin (Jarring 1964), but this term is not used locally. In this article we have used the term Uyghur for all forms of the Turkic language used by Uyghur people, but in the corpus we have used the term *Turkī* for the forms of the language before 1950 and the term Uyghur for later forms of the language.

¹⁷ The title of the Uyghur version of this document (QA009) is not known as the manuscript is incomplete. This document is an example of a Uyghur text translated from a Manchu text which we have paired in the corpus with its corresponding Chinese text.

in Chaghatai Turkic (many Arabic-Persian loanwords, however, had become nativized and were generally not replaced). Other than these Manchu-Mongolic elements, which fell into disuse with the collapse of the Qing administration in 1911, this form of the language shows similarities to the modern Uyghur found in our post-1980 documents, apart from some orthographic features and a small number of morphological features. It was to become one of the major shaping factors in the development of modern Uyghur.

From the late-Qing texts in the corpus we can see that the written language was already evolving by that time in a separate direction from both the classical literary tradition and the Manchu-Mongolic influences found in most court documents. This can be seen, for example, in the Uyghur text of “Explanations of 16 Teachings from the Emperor with Related Legal Articles” (Ch.: *Shengyu shilitiao fu liyijie*,¹⁸ QA010), dating from 1877 to 1880, and in those “related articles” (listed in the corpus catalogue as selections from the Grand Qing Code, (*Daqing lilii*, QA011), as well as the 50 documents in the QB sub-collection, which were produced between 1881 and 1911. These documents, which include an arrest warrant (QB026), a report on non-payment of debts (QB020), and accusations concerning a case of camel theft (QB023–24), all come from Turfan. They are thus of local rather than central provenance and reflect the form of Turkic language spoken in Turfan at that time, with some influence from Chinese,¹⁹ as well as a number of features that are found in modern Uyghur as spoken in Turfan today. This indicates the high degree of continuity in the evolution of the modern Uyghur language in this region since the late Qing era.

That evolution was not linear. In the Republican era, one source of influence again came from translators, intellectuals and officials working with the Chinese administration, leading to further experiments with language and orthography. These are illustrated in the corpus by the articles from issues of the *Mengzang ynebao* in early 1940 (the Uyghur texts in the RB sub-collection). These translators and intellectuals hoped to reshape the national language in the light of pan-Turkic ideals (Brophy 2021: 37), and the language they developed was used in documents issued by some central government institutions with which they worked after 1912 and later also in some provincial government documents. Their form of the language included significant morphological borrowings from the forms of Turkic language found west of Iran, primarily in Turkey, as well as the use of Ottoman Turkic script, orthography and lexicon. As a result, even educated native readers would have struggled to understand texts in this new hybrid language, unless they had a good knowledge of Ottoman Turkic as well as of Central Asian forms of Turkic. However, the collapse of the Republican administration in 1949 led to these efforts at

¹⁸ The Uyghur version of this text has no title; we have therefore used the Chinese title here.

¹⁹ Documents containing claims by Russian Turkestan merchants for debt repayment (QB0043–50) use a language close to modern Uzbek, together with some features of the local writing style for official documents and petitions.

centralised linguistic modernisation being again largely discarded, leaving relatively little imprint on the ongoing development of the language.

One document in the corpus, although issued by the administration, shows how other forms of Uyghur were developing throughout the Republican period in ways that were more accessible to local readers. This is the “Announcement by the Sinkiang provincial government” (Uyghur: *Şiŋ ŋaŋ ũlkũlũk hũkũmãtdũn ä‘lan*, RA005) issued in January 1947. It was for public consumption rather than an internal exchange between officials or institutions, and so needed to be broadly comprehensible. It thus follows the conventions developed by translators and scholars based in the Republican capital in terms of orthography but hues closer to local language practice in morphology, lexicon and syntax. Similar forms of the language are found in Kashgar newspapers at that time. The resulting language could be termed pre-modern Uyghur.

The language in the corpus texts from the post-1949 era (the PA and PC sub-collections) are, unsurprisingly, heavily influenced by Chinese lexicon and politics, but nevertheless are written in what is now considered standard modern Uyghur. In terms of orthography and script, they reflect the three rounds of script reform introduced by the PRC since the 1950s, but, despite the return in the 1980s to the use of the Arabic script, differ in some significant ways from the earlier documents. In terms of syntax and morphology, however, these texts show marked continuities: they reflect the influence of localized language practices in the written texts, based largely on the spoken language of the Tarim basin but with disproportionate influence (relative to population size) from Turfan Turkic (via Ili). The use of Chinese loanwords, which had been pervasive in political and cultural literature in the 1960s and 1970s, diminishes significantly in translated documents, with either Turkic words or words drawn from Arabic-Persian or sometimes English replacing them.²⁰ The corpus thus illustrates the dynamics of language development that have led to modern Uyghur, and particularly the tensions between competing political or ideological ambitions and local forms of language in practice.

Such variations were of practical as well as academic significance for the project and its design: it meant that existing computational tools developed for analysing and processing modern Uyghur texts were often of limited value in processing texts written in earlier forms of the language.

²⁰ There is some use of Chinese loanwords in the translations from *Qiusi* (PC001–50), reflecting the specialised theoretical discussions in that journal and the fact that the translators were highly educated bilingual speakers, with intense familiarity with Chinese terms and thoughts.

Historical Forms of Chinese in the Corpus

The Chinese documents in the corpus illustrate major changes, such as the shift from traditional Chinese characters to simplified characters in 1956, but also other forms of linguistic change that are less obvious. For example, while some of the earlier documents (QA001, QA006, QA008) are written in a higher register conforming to Classical Chinese as found in literary and official texts, many use more colloquial linguistic forms and terms as found in Mandarin (QA009, QA010, QA012 and QB001–50). The later texts use a register that, apart from bureaucratic forms of address at the beginning and end of each text, is closer to spoken Chinese language of the time.²¹ These constitute a form of the language that, apart from some features reflecting the spoken language of that time, was in the process of evolving into the current form of the language.

The language used in the Chinese texts in the RB sub-collection is Republican Chinese, which was shaped by language modernisers in pursuit of an idealised national language based on the vernacular. After much debate between supporters of various northern and southern dialects, the government finally settled in 1932 on a language that relied largely on the Beijing dialect (Weng 2018: 621–5). The form of that language favoured by officials is illustrated by the Chinese-language articles in the corpus from the *Mengzhang yuebao* (RB001–90). These show the use of Japanese idiomatic expressions and some terms or concepts borrowed from European languages, creating a form of language similar to modern standard Chinese in terms of morphology, while differing in terms of lexicon. The Chinese texts from the 1980s onwards, including laws and regulations issued by the central government of the PRC (PA001–50) and theoretical-ideological pronouncements by the ruling party and its leaders (PC001–50), illustrate the increasing standardization of the language in the PRC era.

Processing and Preparing Documents

In order to produce the corpus, the project had to carry out a number of procedures to select and prepare the texts for inclusion in the corpus. These turned out to be by far the most time-consuming element of the project's work. Firstly, the texts had to be identified and collected. Major existing collections of historic Uyghur documents are already available, with some of their contents online, including the Annotated Turki Manuscripts from the Jarring Collection Online (ATMO) corpus, based on the Lund Collection; the related Chaghatay 2.0 project; the Harvard-Göttingen Xinjiang Minority Newspapers Digitization Project; and the Jarring Collection at Lund. For our collection, we drew instead from sources which have so far not been made available online, in particular the 91-volume set of Qing archival

²¹ Similar language is found in the Chinese texts of Documents RA001–03 and RA005.

documents from Xinjiang (QXDX 2012) and the 100-volume set of facsimiles of Republican-era journals relating to minorities (Xu and Li 2006).

After selecting the documents, we had to develop a model for Optical Character Recognition (OCR) that could recognise and digitise texts in forms of Uyghur from before the 1950s. Over several months, Merhaba Eli, an expert in Natural Language Processing (NLP) for Uyghur, worked on developing and retraining digitisation tools for this task, using the online manuscript-recognition platform Transkribus. Her aim was to develop a form of OCR that would be able to recognise the script in newspapers from the 1930s, and she was able to develop a relatively effective model (provisionally named “UyghurMergedModel2B”) for this task. The model scored an error rate of 5.98% in initial tests, well below the level of 10% recommended as acceptable by Transkribus (Eli and Barnett forthcoming).

Even with a low error rate for the documents digitised using this model, we found that manual review of the OCR results was exceptionally time-consuming, because each text had to be checked not just for errors in machine-reading, but also for indistinct images in the originals and mistakes by scribes or printers. In addition, we had to develop editing protocols for marking omissions, ambiguities, errors or orthographic variants in the texts, as well as to determine when and how to retain, add or indicate line-breaks, page-breaks and page-numbers in the documents. Each text had to be checked at least twice for these tasks. This was especially difficult with the pre-1950s documents, which needed to be reviewed by editors with specialist knowledge of historical forms of Uyghur and Chinese, especially in the case of documents where the original was poorly printed, blemished, or used many unorthodox or non-standard spellings. Documents that had been manually keyed in also required careful checking.

A number of intermediary computing tasks had to be completed before the texts could be imported into the corpus. These included standardizing and adding metadata, developing naming systems for files, converting documents from various formats to .txt format, cleaning-up variant forms of punctuation (different Unicode settings are sometimes found for periods and other punctuation marks in Uyghur documents, including marks that look identical to the naked eye), and correcting problems with Right-to-Left conversion by some software tools. An additional stage involved adding hyperlinks to each item in the corpus catalogue to enable quick links to the text of each document.

To enhance the search capacity of the corpus, we also sought to add basic NLP tags to the texts, by first segmenting the texts (adding word boundaries) and then by adding tags indicating the part of speech and lemma for each word. We tested a number of software tools that can tokenise and identify parts of speech and lemmas in modern printed Uyghur texts. Our initial tests of these tools found that Stanford’s CoreNLP and NLPcube both achieved an accuracy rate of 88.6% for part-of-speech tagging with these texts. In terms of identifying lemmas in those texts, CoreNLP scored 79.2% on our initial tests, whereas NLPcube scored 73.4% (Faggionato

forthcoming). Unfortunately, we did not have time in the project to retrain a tool to improve these scores or to process pre-1950s Uyghur documents.

Using the Corpus for Semantic Study

The focus of the pilot project has been on technical development and on the creation of a preliminary online resource for further study by researchers. However, the team has begun work on three studies to demonstrate the potential of the corpus as a research tool. The first involves further study of the historical variations in language and script indicated by the materials, as described above. The second involves the study of unpaired texts—that is, articles that were published in Chinese in ostensibly bilingual or multilingual publications such as the *Mengzhang yuebao* but not translated into Uyghur. That study aims to identify topics and news that were not considered suitable at that time for the Uyghur readership. The third involves a keyword study, noting changes in the usage of certain terms in Uyghur and the related translation strategies (Steenberg and Pekiniy forthcoming). The study used the HUCC “to probe for certain terms, meanings and distinctions and their appearance or disappearance at certain historical times,” and used the aligned Chinese texts in the corpus “to identify some of the linguistic distinctions, especially when they were being made in one but not the other language and to look for synonyms or almost-synonyms and their changes over time.” In particular, the authors used the corpus to trace the use of the term *medeniyet* in Uyghur texts in relation to two Chinese terms which it has generally been used to translate—*wenhua* (culture) and *wenming* (civilisation). Until recent times, *medeniyet* had been used to translate both of these Chinese terms, making it difficult for Uyghur writers to differentiate between a local culture (increasingly presented in contemporary Chinese writing and political thought as secondary to the majoritarian national culture and as implicitly in need of improvement by the state) and an enduring civilization, equal in worth to any other civilization and not necessarily subject to modernist discourses of backwardness. The distinction between these two terms, culture and civilization, became standardized in Uyghur only after 2005, when the Uyghur sociologist Abdujelil Qarluq published three articles in which he proposed that term *medeniyet* be used only in the sense of civilisation (*wenming*), while culture (*wenhua*) was to be rendered by *kültür*, a term taken from Turkish. That suggestion remains a subject of debate among Uyghur scholars. Steenberg and Pekiniy note that, irrespective of terminological issues, the distinction between the two concepts seems already to have been present in Uyghur without it being formally delineated. Their study demonstrates the potential of corpus methodology in the study of ongoing processes of linguistic, conceptual and translational change in Uyghur and its shifting relations to Chinese language, politics and discourse.

Conclusion

Although the project encountered numerous technical delays in preparing and processing the documents for inclusion in the corpus, the final product, with its 200 pairs of aligned documents, and the preliminary studies demonstrate the value of corpus methodology in the study of modern translation history, such as in the case Chinese and Uyghur. As a resource, we expect the corpus to facilitate and stimulate research into, among other topics, diachronic changes in Chinese-Uyghur and Uyghur-Chinese translation practices, into the selection by administrations of keyterms for use in both Chinese and Uyghur public documents, and into the indications in these texts as to shifts in Chinese policies and ideologies for the management of Uyghur peoples over the last century or more.

Appendix: Using the Corpus

The HUCC is deposited both in the Github and Zenodo repositories. It is thus fully accessible to the public. There are two main ways to use the HUCC: either online or by downloading files from either of the repositories.

The online method involves first browsing the corpus catalogue. The catalogue contains the metadata for each of documents in the corpus. It lists the 201 texts in Uyghur in the corpus that were translated from Chinese and the corresponding Chinese texts to which they correspond or from which they were translated. It also includes the 78 Chinese-language documents from 1940 issues of the *Mengzang yuebao* that were not translated into Uyghur. These documents are arranged according to the six sub-collections, with the Uyghur texts listed in the first columns of the catalogue, starting from the Qing-era documents and ending with the files from the PRC period. Each document is identified in the catalogue by its genre and period, and information is given about the author of the document (where known), its title in Uyghur, a translation of the title in English, its date of publication, and, where applicable, the source document from which it was translated, followed by details of the Chinese text corresponding to each item.

To access the text of each item, the user can click on the identifying number in the first column (“File ID”) for each document-pair. This will open a new window showing a folder containing the file names of the two versions of each document: one version, marked by “-T” or “-U” after the file name, being the text in Turkī (if before 1950) or Uyghur, and the other version, marked by “-C” after the file name, being the Chinese text from which it was translated or to which it corresponded. Clicking on a file title will show the contents of the file in text form.

An online user can also browse each sub-collection by clicking on the two-letter code for that sub-collection, and then opening each file in turn.

Some users will want to see the files with their Natural Language Processing (NLP) tags. Because of limitations in the ability of currently available computational

tools to process historical forms of Uyghur or Chinese language found in the pre-1949 documents in our corpus, we were only able to add these tags for documents in modern Uyghur or modern Chinese, i.e, the post-1949 documents in the PA and PC sub-collections. The Uyghur documents in those sub-collections show tokenization, Part-of-Speech (PoS) tags, and lemmatization, while the Chinese documents are tokenized, have PoS tags, and show sentiment analysis. To access the tagged versions of these files, a user should click on the PA or PC folders. The tagged (processed) versions of the files are included as a zip file in each of those two folders, with one zip file for the Uyghur-language documents and another for the Chinese-language documents.

The second method for using the corpus requires downloading. This has the advantage that the contents of the corpus can then be searched at the word or character level. To download the corpus, click on the folder for each sub-collection, and then download the zipped file for the Uyghur-language documents or the zipped file for the Chinese-language documents in that sub-collection.

Once downloaded and decompressed, the files can be loaded into a desktop corpus tool such as AntConc. In some cases, some adjustment might be needed to the settings of the tool to ensure it recognises the Uyghur and Chinese character sets. For example, in AntConc, under the Global Settings tab, Character Encoding must be defined as Unicode (UTF-16). It is also sometimes necessary to go to the Token Definition area, again under the Global Settings tab within AntConc, to click on “Append Following Definition” and to then paste in the Unicode Character Set for Uyghur or Chinese in the box below.

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Taboos and Euphemisms in the Conditions of Nomadic Life of Kalmyks

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The tabooing of lexical units and especially the personal names of elder relatives and respected people in the society is a phenomenon common to many nations. The most common are the personal names of parents and elder relatives in many peoples.

And in this case, we are talking about the taboo in general and the taboo of personal names of older relatives of the husband, as well as the same names, the bearers of which are completely strangers. Even the personal names of small children, regardless of their relationship to the speaker, if they coincided or even were only consonant with the names of her husband's older relatives, were not pronounced by the Kalmyk woman.

In addition, a Kalmyk woman had to taboo not only personal names, but also names of animals, plants and the most common objects if they coincided with the names of elder relatives and people respected in the society. This is the general sociocultural basis that constituted the most important principles of tabooing personal names by married women.

At the same time, a Kalmyk woman had to absolutize the principle of tabooing. If she had to taboo a man's personal masculine name, arsln, meaning "lion", she could replace this name with another name, such as bars "tiger". This principle obliged her to find any other name adequate by any similarity as a euphemism. This principle also complicated in practice the position of the Kalmyk woman because she also had to taboo common words that coincided with people's personal names, for example, if a man's name was Yylə from the word yl "business", the Kalmyk woman had to taboo also simple coincident or consonant words like yln "cloud" or ylh "crush".

The same can be said about the practical tabooing by a Kalmyk woman of words that have only consonant origin, for example, if the tabooed personal name of a person Buurl means "gray-haired", words like buur "male camel", buurkh "to come into decay" often consonant with it should also have been subject to tabooing.

Very revealing in this respect is the information of a Kalmyk woman, who reported the following, which has become a vivid example of this type of tabooing: "*Urksblyn teltr'*", her translation is as follows:

Urrmlyn yozurt: There, beyond the river,

Uulha maalhag: At the base of the tree,

Jomlchchg: The howler has eaten the howler to the ground.

In this text, only one word is used in its natural meaning. It is the word yozurt. Yozurt is "base, root". All other words are euphemisms. The name urskhl, "stream", in the gender case, is taboo. In fact, the word is a river. Urgml "plant" in the gender case. In fact, it refers to a tree, which in Kalmyk is called modn. The word uulha "howling" is used instead of chon "wolf". The word maalkha "puking" is used instead of Khən "sheep".

This informative text shows the diversity and vastness of the tabooed lexical units used by Kalmyk women in their everyday speech. However, the number of animals whose names themselves were subject to tabooing is not numerous. But the names of many animals were tabooed because Kalmyk women tabooed the personal names of respected people, first and foremost the names of her husband's eldest relatives.

There were cases when Kalmyk women could not pronounce their surnames, which in Kalmyks represented the personal names of her husband's father or grandfather. And it looked funny when she was demanded not by a Kalmyk, but by some official of Russian nationality. And in the absence of any Kalmyks nearby. Thus, the names of her husband's older relatives, especially the names of her husband's father or grandfather were not only tabooed, but were absolutely forbidden to her.

It must be said that women who were skillfully tabooed enjoyed great authority. They were famous far beyond their ulus as women who respected and honored their ancestors and the entire lineage of their husbands and, naturally, their children.

And this was also attributed to her linguistic abilities and high culture, which absorbed the valuable heritage of her ancestors. There were anecdotes about such Kalmyk women. One such woman was told that she even tabooed the names of her family's dogs.

True, in today's Kalmyk society it is already a rarity. But in the past, this was an obligatory form of people's behavior in society. And this applies first and foremost to female people, especially married women.

Naturally, these kinds of phenomena could not appear in society on their own. Taboos and euphemisms of this kind were, of course, conditioned by the socio-cultural conditions of the Kalmyks' nomadic way of life in the past. People who lived, for example, in the *odnoliyurt* in the boundless steppe, had to adhere to the rules of certain canons of life and feel morally and morally secure for themselves and their families. At the same time, ethical norms of behavior in the presence of not only relatives, but also completely unfamiliar people were also developed.

At the same time, it should be noted that the names of animals are not on the mandatory list of names that must be subject to taboo.

Euphemisms for names of animals occur, as noted above, in cases where the name of a person formed from the name of an animal is tabooed.

However, there were cases when the name of the animal was tabooed by the Kalmyks, regardless of the coincidence of the personal name of the person, when the animal itself posed a direct or potential threat to people or their household. One-time taboos, of course, the creation of a corresponding euphemism was a frequent phenomenon for the Kalmyks. Euphemisms of this type were also characteristic of other Mongolian, as well as Turkic and Tungus-Manchurian languages.

A.M. Shcherbak noted euphemistic names of the bear among the Turks of Siberia and especially among the Yakuts, which express a more respectful attitude of man to this animal than to the wolf, is conveyed by words expressing a more respectful attitude of man to this animal. The bear is transmitted by words: "father" (Khakass), "father", "old man", "grandfather", "uncle", "uncle" (Altai), "mother" (Tuva), etc. (Shcherbak 1962, 130). In Tofalar the names of different parts of bear's body are tabooed (Rassadin V.I. 1971, 143).

Thus, taboos and euphemisms that occur in the Kalmyk language are fundamentally different in their significance for the cultural functioning of the society. The introduction of such orders in interrelations of people, in particular, the principle of a Kalmyk woman's behavior, especially in observing the norms of tabooing personal names and forming euphemisms, was based on the universal principles of high moral, mutual respect and benevolence taking into account the conditions of the society during the nomadic period.

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Digital Portal “Folklore of the Peoples of Siberia”

Anna A. Grinevich

Introduction

Currently, there is a social order in folklore studies for digitizing and providing public access to the accumulated materials that are stored in the archives or are scattered across hard-to-reach small-circulation publications. Systematizing and integrating folklore resources into the common scientific space is still an unsolved problem of Siberian folklore studies. Modern methods of ontological engineering and corpus linguistics can help effectively solve this problem.

Ontologies are becoming in great demand in the humanities, and in particular in cultural studies and folklore studies. Researchers in different countries are working to digitize and share the cultural heritage of their people (Hyvöonen, 2009; Luchev, 2008; Emadi, 2014). Archives, libraries, and museums are figuring out ways to present their data in RDF triples (Marden, 2013).

In Russia an attempt to systematize photo, audio, video and text materials related to the folklore of the indigenous peoples of Siberia is the digital portal “Folklore of the peoples of Siberia”¹. Being more than just a repository of resources, it provides tools for annotating texts based on ontology of a subject domain. For the multilingual Siberian region, systematizing and accessing the traditional cultural heritage is a pressing matter.

The approach proposed in the article is aimed to formalize the subject domain of Siberian folkloristics using one or more ontologies and then develop an information system providing tools for research and analysis on its basis. The complexity of the problem is, first of all, that the subject area is weakly formalized.

Domain Ontologies

To support the study of the Siberian folklore, it is necessary to formalize the subject domain and related materials: texts, multimedia resources, scientific articles and participants of the study.

As mentioned above, the subject area of folklore is weakly formalized. Materials differing in nature could be classified by various criteria. The description of folklore materials is carried out both through the characteristics of the form and its internal conceptual analysis. For this reason, the subject area cannot be described with a single ontology and is represented by a variety of ontologies, each of which describes a specific part of the subject area.

The information system distinguishes two types of ontologies. Meta-ontology provides a formal description of a collection of materials and forms a navigation basis. Subject domain ontology (or domain ontology) is used when annotating folklore texts. The system can contain multiple domain ontologies and only one meta-ontology.

The meta-ontology was developed on the basis of CIDOC-CRM standard ontology (CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model)² — a formal ontology intended to facilitate the integration, mediation and interchange of heterogeneous cultural heritage information. This model is an international standard certified by the ISO³.

The main concepts of the CIDOC-CRM are Events related to Actors, Time-Spans and Places. We adapted Events to describe a process of collecting and preparing folklore resources. An event is defined by its time-span, place, actor and result. Actors are persons who are performing actions, i.e. persons involved in the preparation of materials: collectors, translators, people responsible for transcribing audio recordings, etc.

¹ Digital folklore portal “Folklore of the peoples of Siberia”. Homepage, <https://folk.philology.nsc.ru/>.

² CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model. Homepage <http://www.cidoc-crm.org/>.

³ CIDOC-CRM ISO page, <https://www.iso.org/standard/57832.html>.

Some properties related to Actors, Places and some other entities could not be expressed in CIDOC-CRM in an appropriate way, so we enriched it with properties we needed. Some of these properties were imported from the FOAF, DBpedia and GeoNames, the rest are new properties we created for this ontology. Thus, we developed three level genre classification, which allows one to characterize resources from different points of view.

It was an issue to draw a boundary line between the domain and meta-ontologies during development. For example, form is an important criterion for distinguishing folklore genres, but the lower level of genre classification is usually semantically conditioned. Genres differ in the type of plot, or the type of characters. This is how folktales in indexes differ, and the same is true for historical songs and other genres. The boundary line is quite formal. The entities required to describe the meta-information of resources (place, time of recording, performer, collector, genre, etc.) we placed in the meta-ontology. The concepts used for navigating the inner structure of the texts are part of the subject domain ontology (for example, a personage system). Meta-ontology describes resources and events related to collecting and preparing, forming the basis for navigation and interface. Subject domain ontologies provide navigation within the resources and are thematically oriented.

The domain ontology was developed for annotating texts. Thus, the Personage system is a semantic characteristic of a folklore piece. Personage system as a part of the domain ontology allows one to reveal typical personages in the texts and to make a search on the basis of this markup. Domain ontology is established to reveal typical elements in texts on national languages. The Personage system differs People, Gods and Animals. Description also contains a list of roles (priest, king, fool, forest giant, etc.). The search of cultural universals was a central task for developed ontologies, that's why the personage system was supplemented with such common roles as Trixter, Culture hero, Great Mother, etc., which allow researchers to compare different traditions.

Building up the System

The system includes four blocks: Repository Block (ReB), Annotation Block (AnB), Domain Block (DoB) and Viewer Block (ViB). The Repository Block includes an XML parser and a service for generating meta descriptions of resources. A user uploads the DOCX table, fills out the form and saves the resource in the system repository.

Folklore texts were digitized as tables in .docx (XML) files. Each table has three columns: the first column contains a string of folklore text in the national language, the second column contains translation of this string into Russian, and the third column is either empty or contains commentaries to the string, made by an expert. Thus, the texts are presented in a line-by-line way.

Multimedia resources associated with texts are added similarly. The connections between the texts and multimedia are quite important for folklore research. A folklore text usually has a bunch of materials attached to it, such as videos where the corresponding folklore tale or song is performed by a native language speaker. The repository also includes information about the researchers who took part in the preparation of the materials and the locations of the expeditions and works.

Populating the repository with new resources is a semi-automatic process. ReB includes a parser that reads an input document and extracts national text, translation and commentaries line by line. A user has to fill a form, providing resource description in accordance with the meta-ontology: title, relations with events and other properties. After a user submits a form ReB creates three text files, places them into the filesystem, and creates a description in the meta-ontology, linking it with the corresponding Actors, Events, and other objects.

Annotation Block implements tools for representing subject domain ontologies and text annotations and provides ontology-based navigation through the text annotations. The user of the system can markup classes, properties and instances of subject ontologies in the text and indicate relationships between marked entities, which will be displayed in markup.

Users annotate texts manually. Before a user is allowed to annotate a text, he/she should select domain ontology. When the subject domain is defined, the user utilizes the annotating tools to select text spans, where the concepts from the domain ontology occur and make connections between the spans and the corresponding domain entities. Annotating tools are part of the AnB. DoB provides an expert with tools to maintain domain ontologies.

Collection of Materials

Currently the database of digital portal contains collections in Russian, Khanty, Shor, Altai, Koryak, Khakass, Buryat and Alyutor languages. Collections are unequal. Thus, the digital collection of Russian folklore consolidates in the database resources collected in Novosibirsk region and published from 1969 to 2021. The collection includes 1663 resources (983 texts, 599 notations, 81 audio samples). The regions presented in the electronic database cover substantial part of Novosibirsk region: Novosibirsk, Berdsk, Bolotninsky, Vengerovsky, Dovolensky, Iskitimsky, Karasuky, Kolyvansky, Kochenevsky, Kochnovsky, Krasnozersky, Kuibyshevsky, Kyshtovsky, Maslyaninsky, Moshkovsky, Ordynsky, Chanovsky districts. The Russian language part of database has been replenished with copies of articles and book fragments devoted to the history, culture, folklore and ethnography of Russians of Novosibirsk region. Digital corpus also contains photo illustrations and round dance schemes. Audio collection consists of 40 expeditionary recordings made in the southern regions of the Novosibirsk region in 2021 (village Shipunovo (Suzunsky district) and village Lebedevka (Iskitim district)). Recordings made by the

Melodiya company in the village Balman in 1977 (17 audio recordings), in village Severnoye in 1987 (9 audio recordings), in village Bergul in 1981 (14 audio recordings) are also stored in the data base. The collection represents mostly singing folklore. A special place in the collection is occupied by wedding folklore.

The epic is presented in the data base in Buryat and Shor languages. Collection includes 2 epics in Shor language (“Kyun Kyok who saw the sun” and “Kara Sabak” performed by shor kajchy V.E. Tannagashev) and 2 epics in Buryat language (“Gurgaldai aged at fifteen” and “Tolei is the only [son] of Tokhonoï” performed by Bura Barnakov).

A unique collection is created in the Koryak and Alyutor languages. These are unpublished materials united around the trickster character Kutkinjak.

Conclusion

This work is aimed at formalizing the description of the folklore resources of the peoples of Siberia and the Far East, creating an information system that would integrate disparate materials in the languages of Siberian ethnic groups, accumulated over a long time. Such a system should expand the range of available resources and provide experts with new opportunities to analyze the cultural constants of Siberian peoples.

In the future, the system will be supplemented with thesauri and dictionaries, and will also develop towards a community building platform and form a virtual research environment (Carusi, 2010) in the field of linguistics of Siberian minority languages and folklore study. For researchers such a system provides opportunity for collaborative research, which is not widely used in humanities. Implementing a virtual research environment for keeping and presenting data has already shown a positive effect in the studies of antiquity, where “methods and outputs have become more complex and multi-modal, and less-attributable to the labors of an individual scholar” (Clivaz, 2021). The collaborative approach changed the methodology of ancient studies. Concerning folklore studies, we believe that integrating various materials and resources in a single environment and supplying researchers with additional research matters will open up opportunities to carry out comparative research on a fundamentally new level.

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Sustaining Oral Traditions and Languages in Siberia by Means of Hybrid Publishing and Dissemination Strategies

Erich Kasten

The Publication of Archival Collections of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures – Objectives and Implementation

One of the most important goals of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures is the sustaining of indigenous knowledge, which is expressed primarily in oral traditions of the peoples of Siberia, whose languages, however, are endangered in many cases. For this reason, we have been conducting research for almost 30 years, mainly on Kamchatka, in order to record oral traditions in the respective indigenous languages – Itelmen, Even and Koryak – and to prepare them together with indigenous experts for later publications. After the recording, the main steps include the film editing as well as the transcription and translation of the transcribed texts into Russian and English. Due to their trilingual presentation, these texts can reach different target groups. The records reproduced in the respective indigenous languages serve for use in the respective local communities of Siberia, whereby their members can

identify more closely with the contents. They are also used in the local school curriculum in the subjects of indigenous languages and local and natural history. With the help of the Russian translation, the materials can be shared with other peoples of Siberia, enabling and further stimulating discourses on common topics. Finally, the English translation serves to provide insightful ethnographic and linguistic information to be discussed within the international scientific community. In alignment with the aforementioned different target groups, the Foundation for Siberian Cultures has thus developed its hybrid publishing and Internet program over the past ten years, which is presented in more detail below.

Our research on Kamchatka began in 1993 with the project “Ethnicity Processes” funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). In the spirit of the method of co-production (Krupnik 2021: xxxv) with indigenous communities, which has more fully unfolded especially since the beginning of the 2000s, a village meeting was first convened in the Itelmen settlement of Kovran. At this meeting, members of the community expressed their urgent concern to document the Itelmen language with the help of the last about 20 remaining speakers and to develop new teaching materials that would make stronger reference to the immediate local and cultural contexts than in previously existing language textbooks. Such a textbook, geared to specific local expectations and with which the community could identify, was published in 1997, after several minor test versions to get feedback from the local community. The final publication received considerable response in other parts of Kamchatka as well, paving the way for us to undertake similar joint projects there later. After being used for many years, a new edition was published in 2012, supplemented by a word index.

With the advent of new technical possibilities, a first multimedia CD, combining texts of the book with audio files, was published as early as 2000 – as we soon realized that the given endangered languages and the indigenous knowledge conveyed in them should be communicated and preserved primarily in oral and not only in written form.

A few years later, as digital technologies continued to advance, previous CDs were replaced by DVDs, with which oral traditions could now be conveyed even more vividly in their respective local and cultural contexts and often accompanied by related activities. Initially, the corresponding printed trilingual texts were attached as booklets to these DVDs that contained Russian and English subtitles as well. With the establishment of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures and the associated publishing house, these booklets could finally be published as (multilingual) publications in the series “Languages and Cultures of the Russian Far East” starting in 2010. With the help of time markers, the print editions are coordinated with the spoken texts on DVD, so that parallel learning with both different media proved useful.

In the meantime, we had already been providing open access to our publications at www.siberian-studies.org since 2003, before the discussion about this type of free access on the Internet really took off within the scientific community. Before that,

at the end of the 1990s, Michael Dürr and Erich Kasten had already initiated making their own works available on the Internet in this way. With regard to the Pathways to Reform series of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (2002–2005),¹ the editor Erich Kasten could arrange with the publisher that a free open access edition of the three volumes could be made available on the Internet at the same time. Such, at that time, novel approach was implemented even more consistently after the establishment of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures a few years later as part of its publishing program. Thus, all publications appear as print editions and are simultaneously available free of charge on the Internet.

The rapid take-up and growing importance of the Internet and new communication technologies and platforms, especially within indigenous communities among peoples in Siberia, required a further reorientation of our publishing strategies. The production and provision of conventional DVDs proved increasingly obsolete, especially for young people, who now access video content largely or almost exclusively via the Internet by their smartphones. Thus, in 2019, the web portal Digital Humanities of the North (<https://dh-north.org>) was developed, into which the previously existing web archive www.siberian-studies was also merged, while the latter eventually – just like the CDs produced around the year 2000 – no longer met current technical standards. Via dh-north.org all recorded texts are now available as videoclips together with optional multilingual subtitles free of charge on the internet. We have chosen the transparent platform Vimeo in order to exclude unwanted advertising and any possibility of commercialization of the content. In parallel, the corresponding books continue to appear as print and as free electronic editions on the Internet. This ensures the widest possible dissemination and use of the content, especially in indigenous communities, which is in line with our main objective – the preservation and further development of endangered indigenous knowledge.

During this year (2021), with the support of the Eastern Partnership and Russia program of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, another website was created – Environmental knowledge of the North (<https://ek-north.org>). Through social media sharing or a special videoblog, it aims to stimulate interactivity and participation of young people in indigenous communities – who are, as mentioned before, our main target group when it comes to preserving endangered languages and oral traditions in Siberia. By posting their own video clips, they can comment on certain topics or supplement them with their own contributions in order to exchange ideas among themselves. Stephan Dudeck conducted a special study on media usage among young people in Western Siberia as part of the current project mentioned

¹ <https://dh-north.org/publikationen/people-and-the-land-pathways-to-reform-in-post-soviet-siberia/de>, <https://dh-north.org/publikationen/properties-of-culture-culture-as-property-pathways-to-reform-in-post-soviet-siberia/de>, <https://dh-north.org/publikationen/rebuilding-identities-pathways-to-reform-in-post-soviet-siberia/de>.

above (Dudeck 2021). This website ek-north.org focuses on the topic of “sustainable nature relations in times of climate change” and aims to stimulate important discourses on this topic, also with regard to the discussion of values in Russian civil society.

As in the accompanying book publication (Kasten 2021), this topical issue is discussed on the basis of indigenous environmental knowledge, social and cultural anthropological research findings, and natural science data and analyses in the multi-voiced diversity of different methodological approaches and genres of knowledge that is intended. Increased use is made of oral traditions of indigenous people in their indigenous languages, which are thus related to modern contexts of survival, giving special value to these records.

Next year (2022), the focus will be on arts and crafts in Siberia. For this purpose, Siberian collections in German museums are to be explored. This will be done on the basis of co-productions with indigenous communities. Methodologically, the work will build on experiences of earlier similar documentation on Even and Koryak objects (Kasten 2021b), with comments and narratives by local experts in the respective indigenous languages being recorded on site and specific techniques being documented at the same time. In this case, too, the texts are published multilingually as a book and simultaneously made available on the Internet as a video film with optional subtitles. By presenting such texts with reference to museum objects that have been largely inaccessible for a long time, indigenous communities are in this way reintroduced to important parts of their material cultural heritage. This kind of “virtual return” is of great importance, especially for indigenous artists, as an inspiration for their work, as we have already been able to observe on many occasions (Kasten 2021a: 242).

In the following, so far available print and online publications of the book series *Languages and Cultures of the Russian Far East* of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures are presented in more detail.

Materials on the Itelmen Language and Culture

The *Historical-Ethnographic Materials for Teaching the Itelmen Language* (Istoriko-etnograficheskoe uchebnoe posobie po itel'menskogo iazyku) was a first richly illustrated textbook created by Klavdiia Khaloimova, Michael Dürr, Erich Kasten and Sergei Longinov at the request of the local community of the village of Kovran (see above). The book was first published in 1997 by the publishing house “Kamshat” in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski and as a new edition by the publishing house of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures (2012). With this book we intended, if possible, to familiarize children with their language, even if only fragmentarily, before it was taught to them there like a foreign language – which is generally a problem in teaching endangered languages when they are no longer spoken at home or in everyday life. Illustrations and topics from the immediate and daily experienced environment should ideally motivate grandparents and parents, who were still at least partially

proficient in the language, to explain situations to their descendants at preschool age on the basis of the illustrations with the help of Itelmen terms and sentence fragments. Thus, the book differed fundamentally from existing standardized textbooks, such as had previously been prepared for all peoples of the Soviet Union according to common patterns. In close consultations with the last Itelmen speakers, it was frequently pointed out to us that local language varieties had not been taken into account in earlier language textbooks – a problem with which we were confronted again in our later work on Even and Koryak language teaching materials. Thus, the older generation in particular could only identify to a limited extent with the language taught in school to their descendants, which was apparently one of the reasons why the Soviet language teaching programs for the preservation of indigenous languages were ultimately rather unsuccessful.

In our historical-ethnographic teaching materials, we initially (in the first edition) made an effort to include at least three local varieties, but it was not until the CD released in 2000 that we were able to reproduce others as well with audio examples. The indigenous community, along with us, felt this was a breakthrough, as language teaching materials could now also incorporate the more familiar oral style of teaching. In the meantime, this CD (of which some more were produced at the time on various topics) has become technically and methodologically outdated, but it provided the basis for the *Itelmen Talking Dictionary*,² which so far continues to prove useful.

In 2008, the Itelmen project at that time was included in the UNESCO Register of Good Practice in Language Preservation.³

Later, other publications were added to round off the program even more. These include the text collection *Itelmen texts* (Kasten and Dürr 2015), which was based on a new conception that has meanwhile also proven useful for other language teaching materials that we have since produced for other indigenous languages of Northeast Siberia. Here, the transcript of the recorded text is reproduced in the original language on the left side of the book, and the Russian and English translations on the right side, respectively. The video accompanying the text is made available on the Internet with Russian and English subtitles⁴ (see the example “Remembrances of my childhood in Moroshechnoe”⁵). In more recent times, given the rapidly changing media usage, the print and online editions of the books are increasingly taking a back seat to the use of the video materials.

In the beginning of the 20th century, V.I. Jochelson had recorded texts in the language of the Itelmen on the west coast of Kamchatka. They refer mainly to Kutch, one of the most important figures in the mythology and storytelling tradition of the Itelmen. These texts, *Itelmen Tales – collected by V. I. Jochelson in 1910–1911*,

² https://userpage.fu-berlin.de/mduerr/ITD_E/itd_E.html.

³ <https://bolt-dev.dh-north.org/files/dhn-pdf/kasten2009.pdf>.

⁴ <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/itelmenische-sprache/en> (see: Recordings in Itelmen language).

⁵ <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/erinnerungen-an-meine-kindheit-galina-zaporockaja/en>.

have been published by us (Khaloimova et al. 2014) for the first time in the modernized Itelmen transcription commonly used today, with a Russian translation, so that they can now be used by Itelmen themselves. With this edition, and along with the still outstanding collection of texts from Bogoras at the beginning of the 20th century, whose publication Jonathan Bobaljik is currently preparing for the Foundation for Siberian Cultures, the earliest qualitatively and quantitatively relevant Itelmen text collections are once again generally – and especially for the indigenous community – accessible.

In 2015, the new edition of *Methodological Recommendations for Teachers of the Itelmen Language* was published (Khaloimova 2015, first edition 2000), which serves primarily as a grammatical guide for future language teachers at pedagogical universities.

Based on the extensive cartothèque of the late linguist Aleksandr P. Volodin, Chikako Ono, together with Jonathan David Bobaljik, David Koester and Michael Krauss, compiled the nearly 500-page *Itelmen dictionary Pol'nyi itel'mensko-russkii slovar'* (Ono et al. 2021).

With all the publications mentioned above we consider our publishing program on language and learning materials on Itelmen to be rounded off and complete in itself, especially since, given the now remaining only two speakers, hardly any further documentation on this topic is to be expected.

Materials on the Even Language and Culture

The first Even language recordings by Erich Kasten were made in the late 1990s during stopovers in Ezzo and Anavgai while on the way to the west coast of Kamchatka, the main residential area of the Itelmen, where they were continued and further deepened in the early 2000s within the framework of various projects.

Together with Marina Tarasova, the Even teacher in Anavgai, and later with Raisa Avak, the director of the Institute for Teacher Training in Palana, the materials on the variety of Even spoken in Central Kamchatka were prepared, and following a similar pattern as the Itelmen text collection (cf. above), the first volumes were published: *Even Tales, Songs and Worldviews, Kamchatka, Bystrinski district* (Kasten and Avak 2014) and *Clothing and Decorative Arts, Evens, Kamchatka, Bystrinski district* (Kasten and Avak 2018). DVDs with Russian and English subtitles have also been published to accompany both print and online book editions, and corresponding videos are also provided at <https://dh-north.org>.⁶ The publication of further extensive records in Even on nature use (reindeer herding, fishing, and hunting) and life histories will probably continue until the end of 2023.

The text collection *Even tales by Dar'ia Mikbailovna Osenina* documents another variety of the Even language spoken by Even groups around Topolinoe in Yakutia (Lavrillier and Matic 2013). This year (2021), environmental knowledge of the Even

⁶ <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/kleidung-und-dekorative-kunst-der-evenen/en>, <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/erzahlungen-der-evenen/en>, <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/gesang-und-tanz-der-evenen/en>.

on climate change was also recorded there, which is currently being prepared for publication.

Materials on the Language and Culture of the Koryak People

Erich Kasten started his first Koryak text recordings in 2000, after Aleksandra Urkachan, his later main local research partner on Kamchatka, invited him to her native village Lesnaya. The since then evolving particularly extensive archive of Koryak language records of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures still requires several years of full systematic processing. First of all, there is a subdivision into the two main varieties of Koryak, Chavchoven, which is spoken mainly by Koryaks who live more inland and engage in reindeer herding, and Alyutor or Nymylan of those Koryaks who live on the coasts and are mainly sea hunters and fishermen. A further subdivision is made by region, where further linguistic variations are found among the groups mentioned. Based on these varieties, texts are then thematically grouped for publications.

First text collections together with DVDs are already available according to this structure on the Nymylans around Lesnaya on the northern west coast of Kamchatka: *Songs and Dances, Coastal Koryaks (Nymylans), Lesnaya, Kamchatka* (Kasten 2016)⁷ and *Worldviews and Ritual Practice Coastal Koryaks (Nymylans), Lesnaya, Kamchatka* (Kasten 2017).⁸ On the variety of Nymylan spoken around Lesnaya, Aleksandra Urkachan and Erich Kasten had prepared learning tools for teaching in schools and other cultural institutions in Kamchatka (Echgan).⁹ They serve primarily as a guide for teachers who teach special indigenous topics such as traditional ecological knowledge and handicrafts along with Koryak language. Other documentaries on fishing at Lesnaya and reindeer herding (in the Karaginski district) have already been made available as videos with subtitles at <https://ek-north.org>.¹⁰

In preparation are publications on Chavchoven, spoken by Koryaks in the Bystrinsky district in the central part of Kamchatka, and on Alyutor in northeastern Kamchatka (expected in 2022). After that, further publications on Nymylan of the Koryaks around Lesnaya will follow on still outstanding topics of nature use, arts and crafts, narratives and life histories. The processing and publication of records on Alyutor and Chavchoven, spoken by Koryaks living in the Karaginsky district (in the central part of Kamchatka on the east coast), may take several more years.

A special topic for all the mentioned varieties will be narrative traditions to be published, mostly centered on the complex and contradictory mythological figure of

⁷ <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/gesaenge-und-taenze-der-korjaken/en>.

⁸ <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/weltbild-und-ritual-der-nymylanen-von-der-westkueste-kamtschatkas/en>.

⁹ <https://dh-north.org/publikationen/echgan/en>.

¹⁰ <https://ek-north.org/dossier/sommerlager-der-rentierhirten/en>, <https://ek-north.org/dossier/fischfang-der-korjaken-bei-lesnaja/en>.

the raven, for which particularly extensive records exist. Life histories will be another revealing topic to be carefully studied. They reflect how the people concerned experienced the serious – often painful, but sometimes also hopeful – social and economic upheavals that accompanied the politically ordered reorganizations under Soviet times to kolkhozes, sovkhozes, and the particular challenges during perestroika – whereas the interpretations of historians are often biased according to the prevailing Zeitgeist.

Materials on the Language and Culture of the Yukaghirs

The following publications are already available on the language and culture of the Yukaghirs: Il'ia Kurilov: *My life, songs* (Odé 2016a) and Akulina Innokent'evna Struchkova: *Various tales, for the Yukaghir children* (Odé 2016b).¹¹ On the topic of climate change, Viacheslav Shadrin has recorded texts in Yukaghir this year (2021), which are expected to be published in 2023.

Materials on the Language and Culture of the Peoples of the Amur Region

Several text collections have already been published on the Nanai as well as on some of the numerous smaller peoples of the Amur region in the Russian Far East, such as *Negidal tales, stories and customs* (Pakendorf and Aralova 2019). As part of a project funded by the Gesellschaft für Bedrohte Sprachen e.V., the text collections *Nanai tales* (Bel'dy et al. 2012) and (later) *Shaman healing texts* (Bulgakova 2016) were published on the Nanai. In a project planned for 2022 with the Ethnological Museum in Berlin, comprehensive texts on Nanai arts and crafts are foreseen to be recorded and published as a text collection (with video films on <https://dh-north.org>) – especially with regard to users from the indigenous communities concerned – to complement the planned museum catalog.

Materials on the Čukči Language and Culture

During a previous research visit in 2014 and as part of an ELDP project in 2021, texts in Chukchi language have been recorded in Chukotka and will be published in 2023.

Extensions of the Languages and Culture Series and Their Integration into the Publishing Program of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures

The Languages and Culture series will soon be expanded regionally to include Languages and Cultures of Western Siberia and the Russian European North. First collections of texts on the Khanty (Stephan Dudeck) and the Nenets (Roza Laptander) are planned. It is also foreseen to establish the series Languages and Cultures of Southern Siberia.

¹¹ For audio file see: <https://dh-north.org/dossiers/jukagirische-sprache/en>.

The Languages and Cultures series is an integral part of the broader and coordinated publishing program of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures, with publications from different series being related to each other wherever possible. For example, the comprehensive Itelmen dictionary *Pol'nyi itel'mensko-russkii slovar'* (see above), published in the scientific series Studies in Linguistic Anthropology,¹² is an offshoot of the Languages and Cultures series, aimed primarily at the scientific community for practical use. The Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology¹³ series publishes internationally authoritative (peer reviewed) monographs, in most cases dissertations. Often, they comprehensively reproduce indigenous knowledge in their own languages, as in the work *An Arctic Indigenous Knowledge System of Landscape, Climate, and Human Interactions: Evenki Reindeer Herders and Hunters* (Lavrillier and Gabyshev 2017). The Bibliotheca Kamtschatica¹⁴ and Bibliotheca Sibiro-pacifica¹⁵ series include new editions of classic ethnographies on these regions since the mid-18th century, some of which include extensive text collections (e.g., in Waldemar Jochelson and Waldemar Bogoras), as well as initial or early language documentation (e.g., in Georg Wilhelm Steller). The Exhibitions and Symposia¹⁶ series, in turn, contains edited volumes that address specific topics, often as a result of workshops or projects, usually in an interdisciplinary manner, such as, with respect to oral traditions, *Oral History Meets Linguistics* (Kasten et al. 2017) and *Sustaining Indigenous Knowledge: Learning Tools and Community Initiatives for Preserving Endangered Languages and Local Cultural Heritage* (Kasten and de Graaf (2013).

In addition, the Foundation for Siberian Cultures has a small, specialized library with relevant and partly rare works on Northern Siberia and North America, some of which are not listed in library catalogs for Germany. Particularly noteworthy are, among others, complete annuals of local newspapers from northeast Siberia from the important 1990s, when freedom of the press still prevailed there.

Conclusion

Within the context of being embedded in the diverse web and print collections and corresponding research activities of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures, the hybrid formats and platforms on oral and written literature of Siberian peoples presented in more detail here enable broader access for different user groups. All video, audio, and text files are also permanently archived at ELAR (the archive of the Endangered Languages Documentation Programme, ELDP, Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities), where they serve primarily linguistic analyses – in some cases in scholarly transliteration.

¹² <https://dh-north.org/verlag/studies-in-linguistic-anthropology/en>.

¹³ <https://dh-north.org/verlag/studies-in-social-and-cultural-anthropology/en>.

¹⁴ <https://dh-north.org/verlag/bibliotheca-kamtschatica/en>.

¹⁵ <https://dh-north.org/verlag/bibliotheca-sibiro-pacifica/en>.

¹⁶ <https://dh-north.org/verlag/exhibitions-and-symposia/en>.

Due to the monolingual nature of most scientific websites of this kind, however, access for users from Siberia is hardly possible or attractive. In contrast, the websites of the Foundation for Siberian Cultures, which are designed to be user-friendly for these regions, are aimed specifically at the indigenous communities, and there above all at young users. This is the only way to preserve indigenous knowledge and endangered languages, i.e., with the help of materials that are used as extensively as possible through interactivity. Thus, the hybrid archiving and publication program of the Siberian Cultural Foundation offers a valuable complement and interface to conventional archives and databases, which, due to their often unilateral orientation, can in most cases only partially fulfill their claim of preserving endangered languages and traditions for the reasons explained above.

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National Press of Siberia and the Far East: in the Context of Russian History from the 20th to the Beginning of the 21st Centuries

Irina V. Lizunova and Evgeniya V. Pshenichnaya

In this article, there are definitions of the features of functioning of the national press of Siberia and the Far East throughout the 20th – the first decade of the 21st centuries. From the moment of emergence and at different stages of the history, the national press carried out the major sociocultural tasks: serving as a universal remedy of information and cultural education of the native population of Siberia and the Far East, been the catalyst of development of national writing and education as well as national literature. Newspapers and the magazines issued in national languages, promoted preservation of ethnic traditions and originality, made a certain contribution to interaction of cultures of the people of Russia. The given statistics of release of the printing periodical press at the beginning of the 21st century testifies to degree of a sophistication and a maturity of institute of the national press, growing amount of challenges in expansion of media space of the country. In this article there is also analysis of various points of view for a state role in development of print national media, their influence on evolution of ethno culture of own people.

More over the importance of finding by the national press of bigger independence is located as well. There is a revelation of the value of the national periodical press in interaction of cultures of the people living beyond the Ural. Furthermore, you will find the reasons for necessity of expanded use of languages of the people of Siberia and the Far East for the press.

The publication of printed materials in the national language is an integral attribute of the social environment of any ethnic group. The development of the national press determines, among other things, the level of attention and support of small nations by society, the degree of consistency and maturity of the state in which these people live¹. The printed word not only performs the function of preserving the language, national originality and identity, but also contributes to the revival and ethnocultural evolution, the progress of a small nation, and involves it in interaction with the cultures of other nations².

It is paradoxically, but the background of a sharp surge in the national self-awareness of the peoples inhabiting Siberia and the Far East, experts started talking about impending threats – those negative trends that contribute to the disappearance of the national press from the country's media space. To find out the state of the modern print media in national languages, let us turn to facts, statistics and the authoritative opinion of media experts. In this study, we tried to answer the following questions:

- What role did the national press play in the interaction of cultures of peoples living in the region in different periods of its functioning?
- What is its participation in the evolution of the ethnoculture of its own people?
- What is happening in the printed national media today?
- At what stage of development are they? Rebirth or crisis?
- What should be the participation of the state in supporting the national press?

In order to answer to all these questions, we started with definition of „national press”. The term “national press” is usually used in the following meanings. The first one is all newspapers and magazines published in the national region (close to the concept of “regional press”), or this is a work of periodicals addressed to the people living in the given territory. The second concept encompasses print (electronic) media published in national languages. In this article, we will use the last understanding of the term.

The process of forming national periodicals among the nations of Siberia, the Far East and the Far North dates back to Soviet times (in some cases, a little earlier).

¹ Mishanin, Yuriy, Mishanina, Aleftina, 2012, 32–35.

² Akhmetova, Anna, 2013.

Periodic press among small nations began to emerge with the completion of the development and introduction of writing, and the formation proceeded under the influence of the growth of national self-awareness, changes in socio-economic development, and the national and social structure of the region's population. The formation of the national press fell on the 1920s to early 1930s. In Novonikolaevsk (now Novosibirsk) – the capital of Siberia in the early 1920s. Several newspapers appeared and functioned in the languages of national minorities living due to various circumstances in Siberia: *Sibiriyas Tsinya* (Latvian for *Struggle of Siberia*, 1920–1936), *Azad Seber* (Tatar for *Liberation of Siberia*, 1921–1936), *Taisnaiba* (the only newspaper in Latgalian in the USSR, 1926–1937), in *Od Eryama* (in Mordovian), *Siberi Teataya* (in Estonian, 1920–1936), etc.³

The beginning of the revival of the national press of the small nations of the North was the release of pages, appendices in the languages of these nations in their places of residence. Thus, one of the first to publish materials in the Nanai language was the newspaper of the Nanai district of the Khabarovsk region. In order to spread the new alphabet, a special newspaper *Uchebny Put* (*Tachiochiori Pokto*, 1932, the village of Naihin; since 1935 – *Stalin's Way*) began to be published there. As the national writing developed, interest in the newspaper increased significantly. In 1935, about 27 issues were published with a one-time edition of 300 copies, and in 1940, 110 issues with a circulation of 1,000 copies. The newspaper *New Way*, the magazine *New Life* (*Sikum Baldin*, No. 1, 2, 1936) were published in order to study the Nanai language in the pedagogical school in Nikolaevsk-na-Amure⁴.

Articles in the national languages of the small nations of the North were regularly published in regional, district and regional print media in Siberia and the Far East in the second half of the 1930s. Materials were published in the Nivkh language in the regional newspapers of Sakhalin and in the regional newspaper *Sovetsky Sakhalin*. In Nikolaevsk-na-Amure there was an attempt to publish a separate newspaper *Nivkhsckaya Pravda* (11 issues were published before 1935). Articles in the Aleutian language periodically appeared in *the Aleutskaya Pravda*, and in *the Okhotsk - Evenkiysckaya Pravda* in Evenk. In Anadyr, the district newspaper *Sovetskaya Chukotka* (*Sovetskaya Chukotka*, 1933; since 1993 *The Far North*) published materials in the Chukchi and Eskimo languages. In Magadan, there was the experience of publishing a regional newspaper *Sovetskaya Kohyma* (1935) in the Nivkh language as well as newspapers *Aidit Orochel* (1935–1936) and *Orotty Pravda* (1936–1941) in the Evenk language.

According to some researchers, in 1935 there were six newspapers in the languages of the indigenous nations of the North in the Far East. Four of them were published in the national language, two others were mixed (Russian-Even and Nanai-Russian, circulation 500)⁵.

³ Posadskov, Aleksandr, Lizunova, Irina, 2007.

⁴ Onenko, Sulungu, Nanai-Russian Dictionary: 12800 words, Moscow. (In Russ.).

⁵ Elfimov, Alexander, 1980, 80–83.

At the stage of creating national periodicals, the printed word taught literacy and enlightened, promoted the development of languages, preserved national traditions and, in general, formed the ethnic culture of the people. At the same time, the new created Soviet national press adapted to the needs of power and built into the organizational structure of the media and propaganda. Without fail, in the languages of the peoples of Siberia and the Far East, who had their autonomy within the RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic), several newspapers (sociopolitical, youth, children's, regional) and magazines (literary, artistic, and professional) were created and functioned. For example, by the end of 1930, five national newspapers were published in the Gorno-Altai Autonomous Region (now the Altai Republic). The main one was *Kyzyl Solun Tabysb* (*Red News*, founded in 1922), then it was renamed *Oyrottyñ Jepi* (*Oyrot Territory*, since 1923). It was replaced by *Kyzyl Oyrot* (*Krasnaya Oiroitiya* has been published since February 25, 1925), then it has begun to be called *Altaydyn Cholmony* (*The Star of Altai*) since January 1948. In addition to the main officialdom, there were published the regional *Kyzyl Shor* (*Krasnaya Shoria*, the village of Kuzedeevo), the newspaper was published only in a joint Altai-Russian version in 1930–1932; youth newspaper *Komsomolets Oirotii* (1930–1936) in Russian and Altai languages; the newspaper for the peasantry *Kolkhoz Izbine* (*Kolkhozny Put*, Ongu dai village, in 1930–1931) in Altai, then in the Altai-Russian version. One-time circulation of all periodicals was 6,100 copies⁶.

Having emerged in the conditions of the rise in national consciousness, many newspapers did not last long. Affected by problems of a material and technical nature – the absence or weakness of the printing base, finances, trained editorial and journalistic personnel, qualified translators. Often there was simply no audience capable of reading in their native language.

In the post-war (WWII) years literary and art magazines replenished the national press of the region: in 1946 an almanac was published in the Tuvan language *Ulug-Khem*, in 1947 *Baigal* in the Buryat language, in 1952 *Khakassia Ottary* in the Khakass language, and in 1959 *Akh taskhyl*. In general, the process of expanding the space of the Siberian-Far Eastern national print media was suspended. This was the result of the ideological orientation towards the accelerated rapprochement of nations, their merger in the future and the emergence of a new historical community of people – the Soviet people. The process of gradual displacement of national languages by Russian, which has a higher potential and sphere of influence, began⁷.

The decline in circulation and the termination of the publication of some periodicals in the languages of the indigenous and small peoples of Siberia, the Far East and the Far North also reflected the policy of national leveling. This was facilitated by the assimilation of peoples, a decrease in the number of people who know the

⁶ Ivanov Pyotr, 1970.

⁷ Korotceva Viktoriya, Mosesova M.V, 1988.

language of their nation and want to learn it⁸, and year-on-year decrease in the readership of national newspapers and magazines.

The process of publishing periodicals in national languages in the Asian part of Russia in post-Soviet times proceeded irregularly. Revolutionary transformations of all spheres of society in the 1990s affected the existence of the national press in two ways. On the one hand, they brought to life a powerful surge of national spiritual awakening, increased the attention of society to the problems of language and education, and significantly expanded the readers' interest in publishing books, newspapers and magazines in national languages. With the beginning of the democratization of national relations in Russia, the desire to preserve the native language acquired the character of a popular movement. It was based on the principle of the survival of ethnic groups, when the slogan "The language is alive – the people are alive" was filled with concrete content. On the other hand, the democratization of the press contributed to a radical change in the number and composition of participants in the emerging regional media space.

The wave of national awakening led to the appearance in periodicals of numerous materials in the languages of the small nations of Siberia, the Far East and the Far North living in this region, gave rise to the creation of new national newspapers and magazines. Thus, in Chukotka newspapers have systematically published individual pages in the Evenk language, periodically published materials in the Evenk language and in newspapers of various "uluses" of Yakutia since 1990. In Kamchatka, the newspaper *Aydit* is published with parallel texts in Russian and Evenk languages. Some articles in the Evenk language were published in magazines: *The Pink Seagull* (Yakutia, 1991–1992), *Aiverette* (Chukotka, 1989–1995). In 1989, in the Eveno-Bytantai region of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), in order to develop the Evenk culture and the Evenk language, there was created a new regional newspaper *Bytantai uottara togalni* (*Lights of Bytantai*), which quickly became popular among readers.⁹ Eskimo-language publications sporadically appear in two district newspapers of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug such as Chukotka and Murgin Nutenut. The literary pages in the languages of indigenous peoples (Ulchi, Evenki, Nanai) appeared in the regional, city and large-circulation newspapers of the Khabarovsk Territory. They were presented by authors of different nationalities, special headings, dedicated to the cultural and historical events of the native land¹⁰. *Nivkh-div* (*Nivkh word*) is a unique newspaper, which has been publishing in Sakhalin since 1990. It is the only one publication in the world published in two dialects of the Nivkh language.

⁸ Petruk, Alexey, 2014.

⁹ Krivoshepkin, Andrey, 1994.

¹⁰ Lazareva, Larisa, 1996, 131–133.

Having changed the founder, survived the transformations of the 1990s, stepped over or approached the 90th anniversary, the largest sociopolitical newspapers of the titular nations of Siberia and the Far East continue to exist and retain their readership and the so-called status of “newspapers of influence”¹¹ (Posadskov, 2000): *Buryad Unen* (*Buryat Truth*, since 1921) in Buryat; *Altaydyn Cholmony* (*Star of Altai* published since 1922) in the Altai language; *Khabar* (*Izvestia, News* since 1927) in the Khakass language; *Shyn* (*Pravda*, since 1925) in Tuvan; *Kyyym* (*Iskra*, since 1921) in the Yakut language.

The modern picture of the national print media is constantly changing: some periodical projects are established, registered, exist, published rarely, irregularly, others disappear without ever seeing the light of day. Most of the current national newspapers and magazines are published in small print runs from 500 to 1000 copies. The downward trend in the national press gained momentum in the mid-1990s: the number and circulation of periodicals began to decline sharply. According to official statistics, over the first post-Soviet decade, the number of such newspapers decreased by more than 2 times, from 56 to 23 units, and circulation more than 10 times, from 53,722 to 4438 copies. (Tables 1–2).

Table 1. Issuing of newspapers in the languages of the indigenous peoples of Siberia and the Far East in 1990–2021 (number of titles)

Language	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021
Altaic	1	2	3	4	4	6	9	10
Buryat	15	7	7	7	9	7	10	9
Tuvinian	6	8		1	9	12	10	9
Khakass	1	1		1	3	3	3	3
Yakut	29	27	10	12	35	44	43	43
Mansiysk	1		1	1	1	1	1	1
Nenets	1	1	1		2	3	4	3
Khanty	1		1	1	2	3	2	2
Chukotka	1			1	2	2	2	2
Total	56	46	23	28	67	81	84	82

Table 2. Issuing of newspapers in the languages of the indigenous peoples of Siberia and the Far East in 1990–2021 (circulation, thousand copies)

Language	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021
Altaic	1675	1376	89	673	158,0	639,8	805,1	409,6

¹¹ Posadskov, Alexander, 2000.

Buryat	3556	1548	2833	3912	718,0	575,3	720,0	325,1
Tuvinian	14153	4229		16	1609,0	1451,9	614,6	349,0
Khakass	1600	603		420	458,0	373,2	424,3	173,0
Yakut	32707	22118	1412	974	7975	6677,4	4092,1	1882,5
Mansiysk	2	12	30	23	30,0	35,0	46,2	20,7
Nenets	19	21	36		56,0	792,9	486,7	127,1
Khanty	36		38	39	87,0	80,1	132,2	60,8
Chukotka	24			1	44,0	52,7	206,5	99,3
Total	53772	29907	4438	6058	11135	10678,3	7527,7	3447,1

The share of magazines for the same period decreased by 4 times in terms of titles from 11 to 3 and 20 times in terms of circulation from 607 to 30 thousand copies (Tables 3–4).

The formation of a new system of national periodicals fell on the second half of the 2000s. The renewal of the thematic repertoire, the emergence of publications designed to meet the new information needs of the audience, made it possible to achieve (and even surpass in some cases) the previous quantitative positions of newspapers and magazines by the end of the first decade of the 21st century. However, it was not possible to achieve the previous level of circulation figures for the national press (Tables 1–4). The tables are compiled according to the statistical collection “Press of the Russian Federation” and “Russian Statistical Yearbook” for 1991–2021.

Table 3. Issuing of magazines in the languages of the indigenous peoples of Siberia and the Far East in 1990–2021 (number of titles)

Edition language	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021
Altaic	1	1		2		1	1	1
Buryat	3			3	3	3	1	1
Tuvinian	2	1	3		1	2	2	2
Khakass	1				1		1	
Yakut	4	3			9	14	10	8
Total	11	5	3	5	14	20	15	12

Table 4. Issuing of magazines in the languages of the indigenous peoples of Siberia and the Far East in 1990–2021 (circulation, thousand copies)

Edition language	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2021
Altaic	4	9		16		5,0	4	3,0
Buryat	36			6	17	6,0	6	3,0
Tuvinian	57	30	30		14	18,5	14	0,9
Khakass	2				2		1	
Yakut	508	100			160	375,6	213	93,9
Total	607	139	30	22	193	405,1	238	100,8

Statistics show that by the end of the first decade of the XXI century the national press of Siberia and the Far East found itself in an ambivalent state. The numbers of titles and circulation are slowly growing, but they are unlikely to be able to reach the 1990 level in the near future. The situation is aggravated by the fact that small-circulation newspapers and magazines lost the system of state orders and distribution networks and now they do not reach the reader, despite the fact that most of such press is subsidized from the state budget. The demand for information and the demand for local periodicals is increasing, but newspaper circulation is falling; the high cost of subscriptions and mail services affects¹². According to media experts, such publications will soon disappear from the regional media space if they are left without government support¹³.

The national press faced the challenges of the time, each of which is more complicated than the others and they pose a real threat to its further existence. Among them:

- market challenges, inability and unwillingness of the national periodicals to switch to market mechanisms of functioning;
- material and administrative dependence on local authorities and the need for subsidies from the regional budget;
- loss of readership due to decrease in the number of readers who speak national languages¹⁴; duplication of information with Russian-language newspapers and magazines; low quality translation; boring marketing, etc.¹⁵;
- fierce competition with the electronic media, the latter squeezing out the traditional press from the emerging regional media space.

¹² Borisov, Igor, 1995, 19–20.

¹³ Mikhailov, Nikolay, 2012.

¹⁴ Voldina, Maya, 2012, 34–36.

¹⁵ Martynenko, Nelli, 2000, 12–15.

Modern trends in the narrowing of the area and the influence of national media in the information field of the country for national culture, and, accordingly, for the interaction of cultures of the nations of Siberia, the Far East and the Far North can be tragic: “The collapse of the national press really threatens the preservation of the languages of small nations and nationalities, (...) and, ultimately, the life of the nation itself”.¹⁶

To overcome the unfavorable factors influencing the press, the only possible way out is proposed - state support for the publishing practice of the national press, books and brochures. This is spoken about from the high rostrum; the existing problems are discussed at authoritative scientific forums. In particular, the head of Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications (Rospechat) Mikhail Seslavinsky at the V Forum of Regional and National Media, held in June 2014 in Kazan, made a statement that the regional and national press are not business projects and in the market conditions, the press in national languages cannot compete with commercial media. Therefore, the state is obliged to subsidize it. In 2013, the Rospechat allocated an impressive amount of 116 million rubles to support the national media. However, in the opinion of the forum participants, these funds are still not enough¹⁷.

The level of support for the press in general and for national newspapers and magazines in particular in the region varied. The economic transformations of the 1990s, the transition to market mechanisms of management, material and financial problems led to the fact that “the national press of Siberia was unable to survive without being embedded in the structures of power and not being an appendage of these structures”¹⁸. According to researcher Oleg Yakimov, “the national newspaper is doomed to be embedded in the structure of power and, therefore, to serve its interests as long as it needs it”.¹⁹

Predicting the future of the region’s national print media, researcher Asiya Bekbaeva points to “the importance of the national press gaining greater independence, turning it into an institution expressing the views of national and confessional groups of the population.” At the same time, she notes the need for state subsidies to national publications as a measure “guaranteeing the preservation and expansion of the network of publications in national languages”.²⁰

Recognizing the importance of state support, we note that, being an uncontested way of saving the national press, it will contribute to either conservation or partial (but no more) improvement of the existing situation. The transition to market

¹⁶ Mikhailov, Nikolay, 2012.

¹⁷ *Regional and national press are not business projects // State TV and Radio Company “Tatarstan”*: <http://trt-tv.ru/news/regionalnaya-i-nacionalnaya-pressa-ne-biznes-proekty/> (accessed 30.11.2021).

¹⁸ Yakimov, Oleg, 2000, 57–63.

¹⁹ Yakimov, Oleg, 2000, 57–63.

²⁰ Bekbaeva, Asiya, 2011.

mechanisms of management will never happen. According to the good judgment of Nickolay Mikhailov “in a country with a market economy, this cannot and should not last forever. The national media will sooner or later have to learn to survive in the media market or disappear”.²¹

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²¹ Mikhailov, Nikolay, National press of post-Soviet Russia: a look into the future in: *Dialogue of cultures in the context of globalization*, St. Petersburg, 2012. (In Russ.).

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The Problem of Preserving the Dungan Language in the Republics of Central Asia

Madzʹhun Djamilya Suleymanovna

The Dungans (Huizu) moved from China to the territory of the Semirechye of the Russian Empire in 1878–1883. The Semirechye Dungans speak one of the dialects of the Chinese language and throughout their history have used four different writing methods: Chinese hieroglyphic, Arabic script, Latin and Cyrillic. While in China, the Hui used the hieroglyphic script and the Arabic script “shchyo zhin”, mainly for interpreting the Qur’an. After their resettlement to Semirechye, the Dungans used “shchyo zhin” to write their works, mainly of religious content, and before the 1917 revolution they even published their works in a printing house in St. Petersburg.

One of the conditions of the Russian government when allowing Dungan refugees to move to Russia was the establishment and maintenance of schools for teaching children the Russian language and literacy at its own expense. Due to the meager material base of Russian-Dungan schools and the lack of frequent contacts with the Russian population, by the time of the October Revolution of 1917, the number of literate Dungan men was relatively small. Since the urban Dungans were ranked

among the bourgeois class, they carried out military service as soldiers of the Russian army, where they learned the Russian language and literacy. The main part of the Dungan population communicated with the neighboring indigenous population in the Turkic languages – Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Uzbek or Tatar.

In the early 20s. of all the peoples living in the modern territories of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, the Dungans were the most culturally and politically backward ethnic group. According to the data for 1926, out of 17 thousand Dungans, only 4.4% of the adult population were literate¹. After the victory of Soviet power, the solution of the tasks of cultural enlightenment of the masses was impossible without the creation of their own written language for the unwritten peoples of the Soviet East. The state demarcation of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in 1924 marked the beginning of work on the transition of the writing of Muslim peoples from Arabic to Latin script. The new writing was a powerful means of ideological and political influence on the broad masses, which was aimed at changing the traditional ideological baggage and religious worldview of the masses. Prominent Soviet Türkologists and Sinologists of Russia rendered invaluable assistance in the development of a new writing system for the peoples of the East. In 1926, the All-Union Committee of the New Turkic Alphabet (NTA) appealed to the All-Union Academy of Sciences with a request to assist the Dungans in compiling their own alphabet. Scientists from Moscow and Leningrad responded to this appeal – professors L.V. Shcherba, E. D. Polivanov, V.M. Alekseev and A.A. Dragunov².

In 1928, a script based on the Latin alphabet was created for the Dungans, which made it possible to start teaching in schools in their native language in the areas of their compact residence. The work on the creation and translation into the Dungan language of school textbooks, scientific research of history, language, culture and the development of writing was carried out in the sector of Dungan culture, created at the Kyrgyz Research Institute of Cultural Construction in 1932 and continued until 1938.

The historical experiment of the Soviet government to create a new socialist community “the Soviet people”, in addition to positive and fateful for ethnic groups, had a number of negative consequences. With the reckoning of the people among the “non-literate” ones and the creation of a new written language for them, the ethnos cut off from its historical roots, losing the connection between generations, the accumulated scientific knowledge and the national cultural written heritage. For example, dozens of names of Dungan scholars (hui) are known in history: educators, poets, pioneers of the Middle Ages, who made a huge contribution to the development of China, world science and culture. But the Soviet Dungans did not have a clear idea of the historical past of their people and the contribution of

¹ Алматынський областной государственний архив (Almaty Regional State Archive). Ф. 489. Оп. 1. Д. 283. Л. 205.

² Калимов А. (Kalimov A.) А. Драгунов – основоположник дунганского языкознания (Dragunov is the founder of Dungan linguistics) // Разыскания по общему и китайскому языкознанию (General and Chinese linguistics research). М.: Наука (Moscow: Science), 1980, 122.

the Hui to the development of the economy and culture of the Middle Empire, since the starting point of the development of culture and the formation of socialist nations and nationalities was associated with the measures of the Soviet government to accomplish the cultural revolution.

The creation of writing had a great historical importance for the development of culture and enlightenment of the Dungans, familiarization to the achievements of the great Russian culture, and through it – to the achievements of world culture. This fact consolidated the separation of the Soviet Dungans from the main body of their Chinese relatives, which was reflected in the name of the people. In China, this ethnos is called Huizu, and Soviet Huizu are known throughout the world as Dungans. Progressive transformations in the field of national politics and culture, which began after the 1917 revolution, contributed to the development of national cultures and the growth of national identity of large nations and ethnic groups. But already in 1938, an end was put to the reforms carried out in the field of national and cultural construction: the People's Commissariat for Nationalities was liquidated, as well as organizations engaged in the culture and education of national minorities, national districts and national village councils (Sovets) were abolished.

Teaching in the Dungan schools in the native language and even teaching native literacy ceased. Out of 8 Dungan schools that existed in 1937 in Kyrgyzstan, from September 1, 1938, five were translated into Russian, one into Kyrgyz and one into Uzbek. In addition, the Dungan departments in the pedagogical technical school in Frunze (Bishkek) and in the pedagogical school in Alma-Ata, where teachers were trained for Dungan schools, were closed. Today, the Dungan textbooks and works of art written in the Latin alphabet can be considered lost to the main body of the Dungans.

Despite the fact that since the 40s. most of the national languages in the USSR has been changed the writing system from Latin graphics to Cyrillic, work on the creation of a new script for the Dungans was not carried out. Since the Latin alphabet was withdrawn from circulation, the Dungan population for almost 20 years (from 1939 to the mid – 50s) was practically devoid of their written language. Until the 60s. of the last century, the Dungans continued to use “shcho zhin” and the Latin script.

The solemnly proclaimed goal of the party – the merging of nations into a single community – the Soviet people – and the prospects for such a unification with the countries of the socialist camp, contributed to the wider spread of the Russian language in the world, and in the country this process was accompanied by a narrowing of the functions of national languages and practical displacement from social and political life languages of small peoples and nationalities. The absence of written language and the need to resume cultural and educational activities were most acutely felt by representatives of the Dungan creative intelligentsia, who were not affected by repression, and were spared by the war. Concerned about the problems of the cultural development of their people, Ya. Shivaza, Y. Yanshansin, Y. Tsun-

vazo, A. Kalimov, H. Yusurov and others appeal to the high party and state authorities with an insistent request to translate the Dungan language into Cyrillic and resume research works in the field of Dungan studies.

In 1952, by order of the Presidium of Academy of Sciences of the USSR, a special commission was formed to create a new Dungan alphabet based on the Cyrillic alphabet. The conference adopted a draft of a new alphabet based on Russian graphics. An impetus for the resumption of cultural and educational work among the Dungans was given by the meeting of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, held on March 26, 1957, which discussed the issue “On measures to improve mass political work among the Dungan population of the republic.” According to the adopted document, from the 1957–1958 academic year in schools with a predominance of Dungan children, teaching of the native language and literature was introduced in grades 5–7, and the Dungan newspaper “Shyuodi chi” (“Znamya Oktyabrya”) began to be published³.

The work on the creation and dissemination of Dungan writing intensified the development of Dungan fiction, carrying out research in the field of history, language and culture, contributed to the hey-day of folk poetry and a general rise in the spiritual culture of the Soviet Dungans. During these years, a unique situation was created when parents wrote in Dungan in Arabic script, children – in Latin, and grandchildren – in Cyrillic.

After the collapse of the USSR, funding for newspapers, television and radio programs for representatives of national minorities from the state was stopped. This burden fell on the shoulders of the national cultural centers and associations of the Dungans of the USSR that began to be created, which later disintegrated into the associations of the Dungans of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

The Dungan script based on the Cyrillic alphabet used to date has played a huge role in the development of culture, education and world outlook of the ethnos. However, one cannot discount the negative impact that the frequent change of writing had on the preservation of historical memory, the continuity of generations, access to the written heritage and cultural values of their ancestors. The almost 150-year existence of the Dungans far from the main ethnic mass of the Hui led to the conservation of their ancient language, giving a new vector to its development by enriching it at the expense of Russian and the languages of neighboring Turkic peoples.

Today the Dungan language and writing are going through hard times: every year the number of Dungans who can read, write and speak their native language is decreasing, there are even proposals to abolish the teaching of their native language in schools. In Kazakhstan, the teaching of the native language was abolished in the

³ Центральный государственный архив политической документации Кыргызской Республики (Central State Archive of political documentation of the Kyrgyz Republic). Ф. 56: Центральный комитет коммунистической партии (большевиков) Киргизии, г. Фрунзе (Central Committee of the Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) of Kyrgyzstan. Frunze city). Оп. 4. Д. 1091. Л. 99–102.

schools of the densely populated Dungans a few years ago. In Kyrgyzstan, the number of hours of the Dungan language in schools has halved: today, a lesson in the native language is conducted once a week.

The Chinese writing system itself has existed for over two thousand years. Proposals to translate it into Latin or Cyrillic at one time were rejected for fear that the unique, huge scientific and cultural heritage of the Chinese people, accumulated over thousands of years, would be lost. The Dungans, in the last hundred years alone, have changed their writing three times! Along with the loss of writing, the Dungan people lose touch with their historical roots, mother tongue, scientific and cultural achievements of their ancestors, which leads to a change in the self-awareness and ethnic identity of the people. Therefore, the question of the preservation of the Dungan language outside the Chinese territory is of particular relevance due to its uniqueness and insecurity.

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The Main Problems of Study of the Written Heritage of the Kalmyks of Russia and the Oirats of Mongolia and China

Ellara Omakaeva

Each nation has its own history, customs and traditions, worldview and, of course, its own language. The latter is the most important monument of national culture, its quintessence and syncretic expression.

Mongol-speaking peoples inhabited the vast territory, which for a long time remained a “white spot” on the world map. The main goal of this paper is to introduce the role of the national script in preserving, expansion and actualization the priceless written historical and cultural heritage and rich vocabulary of the Kalmyks in the past. This work is devoted to the review and linguocultural analysis of written sources on “todo bichig” (“clear script”).

It is necessary to emphasize the importance of collections of source material about Kalmyks including manuscripts on “todo bichig” found in archives and libraries, their preservation for future generations of scholars and transmission to a wider audience.

These issues in the context of Russian-Mongolian-Chinese-German-Hungarian scientific cooperation have recently attracted more and more attention of researchers (Reckel 2015, 2016, 2020; Birtalan 2011; Birtalan/Omakayeva 2020; Rákos 2002, 2015).

The fact that the Mongolian Nomads had its own national script, on which literary monuments have been created, is of great importance for the full characterization of a particular people or ethnic group (Kara 1997; Omakaeva 2000). The unified Mongolian written tradition collapsed in the middle of the 17th century, when the Oirats began to use their own writing system, called *Zaya-pandit*, after its creator, an Oirat monk of the Hoshut origin. New script “eliminated the many ambivalent spellings of the old Uiguro-mongolian script and closed the gap between spoken and written language” (Reckel 2020). This script underwent certain reforms both among the Kalmyks, who used it officially until 1924, and among their relatives in Mongolia and China (Nominhanov 1976; Omakaeva 2010). It has been preserved as a functioning writing system only in China: The Oirats use it to this day, although the Old Mongolian script is used in the education system.

The Kalmyks, the Mongolic people living on the lower reaches of the river Volga, have a rich traditional culture. The Oirat ancestors of the Volga Kalmyks, some Oirat tribes (Torguds and Dörbeds), left Jungaria for the Caspian steppes in the early 17th century. They became known as the Kalmyks (Rubel 1967). “The Mongolian Kalmyks or Oirat may be living in Europe, but they are still culturally a part of Central Asia” (Reckel 2016, 10). Although closely linked with the other Central Asian nomadic peoples, the Kalmyks have historical and ethnocultural peculiarities which distinguish them from their eastern relatives. Arriving in their new land, the Lower Volga area in Russia, they changed their environment in all respects: climate, way of life, linguistic surroundings. In 1771, the main parts of the Kalmyks, especially Torguds, migrated back to the historical homeland, where they still live today.

As is well known, *Zaya-pandita Namkai Jamco*, the author of the *Todo* script, played a crucial role in the introduction of Buddhism among the Volga Kalmyks. Subsequently, Buddhist temples and monasteries used to be the most important centres of Kalmyk ancient manuscripts. In the 1930s, however, many manuscripts were burnt. Therefore, only very small collections of Oirat sources are preserved today in Kalmykia itself. Many valuable manuscripts are held outside of Kalmykia (Kara 1972; Luvsanbaldan 1975; Rinchen 1999; Sazykin 1988; 1996; Uspensky 2001; Annotated catalogue: 2004– 2005; Gerelmaa 2005; Tsendee 2005; Erdemtû 2011; Turanskaya/Yakhontova/Nosov 2018; Altan-Ochir/Yakhontova/Yampolskaya 2021).

Archival sources on «Kalmyk» subjects can be divided into four large groups:

- Linguistic sources (dictionaries, grammars, etc.);
- Literary sources (written Oirat Buddhist and secular works and bilingual works in Tibetan with Oirat line-by-line translation);
- Historical sources (documents, letters, etc.);
- Folkloric and ethnographic materials (recordings of the ancient beliefs, the epic, tales, songs, sayings and proverbs, riddles, signs, blessings, good wishes, etc.).

It should be emphasized that linguistic sources from the funds of the Kalmyk archives cover the century. The materials of an earlier time are in the archives of Germany (Gerngut) and St. Petersburg, since the beginning of the systematic collection of linguistic material and the purposeful study of the Kalmyk language was laid by the Gernguters, descendants of Czech or Moravian brothers, who in 1765 founded the German colony of Sarepta, 28 versts south of Tsaritsyn by the highest command of Catherine II. In 1836, Zwick managed to take out about 70 manuscripts.

The collection of I. Schmidt disappeared during a fire in Moscow in 1812. I. Schmidt is known as a publisher and a translator into German of Oriental sources (Kulganek 2014). He published a number of texts in Tibetan and Mongolian with a translation of sutras into German [Der Weise und der Thor, 1843]. The archive in Gerngut contains his personal correspondence of 1800–1810 with Erdeni-taishi Tundutov, noyon Jimbya Tundutov, Tsebek, noyon Serebjab Tyumen and other Kalmyks (Kalmyk Old-script Documents of Isaac Jacob Schmidt 2002).

Among old-script historical documents of XVIII century there are letters of the governor of the Kalmyk Khanate Ubashi (Letters of the governor of the Kalmyk Khanate Ubashi 2004). There is a considerable corpus of letters of the Kalmyk khan Ajuka (Susejeva 2009).

There are some dictionaries and grammars from the 19th and 20th century in Western European languages ([Zwick 1852; Doerfer 1965; Krueger 1978/84; Svantesson 2009; Rahmn 2012]). Bilingual and trilingual dictionaries of the 18th–20th centuries are extremely important lexicographic sources for the study of the Kalmyk language in the past. Many valuable handwritten dictionaries of the 18th century are held outside of Kalmykia. For example, Cornelius Rahmn (1785–1853) from Sweden wrote a short dictionary and a grammar of the Kalmyk language, both preserved as manuscripts. He lived at Sarepta amongst the Kalmyks as a missionary in 1819–1823. The dictionary and grammar were published by Jan-Olof Svantesson.

The manuscript section of the Russian National Library in SPb contains a «Dictionary of the Kalmyk Language» from the 18th century. This is a handwritten manuscript (104 pages, 2,988 entries).

I came across this manuscript in the late 1990s in the Manuscript Department of the National Library of Russia. There are practically no Russian borrowings in

the dictionary, only the word *bencilgelan* ‘wedding, marriage’ is found. This is a verbal noun: the verb *bencide-* goes back to the Russian *венчаться* ‘to marry according to a church ceremony’, consists of the root *benc-* (*венч-*) and the verbal derivational affix *-de*, and the noun is formed from the verb with the help of the nominal derivational affix *-lgan* (the replacement of *в* by *б* is quite understandable).

It can be assumed that at least three people took part in the work on this dictionary: 1) the main compiler (the author of the Russian wordlist); 2) a bilingual informant whose native language was the Kalmyk language and who did not always adequately perceive the meaning of the translated words; 3) the third author, who could read the old Kalmyk graphics and transliterate Kalmyk words with signs of the Russian alphabet (obviously, one of the Russian orientalists, because if an educated and literate Kalmyk were in the place of the third author, then all transliterations of Kalmyk words would be replaced by transcriptions) (Burykin, Omakaeva: 1999).

Information about the “Dictionary of the Kalmyk language” is given in “Essays on the history of linguistics in Russia” [pp. 405–406], and information about the Russian-Tatar-Kalmyk glossary (1740) compiled at the Tatar-Kalmyk school in Samara by P. I. Rychkov and Makhmud Gabdrakhmanov is given in the work of M. Nogman (Nogman 1969).

On the eve of the departure of most of the Kalmyks in 1771 to their historical homeland, Adrian Sokolov compiled a German-Russian-Kalmyk dictionary. A.M. Pozdneev’s *Kalmyk-Russian Dictionary* (1916) is held in his personal archive in the Orientalists’ Archive at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS (arch. 44).

The ancient beliefs of the Kalmyks are closely connected with the worship of fire, ancestors, and celestial bodies: the Sun, the Moon, stars and constellations. These beliefs are reflected by the rituals performed during the important events of human life: birth, marriage, and death.

An example of an important manuscript connected with a specific ritual is *Beribolog* «Chapter of the bride». Dealing with the wedding ceremony, it gives prescriptions concerning the hour when the bride must leave her home, the man who must seat her on the horse, the colour of the horse, the prayers to be read, and soon.

Funeral rites and ceremonies are described in the *Ukugseni bolog* «Chapter of the Dead». This ritual text is known among Mongolists under the name *Altan saba* «Golden Vessel». The Oirat manuscript, however, has a different name. When the funeral rites for the corpse have been concluded, the people return home and perform a ceremony of purification. The purpose of this ceremony is to avoid misfortunes, which may have been emitted by the spirit of the deceased. The verbal part of the ritual is the prayer text *Amida-ece xagacan ulegsen dalaha*.

Calendar rites and festivals are very important sources for the study of the Kalmyk traditional culture. The Kalmyks have three types of calendar systems: the ancient seasonal calendar, the 12-year animal cycle, and the 60-year cycle. These calendar systems used to play an important role in the life of the Kalmyks in the past and now.

Here it should be noted that Kalmyk holidays are calculated according to the lunar calendar. And the world lives according to the European solar calendar. That is why the dates of holidays, including the New Year, fall on different dates. Every year there is a difference between the lunar calendar and the solar calendar of several days.

The lunar calendar also has its leap years with 13 months. They happen when a double month is introduced into the lunar calendar once every few years for corrections. This year is the year of the Black Tiger. Kalmyks joined it at the end of November 2021 after the Zul holiday. Relevant rituals include *jilin yasalga* and *mengin yasalga*.

The former is performed periodically every 12th year – at the age of 12, 24, 36, and so on. The latter, on the other hand, is performed every 9th year – at the age of 9, 18, 27, and so on.

Interesting information concerning the origin of the latter ritual is given in the manuscript titled *Menggiyin gol*:

In India there lived a khan whose name was Nakbo. He had a daughter. He had a large and magnificent palace, as well as wise officials. By birth he was of the year of the Tiger. When he was twenty-seven years old, the year of the Dragon arrived and everything changed. His palace became small, his family decreased. In his dream he heard a voice: «Your misfortunes come from the fact that you fell under nine yearly eyes and nine cow eyes (?). To the east of you lives Gyanze, the ruler of the Black Chinese. Send your officials to him and ask him to bum up all your misfortunes and sufferings.» When the khan woke up, he did accordingly.

Kalmyk holidays are calculated according to the lunar calendar. And the world lives according to the European solar calendar. That is why the dates of holidays, including the New Year, fall on different dates. Every year there is a difference between the lunar calendar and the solar calendar of several days. The lunar calendar also has its leap years with 13 months. A double month is introduced into the lunar calendar once every few years for corrections. This year is the year of the Black Tiger. Kalmyks joined it at the end of November 2021 after the Zul holiday.

These samples illustrate the significance of manuscript materials for various types of diachronic and synchronic research.

The field materials also contain interesting dates and information. Joint expedition projects are being implemented. In 2007, for example, the joint Russian-Mongolian expedition project “Folklore and language of Western Mongols (Oirats) in the context of Central Asian oral-poetic and written traditions” (headed by academician D. Tumurtogoo from the Mongolian side, and prof. E. U. Omakaeva from the Russian side).

The choice a certain region of Mongolia (Kobdo and Ubsunuraimag) for the expedition study was due to many reasons. This region attracted the participants of the expedition primarily as a place of localization of the oral and written traditions

of spiritual culture of the Mongolian-speaking sub-ethnic groups of Mongolia, related to Russian Kalmyks and Oirats of China. The expedition carried out refers to the so-called “repeated” expeditions “following the tracks” of the previous gatherers.

The expedition has enriched our knowledge, which had previously been known to us through Vladimirtsov’s pioneering works. Oirat dialect belongs to the western dialects of the Mongolian language. It has many peculiarities in the phonetic system and morphological similarities with Kalmyk language. It is the work of the future to integrate the ideas brought to us by Vladimirtsov with more recent our understanding of the dynamics of changes in Mongolian languages.

So we are planning to fulfill a detail linguacultural description of collected texts provided with translation into modern Kalmyk and Russian to make acquainted the readers with rare samples. We have already published several papers in which we have used the material, both linguistic and folklore, collected during the expeditions of 2007–2014 (Omakaeva, Gedeeva, Gerelmaa 2008; Omakaeva 2014).

Therefore, there are many arguments behind the preservation and actualization of the written heritage of Kalmyks: scientific (research increase knowledge), political (symbolism), social and cultural (ethnic identity), economic (development of tourism in Kalmykia).

It is necessary to carefully study the various types of letters used by Kalmyks (Oirats), all their external and internal links, the relationship of writing with the history and culture, which will reveal the role and significance of written tradition not only in the history of a particular ethnos, but also in history of the nomadic civilization of the peoples of the entire Central Asian region. The study of the written tradition and the samples of writing is important not only for research itself, but also for the preservation of the written heritage of the past as a national treasure for future generations.

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Web Resources on and by Small Indigenous Peoples of Siberia

Deniz Özkan

Siberia is a fascinating field of research. It has now become a part of digital humanities, because the last years have seen an increase of activities in web-based projects on and by the indigenous peoples of Siberia. Many web pages have been created which are available online for users around the globe. They came into existence in the course of projects, in which indigenous people play an important role themselves. They are not simply the object of research (as in colonial times), they do research themselves, in this way science can thrive multiperspectively.

Due to the fact that the scientific engagement in this topic is primarily in Siberia, these new resources haven't become known outside the Russian language sphere up to a scale one would expect or desire.

That is the reason why it is so important to spread the word about the existence of these resources, and make them accessible to the scientific community. This work shall help to increase public awareness, and to facilitate access to all those interested in this topic. This is the first step to create such a collection of internet resources. Due to the dynamic nature of the web, this work will never be complete, and is not

intended to be, but is necessary nevertheless. Over time, its contents will be extended and updated accordingly. Readers are kindly asked to make propositions and additions or comments, which will find their way into a later edition of this work. Any hints on further pages as well as suggestions to improve it are really appreciated!

As we all know, social media had quite an effect on the whole world, connecting people and increasing internet use in all thinkable forms. To bridge the gap of far distances, Siberian people started more and more to make use of these new communication opportunities, leading to a widespread application of the Web.

When first coming to Sakha Republic (Yakutia) in the eastern part of Siberia, in 2015, I didn't even have a smartphone myself, but noticed that virtually everyone, even small children had one using it quite frequently. Especially some messenger services such as WhatsApp or Telegram as well as social media platforms like Instagram or Facebook and also Twitter are widely used. For this reason, one can find shops for cell phones, SIM-cards and telephone contracts all around the Yakutian capital, Yakutsk, but also in the towns across the whole of Yakutia, and of course, notebooks and tablets are very popular, too. Many facilities provide WiFi, and in this way, users can practically communicate for free, a factor that shouldn't be underestimated.

This has to be mentioned, because the cell phone technology and internet connection are crucial for communication, and in this way had quite an impact on daily life itself in this region. Usually, when telling people here in Europe about this topic, they often show a total misconception of Siberian digital infrastructures, as if this technology didn't even reach this part of the world, yet. This is by far not the case. Taking all this into account, we can see quite a potential in web pages even for smaller ethnic groups in distant areas in the future.

Another idea I have in mind is to create a kind of "history" of web pages dealing with resources on indigenous peoples of Siberia. The research could reveal the extent of pages still existing, and those already discarded. This could prevent new ones from falling into oblivion after being considered obsolete by its owners. Unfortunately, there is not so many sources on the history of the development of indigenous topic web pages, or other aspects of this phenomenon. Either these are not easy to find or they simply do not exist yet. The latest of these publications I could discover, which is especially dedicated to indigenous peoples in Siberia, is from 2009, which is in this way at a time, when all the development with the so-called social media was either lacking or at a very low level concerning its spreading across Siberia. And even that publication is rather written like a do-it-yourself book, it gives advice and shows how the Internet works, what possibilities it offers etc. But the section in this book dealing with this topic is hardly longer than 20 pages (Nekrasov: 2009, 113–136).

Another publication, dealing indirectly with this topic is from 2013, which rather describes a project and its impact, but doesn't provide a timeline of the history of other web pages (Poddubikov; Rodinova 2013).

Thus, the question remains: When were the very first pages created dealing with this topic? If there is no real documentation about this yet, it would be crucial to do it, despite it being really hard and time-consuming work.

Why this Work is Helpful

A resource collection can be imagined as a web page bibliography, where the web pages are the books, and the collection is like an index on several levels of specificity. When searching the web all on their own, users can encounter a bundle of problems finding suitable pages for their research, some of them are for instance:

- typed in keywords do not provide useful results
- pages found are:
 - outdated
 - not very reliable
 - even with dubious contents
 - have a considerable number of dead links
- further difficulties and barriers, such as:
 - cyrillic letters (very important for Siberian studies): although it is not a real barrier, the fact
 - that not everyone has a cyrillic layout on the keyboard, or is not very skilled in typing these letters, this can take much additional time and slow down the process to get to pages of interest.
 - language: most pages are in Russian, some even in Japanese, so a glossary of frequent
 - terms could be useful to implement, although translation engines like DeepL or Google Translate can be helpful in this matter.

However, plainly spoken, a fully-fledged manual for web resources – as planned here – would be helpful, to save users' time and nerves. In general, searching the web can be rewarding, but also frustrating and exhausting sometimes. Thus, a tool pointing and leading directly to the source can avoid much of the above-mentioned obstacles.

About the Pages Collected

As already mentioned, this work is intended to share links to resources for those interested in the multifaceted cultures of Siberia and its peoples. By bundling these resources, it shall facilitate the access to this research area.

The contents of the web pages encompass a wide spectrum of humanities, e.g.: linguistics, ethnology, archaeology and history, just to mention a few. Web Domains providing literature in digital form are mainly libraries, museums, academic sections of universities, organisations dealing with indigenous cultures and so forth. The web resources we talk about include books, articles, text corpora, online dictionaries, as well as video-based language courses, broadcasts, documentaries interviews, fairy tales, traditional music and much more. Many of the publications on these websites are available as PDF-files and sometimes accompanied by audiovisual materials as well.

Video contents reaching beyond the academic sphere can also yield useful information. Therefore, these broadcasts have also been added, which are primarily accessible via the video platform Youtube. These materials are well suited to get first glimpses and impressions of the cultures and their surroundings. In the last years these video contents have significantly increased in numbers, of which some have just recently been added by the end of 2021.

Until now, I didn't come across any primarily touristic pages which could be of interest to the scientific community, however, if it fulfilled some criteria such as being written in an indigenous language or providing deeper insights into native culture or other relevant information about the same, one could think of adding it to the collection. Nevertheless, academic resources have priority.

What Kind of Pages are These? Who is the Target Group? What do They Look Like?

Originally, these pages were rather built like registers, with quite a poor, but applicable navigation/user interface. Today, these have advanced quite much, and can virtually look like DVD-menus, with a video playing in the background, sometimes even with music, or they resemble almost computer game menus. Web pages to scroll down, revealing step by step its contents, have become very popular in the recent years, sometimes replacing former Wikipedia-style ones. In some pages it is clear that they are meant to look attractive to a wide range of users, but especially the younger generation. Even native artwork is used for the menus. A global scale comparison (a sort of web ethnography) with pages from other parts of the world could be interesting. That is, how they present the contents, to what extent, moderate or even aggressively, really native or romanticized.

Structure of the Future Paper

1. (Meta-)Regional Pages and Organisations

1.1 TV-Broadcasting (which is available on platforms such as Youtube or the like)¹

2. **Pages on Specific Indigenous Groups** arranged by linguistic criteria and sub-grouped by language families.

2.1 Tungusic

2.2 Palaeoasiatic...

[3. Glossary of common expressions with translation – planned, but not yet implemented]

Of course, as soon as these categorisations do no longer fulfil the demands of user-friendliness, they will be subject to change, and have to be adapted accordingly, expanded, re-organized and so forth.

Current progress²

(Meta-)regional pages and organisations collected: 32

Broadcast Series: 6

Ethnic groups sections: 17

Examples 1: (Meta-)Regional Pages and Organisations³

Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)

URL: <https://raipon.info/> (in Russian and English)

Keywords: Siberia, Arctic, Indigenous Cultures, Organisation, Association, Ethnic Minorities, Politics

Web domain of the RAIPON, one of the biggest associations of its kind. It provides sections on 40 represented ethnic groups, which can be selected. An interactive overview map shows the areas where they live: <https://en.raipon.info/narody/>.

The organisation owns a Youtube channel, where live streams of conferences and web meetings are being uploaded as well as some documentaries:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpyC7dW1V4qDrDyQss-7asA>

¹ Some Remarks: Due to the circumstance that there is only a limited amount of broadcast series on small indigenous peoples of Siberia, the section has been added as sub section to section 1 but is listed here nonetheless for demonstrative purposes. I do not take any responsibility for the contents of the pages listed here, because the owners of these pages are responsible for the contents of their pages themselves. The use of these resources is only for scientific and/or private purposes. The following web page links have been checked on January 24th.

² Future papers, which are currently in progress, will increase these numbers.

³ Another important web domain is <https://dh-north.org/>, about which Dr. Erich Kasten reports in his article. It will be part of the web page collection, but is not in the examples here.

Mostly the organisation, its way of working, interregional activities and matters, are topics of these videos. Further contents are minority politics and legal questions.

The following broadcasts show the work of RAIPON and many representatives of the organisation from various regions are being introduced and speak about themselves:

Raipon introduces itself: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zq2U6ucYDN8>

Аргини длиною в 30 лет (30 years anniversary called Argish):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPJeDt66FP0>

Arctic Megapedia

URL: <https://arctic-megapedia.com/> (in Russian and English)

Keywords: Siberia, Arctic, Ethnology, Indigenous Cultures, Video-based/TV Language courses

Information web page on indigenous peoples of Siberia and northeastern Eurasia with a well-arranged, interactive map: <https://arctic-megapedia.com/en/map1/>
This project is a result of the cooperation between Yakutsk University (<https://www.s-vfu.ru/en/>), the Arctic Council (<https://arctic-council.org/>) and the Unesco (<https://en.unesco.org/>).

Contents of 40 ethnic groups in total can be accessed directly via the map or by a menu. There is a presentational video on the project in English, about seven minutes long, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgyWXGeQUK8>

Arctic Megapedia has also a Youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ARCTICMEGAPEDIA/featured>

This channel provides video material on small indigenous peoples of Siberia. Besides small documentaries, interviews, narrated stories and poems, etc. one can find video language courses, so called Телеуроки (TV-lessons). These language courses provide in 40 short lessons a good introduction to and impression of the chosen language. Spoken sentences are accompanied by written text. However, some basic knowledge is required to have a balanced paced learning experience and get a good yield of them. Here are three example playlists:

Chukchi:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4PpoyynewW2Hseqw0EUBdCy-OpeJ7Aj86>

Even:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4PpoyynewW1R8SwdJbcawe03aEY-97qS>

Yukaghir:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4PpoyynewW0SYpSjHjksVp-SYD4pH-7Zs>

Sakha Memory

URL: <http://sakhamemory.ru/liter/> (mainpage offline)⁴

URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20210514155533/http://sakhamemory.ru/liter/Main.aspx>

Keywords: Siberia, Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Literature, Linguistics, Text Collections, Philology

A page dedicated to the literature of five ethnic groups in the north of Sakha: Dolgans, Chukchi, Evenks, Evens and Yukaghirs. These materials are provided as PDF-files, among these one can find grammars, anthologies in these five languages. Some of these books are partially in Russian or in Yakutian. Via a side menu one can select the language/ethnic group of choice:⁵

Чукотика (Chukchi) <https://web.archive.org/web/20210514162705/http://sakhamemory.ru/liter/Table.aspx?cat=2>

Эвенкиника (Evenki) <https://web.archive.org/web/20210514172637/http://sakhamemory.ru/liter/Table.aspx?cat=4>

Юкагирика (Yukaghir) <https://web.archive.org/web/20210514165924/http://sakhamemory.ru/liter/Table.aspx?cat=5>

Малые Языки России

URL: <https://minlang.site/news>

Keywords: Linguistics, Indigenous Languages, Minority Languages, Russia

Project on behalf of the linguistic section of the Russian Academy of Sciences on the topic minority languages of Russia, among these also indigenous languages of Siberia. In the section Языки (languages) there is a list ordered by language families, from where links lead to information pages of the single languages. Sociolinguistic data like number of speakers and their spread is given here, also shown on a map (Open-Street-Map), furthermore, language status and the degree of endangerment is given etc. Additionally, data on linguistic areas such as morphology, phonetics, syntax and so forth, are provided. A few pages even have text corpora.

Памятники фольклора народов Сибири и Дальнего Востока

URL: <https://www.philology.nsc.ru/departments/folklor/books/index.php>

Keywords: Sibiria, Text collections, Folklore, Epics, Philology

A page dedicated to folklore text of Siberian peoples, provided by the Philological Institute of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Институт

⁴ When submitting this paper, the URL was still active, but now shows an error page, the domain has been shut down. The links given are from www.archive.org (Wayback Machine).

⁵ To download/open the files simply push “посмотр” (view)

филологии Сибирского отделения Российской академии наук – ИФЛ СО РАН). These texts are digitized versions of the philological series **Памятники фольклора народов Сибири и Дальнего Востока** (Folklore monuments of peoples of Siberia and the Far East). Here are two examples:

Tome 11 on the Nanai: <https://www.philology.nsc.ru/departments/folklor/books/t11.php>

Tome 25 on the Yukaghirs: <https://www.philology.nsc.ru/departments/folklor/books/t25.php>

The tomes can be downloaded as PDF, or read online. Excerpts of the audio discs and records are available as well.

Examples 1.2 TV-Broadcasting

“Геван”

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL19ZwiAmfPfi3LmRYAc-IDW8-m2FrDe2u38>

Until now the most extensive series of broadcasts on the topic small peoples of Siberia shown on the Yakut television channel NVK Sakha (HBK Саха). At present (Jan. 2022), there are 47 episodes so far. These are presented in Russian and sometimes in Yakutian. Focus is the indigenous cultures of Sakha (Yakutia) that is, the Evens, the Yukaghirs, the Dolgans and the Chukchi, occasionally there are also reports on other cultures of the Far East of Siberia.

Examples 2: Pages on Specific Indigenous Groups Arranged by Linguistic Criteria

2.1 Tungusic

Udihe/Udehe/Udegs

The Udihe are one of the Tungusic peoples of the Amur region, who live in Khabarovsk and in the Primorye area. Traditionally they are fishers and hunters. Of the almost 1500 Udihe only about 70 still speak their language. Despite of that, Udihe language is taught in school.⁶

Geographical Situation and Distribution, Sociolinguistic Basics

<https://minlang.iling-ran.ru/lang/udegeyskiy-yazyk>.

⁶Data taken from TURAEV: 2011, 410ff. Demographics, and further data: <https://minlang.iling-ran.ru/lang/udegeyskiy-yazyk>.

Literature

Приморская краевая публичная библиотека им. А.М. Горького
(<https://pgpb.ru/>)

The PGPB provides digitized Udihe literature in Russian language, which can be read online:

<https://pgpb.ru/digitization/detail/4377/>

<https://pgpb.ru/digitization/detail/4372/>

<https://pgpb.ru/digitization/detail/5573/>

Udihe Folklore Texts (ИФЛ СО РАН)

<https://www.philology.nsc.ru/departments/folklor/books/t18.php>

Including Audio

Text corpus

Almost two dozen of videos with glossed texts

http://www.siberianlanguages.surrey.ac.uk/language/udihe/?post_types=avv

These are mostly short stories, fairytales, oral literature and the like. A glossed text can be displayed which is searchable, and time stamps help to find the according spoken text.

2.2 Palaeoasiatic

Nivkh

The Nivkh (also known as Gilyak) live in the Amur area, in the far east of Siberia and on Sakhalin Island, in the Sea of Okhotsk. Their self-designation is Nivghu, Nivakh, Nivukh or Nibakh (“person”). Their idiom is considered a language isolate. Of the more than 4600 Nivkh, only about 50 still speak their language, especially the elder generation.⁷

Language Area and Linguistic Basic Data

<https://minlang.iling-ran.ru/lang/nivkhskiy-yazyk>

Journal/Newspaper archive “Электронная Библиотека Сахалин и Курилы”

On this page you can find several newspapers and journals, which were published on Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands: <https://morningslands.ru>

Of special interest is the section Нивх диф (Нивхское слово, “Nivkh word”) – Journal issues in Nivkh language. An overview list is available, where you can select

⁷ Data taken from Volodin: 1997, 139f. and Turaev: 2011, 268ff.

<https://minlang.iling-ran.ru/lang/nivkhskiy-yazyk>.

the issues and open them as PDF-files: <https://morningslands.ru/edition/2084638>

The selection encompasses a period from the beginnings in 1990 until 2021, with maximum one or two issues per month, sometimes even just one or two per year.⁸ The eldest of them are entirely in Nivkh language, later issues are bilingual with Russian. From 1990 till 1996 these issues were published as attachments to the newspaper “Сахалинский нефтяник” (“Sakhalin oil worker”).

By using the keyword “Нивх”, the search function delivers single articles on Nivkh culture in further papers of the region, and will be listed as статьи (articles).

Resources on Vladimir Sangi, a Famous Nivkhi Writer

Short documentary by the Yakut television channel NVK Sakha (НБК САХА) from the series “Теван” March 21st 2020, about **Vladimir Sangi**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyMbHtHLEEs>

His collected works in Russian language, readable online:

Tome 1: <https://dlib.rsl.ru/viewer/01000646112#?page=1>

Tome 2: <https://dlib.rsl.ru/viewer/01000653343#?page=1>

Furthermore, two clips showing him narrating poems in Nivkh language:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoVRQZeC988>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8L-f9Wv8Sdk>

Sound Materials of the Nivkh Language:

<http://ext-web.edu.sgu.ac.jp/hidetos/HTML/SMNStitle.html>

A database for Nivkh language audio materials, recorded from 2002 till 2015 by Hidetoshi Shiraishi. On these recordings one can hear native speakers of different dialects of Nivkh. These materials can be downloaded and are complimented by text documents (PDF). The texts contained have been partially translated to Russian, English and Japanese. Along the actual translation, a word-by-word version is also provided.

Broadcasts/Videos

Мультфильм “Шаман” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkMf3LOyr30>

A Nivkhi fairy tale as cartoon, in Nivkhi language. Paralell versions in English and Russian are also available.

“Нивхи Сахалина” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8k0JKXiBIw>

Soviet documentary about Sakhalin and the Nivkh from 1978 by Vladimir Make-donskiy.

⁸ The selection there is not complete, some issues have been left out.

Conclusion

As we have seen, web pages provide useful materials for language teaching, learning and preservation, either in written text right on the page or in form of digitized documents and books. They should be considered a powerful tool for science and the language communities themselves. Every corner of the planet where web connection is available, access to these vast resources is at reach. With all the upcoming pages in the future it is therefore necessary to maintain an organized collection, which is able to decrease the time needed to get to the source(s), helping the scientific community at a global scale. Regular updates will be required to keep up with the digital creations. Furthermore, work on the history of the “indigenous web” should be done, to draw a picture of developments in the ever expanding universe called Internet. In order to do this web history research, it is crucial to find web pages before they get discarded and maybe will remain forever lost.

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Building a Web Archive Central Asia¹ as Part of the Special Information Service for Central Asia and Siberia

Tahir Mutällip Qahiri

Introduction²

“Web archiving has developed into a new field of action for libraries since the late 1990s.” (Beinert et. al.: 2014, 291). For this reason, web archives with different focuses have been established at German research institutions and libraries. At the Göttingen State and University Library (SUB Göttingen) a so-called Web Archive Central Asia has been established.

The SUB Göttingen works closely together with the Centre for Research Libraries in Chicago, USA. A similar policy is pursued by the Bavarian State Library (BSB),

¹ I built the Web Archive Central Asia 2019 to 2021 and wrote a first version of this article for the CASSIB webpage which was then partly rewritten and presented by J. Reckel at the conference.

² All links quoted in this paper have been last accessed March 25th, 2022.

which also works together closely with academic institutions in the USA in archiving web sites. One example is the archive “Belarus Crisis”, which the BSB is setting up within the FID East, East-Central and Southeast Europe.³ The aim is always to store Internet sources in the Internet Archive in a legally compliant, permanent and openly accessible way, using the services of Archive.It.

Web pages are usually only available on the net for a short time and their structure and content are changing constantly. In the Central Asian region, websites are also particularly under threat by censorship and by political public unrest and regime change. For this reason, the FID Central Asia has made the archiving of websites from these regions its task.

The archival goal of the FID Central Asia includes the websites in Turkic languages of the region in question (Uyghur, Kazakh, Uzbek, Kirghiz, Turkmen, Tatar, Yakut etc.) and in Mongolian languages. Since the archiving, cataloguing and indexing of websites in Turkic languages from the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang in the People’s Republic of China have been the focus of the work in recent years due to the political situation in this area, the websites in the Turkic languages of the Central Asian part of China will be dealt with in detail below.

There are websites in Uyghur, Kazakh and Kyrgyz languages in Arabic script in Xinjiang. In addition, there are websites in Oirat (Western Mongolian) language and script. The vast majority of websites are in Uyghur. There were about 4200 websites in Uyghur by 2005 (Cf. Aziz Isa Elkun (2011). Elkun (Äziz Äysa Älkün) has shown in his aforementioned article with the help of many examples that the Chinese government has been influencing Uyghur language websites since 05.07.2009 – since 2018 in an increased number of cases.

The question of how many websites in the Uyghur language are currently still accessible in Xinjiang cannot be answered precisely. The situation is very volatile. The example of the website of the Chinese National Radio in Uyghur and Kazakh, which has not been accessible since the end of October 2020,⁴ shows that websites in minority languages are currently under threat. For this reason, the project “Web Archive Central Asia” is of particular importance within the FID Central Asia.

Particular attention was paid not only to conventional websites, but specifically to websites of daily or weekly newspapers, which often hold an entire archive of older issues (see below), and to websites, often websites of exiled Uyghurs, which hold monographs, journals, individual articles, audio and video contributions, i.e.

³ Belarus Crisis: Fall 2020–2021 <https://archive-it.org/collections/14892>.

⁴ https://web.archive.org/web/2020*/http://uycnr.com/ URL in “Central Asian Web Archiving”: https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340*/http://www.uycnr.com/.

an entire online library in the Uyghur language, in the sense of a repository or database.⁵ The structure and content of the websites will be discussed in more detail below.

Since it is difficult for scholars to make specific use of archived material in the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, archived web pages in the Central Asian Web Archive were catalogued in the German Union Catalogue of Serials (ZDB), linked and their content indexed by keywords and descriptions in German and English, and made searchable beyond the region via the Common Network Catalogue (GVK). There are also keywords in English on the site of the Central Asian Web Archive of Archive.It itself. Instructions for users have been made available on the homepage of the FID Central Asia CASSIB. CASSIB stands for Central Asia – Siberia. <https://fid-cassib.de/webarchive-central-asia/>

Building a Web Archive for Central Asia (2019–2021)⁶

The following section describes the individual steps taken to build the Central Asian Web Archive.

June 2019: Hiring of a native Uyghur speaker as a staff member in the FID Central Asia project, responsible for the Central Asian Web Archive.

Second half of 2019: Coordination processes and collection of websites from Xinjiang and Central Asia: Negotiations with the Centre for Research Libraries and indirectly via CRL with Archive.It, both USA.

The SUB Göttingen has been a member of the CRL since November 1st, 2019. At the end of 2019, the CRL conducted negotiations with Archive.It to build a collection “**Central Asian Web Archiving**”, later renamed as “**Central Asian Web Archive**”. The content of this collection has been available via the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine from January 2020. <https://archive-it.org/collections/13340>

⁵ One example: <https://www.uygur.com/> with several sub-pages for monographs e.g. <https://www.uygur.com/kutuphana/> The page has been archived: https://web.archive.org/web/*/https://www.uygur.com/* Some PDF documents have not been saved correctly especially in early crawls. The main webpage ئۇيغۇر تۈرى has been catalogued in the ZDB and made more accessible by keywords. You can search it in the GVK (Common Library Network Catalogue) under ئۇيغۇر تۈرى

⁶ The more practical aspects of the Web Archive Central Asia, cataloguing and ways to search the archive have been addressed on the CASSIB webpage, which contains several important links. It also has a link to the original German version of this paper. This English version has been updated in March 2022. <https://fid-cassib.de/index.php?id=72&L=%201&cid=72>

June to December 2019: Collection of over 700 URL of Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Mongolian websites in the autochthonous languages of the regions of Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, partly also of exiled Uyghur sites or of the Uyghurs in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan

In autumn 2019, the FID staff member took part in an extensive training course on cataloguing and verbal indexing of foreign websites in the ZDB.⁷

First half of 2020: Training phase 2, first test crawls by Archive.It and post-processing of the initial crawls by the SUB Göttingen. The URL of selected Uyghur, Kazakh, Mongolian websites are sent to the CRL. The CRL decides on the relevance and asks Archive.It to crawl them from February 2020. The first test crawls have been available from March 2020 and have been analysed by the CRL and a staff member of the FID Central Asia. According to the agreement between the CRL and Archive.It for the “Central Asian Web Archiving”, the crawls for 2020 must not exceed the data volume of 1.0 terabyte. Later the data volume was increased. It was 2.8 TB for 2021. These had to be paid for from project money.

Video conferences were held between CRL and the SUB Göttingen in April and June 2020 to analyse the test crawls and to decide on the next steps.

It was found that hyperlinks in general, and in particular embedded PDFs and audio/video files, were not initially actively stored in the test crawls. This could subsequently be partially solved by the CRL in cooperation with Archive.It. For example, the PDFs of many daily newspaper editions from Sinkiang could be archived. However, with almost every newly saved website, the old problems reappear, which have to be addressed and solved individually. The web pages must also be regularly checked later to see whether the problems could be solved permanently. Older crawls (pre-2020) of Uyghur pages in the Wayback Machine usually have dead hyperlinks. Close cooperation between the FID Central Asia, CRL and Archive.It has significantly improved the situation for crawls of such pages since 2020.

After an initial test phase, the crawled pages will be permanently stored in the “Central Asian Web Archive” and in the Wayback Machine, where they will be openly accessible.

In order to enhance the quality of the web archive, the websites of the collected URL lists are constantly kept under observation and arranged according to their content and relevance for research. A shortlist of URLs for inclusion in the web archive was the first result. Subsequently, stored web pages were catalogued in the ZDB in terms of form and content. Formal cataloguing is done using the original script together with internationally accepted transcriptions.

⁷ I would like to thank Sonja Meier (SUB Göttingen) very much for her training offers on cataloguing digital media in the Zeitschriftendatenbank (ZDB) and her critical support of my work on cataloguing.

Procedure for Selection, Crawling and Cataloguing

Selection of Web Pages for the Web Archive

So far, a total of 112 (as of 10.1.22) major web pages in Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Mongolian have been included in the web archive “Central Asian Web Archive”. The selection is based on the following criteria: The websites to be crawled were selected under linguistic, cultural and sociological aspects.

The subject areas of the mirrored websites cover education and upbringing, Uyghur and Kazakh history and culture, language and literature, as well as traditional ethno-medicine and other areas such as economy, law, etc., the latter mainly from a linguistic point of view. Among them, there are many government websites, corporate websites and personal blogs⁸ etc., all in the autochthonous languages of the region.

In order to reflect the diversity of the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongolian languages, individual websites were deliberately included that are less relevant in terms of content from a cultural and social science perspective. They are important for linguists. Exiled Uyghur websites have only been included if they contain cultural aspects of the Uyghurs.

Selection Criteria for URL of Websites Reported to the CRL

- Government websites in Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Mongolian language are included in the web archive if they contain relevant information about politics, economy, society and culture of this region. The number of these websites is decreasing. Three years ago, for example, the government website of the Kyrgyz Autonomous District of Qizilsu in Atush in the Kyrgyz language was still online. Currently (2020-2021) it is offline.
- Business websites in Uyghur from Xinjiang covering health, business and finance, IT and smart phone technology, food and cooking, cosmetics etc. are selectively crawled. Linguistic research into the extinction of cultures and languages has shown that terminologies and words in these fields disappear first. Therefore, the archiving of such websites is of great relevance for posterity and science, especially linguistics.
- Some information portals, job portals and news portals in Uyghur language from Xinjiang, which are created and maintained by non-governmental organisations and individuals, are included in the web archive because important information about the social situation, social and political structures in Xinjiang are subtly expressed and are therefore relevant for the understanding of contemporary society.

⁸ Blog, or weblog in Uyghur language (uig) is searched for in the GVK-catalogue like this: aiw weblog spr uig. For other languages exchange uig with: kaz (Kazakh), mon (Mongolian), kir (Kyrgyz) etc.

- Web directories in the Uyghur language from Xinjiang will be selectively included in the web archive because they contain lists and references to Uyghur websites that have been deleted earlier. From this point of view, the web directories can provide important information for future generations about the development of Uyghur internet culture.
- Websites of academic organisations in and outside of Xinjiang, which focus on Uyghur culture, language and literature, are included in the web archive. This also applies to other autochthonous peoples and languages of the region.
- News websites in exile and websites of the political and cultural organisations of the Uyghurs in exile in Uyghur language will be included in the web archive on a selective basis, if these websites contain important information about the culture of the (exiled) Uyghurs.
- Websites about Islam and with Islamic content in the Uyghur language of the exiled Uyghurs will be included selectively.
- Personal blogs will be chosen selectively and only some of them will be included in the web archive, if contributions in these blogs are useful for scholarly research and for documenting the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Oirat culture.
- A few film portals will be included in the web archive, if technically and legally possible.

Quality Control Using the Example of Selected Websites

URLs are sent from Göttingen to the CRL and, if approved, reported by the CRL to Archive.It. Archive.It then initiates the crawling of these pages. The FID Central Asia staff member checks whether the page has been saved completely and reports possible problems to the CRL with an analysis of the initial crawl. Follow-up crawls must also be constantly checked for quality. Göttingen also decides if websites should be crawled weekly, monthly etc.

This will be briefly described here using the website of the Party Commission of the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang as an example. The URL of this stored website is:

<https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200508214909/http://uy.ts.cn/>

During the test crawls, many sub-categories and contributions, especially video contributions on this website were not saved, or the hyperlinks were not active in the saved versions. The daily edition of the respective newspaper is usually offered as a PDF on the website free of charge. However, the hyperlinks to the PDFs were initially not saved or not saved correctly. Therefore, the FID staff checked every single category of this website and reported the problems to the CRL. This solved most of the problems in the follow-up crawls.

Here is one example: “The Daily Newspaper of Xinjiang” (Chin. Xinjiang Ribao) is published in Chinese, Kazakh, Uyghur and Oirat (Western Mongolian).⁹ The FID concentrates on the last three languages. The content of the editions in the various languages differs to some extent. PDF editions in the above-mentioned languages can be found on the website of this newspaper. URL of the Uyghur version:

<https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200508214811/http://uyghur.xjdaily.com/>

Link to the PDF version, which is mostly identical to the print version:

<https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210321/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/shuzibao/index.html>

At the beginning of archiving there were problems with the storage of the PDF editions of this newspaper in the three languages mentioned above. The problem was reported to the CRL by the FID staff. The problem was solved.

These Newspaper websites are particularly valuable because they provide access to past issues, often retrospectively over years. Thus, an entire newspaper archive has been stored here. The newspaper websites are described in more detail below. More than 14,000 newspaper pages (as of 21.01.2021) have been stored as PDFs or images.

Example Daily Newspapers

Eight daily newspapers from Sinkiang in the autochthonous languages of the region have been stored in the Central Asian Web Archiving so far. In addition, there is the Uyghur weekly newspaper from Kazakhstan.

A total of over 14,000 newspaper pages have been saved as PDF or image files (as of 21.01.2022). For two newspapers, there are still problems with the storage of the PDFs, which so far could not be solved. Many newspaper websites contain archives of older issues going back many years. It happens that archives of older issues have been deleted from the current website but remain stored in the Central Asian Web Archiving. The following are examples of newspaper websites from Xinjiang.

Daily Newspapers of Xinjiang in Uyghur Language

The website of the Daily Newspaper of Xinjiang (Chinese: Xinjiang Ribao) in Uyghur, Kazakh and Oirat/Mongolian is stored in the Web Archive. The newspaper is issued daily with usually four pages and more pages for special issues. On the website not only the PDF of the printed version but also many contributions on politics, economy, society of Xinjiang and the whole of China are presented. The

⁹ Newspapers in a particular language are searched for in the GVK catalogue like this: Uyghur newspapers: aiw zeitung spr uig; Kazakh newspapers: aiw zeitung spr kaz; Mongolian newspapers: aiw newspaper spr mon.

PDF issues of the Uyghur version between 01.05.2019 and 05.04.2021 are available on the website <http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn> and in the web archive https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/*/http://uyghur.xjdaily.com/). The PDFs of the Kazakh version between 15.10.2019 and 26.12.2021 are available in the web archive: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20211227050144/http://kazakh.xjdaily.com.cn/>. The Oirat/Mongolian version between 01.11.2020 and 26.12.2021 is also stored in the web archive: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20211227050133/http://mongol.xjdaily.com/>.

Since 05.04.2021 the Uyghur version of the newspaper website has been reconstructed and changed, so that the newspaper issues are now represented as embedded pictures which makes them difficult to crawl and save. The new homepage of the Uyghur Xinjiang Daily is: <http://uyghurwap.xjdaily.com/xjrb-wwb/2021/04/15/1.html>

On the old homepage before the site was reconstructed, the start page had four buttons to choose between the languages of Chinese, Uyghur, Kazakh, Oirat/Mongolian. The start page had eight sub-pages as of 18.12.2020: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20201218184343/http://uyghur.xjdaily.com/>.

The eight sub-pages of the old version are:

(Start page)

<https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200508214811/http://uyghur.xjdaily.com/>

- Muhim xäwärlär (“important news”), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527205908/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xw/yw/index.shtml>
- Mämlikät Xäwärliri (“national news”), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210003/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xw/gnxw/index.shtml>
- Şinjang xäwärliri (“news from the region of Xinjiang”), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210021/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xw/xjhw/index.shtml>
- Jaylarda (“local news”), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210037/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xw/dzxw/index.shtml>
- Obzor (“commentaries”), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210054/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xx/pl/index.shtml>
- Öginiş (“learning”), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210120/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xx/index.shtml>
- Sayahät (“tourism”), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210227/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xw/lyxw/index.shtml>

- Sipirliq gezit (“digital newspaper” / PDF-newspaper), URL: <https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200527210321-/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/shuzibao/index.html>

Table 1. Overview of saved newspaper websites from Xinjiang and Kazakhstan (18.01.2022)¹⁰

Nr.	Newspaper Web Site-Name/Link (Start Page)	Number of archived pages (PDF or pic.)	Subpages Example: Link	Number of archived sub-pages
1	“Šynjang gazeti” Xinjiang Daily in Kazakh language https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210219185334/http://kazakh.xjdaily.com.cn/	2132 (PDF)		
2	“Šinjang geziti” Xinjiang Daily in Uyghur language https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212193834/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/	1920 (PDF)	https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200807184218/http://uy.xjdaily.com.cn/xw/yw/index.shtml	8
3	“Šinjiyang-giyin ödör-in sonin” Xinjiang Daily in Oirat/Mongolian language https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212193834/http://mongol.xjdaily.com/	1080 (PDF)	https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20201016182747/http://mongol.xjdaily.com/126/index.html	14
4	“Altay gazeti” ¹¹ https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200908145717/http://kazakh.altxw.com/news/altrb/index.shtml			

¹⁰ Because of a lack of funding, no further pages could be saved after December 31st, 2021.

¹¹ The “Daily News from Altay” is a Kazakh newspaper with eight pages for each day, except for weekends and holidays. The issues from February 2020 onward are available as an archive on the website in a different data format as embedded pictures. Archive.It has problems saving these pages. This news website has seven subpages. URL: <http://kazakh.altxw.com/>

5	“Ili geziti” ¹² (Uyghur) / “Ile gazetisi” (Kazakh) https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212182506/http://epaper.ylxw.com.cn/user/yrb.html			
6	“Tarbagatay gazetisi” ¹³ https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212182504/http://www.kztcxw.cc/category/58_1.html	8152 (PDF)	https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20200918184340/http://www.kztcxw.cc/category/18.html	
7	“Uygur avazi” ¹⁴ (Weekly Uyghur newspaper from Almaty/Kazakhstan) https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/*/http://uyguravazi.kazgazeta.kz/	528 (PDF)	https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212191248/http://uyguravazi.kazgazeta.kz/rubric/118/news	
8	“Xälq tori” ¹⁵ (People’s newspaper in Uyghur) https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212182642/http://uyghur.people.com.cn/	Only online no print or PDF	https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212195201/http://uyghur.people.com.cn/155988/309877/index.html	20

¹² The Daily News from Ili appear in Uyghur and Kazakh language on weekdays with four to eight pages. The PDFs are available on the news webpage, but Archive.It still has problems saving the PDF. The news webpage has 18 subpages. URL: <http://kazakh.ylxw.com.cn/>

¹³ The PDF online archive of the “Tarbagatay Daily” in Kazakh language for a period starting 01.11.2013 until 2021 with the exception of some issues from mid-September 2017 to mid-December 2017 have been saved in the Central Asian Web Archive successfully.

URL for the issue 01.11.2013: https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212191652/http://www.kztcxw.cc/category/58_60.html
https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212191652/http://www.kztcxw.cc/category/58_60.html

¹⁴ This weekly paper appears with eight pages which are available online as PDF. No archive of past issues is available online except for the issues saved in the Central Asian Web Archive.

¹⁵ Online version of the Chinese “People’s Daily Newspaper” (chin. Renmin Ribao) in Uyghur. The “People’s Newspaper” is a party newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party. The “People’s Newspaper” has no printed edition in the Uyghur language. This newspaper website has though different versions in different languages online only. Among them are the languages of seven national minorities of China. There are also versions in nine foreign languages. This online newspaper is available in the above-mentioned languages with different content.

9	“Xalıq torabı” ¹⁶ (People’s newspaper in Kazakh) https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212182517/http://kazakh.people.com.cn/ (in Kazakh Arabic script)	Only online no print or PDF	https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/20210212182517/http://kazakh.people.com.cn/306608/index.html	21
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Cataloguing and Indexing Through Keywords and Translation

Individual Central Asian web pages were already stored in the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine before 2019. Crawls for these pages were often many months apart. Hyperlinks were often not saved. The stored pages were hardly searchable unless the URL was known.

In order to enable a targeted thematic search for Central Asian web pages in the Internet Archive, about 500 Central Asian and especially Uyghur web pages with sub-pages have so far been catalogued in the ZDB (Zeitschriftendatenbank), indexed and a short description in English and German added. These catalogue records are accessible worldwide via the Common Union Catalogue (GVK). A short guide for searches in this catalogue is available under “How to search the Webarchive” : <https://fid-cassib.de/webarchive-central-asia/> Also: [Explanation_Webarchive_and_Search_26_3_21.pdf](https://fid-cassib.de/webarchive-central-asia/Explanation_Webarchive_and_Search_26_3_21.pdf) (fid-cassib.de)

Due to the complex structure of many websites, thematically deviating sub-pages have been catalogued separately.

Each catalogue record contains the following categories, among others, which can also be searched individually:

- publication date (first verified sighting)
- language code
- country code
- place of publication
- Title of the web page (parallel title, variant title and previous main title, if applicable. Original written record in the original script and transliteration of title)
- Authors/corporations/parties (original script and transliteration).
- Date(s) of crawls
- Subject headings (according to the rules of the ZDB, only six subject headings can be assigned to one title record).
- URL (current at the time of cataloguing, updated later if necessary)

¹⁶ Online version of the Chinese People’s Daily Newspaper (chin. Renmin Ribao) in Kazakh. The “People’s Newspaper” does not have a printed edition in Kazakh. This online newspaper in the Kazakh language is available in both Kazakh-Arabic script and Cyrillic script: URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220000000000/http://kazakh.people.com.cn/>.

- Link to the archived web page in the Internet Archive/Central Asian Web Archiving
- Access restriction, if applicable
- Content description (Because only six keywords are possible, the web page has an additional description in full sentences in English and German in field 4207).
- Font/script(s)

Due to the complex structure of many websites, thematically **deviating sub-pages** have been catalogued separately. Each catalogue record contains the following categories, among others, which can also be searched individually:

- publication date (proven since)
- language code
- country code
- place of publication
- Title of the web page (parallel title, variant title and previous main title, if applicable).
- Original written record and transliteration of title)
- Authors/corporations/parties (original written record and transliteration).
- transliteration)
- Mirror date
- Subject headings (according to the rules of the ZDB, only six subject headings can be assigned to a title record).
- URL (current at the time of cataloguing, updated later if necessary)
- Link to the archived web page in the Internet Archive/Central Asian Web Archiving
- Access restriction, if applicable
- Content description (Only six keywords are possible. Therefore, the web page is described again in English and German in bound language in field 4207)
- language)
- Font

Example of a Government Website from Sinkiang:

The recording of the entrance website of the Party Commission of Sinkiang initially looks as follows in the cataloguing system. The categorie 4207 contains also a description in English:

Eingabe: 0007:10-02-20 Änderung: 0007:22-02-21 18:18:42 Status: 0007:10-02-20 **0500** Obxz

0501 Text\$btxt

- 0502 Computermedien\$bc
- 0503 Online-Ressource\$bcr
- 1100 2001\$n[2001]-
- 1101 cr
- 1131 !959344357!Website [Ts1]
- 1140 ws
- 1500 /1uig
- 1505 \$erda
- 1700 /1XB-CN
- 2110 3007987-1
- 2240 ZDB:3007987-1
- 4000 \$T01\$ULatn%%Tiyanshan tori / Šinjang uyğur aptonom rayonluq xälq hökümiti axbarat işxanisi; Näšir hoquqi Šinjang yengi taratqular märki-zigä täwä 4000 شىنجاڭ ئۇيغۇر ئاپتونوم رايونلۇق خەلق / تورى %T01\$UArab\$
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- 4030 Ürümçi : Šinjang uyğur aptonom rayonluq xälq hökümiti axbarat işxanisi
- 4060 Online-Ressource
- 4085 =u <https://web.archive.org/web/20171221223050/http://uy.ts.cn:80=x>
 H=z LF
- 4085 =u https://wayback.archive-it.org/13340/*/http://uy.ts.cn/=x H=z LF
- 4085 =u <http://uy.ts.cn/=x> H=z LF
- 4201 Gesehen am 24.02.2020
- 4207 Regierungswebseite der Parteikommission von Xinjiang und Nachrichtenwebseite der Kommunistischen Partei Chinas in Xinjiang. Es werden Beiträge und Nachrichten zur Politik, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft, Landwirtschaft, Kultur, Bildung und Landeskunde von Xinjiang publiziert. Diese Webseite ist in verschiedenen Sprachen Uigurisch, Kasachisch, Mongolisch und Chinesisch sowie Russisch und Englisch abrufbar. Government website of the Party Commission of Xinjiang and news website of the Chinese Communist Party in Xinjiang. It publishes articles and news on politics, society, economy, agriculture, culture, education and regional studies of Xinjiang. This website is available in various languages Uyghur, Kazakh, Mongolian and Chinese as well as Russian and English.
- 4213 \$T01\$ULatn%%Haupttitel 2001-2018: Tängritağ tori
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- 4221 In arabisch-ugurischer Schrift
- 5056 [FID]ZENTRALASIEN\$qDE-7
- 5100 !040099377!China [Tgz]
- 5101 !040774600!Sinkiang [Tg1]
- 5102 !040319008!Kommunistische Partei [Ts1]
- 5103 !040614913!Uiguren [Ts1]

5104 !040465144!Politik [Tsz]
 5105 !04136757X!Parteipolitik [Ts1]
 5109 (DE-7){DE-601}
 7001 16-03-20 : x
 4800 !009004742!341000-6 <7> Göttingen, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen
 7135 =u http://opac.sub.uni-goettingen.de/DB=1/LNG=DU/CLK?IKT=12&TRM=1689724374
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A general problem in the indexing and cataloguing of web pages is the fact that most web pages are composed of several subcategories and, according to the cataloguing rules of the ZDB, each individual category is regarded as an independent title and requires its own title record. Therefore, in this example, if you search for this website in the Common Union Catalogue (GVK) under *Tiyanşan tori*, you will come across a total of 40 title records: One record for the main page and 39 more for sub-pages.

The Sub-Pages

1. muhim xäwär (Eng. “important news”), 2. Şinjang (Eng. “Xinjiang”), 3. mämlikäät (Eng. “Chinese inland”), 4. näzäriyâ (Eng. “theory”), 5. ekran¹⁷: Män wä mening wätinim (Eng. screen: “I and my fatherland”), 5.1. Ekran: Män wä mening wätinim: Öginiş dawamlaşmaқта (Eng. screen: “I and my Fatherland: Learning progresses”), 5.2. Ekran: Män wä mening wätinim: Yengi дәwr, yengi nätijä, yengi sähipä (Eng. screen: “I and my Fatherland: New era, new achievement, new page”), 5. 3. Ekran: Män wä mening wätinim: Sältänätlik 70 yil küräşçän yengi дәwr (Eng. screen: “Me and my fatherland: The great 70 years – a fighting new era”), 5. 4. Ekran: Män wä mening wätinim: Namratliqtin qutulduruş ötkiligä hujum qiliş jengidä qätiy gälibä qilayli (Engl. screen: “Me and my fatherland: Let us fight in the storm, struggle against the hurdle of poverty and surely win”), 5. 5. Ekran: Män wä mening wätinim: Määdäniyättä Şinjangğa näp yätküzüş (Eng. screen: “Me and my fatherland: To win in the field of culture of the Xinjiang region”), 5. 6. Ekran: Män wä mening wätinim: Millätlär ittiraqlışip bir a’ilä kişiliridäk boluş (Eng. screen: “I and my fatherland: Nationalities become members like members of one united family”), 5. Ekran: Män

¹⁷ Ekran, a Russian foreign word in Uyghur, means screen and usually refers to videos. If you click on the “Ekran” tab on the top, a page opens with numerous video categories, all of which are listed here as examples. “Screen” (Ekran) can often be better translated as “media library”.

wä mening wätinim: Yaşliq küräş qılış üçündür (Screen: “I and my fatherland: Man’s youth is for struggle”), 5. 8. ekran: Män wä mening wätinim: Jungxua änäniwi mädäniyitini äwj alduruş (Screen: “I and my fatherland: Spreading traditional Zhonghua¹⁸ civilisation in Xinjiang), 6. Räsımlık yäşmä (screen: “Narrating through Pictures”), 7. Äsliy mäqsätıni untumay, burçni ästä çing saqlaş (screen: “Keeping the Original Objectives in Mind and Taking the Mission to Heart”), 8. Kündä bir altun jümlä (Eng. “Learn a sentence worth its weight in gold every day”), 9. Wätänpärwärlık hesyati, küräş qılğuçılar (Eng. “Patriotism and fighting”), 10. Tiyanşan tori mäxsus sähipisi: Iradidin sepil hasil qılıp, yuqumning aldini eliş – tızgınlaş, tosüp zärbä beriş jengidä gälıbä qılaylı (Engl. Special Forum of Tiyanşan: “Let us build a firm defensive wall from our will and let us thereby achieve victory in the field of struggle in the prevention of infection, in the control measures against infection and in the attack against infection”), 11. Sältänätlik 70 yil küräşçän yengi däwr (Eng. “The Magnificent 70 Years: Combative New Era”), 12. Şınjangni qalaymıqan qılış xam xiyalida bolğan härqandaq suyıqäst härgiz mäqsitigä yetälmäydu; Şınjangdiki här millät xälq qätıy qoşulmaydu (Eng. “Any conspiracy with empty fantasies to throw the Xinjiang area into chaos must not be allowed to reach its goal under any circumstances – All nationalities in Xinjiang are determined not to allow this.”), 13. Şınjang yaxşı jay (Eng. “Xinjiang is a good place”), 14. Millätning güllinişi üçün: Qährımanlar, qurbanlar şäjärisi (Eng. “For the Revival of the Nation: The Biographies and Life Stories of Heroes and Sacrifice Makers”), 15. Şınjangdiki bayqaş (Eng. “Discoveries in Xinjiang”), 16. Ätimiz teximu güzäl: Käspi y maharät tälım – tärbıyä: Ümidkä tolğan güzäl turmuş (Eng. “Our future will be even more beautiful: education and training in professional skills: the beautiful life full of hope”), 17. Güzäl yurt – makanimizni yaxşı qoğdaylı (Eng. “Let us defend our beautiful homeland well”), 18. Namratlıqtın qutulduuş ötkiligä hujum qılış (Eng. “The struggle against the difficulties in the fight against poverty”), 19. Älrayını biliş, älgä näp yätküzüş, älnı mayıl qılış (Eng. “Be aware of the people’s feelings and opinions, bring profit to the people, win the people’s hearts for the government”), 20. Millätlär ittipaqılışp bir a’ılä kişilıridäk boluş (Engl. “Nationalities become members like family members of a family by uniting”), 21. Bingtuän (Engl. “(Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps), 22. Şınjangğa nişanlıq yardäm beriş (Helping the Xinjiang region in a targeted way), 23. Ürümçi (Urumchi), 24. Mädäniyät – sayahät (Culture and tourism), 25. Jaylarda (Reports and news from the districts and cities in Xinjiang), 26. Pän – ma’arip (Engl. “Education in Xinjiang”), 27. Yeza igilıki (Engl. “Agriculture in Xinjiang”), 28. Täntärbıyä (Engl. “Sport”), 29. Turmuş luğiti (Engl. “Living World”), 30. Şınjang näzäriyä tori (Engl. “Special Forum of Xinjiang for Political Theory”).

The Uyghur titles of the above sub-pages can be searched individually in the GVK.

¹⁸ Zhonghua: Chinese for “middle culture”, i.e. Han Chinese culture. The term often stands for China per se.

When cataloguing, it is often necessary to add: even if the country code, date of publication and corporate body(ies) of this webpage can be determined from the information found on this webpage, field 4207 and the fields between 5100 and 5105 must still be filled in later, after having made an overview of the content of all categories of this webpage. In the context of a ZDB record, field 4207 is information on the content of electronic resources, while the fields between 5100 and 5105 are made up of keywords and thus also make the content of the medium in question accessible by means of keywording.

In many cases, there is no information on the respective web pages about whether the main title has changed over the years and when this might have happened. But title changes and old titles must also be researched and entered. These questions are of enormous importance for building a high-quality web archive and for good formal and subject indexing of web pages.

In order to solve the aforementioned problem of the former main titles of the Party Commission's website, extensive research in the Internet Archive <https://archive.org/web/> was necessary. Our FID staff looked there at the issues of the website in question from earlier years and tried to find answers to questions. This means more time and effort to merge old and new versions of a website.

On this party website there are videos on many sub-pages as described above. Most of them were saved during the mirroring by Archive.It. When called up, it often takes a long time for the videos to load.

Here are two examples: The first video is called: "Baş şujining bir häptisi" (Eng: "A week in the life of the General Secretary"):

<https://wayback.archiveit.org/13340/20210213120005/http://uy.ts.cn/system/-2020/07/10/036355845.shtml>

The second example is the following video: "Xotän wilayiti keriyä nahiyisidiki täsirlik hekayä" (Eng: "An impressive story in Keriyä County of Hotan District"):

<https://wayback.archiveit.org/13340/20210213140110/http://uy.ts.cn/system/2019/11/21/035972463.shtml>

In the case of many Uyghur exile websites, it is difficult to determine the country code, date of publication, place of publication, as these details are often missing from such websites for various reasons.

Questions and problems about content or technical aspects often remain unsolved for the time being.

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Support, a Chat, and a Cup of Tea: Soviet Modernization and Strategies for Women’s Emancipation in Central Asia, 1924–1935

Eva Rogaar

Introduction

Bibi Pal’vanova was an exemplary case of a formerly “backward” and “oppressed” Central Asian woman who had been “liberated” and “emancipated” by Bolshevik and Soviet power in Central Asia after the October Revolution of 1917. Born as the daughter of a poor peasant in imperial Turkestan, she received education in the Soviet system, and eventually became a Professor of History and a correspondent member of the Academy of Sciences in Central Asia. In several memoirs, she shared her experiences and memories of the Soviet campaign for women’s liberation in early Soviet Central Asia. According to one of her editors, she reflected “with documentary precision, how her Eastern sisters, with the help of their older sisters –

female Russian Bolsheviks – and under the guidance of the Communist Party, obtained equality, and lived freely and happily in the Soviet Union.”¹ One of the central aspects in her memoir *Emansipatsiia musul'manki* (“Muslim women’s emancipation”) was a discussion of the strategies of the Communist Party’s Women’s Division, the *zhenotdel*, to gain access to Muslim women in order to engage them in the Soviet project in the 1920s. The following telling passage captures the essence of her story well:

In areas with strong traditions of reclusion and with few female workers [which was the case in the Soviet East, especially in Uzbekistan], *zhenotdels* stood for the task to find a way of meeting with local women that would give them the opportunity to gather women together in groups, talk with them, and educate them. Such an opportunity was found in the form of the women’s club. It was a clever vehicle for work among Muslim women, and it was informed by life itself. (...) Since the women’s clubs met in closed spaces that only women could enter, even men who still held backward views on women did not object to their wives visiting the clubs. For the secluded Muslim woman, however, a visit to the club had great significance: it provided her an insight into the new world of the collective, under cover of the *zhenotdel*.²

Pal’vanova’s story was not an isolated case. Her account reflected the widespread view in Soviet propaganda that Central Asian, and in particular Uzbek, women were uneducated and in need of “enlightenment,” yet incapable of making the decision to pursue it themselves, because their husbands or other family members would make such decisions for them. Aware of the persistence of traditional gender and family relations, and of seclusion and women’s veiling, activists understood that they had to approach women and their relatives in a manner that was not hostile, and would show their good intentions. The fact that women were invited to an environment where they would be surrounded exclusively by other women would take away possible suspicion on the side of the family, and the friendly, welcoming attitude of activists would make women feel at home. Only after they had gained the trust of these Uzbek women and their relatives, they would come inside, and in that closed, warm, safe environment, activists could slowly start educating them, and familiarizing them with the new Soviet way of life. As the last sentence of the quote highlights, the *zhenotdel* created a Soviet microcosm, in which visiting women would softly but steadily be immersed.

This paper examines Soviet strategies for the “liberation” and “emancipation” of Uzbek women in the 1920s and early 1930s, such as presented in Pal’vanova’s account. My reason for focusing on the Uzbek case is mainly a pragmatic one: most

¹ Pal’vanova, Bibi, *Docheri Sovetskogo Vostoka*, 5, Moscow 1961.

² Pal’vanova, Bibi, *Emansipatsiia musul'manki: Opyt raskrepostobcheniia zhenshchiny sovet'skogo Vostoka*, 101–102, Moscow 1982.

scholarship and primary materials on this topic in Central Asia has been centered on (urban) Uzbekistan. This may be related to the fact that Tashkent played an important role in history as the capital of imperial Russian Turkestan, and the capital of Soviet Turkestan until the national delimitation of Central Asia in 1924. Much of the imperial and Soviet administration for the area was thus situated in what then became the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, and this was the region of Central Asia the authorities had the most knowledge of. Existing scholarship on the subject of the Soviet women's liberation campaign in Uzbekistan (or Central Asia more broadly) does not typically focus to this side of *zhenotdel* and other Party organizations' activism in the early and mid-1920s. Some scholars do not take these efforts into account altogether, while others have discussed them mainly as a (largely ineffective) prologue to what was to come with the "Hujum" ("assault") in 1927. The "Hujum" was a campaign that Soviet activists carried out in Uzbekistan between roughly 1927 and 1929, and which was part of an attempt to speed up the struggle for women's emancipation and against the remnants of the old "byt" (way of life). In this scholarship, the Hujum is viewed as a radical breaking point, marking the transition from mild attempts toward women's unveiling, to massive and violent ones. Yet a closer examination of approaches to women's emancipation in Soviet Uzbekistan leads to a more differentiated picture in which non-coercive approaches prevailed. The distinction between violent and non-violent is far from clear-cut, but by non-violent and non-coercive initiatives I mean initiatives that did not involve physical or verbal abuse. Publications by Soviet ideologists and activists themselves show that efforts to take Uzbek women's feelings, needs, and habits into consideration were in fact central to Soviet strategies for Uzbek women's emancipation throughout the 1920s and well into the 1930s.

Of course, such an analysis of Soviet discourse and approaches in itself reveals little about the actual effectiveness of such non-coercive empowerment strategies in practice. What it does provide, however, are new insights into contemporary Soviet views of Uzbek women, into ideologists' and activists' arguments for the best strategies to engage these women in the Soviet project, and into the specific society they envisioned for the region and the meaning of the "new Soviet woman" in this particular context. In this paper, I seek to develop three major arguments. First of all, I argue that non-coercive types of activism, such as women's clubs, were central to the Soviet women's liberation campaign in Uzbekistan from its initiation in the 1920s on. Sources strongly suggest that like in the Russian part of the Soviet Union, the Party and its women's section sought to go beyond the mere elimination of outward manifestations of religion and the old "byt." They were also deeply invested in a genuine and comprehensive transformation of these women's public and private lives and worldviews, as part of the entirely new order the Bolsheviks sought to build from the moment they came to power. As William G. Rosenberg

maintains, they pursued a full-fledged “cultural revolution,” a profound transformation of society with “new social values, as well as revolutionary social relations, and the stimulus for radically new proletarian cultural forms.”³

Secondly, I contend that while the Hujum of 1927 indeed signified a turning point in the scale and rigor of the liberation campaign, there was also significant continuity between the types of activism before and after 1927. A personal, non-coercive, and comprehensive approach to Uzbek women’s emancipation remained a major aspect of Soviet activism well into the 1930s. The *zhenotdel*’s shutdown in 1929 did not lead to radical change in that regard; its activities were taken over and continued by a range of Soviet institutions and organizations, such as unions, factories, farms, and the Komsomol. The third major argument is that although the campaigns for women’s emancipation in the center and in Soviet Uzbekistan were part of the same project to transform women into developed and engaged members of Soviet society, the ways in which the new “*byt*” and the “new Soviet woman” were defined in their specific contexts were quite different. Whereas in the Russian part of the Soviet Union the state and activists propagated complete gender equality, full social and economic independence of women, and the “withering away” of the family, the “new Uzbek woman” in Soviet propaganda also became more independent in thought and action, but continued to operate within the framework of family relations.

In addition to these arguments, I also treat a number of subthemes that uncover other aspects of Soviet views and approaches regarding Uzbek women’s liberation and emancipation. I discuss the understandings of morality, order, and health that were closely linked to ideas of emancipation, and part of a broader agenda for pursuit of Soviet modernity. This latter project, I argue, served as an important justification for increased state control and intervention in citizens’ lives, down to the most intimate levels of social relations. Moreover, I look into the importance of space and aesthetics in Soviet strategies for reaching out to women and bringing them into contact with this new Soviet modernity that the leadership and activists envisioned. Lastly, religion is an important theme; it figured prominently in Soviet propaganda, where it was depicted as one of the major symptoms, agents and causes of the old “bourgeois” order.

The primary source base for this paper consists mainly of articles and books by Soviet ideologists, and mostly female Soviet activists in Uzbekistan (both Russian and Central Asian women). Among the writings by the latter are both contemporary publications and memoirs published in later decades. Some of the sources I have used have not been consulted by the secondary academic works that I am familiar with. Other materials have been used by other scholars in the past, though primarily

³ Rosenberg, William G., Introduction, in: William G. Rosenberg ed., *Bolshevik Visions: First Phase of the Cultural Revolution in Soviet Russia. Part 1: The Culture of a New Society: Ethics, Gender, the Family, Law, and Problems of Tradition*, Ann Arbor 1990, 5.

for their sections about unveiling, force, and violence. These aspects, however, constitute only one part of what these sources can tell us about the Soviet campaign for women's emancipation in Uzbekistan. While acknowledging the important insights of existing scholarship, I have therefore attempted to investigate the sources from a different angle, and examine what they reveal about the Soviet attempts to bring about profound social change, through a careful, and thoughtful approach.

Making the “New Soviet Woman”: State Intervention in the Domestic Sphere and “Byt”

Pal'vanova and her colleague-activists in Turkestan, and later Soviet Uzbekistan, were part of a much larger campaign for women's liberation and emancipation that the Bolsheviks started in all the areas under their rule after the 1917 Revolution. They stressed that in order to make the modernization of the country possible, it was necessary to eliminate all the elements of the old “byt” (way of life), which had made women the most backward of all groups in society. This was, so they claimed, the result of pre-revolutionary capitalist and bourgeois traditions that had left women with a double burden of work and household tasks, which prevented them from participating in public life, culture, and politics in the way men did.⁴ As a result, the typical backward woman, or “baba” was illiterate, deeply religious, and highly superstitious.⁵

The term “byt” in this discourse deserves some explanation, as it is an elusive term. It is often translated into English as “way of life” or “daily life”, but the concept is more complicated than this. What it represented could vary for different contexts, periods, even individuals. Broadly speaking, however, it encompassed not merely acts of everyday life, but also thoughts, beliefs, and worldviews and the systems and material conditions that informed these. The Bolsheviks understood the backward “old byt” in the 1920s to be all day-to-day manifestations of capitalist or bourgeois systems or mentality, and religion was an inextricable part of this. It seems that “byt” was a malleable concept that could include a wide range of actions and ideas that could potentially undermine, or frustrate the extension of, Soviet authority and control.

The need to overcome backwardness and move toward modernization had to do in part with older historical Russian anxieties about civilization, Russian identity, and the country's perceived backwardness in relation to the West; and in part with the wish of the Bolsheviks to eliminate archaic patriarchal social relations and mobilize the population for the socialist project.⁶ The question of mobilization became

⁴ Goldman, Wendy Z., *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917–1936*, Cambridge 1993, 1–3.

⁵ Wood, Elizabeth A., *The Baba and the Comrade: Gender and Politics in Revolutionary Russia*, Bloomington 1997, 216.

⁶ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, 5–6.

particularly urgent after the Revolution and civil war, when the country was weakened, impoverished, and divided. Women allegedly were the most backward element of society, yet at the same time they were the ones who were seen as the “mothers of the nation,” responsible for giving birth to strong children for the future of the country. The claim of women’s backwardness and the state’s self-proclaimed responsibility to eliminate it, provided the leadership the opportunity to intervene in the sphere of social relations and even on the level of “byt”. As historian of gender politics in the Soviet Union Elizabeth Wood puts it, “The perceived backwardness of the female population thus gave the Bolsheviks entrée into the most private relationships, those between husband and wife, parent and child.”⁷

In the sphere of gender and family relations, as Wendy Goldman shows in her work on reforms in the Russian part of the country in the early Soviet period, the Bolsheviks argued that women could only become true members of Soviet society if household labor were taken over by the state. The idea was that in the foreseeable future, paid workers in dining halls, childcare centers, laundries, and the like would take care of all women’s former domestic tasks of cooking, cleaning, and child-rearing. Eventually, so it was claimed, women would work and become fully independent, both socially and economically; as a result, marriage would become superfluous, and the institution of the family would eventually “wither away.”⁸ Moreover, abortion was legalized in 1920, only to be prohibited again in 1936, in response to negative demographic trends.⁹

The leadership’s urge to modernize and revitalize the country also provided the state an argument for increased intervention in citizens’ lives in the sphere of health and sanitation. The civil war had left many dead, starved, crippled, or chronically ill, and the country had become militarily, economically, and industrially weak. The Soviet state assumed the task of improving people’s living and working conditions, and making the country healthy and strong. In 1918 a special Party organ, the People’s Commissariat of Public Health, “Narkomzdrav,” came into being for the protection of the health and welfare of all citizens.¹⁰ “Hygiene” became an important aspect of the “new Soviet life.” Both ideologists and Narkomzdrav activists supported, as Starks maintains, “habits for body, home, and life centered on order, rationality, and balance.”¹¹ The agenda for “hygiene” went much beyond health and illness alone: it had an important political side to it, as well. The message thus also had a strong ethical and moral connotation; it was not only about being physically healthy, but also about being mentally “sane,” making morally “right” decisions, and being a good, responsible person and citizen. The campaign propagated a regulated, hygienic lifestyle that was closely associated with mental health and modernity, and with state programs of education and medical inquiry; citizens who lived

⁷ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, 2–3.

⁸ Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 2–3.

⁹ Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*, 255.

¹⁰ Starks, Tricia, *The Body Soviet: Propaganda, Hygiene, and the Revolutionary State*, Madison 2008, 3.

¹¹ Starks, *The Body Soviet*, 4.

their lives according to order and health, would be enlightened, strong, productive, and happy, which would lead them automatically to choose for the most rational organization of society, socialism. In order to spread this “healthy” lifestyle, a whole range of activities, campaigns, and educational programs was organized that showed Soviet citizens “how to eat, bathe, and decorate the house,” and which activities were appropriate for them to pursue.¹²

“Motherhood and infancy” were major focal points for the Soviet health campaign, as well. This was closely related to the state’s desire for higher birthrates and lower infant mortality rates. Increasingly, campaigns for natal health and the importance of proper child-rearing were related to the advice of physicians. Motherhood in Soviet propaganda became more and more rationalized, and was presented as a skill that any woman could learn with the right instruction and monitoring. Under the guidance of the state, Soviet women were expected to give birth to, and raise, strong, healthy children for the future of their country. Here, too, there thus was a strong moral component to the state’s rhetoric and policies. More profoundly than in other states, according to Tricia Starks in her book on campaigns for health and sanitation in the Soviet Union, issues related to home, body, life, and leisure were deemed by the Soviet state as public concerns that directly affected the Soviet project, and therefore required strong state control.¹³

In order to bring the message of the “new Soviet byt” to women, and to educate them in this new lifestyle, the Party did not only advertise its new policies. As was the case in other states, the Soviet leadership understood that abstract theories would not suffice for a true social transformation: such a thing would only be possible through radical change in people’s thinking and behavior.¹⁴ With regard to gender politics, it the Soviet state therefore also actively pursued outreach work among women through a special women’s section of the Party, the *zhenotdel*, which was founded in 1919. Much of the *zhenotdel*’s activities were directed at non-Party women, meant to show ordinary women the benefits of the Communist Party’s ideas, and make them understand what was “best” for them and for society. As Wood shows, however, although the focus on women as the most backward part of society provided the Party the opportunity to extend its influence to the most intimate aspects of social and family life, the creation of such a separate women’s section did not take place without its dilemmas. While the revolution required the solution of the “woman question,” it was at the same time at odds with the Party’s class politics to take special efforts for women’s emancipation. To resolve this friction, it was stressed that women’s emancipation was desirable, yet explicitly not in

¹² Starks, *The Body Soviet*, 5.

¹³ Starks, *The Body Soviet*, 6.

¹⁴ Hoffmann, David L., *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity, 1917–1941*, Ithaca and London 2003, 8.

the (Western, capitalist) feminist way, for the latter was considered to be a bourgeois ideology. Moreover, there was the dilemma that if trade unions and the Party did not apply affirmative action regarding women, men would dominate decisions and positions of importance, yet special efforts on behalf of women carried the risk of intensifying old inequalities and social relations.¹⁵

Once the zhenotdel was created, it began to act increasingly independently, advocate for women's wishes, and criticize unsuccessful policies of the Soviet leadership. Party officials did not appreciate these developments, and took measures to restrain the zhenotdel's autonomy. By accusing the organization of "feminist deviations," and installing other restricting measures, in 1923 the zhenotdel was forced to become an obedient advocate of the revolution along Party lines. The uneasy balance between the opportunities and risks – of "feminism," or the chance that women would make demands that opposed Party ideology – that separate activism among women (by women) posed to the state, however, remained present throughout the 1920s. And despite the identity crises that the zhenotdel experienced in the first few years of its existence, Wood argues that gradually, it "began to find ways to talk to women workers and peasants."¹⁶ Ultimately, according to Wood, it was the image of the backward woman that served several important symbolic functions within Party propaganda: the supposed backwardness of the "baba" made the contrast with the strength and "culturedness" of the Soviet comrade seem all the more profound; women's supposed weakness and insecurity were used by the Party as arguments for more interference of the state and zhenotdel in women's lives; "backward" women's resistance (like that of the peasant, priest, or NEPman) could easily be explained as being informed by old, bourgeois traditions, and their "religiosity" could conveniently serve as an argument to attack the Orthodox Church.¹⁷

The Church and religion indeed figured as a prominent symbol in the Soviet campaign to make the contrast between the old, "backward," "bourgeois" way of life, and the new, "modern," and "cultured" Soviet "byt" seem as profound as possible. The Party portrayed religion as a particularly harmful element of the old order, which had prevented Soviet citizens from emancipation and full participation in the Soviet project of building socialism. Since Soviet propaganda presented women as the most religious and superstitious group in society, it argued that the harmful influence of the Church had hit women particularly hard, and had held back their development more than of any other group. It attacked both religious convictions that informed people's thoughts and actions, and the clergy as representatives and propagators of these convictions. In its attempt to eradicate religion, the leadership started a staunch antireligious campaign, which it pursued most vigorously in the

¹⁵ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, 2.

¹⁶ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, 5.

¹⁷ Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade*, 8.

1920s and 1930s.¹⁸ In addition to church closings and prosecution of religious figures, 1925, the Party created the League of the Militant Godless (Soiuz Voinstvuiushchikh Bezbozhnikov), a Party organ with the specific task of promoting “atheism” throughout the Soviet Union. It spread the view that religion, like all other remnants of the old order, were incompatible with modern Soviet society. The message was that atheism, in contrast, would liberate women from superstition, dependence, and gender inequality. By means of lectures, films, discussion groups, literature, schools, and other resources, the League sought to teach citizens (both Party members and non-Party members) about the harmful effects of religion, and the benefits of the new, “rational” Soviet worldview.¹⁹

Soviet ideologists claimed that there was one segment of the women that suffered most profoundly of all women in the Soviet Union from social and economic suppression by the old “byt” (which was to an important degree informed by religion), and that therefore was the most backward and primitive group in the entire country: the “veiled Muslim women of the Soviet East,” i.e., Muslim women in regions like the Caucasus and Tatarstan, but above all in Central Asia.²⁰ The leadership argued that these Muslim women should be liberated from the customs and social and religious structures that blocked their personal development, and their participation in public life and the workforce.²¹ The reason why the Party put particular emphasis on the need to emancipate women in Central Asia, was that this region lacked a substantial working class. In the absence of class struggle, Soviet authorities sought to employ gender relations as a substitute for class. It was therefore in the sphere of gender and family relations and the position of women in the family and society that the struggle had to take place. In this struggle, where women served as a “surrogate proletariat,” they would ultimately acquire the freedom they supposedly needed.²²

Soviet ideologists considered Islam to be more backward than other religions in the Soviet Union, but it does not seem that they also necessarily believed it was inherently more “dangerous”. This also appears from the fact that the antireligious campaign against Orthodox Christianity in the Russian part of the country was pursued earlier, and was generally speaking harsher, and more massive and comprehensive than the campaign against Islam. Rather, it appears that Soviet propaganda

¹⁸ Husband, William B., *“Godless Communists”: Atheism and Society in Soviet Russia 1917–1932*, DeKalb 2000, XII.

¹⁹ Peris, Daniel, *Storming the Heavens: The Soviet League of the Militant Godless*, Ithaca 1998, 2; Husband, “Godless Communists”, 62–63.

²⁰ Northrop, Douglas, *Veiled Empire: Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia*, Ithaca 2004, 347.

²¹ Keller, Shoshana, *Trapped between the State and Society: Women’s Liberation and Islam in Soviet Uzbekistan, 1926–1941*, in: *Journal of Women’s History* vol. 10, no. 1 (1998), 20.

²² Massell, Gregory J., *The Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia, 1919–1929*, Princeton 1974; Northrop, *Veiled Empire*, 345–346.

against religion was adjusted to local contexts; in the case of Muslim regions such as Uzbekistan, Islam was “the” religion and therefore specifically targeted. Much like they did in the Russian part of the Soviet Union, leaders and activists went to great lengths to make the difference between the old “byt” – including Islam – on the one hand, and science, “rationality,” and sophistication on the other hand seem as large as they possibly could. An indispensable part of these attempts was the Party’s denial of reforms in the sphere of gender relations that Muslims themselves had already been pursuing in the region. A group of Central Asian Muslims, the *jadids*, had already been arguing for women’s education and emancipation within Islam from the late nineteenth century on, so well before the October Revolution and the arrival of the Bolsheviks in the area.²³

One of the Central Asian republics where Soviet activists carried out their campaign for women’s liberation and emancipation most vigorously was Soviet Uzbekistan. According to Soviet propaganda, Uzbek women were the most oppressed even among all the women of the Soviet East. The position of Tatar, Bashkir, and even Kirgiz women, and of women in the North Caucasus, in society and the economy was unequal to that of men, and women bore the heaviest burden; in Uzbekistan (as well as in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan), however, women were virtually cut off from society, and their husbands made them work long hours in the domestic, textile, or handicraft industry – industries that ensured their constant proximity to the home – and took the money for their wives’ labor.²⁴ In this situation, which had supposedly been perpetuated in the colonial period and which had determined the particularities of society and family life in the area, Uzbek women were thus not merely burdened with the role of housekeeper but were also made to work by their husbands and fathers. As a result, according to the Soviet view they were basically slaves, “objects that could be traded, scolded, or even killed.”²⁵

How, then, did the Party seek to put its ideas regarding Uzbek women’s liberation into practice, and how did it seek to create “modern,” “emancipated,” Uzbek Soviet women? Although most academic work on women and gender, the antireligious campaign, and health, focuses on the central, Russian part of the Soviet Union, there are a few scholars who have explored the subject of Uzbek women’s emancipation in the first decades of the twentieth century. In the early 2000s, Douglas Northrop and Shoshana Keller published their works, where they focused particularly on the *Hujum* (roughly 1927–1929), and the aspects of it that pursued mass

²³ Khalid, Adeeb, *Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire, and Revolution in the Early USSR*, Ithaca and London 2015; Kamp, Marianne, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan: Islam, Modernity, and Unveiling under Communism*, Seattle 2008.

²⁴ Liubimova, Serafima, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, Moscow 1928, 5–6.

²⁵ Bekmukhamedova, M. M., Rost uchastiia Uzbekskikh zhenshchin v obshchestvenno-proizvoditel’nom trude. Trudy Tashkentskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta imeni V. I. Lenina, in: *Voprosy ekonomiki i sotsializma* no. 274 (1966), 80–81.

unveilings. Northrop has focused primarily on the coercive side of the Soviet women's liberation campaign. He presented the campaign and unveiling as something that was violently forced upon women. According to Northrop, the Soviet campaign was altogether rejected by the Uzbeks, and he interprets their reaction as anticolonial resistance.²⁶ Keller also emphasized the coercive aspects of Soviet project for women's emancipation and unveiling, and has highlighted women's suffering, both from the actions of the Soviet state and by the wave of violence unveiled women experienced from the side of the Uzbeks.²⁷ Marianne Kamp, in response, has argued that the campaign for unveiling and women's emancipation was not merely a clash between ideas of Soviets and Uzbeks. She still focused on the Hujum and unveiling, but maintained that prerevolutionary jadid reformist ideas coincided and merged with the Soviet campaign in many ways. Kamp therefore considered the violent backlash of the Soviet campaign as a struggle between Uzbeks themselves. For this reason, she primarily examined Uzbek women's sources, and the way their views were shaped by Uzbek reformist ideas. This ultimately led her to argue that the Hujum took place in part upon Uzbek women's demands.²⁸

Although this literature has provided valuable insights into the ideas of the Soviet leadership regarding Central Asian and Uzbek women; the coercive aspects of the liberation campaign; and its violent backlash, it also leaves important questions unanswered, and significant aspects of the campaign unaddressed. By focusing on the violent side of the project, much of this scholarship obscures the wide range of non-violent initiatives that Soviet institutions carried out among Uzbek women, in order to pull them away from religion and persuade them to adopt a Soviet worldview and "byt." Sources by Soviet ideologists and activists show that, similar to the cases in the Soviet center as shown by Wood, Goldman, Starks, and others, there were several Soviet organizations that organized a wide variety of activities for acquiring the support of Uzbek women for the Soviet project, and for recruitment of potential future local cadres. As it was in the Russian part of the country, the most prominent and active among these organizations in Soviet Uzbekistan of the 1920s was the zhenotdel, which opened its doors in Central Asia as early as 1919.

The Zhenotdel and Women's Emancipation in Early Soviet Uzbekistan

Already during the first years after the October Revolution, the first efforts toward the emancipation of the "women of the East" were made in the cities of what was then Turkestan. Female Russian communists, primarily workers and wives of workers and soldiers, took the initiative for the creation of the first independent women's

²⁶ Bekmukhamedova, M. M., *Rost ubastiia Uzbeksksikh zhenshchin*, 11–12, 26–27.

²⁷ Keller, *Trapped between the State and Society*, 24–25.

²⁸ Kamp, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan*, 4–6.

organizations in the region, so-called “women’s unions.” The foundation of such separate women’s organizations initially met with skepticism on the part of Bolshevik ideologists in Russia. The first All-Russian Congress of Workers (Moscow, 1918), for example, emphasized the “dangers” of independent women’s organizations, stressing that female workers did not have interests other than those of the working class as a whole. The reason that such organizations were nevertheless allowed, was the idea that more agitation and propaganda among women was needed because their class consciousness was less developed than that of men. From that moment on, committees for agitation and propaganda among women were founded throughout the country, and in 1919 the Central Committee reorganized these into the department of Women’s Workers and Peasants, also known as the Central zhenotdel. The main “peripheral” sub-department of the zhenotdel in Turkestan was established in 1919, and in the course of 1919–1924 multiple smaller branches appeared throughout Central Asia.²⁹

Many Party officials in Central Asia, however, did not take the zhenotdel very seriously during the first years of its existence. In her memoir *Dnevnik zhenotdelki*, zhenotdel activist Serafima Liubimova mentioned her frustration with the initial cynicism of male Party members in the region, and her continuous efforts to counter their pessimism about the zhenotdel’s potential to carry out serious Party work.³⁰ The zhenotdels in Turkestan argued that only female activists, and not even all of them, had the chance of access to Muslim women; it was necessary to be familiar with their native language, way of life (“byt”), and mindset (“psikhika”), and to earn their trust and respect.³¹

Despite initial doubts about the zhenotdel’s capabilities, however, the Party defined women’s empowerment as an important step in the revolutionary project, and the central authorities eventually affirmed the zhenotdel’s work among Central Asian women. It was argued that under the “old way of life” (“staryi byt”), women in Central Asia had been prevented from participation in public life, and had been deprived of the legal rights that men possessed. This situation did not only profoundly disadvantage women’s development, but it also held back the development of the region itself. Women’s empowerment in Central Asia was therefore not only an act of justice for women, but also of major importance for the development of society as a whole.³² The 12th (1918) and 13th (1919) Party Congresses stressed the importance of Party work on the empowerment of women in the East. The Central Committee of the Communist Party and the department concerned with women’s

²⁹ Pal’vanova, *Docheri sovetskogo Vostoka*, 42–43.

³⁰ Liubimova Serafima Timofeevna, *Dnevnik zhenotdelki*, Tashkent 1926, 8–10.

³¹ Pal’vanova, *Docheri sovetskogo Vostoka*, 49.

³² Bekmukhamedova, *Rost uchastiia Uzbekskikh zhenshchin*, 81–82.

liberation work in the “East” were especially active in defining the forms and methods for this activism, and issued several major decrees in the early 1920s.³³ Upon the creation of Soviet Turkestan in 1922, the *zhenotdel* insisted the Central Committee of the Turkestan Communist Party expanded women’s legal rights. Soviet law raised the minimum marriage age for women to 16 and for men to 18; illegalized polygyny, forced marriage, and the payment of bride-price; and granted all women in Turkestan, like in the rest of the Soviet Union, legal equality to men in all spheres of life.³⁴

Yet women’s legal equality did not necessarily lead to equality in practice, since, so it was argued, the women of the East were still under pressure of “archaic” customs. Legal rights alone were not sufficient; as Pal’vanova wrote in her memoirs, it was necessary to “awaken the consciousness of the illiterate, passive Eastern woman, and encourage her to participate actively in public life. This required patient and skilled work among the female masses.”³⁵ After the national delimitation of Central Asia in 1924, and the subsequent creation of the Central Asian Soviet Socialist Republics, the work in the sphere of women’s liberation intensified. At its first congress, the Communist Party of the Uzbek SSR adopted a resolution “On work among women,” which stressed that the task of women’s empowerment was profoundly important, for it was not only beneficial for women themselves, but also closely related to the republic’s economic and cultural construction.³⁶

The dominant image of Uzbek women in Soviet writings and propaganda appears to have been quite consistent. Interestingly enough, the way Uzbek women were portrayed in women’s activists’ memoirs was not very different from that in publications produced by male Soviet ideologists (many of whom resided in other parts of the country); all presented Uzbek women in an impersonal manner, as being covered in darkness, and lacking personality and any form of agency. Pal’vanova remarked that whereas Kazakh women came to *zhenotdel* activities by themselves, Uzbek women would always be accompanied by their husbands, who then waited for them outside until the meeting would end, and women would wear their *parandzha* (traditional Uzbek body veil) until the moment they had entered the club; they would follow the orders of total seclusion and separation of the sexes that the Uzbek old “*byt*” demanded from them.³⁷ This picture of the “helpless” Uzbek woman was reinforced by stories of unveiled local women that were used in Soviet propaganda to demonstrate the great achievements of the campaign women’s emancipation in the region. One Kurbangozel’ Alieva, who had been born in imperial Turkestan and had experienced Soviet “liberation” first-hand, for instance, recalled:

³³ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 7–8, 11–12.

³⁴ Bekmukhamedova, *Rost uchastiia Uzbekskskikh zhenshebin*, 83.

³⁵ Pal’vanova, *Docheri sovetskogo Vostoka*, 41.

³⁶ Akopian, N.A., *Pervyi s’ezd zhenskoi trudiashcheisia molodezhi Uzbekistana* (oktiabr’ 1935 g.), in *Nauchnye Trudy* no. 212 (1962), 107.

³⁷ Pal’vanova, *Emansipatsiia musul’manki*, 114.

My husband took me to the zhenotdel (he in front, me behind him), and said: here is my wife, educate her. This was in 1926. I was a veiled, completely dark ["temnaia"] woman, afraid of everything. I thought – what will happen to me? At the women's club they were very welcoming, like friends, they brought me to the dom dekhkanki ["house for the peasant woman"], introduced me to other women. My husband then took me there every day, as a child to kindergarten. (...) After spending quite some time in the dom dekhkanki, however, I learned how to read and write, became interested in newspapers... From there I started my social work and my new life. (...) I will never forget the dom dekhkanki.³⁸

Uzbek women's exceptional religiosity and pressure from the side of their "conservative" husbands and religious authorities, so it was argued, made the women's liberation campaign in Uzbekistan particularly challenging. Women's activists therefore had to do their work carefully, and be thoughtful of the fact that Uzbek women were shy and illiterate, hardly knew anything about the world, and had never learned to think or make decisions for themselves. Activists were instructed to adjust their work to the backwardness of these Eastern women and the particularities of these women's way of life. Gali Ibragimov,³⁹ an influential Soviet ideologist in the sphere of emancipatory work among Eastern women, stressed that such work ought to be carried out with great care, "without mockery or harsh insults that [could] offend their religious feelings."⁴⁰ In order to gain access to these women, throughout the 1920s, Soviet activists and ideologists would further develop their strategies for the "liberation" of these supposedly suppressed, backward creatures who so desperately needed Soviet support.

Major Strategies and Means for Uzbek Women's Liberation and Empowerment

Women's Clubs and "Krasnye Ugolki"

In their endeavor to reach out to Uzbek women, zhenotdels were in need of a strategy that would enable them to create a pleasant and attractive space for women only, where they could gather women, talk with them, and teach them all there was

³⁸ Pal'vanova, *Docheri sovetskogo Vostoka*, 69–70.

³⁹ Although Ibragimov specialized in "enlightenment" work among Tatar and Bashkir women, his writings were influential and considered as an important blueprint for work among other Eastern women, as well. See for example Kobetskii, M., *Ocherednye zadachi antireligioznoi propagandy sredi zhenshchin Vostoka*, in *Antireligioznik* no. 2 (1929), 18. Very little information is available about Ibragimov, but it appears that he was a Tatar researcher who worked for the Soviet state as a specialist on Islam and women's liberation in Muslim regions of the Soviet East. He published books as well as numerous articles in League of the Militant Godless' journal *Antireligioznik*.

⁴⁰ Ibragimov, G., *Kak vesti antireligioznuu propaganda sredi tatarok i bashkirok*, Moscow 1928, 19–20.

to know about life as an independent, active, and knowledgeable Soviet woman. Such a setting was found in the form of women's clubs in urban areas, and their equivalent "krasnye ugolki dekhkanki" ("little red corners for peasant women") for peasant women in rural and urban areas. The first women's club opened its doors in the old city of Tashkent in 1924, and after that the number of clubs in Uzbekistan quickly rose to 34 in 1926, and the number of krasnye ugolki to 30, with around 3000 members in total. Not all members of the club were Party members: as of 1926, of the 30 members of the club in Pskent, for example, only 17 were candidates for Party membership.⁴¹

Women's clubs offered their female visitors a wide variety of activities and opportunities. First of all, women could take literacy courses, and classes in political organization, but also in more creative fields such as drama, music, and dance, or practical skills such as sewing, cooking, or gardening. There were reading groups and public readings, and many clubs owned reading rooms and extensive libraries. Another central feature on the club's agenda was work "for the protection of mothers and children"; clubs had their own clinics, or organized medical consultations, and women could make use of nurseries and kindergartens free of charge. The clubs also offered classes and discussion groups where women could talk about hygiene, child-rearing, and more generally, on how to live a healthy life and raise strong children.⁴² Pal'vanova argued for the importance of work targeting mothers and children by stating that in order to truly help women of national minorities – who under tsardom had had to endure much more severe conditions than other women – to fully develop their capacities and become involved in public life, "it is necessary to start with the thing a woman cares about the most. And what is dearer to a female worker or peasant than her own child?"⁴³ Thus, besides the state's preoccupation with the political, demographic, and moral aspects of health and cleanliness, the assertion that children were the most important thing for Uzbek women provided the leadership and activists with another argument for intervention in these women's lives.

In addition, women's clubs provided Uzbek women legal advice and support, often through a special inquiry office. This office assisted in the popularization of Soviet laws concerning women's rights, and helped women protect their legal rights. Apart from that, however, on a more general level, it also had to be a place where women could get answers "all the questions that are of interest to a woman." According to Ibragimov, the rationale behind this inquiry bureau, and the provision of care and advice for mothers and children, was to gradually undermine the influence of the Muslim clergy on women's lives. For after all, he argued, if these services did

⁴¹ Prishchepchik, Z., Opyt raboty klubov v Srednei Azii, *Kommunistka* no. 9 (1926), 76–78.

⁴² Prishchepchik, *Opyt raboty klubov v Srednei Azii*, 76–77.

⁴³ Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia musul'manki*, 88.

their work well, women would no longer go to spiritual leaders for advice and support, and they would understand that it was not the Islamic leaders with their sharia who improved the situation of women, but the empowerment and independence that the Soviet state provided them.⁴⁴ This line of reasoning shows that Soviet ideologists sought to devise ways to compete with religious leaders in terms of the services they provided, and the spheres in which they operated.

Not all women and their husbands trusted the women's clubs right away. Once they understood that the club was a profoundly useful facility that provided free care, advice, and education, they would quickly become less suspicious.⁴⁵ Pal'vanova also remarked that although it would sometimes be difficult to attract women to literacy courses, because they were often already married at an early age (automatically implying that their husbands would make decisions for them), the leaders of the club would negotiate with their husband, parents, and in-laws, "with a cup of tea, at an easy pace, in the Eastern way," after which the woman in question would be more likely to be allowed to visit the club (though not always).⁴⁶

An important feature of women's clubs, as various activists and ideologists maintained, was that it felt to Uzbek women as a safe and home-like space. The factors of aesthetics, affection, and emotion were quite important in this respect. Z. Prishchepchik, for instance, wrote that a successful club is furnished in such a nice way that when an Uzbek woman saw it, she did not want to leave. Clubs offered a space where women could sit down with a cup of tea – a frequently recurring theme in Soviet writings – after their classes, relax, read, and socialize with other women.⁴⁷ Pal'vanova wrote about women's clubs as being "informed by life itself," and adjusted to the women's interests and needs in daily life. This warm, innocent appearance seems to have been a significant factor in the clubs' success and its seemingly broad acceptance by Uzbeks. Being a closed space where only women met, both Uzbek women and their husbands were at ease with the women's club, and did not consider it a threat to their values and priorities in life. Once inside the club, and once they had established a relationship of trust, activists would then slowly but surely familiarize their visitors with the life and worldview of the "new Soviet woman."⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Ibragimov, Gali, *Antireligioznaia rabota sredi Zhenshchin Vostoka*, in: *Antireligioznik* no. 2 (1930), 45–46.

⁴⁵ Pal'vanova, *Docheri sovetskogo Vostoka*, 66–67.

⁴⁶ Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia musul'manki*, 108.

⁴⁷ Prishchepchik, *Opyt Raboty klubov v Srednei Azii*, 78.

⁴⁸ Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia musul'manki*, 101–102.

Women's Shops and Cooperatives

Soviet activists maintained that until 1925, grocery shopping in Central Asia was primarily a male business. Since they could encounter male customers in the shop, and the employees were men, women could only go shopping wearing their *parandzhas* and *chachvans* (Uzbek body and face veil), and in practice they often preferred sending their husbands to do it. There was no opportunity for them to take off their veil there, or to “overcome the fear of men that had been embedded in them since childhood,” let alone become active members of consumer’s cooperatives (*potrebkoooperatsii*).⁴⁹ In order to alter this situation, the Communist Party in Uzbekistan introduced a new concept: in addition to public shops for a mixed public, shops were opened exclusively for women; they were operated by women only, and the products they offered corresponded to women’s needs. The first women’s shop (*zhenskaia lavka*) of Soviet Uzbekistan was opened in 1925, in the old city of Tashkent, and according to Soviet records, by 1927, there were already 17 shops in the republic, through which 3583 women were employed.⁵⁰

The primary goal of these women’s shops, according to activists and ideologists, was not to provide Uzbek women with groceries; this was rather a means to attract Uzbek women in the first place. It was argued that by attracting women to the stores, employees and female Soviet activists would gain access to their Uzbek customers, which would give them the opportunity to educate them in Soviet values, culture, and politics, and inform them on work in cooperative enterprises. In her article on women’s shops in women’s magazine *Kommunistka*, E. Butuzova argued that the political and cultural work of the stores among its visitors was deemed extremely important, for it was one of the few available means to “introduce the new Soviet life into the Uzbek family.”⁵¹ She discussed how the primary strategy for attracting women to women’s shops and arousing their interest in cooperatives was by selling goods that were scarce on the market, such as the popular green tea “*kok-chai*,” and by giving shareholders particular benefits. Moreover, they offered poor customers the option of payment by instalments.⁵²

Thus, apart from their function of selling groceries to women, the women’s stores’ activities and approaches in many ways resembled those of women’s clubs and *krasnye ugolki*. Shops organized public readings of Soviet literature⁵³ or Uzbek

⁴⁹ Tunik, M., *Rabota sredi zhenshchin v potrebkoooperatsii Uzbekistana*, in: *Kommunistka* no. 5 (1927), 56–57.

⁵⁰ Butuzova, E., *Zhenskie lavki v Uzbekistane*, in: *Kommunistka* no. 9 (1927), 63–64.

⁵¹ Butuzova, *Zhenskie lavki v Uzbekistane*, 45.

⁵² Butuzova, *Zhenskie lavki v Uzbekistane*, 64–65.

⁵³ Unfortunately I have not been able to locate sources that provide specific information about the literature the *zhenotdels* used for their activities. Reports from Soviet publishing houses, and archival materials of the Department for Agitation and Propaganda could probably shed more light on this question.

women's magazine *Iangi-Iul*,⁵⁴ or turned the stores into tea houses on quiet days. Shop employees, local or "European" women who spoke Uzbek (all candidates for Party membership), would have discussions with customers on a variety of topics that the visitors themselves would initiate, such as family problems or legal issues, or how to become politically involved. More generally, like in the legal inquiry offices, employees were instructed that it was of major importance for them provide women with answers and information they could not get in their own circles. Of particular importance was also the task of women's shops in the sphere of medical and pedagogical advice to mothers. Shops organized so-called "mother and child" gatherings where women received instructions on how to take care of themselves and their children, and where they had access to free medical consults and medication. And finally, women's shops provided an opportunity for introducing Uzbek women to the work of shop managers, board members, and cooperatives more generally.⁵⁵ And all this happened in a welcoming, clean, and nicely decorated environment with well-organized and educated employees, where women would be comfortable, and where, again, husbands would feel they could safely let their wives go to.⁵⁶ As Pal'vanova commented in her memoirs later, the women's shops were not only successful in economic respect, but they were also profoundly popular among local women. Therefore, as a strategy adjusted to local circumstances, these shops became one of the *zhenotdel's* primary vehicles for Uzbek women's emancipation in those years.⁵⁷

Antireligious Groups and Other Antireligious Activism

Whereas in the Russian part of the Soviet Union the League of the Godless was a sizable Party institution that operated independently, its subsections in the "East" and especially in Central Asia were profoundly smaller and less influential. Indeed, writings by "bezbozhniki" in Central Asia were relatively sparse, and the League of the Godless was hardly mentioned by activists and ideologists except in the League's own journals *Antireligioznik* and *Bezbozhnik*. This did not mean, however, that the struggle against religion was not on the Soviet agenda for Central Asia; on the contrary, the spread of antireligious or atheist propaganda was a major component of Soviet "enlightenment" work among women in the "East," and so it was in the case

⁵⁴ This was a magazine edited by women from the Uzbek *jadid*/Soviet intelligentsia. Marianne Kamp writes that the editors used this magazine to "translate" the Soviet message about women's emancipation into a form that was acceptable to a broad group of Uzbek women, but it is debatable whether this was the only place where such a translation took place; it seems that Russian Soviet activists in Uzbekistan already adjusted their approaches to local circumstances to an important degree, in the first place.

⁵⁵ Tunik, *Rabota sredi zhenshchin v potrebkoperatsii Uzbekistana*, 57–58.

⁵⁶ Butuzova, *Zhenskii lavki v Uzbekistane*, 66.

⁵⁷ Pal'vanova, *Docheri sovetskogo Vostoka*, 74.

of Uzbekistan. In the absence of independent facilities of the League of the Godless, antireligious gatherings and propaganda were organized primarily under the banner of women's clubs and *krasnye ugolki*. Where possible, the latter were instructed to make use of literature, textbooks, and visual materials for women, produced by the League of the Godless.⁵⁸

In his writings, Ibragimov discussed how antireligious work among women could take various shapes. There were reading groups for antireligious literature, where women could also purchase affordable antireligious literature; small group discussions about antireligious topics; and excursions to museums, factories, farms, hospitals, or power stations. From these excursions, activists were encouraged to draw "antireligious conclusions," emphasizing that these grand Soviet achievements would never have been possible without science, reason, and hard work.⁵⁹ Antireligious activities would usually take place in small settings, though there was also antireligious work on a larger scale, in the form of large antireligious concerts, music, or poetry. Female activists were also encouraged to conduct antireligious work in their own home, among family members, or whenever they would visit friends, or go to the theatre.⁶⁰

Ibragimov stressed that it was important for activists not to start out with clearly antireligious conversation topics right away, and to avoid abstract themes. Instead, he instructed activists to start with a cup of tea, and discuss topics that were of immediate interest to Uzbek women themselves, such as child-rearing, or issues that were being discussed in the women's club at that time. From there one could slowly move on to talking about the harmful effects of the old "byt," not only on their position in society, but also on their health and that of their children.⁶¹ It was argued by one L.K. in the journal *Antireligioznik*, that the *parandzha* and *chachvan* were unhealthy and that they were the source of illness among women and children. The author maintained that they caused physical underdevelopment; that the high temperatures and lack of fresh air under the veil led to infections or even typhus; and that veiled women were frequent victims of traffic accidents because of their limited sight. The author concluded that only individuals attempting to undermine progress and modernity would support women's veiling and the continuation of women's seclusion and oppression.⁶²

Activists also received instructions to talk about the inability of religious dogmas to provide correct explanations for phenomena such as the development of steam (for example, when a woman would make tea), the solar system, the radio, but also things as disease, or misfortune. Uzbek women would gradually come to understand

⁵⁸ Ibragimov, *Antireligioznaia rabota sredi zhenshchin Vostoka*, 42.

⁵⁹ Ibragimov, *Antireligioznaia rabota sredi zhenshchin Vostoka*, 42.

⁶⁰ Ibragimov, *Kak vesti antireligioznuin propaganda sredi tatarok i bashkirok*, 20–23.

⁶¹ Ibragimov, *Kak vesti antireligioznuin propaganda sredi tatarok i bashkirok*, 25–26.

⁶² L.K. *Parandzha i chachvan*, in: *Antireligioznik* no. 2 (1939), 34–35.

that religion had denied them development, the truth, and the opportunity to think for themselves. They would realize that what happened in their lives was not part of some god's predetermined plan, but that instead, it could be explained by science and rational thinking, and that human beings in fact had control over their own fate. It would therefore be good for them to pursue education, start to think independently and "scientifically," and live the "cultured" Soviet way of life.⁶³ Moreover, women's education and their visits to antireligious activities would not only provide them insights in the danger and superfluity of religion, but would also physically distract them from religious practice and religious holidays.⁶⁴

Attacks on the Muslim clergy were indeed quite prominent in Soviet antireligious propaganda. Apart from the above-mentioned inability of religious dogmas and superstition to give rational explanations for natural phenomena, there were two other frequently recurring themes, as well. The first was the "dangerous" character of Islam, supposedly a result of its historical development under the Russian Empire. Ibragimov argued that because of its subordinate position in the Empire, the Muslim clergy had assumed the role of the "clever, unreliable oppositionist"; the cultural and economic backwardness of the East turned religious superstition into extreme fanaticism unknown to other religions; and according to Ibragimov, it was a disturbing fact that Islam sought to control all spheres of Muslims' lives, even family life and prayer. He stressed that women's extreme backwardness had made them into easy victims of such barbarism, and that the Muslim clergy therefore had to be eliminated.⁶⁵

Another argument against the Muslim spiritual leadership was that despite its recent attempts to appeal to women with promises of reforms, full women's equality within Islam was absolutely impossible. It was necessary, Ibragimov wrote, to make it quite clear to women that these were myths, only meant to keep the clergy's influence intact. After all, the right to visit the mosque would not improve women's position in the family and society, since they would still be veiled and locked up in the house, unable to develop themselves or contribute something meaningful to the socialist project. Therefore, Ibragimov argued, it was necessary to highlight the difference between on the one hand the old "byt", which he considered was informed for an important part informed by sharia, and on the other hand the Soviet efforts toward women's emancipation.⁶⁶ According to Soviet propaganda, Islam was thus static and monolithic (solely based on "the" sharia), misogynist, and inherently threatening and incapable of genuine reform. At the same time, the Soviet approach to women's emancipation also drew on strategies that the Muslim clergy used. This

⁶³ Ibragimov, *Kak vesti antireligioznuu propagandu sredi tatarok i bashkirok*, 25–26; Ibragimov, *Antireligioznaia rabota sredi zhenshchin Vostoka*, 45–46.

⁶⁴ Ibragimov, 'Antireligioznaia rabota sredi zhenshchin Vostoka', 44.

⁶⁵ Ibragimov, *Kak vesti antireligioznuu propagandu sredi tatarok i bashkirok*, 15–16.

⁶⁶ Ibragimov, *Antireligioznaia rabota sredi zhenshchin Vostoka*, 47–48.

was illustrated, for instance, by Kobetskii's remark that it was important that activists would not only understand the actions of the Muslim clergy, for example why it offered women more rights and organized women's group of its own, but that they also employed some of the same strategies to counter the clergy's influence.⁶⁷

Work Among Poor Women

A final major component of work among "Eastern" women was directed specifically at poor women. Already early on, Soviet ideologists understood the significance of such work. Ibragimov, for instance, argued that financial support and "enlightenment work" among poor women would make them sympathetic to the Soviet project, and would persuade them to become active builders of socialism. Moreover, they would understand that it was not religion or the Muslim clergy, but only their personal investment in self-development and Soviet society that had improved their financial and social situation and had made them strong and independent.⁶⁸ This was another example of Soviet attempts to appeal to the same group of (vulnerable) women as the clergy did, and compete with religious authorities by addressing the same social issues in women's lives. Ibragimov argued that support of poor women was especially important on religious holidays, because on these days religious people were particularly generous to those in need.

Financial support to poor women could take the shape of financial means from the Soviet Fund for the Poor, assistance of a woman to become a member of a trade union, join a cooperative, get an insurance, help to women to start a collective farm and purchase the necessary machinery and cattle, and other. The land reforms in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, which were carried out from 1926 on, were also of major importance in this respect. While land ownership had previously been determined by marriage rights and followed the paternal line, after the reforms women received equal rights to land, and around 500 Uzbek women became independent land owners.⁶⁹ It was argued that these land reforms undercut the economic basis that had previously stimulated the backward practices of bride-price, polygyny, and child marriage among Muslims.⁷⁰ Meanwhile, while assisting the poor financially, and thus gaining access to them by means of goods, activists were instructed to conduct their cultural and political propaganda among these women, as well. Both in and outside women's clubs, activists were expected to make efforts towards ending poor Uzbek women's illiteracy, introducing them to "modern" Soviet life, and making them politically and socially active.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Kobetskii, *Ocherednye zadachi*, 19.

⁶⁸ Ibragimov, *Kak vesti antireligioznuin propaganda sredi tatarok i bashkirok*, 50.

⁶⁹ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 36–37.

⁷⁰ Pal'vanova, *Docheri sovetskogo Vostoka*, 92–95.

⁷¹ Ibragimov, *Antireligioznaia rabota sredi zhenshchin Vostoka*, 46–47.

Women's Spaces in the Soviet Modernization Campaign: a Reflection

This examination of the basic components of the Soviet women's liberation campaign in mid-1920s Soviet Uzbekistan shows that they were tied together quite closely, and that they were variations on the same themes, and part of the same set of goals. The overarching goal was to incorporate Uzbek women – and through them, Uzbek society as a whole – into the socialist project, by making their behavior and worldviews compatible with “modern” Soviet society. Achieving this was not merely a matter of informing women about the benefits of Soviet life, but also about “enlightening” them and making them feel the benefits of Soviet power. Activists also had to deal with the reality of women's existing loyalties toward Islam and Muslim authorities. In this respect, Soviet “atheism” seems to have meant primarily “non-religion,” or “anti-religion,” insofar religion was part of the old order. In their attempts to break women's ties with Islam, Soviet propaganda sought to discredit Islam and the Muslim clergy in any possible way. It presented its project as radically different from Islam and the old “byt” (“way of life”) as it could, and dismissed every attempt by the clergy to reform Islam in the favor of women. According to Soviet accounts, arguing that the old way of life was characterized by inequality, superstition, and suppression of the people by religious dogmas that blocked the development of society and the economy, Soviet society represented progress, equality, the victory of science and rational thinking over superstition.

In a similar way, the image of the “old” and the “new” Uzbek woman were defined as completely opposed to each other, with the backward, passive, religious, and suppressed woman, wrapped in darkness and without a face on the one hand, and the educated, engaged, healthy, and independent Soviet woman on the other hand. Apart from promoting “reason” over “superstition,” Soviet propaganda also assumed a strong moral component, viewing the old as morally “bad,” and the new as morally “good.” The old “byt” was related to filth, illness, and uncultured, unproductive behavior; the new “byt” in contrast, was presented as the example of cleanliness, sophistication, and, in extension, the ability to be a good, sane, and engaged person, citizen, and parent. This discourse of morality in Soviet propaganda made it increasingly difficult for opponents to argue that religion or tradition could be viable alternatives for the Soviet way of life.

In order to win Uzbek women over for the Soviet project, however, activists understood that they had to be careful in the ways they reached out; they had to develop an approach that was low profile, was of interest to women themselves, and did not all too radically dismiss the things in Uzbek women's lives that were important to them. This mindset resembles what Victoria Smolkin-Rothrock has argued regarding the state's approach to “atheism” in the Russian part of the Soviet Union from the Krushchev period on. She maintained that despite its ambitious modernizing goals, ideologists realized that spirituality and emotion were important

to Soviet citizens, and that the aesthetic, psychological, communal, and moral components of religious experience were precisely what connected people to religion. Rather than trying to eliminate these factors, state atheism had to study and incorporate them into its strategies.⁷² In the Uzbek case, activists therefore created spaces where women would feel comfortable and that would not be suspicious to their husbands. They sought to attract women with advice, scarce goods, or resources that exceeded what the Muslim clergy offered; only after activists had gained these women's trust, they could gradually familiarize them with the Soviet way of life and "scientific worldview," and pull them away from the influence of religious authorities. In a way, the spaces that Soviet activists created for Uzbek women's emancipation embodied their strategies. They were safe, cozy, and empowering women-only spaces where women, "over a cup of tea," could relax, study, and develop themselves broadly. At the same time, these were also profoundly ordered, disciplining spaces, where women were constantly immersed in the Soviet discourse of values, manners, cleanliness, and morality more broadly.

The "Hujum" (1927): Change or Continuity?

The "Hujum" ("nastuplenie" in Russian, and often translated as "assault" in English),⁷³ launched by the Communist Party on March 8th 1927 in cooperation with the Central Committee of the Sredazbiuro and the Uzbek Communist Party, signified a new phase in the Soviet campaign for the liberation of Uzbek women. As existing scholarship on this period has shown, from that moment on, the struggle with the old "byt" intensified and assumed a mass character. Scholars like Douglas Northrop, Marianne Kamp, and Shoshana Keller, have vividly described the violent and coercive aspects of the Soviet campaign in the 1920s. They have highlighted the occurrence of mass public unveilings of Uzbek women, which in turn led to violent responses from the side of offended husbands and family members, and which is often seen as the symbol of that phase of the campaign.

Sources indeed suggest that the campaign became more massive and controlled, and that unveiling became an increasingly important point of attention for ideologists and activists. Liubimova, for instance, wrote that whereas before the Hujum Party members in Uzbekistan did not differ much from the non-Party-affiliated masses, from 1927 on Party members were encouraged to "take off the veil from

⁷² Smolkin-Rothrock, Victoria, *"A Sacred Space is Never Empty": Soviet Atheism, 1954–1971*, Berkeley 2010, 8–10.

⁷³ This translation seems worth looking into more closely. In Russian, "nastuplenie" has a connotation that is closer to "offensive" or "struggle" (many Soviet sources use it interchangeably with the Russian word "bor'ba"), words that do not necessarily imply a *physical* attack. It is only in the English translation into "assault" that the concept explicitly suggests violence.

their wives' faces." After that, she remembered, thousands of peasant women and wives of workers also followed this example and unveiled, and despite its many attempts, the Muslim clergy could do nothing to stop this process.⁷⁴ The second All-Union Congress of Female Workers and Peasants and the Communist Party at its 15th Party Congress, called upon the working masses to protect unveiled women, and more generally all local Party members and organs were encouraged to contribute to women's liberation in Central Asia, and to help monitor the implementation of Soviet laws regarding the position of women in society. In 1928, a special Committee "for the improvement of women's work and life" ("po uluchsheniuiu truda i byta zhenshchin"), consisting of activists, members of soviets and women's clubs, teachers, and Komsomol members, came into being to improve women's legal situation and to provide them legal support. Although veiling, for instance, had not officially been prohibited by law, the definition of "enemy of the people" was significantly expanded, and had come to include a variety of practices by men and the Islamic authorities that supposedly blocked women's emancipation.⁷⁵

Another new aspect of the campaign after 1927 was the increasing attempt to attract the female masses to the workforce. This went hand in hand with developments in industrialization and collectivization in the Soviet center, and the preparations for the first Five Year Plan (1928). Collectivization and labor, it was argued, were a strong weapon in the struggle with the old "byt," for participation in the workforce ended women's isolation and "loneliness," and provided them the opportunity for political and economic self-determination. And through the empowerment of women, it would eventually be possible to resolve the region's backwardness.⁷⁶ Liubimova maintained that the Five Year Plan for the development of industry and agriculture in the Soviet East was to an important degree meant to open up the opportunity for tens of thousands of women to work. As the 15th Party Congress decided, therefore, the focus would lie on those branches of industry that were considered suitable for Eastern women, such as textile and food processing, and carpet weaving. Women who started cooperatives received instruction and financial support, in particular those that had received parcels of land in the context of the land reforms.⁷⁷

Yet at the same time, there seem to have been significant continuities in the Soviet approach to women's liberation in Uzbekistan, as well. The Communist Party and Sredazbiuro stressed that "since a rejection of external signs of reclusion did

⁷⁴ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 19–20.

⁷⁵ Suvorova-Fedorova, M., *Trud i byt zhenshchin Vostoka. Materialy Vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia komissii po uluchsheniuiu byta zhenshchin Vostoka*. 11–17 ianvaria 1928, 11–16.

⁷⁶ Abidova, Dzhakhan, *Zhenshchina Uzbekistana v bor'be za svoe raskreposhchenie*, in: *Revolutsiia i Natsional'nosti* no. 3 (1936), 48.

⁷⁷ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 21–22.

not necessarily lead to women's de facto liberation from reclusion ("zatvornichestvo")," the Hujum should not merely be reduced to "taking off the clothes of reclusion"; rather, it was about "surrounding every woman with an atmosphere of compassion and attention, and offer her support to stand firmly on her feet."⁷⁸ The idea was that it was important in this phase of the campaign to cherish and maintain the achievements that women's clubs, shops, and other facilities had made in the previous years, and to continue these central forms of activism among Eastern women, though with a more systematic approach, and with better trained activists.⁷⁹ The 15th Party Congress stressed that it was not only important for the cultural development of the East to expand Uzbek women's education and prepare more local female cadres, but also to advance the work in the sphere of motherhood and childcare further. More than anywhere else, the Congress argued, facilities such as nurseries, clinics, and schools, and farms, had to be used to strengthen the ties of the Party with non-Party female workers. Much like before 1927, activists received instructions to gather women for conversations and lectures, and after starting off with a topic of immediate interest to the women, to slowly turn the conversation to the achievements of the Party.⁸⁰

To a large degree, the strategies and facilities for women's empowerment in Uzbekistan thus remained in place. Women's clubs and krasnye ugolki remained popular institutes. The role of the zhenotdel in these gradually decreased after 1927, however. Increasingly, factories, farms, cooperatives, unions, soviets, and the Komsomol were expected to create their own women's groups, and would carry out their own cultural-political "enlightenment work" among Uzbek women.⁸¹ An argument for this was given, for instance, by Soviet ideologist N. A. Akopian, who wrote that "if women and girls, who had unveiled and had had a few years of education, returned to a kolkhoz that did not offer systematic enlightenment work with women, [these women] started wearing the parandzha again and forgot everything they had learned."⁸² Factories, farms, and cooperatives became central settings not only in teaching Uzbek women the importance of labor itself, but women's presence in these spaces also provided activists the opportunity to inform them about the harmful aspects of the old "byt," and the benefits of Soviet society. Furthermore, factories and farms had facilities such as cinemas, schools, and libraries, and their dining halls and nurseries instructed Uzbek how to prepare "clean food" for their family,

⁷⁸ Pal'vanova, *Emansipatsiia musul'manki*, 101.

⁷⁹ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 46–47.

⁸⁰ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 43–45.

⁸¹ Tursunov, Kh. T. et al eds., *Khudzhum znachit nastuplenie*, Tashkent 1987, 75–85; Nuritov, A. N., *Politotdely MTS Uzbekistana v bor'be za vovlechenie zhenshchin v kolkhoznoe proizvodstvo (1933–1934 gg.)*, in: *Nauchnye Trudy* no. 212 (1962), 97–105.

⁸² Akopian, *Perryi s'ezd zhenskoi trudiasheisia molodezhi Uzbekistana*, 112.

how to eat and behave in a sophisticated manner, or how to raise their child.⁸³ Soviet ideologists and activists expected that the fact that women were contracted directly (without the mediation of male family members), and earned their own money, would make them demand a stronger position within their household and family. Moreover, skills such as accounting and contracts that are required for industrial work would help women understand the importance of literacy and education. From this Liubimova concluded that the importance of women's participation in the workforce was not limited to the economic sphere. It also "distanced them from the old byt, and taught them a way of life based on new foundations, without them even being aware of it."⁸⁴

In fact, it appears that the cultural significance of Uzbek women's participation in industry and agriculture was a major reason for attracting more women to the workforce in the first place, and may even have exceeded the importance given to these women's contribution to the economy and to industrial output. Whereas reports on the situation in the Russian part of the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and early 1930s wrote extensively about the extraordinary achievements (whether or not reflecting the truth) of workers in factories and farms, such proud assertions were quite rare in writings on Uzbek industry in that same period. The Uzbek industrial sphere was limited, and it is the question whether it was even possible to expand it significantly. Liubimova wrote that although large numbers of Uzbek women were attracted to factories, there were often not enough positions to actually accommodate all these women. Furthermore, factory owners were not always interested in Uzbek women, especially older women, who supposedly did not have the right "work mentality." Therefore, as Liubimova argued, it was indispensable above all that the Eastern woman learned how to be disciplined and "cultured," and that they understood the benefits of labor for their own development, and the importance of their devotion to the greater Socialist cause.⁸⁵

Reflecting on the Meaning of the "New Soviet Woman" in the Uzbek Context

The Soviet approach to Uzbek women's emancipation shows many similarities, yet also profound differences with the Russian case in the early Soviet period. In both cases, women's legal equality and equal opportunities in the public sphere, and encouragement of women's education, financial and social independence, political and social engagement, and participation in the workforce, were prominent aspects of

⁸³ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 28–29.

⁸⁴ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 31–32.

⁸⁵ Liubimova, *Rabota partii sredi truzhenits Vostoka*, 26–28.

Soviet propaganda. At the same time, however, Soviet propaganda in Uzbekistan was to a significant degree adjusted to local circumstances and concerns. As the Soviet leadership and activists argued, the strategies for strengthening the position of women “must take into account the specific circumstances of the Eastern periphery.”⁸⁶ In contrast to the center of the Soviet Union, for instance, Soviet activists in Central Asia hardly mentioned issues such as divorce and abortion, nor did the Soviet leadership argue for the “withering away” of the family and the complete take-over of childcare and household tasks by the state.⁸⁷ The new Uzbek Soviet woman was educated, cultured, and politically aware, but women’s emancipation was still defined within the framework of strong family relations. Much of the “enlightenment” work among women, including medical consultation and legal support, was aimed at eliminating other sources of authority such as religion from this framework, and at making “modern” Soviet women, wives, and mothers who would be engaged and loyal to the state.

That the matter of women’s emancipation was formulated differently in Uzbekistan and in Soviet Russia also appears from the sources on Uzbek women’s participation in the workforce. In the Soviet center, industrial and agricultural production were crucial for the construction of the country, and there every Soviet citizen was expected to contribute and work long hours, often under harsh circumstances. An entire cult was developed around the Soviet worker, in order to increase workers’ motivation to work harder. As mentioned above, however, the situation for Uzbek women was profoundly different. In Uzbekistan, keeping women “busy,” and the opportunities for “enlightenment work” and distraction from religious practice that women’s physical presence in factories, farms, and other cooperatives provided seem to have been at least as (if not more) important as their contribution to industrial output.⁸⁸

What the considerations were for this distinct approach does not become entirely clear from Party decrees and activists’ writings on work among women. Occasionally, some aspects of the campaign were described as compromises. For example, it was mentioned that a “small deviation from the principle of mixed education” was needed in Central Asia for a short period of time, since forcing mixed education in the East would lead to high numbers of girls and women abandoning their education.⁸⁹ For the most part, however, it seems that adjusting Soviet propaganda and activism was considered more as a pragmatic choice than as a weakness,

⁸⁶ Niurina, F., *Usilit’ podgotovku kul’turnykh kadrov Vostoka*, in: *Kommunistka* no. 5–6 (1929), 22–23.

⁸⁷ See Wendy Goldman’s book *Women, the State, and Revolution* on the campaign for women’s emancipation in the Russian part of the Soviet Union.

⁸⁸ Ibragimov, *Antireligioznaia rabota sredi zhenscbim Vostoka*, 48–49.

⁸⁹ Niurina, *Usilit’ podgotovku kul’turnykh kadrov Vostoka*, 23–24; Smirnova, A., *Zhenskoe obrazovaniie v Uzbekistane*, in: *Kommunistka* no. 8 (1928), 82–83.

and that there were no concrete plans to change this approach radically in the 1920s or early 1930s. This may have had to do with a conviction that Central Asia was simply too backward for an approach similar to Russian part of the Soviet Union. Or it could have been part of Terry Martin's more friendly explanation that the Soviet leadership believed that the best strategy for preparing all the peoples of the Soviet Union for true Socialism, was by letting them develop their "national consciousness"; though one that was decidedly "national in form, but Socialist in content."⁹⁰

Conclusion

The goal of this research has been to provide an insight into the new society Soviet ideologists and activists pursued in early Soviet Uzbekistan, and into the cautious strategies they imagined would be most effective for this goal. As a result, there are also important questions that this perspective and source base explicitly do not answer. First and foremost, my research is a history of an approach, and does not make claims as to how Soviet strategies played out in practice, and how successful they were. This would be an interesting avenue for further research. Other points of departure could be the role of zhenotdel activists in shaping the Communist Party's policies for Uzbekistan on the ground, or how Party decisions regarding the "modernization" of Uzbekistan fitted within larger ideological debates about Soviet nationality policy and the pace of societal transformation.

In this paper, I have argued that central to the Soviet campaign for Uzbek women's liberation and emancipation in the 1920s and early 1930s was a cautious, non-coercive approach. Whereas much of the earlier scholarship on this campaign has focused on the Hujum of 1927–1929, and the mass unveilings and violent backlash that occurred in this context, I have contended that this coercion and violence (in their physical manifestations) were an exception to the general Soviet approach in the region; and that both the leadership and activists primarily considered the Hujum as a project to consolidate and improve existing practices, and to intensify and extend the scope of the campaign. Throughout the 1920s and well into the 1930s, women's clubs and shops, antireligious groups, and support to poor women were major vehicles for Soviet outreach work among women in the region. With a warm, safe, and welcoming atmosphere, and by providing goods, resources, and medical and legal support, activists sought to obtain Uzbek women's trust, time, and attention. Activists understood that only once a relationship of trust was established with both women and their relatives, they could go ahead and educate these women, and gradually persuade them of the benefits of the "modern" Soviet way of life – at the expense other, mostly religious, authority. Upon close inspection it

⁹⁰ Martin, Terry, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*, Ithaca 2001.

appears that this strategy, even though it did not include physical abuse, was nevertheless meant to discipline Uzbek women profoundly, and to constrain their thoughts and actions. It is therefore important to keep in mind at all times that control and power can be exercised in many different ways, and that coercion and violence are complex concepts with a large grey area beyond their clearly physical forms.

The “new Soviet Uzbek woman” that was to be shaped in Soviet Uzbekistan at that time differed in multiple respects from the “new woman” in Soviet Russia. Whereas the ideal imagined for the latter was radical independence from all social and economic family ties, the new Uzbek woman, though modern, intelligent, and independent in thought and action, continued to be imagined within the network of the family, as a wife and mother. This suggests that multiple “cultural revolutions” occurred in the early Soviet Union in different contexts. Upon closer inspection, however, their differences notwithstanding, the cases of Soviet Russia and Uzbekistan were part of the same set of overarching goals: rigorous social transformation and modernization of society, and the creation of a new order with loyal, engaged citizens, and with the Communist Party as the only and undisputed authority in all spheres of life. Even though social and family relations were kept in existence in form, Soviet power sought to extend its influence precisely to the sphere of such relations, and to monitor and control them. Even the most intimate of relations were thus kept in check and in line with the Party’s main objectives, and outreach work among women was crucial in this respect. Even if an Uzbek woman was knitting or drinking tea at a woman’s club rather than working long hours in a factory and earning her own salary, she was still immersed in the Soviet order and worldview, and distracted from religious practice. As long as she looked to the state rather than to religious figures for support and advice, became an active participant in the Socialist project, respected Soviet ideals for order and morality, and continued to give birth to new Soviet children, the state’s major goals were achieved.

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The Multinational Community of Siberian Peoples: Research Information Base

Valentina V. Rykova, Lyudmila A. Mandrinina

The paper objective is to present the information resources devoted to studying Siberian peoples generated by the State Public Scientific Technological Library of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Novosibirsk), the largest research library in Siberia. It gives brief characteristics of bibliographic DBs Scientific Sibirika, Türks of Siberia, Poles in Siberia, Human Ecology of Siberia and the Far East etc., which were compiled to support research of scientists and specialists dealing with the population in Asian Russia. Some of them were generated in frames of the library international cooperation with YERTAD, the Association of History and Culture (Turkey), and projects of the Center for Polish Science and Culture formed at the library in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland. These DBs are a reliable and convenient information source to investigate the Siberian and Far Eastern peoples. It is possible to create information and bibliographic products (databases, literature indexes, reviews) on their base on individual ethnic/linguistic groups of the population of different Siberian regions.

They are the tool to carry on bibliometric (scientometric) analysis of the documentary corps on various issues to determine the research field priorities and trends.

The development of Siberia, a vast historical and geographical region of Northern Eurasia stretching from the Ural Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, inhabited by indigenous peoples called “aliens” in Tsarist Russia, took place for a long time and had a significant effect on forming the population ethnic composition of this region.

Colonizing Siberia by the Russian state started with the campaign by Yermak and his squad above the Urals in the late XVI century. At the early reign of the Romanov dynasty (XVII century), Cossacks and settlers developed East Siberia. That time, “free people” rushed beyond the Urals, and Siberia with its endless expanses became a place of exile and hard labor. In the late XIX – early XX centuries, a great number of people by different professions migrated to Siberia to develop the region due to:

- the Trans-Siberian Railway construction connected the European territory with Siberia and the Far East, and contributed to the economic development of the Asian regions of Russia;
- Stolypin Agrarian Reform of 1906 that provided for resettling above 2.5 million peasants to vacant land beyond the Urals.

It resulted in the fact that the Russians became the dominate nation in terms of population compared to indigenous peoples. The Revolution of 1917, Civil War, socialist industrialization, Great Patriotic War, post-perestroika migrations of the XX century led to resettling several million people of various nationalities to Siberia. The several century histories resulted in forming a multinational community of Siberians consisting of indigenous and newcomers¹.

The flow of publications devoted to studying the region population is scattered in numerous domestic and foreign publications, therefore, the targeted databases (DBs) containing thematically related documents are significant to meet the information needs of scientists and specialists involved in investigations of the aboriginals and newcomers. The objective to track and record significant number of publications dedicated to research of Siberia and the Far East is solved by the State Public Scientific Technological Library of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (SPSTL SB RAS). The library has been generated regional bibliographic DBs for information support with systematized scientific materials on the Siberian population life. DBs are compiled based of a legal copy of domestic literature entering SPSTL SB RAS, secondary bibliographic information, and free available Internet resources.

The information on various aspects of vital activity of peoples inhabiting the vast spaces of Asian Russia is presented in the polythematic DB Scientific Sibirika,

¹ Karikh, Elizaveta V., *History of Siberia (the XVII–XX centuries)*, Tomsk, 2013. (In Russ.).

which consists of some large thematic sections: History of Siberia and the Far East; Literature, Art of Siberia and the Far East; Economy of Siberia and Far East; Indigenous Peoples of the North and others. Besides, publications covering certain aspects of the population beyond the Urals are included in the independent DBs *Türks of Siberia*; *Poles in Siberia*; *Human Ecology in Siberia and the Far East*; *Bibliographic Aids on Siberia and the Far East*, *Siberian and Far Eastern Book* (united catalog)². Table 1 presents the thematic sections of the DBs covering materials on the Siberian and Far Eastern population, and numbers of publications by the topic.

Table 1. Materials on the population in the DBs of SPSTL SB RAS' own generation

№	DB title, retrospective	Subject headings	Entries amount
1	Scientific Sibirika, (thematic sections) History of Siberia and the Far East (1991 – nowadays)	Anthropology, ethnography; historical geography and demography, onomastics; historical and comparative historical study of languages	53,423
	Literature, Art of Siberia and the Far East (1991 – ...)	Folklore, decorative and applied arts, arts and crafts	18,405
	Indigenous Peoples of the North (1989 – ...)	Ethnicity and origin; legal bases of development and self-government; ecology of traditions territories; traditional economic branches, crafts; social sphere; culture, ethnic education, medical and biological problems	40,872
	Economy of Siberia and Far East (1990 – ...)	Demographics, labor resources	25,365
	Problems of the North (1988 – ...)	Social development of the Northern zone; population and labor resources of the North; settlement systems, standard of living	23,071
2	Türks of Siberia (book editions) (1799 – ...)	History, ethnography, anthropology; culture; linguistics; folklore, literature; religion and beliefs	1,502
3	Poles in Siberia (1989– ...)	Not structured by sections	2,547

² Lavrik, Olga, Busygina, Tatiana, Rykova, Valentina, Bibliographic Information Resources on the History of Siberia and the Far East, in: *Slavic & East European Information Resources* 4 (2016), 257–267. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15228886.2016.1246318>.

4	Human Ecology in Siberia and the Far East (1989 – ...)	Ethno-medicine; human adaptation to the conditions of Siberia and the Far East and the problems of survival, public health and its protection; assessment of risks to public health	8,171
5	Bibliographic aids on Siberia and the Far East (XIX century – ...)	Economics, sociology, demography	806
6	Siberian and Far Eastern book. XVIII century – 1930: united catalog	Not structured by sections	about 3,000

The thematic sections *History of Siberia and the Far East* and *Indigenous peoples of the North* of DB Scientific Sibirika have a subject heading *Peoples of Siberia*, which records the materials on individual ethnic groups. These sections reflect more than 37,000 publications devoted to Siberian and Far Eastern peoples. Table 2 represents the statistics of publications on the indigenous peoples of Siberia – 38 names of peoples and ethnic groups. These are materials on the historical development of peoples from antiquity to the present day, anthropology, ethnography, comparative historical linguistics, historical geography, demography, etc. The largest publication amount is devoted to 11 peoples (above thousand entries), where materials on Buryats, Yakuts and Khants have the highest quantitative indicators. Yakuts and Buryats are the most numerous indigenous peoples of Siberia, but Khants are small indigenous peoples (according to the 2010 census, the number of Yakuts is more than 478,000 Buryats – above 461,000 Khanty – nearly 31,000 people).

Table 2. Publication numbers in DB “Scientific Sibirika” devoted to indigenous peoples of Siberia

№	Peoples	Publication numbers	№	Peoples	Publication numbers
1	Yakuts	8,288	20	Finno-Ugric peoples	334
2	Buryats	3,878	21	Dolgans	322
3	Khants	3,052	22	Samoyed peoples	308
4	Altaians	2,486	23	Eskimos	290
5	Siberian Tatars	1,838	24	Shors	286
6	Nenets	1,556	25	Tungus-Manchu peoples	284
7	Turkic peoples	1,496	26	Nganasans	280
8	Mansi	1,384	27	Ainu	256
9	Khakass	1,351	28	Orochs	216

10	Evens	1,311	29	Teleuts	207
11	Ob Urgy	1,267	30	Tofalars	197
12	Selkups	937	31	Itelmens	188
13	Chukchi	737	32	Ulchs	168
14	Yukagirs	665	33	Aleuts	158
15	Nanais	612	34	Kamchadals	157
16	Koryaks	468	35	Kumandas	137
17	Mongolian peoples	467	36	Negidals	132
18	Nivkhs	403	37	Oroks	130
19	Kets	357	38	Udegs	120
Total			36,723		

As mentioned, materials on the Siberian people vital activity are scattered in many sources, and a lot of analytical work is required to identify and systematize the documents. DBs dedicated to individual peoples or ethnic (linguistic) groups are an irreplaceable information basis for detailed and thorough research. In 2019–2020, the bibliographic DB Türks of Siberia was formed with publications (about 28,000 titles) devoted to studying indigenous Siberian Turkic peoples (Altaians, Dolgans, Kumandins, Siberian Tatars, Teleuts, Tofalars, Tuvinians, Khakass, Chulym, Yakuts). The number of these peoples in Siberia is more than 900,000 people. The DB was prepared in cooperation with YERTAD, the Association of History and Culture (Turkey), which initiative was to create the international e-library Otrar on Turkic peoples³. SPSITL SB RAS took part in the project “Turkic peoples of Siberia”. As the project first stage the DB Türks of Siberia (book editions) (above 1500 titles) was formed, and an eponymous bibliographic index was prepared on its base.

Besides the indigenous peoples and Russians settling Siberia since the late XVI century, the Siberian history is inextricably related to so-called “new coming peoples”. For example, the Poles, who moved to Siberia by:

- forcing to penal servitude by the Russian authority’s decision (part of Poland called the “Kingdom of Poland” was annexed to Russia at the early XIX century and remained the Russian Empire part for a hundred years)⁴;
- arriving to Siberia by their free will, because it seemed them to be an economically advantageous region;
- sending for the civil service, etc.

³ Mustafina, Mira, *Manuscripts of the Otrar Library online*. URL: <https://liter.kz/8272-rukopisi-otrarskoy-biblioteki-onlayn/> (accessed 12.03.2021). (In Russ.).

⁴ Andreyanova, Nadezhda, Vaschenko, Andrey, Zvonarev, Andrey. *Legal status of the Kingdom of Poland within the Russian Empire*, Moscow, 2015. (In Russ.).

It was Siberia, where the largest Polish national community in Russia was formed⁵.

The history of the Polish people has become an integral part of Russian history. The desire of Poles to study the history of their people, to learn the names and activities of compatriots lived in Siberia deserves respect. Studying the Siberian history of Poles, revealing the research priorities and trends on the issues of Russian-Polish history got its development in the projects of the Center for Polish Science and Culture created at SPSTL SB RAS in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland (Irkutsk) in 2013. In the project framework, the Polish-Russian scientific seminars SIBIRICA – the history of Poles in Siberia in the studies of Polish and Russian scientists were organized; the bibliographic DB Poles in Siberia as an information base to support scientific activities was generated by SPSTL SB RAS. The DB is being replenished and currently includes above 2,500 publications for 1990–2021 devoted to the Polish people contribution to science, culture, education, healthcare in Siberia; their lives in Siberia and the Far East. The DB services allow receiving information about Polish personalities, whose activities related to Siberia. Headings of persons include, if possible, information that gives a detailed description of a particular figure (dates of life, types of activities, etc.). The DB contains bibliographic information about nearly 1000 Poles in Siberia.

Compiling bibliographic DBs as results of SPSTL SB RAS' international cooperation with foreign partners shows the demand for this information resource type.

The DB *Siberian and Far Eastern Book. XVIII century – 1930* (united catalog) is of undoubted interest for researchers of the history of the Siberian and Far Eastern population. It was prepared in frames of the project “Program to develop the Retrospective National Bibliography of the Russian Federation (for the period up to 2020)”⁶. It reflects materials on the Siberian and Far Eastern peoples (topics: history, ethnography, folklore, peasant, urban economy, health care, education, religion, etc.) published in Asian Russia for more than two hundred years.

A distinctive feature of the information resources generated by the SPSTL SB RAS is systematizing documentary arrays by subject-thematic and geographical headings, which greatly facilitates the search for relevant (especially regional) material of specialists. The records in DBs of SPSTL SB RAS' own generation include a full bibliographic description, a section of subject-thematic headings, a geographical heading, an annotation, and translations of titles to foreign publications.

Recently, using information of Internet resources in the practice of bibliography is especially relevant, that entails changes in organizational forms of work. Particular attention is paid to electronic regional editions without printed analogues on various knowledge fields (history, culture, ethnography, etc.) concerning certain Siberian and Far Eastern territories to meet information needs of users engaged in regional

⁵ Shaidurov, Vladimir, The Polish community of West Siberia in the late XIX – early XX centuries: formation and development features, in: *Bulletin of Altai State University* 4–3 (2009), 253–258. (In Russ.).

⁶ Program to develop the Retrospective National Bibliography of the Russian Federation (for the period up to 2020). URL: <http://www.rba.ru/content/about/doc/nacbibl.pdf> (accessed 30.11.2021). (In Russ.).

research. There are hyperlinks from the bibliographic descriptions to the full text of e-documents, which allows the DB users to view documents of interest outside the library.

To improve the information and bibliographic services for scientists and specialists, DBs compilation is accompanied with their content using bibliometric (scientometric) techniques. Their results give an idea of the temporal, specific, thematic, linguistic structure of the studied document corps, contribution of individual research teams and scientists to the specific topic elaboration; show the most productive periodical and significant monographic editions in a particular field of knowledge; present a list of scientific events (conferences, symposiums, working meetings) related to a particular issue.

SPSTL SB RAS' researchers have carried on the bibliometric analysis of information arrays of DBs Poles in Siberia and Türks of Siberia (book editions)⁷, as well as publication flows on individual Siberian peoples (Sakha, Nanais, Dolgans and others)⁸ (Rykova 2014, 2015, 2021) that allowed them to obtain the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of their content.

It should be concluded that the DBs of SPSTL SB RAS' own generation are a reliable and convenient information tool to study the Siberian and Far Eastern population. Based on them, it is possible to create information and bibliographic products (databases, literature indexes, reviews) on individual ethnic (linguistic) groups of the population of different Siberian and Far Eastern regions. Applying DBs services, everyone has an opportunity to carry out the scientometric analysis of the documentary arrays on various issues, to determine the research field priorities and trends.

⁷ Mandrinina, Lyudmila, Rykova, Valentina, Poles in Siberia: a database on Russian-Polish history, in: *Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal* 11 (2019), 107–111. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5817/cphpj-2019-013>; Mandrinina, Lyudmila, Rykova, Valentina, Busygina, Tatiyana, Balutkina, Natalia, Database Türks of Siberia – the information basis of Türkological research, in: *Siberian Anthropological Journal* 3 (2021), 21–31. DOI: 10.31804/2542-1816-2021-5-3-21-31. (In Russ.).

⁸ Rykova, Valentina, Nanais – the Far East aboriginal people: analysis of documentary flow of DB Scientific Sibirika, in: *Historical Informatics* 4 (2014), 11–14. (In Russ.); Rykova, Valentina, Analysis of the documentary flow of DB Indigenous Peoples of the North dedicated to the research of the Sakha people, in: *North Eastern Humanitarian Bulletin* 4 (2015), 122–124. (In Russ.); Rykova, Valentina, Turkic people of the Siberian Arctic: analysis of information in foreign and domestic databases, in: *Humanitarian Scientific Bulletin* 8 (2021), 33–40. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.5503681. (In Russ.).

Program of the Conference

Papers were circulated in advance.

- 9:00 Opening remarks: Johannes Reckel and Merle Schatz
- 9:10 Erich Kasten (Fürstenberg, Germany): Sustaining Oral Traditions and Languages in Siberia by Means of Hybrid Publishing and Dissemination Strategies
- 9:30 Eleanor Peers (Cambridge, England): Arctic Russia Meets the East of England: An Introduction to the Russian Collection at the Scott Polar Research Institute Library
- 9:50–10:00 *Coffee Break*
- 10:00 Valentina V. Rykova/Lyudmila A. Mandrinina (Novosibirsk, Russia): The Multinational Community of Siberian Peoples: Research Information Base
- 10:20 Deniz Özkan (Göttingen, Germany): Web Resources on and by Small Indigenous Peoples of Siberia
- 10:40–10:50 *Coffee Break*
- 10:50 Irina V. Lizunova/Evgeniya V. Pshenichnaya (Novosibirsk, Russia): National Press of Siberia and the Far East: In the Context of Russian History from XX to the Beginning of XXI Centuries
- 11:10 Madzhun Djamila Suleymanovna (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan): To the Problem of Preserving the Dungan Language in the Republics of Central Asia
- 11:30–11:40 *Coffee Break*
- 11:40 Robert Barnett/Jessica Yeung/Rune Steenberg/Merhaba Eli/Christian Faggionato/Ahmet Hojam Pekiniy (London, England etc.): Studying Chinese Translation Practices Since the Qing: The Historical Uyghur-Chinese Corpus Project
- 12:00 Eva Rogaar (Illinois, USA): Support, a Chat, and a Cup of Tea: Soviet Strategies for Women's Emancipation in Uzbekistan 1924–1935
- 12:20–12:30 *Coffee Break*
- 12:30 Anna Grinevich (Novosibirsk, Russia): Digital portal "Folklore of the peoples of Siberia"
- 12:50 Johannes Reckel (Göttingen, Germany): Building a Web Archive for Central Asia
- 13:10 Ellara Omakaeva (Elista, Russia): The main problems of study of the written heritage of the Kalmyks of Russia and the Oirats of Mongolia and China in the past
- 13:20 Final Remarks and End of Conference

Central Asia and Siberia are characterized by multiethnic societies formed by a patchwork of often small ethnic groups. At the same time large parts of them have been dominated by state languages, especially Russian and Chinese. On a local level the languages of the autochthonous people often play a role parallel to the central national language. The contributions of this conference proceedings follow up on topics such as: What was or is collected and how can it be used under changed conditions in the research landscape, how does it help local ethnic communities to understand and preserve their own culture and language? Do the spatially dispersed but often networked collections support research on the ground? What contribution do these collections make to the local languages and cultures against the backdrop of dwindling attention to endangered groups? These and other questions are discussed against the background of the important role libraries and private collections play for multiethnic societies in often remote regions that are difficult to reach.