Cultural heritage of the indigenous Arctic peoples of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia)

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the analysis of a little-studied phenomenon of the Arctic peoples of North-East Asia, which is the historical and cultural heritage of the atokhtons northern ethnic groups of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). Evens, Evenks, Yukaghirs, Chukchis and Dolgans live in Russia compactly in the extreme climatic, geographical conditions, and also in the special socio-economic realities of the unique Arctic region of the planet. An important factor of their sustainable development in the context of interaction between different cultures, especially global, post-industrial and traditional, is the creation of a favorable terms for traditional lifestyles and traditional economic activities, which are based on the full harmony and interaction of the human community and nature. Under these conditions, the most important, obvious and relevant is the study of the life and work of the peoples of the circumpolar Arctic in the mainstream of the scientific direction created by the academician D.S. Likhachev named as "ecology of culture". In the present article, the subject of the close attention and research are both the objects and issues of the environmental protection (ecology of nature), and the material and spiritual culture of society (human ecology). The preservation, development and revival of the native language and culture of the Arctic ethnic groups of the Sakha Republic is an important requirement for ensuring the stability of the ethnic traditions. Russian scientists and explorers of the North actively worked in this direction and contributed into Philology, Folklore and Ethnography of the indigenous Arctic peoples of Yakutia and adjacent regions of the Russian Federation. The joint project of the Institute for Humanities Research and Indigenous Studies of the North, Russian Academy of Science, Siberian Branch and the Institute of the Peoples of the North of Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia "Monuments of ethnic culture of indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East" successfully continues researchers of the Arctic in the XXI century. It is noteworthy that the main part of the project participants are the representatives from among the indigenous peoples of the North; they conduct such kind of research, which combines their life experience and scientific knowledge.

1. Introduction

Evens, Evenks, Yukaghirs, Chukchi and Dolgans are historically compact live in the remote areas of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), which are the parts of the Arctic zone of Russia. According to the 2010 Census of the Russian Federation, there are only 1281 Yukaghirs in two regions of the Republic (Nizhnekolymskiy and Verkhnekolymskiy). In the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) live 670 Nizhnekolymskiy Chukchi. The Dolgans live in the Anabarskiy national (Dolgan-Evenk) municipal
ulus (district) of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia). The total number of Dolgans is 7,885 persons, and 1,906 of them live in Sakha Republic. Evens live in 13 Northern ulus of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). They registered about 15,000. Evenks live in Ust-Maisky, Aldan, Neryungri and in some other ulus of the northern republic. According to the same Census, there are about 21,008 people.

Yukagirs also live compactly outside of Yakutia, in the Chuotka Autonomous Region. Chukchi are also indigenous inhabitants of Chuotka, Magadan region and Kamchatka region. Dolgans live in the Taimyr (Dolgan-Nenets) municipal district of the Krasnoyarsk Territory; and the Evens - in Chuotka, in the Magadan Region, and also in the Kamchatka and Khabarovsk Territories. Evenks inhabit the area throughout Eastern Siberia and the Far East.

2. Research results
The concept of cultural heritage is very broad. In relation to the autochthonous Arctic ethnic groups of Russia it is directly related to the concept of the ecology of culture.

The concept of ecology of culture, as it was introduced by the academician D. S. Likhachev, points to a careful attitude and preservation of not only biological objects of nature, but also the material and spiritual human culture [12]. Unfortunately, the scientific and technical development of the natural wealth of the North and the Arctic does not always take into account the human resources, including indigenous peoples, and its valuable potential in this vast region. Meanwhile, these people inhabited these lands from time immemorial and they developed a unique circumpolar culture, based on the methods of survival in the extreme climatic conditions of this part of the planet. "The historical specificity of the indigenous peoples of the Russian Arctic consists in the fact that they created in this region the cultural, social and environmental heritage of an exceptional way of life (a kind of "Arctic civilization"); they have mastered the natural environment and created the life support systems several thousand years ago" [29, p.7].

The indigenous small in number peoples of the North and Arctic are, according to our point, Evens (Lamuts), Evenki (Tungus), Yukagirs (Odoul), Dolgan (Tyalar) and Chukchi (Luoravetlan), the small population living compactly in the most extensive territories of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia). Currently, the languages and traditional culture of these peoples are on the verge of extinction. As R. R. Abdulkhakov rightly notes: "The people small in number are losing their languages and, together with it, also their traditional food, ceremonial and cultural traditions and other knowledge of the previous generations" [1, p. 35].

This was mostly due to the ill-conceived policy of industrial development of the Northern territories, which partially deprived the indigenous population from the places of traditional nature management and farming (reindeer husbandry, hunting, fishing, gathering), globally transforming the modern environment of their habitat. Studying the problems of protection of the traditional culture and of support of the indigenous peoples in Arctic in the conditions of the active industrial development of the Arctic territory, O.A. Murashko notes the following: "The Legislation of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) on environmental expertise aims to protect the traditional way of life and cultural development of the indigenous peoples, but it does not yet solve the problem of preserving the intangible basis of the culture of life support" [14, p.137].

Indigenous peoples of the Arctic, along with a completely original material culture, created a rich spiritual culture, which is represented by the unique folk knowledge developed by many generations of them.

As it was noted by the academician V.A. Robbek, "the traditional knowledge was developed within the local communities and was based on the close interaction between people and their ecosystems for centuries or even millennia. They usually reflect the subtle strategies of continuing social cohesion and sustainable ways of using of the renewable natural resources, because they are stable" [23, p. 617]. He also notes that the diversity that has permeated into the local traditional knowledge is also present in the language and influences the way it is used. This requires, in his opinion, the cooperation of environmentalists and social researchers with linguists in order to better assess the cognitive map of traditional knowledge, which largely exists within the oral context.
Preservation and development of a unique of the culture of the peoples of the North and the Arctic will guarantee safeguarding of the ethnic and cultural values for the future generations of Russians and the world community. Yukaghir, Chukchi, Dolgans, Evens live only in the northern territories of the Russian Federation. Evenks also live in China. Their languages are listed in the "Red book of languages of the peoples of Russia" [11].

However, until now their languages as a part of their ethnic culture still preserve the treasures of folk knowledge in the annals. The language is preserved where there is a language environment, and, as you know, it is better preserved and functions where traditional types of economy (such as reindeer herding, hunting, fishing, gathering) are developed. So, for example, "the traditional culture of the Nenets is largely formed depending on the traditional economic and cultural complex. A special role here is played by reindeer husbandry with its specific features and peculiar aspects, which are inherent only to this ethnic group. The rich linguistic vocabulary, the way of life and of forming the ethnic character, worldview and world perception, for the Nenets all that is associated with reindeer" [18, p. 227]. In turn, reindeer husbandry can exist and develop in the presence of a certain biological base (forage pastures for reindeer, hunting grounds, places of reproduction of fish stocks, etc.).

The contribution of the autochthonous peoples of the North and the Arctic, their invaluable experience in the development of landscape-geographical territories in harsh climatic conditions, samples of environmental culture, which they created, the moral and aesthetic views, their material and spiritual culture are not sufficiently studied as a valuable experience of mankind. In the practice of development of the Arctic and Northern territories, in particular in Russia, this rich experience remains unclaimed. Currently, in Russia there is published a unique series of books "Cultural heritage of indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of Russia" (the author of the idea V.A. Robbek) [19], initiated by the staff of the Institute for Humanities Research and Indigenous Studies of the North, Russian Academy of Science, Siberian Branch and professors and teachers of the Institute of Peoples of the North of the Russian State Pedagogical University A.I. Herzen.

To date, more than forty volumes have been published; the content of those volumes includes the following blocks:

1. Languages and folklore of the peoples of the North;
2. Arts and crafts and arts and crafts of indigenous small northern peoples;
3. The traditional culture of the northern ethnic groups: the material and spiritual world.

In the framework of this project, the following researchers studied Evenk language and folklore: T.E. Andreeva [2], B.V. Boldyrev [3], G. I. Varlamova [4, 5], A. N. Myreyeva [15, 16], Nikolaev N. N. [17], Z. N. Pikunov and I. R. Pikunov [20], Struchkov K. N. [27]. V. A. Robbek and M. E. Robbek devoted their works to study of the language, material and spiritual culture of the Evens [10, 22, 23, 24, 31]. A. A. Danilova, V. K. Ivanov, Z. I. Ivanova-Uvarova, and P. E. Prokopyeva studied the language and culture of the Yukagirs [6, 9, 21], and A. I. Savinov investigated the problems of ethnocultural identity of the Dolgans [26].

The lifestyle of a northern person has always depended on the climatic conditions of their habitat. Evenks, Evens, Dolgans, Yukaghir and Chukchi have developed a nomadic way of life and their ecological culture. Yakutia (the place of their residence) is the world coldest territory with permafrost, huge water areas, taiga massifs and tundra, and Arctic species of flora and fauna. Since ancient times, the people in the North has built the relationship between the biosphere and society on the principle of harmonization, mutual respect, and this determines all the aspects of the material and spiritual culture.

A. D. Marfusalova writes about it the following: "The ecological traditions of the indigenous peoples of the North, as well as of the other aboriginal ethnic groups, who preserve the appropriating economy, are the product of long-term evolutionary development and the result of the entire set of natural and social conditions of life. They represent the stereotype of ecological thinking and behavior fixed in the memory and behavior of the majority of the members of society (ethnos, people, mankind), transferred from generation to generation in the historically long period of time. It is directed on formation of balance of ecosystems, rational coexistence of human and the nature providing self-reproducing activity of human society and multi-species biosphere" [13]. The traditions
of environmental protection typical for the peoples of the North are visible in all their appearance, in the norms of everyday life, in the stereotypes of their behavior, in folk psychology, ethnic morality and ethics.

Reindeer herders and hunters have developed a strict system of taboos, designed to facilitate the reproduction of nature bioresources that can ensure the life of the ethnic group. In a difficult climatic situation, they created a kind of folk production calendar, highlighting the special seasons and periods.

For example, in the Evenk language there are not four seasons (in contrast to the Russian language), but six: diugani - summer, bolani - early autumn, montelse - late autumn, tugani winter, nelke - early spring, magni - late spring. This is due to the special economic and cultural cycle of reindeer herding, hunting, fishing, gathering (calving, coral, moulting of animals and migratory of birds, time of fishing, etc.). The method of economic activity, the tools of hunting and fishery, the objects of labor and life, all those were the subject to the laws of nature and were developed by the peoples, who had respect for the environment.

Despite all the transformations and innovative processes, the language and traditional culture of the Evens, Evenks, Yukaghirs, Chukchis and Dolgans of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), continue to be preserved in their new forms, adapted to the conditions of a multinational and multicultural society. In this significant role played by such advanced sciences as Ethnolinguistics, Ethnocultural studies, Linguostylistics.

In the domestic Tungus studies (Philology, Ethnography, Folklore, Ethnolinguistics, Linguostylistics), there are the widely known fundamental works and applied research of such scientists as V. G. Bogoraz, G. M. Vasilevich, V. I. Tsintsius, L. D. Rishes, A. N. Myreyeva, N. I. Gladkova, K. A. Novikova, V. D. Lebedev, V. A. Robbek, A. A. Burykin, A. A. Petrov, A. L. Malchukov and others.

In Paleoasian studies we appreciate the research on Chukchi and Yukagir language, ethnography and folklore accomplished by V. I. Jochelson, I. S. Vdovin, P. Y. Skorik, V. G. bogoraza, I. A. Kreinovich, G. N. Kurilova, E. V. Kulikova and others.

In Dolgan studies there were recognized the fundamental works of such famous scientists as A. A. Popov, E. I. Ubriatova, B. O. Dolgikh, E. E. Aksenov, P. E. Efremov, N. M. Artemyev, G. G. Alekseev, A. I. Savvinov, and others. Specifically in Dolgan Linguostylistics were engaged AA Popov, PE Efremov, N. In. Emelyanov, N. Ah. Alekseev [7; 8; 30].

3. Conclusion

Thus, the cultural heritage of the Indigenous Minorities of the Arctic Sakha Republic of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) needs special care today. The joint efforts of the State authorities of the Russian Federation, public organizations and the representatives of the indigenous ethnic groups are needed in the field of human ecology: the preservation and development of the phenomena of material and spiritual culture created by many generations in the previous centuries.

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