

УДК 930 + 94 (47)

**Social and Cultural Peculiarities
of the Development of Ethnocultural Groups
Belonging to the Indigenous Minorities
of the North, Siberia and the Far East.
The Population of the North-East of Siberia
in the Chinese Graphic Monuments**

Nadezhda T. Terentjeva*

*Republic Sakha Academy of Science (Yakutia)
33 Lenina, Yakutia, 677007 Russia¹*

Received 4.07.2011, received in revised form 11.07.2011, accepted 18.07.2011

The conception of the given work is based on the methods of comparative historical analysis and civilizational approach.

Keywords: Peoples of the North-East of Siberia, Yakutia, Chinese graphic monuments, Chinese sources.

Our historical sources are a complex of documents and objects of material culture that directly reflect the historical process, fix the facts of the past and accomplished events. They are subdivided into seven groups: graphic, material, ethnographical, spoken, linguistic, photo and phonographic documents.

In their turn, written sources include chronicles, legislative acts, clerical documentation, protocols, agreements, diaries, memoirs and letters (Danilevskij, 1991).

Various historical acts and other archival materials are also referred to as the historical sources of Siberia. Translations of Chinese and Middle Asian sources are also of big interest for the studies of earlier phases of history (Gardiazzi Marvazi and others) (Vasshevich).

As N.V. Kjuner notes, the Chinese documentary materials can be divided into two types: chronicle narrations and dynastical chronicles (Kjuner, 1946).

Traditionally, in the broad sense of the word chronicles are considered to be historical compositions that provide the narration of the story strictly according to the years of accomplishment and very often accompanied by chronographic (yearly), often calendar, and sometimes chronometric (hourly) data. According to these specific features they are close to the East European annals (from Lat. “annals” (libri) – annual (reports)) and chronicles (from Greek “chronikos” – relating to time). In the narrower sense, chronicles are real annalistic texts which reached our days and are preserved in

* Corresponding author E-mail address: his_cn_explorer@list.ru

¹ © Siberian Federal University. All rights reserved

one or several similar lists (Maljavkin, 1989). As a rule, in the present research “chronicle” means a complex of lists combined in one edition (for example, chronicles of the Late Han Dynasty Epoch). Thereat, imply that in their basis there is a supposed common source. Every list delivers the previous text in its own way, changing it in a greater or lesser degree (corrupting or, vice versa, correcting it).

A special part of the Chinese historical literature is a part containing certain data on foreign peoples. Such kind of news was systematically included into the so-called dynastical stories of China and were added into the general chronological narration in the course of times of the Chinese historical chronicles (more than two thousand years B.C.) (Danilevskij).

The Chronicles of ancient Chinese dynastical stories are not only extremely interesting, they are also rather difficult to study for most researches of the present field. The scientists have found out that almost all the preserved annalistic texts are compilations and collections of the previous chronicles (Maljavkin, 1989). Just the same information with some later amendments (insertions) are reproduced in other works of Chinese historical literature, including such special collections as «Shuo-feng-bei-cheng» of the middle of 50-s of the XIX century or in the earlier works like numerous encyclopedias («Cefuangui» of the XII century, Wenxian-tukao of the XVIII century, Tushujicheng of the XVIII century.) and finally, in such collections of works as «Yi-tong-zhi» (historical-geographical review), and «Daqing -yi-tong-zhi» of the XVIII century in particular.

The second peculiarity of the dynastical stories pointed out by many researchers is their chaotic character. V.P. Vasilyev notes: «at first sight at the full collection of Chinese history, one can come to the conclusion that everything

has been already done there and that the person who knows Chinese has nothing to do but to read multi-volume works and mechanically obtain the data, but in reality everything turns out to be different. Beside this strange disposition of works which makes the scientist look through all the collection in order to obtain a full notion of one separate event, beside this tiresome reading, beside constant critical tension which will disclose the truth only if one researches the subject fully and deeply, moreover, the scientist constantly faces various questions that make him search for answers, but in vain, as far as he is constantly meeting corruptions and gaps in the texts». (Vasilyev, 1861) L.N. Gumilyov adds that «primary data is obtained from the translations of Chinese chronicles, and though the translations were made conscientiously, the chronicles themselves are a super-complicated source» (Gumilyov, 1993).

In the present article we consider the dynastical stories of the Tang Epoch as a source for researching the Siberian peoples. We should also note that at that time the dynastical chronicles of the Tang Epoch were considered to be an etalon of historical science of China. For the first time the chronicles generalized and systemized the data about vagrant tribes of the Chinese Empire and the peoples living on the territory of modern Siberia.

Already in the XVIII century and even earlier Russian and Western-European researchers paid attention to existence of such an early source as Chinese historical literature which was interesting and important studying other nations of Asia, the peoples of Northern Asia and Siberia in particular. The first sinologist N.Ja. Bichurin became famous for compiling «The Collection of Materials about Peoples Populating Middle Asia in Ancient Times» which was published in three parts in St. Petersburg in 1851. This work was compiled on the basis of Chinese

dynastical stories translations, especially its part concerning the nations of Central and Northern Asia. N.Ja. Bichurin and the previous translators translated the Chinese texts the way they found it, sometimes shortening it because of various reasons, but never criticizing it or comparing various editions in order to find out the original variants, the latter insertions or other deviations from the earliest variant (Kjuner). That was why even the best translations were corrupted and had gaps in comparison even with the latter and more precise revisions of the text. These mistakes were eliminated in the modern translations because of better knowledge of various publications and editions of the Chinese historical literature pieces and due to the variety of interpretation of some words (hieroglyphs).

N.Ja. Bichurin dedicated his «The Collection of Materials about Peoples Populating Middle Asia in Ancient Times» to translating the Tang Epoch History, where he suggests setting the ethnonym «Kurykan» equal to the Chinese ethnonym «Guligan». Proceeding from the data of the Chinese chronicles by N.Ja. Bichurin, we may suppose that the tribes of the *Guligans* (*Kurykangs*) and the *Dubo* were neighbours, and beyond their living territory there was Beyhey (Baikal). Near it there lived people similar to the *Kurykangs*: «To the North of two tribes (generations) of the Guligans and the Dubo there is a small sea. When the ice is tough, horses can walk on it cross the sea in 8 days. To the North of the sea there are a lot of big mountains. Their inhabitants seem to be rather big. And their traditions are similar to those of the Guligans» (Bichurin, 1953). Since that time, the given hypothesis has become wide-spread in the research works by many Russian scientists.

V.V. Radlov supposed that under «Guligans» they meant ancestors of the Yakuts (Radlov, 1964). Later, N.N. Kozmin set «Guligans» directly equal to «Kurykangs» (Kozmin, 1928). Thereat, the

researchers have proceeded from the fact of use of Turkic languages and that the Yakuts were the closest neighbours of the Kurykangs.

A.P. Okladnikov has placed much importance on Chinese sources. In his fundamental work «History of Yakutia» he researches the Kurykang hypothesis right from the position of Chinese scientists and denotes that the Kurykangs in fact inhabited the territory of Baikal (Okladnikov, 1955).

In his research works, A.N. Bernshtam analyzes the data given by N.Ja. Bichurin and N.V. Kjuner and compares the ethnonyms of ancient and modern peoples of South Siberia and Yakutia in particular, with Chinese ethnical names and denotes their probable place of habitation on the map, transcribing ancient geographical names (Bernshtam, 1947). Thus, for example, he supposes that the *Ju* tribes were taiga reindeer herders and presents an ethnographic description of their place of habitation, husbandry and clothes taken from a Tang story: «... there are a lot of trees and no grass, and a lot of green moss»; as a drawing labour force they used deer, «...which are like Chinese cows and horses, their clothes is made of buck skin». Tang chroniclers give different variants of their ethnonym and especially its *U-wan* form, which should be taken as a self-naming of the Tungus people – «the Evenkis».

If we admit the Tang transcription and their remarks concerning that «there were various generations composing the tribes of *U-wan*, in particular there were the already mentioned *Ju*», then we come to the conclusion that the *Ju* tribes were merged in the *U-wan* Tungus people. Toponymic name of the *Dabo* tribe is translated from Chinese as «large steppe» and it was transferred on to the inhabitants of this «large steppe». Such a steppe could be a forestless plain to the North-East from the Baikal Lake, headstream of the Lena River. In

comparison with the tribes of deer breeders, the *Damo* possessed horses and sheep, and they were tall. A.N. Bernshtam supposes that they «had some Yakut ancestors, just some of them, because in the paragraph concerning the *Damo*, it is mentioned about the territory of the *Gu-shi*, who «were related to the *Damo*» according to Tang history. The *Damo* tribes are mentioned in the history of Tang under the name of *Dahan*, while the materials about the *Gu-shi* are absent: «... probably, *Gu-shi* is a transcription of some part of the Yakuts or the Tungus (Bernshtam). Ye. I. Sidorov's research works attract special attention as he uses Chinese dynastical stories in his essays. He considers Chinese ethnonyms of ancient times and compares them with self-namings of the peoples of Yakutia. Thus, for example, he identifies tribes of the *Saihzhe* or *Saiheshi* of the Shivey similar to the ethnonym *Sakha* and finds its proofs in ancient Japanese, Manchu and Chinese sources. In his article «The Sakha Ethnonym» Ye. I. Sidorov mentions the research works of V.P. Vasilyev, L.L. Viktorova, A.G. Maljavkin about the *Shiweis*, and he agrees with these scientists concerning that «some of the *Shiwei* tribes of the early Middle Ages – the *Big*

Shiweis – inhabited Southern Yakutia and some part of the Trans-Baikal territory» (Sidorov, 1984). Analyzing the conclusions made by N.V. Kjuner that in the VII century the middle part of the Lena River was inhabited by the tribes which are known from Chinese chronicles as the *Yuzhe*, and Southern Yakutia and the Northern Trans-Baikal territory – by the *Dahans*, Ye. I. Sidorov presupposes that the ethnonym *Yuzhe* meant ancient Tungus or Yukaghir tribes and the nation which was known as the *Dahans* and was a part of the *Big Shiweis*. *Dahan* is translated from Chinese as «... a spindlelegs, a tall man, a big guy». (*The ethnonym Dahan itself is translated correctly: the hieroglyph «da» means “big”, and «han» – “a guy”, “a man”. But, the word «Dahan» serves also as a definition of young men remarkable for their great courage, and it is still used in Chinese – N.T.*). Analyzing Chinese chronicles, Ye. I. Sidorov appeals mainly to the translation works made by N.V. Kjuner.

Obviously, dynastical stories of the Tang epoch are practically a paradigmatic material in the process of research of the people living in Siberia and Yakutia in particular.

References

- Danilevskij I.N.* Historical Sources of XI-XVII centuries. Moscow, 1991. P. 120 (in Russian).
Vasshevich G.M. Archive of HE RAS. F. 22. L. 1. Chr. 70 (in Russian).
Kjuner N.V. Chinese Historical Data on the Peoples of the North. Leningrad, 1946. P. 10 (in Russian).
Danilevskij I.N. Decree. Essay. P. 122 (in Russian).
The same. P. 156 (in Russian).
Maljavkin A.G. The Tang Chronicles about the State of Central Asia. Novosibirsk, 1989. P. 106 (in Russian).
Vasilyev V.P. History and Ancient times of the Eastern Part of Central Asia since X till XIII century. Appendix: translation of Chinese news about the Kidans, the Zhurzhen and the Mongolian Tatars. St. Petersburg, 1861. P. 21 (in Russian).
Gumilyov L.N. The Dinlinsk Problem. Collection of Works. Moscow, 1993. P. 263-265 (in Russian).
Kjuner N.V. Decree. Essay. P. 15 (in Russian).

Bichurin N.Ja. The Collection of Materials about Peoples, Populating Middle Asia in Ancient Times. – V. III. – Moscow; Leningrad, 1953. P. 296 (in Russian)

Radlov V.V. Ancient Turkic Runic Monuments. – Moscow, 1964. P. 150-180 (in Russian)

Kozmin N.N. Concerning the Question of Origination of the Yakuts – Sakhalars. – Irkutsk, 1928. P. 34 (in Russian)

Okladnikov A.P. History of Yakutia. – V. I. – Moscow; Leningrad, 1955. P. 152-153 (in Russian)

Bernshtam A.N. Notes about Ethno-Genesis of the North Asian People // Soviet Ethnographer. – Moscow, 1947. P. 60-66 (in Russian)

Bernshtam A.N. Ancient Turkic Elements of Ethno-Genesis of North-Eastern Asia // the same. P. 148-158 (in Russian)

Sidorov Ye. I. The Sakha Ethnonym // Ethnical Onomatology: collection of works. – Moscow, 1984. P.40 (in Russian)

**Социально-культурные особенности
развития этнокультурных групп,
принадлежащих к коренным
и малочисленным народам Севера,
Сибири и Дальнего Востока.
Китайские письменные памятники
о народонаселении Северо-Востока Сибири**

Н.Т. Терентьева

Академия наук Республики Саха (Якутия)

Россия 677007, Якутск, пр. Ленина, 33

Концепция данной работы основана на методах историко-сравнительного анализа и подходах цивилизационного подхода.

Ключевые слова: народы Северо-Востока Сибири, Якутия, китайские письменные памятники, китайские источники.
