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Archetypical Image of the Old Man in Buryat Literature of the 20th Century

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Abstract. The article reviews the archetypical nature of the image of the Old Man in Buryat literature, which originates from the character of Buryat-Mongol myths, the White Elder (Sagaan Ubgen). The article aims to reveal the typological properties of the archetype of the Old Man in a key genre for national literature, a novel, involving also dramatic and lyrical epic works. This goal necessitates involving a comparative typological analysis, as well as mythopoetic and comparative-genetic methods used in the study of traditional culture. Their use in literary criticism is important and relevant since the authors try to explain the strengthening of the universal interpretation of man in the art of the 20th century, and the desire of writers to outline ways out of the acute crisis relations between man and the world, man and nature. Earlier in the texts of national culture the socially determined explanation of these relations was sought; but at the present time another interpretation is getting up to date, precisely an interpretation based on the writers' appeal to the deep layers of mythological thinking, their reliance on universally existent, ontological causes of the crisis phenomena. The analysis of the "sacred / profane" dichotomy which is peculiar to mythological thinking showed that this hero of Buryat literature is committed to search for ancestral memory as for truth; he considers serving his kinship the essence of human existence. The presence of an axiological aspect leads to the universal ontological values inherent in the archetype of the Old Man. The leading method of analysis was comparative-typological, aimed at establishing typological patterns in the field of representation of archetypes in the literature and ensuring specificity in the results obtained. The usage of this method made it possible to distinguish such typological features and properties of the Old Man's archetype as ambivalence, poetry and ontology of binary oppositions, craving for a miraculous outcome. It is concluded that these archetypal properties impart the analyzed images the symbolic meaning of eternal rebirth, the cyclicity of life and its harmonious order.

Keywords: archetype, Old Man's image, national drama; poem; Buryat novel; shaman; Uligershin narrator; mediator function; ancestral memory; good / evil; life / death.

Research area: philology.

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Introduction

The fundamental historical, demographic and cultural factors that determined the originality of Buryat literature are closely linked to the national mentality and its folkloric and mythological heritage. Studies of the ethno-historical originality of the Buryat literature lean towards the specific features of the writer's artistic world, which can be explained by conscious or unconscious addressing the deep genetic layers of mythological thinking. Mythology as a means of structuring key image archetypes was a compelling means of research in the 20th century in literature due to the increased importance of universal interpretation of human personality, and the writers' desire to emphasize the severity and complexity of insoluble collisions and incomprehensible phenomena. This article is devoted to the study of one of the unique archetypical images in Buryat literature, namely the image of a wise old man. Examining this ethnocultural image in comparative and typological terms, we regard not only the study of historical and functional, historical and genetic connections as relevant, but also a whole range of traditional values and mental features of the nation. This means that the literature study of the archetypical basis of the image structure can significantly complement the processes of objectification of scientific integration.

We have investigated the mythological archetype as an essential constituent necessary for semantic analysis of literary works. We consider the following definition of this term (with reference to the works of C. Jung) to be the closest one to our research goals: "The archetype is a symbolic formula that takes on a function everywhere where either there is no conscious concept or it is nonexistent due to in-

ternal or external circumstances. The doctrine of archetype is associated with C. Jung's understanding of a symbol that "functions as an element of the unconscious..." (Modern foreign literary criticism, 1999: 184). The conscious or unconscious reference to the archetypical manifestations of images outlined by C. Jung and other interpreters of manifestations of myth in art, for example, E.M. Meletinskii, underline the enormous distance between the archaic myth and the modern game, while the pronounced symbolic meaning of images (archetypes) renders an invariable universal peculiarity in any national culture. According to E.M. Meletinskii, writers often use "mythological parallels" in order to emphasize the recurrence of irreconcilable personal and social conflicts that people of different epochs perpetually face (Meletinskii, 2000a: 130).

Within the framework of this work, the most general view of archetype is its interpretation given by S.S. Averintsev: the concept of archetype is applied "to designate the most general, fundamental and universal motifs, the initial schemes of representations at the core of any artistic, including mythological, structures" (Averintsev, 1988: 111). At the same time, the archetypical features in the images of literary heroes make it possible to reveal not only general cultural and superethnic character of the archetype, but also its ability to cover the specifics and mental nature of each national culture.

Materials for research into mythological and archetypical imagery in the literary process of modern times can be presented by fiction of Mongolian peoples, confirming the diverse influence of their traditional culture on literature. Focus on mythological motifs and images is visible in the works of those Mon-

golian literary scholars who bring to light the connection between national folklore and literature, and the writers' appeal to the sacral and mythological meaning of literary works (Gadamba; Damdinsouren; Dalantai; Dagvadorj, Olziibaier). In this regard, we cannot but mention S. Dulam's Thesis "Images of Mongolian mythology and literary traditions" (Dulam, 1988), D.V. Dashibalova's Thesis "Folklore and literary tradition in 19th century Mongolian literature" (Dashibalova, 2000).

In S.J. Baldanov's monograph "National poetic origins of the national literature of Siberia (Buryatia, Tuva, Yakutia)" (1995) one section analyses the material of the Buryat literature and studies folklore and mythological imagery. It examines the comparative aspect of the use of images and motifs of the Buryat folk-poetic creativity in poetry, prose and drama. T.B. Balarieva's Candidate's Thesis "Folklorism of modern Buryat prose" (2005) also deals with the role of folklore genres in the Buryat literature, highlights separate images and motifs, in particular, the images of wise old ladies and old men in the Buryat novel. The authors of these studies look into the manifestation of national identity and folklore and ethnographic origins of the Buryat mythological representations used by the writers. The monograph "Women's images in Buryat dramaturgy: archetypical content and national and cultural context" by S.S. Imikhelova and T.V. Shantanova (2015) accentuates and discusses in detail the archetype of the Great Mother as a reflection of the mythological primary scheme in female images of Buryat drama.

As for the archetype of the old man in the traditional culture of the Mongolian peoples, there are theses devoted to this topic: "Semantics of the image of the White Elder in the traditional culture of the Mongolian peoples" (2004) by E.A. Nemanova, a cultural scientist and historian, and "The image of Sagan Ugen – the Master of the Land in the art of Mongolian-speaking peoples (Mongolia, Kalmykia, Buryatia)" (2004) by art historian S. Batchuluun. They pinpoint attention to the cultural and artistic aspects of the mythological image of the White Elder, primarily its manifestation in the traditional art of Mongolian-speaking

peoples. The same aspect of this image is presented in the works of the Buryat researcher V. Naidakova based on the material of folk theatre art (Naidakova, 1997; 2002), but the thorough analysis of the archetypical image of the wise old man in the works of Buryat writers is still to be made. This article represents the first systematic approach to studying this image (archetype) in the Buryat literature.

Materials and methods

The material for studying the image (archetype) of the old man in literature is represented by the works of Buryat prose writers, poets and playwrights created at various periods of the 20th century. They offer a creative interpretation of the popular folkloric and mythological images of Grandma Manzan-Gurme and the White Elder. Distinguishing these fundamental mythological characters and considering the mechanisms of their transformation in fiction necessitate application of the concepts and provisions developed in the works of a wide range of scientists – philosophers, cultural anthropologists, folklorists, mythologists, literary critics, such as C.G. Jung, M. Eliade, A.N. Veselovsky, O.M. Freidenberg, E.M. Melitsky, V.N. Toporov, C.K. Kluckhohn, N. Fry and others; comparative analysis of ritual and mythological cultures. The content of the archetype in focus and typological patterns of its manifestation in the works of Buryat literature representing this archetype conditioned the use of comparative-typological and comparative analysis of folklore, mythological and literary texts. In addition, it was necessary to take the advantage of the hermeneutic analysis of the fiction text, which assumes that "hermeneutic criticism might speak the language of the assumption of meaning and of internal recreation, structural criticism that of distant speech and intelligible reconstruction" (Genette, 1998: 170-173). These methods are thus characterised by the principles of consistency and interdisciplinarity.

Results

Examination of the image of the old man in Buryat literature with the above methods led to the conclusion that his archetypical properties

and functions are symbolic and have occurred in works of various genres. They look the most symbolic in dramatic genres, as drama arises directly from the ritual, logically goes back to the ritual and that ritual is not the source but the content of a dramatic work (Meletinskii, 2000b: 109). Proof of this thesis can be found in the Buryat dramaturgy of the 20th century, where the key role is played by the old man, the Elder of the clan, who is an indispensable participant in traditional ceremonial actions on *tailagans* (feasts) and in everyday rituals.

The function of the old man's image archetype acquires a poetic-symbolic character also in lyrical poems and those poems that go back to the tradition that comes from Buryat legends – the *uligers*, where the main role belongs to thinking, feeling and lyrical intonation of an *uligershin* (storyteller), whose talent and wisdom have always been revered by the people, and where the image of the White Old Man, popular in the myths and folklore of the Buryat Mongols, reflected the philosophical and meditative epic sound.

A novel is supposed to be evidence of the maturity of artistic thinking in the history of national literature, as the emergence of this genre begot a special trait, which is called romantic thinking. That is why the concern of Buryat writers-novelists to folk legends and myths required our comparative-typological analysis of the image of the old man as a symbol of the wisdom of the people and undoubtedly revealed the transformation of such properties of the archetype as ambivalence, binary character, gravitation towards the miraculous events, symbolism of eternal rebirth and cyclical life. Thus, the consistent consideration of the subject and material was caused by the genre nature of works by Buryat writers and their orientation on the family topic.

Discussion

The Buryat literature has traditionally included images of old men and old women, dating back to the famous folkloric and mythological images of Grandma Manzan-Gurme (Manzan Gurme *toodei*) and the White Elder (Sagaan Ubgen). The mythological version of these images has ancient roots. For instance, in

Shamanic mythology, the White Elder was a good Master of the Land and moved into Buddhist mythology with a new legend, where he is worshipped as the patron of beasts and living creatures. While Grandma Manzan Gurme, being the ancestor of the luminous deities, is the bearer of supreme wisdom and adviser to the gods, the White Elder's archetype is connected to the function of defending and protecting living beings.

The key to understanding the originality of the image phenomenon of Sagaan Ubgen is concealed in his name: the philosophy of the name, as we know, shows that the name, denomination in ancient consciousness has always had a sacral character, directly communicating with the hidden essence of what is shown (A.F. Losev, P.A. Florensky). The word "ubgen" is equated with the notion of world wisdom, the definition of "perfectly wise". It is not necessarily attributed to an elderly person, any old man. B.Ia. Vladimirtsov pointed out that the Mongolian word "ebugen" or "uvug dedes" can also mean "progenitor" (Vladimirtsov, 1934: 50). In the Buryat language, "ubgen" is a respectable name for a shamanic spirit, an epithet given to revered deceased shamans regardless of their age (Manzhigeev, 1978: 78).

A. Mostaert traces the White Elder cult to shamanic beliefs spread among the Mongols. V. Heissig, K.M. Gerasimova and other researchers have written many works about the beliefs and ancient rites of the Mongols connected with worshipping the deities, the masters of land and water, including the White Elder (Heissig; Gerasimova). N.L. Zhukovskaya understood this image "as a mythological partner of Mother Land Itugen (Ulgen)... as the patron of longevity, wealth, happiness and family well-being" (Zhukovskaya, 1988: 611). The White Elder is viewed by folklorist researchers among other mythological characters in the epos of Turkic-Mongolian peoples (Dampilova). The mentioned historical and cultural work "Semantics of the image of the White Elder in the traditional culture of Mongolian Peoples" is devoted to the cult of the White Elder as a deity (Nemanova).

For our article, the ritual role of the old man (the Elder, the head of the family) is es-

pecially important and it has been emphasised as the leading one by the researchers of Mongolian traditional culture. Often the old man was the main performer of the rite, playing the sacral role of a person who came into contact with mythological characters (Skrynnikova, 1998: 131).

This is the function of the old man's image (archetype) in early Buryat dramaturgy, which uses the semantics of the ritual. Since, as was said, drama genetically runs back to the ritual, it is so crucial to trace the sacred, divine origin in the image of the old man, the elder of the family, who plays a significant role in a conflict and action. In Bazar Baradin's play "Choijid" (1921) (the writer was one of the founders of Buryat literature) the resolution of the conflict directly stems from the participation of a powerful character who acts as a mouthpiece for the people's will – shaman Naran, who performs a ritual-revocation to spirits and deities about the blessing and protection of ancestral lands.

The historical drama of B. Baradin "Choijid" is based on a historical fact – the events of 1805-1807, when the decision of the officials and Lama nobility to give the settlers fertile ancestral lands of Engida came as a real disaster for common folks of this area. Encouraged by the sympathy of local shamans and at the same time being gullible to the help of the Lamas, the deceived people sought to stand up for their interests and showed unskilled attempts to protest against the authorities, who are concerned about selfish ends only.

In the *tailagan* (people's assembly) scene, the shaman Naran performs a ritual. In his ecstatic monologue, which describes the ancestral lands, acquires an archetypal image of the land of Etugen (Itugen, Ulgen) – a foster mother and an intercessor, protecting her children and punishing their enemies. Naran's singing embodies the unified voice of the people of Engida, who are deprived of the right to nomadise, hunt and grow bread on their ancestral lands; he retells the harsh drama of black days for people trying to protect their interests. Being in the centre of an episode of shamanic trance, Naran becomes the spirit of the first ances-

tor, the Old Sage, related to a certain miraculous power that surpasses human abilities, so that he can overcome insurmountable obstacles with the help of unknown forces. The Buryats, according to the mythological genealogical tradition of Mongolian peoples, take their roots back to the Tengri celestials, so the uninterrupted relation with celestial ancestors indicates the vertical connection which guarantees help to earthly people (Dugarov, 2010). Being likened to a wise elder, the shaman works in dramatic action not just as a mediator between the sacral and profane worlds, but miraculously gives people hope to overcome chaos and restore harmony in the human world. And although the people's protest against the betrayal and arbitrariness of the authorities is doomed to failure, Naran in Baradin's "Choijid" personifies the supreme justice, and the proof of this is the collective image of the zones (People), whose voice ("hubhub") sounds like a chorus in the form of collective approval or condemnation, consent or dissent, but whose consciousness, embodied in the actions and speeches of prominent representatives of the Engida people, demonstrates the supremacy of folk moral rectitude over the selfishness and callousness, cunning and duplicity of irresponsible parvenus in power. Despite the tragic outcome of this combat, the drama celebrates the harmony of common folk life, which refutes the chaos of social order.

The archetypal function of the old man's image manifested itself in a dramatic work that has become a classic of Buryat dramatic art – the musical drama "Bair" (authors: G. Tsydynzhapov and A. Shadaev, composer: P. Berlinsky). The fairytale plot of the drama and performance, shown in 1940 during the first decade of Buryat literature and art in Moscow, was supported by the mythological image of White Elder from the religious mystery "Tsam". Detailed analysis can be found in the work by V.Ts. Naidakova, who discerned the sacral meaning in theatricality of this image (Naidakova, 2002: 101).

It should be remembered that the playwright B. Baradin, who witnessed the rehearsal of the Buddhist Mystery of Tsam in the

Gusinozersk datsan (Buddhist monastery) in 1903, saw in it a connection between human and divine forces and tried to show this connection in his plays in a brilliant artistic form (Imikhelova, Frolova, 2011: 6). And the director of the musical drama “Bair” G. Tsydynzhapov, whose name is borne by the Buryat State Opera and Ballet Theatre, watched in his youth “sacred dances” in masks at the Buryat datsans and managed to show the main movements and poses of the White Elder, together with the choreographer I. Moiseev, who helped in the production of dances (Naidakova, 2002: 101-102).

The White Elder (Sagaan Ubgen) is one of the most popular characters in the Lamaist mystery of Tsam, a kind and at the same time comical hero. The mask of the White Elder opposes the frighteningly formidable masks of Buddhist deities – the dokshits, which were interpreted as two-faced, two-sided: on the one side there was the mask of a beautiful female face of the goddess White Tara (Sagaan Dara ehe), on the other – the angry face of the dokshit. On the other hand, the dance and the mask of the White Elder gave off a character engaged in purely worldly concerns. The dance of the masks from Tsam was included in the scenes in the third act of “Bair”, showing the celebrations at Khan’s Palace, where the hero, Bair himself, penetrated. Hidden under a mask and then mingled with the crowd in the masquerade performance, he invisibly enters the dungeon where his beloved kidnapped by the people of the Khan languishes, releases her and they flee from the palace under the masks.

The episode from the mysterial plot was a kind of intermezzo and was necessary for a musical and dance commentary on the main plot of the struggle between good and evil. Each of the dancers would turn to the White Old Man with a female mask, seducing him, drawing him into a dance. The old man willingly talked to the beauties, entered their circle, started dancing and missed the moment when charming female creatures turned into angry monsters, now stepping on him in a wrathful procession. Being exhausted, the old man would fall, surrendered, capitulating before such a terrifying invasion of the monsters, and

in a half-conscious state would ring a small bell with a magical property. At the sound of the bell, several batars (bogatyrs) appeared and a pantomime dance began – a battle with monsters that ended with the victory of forces of light.

The plot of the drama “Bair”, which includes an episode of an ancient mysterial rite with the image of the White Elder in the centre, emphasises his ambivalence as a mandatory feature of the primordial archetype image. Being a comic character, causing laughter with his clumsiness, the White Elder confronts the dreadful forces with his light face: he is dressed in white clothes and under a long white beard he hides a clever and kind face. Importantly, the link between the image and the ritual function taken from the religious mystery gives this image a sacral meaning: it is the very archetypical basis that allows him to reach a miraculous resolution of dramatic collisions.

In the Buryat drama of the second half of the 20th century, this craving for miraculous personifies by the image of an old man has long remained subdued, but not cancelled, as well as the reference to the ritual nature of the dramatic text. For example, in Ardan Angarkhaev’s plays of the 1970s, you can find many images of wise old men and old women, while in his play “The Full Moon” (1980) a main character – an old man called Munko feels an inner deep connection with the land, with everything living on the earth, with the eternal cycle of life, which is the archetypical context of the image. He is a hunter, and according to the Buryat oral and written tradition, the White Elder acts as the patron of wild animals and therefore hunting (Nemanova, 2004: 97). Munko’s grandfather, desperate to overcome his loneliness (back then, during the war years he lost his family and friends), is going to commit a suicide on a moonlit night and spend his last moments in taiga. But he is forced to abandon this decision influenced by the reminiscence of an ancient popular belief associated with the full moon. As per this belief, during the period of the fifteenth moon (this is what the Buryat people call the full moon – arban tabadakhi hara), people must love each other, be generous, tolerant and pity the weak and unhappy. This belief, which

resembles a ritual and ceremonial function, is perceived by the hero as a kind of will, a law consecrated by tradition, which has been honoured by the Buryat Mongols for centuries. In Mongolian literature, you can often find wise statements in the mouths of elders that sound like teachings of truth and which are passed on as commandments from generation to generation:

Долоон үед нь ч мартагдахгүй сургаалаа	Seven centuries of un- forgettable edification
Дүүнартаа зориулж хэлнэ гэж би боддог	I am thinking of teach- ing my young brothers.

(Galsansokh, 2003: 29)

In Munko's monologue, there can be found a lesson: "You can't kill even the most feeble creature, hurt a human being, allow bad things to happen even in your thoughts. On this holy day, only the benign, the kindest thing that exists in people should reign". The opposition "good – evil" laid down in these words is the essence of the commandment developed by folk morality (Naidakov, Imikhelova, 1987: 181). The image archetype of the old wise man enhances a deep content in the collisions of Angarkhaev's play, allowing it to eliminate disharmony in the souls of other actors.

The sacred nature of the image (archetype) became apparent in Bair Erdyneev's play "The Return of the Geese" (1987), which presented a drama of three old heroes – the only inhabitants of the village of Onin Bulag who stubbornly refused to leave their native village ("bulag" means "a spring, a brook"), to move to their children's houses in the city. The starting point is the consent of old woman Yanja, who finally gave up, being persuaded by her son to leave the abandoned village and move her home to the city as a summer cottage. Old Galan will respond to this decision in the following way: "She is a kind of hostess here, when she leaves, Onin Bulag will disappear" (Erdyneev, 2011: 397). In the dialogues between heroes and old people, there is a general feeling of bitterness that the elders have not been able to inspire their children with respect and love for their native village, their father's houses, that children do not value these dwellings, and do not

concern for the rapid death of their native village as a loss of a dear creature. The action takes the form of a melodramatic plot when old Yanja gets another, once abandoned but not forgotten son. The plot contains a miraculous resolution of the dramatic collision, and it is no coincidence that old people's images go beyond everyday reality thanks to signs that remind us of another symbolic reality: it is a wooden plane on a roof ridge of Yanja's house, a lark hovering over it with its song, flying geese who have returned although they have not flown to Onin Bulag in ten years. The images of three old men clinging so obdurately to their houses and home village have a special meaning, because preserving the house as a sacred space, as a celestial temple is this sacred function of the old man's archetype which looks dominant in the play by the Buryat playwright of the new generation as in times of yore.

The village theme in the literary process of the second half of the 20th century is represented mainly by works in which the main characters are people of the older generations. P. Florensky wrote in his book "Pillar and Statement of Truth" that among the human types there are "largely pure, so to speak, fragments of the crushed primordial world that distorted their image less than others" (Florensky, 1990: 358). These types include the images of old men and women who are suffering social changes in the social consciousness of their compatriots, their discrepancy and gap concerning the values of the traditional world. This process has also been reflected in Buryat literature, although the play "The Return of the Geese" is an example of such a representation of the old man's image which is different from works of Russian literature in the 1970s and 1980s. The archetypical basis of the images in the Buryat drama is connected with the sacral aspect, because the village house, native to old heroes, acts as a symbol of an arcane place, inextricably linked with the Eternal Blue Sky (Huhe Munhe Tengeri) – the sacral name of the chief deity of the Mongolian world.

To visualise the development of the image (archetype) under analysis in dramatic texts, let us turn to the dramatic performance "Ulei Girls". Created in 1997 (by the authors of the

libretto and directors S. and E. Zhambalov), it became a landmark for Buryat art at the end of the 20th century and is still performed on the stage of the Buryat Academic Drama Theatre. And such a character as a blind uligershin (a storyteller) plays an important role in it, thanks to him it is possible to prevent a tragic outcome following the violation of ritual at a Buryat wedding. The play affirms the affinity between people and spirits, the world of the profane and the sacred with the help of a spiritual ground – a song by uligershin, which symbolically embodies and preserves order on earth (Nikolaeva, 113).

The play's dramaturgy is based on the shamanic chants "The Ulei's numerous zaianki" (Yleegey Olon Zaianuud) and "Another call of the Ulei zaianki" (Yleegey zaianai baha nege durdalga" (Huhe Munhe Tengeri, 1996: 103-123), recorded by Ts.Zh. Zhamtsarano, as well as on the legend of stealing the sacred fire from the spirits, this fire being a symbol of inexhaustible wealth for people. The spirits in the sacral world are the Ulei girls, i.e. zaianki, the spirits of young girls who killed themselves before their wedding, or female suicides tortured by their husbands (Manzhigeev, 1978: 79-80). They guard the sacred fire as a reservoir of souls of children and animals, as a guarantee of Harmony and Order. In human form, the Ulei girls come into the real world to return the stolen fire, which has fallen into the hands of the Groom's mercantile parents, during the wedding. One girl with a stern look stands out among the Ulei girls; she sees the fire in the hands of the Groom and falls in love with him. In the shamanic chant, the Girl – Duuhei falls in sincere love with the Groom, while in the performance the Ulei Girl kisses the Groom and takes him into her world in a lust for revenge (Mordvina, 2008: 286).

A shaman invited to the wedding begins to perform a rite in order to return the soul of the Groom, but he cannot beat the soul of zaianka. And then the Bride, ready to sacrifice her life for her beloved Groom, offers to join the Ulei girls in exchange for her soul. And here, the uligershin intervenes in this mystical ritual with his uliger song, which leads to a wonderful transformation: hearing the voice of her be-

loved in the song and the echo of her unfulfilled love, the zaianka Girl turns into an almost earthly creature from a demonic fury. Uligershin's song showed de visu that in the face of true feelings, the inhabitants of two worlds can be equated and come to an agreement.

The uligershin acts as a mediator between worlds: his uncomplicated melody about the simple values of human existence, about the oldest truths has such an impact on the vengeful zaianka that she gradually remembers the world in which she was an alive girl who loved and suffered. The girl's insurgent soul is at peace now, the other Ulei Girls have also calmed down, and in the epilogue the wedding ritual continues. Broken harmony is restored: the Bride gives sacred fire to the Ulei girls and in her silent dialogue with the zaianki there is so much understanding and pity that it becomes clear how she has changed and grown up. The shaman ends the ceremony and closes the entrance to the space of the other world. The ritual of unbraiding as a symbol of another, adult life begins. So, in a profane, earthly world where values are turned upside down and where Chaos triumphs, the Ulei Girls act as demonic beings, and with the restoration of Harmony and Order, the symbol of which is the sound of a song performed by the old uligershin, they remain the guardians of Harmony and Order.

In the peripetias of the Buryat plays considered, one can discern the trend towards a miraculous outcome in the eternal confrontation between good and evil, harmony and chaos that began in the 20th century and continued in the performances at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries thanks to the image of the old man. The archetypical in this image is in its connection with the divine, sacral world, in the performance of a poetic and miraculous function, in the search for truth and harmony, symbolising the wisdom of the ethnos. The particular feature of dramatic works with the image of the old man in the centre is therefore this universal-symbolic overtone, which does not obscure the social nature of the conflicts and collisions associated with him. The confrontation of social forces takes on the symbolic character of the eternal struggle between good and evil, and the strengthening of poetic and symbol-

ic sacred meaning in the old man's archetype has added philosophical meaning to the action: from the profane, everyday world, the modern story moves to the mystical space and aggrandises to the eternal clash of good and evil, life and death, i.e. it becomes an integral part of the beingness, cosmic routine.

It is quite natural that the connection with the sacral, divine origin of the image of the White Elder is represented in poetry. One of the examples of this function is Dondok Ulzytuev's poem "Life of a Human" (1958), in which the Black hermit and contemplator – Hara Zutan Daiansha prophetically outlines the path of humanity in the eternal circle of sansara, in which all reincarnations, are empty and meaningless, being endlessly repeated. He is opposed by the White Elder – Sagaan Ubgen, "the whitest, the most fearless, the exterminator of everything evil", reading the "book of white laws". Every morning, blessing the universe, Sagaan Ubgen, as the patron saint of all living creatures, begs for a light path for humanity. His wisdom is manifested in the fact that he sees the harmony of the world as an eternal confrontation between good and evil:

Хорбоо замбиин амисхал	The whole soul of the Universe –
Хоёр ехэ урасхал.	Two great movements,
Хоёр ехэ урасхал	Two great movements
Ходо мүнхэ тэнсэхэл.	Will eternally op- pose each other.

(Ulzytuev, 1874: 236)

The White Elder in the poem by D. Ulzytuev acts as a creator, demiurge, master of the universe, organizing and creating subject. The poet presents the eternal battle between good and evil, life and death, and the forces of light and darkness in the form of two oppositions that are always in struggle. This attitude of the author and the lyrical hero to the mythological image of the old man constructs a symbolic model of the world (Dampilova, 2016).

In Buryat poems, the archetype of the wise old man is represented differently – in the image of a narrator. The narrative poetics of such poems as "The Return of a Batyr (Song about Shildei Zangi)" (1966), "The Song about Dorzhi Banzarov" (1969) by N. Damdinov, and

"The Tale of a Bator" by D. Zhalsaraev (1969) follow the meditative tradition that comes from the Buryat uliger poetic tales, which convey the thinking, worldview and intonation of the uligershin (narrator). This is why these works can present a philosophical and poetic model of the world, as well as lyrics. The aspects of this model can be found, for example, in Nikolai Damdinov's poem "The Song about Dorzhi Banzarov".

The plot line of the poem is dedicated to the childhood and youth of the first Buryat scientist; it renders the events from the life of a boy, Dorzhi, who has been away from home for a long time: together with his father, a foreign Cossack, he takes part in a sentinel service on the border with China, thanks to his swagger he is sent to study at a Kyakhta school, and finally, the elders of the ulus decide to send a talented boy to the Kazan Gymnasium. The narrative in the poem, however, is broader than the plot events and includes episodes depicting details of everyday life, traditions and customs of folk life, images of the surrounding nature – the steppe with its summer heat, autumn downpours and winter severe frosts. And this epic intonation seems to exclude the lyrical subject's monologue, which is obligatory for the poem genre, if it were not for the narrator, who has a keen and steady interest in national life. Together with the teenager Dorzhi, the hero-narrator is organically involved in this world, and his description is not only visible-material, but also distracted-spiritual in nature. For instance, his reflections contain an image of time and its rush, images-symbols of darkness and light, or the boy suddenly hears a mysterious call of fate. Symbolically, the key episode in the poem is an episode in which a boy hero once hears an exciting "thump" outside the yurt, the narrator comments it as a miraculous and mystical event, as "the sound of some strange, bossy call", whether it is an echo, "or a distant, sonorous song of a horn". Because only a wise consciousness can recognize the prophecy: sooner or later the "fate will blow the horn" and will force the hero to fulfill his destiny.

The narrator's speech demonstrates a connection to the intonation of the majestic uliger-shin epic narrator, who envisages space and

time, past and future. And very often these spatial and temporal connections show the narrator as a person who has a long life experience and is prone to philosophical inferences.

Those who came to our world,
Those who will come to our life,
Are tightly connected with it with millions of strings.
The heart is beating, depending on many moments –
Wind blowing, waters moving.
And the Earth revolving among the celestial bodies
Often changes the people's destinies unwillingly.

(Damdinov, 1981: 223).

It is this manner of unhurried, thoughtful speech that fully reveals both the image of the young hero and the image of the wisest narrator, created under the influence of the Buryat uligers. Many Buryat poems are characterised by this manner.

Inter alia, in the poem "The Arrow of Khukhuday" (1982, 2013) its author, Bair Dugarov, following his predecessors, imitates the calm and judicious intonation of the hero and narrator, an old uligershin singing a song-tale about the epic hero of the Mongolian peoples' – Geser. This divine hero (bogaty) has been sent to earth by the gods, the Tengri, to fight the multi-headed mangadkhay (monster). At the climax of their battle, the narrator emphasizes the celestial origins of both rivals: Geser was born on earth by the will of his named father Khukhuday, the god of lightning and thunder, and the evil embodied in the mangadkhay was also sent to earth by the command of Esege Malan-khan, the leader of the celestial Tengri. This solution of the traditional plot line symbolises the indestructible connection not only between heaven and earth ("Mortals and gods – everyone is bound together"), but also between good and evil ("Evil and good are bound together by one umbilical cord") (Dugarov, 2013: 174). In the mouths of a wise old storyteller, the idea of the eternal struggle between good and evil acquires poetic dimension. Implicitly embedded in his mythological consciousness, this idea became in Dugarov's poem an expression of the national dialectics of existence: there is no end to the battle of eternal enemies and there can be no end. The unique appearance of the wise narrator accentuates archetypical think-

ing in opposites, which do not contradict each other but constitute a certain unity as symbols of eternal rebirth and the cyclicity of life. This is the specific manifestation of the image (archetype) of the wise elder in the poem genre.

The poetic character of the binary opposition and the miraculous and fairy-tale outcome typical of the mythological worldview are different from those of drama and poetry in the novel, where there is no direct and conscious resort to mythological motifs and parallels. According to E.M. Meletinskii, the mythology of the novel genre in the 20th century is connected "with neo-romantic appeal to national folklore and national history" (Meletinskii, 2000a: 370). As in the historical drama, the mythology in the novel is associated with social and historical problems, which can be found in the work of Afrikan Bal'burov "The Singing Arrows" (1961), the first Buryat novel written in Russian. But even this title renders a symbolic and metaphorical meaning that permeates the content with high poetic implication.

In the novel, which tells about the events of class struggle in the early 20th century, there is an insert – a folk legend about the history of settlement on the lands near Baikal by the Buryat tribe of Khongodors, about how a chief decimated the old men for the sake of preserving the tribe, and, having realized his mistake, punished himself by ordering the best soldiers of the tribe to shoot arrows at him. The author, with the help of an insert legend, gives the reader the opportunity to answer the question of what arrows are singing about flying to the same target – to the heart of the chief. In the first half, the legend tells the story of the consequences of constant wars that have exhausted the tribe. To save it, the chief wished to start a new war, which was opposed by the old man Olzobe, who offered to march on new lands, to Baikal, and the council of elders agreed with him. A hard and tiring campaign began. And when all the supplies except dried meat had been eaten, the leader gathered the elders and said: "The life of the tribe, its future is in our young soldiers, in our young women and girls. To save the tribe, we need to untie the tulumms with ground meat now. But we have too many mouths. If we don't reduce their number, every-

one will die soon. What should we do to save the tribe?" (Bal'burov, 1969: 250). The elders shuddered when they understood the chief's words, but kept silent. And then he ordered to throw all the old men and the old women off the cliff. Only Molontoi, the son of Olzobe, did not follow the order.

The second part of the legend tells about the mining of a huge diamond from the bottom of Lake Baikal, near the shore, which would allow the tribe to settle on the lands of any mighty ruler. Following the chief's directions, the best warriors tried to get the gem one after the other, but even the bravest warriors could not do it and died. When it was Molontoy's turn, his father ordered him to show him the stone at night when he could refrain from constant hiding. And then he immediately realised that the stone at the bottom of the sea was just a reflection of the diamond that was on the rock. The tribe was saved by the wisdom of old Olzobe.

An ancient legend, reproduced in the novel by A. Bal'burov from the words of the hero – the Buryat intellectual Mikhail Dorondoev, is used in connection with the general idea. As a "text in the text" it is "superimposed" on the plot of guilt, repentance of the hero-teacher, and in doing so the novel apposes him to the truth. A great truth is revealed in Dorondoev's mind, not without the influence of a legend he has recorded, which will eventually "prompt" him to give up his passive position in relation to his fellows (from the same ulus), to make the choice in a social conflict of historical importance. The image of the novel hero (he was created under the influence of a real prototype) is compared to the image of a chief from an insert legend who did not give credence to the wisdom of the elders of the kinship, and this excerpt is reproduced in the neo-romantic interpretation about which Meletinskii wrote. This is indicated by the contrast between the confidence of the anonymous chief in possessing the truth and the wisdom of old man Olzobe, whose name can be roughly translated from Buryat as "possessing rich prey".

Mythologism of the novel by A. Bal'burov is expressed not only in an insertion novel, but also in the general worldview, which manifests

itself primarily in the mythological notions of Dorondoev's fellow villagers. Once again, the old man's archetype finds its place in these novels, for example, in the images of metaphors of the celestial bodies. For example, the shepherd Uta Markhas determines the time of the stars at night. The constellation of the Great Bear (Ursa Major) in his perception is the work of the Seven Elders, because according to Buryat and Mongol mythology, the Seven Elders (Seven Smiths, Seven Gods) are considered to be the givers of a happy destiny: "The Wise Seven Elders zealously watch the time so that people wake up at the right time: they always come to the chimney of your yurt and hang above it just in the morning, when you see them in the chimney, get up..." (Bal'burov, 1969: 307). In the poetic popular and totally mythological beliefs, the archetypical nature of solar images is reinforced by the archetype of the old man, which poetically stresses the eternal and wise, i.e. cyclical and harmonious order in nature and human life. It is important to note, though, that the myth is created "mainly to understand the real world" (Langer, 2000: 160). Scientists connect the astral cults of the moon, sun and stars with the origin of white symbolism among the peoples of the Mongolian area: since ancient times the white colour has been associated with both the purity of mother's milk and the "milk" of the Milky Way (Dulam, 1989: 165).

The image archetype of the wise elder has a different meaning in the novel "The Eternal Colour" by Ardan Angarkhaev (1982). The main characters are three old men, Ayu-sha, Sharalday and Lombo, and therefore the spatial and temporal structure of the novel is largely based on the opposition between past and present. In their reflections and memories, the heroes constantly return to the past. Young heroes reproach old people for being too "hit by memories". And Ayu-sha, the most authoritative of the old people, believes that the young people live for the future quite naturally, and on behalf of their coevals declares: "...we have something to remember. The past evokes not so much light but bitter and painful thoughts in the memory of Angarkhaev's old heroes: "Eh... there are such memories that turn apart the whole human soul" (Angarkhaev, 1988: 43).

The work of memory is emphasized in the novel not only by the motive of memories, but also by the motive of mental discord (Buiantueva).

The memories of three old people in the novel "The Eternal Colour" are inextricably linked to the present day, as an inquiry officer, Maglaa, appears again in the small village of Khasuurita to investigate cattle loss. And at the same time, in his memory and that of the old people, a long story about burnt-out collective pig farms is brought back to life. The old man Sharalday was once considered to be a suspect in this crime, and his age-old Lombo tried to advert suspicions of the crime at all costs. The third old man, Ayusha, also believed that the old episode rubbed him up the wrong way. The heroes in the novel have a lot in common, the memories of the past unite them and reveal a common perception of their world view, aspirations and defending the same values. The archetypical imprint in the images of the three old men is seen in their commonality with their family. It is in the genre of the novel that one can trace such mythological "parallels" that reveal the main spiritual value in the mentality of the Buryats – the connection of man with his family and kinship. The proclivity of the old men in Angarkhaev's novel to the ancestral memory, their sense of responsibility before the kinship allow us to find a manifestation of the White Elder archetype in them.

Another feature of the archetypical trait in the heroes is the ambivalence of their strivings: on the one hand, a stoic search for harmony with the world and themselves, and on the other hand, an awareness of the impossibility of achieving this harmony. And this is what constitutes the novel's romantic potential, expressed in continuity, the incompleteness of their individual inner conflict (according to Bakhtin, the novel hero is "either more than his fate or less than his humanity" (Bakhtin, 1975: 479)).

For Angarkhaev, the effect of old man's wisdom inherent in A. Bal'burov's novel "The Singing Arrows" is of no importance; much more important is the impulse of each of the old heroes to remember the past in order to reach the idea of preserving the ancestral memory. Of the three characters in the novel, the most

painful conflict with the world and himself is felt by the old man Lombo, and this conflict is portrayed by the author as a transition from the egoism of previous life to the feeling of connection with children, as a denial of the meaninglessness of previous existence (Buiantueva, 2011: 125). The scene of night vigil of Lombo and his children is symbolic, since they make a fire in the courtyard of their inherited house and when, finally, the process of Lombo's agonizing for moral cleansing continues, as he seeks agreement with his conscience and unison with his children, the descendants of the family.

The images of old people in the novel are built into the main conflict – the dramatic state of all the heroes, old and young, their acute loss of harmonious relations with the world around them. The writer tries to portray this conflict in a system of episodes and peripeteias that very often reveal clashing contradictions, especially if the opposition 'life / death' comes to the fore, as it is associated with the old man's archetype and adds the novel a universal-philosophical character.

In the collective scene of the Lombo's feast, an unnamed guest appears – a distant relative, who turns out to be the real culprit of a longstanding crime. The perception of this uninvited guest by the host is on the level of collective consciousness: "...the little man suddenly went hog-wide... Chuckling, he was talking about black affairs in the black world. The Khasuurites listened, marvelled at him, feeling gloomy. It was as if there was no field outside the windows, outside the village, no blue sky, no human nobility, no evergreen fir trees, no ringing rivers, no thick herbs and no glorious deeds ..." (Angarkhaev, 1988: 221). The episode is filled with symbolic meaning: the old man – Lombo's moral insight is directly related to the awareness of belonging to the clan/collectivity, to the folk moral norm that in collective consciousness always exists as truth, as the unity of man and society, of man and nature.

The images of three old people embody different value codes: Ayusha – the wisdom, honest Sharalday – the conscience, and Lombo – the desire for moral purification. But the overall unifying trait for the heroes is the work

of memory. It is Sharalday's memory, on the one hand, that causes his illness, as it will turn out in the finale, is was caused by a keen sense of resentment against his fellow villagers, who suspected him of a lingering crime, which even pushed him towards the idea of suicide. In the finale of the novel, old man Sharalday will find himself in a dramatic moment in his life in the forest on the bank of a river, where he reflects on the meaning of his own life, thinking about life and death. And when all the villagers go after him and find the lost old man, they hear Sharalday's laughter in astonishment and perplexity. And that is the laughter of a happy man who has been freed from painful and bitter regrets. It even seems to the reader that these feelings of a hero, who never ceases to feel the bitterness of a failed life, wane under the influence of the surrounding familiar to him nature. Here one can feel the ambivalent combination of suffering and joy, dramatic and comic, which permeates the image of the White Elder in the plots of legends, in the action of the Buddhist mystery "Tsam". Here the reader experiences almost the same miraculous resolution of unsolvable problems that glues the action in dramas involving a shaman or uligershin.

A novel in the 20th century connects the poetics of mythology with the social and historical context. This is why Angarkhaev's archetype functions where the deeply subjective contact between his characters and the past is captured. J. Huizinga associated this contact with a special "sense of history": "This undefined contact with the past is an entrance into a certain atmosphere, it is one of the many ways in which a person goes beyond himself, a form of experiencing the truth...". In our view, the image of the old man also becomes this form of experience of truth, because "a sense of history" is "realized...is reduced to moments of spiritual clarity, to sudden spiritual impulses" (Huizinga, 2003: 262-263).

It is this feeling that leads the three old heroes of Angarkhaev to an epiphany as a "moment of truth". One of them, after all the events that happened in his native village, being in his dearly beloved forest, finally voiced the author's main idea, addressing his grandson: "This forest is your forest, mine, and your

father's... Whatever thoughts came to one's mind here, under these trees... Civilisations and religions change, and the eternal desire for truth remains forever and ever..." (Angarkhaev, 1988: 326). This outcome of the novel is filled with universal-philosophical meaning, which is "prompted" by the archetypical content of the old man's image, as in other works of Buryat literature in question.

The important trait of any archetype – ambivalence helps to resolve the main conflict in both drama and poem, as well as in a novel. According to M.M. Bakhtin, the real way out of the conflict zone can be seen in its translation into a symbolic, emblematic sphere, when the hero's life in an incredibly tense situation ends in a carnival action, when destructive and simultaneously creative laughter can turn even death into a "buffoonery debunking" (Bakhtin, 1979: 146). In the finale of the Angarkhaev's novel, Sharalday, who has just been ill and has been thinking about suicide, laughs, and this laughter sounds like his release from disharmony in his soul and in the world. This carnival laughter reaches harmony thanks to the immortality of the people's body, the all-conquering people's strength and national health (according to Bakhtin). It is this finale in the novel that creates a purifying catharsis in the soul not only of Sharaldai, Lombo, Ayusha, but also of all the villagers, brought together in one night by a common sense of unity.

As it follows from the works of P.A. Florensky, A.F. Losev, V.V. Ivanov, V.N. Toporov, B.A. Uspensky, Yu.M. Lotman, C. Levi-Stross, mythological consciousness is oriented towards the performance of clearly defined functions: perception of the world in terms of binary oppositions and resolution of contradiction through the function of a progressive mediator. This is how the image of an old man acts as a mediator in a drama, poem and novel. And the novel also accents the most important element of the myth – a complex of initiation events, the essence of which is to qualitatively change the condition of a hero who has successfully passed the test with the help of an initiation rite. This mythologeme becomes the organisational link in the novel because it opens the reader its

connotative meaning: a succession of various states results in the total renewal of the old heroes, who would acquire a new consciousness. According to R. Bart, “the myth does not seek to appear as a ‘cultural product’ but as a ‘natural phenomenon’; the myth does not hide its connotative meanings, it ‘naturalises’ them” (Bart, 1989: 18). The meaning of initiation is “naturalised” in “The Eternal Colour”, i.e. this connotation is taken for granted in the finale, or as something natural. This is how the mythological image of the old man is “read”; this is how the reader perceives his archetypical function.

Conclusion

Thus, the images of old people in a Buryat drama, poetry and novels are filled with poetic imagery based on allusions to and parallels with mythological folklore. The original mythological meaning of the archetype is transformed, being subject to new contextual (semantic and compositional) connections that emerge in the works of these genres. Thanks to the oppositions (past / present, life / death) the image archetype of the old man provides not only for the connection of epochs as a “sense of history”, but also emphasises, ultimately, the immortality of the folk spirit. Thinking in binary oppositions as a feature of the old man’s mythological image makes it possible to see in this binary symbolism the symbolism of eternal rebirth, the cyclic nature of life.

The process of the image of the old man being symbolised in various genres of Buryat literature reveals signs of archetype in this image. These are the craving for a miraculous outcome, ambivalence, binary character, ascent

to universal ontological meanings: the old man stands for a kinship, the search for genealogy equals the search for truth, belonging to the kinship generates the essence of human existence, the moment of human life personifies the eternity of patrimonial memory. The image is a symbol of the wisdom of life itself and its harmonious order. Its symbolic content shows the universalism of the very search for truth as a condition of the immortality of the kinship and the folk spirit.

The image of the old man in all the reviewed works of Buryat literature portrays him as a guardian of mythological knowledge, genealogy and tradition, this function is not highlighted clearly, but is always implied. In this case, the myth is used in its basic meaning as the archetypical, the image of the old man emphasises his function of a mediator between two worlds – the sacral and the celestial, divine and profane, worldly and earthly. It can be concluded that the general line in the Buryat literature of the 20th century follows the idea of continuity of sacral genealogical representations, traditional for the Buryat and Mongolian world.

The materials of the study are of indisputable practical value, as they represent the initial experience of considering this archetypical image in the Buryat literature, and lay emphasis on the need for further detailed study. Subsequently, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the archetype of a wise elder, whose semantic connections are hidden in the depths of subconsciousness, is realised on a contextual level; the traditional archetype as a symbol requires the actualization of not only genre contexts, but also spatial and temporal ones, updating of plot, motives, etc.

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Образ-архетип старика в бурятской литературе XX века

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Аннотация. Данная статья посвящена архетипической природе образа старика в бурятской литературе, восходящего к персонажу бурят-монгольских мифов, именуемому Белым Старцем (Сагаан Үбгэн). Цель статьи – выявить типологические свойства архетипа старика в драматургии, поэзии и ключевом для национальной литературы жанре – романе. Цель продиктована необходимостью привлечения сравнительно-типологического анализа, а также методов, используемых при изучении традиционной культуры, – мифопоэтического и сравнительно-генетического. Их использование в литературоведении представляется важным и актуальным, чтобы объяснить усиление универсальной трактовки человека в художественном творчестве XX века, стремление писателей наметить пути выхода из острых кризисных отношений человека и мира, человека и природы. Если ранее в текстах национальной культуры искали в основном социально-детерминированное объяснение этих отношений, то в настоящее время актуализируется другая их интерпретация, основанная на обращении писателей к глубинным пластам мифологического мышления, их опоре на универсально-бытийные, онтологические причины кризисных явлений. Установление свойственной мифологическому мышлению оппозиции «сакральное/профанное» обнаружило в герое-старике бурятской литературы стремление к поиску родовой памяти как истины, причастность к роду как обретение сути человеческого существования. Наличие аксиологического аспекта при этом выводит к универсальным онтологическим ценностям, заложенным в архетипе старика. Ведущим методом анализа стал сравнительно-типологический, направленный на установление типологических закономерностей в сфере репрезентации архетипов в литературе и обеспечивающий высокую степень конкретности получаемых результатов. Его использование позволило выделить такие типологические признаки и свойства архетипа старика в произведениях бурятских писателей, как амбивалентность, поэтичность и онтологичность бинарных оппозиций, тяга к чудесному исходу. Сделан вывод о том, что эти архетипические свойства придают проанализированным образам символический смысл вечного перерождения, цикличности жизни, ее гармонического распорядка.

Ключевые слова: архетип, образ старика, национальная драма, поэма, бурятский роман, сказитель-улигершин, функция медиатора, родовая память, добро/зло, жизнь/смерть.

Научное направление: 10.00.00 – филологические науки.