

HUMANITARIAN RESEARCH

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOLKLORE STUDY

ON THE ISSUE OF DATING OLONKHO

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Annotation. The appearance of Olonkho has been of interest in the minds of researchers since the time of P.A. Oyunsky. For the first time in 1927, he suggested that Olonkho could appear in the form of separate narratives of wars during the Tatar and Mongol invasions of China. In this study, we attempted to find out the approximate time of the occurrence of Olonkho based on an interdisciplinary approach.

The aim of the study is to determine the elements of the archaic, ancient and medieval elements of Olonkho and determine the approximate period of their appearance in various Olonkho plots.

Research Methods. We reviewed the available literature on the Yakut epicology, on population genetics, history and ethnogenesis of the Sakha (Yakut). When dating the time of appearance of Olonkho, we used the method used by P.A. Oyunsky. We compiled a picture of the modern understanding of the ethnogenesis of the Sakha based on an analysis of modern historical, archaeological, genetic, humanitarian and our own research on this issue.

Results. The heroic epic of Olonkho is an archaic genre of oral folk art, with its composition containing elements of the archaic, ancient and medieval periods, involved in the texts of Olonkho in different eras. It should be noted that at the same time, Olonkho as an oral genre evolved from myths about the creation of the world to a holistic work in the form of a heroic epic, the formation of which ended in the territory of the Middle Lena with the formation of the Kulun-Atakh culture. Over the past 35,000 years, several waves of large-scale migrations of the ancient population have changed in the territory of Northeastern Siberia, but the female population of the region has remained constant. As we believe, it preserved and introduced Olonkho to the most archaic motifs, as the most conservative and traditional element of the population. The general opening ceremonies of the heroic epics of the Turkic-Mongolian peoples about the creation of the world were probably included in the texts of Olonkho during the golden age of the Xiongnu (Hun) community. Starting from the XII century, there is an increase in Mongolian influence, which is evident from the presence of Mongolisms in the Olonkho language and the emergence of anthroponyms of Buryat-Mongolian origin of the XI-XVII centuries.

Conclusions. The emergence of Olonkho is probably associated with the period of influence of the Xiongnu on the inhabitants of the Middle Lena, material traces of which are observed in the period from 190 BC to the III-IV centuries.

Key words: Olonkho, Sakha, Xiongnu, Mongols, Buryats, creation of the world, World Tree, pantheon of deities, ethnogenesis, population genetics, mitochondrial DNA, Y chromosome.

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Olonkho is the most archaic and complex work of epic heritage, reflecting a whole complex of philosophical, religious, attitudinal and historical views of the Sakha people. The period of its appearance has been stirring the minds of researchers since the time of P.A. Oyunsky. He first suggested in 1927, that Olonkho could appear in the form of separate stories about the wars during the Tatar and Mongol invasions of China (Oyunsky 1927: 13). Modern ideas about the ethnogenesis of the Sakha allow confirmation of this basic idea of P.A. Oyunsky, not during the Tatar and Mongol invasion of China, but much earlier and probably associated with the time of the rise and fall of the Xiongnu. In this study, we have attempted to substantiate this point of view and our own views on the basis of an analysis of contemporary publications, without in any way questioning other opinions of researchers of different periods on this problem: G.U. Ergis (Ergis 1947: 41), I.V. Pukhov (Pukhov 2013: 10), V.M. Nikiforov (Nikiforov 2010: 11), and V.N. Ivanov (Ivanov 2014: 12).

“Olonkho is a Yakut heroic epic. The descriptive part is performed with recitation, and the monologues of the heroes of Olonkho are sung” - this is the definition of Olonkho in the Big Explanatory Dictionary of the Yakut Language (BEDY) (BEDY, Vol. VII 2010: 259). The construction of Olonkho stanzas has the character of a white verse. The size of lines is dimensionless, while in general, its size sometimes reaches from 20 to 50, on average 10-15 thousand lines. Olonkho verses rhyme perfectly, usually at the last word of the verse. The monologues of positive heroes are sung, and they usually begin with the title “Дьэ бую!” [dʒɛ bō] Epicologists, including musicologists, consider the initials to be a pre-formula, playing the role of initiator of the melody of songs of positive characters. Arrangements also serve as a kind of voice setting of the narrator and at the same time a call to the listeners’ attention. The second component of the traditional origin, “Бу” means “this” in Yakut. The word “Дьэ” itself has three meanings according to the BEDY, but the most suitable to the Olonkho, “Дьэ бую!” is considered to be the following option: “Expresses a question with an urge to a more detailed story” (Well?) (BEDY Vol. III: 507). It turns out that in the translation of the origin of Olonkho “Дьэ бую!” means “Well, there!” This is exactly the kind of translation we see in the Olonkho, “Nurgun Botur Swift” in the Russian translation of V.V.

Derzhavin (p. 243). Usually, from among the listeners, the owner of the house approves of Olonkhosut with a shout: “No” (a sign of approval). It should be noted that the rank “Дьэ бую” or “Дьэ Боо,” usually foreshadows the monologues of men who are positive heroes. Probably, this rank was introduced in order to predispose the audience to a positive hero with a respectable rank.

In Olonkho, there is another archaic word “күо,” [kō] whose meaning is forgotten. Usually with this word are denoted the names of epic brides or beauties. For example, “Туйаарыма күо” [tujä:ruma kō], “Сыралыма күо” [suraluma kō], “Куннэй күо” [kønnej kō], etc. Researcher Olonkho, N.I. Filippova, believes that this word may have a remote connection with the ancient Chinese title, Hua - “sacred flower, lotus”, which was called the Empress or Princess (Filippova 2000: 19). Chinese character 花 - (hua) means flower (CCRD 1983 t. IV: 297). According to N.J. Bichurin “hua” - the title of the Princess, for example, such a title was worn by brides, given as wives to the leaders of the tribes surrounding China to establish peace (Bichurin 1950: 254). Another mysterious word “люо” [lō] refers to a snakelike beast, possibly a dragon. The latter is denoted by the Chinese character 龍 (long, in Russian transcription - lun), dragon (CCRD Vol. 4: 363), very similar in sound to the mysterious beast “люо” of Olonkho.

A deep expert of Yakut Olonkho, P.A. Oyunsky, noted the abundance of elements of Chinese origin in Olonkho (Oyunsky 1927: 32-34). He explains it by peculiarities of Yakut origin. According to P.A. Oyunsky, ancient Yakuts migrated from their ancestry near the Aral Sea through China and Baikal to the Middle Lena. He writes: “Obviously, the ancient Yakuts survived the initial period of the patriarch and the entire period of the matriarchate in the northeast of the Aral Sea. That is why in the first years of the heroic epic, the native art could well be taken in “Olonkho” for the title of the Aral Sea and transfer it to the epic of heroic time in the Middle World” (Oyunsky 1927: 32).

In comparison with 1927, P.A. Oyunsky’s modern ideas about the origin of the Sakha have changed greatly. In the 1970s, Prof. A.I. Gogolev discovered the Kulun-Atakh culture of pastoralists on the territory of Megino-Kangalassky ulus near the village of Matta. The culture dates back to the XIV - XVII centuries (Gogolev 1993). The author convincingly shows that the for-

¹ Дьэ бую! - most likely represents an appeal to the audience, rather than an exclamation “Well!”.

² However, there is an assumption that this component of the beginning has a different origin. Perhaps the beginning of the Olonkho “Дьэ бую!” is Sinic 昭伯 (zhāo bó), i.e. address to the eldest of the male listeners.

³ Epic scholar I.V. Pukhov believed that the word “kuo” comes from the word “ko” (beauty) of Turkic origin (Pukhov 2013: 9).

mation of the Sakha culture took place on the territory of Middle Lena and was not brought from outside. Professor A.N. Alexeev believes that the formation of the Sakha people took place with the participation of autochthonous population of the region (Alexeev 2013: 62-69). The famous archeologist S.A. Fedoseeva, who devoted her life to the archeology of Northeast Siberia, wrote: "... the roots of the Yakut ethnos (its gene pool) go much deeper in the history of the peoples of Northeast Asia than it seemed to many before. This is confirmed by the latest archeological discoveries. Paleoanthropological materials of Dearing-Yurekh Late Neolithic burial ground left by the population of the Ymyyakhtakh culture, testify that the main gene pool of the Yakut population had already been formed in Northeast Asia at least 3500 years ago" (Fedoseeva 2003: 89). Recent publications allow us to note that the indigenous layer of the Yakut gene pool is represented by representatives of the first waves of ancient Siberian migrants, and the oldest genes have survived in the gene pool of the female population.

Two significant scientific studies have recently been published clarifying the settlement of Paleolithic and Neolithic hunters of Northeast Siberia and hypothetical Beringia. It has been established that from the Holocene on the territory of Northeastern Siberia the continuity of women living in these areas was preserved (Kilinc et al. 2018: 1-10). The group of authors headed by M. Sikora and V.V. Pitulko (Sikora et al. 2019: 182 - 188) analyzed the data of genome sequencing of 34 bone remains of ancient Siberian populations and found that Northeastern Siberia was inhabited by three waves of migration. The authors named the first wave of migrants as ancient Siberians represented by an ancient sample from the Yansk site, 31000 years old. The mitochondrial haplogroup of the sample was represented by U2, and the Y-chromosome P1, i.e. West Eurasian haplogroup. According to the authors' conclusions, this population of ancient Siberians became extinct and was assimilated on the second wave of migrants originating from East Asia, 20-18 thousand years ago, which the authors called Paleo-Siberian. The latter population became the pedigree of Paleo-Siberian and American Indian populations, which were partially replaced in the beginning and middle of the Holocene by the Neo-Siberian population of mixed origin.

P.A. Oyunsky's assumptions about the connection of Yakut with the territory of the north-east of the Aral Sea, probably, besides the folklore material have some distant genetic roots. So, in 1991, the burial site Ak-Alakha of the Altai archaeologist N.V. Polosmak was excavated (Polosmak 2001). A double burial of the Pazyryk culture of the III century BC was discovered in the burial site. In 2015, the results of paleo-genetic research of bone remains of the burial were published (Pilipenko A.P., Trapezov R.O. 2015: 144-150). We have carried out a comparative analysis of the results of these studies with published data from around the world and found a wide distribution of related haplotype Pazyryk throughout Eurasia, including among modern Sakha (Tikhonov et al. 2019). Genetic links between Sakha and Sack may be suspected by the latest paleo-genetic studies of C. Sikora with co-authors. Thus, the inhabitants of the Yana River near the village of Cossack found a human fibula belonging to an adult man and handed it over to the archaeologist from St. Petersburg V.V. Pitulko. Results of paleo-genetic researches have shown that genetic markers of Y-chromosomes of this man coincide with the haplotype of legendary Elley. The radiocarbon age of this bone is 1180. (Sikora et al. 2019: 182-188). It was still decided that Elley could be from the Kidan Empire and arrived in the Middle Lena after 1125. (Tikhonov, Gurkan, and Beyoglu 2019: 32-52). It turns out that the inhabitants of Cossack probably found the bones of the first son of Elley Lamancha Suruk. Priklonsky, back in the XIX century, wrote that Lamancha Suruk was the first son of Elley and was the first wandering white shaman – preacher. According to the legend, he went missing (Priklonsky 1890: 28). Thanks to genetic research, we can determine who was the mother of this man, i.e. the wife of Elley. According to legends, Elley's wife was not Omogoy's own daughter, but a foster child. Thus, the mtDNA of this woman is D4o2a (Sikora et al. 2019: suppl. data). A related haplogroup D4o has Ujarskaya Princess, excavated in Ujar district of East Kazakhstan region of the Saks period IV - III centuries BC (Dzhansugurova et al. 2016: 706). The haplogroup D4o2a is found among modern residents of Yakutia and Kazakhstan (Fedorova et al. 2003: 643-653; Djansugurova et al. 2018: 30). It should be noted that tribal clans with a name similar to Saks are found in many Turkic peoples (Ushnitsky 2013: 94-99). A well-known Kazakh historian, professor at the

⁵ I.N. Novgorodov believes that Sinism penetrated the Sakha language through Mongolian means. Some conclusions of Novgorodov's research surprisingly coincide with the results of our research, but we do not agree with his conclusion that "... the Yakuts migrated to Central Yakutia in the XIV century from the south a rather compact mass" (Novgorodov 2013: 60-65).

L.N. Gumilev Eurasian University, J.O. Artykbaev (Artykbaev 2018: 57-63) also holds a view on the connection of the Sakha with the Sak tribes of Kazakhstan, as well as in the general motifs of the folklore of Sakha and Kazakhs.

The analysis of Olonkho's texts allowed us to highlight the elements of archaic, ancient and medieval periods involved in the epic work at different times. The archaic elements of Olonkho include: a preamble to an epic work that describes the creation of the world. The archaic layer of Olonkho could be related to the time of human contact (in Olonkho – “айыы аймага” [ajɯ: ajmaja]) with the early representatives of homo sapiens (Neanderthals and Denis). The image of the latter in Olonkho is represented as “абааһы” [aba:hɯ] (Tikhonov, Zakharova, and Neustroyeva 2018: 14-28). Meeting these people is the most amazing episode in the historical memory of the distant ancestors of the inhabitants of the Middle Lena and whose images could not be erased for 40000 long years. Deep traces of this stress allowed the bearer of Olonkho to classify all his enemies as “абааһы” kind. Carriers of archaic elements of Olonkho are undoubtedly ancient genera, which joined the ranks of Sakha in the form of brides, whose roots stretch back to the first inhabitants of the river Yana, discovered by archaeologist Pitulko, with 31000 years of age (Sikora et al. 2019: 182-188).

Also archaic is the image of the World Tree – “Аал Луук мас” [a:l lu:k mas] and the variations of its name. It appeared in the mythology of different peoples in ancient times. According to some researchers, the motive of the World Tree existed in the upper Paleolithic. The first mention of the sacred tree (the tree “huluppu”) is in the oldest Sumerian poem - Gilgamesh (end of the second millennium BC). One of the oldest bronze sculptures of the tree, corresponding to all the world canons of the mythological World Tree, was found in 1980 by archaeologists in the area of Sanxingdui, 40 km north of Chengdu (China), whose age is determined to be 1200 BC. Bronze sculptures of two trees up to 4 meters' high were found (Loewe and Shaughnessy 1999: 212-219). Did the Xiongnu know about it, according to Gumilev, they appeared in Chinese history in 1764 BC? (Gumilev 1960: 23).

The World Tree motif in mythology is common in the myths of the peoples of Northern Eurasia, several

countries of Southeast Asia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Iran and America (Berezkin 2009: 24-36). The Yakut Aal Luuk Mas undoubtedly has all the attributes of the World Tree motif. In his monograph “From the Old to the New World: Myths of the Peoples of the World”, Y.E. Berezkin changed his view on the independent origin of the World Tree myth of some peoples of the American continent. In his new work, he allowed for the possibility of “... a historical interconnection of all Eurasian (or maybe Central and South American) variants of ... the image (of the World Tree)” (Berezkin 2009: 385). Thus, the myth about the World Tree among the inhabitants of Northeast Siberia may have already existed approximately 20-18 thousand years BC, during the formation of the Beringia population. A part of this population later penetrated the American continent along the Beringia land route and took with it the motif of the World Tree. It should be noted that the motif of the World Tree is absent in the mythology of Chukchi, Eskimos, Ainu and Japanese (Berezkin 2009: 31). According to modern ideas, Chukchi, Koryaks and Eskimos penetrated Northeastern Siberia later, in the beginning or middle of the Holocene - these migrants are identified in the scientific literature by the Neo-Siberian population (Sikora et al. 2019: 182-188).

The oldest layer of the Olonkho epic, a myth about the creation of the world, almost coincides with the epic of the Turkic peoples of Eurasia (Pukhov 2013: 84-141). It should be noted that the similarity of the origin of the epic of the Turkic peoples is probably also associated with the period of the Scythian community. So, based on the study of the origins of the lyrical motif in folk arts and crafts, we came to the conclusion that: “The popularity of the lyre motif in the folk arts and crafts of the Turkic peoples is probably explained by the spread of this motif in the period of the Scythian community, when there was a cult of a griffin and a lyre motif was formed due to the geometry of its figures in the folk art” (Tikhonov and Tikhonova 2019: 51-61).

The pantheon of the deities of Olonkho are ancient, which to some extent has similarity with the gods of ancient Greece. For example, Zeus in ancient Greek mythology, is the god of the sky, the god of thunder and lightning, who knows the whole world, then in Yakut Olonkho, “Суон Дьааһын Тойон” [sõn dʒaa:hun tojon] also knows the god of thunder and lightning. In this re-

⁵ Polemising with V.N. Toporov Yu.E. Berezkin (2009) writes: “... we will call the world tree not any object in the imaginary center of the world and not any tree mentioned in myths, but a vertical axis that connects several tiers of the universe and at the same time is thought to be solid. ... It is essential that the tree passes through the tiers, serves as their pivot, and does not simply touch the firmament” (Berezkin 2009: 31).

gard, we consider it appropriate to quote from B. Seroshevsky: "The role of evil and good spirits and gods ... in Yakut Olonkho is very special, almost as much as the role of Greek gods in the Iliad. They are interested in the affairs of their loved ones, help them with advice, give them weapons, a horse, heal their wounds, give them back their lives, but they cannot change anything essential in their fate" (Seroshevsky 1896: 613). The carriers of this layer of Olonkho are probably the births associated with the introduction of iron metallurgy in Yakutia and created an invincible blacksmith cult in Olonkho.

It should be noted that the epic apparently evolved from myths and legends about the creation of the world to the whole heroic epic of Olonkho, the final genre formation of which ended with the formation of the Sakha people in the Middle Lena. In L.D. Nesterova's opinion: "As a result of 'the longest artistic evolution,' the Yakut folk epic, Olonkho, synthesized and developed all genre diversity in a general epic style, and an image of wealth through Yakut folklore and remarkable beauty of the folk language. The Yakut epic transformed and adapted works of other folklore genres, subordinating these absorbed works to its ideological and artistic specificity" (Nesterova 1984: 156). The heroic epic, Olonkho, is a kind of chronicle of life of a carrier of this ancient legend and played a generating role in formation, consolidation and self-identification of the Sakha people.

The abundance of Olonkho Chineseness, which was spoken about by an outstanding expert in Olonkho language, P.A. Oyunsky, probably has older roots, as the author believes, but some of them are connected with more modern events. He deduces the names of the heroes of the Lower World tribes from the Chinese. Thus, he writes that "Кытай Бахсылааны уус" [kɯtɑj bɑxɯlɑ:nɯ u:s] from the Chinese name "Bah-Sun-Yen", and the head of the Lower World "Арсан Дуолай" [arsan dɔlɑj] from the Chinese names "Aar Sun" and "Dao-lin", and his wife and his mistress "Аан Дьааһын Ала Буурай" [ɑ:n dʒɑ:hɯn ɑlɑ bu:rɑj] - An-Ja-Un (Oyunsky 1927: 33-34). In Olonkho, the wife of the head of the Lower World, "Арсан Дуолай", is described as being born with a block on her feet. In Olonkho, probably, it is a custom to bandage the legs of the beauties at the court of the Emperor of China. Feet of princesses are bandaged since childhood, making them small and similar to a lotus flower. Women with such legs cannot walk far because

of severe pain. Yakut horse breeders to this day, before the horse is released to feed, put "адага" [adaɣɑ] (pads) on his legs, so as not to go far. Olonkho uses a metaphor when talking about "Арсан Дуолай" wife, "born with a block on their feet." In China, the fashion of bandaging feet began to spread, probably from 1100 (Morris 2010: 296) and was only eradicated in the XX century. It should be considered that the conclusions of P.A. Oyunsky, were not based on personal emotions, but on a deep knowledge of the spirit of Olonkho, his philosophy, his language and his ancient roots. But China's inhabitants of the Middle Lena were never the enemy, because they were too far away. Who could using the Olonkho endow the enemies of the inhabitants of the Middle World with the attributes of ancient China? The only people who fought with China for hundreds of years - the Xiongnu, whose descendants, according to genetic studies have found refuge in Yakutia and are likely to have survived among the populations of modern Sakha.

The Olonkho language contains a lot of archaic vocabulary. The question arises, when did the ancient Turkic language enter the territory of Yakutia? After all, the legends of Elley and Omogoy say that they are strangers and did not speak the language of Sakha. Thus, according to the legend written by G.V. Ksenofontov, when Omogoy people found Elley⁷ on the bank of the Lena River he spoke only two words: "бэлэнтэй" [belɛntɛj] and "бахай" [bɑxɑj] (Ksenofontov 1977: 21-24). What is the word "бэлэнтэй"? In Mongolian, the word "be-lentye" in the modern sense means "sale." "БЭЛЭНТЭЙ" (in Yakutian) is identical to Mongolian - ready, cooked; ready; cash (money) (BAMRD - Big Academic Mongolian-Russian Dictionary Vol. 1: 458). In the Tunguso-Manchurian languages the word "bele" means: in Manchurian - groats, including rice (CMRD - Complete Manchurian-Russian Dictionary 1875: 491), which in Even, Negidal, Ulch and Orok languages has become: help [CDTM - Comparative Dictionary of the Tunguso-Manchurian languages, vol. 1: 1975: 124]. In a word, "бахай," Elley probably meant the state of Bohai, which existed on the territory of Manchuria, modern Primorye and North Korea conquered by the Kidan Empire in 926. It is known about Omogoy, that he comes from the Buryats, although there are many different legends about his origin (Ksenofontov 1977). A researcher of Sakha ethnogenesis, historian V.V. Ushnitsky, writes:

⁶ The custom of bandaging the feet of Chinese women could be heard by the Olonkhosuts not earlier than the 12th century AD. I.e., this custom became known probably due to the development of trade with China. According to archaeological research, Chinese silk was found in graves on the territory of Yakutia before official trade with China began under the peace treaty signed in Nerchinsk in 1689.

“Another line of Sakha ancestor leads to Omogoy, in his person we see not only a Mongolian substrate, but also an older substrate - belonging to the common substrate of Buryats and Sakha - Batulians, connecting them with the people of Vadul-odul” (Ushnitsky 2013a: 244-245).

Does it mean that the Turkic language in the territory of Yakutia penetrated much earlier than the XII century, if Omogoy's clan is not a Turkic substrate of the Sakha ethnos? We know that the Sakha clans include related haplotypes from the Scythian and Xiongnu community. Probably, the technology of iron metallurgy penetrated with them in Yakutia at the beginning of the century. What language did they speak? It is not known. In this connection, it should be noted that the haplotypes of the Y-chromosome and mtDNA of the Pazyryk burial of the III century BC coincide with the data of modern Sakha and Turkic-speaking peoples from all over Eurasia (Tikhonov et al. 2019: 24-27). But it should be noted that it is difficult to tell about the time of penetration of the archaic Olonkho language into the territory of Yakutia. Scientists are still arguing about the language spoken by Scythians and Xiongnu. Recently, in the journal “Inner Asia” of Cambridge University, an article was published by the staff of the University of Toronto J.-Yu. Lee and Sh. Kuang regarding this: “According to some excerpts about the Xiongnu language that can be found in Chinese stories, the Xiongnu were Turks, not Mongols,” and the Turks had Xiongnu roots (Lee and Kuang 2017: 199).

It should be noted that the ancient unknown archaic vocabulary of the Olonkho language could penetrate into the Middle Lena together with a warrior from the Pokrovsk, whose bones were accidentally found in a sandy quarry near the town of Pokrovsk, whose age, according to S. Amory et al. 390-190 years BC. (Amory et al. 2006: 531-539). The mtDNA of the Pokrovsk warrior coincides with the data from the mtDNA of a woman from the Xiongnu necropolis in Egin Gol (Mongolia) of grave No. 45, who lived in the II - III centuries AD. (Amory et al, *ibid.*). At present, according to the population database mtDNA EDNAP (EMPOP) of the Institute of Forensic Medicine, Medical University of Innsbruck, related mitotypes of these two ancient

samples are mainly represented by the modern population of Eurasia. So, from 12 related modern mitotypes: 6 are from Uzbekistan, 3 from Yakutia, 1 from Pakistan and 2 from South Korea (Huber, Parson, and A. 2018: 204-214). Thus, related mitotypes of the maternal line mtDNA of the Pokrovsk warrior have been preserved in the gene pool of the modern Sakha population, but in addition, the descendants of this warrior in the male line probably survived to this day. Thus, the French researchers were able to extract five loci of short tandem repeats of the Y-chromosome from its DNA (Amory 2006: 531-539). Matching with these loci STR (Short tandem repeats) are marked in one Sakha currently living in the city of Yakutsk (Gao et al. 2015). This question can be finally clarified only when conducting a full genome sequencing of the genome of the remains of the Pokrovsk warrior.

Thus, some layer of Olonkho could have penetrated the Middle Lena quite early, probably with the first representatives of the Xiongnu. This view may be justified by the following arguments:

1. Shanyui is the title of Xiongnu Emperor. 1. According to the Chinese transcription 单于 (*chán yú*) Shanyui = [sh]anyuí = «аньыы» = «айыы». In the dictionary of the Yakut language of E.K. Pekarsky (DY), the etymology of the word “айыы” [ajɯ:] is indicated from: “cf. Jajy, Turk. Aji - creation, creative beginning ...”, but in the Ancient Turkic dictionary Aji means - very, strongly; and the word Aji - moon (DY vol. 1 1959: 47). V.S. Taskin believes that the word “shanyui” is of Turkic origin from the word's “san” and “yui” and means “a respectable or honored house” (Taskin 1986: 213-218). We assume that the Yakut word “айыы” probably owes its origin to the Xiongnu. And the prototype of “Урун Айыы Тойон” [əɾəŋ ajɯ: tojɔŋ] (White Aiyy Toyon) in Olonkho may be the Supreme Xiongnu - Shanyui. According to V.S. Taskin, the title Shanyui became known to Chinese chroniclers not later than the period of the warring kingdoms, but it is known that the first Xiongnu Emperor Mode (according to other sources Maodun) ascended the throne in 209 BC.

⁷ In 1998, a treasure of 147 Chinese coins from the period of the Sung dynasty was found in the Khangalassky ulus. The year of issue of the coins was 997 - 1125. (Stepanov 2012: 147-154). An interesting fact is that the collection of coins ends with the date 1125, i.e. with the date of the fall of the Khitan Empire Liao. The treasure could have belonged to Elley himself, because after the fall of the empire in 1125, he could not add Chinese coins to his piggy bank. According to legend, the people of Omogoy found Elley near Lake Belentey (named after him) in the Ensieli Valley, not far from where the money was found. Elley is considered a refugee from the Khitan Empire during its fall (Tikhonov, Gurkan, and Beyoglu 2019).

⁸ It is known that about 10% of the vocabulary of the Sakha language is of unknown origin, not found in any language in the world.

2. In Olonkho of P.A. Oyunsky, “Nyurgun Bootur Swift,” there are such lines:

“On the chest of the forefather Kyladyky,
Where the red sativa stone shines,
Where it howls piercingly, circling above the ground,
The Spirit of Bloodshed **Ilbis** ...”

The custom of “The Call of the Spirit of Ilbis” is described in detail in the collections of legends of G. Ksenofontov “Ellayade” (Ksenofontov 1977: 145). Surprisingly, this rite is very similar to the rite of sacrifice described by the Xiongnu. L.N. Gumilev considers the historical connection of these rites improbable (Gumilev 1960: 33), but the genetic history of the Sakha population suggests that the ritual can be borrowed from the Xiongnu. The etymology of the word is associated with the Turkic word İblis – Devil (BEDY Vol.3 2006: 611). But in “Comparative dictionary of Turkic adverbs,” (EDTD) V.V. Radlov the word “ilbis” in the Tobolsk dialect of the Tatar language is “tiger” (EDTD vol. 1: 1497). Ilbis, the god of war or spirit of war, cannot be the devil for the Xiongnu, but rather a tiger. According to our research on Olonkho, an ancient tradition of teaching boys the art of warfare from the early years to maturity is described (Zakharova 2004: 15-17).

3. Olonkho often mentions the tribe “Ordos”. In Olonkho, A.S. Ambrosiev-Omuruoska “Ogo Tulaayah Bukhatyur” has such lines:

“**Ордуос** биистэрэ
Уоран, саһан кэлэн
Уоппун умуруорбатыннар,
Ордуубун үрэйбэтиннэр диэн,
Отут арсыын халыһнаах
Охсуу таас муосталаах эбит...”

“That the tribes of Ordos,
Under the cover of the night sneaking around,
My hearth was not extinguished,
The house was not ruined,
The floor is covered with chipped stone
Thirty Arshin Thickness” [translation of authors].

In the “Big Explanatory Dictionary of the Yakut Language, the adjective “Ordos” is given the following interpretation: “touchy; unrestrained, fiery, rude” (BEDY Vol. 7 2010: 325). The etymology of the word is deduced from the Mongolian “uur” - anger, rage, spite (ibid.). But it should be noted that Ordos is a plateau that stretches to the north of China, where many militant nomadic tribes lived. In the Chinese chronicles, the Xiongnu are described as a belligerent tribe with a cool character. Ordos is considered the homeland of the Xiongnu, but from there in 215 BC Qin warlord Meng Tian pushed them to the north. On the border with the Xiongnu was built the Great Wall of China, and it became the officially recognized as the Shanyui border between China and the possessions of the Xiongnu (Kradin 2001: 41). A study of mtDNA of nine skeletons excavated in the Zhukaygou Cemetery east of the Ordos Plateau during the warring kingdoms (475 BC - 221 BC) (Wang et al. 2007: 5-8) showed that haplotype GVS1 mtDNA 16223T-16362C coincided with the data of mtDNA samples from Tattinsky and 2 from Churapchinsky uluses (Keyser et al. 2015), and haplotype 16223T-16290T-16319A-16362C with samples of Dolgan and Evenk (Fedorova 2008: 319). It follows that the descendants of ancient women from Ordos by some means reached the Middle Lena and, apparently, left the toponym “Ordos” in the people’s memory.

The formation of a certain part of the plot Olonkho, apparently, took place under the influence of the Xiongnu. This period covers the period from 190 BC (the appearance of a probable Xiongnu representative on the Middle Lena - the Intercession Warrior) to the III-IV century AD (Sagelennech sit, where the Chinese coin were found, recognized among archaeologists as an indicator of Xiongnu influence in Siberia) (Alexeev 2013: 62-69). Kazakh history professor, Zh.O. Artykbayev, links the time of the appearance of similar legends of Kazakhs and Sakha to the Sacks period and the period of the great migration of peoples in the Xiongnu (Hun) time (71 BC - 56 BC) (Artykbayev 2018: 61).

According to legends collected by S. Bolo until the Sakha, tribes of Kyrgyz lived on the Middle Lena (Bolo 2006: 53). They probably left the most northern runic writings on the Lena River (Bernstam 1951: 65-75).

⁹ In 209 BC, Mode seized the Shanyu throne and the history of the Xiongnu (Hunnu) empire begins. The age of the Pokrovsky warrior coincides with the dates of the rise of the Xiongnu in the Asian steppe.

¹⁰ Mode and Maodun are quite understandable in the Sakha language as Modun (mighty), and his father Toumen (Tomen) is *tүмөн*, *үтүмөн*. In Turkic, this word means - 10,000, and in Yakut, as an innumerable number. In Olonkho, Maodun is probably referred to as “Одун Хаан” [odun ха:n].

Olonkho motifs related to everyday life were undoubtedly introduced in the Middle Ages. Such are the Bogatyr horses, iron tools of the Bogatyrs (“кылыс” [kʷylʷus], “батыя” [batʷija] – palm trees, onions), marriage description, clothes, food, and others. (Oyunsky 1927: 29-30, 44-54). It should be noted that Olonkho does not mention the title of the Turkic rulers - Kagan, but the Mongolian title - Khaan is used (“Одун хаан” [odun xɑ:n], “Чыныс хаан” [ʧɯɲɯs xɑ:n], “Дьылга хаан” [dʒʷɯlɣɑ xɑ:n], etc.). The Olonkho researcher N.I. Filipova (2000) found that in Olonkho the rudiments of the titles of the state formations of the Turks and Mongols: darkhan, beki, bakhsy, tutuk, erkin, bogdo (Filippova 2000: 19) are preserved in anthroponyms. The epicologist, V.M. Nikiforov, expressed his version of the titlature of Olonkho characters by seven conventional stages of their formation. He investigates the epic system of images of the Yakut Olonkho and gives a classification of the conventional seven stages of its formation: The Turanian, Xiongnu-Chinese, Teleuigur, ancient Turkic, Kyrgyz, Mongolian, and Uryankhai periods, the researcher emphasizes that “... it does not mean that they follow each other in a strict sequence, but can be superimposed and be synchronous on some of their sections” (Nikiforov 2002: 206-207). His main conclusion is that with the accumulation of interdisciplinary data and with the publication of new subjects there is a tendency to enhance the epic of Yakut Olonkho creation, with which we fully agree.

The most common and consistently used title in Olonkho is Darkhan. In Turkic, Tarkhan, there is a privileged class of nobility of Turkic state formations. It began to be used in the period of Turkic Kaganats (550-745). In Olonkho it is used not Tarkhan in Turkic transcription, but in Mongolian - Darkhan. We have noticed that among the stable anthroponyms of Olonkho, there are three epic characters that surprisingly coincide with the names of historical personalities – “Чыныс хаан”, “Сээркээн Сэһэн” [se:rke:n sehen], “Адъарай” [adʒɑraj]. “Чыныс хаан” is undoubtedly associated with Genghis Khan (Oyunsky 1927: 11). “Сээркээн Сэһэн” is reminiscent of the name of the Mongolian chronicler and Ordos Prince Sagang Sechen, who wrote in 1662, the most extensive medieval Mongolian chronicle “Erdeniin Tobchi” (BSE vol. 37 1955: 578), and “Адъарай” is probably an image of the Buryat hero Ajarai, the tribal leader of the Ekhirid tribe of the Upper

Lena Buryats (Badmaev 2000: 12-14).

Analyzing this data, we can make the following conclusion that starting from the XII century, Mongolian influence increased in the territory of Yakutia up to the appearance of servicemen of the Russian Empire in these regions. Links with the Buryat-Mongolian tribes intensified after the opening of trade with China (Tikhonov, Gurkan, and Beyoglu 2019: 32-52). Khori births appeared in Olekminsky, Khangalassky, Upper Vilyuysky, Suntarsky uluses, a suburb of the city of Yakutsk (Khattass), Ust-Aldansky ulus and in Churapcha, repeating the configuration of the path of trade in Chinese goods in Yakutia (tea, tobacco). These goods went to Yakutia through Mongolia and the border points of Kayakhta and Nerchinsk. Sakha-French archaeological expedition noted a strengthening in the influence of Mongolian culture in the inventory of Sakha burials in the XVIII century. The Buryat-Mongolian influence was reflected in all life of Yakutia’s population, including Olonkho.

The final formation of Olonkho genre in its present form undoubtedly took place in the territory of modern Yakutia. It should be noted that the XII century is the beginning of the formation of the Kulun-Atakh stage of Sakha culture (which replaced the Ymiyakhtakh stage), which began with the arrival of the legendary Elley. During the two centuries of XII-XIV, there were complex processes of consolidation, transformation of culture, worldview of the people and their philosophy, which ended with the formation of Kulun-Atakh culture to XIII-XIV centuries. The Olonkho texts incorporated elements introduced from different cultures ranging from ancient to late (autochthonous, Scythian, Xiongnu, Turkic, Mongolian, Chinese and Middle Asian) and not as a result of cultural diffusion from living in the neighborhood for a long time, but as a result of demographic diffusion. It should be noted that the territory of the Middle Lena during the rise of the steppe empires was a “haven of peace”, where the defeated and persecuted fugitives sought refuge. It should be borne in mind the conclusions of the authoritative researchers Sikora et al., that the female population of Northeast Asia has been constant since the Holocene. Thanks to the female population and its adaptive advantage, the offspring of immigrants from the south, mainly of the male population, survived, and the evolution of the formation of the epic heritage went on continuously, one might even say in parallel, starting from archaic myths and legends to

¹¹ Ambrosyev-Omuruoska AS Оҕо Тулааyah Bukhatyir. http://olonkho.info/ru/index.php?title=Амвросьев,_Алексей_Петрович_Омуруоска._Олонхо_%22О50_Тулааyah_Бухатыыр%22. Access 17.03.2020

¹² Wikipedia [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarkhan_\(name\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarkhan_(name)). Accessed April 1, 2020.

the heroic epic, in whose texts the plots of different eras were incorporated. The female population of the Middle Lena, probably from the time of the Xiongnu, has become an accumulator of cultural innovations of refugees from the south during the rise and fall of the steppe empires. The archaic plot of the Olonkho was probably based on the legends of the autochthonous population of the Middle Lena, the descendants of the first settlers - mammoth hunters who reached the shores of the Arctic

Ocean in pursuit of mammoths 35,000 years ago. It is not for nothing that in various genres of Yakut folklore three ancestors are recognized as the progenitors of the Sakha people: Omogoy Baay, Elley Botur, “Улуу Хоро” [ulu: xoro], it is in this historical time sequence that all of them, being aliens, strangers on the territory of modern Yakutia, were able to unite and form on the basis of the autochthonous population to one Sakha people from different ethnic groups.

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