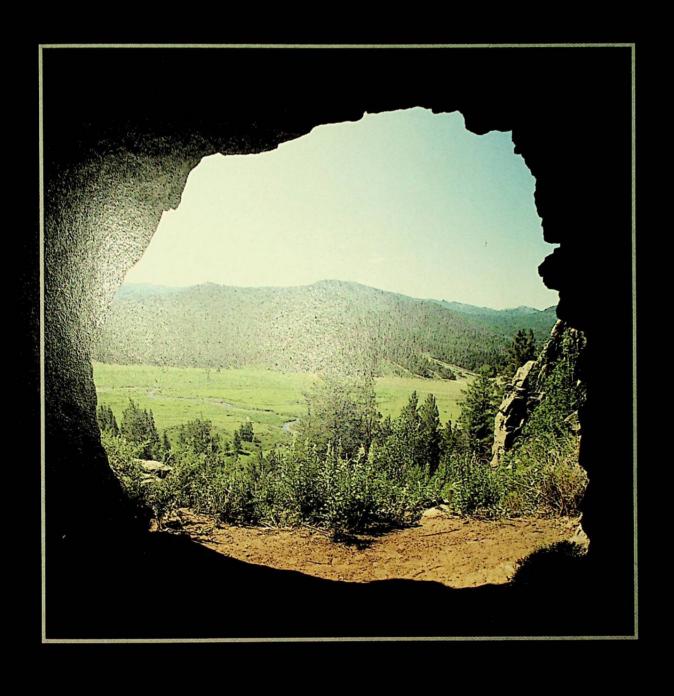
EBURYATS TRADITIONS БУРЯТЫ ТРАДИЦИИ БУРЯТЫ ИКУЛЬТУРА



BURYATS



TRADITIONS & CULTURE



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FIVE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES IIRTЬ IIEPBOOCHOB

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Over the old earth the blue wind is blowing. It comes from the snowy Himalayan peaks, rustles the sands of the Gobi desert and flies further to the North through the great corridors opened up from time immemorial along the smooth Mongolian steppes. It raises dust from the Hun burial mounds, frightens away tarbagans; the wind whistles in antelopes antlers, flutters the manes of the undersized horses, drives flocks of sheep and stirs up foamy white-caps on the Selenga. It also covers the foot hills of the Sayans and animal trails with whitish fresh snow; the wind stirs the crowns of perennial ceders and larches, bends down the heads of the wild onions, tears off decayed shreds from the ancient "obo", drones in the curves roofings of temples and turns with a slight creaking sound the drums (prayer wheels) together with the prayers of people spirals upwards causing coasts of the sacred sea. And then the trees will grow, and the fire will burn, and the iron will be forged in the name of the people who have populated the country near Baikal since ancient times. This country is Buryatia, Barghudzhin-Tokum, Ara-Halha, sheltered by the huge heavenly yurta, its edges resting against the Mongolian steppes in the South, against the Yakut tundra in the North, across the riverbeds of the Vitim and Onon in the East and beneath the Baikal waves in the West. In this country time has interwoven its fantastic pattern of customs and beliefs, tribes and languages, each of them deserving a low bow and an unhurried narrator.

"... In the heavenly country of the transparent light, air came into motion and one after the other the heavenly countries were formed from the air, reaching the land that is free from war and strife. Then again the air stirred and wind began to blow. After a long time air accumulated and a very stable sphere of air was formed. Following the prolonged accumulation of cold air, the warmth released formed a very hot sphere of fire. In this way two substances were formed. As a result of the combination of these two elements-cold air and hot fire-moisture accumulated in the form of sweat and dampness. That's how the sphere of water came into being and thus three substances had emerged. The air supported the fire and in its turn the fire heated the water. Due to the combination of three elements-cold, heat and moisture (air, fire and water) - a mass of atoms began to cluster together and thickened like a milk skin; from it the sphere of the earth emerged. Four substances had been formed. Steam which was released during the combination of the four spheres-air, fire, water and earthturned into the accumulation of clouds. As the rain began to fall, the our spheres were soaked simultaneously. Water settled on the earth and a great outer sea was formed",—thus wrote Mergen Gegen, author of the medieval Mongolian chronicle "Altan Tobchi", presenting Buddhist cosmology of the origin of all life.

Long before the time of Buddhism and Lamaism, the ancestors of the Buryats, the proud Burte-Chinos, begged the Eternal Blue Sky—Khukhe Munhe Tengri—for mercy, splashing milk of one hundred white mares into the blue waters of Baikal as he believed that the lake-sea was the reflection of heaven.

FIVE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES ПЯТЬ ПЕРВООСНОВ

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"Heaven-Father, Earth-Mother!"-exclaimed the man dismounting from his horse and straightening the grass by sacrificial stone and solicited heaven-born tengries and ezhins-spirits for their permission to step upon their land. He begged the master of water for successful fishing, the master of forests and trees for rich hunting, so that there would be fire in the hearth and happy children would run about, and so that the ezhin of fire, Sahyaady-nojon and his wife Sakhali-khatan, would look at the children and smile. It was by bonfire that the dallaga-shaman made his invocations:

Thanks to the embrace of High Heaven Widely-spread mother-Earth

A, khury!

Thanks to the rays of the golden sun And radiance of the diamond moon,

A, khury!

Thanks to the wealth of our native land And the udder of our Earth,

A, khury!

Thanks to clean streams of running water And tips of growing grass,

A, khury!

Thanks to flames of the hot fire And foundation of four altars,

A, khury!

There is boundless wealth And great happiness,

A, khury!

There is Heaven-Father and Earth-Mother and a Man between them. But he is not weak and helpless. Even according to the elementary notions of the ancient community, man was much more important than heavenlyborn creatures. It is on the earth that the epic Buryat hero Geser-khan was restored to life in the hut of a seventy-year old man and sixty-year old woman. He "descended from heaven for the sake of all people", for the struggle with demons-mangakhays.

Sky, Earth, Water, Fire, Tree... There were rather complex relations between ancient inhabitants of Barghuzhin-Tokum and the surrounding forests, mountains, rivers and lakes. Each tribe had its own deities, masters of rivers, lords of mountains-"ezhins", "ongons", "khats". They were called differently by Khoris and Tumats, Barghuts and Bulaghachins, Kuremechins and Khonkhodors, Ekhirits and Bulaghats ...

When and where, either on the shore of Baikal, in the taiga valley or during steppe migration, did a narrow-eyed, high cheek-boned tribesman ponder over the questions "Who am I?" and "Where am I from?"

The Buryat legend says: "... Long ago there was no Baikal-sea but there was earth. Then the fire-spitting mountain collapsing and turning