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**Unknown Treasures of the Altaic World
in Libraries, Archives and Museums**

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Description of Mongolian Folktales Kept in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg)

DMITRY A. NOSOV (ST. PETERSBURG)

Saint Petersburg can be called the cradle of Russia's Mongolian studies. For dozens of years the research school was directing scholars in the field of Mongolian culture.

Through all the history of the development of the Mongolian studies the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS (former Asian Museum, Leningrad/Saint Petersburg branch of Institute of Oriental Studies – IOM RAS) has been playing an important role. All significant Russian Mongolists and Mongolian scholars from other countries came through it. One may find the results of their work both, published or kept as manuscripts. These manuscripts deal with many aspects of Mongolian life and with folklore as well.

Since the mid-nineteenth century the texts of Mongolian folklore genres have been actively collected and published, still most of these texts remain in archives of Mongolian scholars unpublished. These archives formed foundations of various research institutions, the main of which was the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad. It has two depositories which deal with texts on culture and history of Mongols, Buryats and Kalmyks. The Manuscript Depository contains all texts written on Mongolia in the Uygur script (which is in use nowadays in Inner Mongolia) and the Oirat script.

The Archive of Orientalists holds the working materials of the Institute's stuff, travelers and other collectors. All texts were written in transliteration or transcription. It contains Russian translations of texts either. As one can find out from the catalogues of these two depositories, both of them contain texts of Mongolian folktales. This can be done with the help of catalogues of Mongolian materials, prepared by ALEXEI SAZYKIN and IRINA KULGANÉK.

To analyze Mongolian folktales, kept in the Archive of Orientalists IOM RAS, I have used the "Catalogue of Mongolian folklore materials" of the Archive compiled by I. V. KULGANÉK. The catalogue consists of 11 sections. Folktales are mentioned in a section called "Prose" which contains 28 items that deal with Mongolian folktales.¹

1 KULGANÉK (2000), 139-168.

Folktales from the modern Republic of Mongolia are most widely presented in the catalogue. There are 18 items that contain Mongolian folktales. All of these items were registered by famous Russian Mongolists. Those are: B. I. PANKRATOV who wrote down ten Mongolian folktales; B. B. BARADIJN, whose fund contains 13 Mongolian folktales; Ts. Z. ZHAMTSARANO, who managed to write down 42 folktales of Mongolian speaking peoples; and A. M. POZDNEEV, whose collection contains three Mongolian folktales. Among these folktales 38 were put down in Mongolia proper: three by A. M. POZDNEEV, ten by B. I. PANKRATOV and 25 by Ts. Z. ZAMTSARANO.

There is no information on either date or place of registration of three folktales collected by A. M. POZDNEEV. PANKRATOV wrote down five Mongolian folktales at Altan Bulak, the date remains unknown. Another five texts of Mongolian folktales collected by him contain no information on date and place. Ts. Z. ZAMTSARANO managed to write down Mongolian folktales in a most proper way. 17 of them he wrote in Urga in 1904 from his students, another four were put down in Urga as well, but in 1912. At the same year he wrote three Mongolian folktales from Buryats and in 1911 one folktale on the Onon river.

Except Mongolian we can find four Chahar folktales, written down by BARADIJN in Mongolia in 1909, two pure Khalkha folktales registered by him in Mongolia, and two Darkhat folktales, written also by BARADIJN in Mongolia in 1910. At the same year he had fixed two Abaga folktales, two Bargut texts at the Sholbok lake and one Sunit children's folktale. We can say that TSEVEEN ZHAMTSARANO was the most successful collector of Mongolian folktales from Saint Petersburg. Ethnologically widest folktales material was prepared by B. BARADIJN.

The analysis of Mongolian folktales publications has shown that four of ten texts, written by PANKRATOV were published by NICHOLAS N. POPPE in his edition of "Specimens of Khalkha-Mongolian folklore: North Khalkha dialect", done in Leningrad in 1932.² We can definitely say that 47 from 51 Mongolian folktales from the Archive of Orientalists of our institute remain unknown to the Mongolian scholars and should be published. Folktales of the Buryats are represented in eight items of the catalogue. Ts. Z. ZAMTSARANO was the most active researcher: he prepared five items that contain 17 Buryat folktales. They were registered during his trips to Buryatia in 1903, 1906, 1907 and 1908. Eight tales were written down in Buryat proper (six – in the so-called

2 POPPE (1932).

Academic transcription based on Cyrillic alphabet, and two – in Russian translation), five folktales in Academic transcription were heard by him in the Aginsky datsan and four from Khori-Buryats in the unknown location.

BARADIJN's fund contains two items that have Buryat folktales. But the amount of folktales seems to be larger than that written down by ZHAMTSA-RANO. One item contains fifty notebooks of the Buryat folklore materials collected by the post graduate students of the institute, BERTAGAEV and HAMGA-SHALOV, during their expedition to Buryatia in 1932.

Folktales of the Kalmyks are presented only by two items. The first item contains 26 Kalmyk folktales written down by N. OCHIROV in Kalmykia in 1911 in the Cyrillic Academic transcription. The second item contains one folktale registered and translated by A. D. RUDNEV in Kalmykia in 1906.

The Department of Manuscripts and Unique Documents of IOM RAS also holds the texts of folktales of the Mongolian speaking peoples. Their description can be found in the first volume of SAZYKIN's "Catalogue of Mongolian manuscripts and xylographs of IO AS USSR".³ These texts are written both in Mongolian and Oirat scripts.

The Oirat texts are presented by ten items. Nine of them belong to POZDNEEV's collection. Eight items contain one folktale, the ninth consists of two tales. Only one item has a date: it goes back to 1867.

According to V. PROPP's narrative structure classification of folktales and subject classification of Mongolian folktales proposed by KHORLOO, GAADAMBA (and used by LŐRINCZ, BARDAKHANOVA and BASANGOVA), one can clearly determine the genre of four tales. In POZDNEEV's Oirat collection there are no less than two fairy-tales, one Heroic (*baatarlag*) folktale and one animal tale.

Another Oirat folktale is found in the GOLSTUNSKY fund. Unfortunately, there is no information either about date, or place of its registration.

Folktales, written in the Mongolian Uygur script are represented by seven items. Three of them are kept in SAMDANOV's collection: two in the collection of the Theological Academy of Kazan, one in the ALEKSEEV's collection and one in RYGDYLON's collection.

Unfortunately, neither SAZYKIN's catalogue, nor the texts themselves give us information on date and place of their registration. This data is to be cleared. Though, we can suppose that these texts were written down in the end of 19th – beginning of 20th centuries, and they are of high value for the folklorists.

For example, we can definitely say, that the collection of the Kazan Theo-

3 SAZYKIN (1988), 45-47, 384.

logical Academy contains the oldest text of «Болдоггүй Боролзой Өвгөн» (the manuscript is named “Borontai ebugen”) cumulative story. This story is widely spread amongst modern Mongolians, and actually consists of two connected cumulative stories of II and XI types of PROPP’s cumulative stories classification. I haven’t yet achieved any success in my attempts to find parallels to the story in LŐRINCZ’s catalogue of Mongolian folktales, in AARNE’s (edited by THOMPSON)⁴ or other catalogues of world folktales.

Existence of such early registration of the folktale along with its registrations in the 20th–21st centuries gives us an opportunity to make a diachronically study of transformations of Mongolian folktales, first of all of its images.

To finish my paper, I would like to mention that most of folktale materials of IOM RAS were written down at the beginning of the 20th century. The date of registration makes these materials of great importance for folklorists. We can unite it with the folk-material, collected by the so-called “European Orientalists” (first of all I mean G. N. POTANIN), who were active at the second half of the 19th century. In the second half of the 20th century this work was actively continued by Mongolian, Chinese, Belgian, Buryat and Kalmyk scholars. All this material gives us an opportunity to study the Mongolian folktale through 150 years of its development.

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4 THOMPSON (1961).