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## THE PHENOMENON OF NEO-TRAMBALISM, TRAMBOLISM AND RE-TRAMBALISM IN THE REGIONS OF THE RUSSIAN ARCTIC DURING THE SELECTION AND PLACEMENT OF PERSONNEL AMONG INDIGENOUS MINORITIES IN THEM

**Abstract:** In the article, the authors analyzed the experience of two Russian Far Eastern regions - Yakutia and Buryatia - in using the categories of neo-tribalism in political discourse. This is an interesting phenomenon, since we are not simply talking about the use of the concept of "political clan", but about references to local cultural traditions. Tribal identity as a political factor may not be condemned, but rather encouraged. The origins of this phenomenon are usually sought in local specifics, in cultural practices described by anthropologists and ethnographers. This study is an attempt to demonstrate that the language of neotribalism is modern, it appeared in response to current demands, and the state plays one of the main roles in its formation and maintenance. The work is based on the analysis of various content, but its goal is not to describe the language of neotribalism, but to understand the origins of its existence. Studying the situation in two regions made it possible to compare the data obtained and fit the practice of using neo-tribalist language into the socio-political context. Authorities are one of the main actors representing neo-tribalist meanings, which are part of the more general discourse of neo-traditionalism. The content created signifies tribalism as part of valued local traditions. The mass media pick up and replicate the idea of the tribal structure of local society, since this is a rating topic. As a result, the state itself is viewed in a neo-tribalist manner. The popularity of this model of describing politics directly depends on how actively the authorities support the neo-traditionalist discourse.

**Key words:** neo-traditionalism, neo-tribalism, Asia, culture, politics, power, language, meanings.

**Language:** English

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## Introduction

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Neo-tribalism in politics is a phenomenon considered by world science from various points of view. Although there are classic works describing tribes in modern times, the debate about what tribalism and neotribalism are and whether these terms can be used today continues to this day. The authors offer their own approaches and definitions: retribalization, modern tribalism, etc. Each of them focuses on specific aspects of the phenomenon being studied, which is reflected in the terminology used. In the presented work, the term “neo-tribalism” is used, understood as a modern phenomenon of the actualization of artificially archaized relations (tribal, clan, etc.) and the identities corresponding to them. The prefix neo- in this situation emphasizes the presence of innovative practices and ideas that are a response to certain processes in society. In addition, we are interested in tribalism in a political context - as the phenomenon where, under specific circumstances, certain interest groups use parts of their traditional culture to formulate functions for informal organizations that are used in the struggle of these groups for power within formal organizations. However, the object of analysis was not the political actors identifying themselves with the corresponding informal groups, but the neo-tribalist meanings attributed to them and their actions. Studying how tribal life is portrayed as an idealized past or a regressive barrier to development has provided insight into why ideas about the existence of tribes and clans can be cultivated: they are portrayed as part of traditions, valuable or unfavorable in the context of ethnic identity and national consciousness. In other words, neotribalism in this study is viewed in terms of systems of meaning already used to describe politics, and not as actual groups and their relationships. This avoided the danger of accepting neotribalism as a given, a cultural feature that can be described and thereby contribute to the formation and systematization of the language of neotribalism. An earlier study of the manifestations of neo-tribalism in the field of politics of the modern Far East showed that language in this situation is of paramount importance in the context of a formally unified region with many ethnic groups for which tribalism is officially enshrined as part of culture and history, part of traditions that need to be preserved.

The presented study focuses on two republics: Sakha (Yakutia) and Buryatia. They are united by both

the presence in the public sphere of the language of neotribalism as a way of describing politics, and the common features of the historical past, significant in the context of this work, as well as the national character of autonomy. On the other hand, the territorial boundaries are somewhat wider, since the use of the language of neo-tribalism tends to describe local ethnic groups whose borders of residence do not coincide with the official borders of the republics. It is on this scale that the public categorization of politics in terms of tribalism manifests itself most clearly. It allows one to evaluate political phenomena, draw political boundaries, legitimize political decisions, claims to power and resources, and explain ongoing political processes. The language of neotribalism is not the only one in this situation; there are other ways of everyday describing and understanding politics. But it is definitely popular, and in order to see its prospects, it is necessary to put it into context, to understand the origins of this phenomenon.

An attempt to understand the socio-political conditions in which the language of neo-tribalism is formed revealed its close connection with the general neo-traditionalist discourse. Government authorities systematically announce the need to preserve and revive traditions; officials publicly position the study areas as unique spaces where traditions are an integral part of culture and history. This relationship between the general neotraditionalist discourse formed by state institutions and the idea of neotribalism, which becomes the basis for describing the political actors themselves, their relationships and actions, became the subject of this study. Similar processes are recorded everywhere in the modern world, when the revival or construction of ethnocultural and religious traditions and, in general, archaics become an integral and integral part of socio-economic and political discourse.

The purpose of this article is not to record and classify the use of neo-tribalist discourse in political content, but to understand the reasons for this phenomenon. The basis of the study was the concept of representation and the theory of commodification of ethnicity. The concept of “ethnicity industry” made it possible to analyze the motives of authorities in the creation and dissemination of neo-traditionalist discourse, and the concept of representation made it possible to trace the movement of relevant meanings in society and identify the relationship between the actions of politicians and the spread of neo-tribalist discourse about the politicians themselves. The emergence and transformation of the language of

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neotribalism is associated with many factors, but in this situation the study is limited to the sphere of influence of state institutions, therefore it is based on interpretive approaches to policy analysis. Their central characteristic is a focus on meaning, so they are situation specific rather than requiring general laws or universal principles. Typically, they focus on language as well as other artifacts that convey meaning, such as people's actions and any objects they may use in those actions. The interpretive approach offers a wide range of research methods, ranging from observation, interviews, document study, to spatial analysis, each of which was used at a specific stage depending on the data obtained. This allowed us to adjust the study, making its results more relevant. In addition, this made it possible to analyze such a complex concept as "neo-tribalist discourse", which consists of many heterogeneous meanings. The method of structured focused comparison helped to organize the research techniques used. With its help, you can study a small number of cases in detail and comprehensively and minimize the negative aspects of having a small number of cases participating in the comparison (remember, the study is focused on Yakutia and Buryatia). Formulating a set of general questions that should be applied to each of the cases ensures that the data obtained are truly comparable. A structured, focused comparison allowed for detailed examination of individual cases that differed in both chronological and geographical characteristics. It was important to identify and compare different models of describing politics using neotribalism, and to trace the process of their transformation.

The empirical basis of the study was formed on the basis of the applied research methods. Materials published in the region over the past twenty years dealing with the topic of tribalism and politics were examined. Initially, the selection was carried out using keywords and phrases; the obtained data was grouped by source and ranked by popularity; The materials referenced at the initial stage of the study were examined. Next, a special search was carried out for materials with similar characteristics to conduct a comparative analysis. As a result, the data that was accessed can be divided into three categories: actions (what people do in the analyzed political situation, for example, the practice of government bodies), language (what is said and written about tribalist groups in politics, incl. the language of legislation, various documents, reports, language used in interviews, journalistic articles, statements of politicians, etc.), as well as politically related objects or physical artifacts (for example, items of clothing emphasizing membership in a particular tribal group and etc.). All this made it possible to identify the significant role of state institutions in the emergence and support of the language of neotribalism.

The Krasnoyarsk Territory is one of the most resource-rich regions of Russia: its territory contains

huge reserves of oil, gas, iron ore, coal, non-metallic minerals, non-ferrous and rare metals. Thanks to its unique natural resources, the Krasnoyarsk Territory is one of the supporting industrial regions of the Russian Federation: the basic industries are metallurgy (the share of non-ferrous metallurgy is more than 40%), mining (about 30%), hydropower and solid fuel power (more than 10%), forestry and timber processing industry.

In the Taimyr Dolgano-Nenets municipal region, reserves of platinum, platinum group metals, cobalt, copper-nickel ores are concentrated; these are the Norilsk-1, Oktyabrskoye, Talnakhskoye deposits, united in the Norilsk mining district. On the territory of the largest in Eurasia, the Great Arctic Reserve, there is a natural reserve known since the mid-19th century. Taimyr coal basin. In the 1970s The world's largest deposit of impact industrial diamonds was discovered within the boundaries of the Popigai ring structure. According to the map of distributed resources, more than 40 mining companies operate in Taimyr. The main developer of subsoil on the peninsula is MMC Norilsk Nickel. Over the past few years, oil and gas production companies have been actively entering the area. The flagship project for Taimyr is the Vostok Oil project of the Rosneft company. The development of the peninsula and its resources involves not only mining and processing companies, but also wild reindeer hunters, reindeer herders, fishermen, i.e. indigenous peoples (Dolgans, Nenets, Enets, Nganasans, Evenks). The meaning of the concept of "development" is revealed when identifying resource-user projections, in which various stakeholders and actors appear. It is clear that all residents of Taimyr have common resources that everyone uses, although in different volumes and forms. But they use resources in different ways, and these differences do not occur directly from the location and purpose of the resource (say, pastures or minerals), but in the refraction of traditions, interests, technologies, strategies. The decisive role is played by the motives and attitudes of communities (peoples, villages, corporations) and their leaders. Different views and approaches can give rise to conflicts, or they can serve as the basis for cooperation and the development of multilateral models of interaction. Ultimately, it is not the resources themselves, but the behavioral strategies of their users that create the picture and history of a particular space. Analysis of intersecting motives reveals the existing alignment of interests and possible scenarios for the development of events. The history of the Russian mining and metallurgical company Norilsk Nickel goes back more than eighty years. The earliest mentions of minerals on the territory of Taimyr date back to the 18th century. Geological expeditions in the 1920s. determined the high prospects of the region (Norilsk-1 deposit), and already in March 1935, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central

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Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks adopted Resolution No. 1275198ss “On the construction of the Norilsk Combine” and on the transfer of “Norilskstroy” (full name - “Norilsk Mining metallurgical plant named after A.P. Zavenyagin”) into the NKVD of the USSR. Together with the industrial capacities of the plant, the workers' settlement of Norilsk was built by the prisoners of the Norilsk forced labor camp. By the end of the 1930s. Norilsk has turned into an industrial giant in the Arctic, which has radically changed the economy of the Taimyr National District. November 4, 1989The Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a resolution on the creation of the “State Concern for the production of non-ferrous metals “Norilsk Nickel”. On June 30, 1993, by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation, the State Concern for the Production of Precious and Non-Ferrous Metals “Norilsk Nickel” was transformed into the Russian Joint-Stock Company for the Production of Precious and Non-Ferrous Metals (RAO) “Norilsk Nickel”. Nowadays, the Public Joint Stock Company “Mining and Metallurgical Company “Norilsk Nickel”” (PJSC “MMC Norilsk Nickel”, since 2016 – MMC “Norilsk Nickel”) is the world’s largest producer of palladium and refined nickel, one of the largest producers of platinum and copper, as well as cobalt, chromium, rhodium, silver, gold, iridium, ruthenium, selenium, tellurium and sulfur. The company unites two main production sites: the Polar Branch operates on the Taimyr Peninsula (in Norilsk, Talnakh, Kayerkan and Dudinka), and the Kola Metallurgical Company JSC operates on the Kola Peninsula (in Monchegorsk, Zapolyarny and Nikel).

Norilsk Nickel has always invested in the Taimyr region - both when it was a “plant” (as the local population continues to call it), and when it became a “master” (a joint stock company and a world-famous industrial giant). In the coming years, the Norilsk Nickel company plans to invest more than \$10 billion in the development of the north of the Krasnoyarsk Territory (an agreement between the Krasnoyarsk Territory, the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation and MMC Norilsk Nickel). Norilsk Nickel's criticism for its irresponsible attitude towards nature and people, especially in connection with the oil spill at CHPP-3 in May 2020, does not prevent us from treating it as the main investor for Taimyr and the Krasnoyarsk Territory, as can be seen in the answers to interview questions: “In Soviet times, bosses from the plant were assigned to each village. Tripartite agreements were signed: the plant – the region – the district.”

“Since perestroika, no one cares about the population. “Norilsk Nickel” is only interested in taking from the region, and live the rest as you want. And now, after the spill accident, there is a desire to crush the people, it won't work!” How to build new relationships between the indigenous population and

the mining company? To ask or demand, to quarrel or to cooperate? Probably, dualism in the “either-or” format is unacceptable for these relationships - they are much more complex, and in their debugging not only strict restrictive settings are possible, but also alternative agreed-upon scenarios.

MMC Norilsk Nickel is the main generator and organizer (sponsor) of project activities in Taimyr. Support for many large-scale events and exciting initiatives testifies to the socially responsible policy of the company as the “chief of the region.” The palette of new and already traditional projects and grants is very diverse. Thus, in 2013, Norilsk Nickel launched a charitable program of social projects “A World of New Opportunities” to support the sustainable development of all regions of the company’s presence: implemented in the Krasnoyarsk Territory (Norilsk, Taimyr Dolgano-Nenets Municipal District) and the Murmansk Region (Norilsk). Monchegorsk, Pechenga district). The program is aimed at solving social problems; the key task is to support and develop intersectoral cooperation of local communities. Each of the nine nominations of the competition represents significant vectors for the development of cities, territories and people: “Pole of Revival”, “Pole of Energy”, “Pole of Growth”, “Pole of the Future”, “Pole of Good”, “Pole of Nature”, “Pole of the North” and etc. In 2021, 208 applications were submitted to the competition from 133 organizations in Norilsk and Taimyr. The winners were 54 projects from 52 organizations. The winning projects covered a large number of areas of public life: from a center for adaptive classes for children with disabilities to teaching digital literacy to older people, from the anniversary of the first house of Norilsk to museum performances, from scientific collaboration between schoolchildren and university teachers to craft workshops for sewing bokars, from robotics tournaments to a digital self-teacher of the Nenets language through VR applications. “The World of New Opportunities is a very strong grant project. Norilsk Nickel is the largest grant giver, distributes grants of up to 5–6 million rubles, creates rehabilitation centers, and supports many projects of various types. The competition is also held in Murmansk, our projects are watched by experts from there, and we watch their projects. In this part of Norilsk Nickel’s policy, I really like their position; they have interesting rules. I can confidently say that the company is responsible.” The World of New Opportunities Program does not have special nominations for the indigenous population, however, among the winners there are projects of an ethnic nature, and not only representatives of indigenous peoples. For example, with grant funds in the summer of 2018, the Turkic holiday “Polar Sabantuy” was organized in Talnakh. The ideological inspirer of the project is the chairman of the board of the public



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organization “Local Nogai National Cultural Autonomy” Kumykbiy Ibragimo.

In general, supporting ethnic festivals and holidays is not new for Norilsk Nickel. With the sponsorship of the company, traditionally, since Soviet times, the main holidays of the indigenous peoples of Taimyr are held - Fisherman's Day and Reindeer Herder's Day. “We are working with Norilsk Nickel to organize holidays – Reindeer Herder's Day, Fisherman's Day. They sponsor 5 million annually. We buy gifts on their behalf through a charitable foundation.” In 2021, on Reindeer Herder's Day, nomads from the tundra once again gathered in Tukhard to take part in reindeer sled races and meet with family and friends. 30 men's, 16 women's and 26 youth teams took part in the race, which had to cover a 30-kilometer distance. In the men's group of participants, Alexander Yamkin was the first to reach the finish line, and he received the main prize - a snowmobile. Second place, and along with it the outboard motor, went to Grigory Iaptune. Third place went to Timur Marik, who was also awarded a boat motor. Among the women, Henrieta Tesedo won, Oksana Yarotskaya was second, and Gilda Lyrmina was third. Among the young reindeer herders, Nikolai Yamkin was the fastest, Illarion Naivosedov was in second place, and Pyotr Naivosedov was in third place. In addition to reindeer sled racing, competitions were held in national sports: throwing a maut (lasso) on a trochee (a pole for driving deer), national wrestling and jumping over sleds. Competitions for men's, women's and children's national clothing and festive harnesses were organized for the villagers and guests of the holiday. The winners and runners-up in each of the competitions received gas generators, chain saws, tool sets, and sewing machines.

Reindeer Herder's Day and Fisherman's Day are always awaited in Taimyr, however, according to the population, these holidays are becoming less and less interesting from year to year. Interest in competitions, for example, in the same deer races, is reduced due to prizes - expensive goods purchased through competitive bidding are of such low quality that they devalue the very tradition of holding holidays. Thus, the indigenous residents give the example of transporting a snowmobile donated for winning a race on cargo sleds - it was neither possible to get new equipment nor, as it turned out, to use it for its intended purpose. Of course, direct responsibility lies with the organizers, and not with the sponsors, but the shadow of “disapproval” also falls on the latter. It seems that in order to support the sponsor's image, it is necessary not only to finance, but also to monitor the progress and results, determine the prospects of supported projects and grants, especially for those that are designated as the strategic direction of the company.

In the development strategy of MMC Norilsk Nickel until 2035, support for indigenous peoples of

the North is included as a separate item. One of its important components is the “World of Taimyr” project competition, launched in 2020 after the events at CHPP-3. The project is aimed at creating conditions for the sustainable development of territories traditionally inhabited by indigenous peoples of the Taimyr Peninsula. Depending on the nominations (and there are four of them in the competition), the amount of grants ranges from 1.5 to 6.5 million rubles. The competition supports socially significant initiatives of non-profit organizations of indigenous peoples of Taimyr, family (tribal) communities, state and municipal institutions registered and operating on the territory of the Taimyr Peninsula. The geography of project implementation is the Taimyr Dolgano-Nenets municipal district of the Krasnoyarsk Territory.

In 2021, the winners of the competition were 6 projects of family (tribal) communities, 2 projects of non-profit organizations and 20 projects of municipal and budgetary institutions. The projects of the competition winners are aimed at solving a variety of issues: reviving national languages, carrying out environmental campaigns, developing infrastructure in the villages of the Taimyr Peninsula, preserving historical memory, etc. Of the four areas of the competition, the leading category was “Ideas of Taimyr” - revival of cultural heritage, support for gifted children, development of national sports. 17 winning projects were presented in this nomination for a total amount of 15.5 million rubles. The largest in terms of the amount requested was the project in the category “Opportunities of Taimyr” - “Ethnopark TYYAKHA”, prepared by the family (tribal) community of indigenous peoples “Ty yakha” (4.5 million rubles). The project team plans to complete the construction of an ethno-ecological settlement, where objects of everyday life and culture of the indigenous peoples of the Taimyr Peninsula will be presented.

Although the overall assessment of the significance of the competition in the development and promotion of initiatives of the indigenous population and popularization of the territory is high, there are obvious shortcomings in the conditions and procedure for its conduct. The stumbling block was the support of a large number of projects from budgetary organizations, and not from the tribal communities themselves. “The Norilsk Nickel grant program “World of Taimyr” appeared after the spill, but out of 45 communities, only five won grants, the rest of the institutions are again budgetary organizations that sit on salaries, on budget funding, but they again took away these grants, and the communities that were promised, for whom this grant program was created, they again gave nothing.”

One of the reasons for this imbalance is the low level of applications completed by communities due to a lack of experience and legal assistance. “Norilsk Nickel was offered to make grants for communities,

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they agreed. A huge number of budget institutions are participating in the competition. Of the 45 communities that applied for grants, only five or six won <...>. The main winners were public sector employees – 22 budgetary institutions. It is not right. It was necessary to at least do it in half, it was necessary to pull out some communities, help and advise, that's why you are experts. After this, there was serious negativity from the communities. I even felt ashamed that I won a grant because I have tourism, my grant was written by professionals, I attract experts because I work as a team player... I apply knowledge, adapt it so that it complies with social norms, grants, and the project is written experts. I'm putting their salary into this project. To win, you need professionals." The imbalance was also noted in the direction of the competition projects: the applications of the community members, due to the specifics of their activities, and also, let's not lie, because of the habit of receiving subsidies, had a "commercial" orientation. "I didn't apply to "World of Taimyr" because I think it's all socially oriented, I applied a few years ago and they also turned me down, they said that I had too much commercial stuff, I was asking for purely material values. I know that it's already clear who wins – the dances, the dancers, the artists." "Nobody gave me a grant to win in the same Norilsk Nickel that I praise. I didn't win - I pledged a million to purchase raw materials. We won dances, dances, and government institutions. Is this normal at all? I'm sitting without a single piece of clothing."

In turn, the organizers of the competition refer to the inactivity of local communities.

"Norilsk Nickel has initiated another grant competition, "The World of Taimyr." Communities benefited little because much depended on the quality of the application. In this case, we fundamentally do not divide "communities - not communities." In general, communities do not really work; in our country, maybe eight out of 100 communities are active."

However, the activity of communities is largely determined by its leaders, and their inertia is associated with a lack of experience and legal literacy, the ability to conduct business and organize work in market conditions.

The competition-grant policy is certainly promising, since competitions are held periodically and openly, which makes it possible to quickly respond on both sides. However, the main instrument of interaction with KMNT MMC Norilsk Nickel calls the quadripartite agreement on interaction and cooperation signed on September 25, 2020 in Moscow between the Russian public organization "Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation" (President G.P. Ledkov), regional public organization of indigenous peoples of the North of the Krasnoyarsk Territory (president A.I. Gayulsky), local public organization of

the Taimyr Dolgano-Nenets municipal district "Association of indigenous peoples of Taimyr of the Krasnoyarsk Territory" (chairman G.I. Dyukarev) and Public Joint Stock Society "Mining and Metallurgical Company "Norilsk Nickel"" (A.M. Grachev). The agreement includes a detailed "List of activities to assist the social and economic development of the Taimyr Dolgano-Nenets municipal district of the Krasnoyarsk Territory for 2020–2024." (in short - "KMNT Support Program") - these are 42 projects of various directions worth 2 billion rubles. Such an agreement with a specific action program for Taimyr is unprecedented. And although the program was proposed as a compensation measure in connection with the accident at CHPP-3 of JSC NTEC, part of the MMC Norilsk Nickel group, in its purpose and scale it clearly went beyond the scope of simple "patronage" (sponsorship).

Undoubtedly, Norilsk Nickel's new large-scale program is an attempt to build partnerships with the indigenous population of Taimyr, evidence of the company's ability to respond and provide assistance to the population in extreme conditions and in a short time frame. Control over its progress and implementation is entrusted to the department for interaction with indigenous peoples of Taimyr, which has been operating at Norilsk Nickel since January 2021, which works directly with local governments, public organizations and family (tribal) communities 14. A number of projects have already been implemented and have a good resonance, however, the attitude towards the program among the indigenous population is ambiguous: "I think as long as they are united and invincible as monopolists, partnerships and cooperation with the plant are impossible. Not only with Norilsk Nickel, but in general. They accepted the 2 billion with a bang and signed an agreement - solve your problems. In Canada, where I was, the villages were united into a corporation. The state pays them money and the oil workers. They have their own shares, their own roads, transport, aviation and river fleet."

Perhaps one of the recently discussed projects initiated by Norilsk Nickel is the construction from scratch of a comfortable village for residents of Tukhard. The Tukhard rotation camp, intended for the builders of the Messoyakha-Dudinka-Norilsk gas pipeline (Zapolyariegaz company, now Norilskgazprom), appeared on the left bank of the Yenisei, not far from the old Nenets settlement of Kisly Mys back in 1968. Due to its location (76 km from Dudinka) and supply, the village quickly grew, including due to the resettlement of Kislomysovites, and turned into a transshipment base for reindeer herders roaming the nearby tundra. The helipad remained a kind of border between the part of the settlement where the shift workers lived, called "Torch," and Tukhard itself (Nenets "fire-city" or "place where fire is made"), where houses for the

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indigenous population were built. The main problem of the village (today there are more than 80 houses in which about a thousand people live, an elementary school, a hospital, a post office, a cultural center, a library and an airfield for small aircraft) is non-compliance with environmental regulations and “safety standards”, since the settlement is located in sanitary protection zone of an industrial enterprise, but most importantly, the quality of housing does not correspond to living conditions in the Far North. As the Tukhard residents themselves say, it is impossible to live in houses due to design miscalculations, lack of full-fledged infrastructure and poor quality of construction (most of them are in disrepair). “Norilsk Nickel’s policy regarding indigenous peoples is actively changing. They allocated 170 million rubles to the same indigenous communities. Subsidizing reindeer herders, grant assistance is quite impressive - about 180 million rubles, of which about 150 million remains in Taimyr (half in Norilsk, half in the region). Norilsk Nickel financed the construction of 27 houses in Tukhard. True, the village is frozen because there is no connection to the electricity grid or to the boiler house. This is a political dispute between the regional authorities and Norilsk Nickel. The authorities are focused on Deripaska, on RusHydro, so they attach debt obligations to Norilsk Nickel. This is bad for us, because while these boyars are fighting, our new village is falling into disrepair.”

In 2021, the Norilsk Nickel company proposed to build New Tukhard with the necessary infrastructure and social facilities (school, kindergarten, hospital, shopping center, visitor center for tourists) one and a half kilometers from the current village. To discuss, accept and agree on the resettlement project, Norilsk Nickel launched the FPIC procedure. To carry it out, the Interregional Public Organization for the Protection of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples created an advisory council, which included international and Russian experts. Representatives of the indigenous population saw this procedure not so much as an act of “free, prior and informed consent”, but rather as a fact of compliance with federal law and the responsibility of residents of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.

“This is not FPIC, this is an eviction in accordance with the federal law on the sanitary zone. First, you need to agree on the shore about where the village will be, what buildings will be there, etc. sign a letter of intent.”

At a gathering of residents of Tukhard on November 21, 2021, a Council of representatives of the village was formed, including reindeer herders who do not have a permanent place of residence in the village (chaired by Igor Yamkin), designed to become a link between the residents of Tukhard and the company. At the meeting on March 4, 2022, the Program for the resettlement and development of the village of Tukhard until 2026 was discussed. Based on

the results of the meetings, an agreement “on the implementation of FPOS” was signed between the Council of Representatives of the residents of the village of Tukhard and the General Director of the industrial sites of Norilsktransgaz JSC in Tukhard, M. Shilykovsky. It was developed in accordance with international standards, contains the company’s obligations to the residents of the village, defines the conditions of resettlement, including options for compensation or the purchase of housing in other villages of Taimyr or the city of Dudinka, and provides for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the resettlement program at all stages of its implementation. A separate paragraph, albeit very abstractly, spells out the need to take into account the “ethnocultural characteristics of the territory.”

It is obvious that MMC Norilsk Nickel is placing a special emphasis on the construction of New Tukhard. Given the deplorable state of many Taimyr villages with their problems in solving basic life support issues (energy and water supply, heating, housing repairs, waste removal and disposal), with a complex expensive transport scheme and high prices for consumer goods, the lack of digital means of communication and information and unemployment, the construction of a model village would significantly enhance the image of Norilsk Nickel’s programs and projects.

Vice President for Federal and Regional Programs of the company A. Grachev comments: “This joint work and partnership will help us create a comfortable environment for people to live and develop.” According to the legislation of the Russian Federation, obtaining consent for resettlement from the local population in such cases is not required, but Norilsk Nickel emphasizes that the company acts in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2007), voluntarily recognizing international standards.

The indigenous population also has some hope for the successful implementation of the resettlement program: “And my opinion on FPIC in Tukhard is that Norilsk Nickel does not need another epic failure, so now everything will be done normally. According to Tukhard’s opinion, everyone living in the village is employees of the administration, post office, culture - what they are told, they will do, they do not have their own opinion. I remember that reindeer herders did come to the meeting, they spoiled the organizers’ mood a little.”

Since the 2000s Oil and gas companies are actively entering the Taimyr Peninsula. At the end of April 2021, the Vostok Oil project alone included 52 license areas, within the boundaries of which there are 13 open fields. The deployment of the project is associated with the construction of a huge oil terminal in Severnaya Bay on the eastern shore of the Yenisei

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Gulf based on the seaport of Dikson (40 km from the city of Dikson), intended for reloading onto oil tankers and transporting oil from fields along the Northern Sea Route to Russian ports, Europe and Asia-Pacific countries. In July 2022, drilling work began at the Payakhskoye field. Oil supplies from the field were planned for 2024. However, in the strategy for the development of the subsoil of Taimyr and the development of the Northern Sea Route, the voices of indigenous peoples are barely heard.

“Almost all of Taimyr has already been marked with licenses. The allocation of licenses is at the federal level. There is no parity. They decided there in Moscow, they marked a square with a pencil, and in it there were villages, wild deer, fish. They come here with all the documents, and in fact they are accepted by the administration. In this, our rights, as indigenous people, are infringed. Well, give us a rent of 1% of the dollar, that’s enough for us. We will build houses ourselves, we will set up young people to study. Now they do everything for us; if they come to build, it will be with their own builders. We would raise our own builders, we know how to build a house for us.”

“Conflicts happen. People are moving here from the east and moving from the west, the locals have nowhere to go... I flew by helicopter last year, it’s just terrible what’s wrong with the land, it’s all cut up for kilometers. Apparently, the administration is giving permission to work... As I understand it, in the future we will have Rosneft working, very big things will happen here, especially along the coast, an entire industrial center will grow here. The people started a race for land in order to shake the oil workers in this way.”

However, the authorities and public organizations of Taimyr are already interacting with oil companies.

“Oil companies are turning around. At the very least, they help somehow. Last year, the Lukoil company commissioned an educational building in Khatanga. Two and a half years ago, the same company helped open a boarding school for 150 children in the village of Nosok. The Surgutneftegas company assisted the rural settlement of Karaul in holding Reindeer Herder Day. Of course, there is help, but I would like a more serious relationship. Especially with the company that will, in essence, run the show – Rosneft.”

With the beginning of the development of oil and gas fields in Taimyr, the problems of using land resources - pastures, water areas, as well as landscape zones of settlements - become increasingly acute. Judging by the reviews, the policies of oil and gas companies and their methods of interaction with the indigenous population do not meet expectations:

“Reindeer herders are looking for lands where the food supply is better than where there is an oil rig or many kilometers of oil pipelines sticking out every kilometer...”

“Due to the occupation of pastures by oil workers and the rapid depletion of the remaining ones, almost all the left bank Noskov reindeer herders will move to the right bank of the Yenisei...”

“It’s easier to pay off with free condensate than to bring in gasoline, and without putting people in a humiliating position.”

Direct dialogue is not easy to build. Indicative in this regard were the public hearings held on May 4, 2021 in the rural settlement of Karaul. By decision of the gathering of village citizens, the unauthorized seizure of the territory by the Yamalдорstroy organization was condemned and suspended; Sibtract LLC (contractor of Vankorneft) was refused to allocate a land plot in the landscape zone of the settlement; distrust was expressed in local authorities in resolving issues regarding the “entry” of oil companies and their subcontractors into the territory of the settlement. The local population was not shy in assessing the actions of the companies and the administration:

“Good company - they came, landed 100 meters away, neither hello nor goodbye. Neither the administration was warned, nor were they met with the population.”

Cases like this demonstrate the ability of a small Arctic community to say “no” to the planned activities of oil companies. In general, the indigenous population of Taimyr is “not against the oil industry,” “not against development,” “not against the Presidential decrees,” but they are outraged that subsoil users behave “like owners.” They do not take into account the residents of the settlements, who, by and large, cannot influence the situation with land use, since the “tundra behind the village” is agricultural land, permission for their use is given by the municipal district, and “these lands together with The guards have long belonged to Rosneft.”

Local communities are especially outraged by the lack of awareness about projects for further development of the Taimyr territory. This applies to both zones near populated areas and distant Taimyr tundras.

“So far, only technical structures come to us to prepare the soil, build bases, sand quarries in order to lay pipelines in the future. Nobody informs us about this, we find information on websites: such and such a company is planning some kind of work in such and such a year. We do not receive information from the district or from the region that, dear guards, you will have such and such Ivanov-Petrov-Sidorov here and will specifically conduct such and such business. Maybe they think that we shouldn’t know about this, that it’s not our interests, but our interests, our lives!”

“Near Karaul and along the tundra there are several industrial points, technical bases, the oil workers themselves are not here yet, companies have come to the territory that are only preparing the soil, building quarries, but before that there were



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geologists. And now I've driven across the tundra, two quarries are ready. What are the plans of Rosneft and other companies? It is clear that they will have several points along the Yenisei, the so-called berths. They have already applied, won certain competitions, and construction has begun. All this is the authority of the district - the coastal part is beyond.

"Information comes, if a hearing needs to be held, then we are provided with a certain package of documents. Resolving land issues outside landscape zones is the responsibility of the district <...>. We used to read news in newspapers and there was radio. But now there are no radio points, the tundra people know absolutely nothing."

On August 10, 2021, public hearings were held in Dudinka on the construction of the Vankor-Suzun-Payakha pipeline, which will run along the banks of the Yenisei. Local residents and public opinion leaders in the region - deputies, bloggers, and leaders of indigenous communities - took part in the hearings. Just before the hearings, Rosneft reported on its support for indigenous peoples in the territories where it operates. They talked about the construction of houses and the development of the infrastructure of reindeer herders' villages, and about the development of the material and technical base of indigenous indigenous peoples' families, and about providing assistance to educational institutions where children of representatives of indigenous peoples of the North study, and about the implementation of the "Comprehensive program for training workers and specialists for "RN-Vankor". At the same time, the hearings began with criticism of Rosneft's projects. Particularly pressing issues were the restoration of the whitefish population in the Yenisei basin, the construction of crossings for reindeer herders through the pipeline, and the creation of a normal information infrastructure for the work of Rosneft contractors with the local population. Taimyr deputy Sergei Sizonenko voiced important problems in his speech:

"It's good that our reindeer herders have been heard and additional crossings for herds through the pipeline have been designed. But we need to once again take a balanced approach to all other issues of cooperation with Rosneft and its contractors <...>."

In addition, I return to my proposal to introduce a quota for hiring local people in Rosneft contractors. In villages, a lot of people can work as drivers, welders, cooks, and laborers. There should be a hotline, through which any tundra dweller or village resident can quickly report to Krasnoyarsk or the parent Rosneft about any observed violations - from environmental problems to drunken shift workers."

In an environment of intensive industrial development, the willingness to defend their interests and the active position of the indigenous population and its leaders are very important. The local population sees the prospect of developing dialogue in open cooperation and direct interaction with oil

companies and their contractors. In addition to compensation payments for environmental and economic damage and the provision of various types of social assistance, the local population has special aspirations for the revival of ethnic villages and the creation of jobs:

"We need to provide jobs, why bring our own people on shifts again, they will pump our mineral resources, but what about the residents of Taimyr?"

"Dudinka and the villages of Taimyr should be transformed with the presence of Norilsk Nickel and Rosneft. Residents of Taimyr should be assigned to all jobs. I understand that not all at once, but it should be so. And that's okay."

The trump card of KMNT can be knowledge of its territory, the presence of mechanisms for the development of large spaces, including the possibility of organizing land control (recording facts of destruction of the tundra cover, protocol of violations, etc.) and work on reclamation and nature conservation.

"I proposed that reindeer herders be involved in guarding the pipe along the route. After all, they tolerate harsh climates well and move mobile on their sleds. All they have to do is set a time for contact, give them a walkie-talkie and a salary. Then you can attract less people on an all-terrain vehicle to ride along the pipe and save costs, as well as on the salaries of temporary workers."

So, in the industrial development of Taimyr, priority goes to the Norilsk Nickel and Rosneft companies, which advocate, at least in their official statements, for the preservation of the traditional way of life and ethnic identity, for a constructive dialogue between subsoil users and the indigenous population. These companies have a significant package of projects to support indigenous minorities, but the local population sees a positive future not so much in grant-project activities, but in the development of large-scale joint programs and building partnerships based on simple principles (according to the survey):

"Don't forget that the indigenous population lives on their own land, take into account their opinion."

"Cooperate as equals, transparency in providing assistance, open dialogue in all areas."

"If you shit, use the earth and subsoil, you just need to clean up after yourself, do some landscaping - that's a simple rule."

"Bilateral agreements on the use of natural resources, payment of compensation for damage caused to the landscape and nature."

"There must be not only meetings, but also real action."

"Teaching companies how to work. Otherwise, the indigenous indigenous peoples will remain with their hand outstretched. And so the third generation of parasites is growing."

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And what is important, the leaders of the indigenous peoples of Taimyr, aware of the complexity of the situation, have an understanding that in establishing constructive partnerships between indigenous peoples and industrial companies, the state should become a mediator for the next five years, since coordinated decision-making and actions through associations and KMNT unions are complicated by serious contradictions, both between and within public organizations. The development strategy of Taimyr should focus on the formation of a platform for long-term interaction between subsoil users and indigenous northerners, based not on competition, but on cooperation and partnership, which will ensure the efficient use of the region's natural resources. The scenario of coexistence of an industrial cluster and ethnocultural communities, in which three main actors are involved - industrial companies, authorities (federal, regional, municipal) and indigenous peoples, should be determined through monitoring and carrying out ethnological examinations.

### Main part

For the region under study, the popularity of the topic of authentic culture and traditions is a fairly common occurrence. A special contribution to its development is made by political actors who constantly raise the issue of reviving and supporting local culture, history and traditional practices. At the same time, those who have the opportunity to speak on behalf of the state (politicians holding public positions, officials), i.e. those who associate themselves with the state apparatus and speak on its behalf, are able not only to speak out in a neo-traditionalist manner, but also act in this direction. We are talking about various projects aimed at maintaining tradition: support programs, organizing relevant events, etc. And since the beginning of the 2010s. the number of such projects has increased sharply. If we analyze the frequency of appearance of the concept "tradition" in regional legal acts in the post-Soviet period, we can see that in the 1990s and 2000s. these were just rare mentions, most often in documents establishing the procedure for using certain natural resources. Even then, the term "indigenous small peoples" appeared in the new legal system, as well as its connection with tradition. In different variations, it appears in laws, regulations and other official documents in both Buryatia and Yakutia, when it comes to special conditions for these population groups.

From this moment on, the definition of the concept of "tradition" became quite fundamental: the mode of use of certain resources, primarily raw materials, depended on it. This is how a procedure for selecting certain cultural elements that are defined as traditional begins to be created and consolidated. Over time, it became more and more bureaucratized, the

main role began to be played not by invited experts, but by officials and authorities as a whole: for example, if in 2000 in Buryatia, when selecting types of economic activities that receive the status of folk artistic crafts (traditions became their defining characteristic), the decision was made by the artistic expert council [Law of the Republic of Buryatia 2000], then in 2010 - by the Government of the Republic of Buryatia [Law of the Republic of Buryatia 2010]. In 2013, new amendments to the law appeared that made it a condition that such products be manufactured in a "place of traditional existence."

In the 2010s the number of references to traditions in official documents increased sharply. In addition, a practice has developed of mentioning traditions and traditions in the speeches of officials: these were policy statements, comments on the actions of authorities, welcoming speeches or speeches at various events, congratulations on holidays. And if in the 1990s. traditional economic activities were mentioned almost only in the context of indigenous peoples (and belonging to them was usually determined by a set of strict rules), then in the 2010s. the concept of "traditional activity" has increasingly begun to be used in relation to the Republic of Buryatia as a whole [Resolution 2011], which is typical for the entire region under study. Over time, the rhetoric changes from discussing the "national and cultural revival of small and endangered ethnic groups" [Decree 1999] and the creation of special conditions for them (from tax benefits to deferment of conscription for military service [Decree 1999]) to positioning a subject of the Russian Federation as a place where "they sacredly honor traditions" [Appeal 2020].

In the first case, traditions were a way to justify the benefits provided, and they themselves acted as an invaluable element of culture, which was not questioned, and therefore did not require justification. The emphasis was not on the traditions themselves, but on the threat of their disappearance, which legitimized state support. This discourse has not disappeared; it has been supplemented by statements about tradition as a value, a strong side of the region in a variety of fields of activity. Gradually, differences in the nuances of this process in Yakutia and Buryatia began to appear. In Yakutia, official discussions about traditions still mostly refer to the topic of indigenous, small peoples, Arctic zones, but most often they are discursively integrated into the idea of modernity, development and the future. When asked about traditions in modern Yakutia, its head, Aisen Nikolaev, replied: "At the same time, we perfectly understand how fragile and vulnerable the Arctic is, how important it is to respect its unique nature and the traditions of the indigenous population. In the Arctic zone of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), a large layer of cultural traditions of the indigenous peoples of the North has been preserved. In places of compact

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residence, the Evenks, Evens, Yukaghirs, Dolgans, Chukchis, Northern Yakuts, and the Russian old-timer population (Russian Ustinets and Pokhodchane) - the descendants of the first Russian explorers, Cossacks and polar explorers - conduct traditional economic activities. The strategy provides for the creation of favorable socio-economic conditions for the sustainable development of indigenous people of the Arctic zone, the preservation and development of traditional culture and the stimulation of employment and self-employment of the population in the agricultural sector, the creation of infrastructure (trade and logistics centers, the acquisition of transport for transportation), the modernization of production through creation of complexes for deep processing of reindeer herding and fishing products. We are counting on additional incentives to promote organic food products in the consumer market, including the acceleration of international certification, branding and export of local products.”

Buryatia is characterized by two other trends. Buryatia is presented as a special space where “traditional cultures” coexist. Their list is not constant, but since uniqueness has become the cornerstone, the “Buryat culture”, “culture of the Semeisk (Old Believers)”, and sometimes the Cossacks are most often mentioned. This does not mean that the authorities of the Republic of Buryatia ignore public organizations acting on behalf of various ethnic groups; however, the model of presentation of Buryatia through traditional unique cultures is dominated by Buryat and Semeisk. The head of Buryatia spoke about traditions like this: “The culture of the Buryat people is deep and diverse. Songs, dances, customs, amazing cuisine, everyone who has tried our cuisine comes back, looks for it in Moscow, in other places, but tries again and again to taste our national cuisine and, of course, first of all, our buuzas, which recently took over first place in Russia as a brand in a competition held by the Russian Ministry of Agriculture. In addition, the culture of the Old Believers is very interesting. Here the Semeyskie community <...> is one of the largest communities in Russia. Preserved traditions, songs, prayers, customs, way of life, costumes, jewelry - this is interesting, original, accessible and leaves vivid impressions for everyone who touches it.”

And here we should highlight the second trend in the dissemination of neo-tribalist discourse by the authorities of Buryatia - its close connection with the past. We are talking not just about the continuity of the historical past, but about its transfer to the present in its original form. The purpose of the state’s actions is declared to be “the preservation of values and the transfer of traditions from the older generation to the younger.” The number of texts emphasizing the importance of the past is growing every year. At the same time, unlike Yakutia, the emphasis is not on the need to integrate traditions into modernity, but, on the

contrary, on the revival of something that is declared authentic, and on changing modern life for the sake of traditionality. The question arises: why does this happen?

For several decades, the global trend in public administration has been its rethinking from a business point of view. The reforms that were carried out in various countries were justified by the changing economy, globalization, regional integration, trade liberalization, and the digital revolution. In any case, their outcome referred to the concept of a market for services that the state provides to the population. The idea of identifying state institutions and private companies also came to Russia. Gradually, the state itself became one of the main adherents of the idea of complying public administration with the requirements of the world market, using management techniques, increasing efficiency, and those who spoke on behalf of the state spoke about their activities in management terminology, which did not surprise anyone. An increase in subsidies from the federal budget has become equivalent to attracting new investors, and an increase in economic development indicators has become equivalent to an increase in sales, etc. Against this background, in the narratives broadcast by local authorities, the region itself becomes the main product sold, and, like a certain product in an advertising campaign, it reveals the rarest features needed by the end consumer.

Traditions easily fit into this model, becoming a unique characteristic of the proposed “product”; they are presented as synonymous with local culture and a component of ethnic identity. The region seems to be a special space where many peoples coexist with unique traditions that can be “consumed.” The “ethnicity industry,” as J. and J. Comaroff described it, is strongly supported by government authorities, which produce more and more relevant content year after year. This is especially evident in Buryatia, while in Yakutia, in texts distributed on behalf of the state, they often talk about the traditions of indigenous and small peoples. In Buryatia, the emphasis is on rootedness, which is why Buryat traditions have become the most popular topic. Ultimately, support from above for such discourse led to the general spread of these ideas throughout society. By the end of the 2010s, there was a sharp increase in sales of Buryat ethno products and ethno practices: clothing, dishes, shaman services, etc. However, the final buyer in the end was not tourists, but local residents. The canteens were replaced by poznye (or buuznye), and semi-finished products of Buryat cuisine became an indispensable part of the assortment of grocery stores.

Constantly emphasizing the importance of tradition turns to the past. The very concept of traditions becomes polysemantic, and therefore can justify a combination of ideas between which, it would seem, there is no connection. Social assistance programs are described through traditions and local

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ethnic culture [Decree 2009], and in the era of a pandemic, under the head of the republic, a council on traditional medicine is created, almost entirely consisting not of doctors or scientists, but of officials [Decree 2021]. At the same time, the discussion of such actions still takes place in market categories, i.e., as a supply in response to demand: “Deputy Minister of Health of Russia Oleg Salagai, during a working visit to Buryatia <...> said that the republic sets the tone for the development of traditional medicine in Russia, therefore the ministry is ready to support the initiatives of Buryatia to develop this area. According to Oleg Salagai, the republic’s achievements in the field of traditional medicine are doomed to success. According to the press service of the government of Buryatia, the use of traditional medicine methods is a competitive advantage of the republic; there are prospects for developing the export of such services in the region. According to the head of Buryatia, Alexey Tsydenov, the introduction of methods of traditional folk medicine will improve the quality of health of citizens and provide services to residents of other regions of Russia and other countries.”

Addressing the topic of tradition fits into the current agenda, which can be used to legitimize the new appointment (the interim head answers the question of what traditional sport he is involved in), and to justify the allocation of the budget (for the revival of the original traditional animal husbandry [Resolution 2013]), both for the presentation of the region (the arrival of the delegation of the Republic of Buryatia to the Moscow Kremlin in traditional national clothes), and to justify the effectiveness of government initiatives (explaining the success of the Year of the Volunteer through the provision of mutual assistance, which is part of local traditions [Message 2019]). As a result, no matter how much the historicity and authenticity of everything traditional is emphasized, it becomes a response to modernity; it is inscribed in modernity, in all the processes that characterize it. Even when presenting an ethnic product for sale, the creators offer something average and understandable to everyone, making it mass. Traditions are an absolutely modern element of the cultural industry. They are described as something constant and unique, but each time they are created anew with the characteristics that are currently in demand.

At the same time, the state becomes one of the main initiators of this process. The ethnographic museum in the city of Ulan-Ude has become one of the most popular; The gates of the family estate located here are a recognizable brand, just like the gates of the Ivolginsky datsan. Today, the carefully calculated effectiveness of the most typical products has a clear superiority. At the same time, tradition allows us to rely on mass marketing while simultaneously justifying the permanence of these products.

The difference in the popularity of neo-traditionalist discourse in official publications in Yakutia and Buryatia is obvious, but the nature of the publications is quite similar in content and presents local conditions as a unique brand. At the same time, the Yakut authorities more often talk about the mining industry and related topics: the wealth of the region, improving infrastructure, investments, local characteristics. As for the situation in Buryatia, large industrial enterprises created in Soviet times went bankrupt one after another. Against this background, the authorities of Buryatia prefer to discuss the problems of agriculture, small business and tourism, and the topic of traditions is more appropriate here than discussions about mining.

In order to use the concept of traditions in an ethnic context, it is necessary to introduce boundary markers and corresponding cultural and political “loci”. We are talking about what separates these ethnic communities from all others and what is defined as tradition for them. Those who represent the state filter and select certain elements of the culture they represent as central and important definitions of “tradition”; one of them was the “tribal” structure of society. In Buryatia, in official discourse, it is much more popular than in Yakutia. The division into clans and tribes is here described as a natural, and therefore more authentic and moral form of social organization compared to “modern”, less “spiritual” structures. References to clans and tribes are embedded in the general neo-traditionalist discourse and constantly appear in images disseminated by authorities. The various “unique” themed events organized by or with the support of local authorities actually represent a typical situation where existing common traditional practices - folk chants, physical competitions, shooting - were modernized, ritualized and institutionalized in such a way as to serve new national objectives. Sports competitions, where teams are “representatives of tribes/clans”, theatrical festivals, where references to tribalism make it possible to promote neo-traditionalist discourse - all this provides an opportunity to present an ethnic product. “On this day, the participants in the theatrical performance showed the threads connecting the past and the present, about how important it is to know your tribal composition. Having shown the legend of the past, we returned to the present, where the 5th games of 108 suburgans are taking place and their opening was given to 11 Khorin clans, the elders of the clans, real athletes. Traditionally, 11 Khorin clans greeted those gathered with sky-blue khadaks, and the elders of the Khorin clans performed the “Serjem” ritual. The wrestlers performed the Eagle dance, which was greeted with delight by the audience, the horsemen’s dance was performed by the dance group “Udy”, and the archers performed a ritual goroo. The audience was amazed by the richness of the colorful costumes



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and the performance of the characters in the performance”.

Authorities do not simply disseminate neo-tribalist discourse, they explain it, since interaction with the external environment becomes important. In order for the final recipient of a message to understand it, it is necessary that they belong to the same culture, and culture is shared meanings. Language acts as a representational system that is central to processes of meaning creation. The state, through its official channels of information dissemination, publicly presents the very concept of neo-tribalism, explaining what a clan or tribe is, what place these concepts occupy in local culture, what relation they have to certain ethnicities, and most importantly, to the state itself. And now the official portals of government authorities publish interpretations of tribal symbols on the coats of arms of municipalities [Coat of Arms 2017], explain how to conduct tribal rites, and write local history in a neo-tribalist vein.

The birth and spread of neo-tribalist meanings are associated with various moments and practices in the “circulation of culture” - in the construction of identity and the designation of differences, in their production and consumption, as well as in the regulation of social behavior. Language is the most important medium through which meaning is disseminated. The surge of interest in neotribalism in society, which appeared against the backdrop of the creation and representation by the authorities of neotribalist discourse, in addition to the obvious consequences in the form of the promotion of national languages, “traditional” religions, appeal to the past, and the commodification of national culture, also led to the spread of neotribalist discourse about politics in the mass media. Now the authorities themselves began to be understood through the concept of tribal groups and the struggle between them. Journalists publish articles with detailed neo-tribalist descriptions of the political situation in the region; they theorize and derive their models of tribal identity of politicians, and explain through this the distribution of resources - from appointment to public office to the allocation of budget funds. These models are transformed under the influence of a specific political situation, so belonging to a tribe/clan/clan, i.e., to some group presented in such language, can be understood in both a positive and negative way. The authorities, for their part, tend to ignore these publications, but continue to participate in the creation and representation of neo-tribalist meanings, in constructing identities with their help, include them in everyday rituals and practices of everyday life, and thus give them value and significance. When the speaker of the People's Khural attends the local New Year's celebration for eleven Buryat clans and participates in a “traditional” competition, it becomes a public act charged with neo-

tribalist meaning; all participants in this event use the same language codes and speak the same language.

The use of neo-tribalist language paradoxically helps to achieve greater diversity in the interpretation of the political situation. As such, there is no monopoly on tradition, but there are limits to the range of its interpretation and instrumentalization, which means this also applies to neotribalism. The most important role in this is played by the hierarchy of power, that is, which actors can determine what is considered traditional. The active use of neo-tribalist discourse by the authorities has real consequences when, through modern mass media, a model of understanding politics and the distribution of power through revived communal relations is increasingly spreading and taking root. All this is actually a reaction to modern circumstances, despite the fact that all the actors creating and publicly presenting neo-tribalist discourse emphasize its traditionality. Advances in communications and the globalization of economic life are making differences between people increasingly important and divisive, prompting them to seek a separate space for their own “tribe.” This is not a unique feature of local relationships; the modern world as a whole is characterized by a situation where politics is determined not so much by economic or ideological problems as by issues of identity. Relationships remain modern, but are associated with the past, which is constructed in categories that meet current needs.

The language of neo-tribalism is itself used to construct ethnic boundaries, since in the region under study the concepts of tribalism and tradition in general are closely related to ideas of rootedness. This allows us to declare the degree of legitimacy of politicians' claims to power, to produce ordered descriptions of the political using understandable (in the modern situation) categories. But at the same time, the problem of identity appears as part of cultural circulation. Talking about politics in neo-tribalist terms excludes those to whom they do not apply. This was clearly manifested in Buryatia: the rapid spread of the understanding of the political process as a struggle between tribal groups led to the spread of the concepts of “Buryat clans”, “semeysky clan”, but, judging by the analyzed empirical material, the stable and increasingly popular concept of “Russian clans” never appeared. This allows us to exclude the bulk of the region's population from the discussion, but in this situation we are talking only about a neo-tribalist understanding of politics, which is not the only or dominant way of describing it.

### Conclusion

In modern conditions, using the concept of clan to describe politics is a common practice. All over the world, including in Russia, publications about political clans constantly appear. Most often we are talking about closed shadow groups of businessmen,

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politicians, bureaucrats, law enforcement officials, and sometimes representatives of organized crime, united by common business interests and informal relationships. But there is another group of publications where a clan is a group that is held together by norms and practices traditional for a given culture. Tribalist connotations in this situation make it possible to emphasize certain characteristics of groups described as clans: their closedness, hierarchy, their position in the external environment, etc. In any case, "clanism" is most often contrasted with modern progressive relations and political order. In modern Russia, such a phenomenon as a conscious appeal to the past is widespread, and it includes both ideas, idealization, nostalgia, and practical activities aimed at reviving the traditions of former times.

It should be emphasized that the situation is of greater interest when the language of neo-tribalism is tied to ethnicity and autochthony. Contrasting the local ("indigenous") with everyone else, attributing to them a traditional way of life that is natural for them in the political sphere, allows us to interpret the current political situation in the interests of specific actors. In two republics of the Russian Far East, Yakutia and Buryatia, where there is a concept of a titular nation, an indigenous but not small people, more and more such texts are being produced. The generally accepted status of the indigenous people is important because tribalism is declared one of the markers of regional identity - "traditional culture". And the need to discuss "Buryat politics" or "Yakut politics" opens up the possibility of using neo-tribalist discourse, since tribal identity is presented as an element of the corresponding national culture.

Despite all the similarities in the processes of formation of neo-tribalist discourse on politics in Buryatia and Yakutia, the speed and scale of their spread are different. These differences can serve as a quasi-experiment to evaluate the role of government

in this process. In both cases, officials seek to use the concept of traditional culture as a competitive advantage for the region. They constantly reproduce the discourse about traditions, emphasizing their importance, positive impact and the need for implementation in modern life, which allows increasing the effectiveness of government: planning and implementing projects, attracting funds or promising to attract them, taking on obligations regarding economic growth and improving living standards.

In Buryatia, this process is most obvious, while in Yakutia, the raw materials sector of the economy is most often discussed as a competitive advantage. In Buryatia, both agriculture and medicine are associated with traditions, not to mention tourism or culture. Traditions have become a way of positioning the republic in the modern world: identifying its place in the economy (regional, national and global), in relations with the federal center, and forming an idea about it among the residents of the republic. The spread of neo-traditionalist, and with it neo-tribalist, discourse has led to the fact that the authorities themselves have become the object of its description. As a result, this process manifested itself more clearly in Buryatia. In the media space of the republic, many texts have appeared that interpret what is happening in politics in tribal categories. And although local authorities choose to ignore them, they nevertheless still produce and disseminate neo-traditionalist discourse, in fact encouraging an understanding of politics in terms of neo-tribalism. Of course, the representation of neotribalism in each case is a conscious action of specific actors pursuing their own goals, including political ones. Discourses about clans, tribes and clans in politics ultimately have real consequences, since they create an appropriate norm, but the question of how viable it will be remains open.

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Article



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## ON THE FEATURES OF RUSSIA'S NEW DEFENSE STRATEGY

**Abstract:** In the article, the authors explored the origins of this phenomenon, which is usually sought in local specifics, in cultural practices described by anthropologists and ethnographers. This study is an attempt to demonstrate that the language of neotribalism is modern, it appeared in response to current demands, and the state plays one of the main roles in its formation and maintenance. A study of the new development policy of the Far East was conducted according to the criteria of compliance with the model of a developing state (developmental state) and an explanation of the identified deviations was proposed. It is shown that the transformation of goals in Far Eastern policy, the expansion of its spatial and content coverage, as well as the growth of the simulation component, are largely caused by the multitasking and structural weakness of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and the Arctic, its struggle to maintain positions among other ministries and departments. The research is based on open sources, archival documents and a series of anonymous semi-structured interviews with representatives of government bodies, municipalities, employees of development institutions and resident entrepreneurs of territories of rapid socio-economic development.

**Key words:** regional development, state, Far East, priority development territories, Far Eastern politics, bureaucracy, development institutions.

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### Introduction

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Far Eastern policy, at least at the level of declarations and formal structures, is taking on an



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innovative character; it is designed to transform the style and content of public administration and create an effective bureaucracy aimed at economic results. The Far East is a field of experimentation with the prospect of spreading successful practices throughout the country. In political terms, Far Eastern politics is acquiring the features of a mass movement (about the similarity of the leader of a development state with the leader of a mass movement. It is personalized, almost a personal project of the president, who in his Address to the Federal Assembly in 2013 declared the rise of the eastern territories a national priority for the entire 21st century. This thesis, along with a photograph of V.V. Putin, is posted on the main page of the website of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Development of the Far East and Arctic. In June 2020, the President signed a special decree on the development of the region. The recently approved development program, the only one of all regional programs, has "national" status and was formed with the participation of residents of the Far East. The preamble of this document notes that 230 thousand Russian citizens took part in its formation. Official news content related to the Far East is filled with information about completed and promising projects opening in region opportunities.

Meanwhile, objective data show a contradictory picture. Despite the increase in the number of residents of the territories of advanced socio-economic development (hereinafter referred to as ASEZ/ASED) and the Free Port of Vladivostok (hereinafter referred to as FPV), the economic dynamics here differ slightly from the all-Russian one, and often look even worse. In terms of the share of investments in the country's total, the Far East occupies its usual penultimate place, ahead only of the North Caucasus, and has still not reached the level of 2012, when large-scale construction projects for the APEC summit were completed in the region. The region's share of foreign direct investment in the country as a whole was growing, but this was happening against the backdrop of a dramatic drop in their overall flow to Russia. The growth of exports from the Far East (one of the main priorities of the new policy), according to the Ministry of Eastern Development, amounted to \$11.3 billion in the first half of 2020 (7% of the country's exports). However, simple calculations leave no reason for pride here either: at the end of 2012, exports of goods from the Far East amounted to almost \$27 billion. From 2002 to 2012, this figure doubled every five years.

The experience of special regional development structures is contradictory not only in Russia, but also in the world. Many of them would fit the assessment given by the Brazilian Agency for the Development of the North-East: "It is not that the actions [...] were useless. <...> The crisis would have been even more serious without him." It is hardly a coincidence that our interlocutor, who is involved in the problems of

the Far East, assesses the effectiveness of the management of this region in the same way:

"Politics is still being pursued, a new policy. If she hadn't been there, it would have been even worse."

Without the Ministry of Eastern Development, as well as the corporations and agencies subordinate to it, it would probably have been worse, but they still have not formed into a system that ensures accelerated growth. Why? This is the main question this article aims to answer.

The analysis of the problem formulated above will be carried out through the sequential solution of three problems, namely:

first, we will determine the degree to which Far Eastern policy meets the criteria of a developing state and identify observed deviations from them;

secondly, we reconstruct the logic of transformation of goals and increasing imitation of results in Far Eastern policy;

thirdly, to complete the topic and relying on the analysis, let's move from the conceptual to the practical side of the problem, answering the question of why bureaucratic structures aimed at the accelerated development of the Far East cannot become effective?

Albert Einstein famously said that "the release of nuclear energy changed everything except the way we think." Indeed, major changes, sharp turns, seem to change literally everything around, but people's train of thought often remains the same. February 24, 2022 obviously and powerfully changed our world, but the thinking about where we found ourselves and what to do remained much the same as it was three months or six months ago. This delay in thought must be eliminated as soon as possible. From this point of view, Fyodor Lukyanov's proposal to begin discussing where and how Russia should move in the new conditions is absolutely timely.

The military operation in Ukraine was not caused by Russia's desire to break the world order. It pursued a much more limited goal: to solve by force a number of geostrategic, geopolitical, and humanitarian problems in Ukraine and, more broadly, in the European direction as a whole. Politically, Russia fell out of the West's orbit back in the mid-2000s; The economic integration project of "Greater Europe" was finally buried in the mid-2010s, since then the situation has continued to deteriorate. In February 2022, a qualitative shift occurred: the growing confrontation with the West took the form of a proxy war between Russia and the United States and NATO on the territory of Ukraine.

This war fits into the complex process of changing the world order, which is based on a shift in the center of economic activity and economic power from the Euro-Atlantic region to the Indo-Pacific. Since the global financial crisis of 2008, the West has been gradually losing ground to the Asian giants -

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China and India. Russia's military actions in this context – starting with the war in the Caucasus in 2008 and especially since the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 – played the role of a trigger setting geopolitical shifts. The military operation of 2022 has become a major milestone. The point of no return in Russia's relations with America and Europe has been passed. And this affects the global situation in many ways.

The current break between Russia and the West is much deeper than the denial of the new political thinking of Mikhail Gorbachev or the “shaking of the ashes” of the communist period of Russian history. In fact, we are talking about abandoning part of the legacy of Peter the Great - a three-hundred-year tradition of positioning Russia not only as a great European power, an integral part of the balance of power on the continent, but also an integral part of pan-European civilization. The turnaround is fundamental: Russia has long wanted to “fit in” with Europe, where not everyone was happy about it. Under Gorbachev, it gave up a lot for the mere possibility of this; under Boris Yeltsin, it began to rebuild in a Western European manner, and under the “early” Vladimir Putin, it solemnly proclaimed the “European choice”, put forward the project of “Greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok” based on merging the economies of the EU and Russian Federation and even knocked on the doors of NATO.

It didn't work out. A common house in Europe has already been built and inhabited, under the general patronage of the United States, but without Russia. This is not a mistake on one side or another. The collective West could not include such a large figure into its community without shaking the foundations of its structure; expanding the foundation would mean the US abandoning its sole dominance. Russia, for its part, could not obey the rules developed without its participation and which promised it, in essence, a subordinate position in the pan-European house. Independence and sovereignty are tightly woven into the DNA of Russian statehood, into the consciousness of the people and their ruling layer.

Strictly speaking, the house built is, in fact, not pan-European, but common Western. The fact that there was no place for Russia in it is not surprising. The logical consequence of the divergence, parting, and then complete break with the West that stretched over a decade and a half is the need for Russia to perceive itself not only as a political unit separate from the political unit united on the Western platform of Europe, but also as an independent civilization, primarily in relation to Europe.

This conclusion is of fundamental importance. Modern Russia is no longer an empire, but it is also not a nation-state in the European sense of the word. Officially, our country defines itself as a multinational state. It would be more accurate, however, to call Russia a civilization-power. This civilization has largely European roots, but these roots are Orthodox

Christianity, adopted from Byzantium, along with political culture and openness to Asia; Slavic origin, language and writing belong to the European East. Before our eyes, this most important component of historical Europe - with the exception of Russia, Belarus, Donbass and still partly Serbia - has been completely absorbed by the European West, which has actually replaced the recently two-part Europe. Russia, naturally, is outside of this new formation.

But Russia is not Europe No. 2, an alternative to the European Union. In terms of civilization, it is greater than Europe. Stretching to the Pacific Ocean and occupying the entire north of the Eurasian continent, it included numerous ethnic groups that were culturally and religiously different from Europe and historically weakly connected with Europe. At the same time, these ethnic groups have been integrated into a single Russian state for centuries. This unified state differed in many ways from the classical European empires - whether overseas or continental - and is best described by the word “power”.

The concept of power differs not only from the concept of empire, but also from the term “great power” as used in the literature on international relations. A power is not a hierarchy of the metropolis and colonies and not a force that surpasses the potential of rivals, but, above all, the ability to hold heterogeneous elements in organic unity and equality. This retention is possible thanks to the powerful state principle, which plays the role of a rigid rod and a flexible frame. It is no coincidence that during the upheavals of the beginning and end of the twentieth century, practically the entire territory of the modern Russian Federation remained under the rule of Russian governments and was not separated from Russia. In this regard, it is fair to conclude that a single power of such size and with such a degree of internal diversity as Russia is at the same time a separate civilization.

The core of the Russian civilization-power is the Russian people, with their language, culture and religion, but the ethnic aspect within the framework of a single civilization is not decisive. On the contrary, the Russian community is open, freely and equally accepting not only individual representatives of other ethnic groups, but also these entire ethnic groups themselves. Tatars, Yakuts, Chechens, and numerous ethnic groups of Dagestan can and are Russian. Orthodoxy is the religion of the majority, but the tradition of religious tolerance allows for the peaceful coexistence and interaction of the main indigenous faiths: Orthodoxy, Islam, Buddhism and Judaism. A single state ensures peace, prosperity and development over a vast territory from the Baltic to the Sea of Japan and from the Arctic to the Caspian. It is the common power that is the most important value for this complex civilization.

The state, however, is itself based on a system of values, without which it collapses. The Russian

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Empire collapsed not so much under the influence of the hardships of the World War, but because of the loss of faith and trust in the supreme power. The Soviet Union died not so much as a result of a shortage of goods in stores, but because of the falsity of the official ideology, which was increasingly at odds with real life.

Legitimacy for the Russian people is not formal legality, but justice. When these two principles collide, justice is placed higher in the Russian consciousness. This is the most important lesson for the modern Russian Federation. The credit of trust given to the authorities by the people is not unlimited.

The sustainability of our current state requires its “re-issue” on the principles of freedom and responsibility, social solidarity, administrative competence, practical participation in governance, including the adoption of major decisions.

In this regard, the people of modern Russia will have to rethink themselves and their country, understand the foundations of self-awareness and worldview, and decide where the Russian path should lead. Only under this condition will it be possible to determine policy goals, as well as strategies and methods for achieving them. The totality of these goals, strategies and methods can be united by the concept of the Russian idea. In short, the Russian idea can be described as Russian truth - the basis of a worldview and a set of fundamental principles, the central support of which is the imperative of justice.

Along with justice, the core of the Russian idea is the principle of equality. Russians do not imagine themselves as the chosen people; they do not have the idea of themselves as an exceptional phenomenon. Russians are not special, they keep themselves on the same level as representatives of other nations, not higher, but not lower. The Russian colonial experience was fundamentally different from that of Western Europeans. In the Russian Empire, Russians in their position did not stand above “foreigners,” and in the Soviet Union, national republics enjoyed various privileges and economic preferences, which the RSFSR was deprived of. At the same time, Russians are not ready to accept someone else's leadership. There is no place for racism in Russian culture, and anti-Semitism - state and everyday - was considered a shameful, condemned phenomenon. Russian culture itself is open to the outside world, its influences, which are assimilated in Russian creative processing.

Thus, justice, equality, openness and reciprocity - while maintaining internal integrity - make the Russian idea a reliable spiritual guideline in developing a foreign policy strategy, especially during a period of change in the world order. The Russian idea opens up the broadest opportunities for mutual understanding, respectful dialogue and reasonable agreements with mutual goodwill. It can be perceived by other peoples and civilizations as the idea of

internal justice, external sovereignty and peaceful, good-neighborly coexistence.

Here it must be emphasized that the Russian idea is intended specifically for Russian civilization, and not as an export product for the rest of the world. An attempt to formulate one's idea in a universalist key, as Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev's associates did when developing new political thinking, is initially hopeless and therefore meaningless. The global world, in which the spread of the Western model has reached insurmountable limits, is increasingly diverging into civilizational platforms, where each civilization has its own idea. The Russian idea will influence the rest of the world by the very fact of its implementation in Russian society and in the politics of the Russian state.

The Russian idea does not need to be invented, it needs to be rethought for the modern stage of development. German communism and then American neoliberalism obscured for many generations of Russian people the heritage of Russian philosophers, writers, historians - from Pushkin and Chaadaev to Slavophiles and Westerners to religious philosophers and Eurasians. Nowadays, this legacy of the past, largely unexplored by us, is especially in demand so that our thoughts about the present and future gain depth. This is not about returning in thoughts and actions to a hundred or two hundred years ago, but about finding a reliable point of support in our movement forward.

No less important is the experience of practical politics of the 20th and early 21st centuries, cleared of ideology and political preferences. Rejection of communist ideology and condemnation of crimes of the Soviet period should not interfere with the possible use of certain social practices of the twentieth century. A similar approach applies to historically closer eras. It must be borne in mind that with the consistent denial of each of the main historical forms of the Russian state by its subsequent form (the Russian Federation - the Soviet Union, the USSR - the Russian Empire, the Europeanized empire of Peter the Great - the Russian Empire, and so on), the key elements of the Russian idea were inherited within the framework of this historical continuum. The “reissue” of the current form of Russian statehood will probably not be an exception.

The reissue of the Russian Federation will require, among other things, a serious and objective audit of the country's foreign policy, taking into account the results of the special operation in Ukraine and in the context of the hybrid war with the United States and Europe. The hot phase of confrontation in Ukraine will end sooner or later, but there is no point in waiting for peace with the West: if Russia holds out - which there is no doubt about - then concrete conditions for such peace will not appear soon. It will also require a critical analysis and understanding of the experience of Russian foreign policy, starting at least from the reign of Gorbachev, and at most,

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covering the imperial period. An important goal of such an analysis is to provide material for developing the theoretical foundations of Russian foreign policy.

During the last century, these foundations were based either on the rather narrow basis of proletarian internationalism as the main form of class struggle in the international arena, or - more recently - on borrowed postulates of various Western theories. Meanwhile, each political theory is created taking into account the values and interests of a particular state or group of states, and other people's theories, even reinterpreted ones, are not enough. A Russian theory of international relations is needed, based on the interests and experience of our country and meeting its needs.

The task of theory is to provide meaningfulness to practice and increase its effectiveness. In the conditions of Russia's unequal confrontation with the united West, foreign policy is obliged to ensure the state's stability in relation to opponents and partners, maintain balance against the backdrop of shocks and promote - even in unfavorable conditions - the development of the country. Exactly how to ensure this should be the subject of quite a wide discussion.

Russian civilization is one of the important components of world civilization. It cannot and should not avoid the world's systemic problems. At the same time, based on the Russian idea as the most important basis of the country's policy, including foreign policy, the establishment of one or another form of world order should not be the main foreign policy goal of Russia, as was declared during the Soviet era. This element, central to Soviet strategy - be it in the Leninist, Stalinist, Khrushchev-Brezhnev or Gorbachev variants - must be abandoned. The world order is created - and changed - as a result of the interaction of many participants in the system, including those more powerful than Russia.

The idea of a civilizing power also differs significantly from the idea of an empire. Economic integration and comprehensive cooperation with a number of former Soviet republics are completely justified, but an attempt to restore a full-fledged center of power within the former Soviet space under Russian auspices is unlikely to be successful, since it is actively opposed by the forces of nationalism in the new states, also supported from outside. The main thing is that Russia does not need increments in order to act as a great power.

The very concept of a great power needs to be rethought. The fact that modern Russia is not a superpower has been officially recognized since the collapse of the USSR. In the modern world, however, a great power is not one that forces others to act according to its will, but exactly the opposite - it does not allow anyone to dictate their will to itself and is able, if necessary, to successfully resist the external pressure of superior power. Russia has this ability, and it also has the necessary resources to implement an

independent path of development and an independent foreign policy course. This is what makes Russia a modern great power.

The break with the West inevitably led Russia to difficult trials, but it, having finally freed it from the complexes of a follower and imitator, opened up the opportunity for the country to redefine its place, role and goals in the world. It is clear that under conditions of massive Western pressure, the priority has become maintaining sustainability by mobilizing resources and releasing the creative energy of citizens. The focus on pressing issues, however, should not distract from the development of fundamental issues that now need to be addressed in a new way.

Geographically, Russia is not part of Europe or Asia. On the contrary, the fact that the eastern part of geographical Europe and the northern part of Asia are part of Russia makes our country an important factor for its immediate and more distant neighbors. At the current stage of Russian history, the balance between the two main directions of the country's foreign policy - Western and Eastern - has obviously and unequivocally shifted in favor of the latter. This situation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

To maintain balance in the conditions of a hybrid war with the West, Russia in the foreseeable future will have to rely more than ever on the countries of the East - primarily China, but also India and, if possible, other countries in Asia and the Near and Middle East. These countries - to varying degrees - are becoming Moscow's most important foreign policy and foreign economic resource in the international arena. In order to use this resource to compensate for the breakdown in ties with the West and develop the country, Russia must seriously turn its face to non-Western countries not only in Asia, but also in Africa and Latin America, strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones.

The recent mass expulsions of Russian diplomats from European and American countries indicate the path to follow.

The end of normal relations with Western countries means a sharp reduction in the need for effort - with the exception of the military and intelligence services - and for related specialists. Instead, a significant increase in expertise and practical competencies is required in neighboring countries - the Transcaucasus, Kazakhstan and Central Asia, Turkey, Iran, the Arab East, South and Southeast Asia - not to mention the world giants China and India. Non-Western organizations and forums of the EAEU and CSTO, SCO, RIC and BRICS should become priority centers of multilateral diplomacy for Russia.

Russia's role in the new international context could consist not only in defending sovereignty in confrontation with the united forces of the West, but mainly in building new models of relations within the



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non-West. A good basis for this already exists - strategic partnerships with global powers China and India, as well as with other important players such as Vietnam. There is a history of difficult, but generally positive relations with regional powers Turkey and Iran. There is experience in interaction with the ASEAN regional organization. A significant amount of cooperation has been created with countries in Africa and Latin America. These recently minor areas should now come to the fore.

Russia, of course, needs to use every opportunity to compensate for the damage caused by sanctions, but its role in the non-Western world should not be narrowly utilitarian, focused on finding ways to circumvent sanctions. It is more important to develop economic, financial, scientific, technical, and cultural cooperation - given that leading non-Western countries are historically on the rise, and also that, in cultural and psychological terms, non-Western societies are in many respects closer to Russian people and national culture than most modern societies Europe and North America.

Cooperation with non-Western countries is of great importance for the formation of joint positions and broad public opinion on a large number of global issues: security, economics, trade, finance, ecology, information, culture and so on. In many of these areas, Russia can make a significant contribution to the overall work. Russia's active and constructive role can make the country one of the world's intellectual and political leaders.

Russia's behavior in the international arena should, to the maximum extent possible, correspond to Russian traditions and values, and not represent a semblance of the policies of European powers in the past, the EU or the United States in the present. Russia does not seek world domination or exploitation of other countries and peoples, does not impose its system of values on anyone, does not interfere in the internal affairs of other states, but at the same time resolutely defends its sovereignty, national interests, is faithful to its international obligations and strives for the harmonious coexistence of various states and peoples, cultures and civilizations within the global community.

In these notes about the need to put foreign policy thinking in order, they spoke, in essence, of only one aspect - the formation of the ideological and intellectual basis of Russian foreign policy. There are many other sides to this problem. We need to learn to adequately look at the rapidly changing world and understand its development trends, including in non-traditional areas of information, technology, climate, and so on for international affairs; carefully study the strategy and tactics of the enemy, as well as partners and neutral states; learn to fight better in the information field, including on your own territory. But with all this, we need to start from the basics: who we are, where we are, what we stand for - and why.

### Main part

Approved on March 31, 2023, the Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) became the sixth in the Russian Federation and the fifth since the beginning of the century. No requirements, including and the validity period in relation to the KVP in Russia is not provided, but in accordance with the Federal Law "On Strategic Planning in the Russian Federation" there is a rule on updating the key strategic document - the National Security Strategy - every six years. The KVP is based on it and develops its foreign policy provisions. The current version of the National Security Strategy was approved at the beginning of July 2021, after which the topic of developing a new KVP was updated.

The legal basis for the CVP is traditionally the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which, due to recent amendments affecting, among other things, certain principles of foreign policy, has created additional prerequisites for updating the Concept. In particular, the approved CVP literally repeats the fundamentally significant constitutional norm of Article 79: decisions of interstate bodies adopted on the basis of international treaties in their interpretation, contrary to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, are not subject to execution in Russia. In addition, the State Council is included among the participants in the formation and implementation of the country's foreign policy as a new constitutional body with powers in the foreign policy sphere.

Immediately after the publication of the KVP, attention was drawn to the norm about the special position of Russia as a unique state-civilization. To a certain extent, this concept stems from a key constitutional innovation: "The Russian Federation, united by a thousand-year history, preserving the memory of our ancestors who passed on to us the ideals and faith in God, as well as the continuity in the development of the Russian state, recognizes the historically established state unity." The mentioned article of the Concept, which defines Russia's role in the world, contains another atypical characteristic of the country as a Euro-Pacific power. On the one hand, this expands the established view of the Euro-Asian or Eurasian nature of the Russian state, on the other, it formulates a new dimension of the Euro-Pacific region with other prospects for building communications and inevitable opposition to the Western idea of the Indo-Pacific space.

The KVP specifies certain provisions of the National Security Strategy, as well as other strategic planning documents, in particular those approved in 2022, the Concept of Humanitarian Policy of the Russian Federation Abroad and the Fundamentals of State Policy for the Preservation and Strengthening of Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values.

First of all, a fundamentally new section has appeared, where the strategic guidelines of foreign policy are concentrated, integrating it into a single

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vector and at the same time distinguishing it from other areas of state policy - “National interests of the Russian Federation in the foreign policy sphere, strategic goals and main objectives of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation.” The concept of national interests is always closely linked to foreign policy activity, however, since previous versions of the KVP did not provide their formulations, the

understanding of Russian national interests often became the subject of speculation. Despite their rather general but clear listing in the National Security Strategy, the different “flanks” and “towers” of the diverse Russian society could afford free interpretations. Today Russian national interests look like this:

**Table 1. National interests of the Russian Federation**

<b>National Security Strategy</b>	<b>Foreign Policy Concept</b> (national interests in the foreign policy sphere, additions to the Strategy norms are highlighted in black)
1) saving the people of Russia, developing human potential, improving the quality of life and well-being of citizens	6) saving the people of Russia, developing human potential, improving the quality of life and well-being of citizens
2) protection of the constitutional system, sovereignty, independence, state and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation, strengthening the country's defense	1) protection of the constitutional system, sovereignty, independence, state and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation from destructive foreign influence
3) maintaining civil peace and harmony in the country, strengthening the rule of law, eradicating corruption, protecting citizens and all forms of property from illegal attacks, developing mechanisms for interaction between the state and civil society	4) protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and protection of Russian organizations from foreign illegal attacks
4) development of a safe information space, protection of Russian society from destructive information-psychological influence	5) development of a safe information space, protection of Russian society from destructive foreign information-psychological influence
5) sustainable development of the Russian economy on a new technological basis	7) promoting sustainable development of the Russian economy on a new technological basis
6) environmental protection, conservation of natural resources and rational use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change	9) environmental protection, conservation of natural resources and rational use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change
7) strengthening traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, preserving the cultural and historical heritage of the people of Russia	8) strengthening traditional Russian spiritual and moral values, preserving the cultural and historical heritage of the multinational people of the Russian Federation
8) maintaining strategic stability, strengthening peace and security, the legal foundations of international relations	2) maintaining strategic stability, strengthening international peace and security 3) strengthening the legal foundations of international relations

It is important that Russia has acquired not only a specific list of national interests, but also a system for their implementation in strategic goal-setting. Nine national interests (detailing and deepening the formulations from the National Security Strategy) are implemented through three strategic goals that integrate and direct the activity of Russian diplomacy from now on:

- 1) ensuring the security of the Russian Federation, its sovereignty in all spheres and territorial integrity;
- 2) creation of favorable external conditions for the development of Russia;
- 3) strengthening the position of the Russian Federation as one of the responsible, influential and independent centers of the modern world.

In turn, the three strategic goals are achieved through the solution of fourteen main tasks formulated

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in the same section. The remaining sections of the CVP, therefore, already represent tools for solving them - priority areas of foreign policy, its regional directions, as well as mechanisms for its formation and implementation.

The structuring of national interests, goals and objectives of foreign policy activities presented in the CVP form a more understandable and logical framework for further actions of the country and its representatives in the international arena. It is impossible not to pay attention to the lack of mention of national development goals, which since 2018 have become a top-level priority for all government bodies and in accordance with which all policy areas should be structured, regardless of the industry and action horizon. However, the fact that the National Security Strategy, in accordance with which the KVP was developed, is directly based on national development goals, allows us to consider the latter as a mechanism for achieving national development goals on the external contour.

The priority directions of foreign policy have replaced the priorities of the Russian Federation in solving global problems, which in the previous editions of the CVP were quite stable. Previously there were six of them, now there are nine, the following have been added:

1. Ensuring the interests of the Russian Federation in the World Ocean, outer space and airspace.

2. Environmental protection and global health (separated from international economic and environmental cooperation).

3. Protection of Russian citizens and organizations from foreign illegal attacks, providing support to compatriots living abroad, international cooperation in the field of human rights (previously, human rights were combined with international humanitarian cooperation).

In addition, the task of "Strengthening international security" has become a priority direction of "Strengthening international peace and security".

Regional foreign policy directions have also been radically restructured. Instead of the largely Western-centric priorities revealed in the logic of "CIS – West – Arctic and Antarctic – Asia-Pacific – Middle East – Latin America and the Caribbean – Africa," a fundamentally new sequence was formed, namely:

1. Near Abroad (perhaps for the first time as an official term)
2. Arctic
3. Eurasian continent. China. India
4. Asian-Pacific area
5. Islamic world
6. Africa
7. Latin America and the Caribbean
8. European region
9. USA and other Anglo-Saxon states

## 10. Antarctic

Among the declared regional destinations, only three countries are directly named: China, India and the USA. Otherwise, the regional directions generalize foreign policy vectors and delve much less into the bilateral agenda than previous editions of the Concept.

There is an attempt to truly take a new approach to planning not just diplomatic work, but also international interaction. Here is the already mentioned originality of the state-civilization, and a rethinking of the geography of regional directions, and a closer attention to history, and the final postulate about the need for an ever wider involvement of constructively minded social forces in the foreign policy process in order to form a national consensus regarding foreign policy.

For the first time, making an attempt to comprehensively and scrupulously define Russia's place in the world, the Concept provides a domestic interpretation of the concept of "great power" - albeit conditional, but invariably in demand in real international relations. The CVP names ten parameters that legitimize not only the status, but also the ambitious priorities of that very state-civilization in the external environment - it is in them that it is easy to grasp the self-perception of a great power, namely:

- 1) the presence of significant resources in all spheres of life;
- 2) status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council;
- 3) participation in leading interstate organizations and associations;
- 4) one of the two largest nuclear powers;
- 5) the state is the legal successor of the USSR;
- 6) decisive contribution to victory in World War II;
- 7) active role in the creation of a modern system of international relations;
- 8) active role in eliminating the world system of colonialism;
- 9) one of the sovereign centers of world development;
- 10) fulfilling a unique mission to maintain the global balance of power and build a multipolar international system, providing conditions for the peaceful, progressive development of humanity based on a unifying and constructive agenda.

On the one hand, as a rule, it is not customary to find added value in focusing on one's own merits. On the other hand, if you don't praise yourself, no one will: Russia regularly tries to explain on various platforms on what grounds it claims a place "on the ground", why on earth is its critical opinion, for example, regarding the "rules-based order", should be of interest to someone. The answer was often very situational and sometimes incoherent, unable to withstand the weight of fundamental differences with counterparties, whose narratives are notable for their

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coherence. Now Russia is not only not ashamed of its disagreement, but also declares its indisputable right to it.

Another new norm of the Concept eliminates the need for euphemisms and saves time for really necessary communication. Relations with other countries can be constructive, neutral or unfriendly, which will be determined by the attitude of these countries themselves towards Russia. Among the principles on which a just and sustainable world order should be based, the authors of the Concept note a spiritual and moral guideline common to all world religions and secular ethical systems. Previous editions spoke about the common (but not unified) spiritual and moral potential (KVP-2016) or even the denominator (KVP-2013) of the main world religions.

The concept captures the politicization of various areas of international cooperation, which is interpreted as negative trends that Russian foreign policy should counteract. Among these are the politicization of the international payment infrastructure, environmental and climate change activities, cooperation in healthcare, sports, human rights, dialogue and interstate interaction in various areas in the Asia-Pacific region.

Despite respect for the UN as the main platform for coordinating interests and codifying international law, the CVP emphasizes the serious pressure that is being put on the organization, and for the first time does not mention a word about reforming the world's leading structure. All recent editions have placed emphasis on rational reform of the UN, but now they talk about the need to restore its role as a central coordinating mechanism.

Previously, there was usually talk about reforming the executive structures of the OSCE, which would increase the relevance and authority of this largest regional platform. In the current Foreign Policy Concept, Russia no longer addresses the need for such reform, as well as the OSCE itself, which is mentioned sporadically as one of the multilateral formats in the European part of Eurasia.

The current KVP significantly strengthens the ideological principles of Russian foreign policy. Thus, for the first time within the framework of the Concept, the concept "Russian World" is used: the role of Russia in its civilizational community is twice noted. In conditions of active rejection, even outright demonization, of the idea of the Russian World in some Western countries, Russian foreign policy confidently takes up its public defense. For the first time, the concept of Russophobia appears, counteracting which develops certain priority areas of foreign policy. It is obvious that previously, due to the seeming marginality of the corresponding movements, it was not necessary to set such a task separately, but new challenges required a direct diplomatic response to attempts to discriminate against everything Russian.

For the first time in the KVP, the concept of "color revolution" is mentioned. Although the main peak of threats associated with this phenomenon occurred in 2000–2010, it did not fall into the regulatory framework of strategic planning. Rather, it remained a stable marker to designate a special class of practices of interference in the internal affairs of states, as a rule, in the post-Soviet space. After the events of 2014 in Ukraine, the term "color revolution" seemed to have lost its relevance. But against the backdrop of a transition to greater straightforwardness in the designation of political guidelines, as well as a constant return to reflection on the nature of the Ukrainian crisis, Russia now clearly indicates its intention to suppress the instigation of "color revolutions" and other attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of its allies and partners. In other words, there will no longer be any recognition of the "free choice" of the people if there is a conviction that it is not free and not a choice at all.

For the first time and immediately, the Concept speaks very extensively about the problem of neocolonialism. The active role of Russia in the elimination of the world system of colonialism and the ongoing process of the irreversible retreat into the past of the model of accelerated growth of colonial powers due to the appropriation of resources is pointed out. The priority of any state renouncing neocolonial ambitions is noted, and solidarity is expressed with African countries seeking to eliminate the inequalities that are worsening due to sophisticated neocolonial policies.

The idea of uniting efforts around countering neocolonialism has been actively penetrating domestic foreign policy discourse in recent months - after President Vladimir Putin's landmark speech at a meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club in the fall of 2022, where he emphasized the neocolonial essence of the Western model of globalization.

Among the main tasks of foreign policy, the formation of an objective perception of Russia abroad is again mentioned. And within the framework of priority areas for promoting international development and humanitarian cooperation, goals are outlined for the formation and strengthening of a positive perception of Russia in the world. International humanitarian cooperation itself no longer appears simply as a linear type of activity, but is divided, in fact, into two areas. One is related to the goals of creating a positive perception and strengthening Russia's role in the global humanitarian space, a separate aspect of which remains the development of public diplomacy mechanisms. The second is aimed at strengthening the moral, legal and institutional foundations of modern international relations: countering the falsification of history, the spread of neo-Nazism, racial and national exclusivity. Particularly noteworthy are changes in the goal-



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setting of parliamentary diplomacy. All previous versions were limited to the universal formulation that the Federation Council and the State Duma contribute to increasing the effectiveness of parliamentary diplomacy. In the new edition, they contribute to the fulfillment of the tasks of parliamentary diplomacy.

A more symbolic innovation should be the absence of any mention of soft power in the text of the CVP. All 2010s in key foreign policy documents it was placed among the integral components of international politics and permeated domestic political rhetoric regarding the desire for a more effective self-positioning of the country. Russia actively encouraged the use of soft power tools, developed relevant institutions, and even occupied not the worst positions in various ratings and indices. For many reasons, but most importantly, probably due to the foreignness of the term “soft power” for Russian soil, interest in it began to fade at a certain point.

Along with the rejection of soft power, the Concept emphasizes the factor of power in its traditional understanding. The thesis about increasing its role reproduces the norms of previous editions, but for the first time the realities of the formation of new spheres of military action and the unleashing of a hybrid war against Russia are analyzed in detail, and the directions of foreign policy response are formulated.

For the first time, the possibility of Russia using armed forces is allowed. Noting its commitment to Article 51 of the UN Charter on Self-Defense, the CVP lists the following grounds for the use of armed force, namely:

- 1) repelling and preventing an attack on Russia and (or) its allies;
- 2) crisis management;
- 3) maintaining (restoring) peace in accordance with the decision of the UN Security Council and other collective security structures with the participation of Russia in their area of responsibility;
- 4) ensuring the protection of its citizens abroad;
- 5) combating international terrorism and piracy.

It is emphasized that in relation to the West, where the bulk of unfriendly states are located, Russia has no hostile intentions, it does not isolate itself from it and does not consider itself its enemy. She simply expresses an attitude in response to the attitude towards herself. Reciprocity becomes not so much a part of politics as such, but a form of implementation of the spiritual and moral guideline “an eye for an eye,” proposed as the basis of a multipolar world. Reciprocity is a continuation of genuine sovereignty, where there is always a place for the good will of an independent player who does not experience worries because of obstacles put in front of him and leaves a chance for the resumption of relations, but at the same time - where there is a place for a forceful response in the case when “they don’t want to -good.”

Regional areas of foreign policy form a marked list of ten regions, mentioned in order reflecting the degree of their priority. For the first time, the minimum number of states is mentioned directly - there are 18 of them in the text, and in this case it is no longer correct to talk about priority, since the mention occurs precisely within the framework of different regional areas, namely:

1. Belarus
2. Abkhazia
3. South Ossetia
4. People's Republic of China
5. Republic of India
6. Mongolia (mentioned within the Russia-Mongolia-China economic corridor)
7. Afghanistan
8. Iran
9. Syria
10. Türkiye
11. Saudi Arabia
12. Egypt
13. Israel
14. Brazil
15. Cuba
16. Nicaragua
17. Venezuela
18. USA

For the first time, the European Union does not appear among regional priorities; it is mentioned only once, along with NATO and the Council of Europe in the context of unfriendly European states. The European region itself (precisely this wording) is predictably viewed as the third from last direction of foreign policy and through the prism of individual European countries. The condition for relations is “the awareness by European states that there is no alternative to peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial equal cooperation with Russia, increasing the level of their foreign policy independence and the transition to a policy of good neighborliness.”

For the first time, the KVP introduces the concept of Anglo-Saxon states, which are included in the cohort of “and others” in the context of interaction with the United States and together with them form the penultimate regional direction. In relation to the United States, a “combined” nature of relations is formulated, including the perception of both one of the influential sovereign centers and as “the main inspirer, organizer and executor of aggressive anti-Russian policy.” There is essentially nothing to talk about with other Anglo-Saxon states: everything will again be determined by their attitude towards Russia.

For the first time, Africa is becoming not just an independent direction of foreign policy, but also a clearly expressed priority. Russia stands in solidarity with the anti-colonial aspirations of African states, and Africa itself is defined as a distinctive and influential center of world development. The CVP expresses support for the principle of “African

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problems - African solutions”, and in addition to strengthening bilateral relations, a number of multilateral structures with which Russia intends to deepen interaction are noted: the African Union, the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum, the African Continental Free Trade Area, the African Export-Import bank, etc.

The emphasis on multilateral formats is traditionally placed in the context of Latin America and the Caribbean as a separate regional area of foreign policy. Here, however, on the contrary, the number of priority associations for cooperation has been reduced from seven (in previous versions) to six (the Union of South American States has been excluded due to internal disagreements). Among other things, for the first time, support for Latin American states under pressure from the United States and its allies is noted in ensuring sovereignty and independence.

### Conclusion

The modern system of governance of the Far East contains all the basic elements of a developing state. At the same time, each of them is marked by significant transformations, leading in total to the actual degeneration of Far Eastern policy. The case of the Far East enriches the very theory of the developing state, since it allows us to focus on the main reasons for these transformations. We can identify three reasons, namely:

- 1) multitasking, covering not only economic but also broad social goals (the most controversial of which in terms of achievability is ensuring population growth in the Far East);
- 2) lack of autonomy (since we see the dependence of the new policy on large commodity corporations and regional authorities in providing quantitative performance indicators);
- 3) structural weakness of the Ministry of Eastern Development (struggle to maintain positions in the government hierarchy, lack of administrative powers and formally established opportunities to influence key decisions in the economic sphere).

The study also gives grounds to recognize that new instruments for the development of the region have become a means of increasing the political capital of the Ministry of Eastern Development to compensate for its inherent weaknesses and deficits. Behind the facade of the information campaign is the traditional approach to the development of the region through large government programs and corporate projects. The task of building a new economy, outlined in 2013, through the creation of an institutional infrastructure that ensures new relations between the state and investors, has faded into the background in front of large raw materials and image projects promoted with the help of undeniable strategic arguments. And here we return to questions closely related to practical politics: is this still a

process of transformation of a developing state or is it already the result of the process? Will the accumulation of political capital contribute to a return to the original goals or will it lead to their further erosion? The answer to these questions requires further research, but the analysis carried out in the article made it possible to identify three main directions for applying efforts to correct the course.

The innovative nature of the Foreign Policy Concept does not negate the inconsistency of such documents. On the one hand, due to their regulatory nature, they become a direct guide to action for the entire diplomatic vertical and any related departments in the medium term. On the other hand, since life does not stand still and changes the situation described in the Concept in the very next moment after its approval, the document still turns out to be, as a rule, insufficient to reflect the needs and intentions of the country in such a complex and turbulent world. Entering the operational space of the state-civilization allows us to acquire a new quality of political-spatial thinking, in which there is no place for discrete parameters: all directions become potentially major, and all paradigms become conditional and fleeting.

The task of the new Concept of foreign policy, as, indeed, of any other plan in conditions of permanent chaos, is to gather together the elements of the previous order scattered by the global storms that have already passed, to reckon with “friend or foe” and step fully armed towards new cataclysms. The ability not only to survive, but also to turn the situation to one’s advantage is a skill, the mastery of which becomes a test for everyone, and the formulated foreign policy priorities are designed to contribute to this.

Aid initiatives for Ukraine in 2022 demonstrate a number of unprecedented changes due to the current geopolitical situation: donor states use aid as a tool for foreign policy and national interests.

**First.** The speed of response of Western donor countries at the very beginning of the conflict. Reliance on the experience of interaction with the recipient country and logistics networks built in previous decades, coupled with the atypical unity of Western countries, which acted as a united front against the start of the Russian special operation, ensured increased response speed. The main thing that spurred donors to action was the stated foreign policy goal of keeping Kyiv in its sphere of influence in the face of a serious geopolitical threat, that is, the forceful return of Moscow’s control over Ukraine. If the West, when providing assistance in 2022, was guided, as donors claim, by humanitarian motives, it remains unclear why Brussels and Washington ignored Kiev’s requests to help vaccinate the population during the second wave of the pandemic (asking for a vaccine from Moscow was impossible for political reasons).

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**Second.** The leading role of donor states, not NGOs. Donor states presented the unfolding scenario as exceptional, unique in its kind. This narrative reinforced the relationship between aid and foreign policy goals. Aid was perceived as an effective tool to counter Russia's special operation in Ukraine. Values and narratives of political intervention took precedence, overshadowing the pacifism and neutrality that dominated scenarios where non-governmental donors played a leading role.

**Third.** Volume and diversification of mobilized assistance. The combination of political intervention and the resources available to the public sector ensured a significant flow, which is unusual for the initial phase of the conflict. The intervention was carried out in areas (financial, political-institutional, military) that go beyond the scope of traditional humanitarian activities. All this created ideal conditions for negative phenomena: from the dispersion of aid to corruption, duplication, and the inability to coordinate the activities of donors and keep records of their interventions.

**Fourth.** Anticipatory post-conflict planning. As soon as the conflict began, two initiatives were proposed that were ideal for the post-war phase: reconstruction of the country and Ukraine's path to EU membership. In the first case, the technical problem was the inability to estimate the resources and amount of assistance required. Politically, the question was whether donor states would be able to cope with the problems we have already seen in the recovery phase in other countries (Bosnia, Afghanistan, Kosovo), without a detailed assessment of the reasons for the limited effectiveness of the support that the West provided to Ukraine from 1991 to 2021. Regarding Ukraine's membership in the European Union, the technical aspect is obtaining candidate status regardless of the completion of the complex process of harmonization with European Union legislation. The political aspect is associated with the unity of the bloc in assessing the compliance of candidate countries (as in the case of the admission of Romania and Bulgaria) and member countries (disagreements with the Visegrad Four) with appropriate standards.

**Fifth.** "Sanctions for the enemy, help for friends." The evolution of sanctions is one of the main

innovations in the Ukrainian scenario. In recent decades, sanctions have already transformed from "the last step before war" to "the best remedy instead of war." Therefore, they began to be used more often - sanctions wars broke out, becoming a favorite tool of diplomacy in the post-bipolar world. In the context of the Ukrainian crisis, sanctions, as opposed to an instrument of assistance, have undergone further radical changes, turning into a tactical and strategic resource in the confrontation. Now they began to be used not only to strike one of the warring parties, but also to provide advantages to the other side. Sanctions have become weapons, and weapons are now promoted as a legitimate form of aid, so sanctions aimed at an enemy inevitably become aid to a friend.

**Sixth.** Food as a weapon, weapon as help. One of the main intricacies of the Ukrainian crisis is the use of food and weapons by Russia and the West, respectively. On the one hand, Moscow has turned access to raw materials into a tactical tool of pressure, on the other, the European Union has made weapons a central element in assisting Kyiv.

The impact of these disruptive trends in care practice is likely to be long-lasting. Due to politicization, previously apolitical food aid has been transformed into an instrument of tactical confrontation. Western donor states, by openly supplying arms to Ukraine, approved two new political principles. First of all, the provision of weapons has acquired full legitimacy as a form of assistance. In other words, the tendency to consider only "good" aid as "real" aid – humanitarian or development – has been overcome for the sake of the idea that interstate aid can be any transfer for the benefit of the recipient. Moreover, and this is the most important thing, the right to self-defense, in fact, is now recognized as a basic need, therefore, the need for weapons is humanitarian.

As with the US "preventive intervention" in Iraq in 2003, the risk is that a rhetorical formula imposed today for the sake of short-term political considerations may become a precedent that will later be turned against the very actors who introduced it. – precisely because of its inherent contradictions and weaknesses of definition.

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Article



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## GENERAL THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES FOR STUDYING THE RELATIONSHIP OF ETHNICITY AND NATURE IN THE ANCIENT BASHKIR EPIC «URAL-BATUR» (ON THE BASIS OF «GROWTH POINTS» ASKINO SECONDARY SCHOOL №1 REPUBLIC OF BASHKORTOSTAN)

**Abstract:** The article discusses new approaches to the theoretical study and understanding of the ancient Bashkir epic "Ural-Batur". Methodological techniques for deeper knowledge of Bashkir folk tales are presented to teachers of rural secondary schools. The concept of the relationship between the ethnic group and the nature around us is considered. A close connection has been established and presented between the modern nature of the Republic of Bashkortostan and the Bashkir folk epic "Ural-Batur". A theoretical study of famous Bashkir legends was carried out; the reflection of nature in the culture of the ethnic group was shown. Possible influences of ethnic traditions on attitudes towards nature in general are identified and presented. A detailed analysis of the legend was carried out in

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the light of a powerful source of knowledge of the worldview of the modern ethnic group. The relationship between man and nature in ancient Bashkir legends is shown. Examples of manifestations of kind attitude towards animals in Bashkir oral folk art are given. The synthesis of the epic shows the main character Ural-Batur as a true representative of the Bashkir people. Separately from the epic, Living and Dead Water are highlighted as the source of life and the strength of the Bashkir bators. When studying the epic, students are presented with the protagonist's testament to future descendants about preserving nature. The etiological animistic motives in the epic "Ural-Batur" are described in literature. For modern humanity, environmental problems of natural places of the Republic of Bashkortostan are presented based on legends. The historical and environmental significance of the "Ural-Batur" epic is priceless for world culture. The article has enormous educational significance for modern youth and the younger generation. The work was written within the framework of "Growth Points", a structural unit of a rural secondary school within the framework of the "Modern School" for digital, natural science and humanities profiles.

**Key words:** education, upbringing, rural educational institution, UNESCO, Republic of Bashkortostan, Yamantau, Kapova cave, Ural mountains, Shulgan-Tash, Growth point, modern school, final essay, Unified State Exam, Russian language, literature, Bashkir language, Federal state educational standards of the new generation, legend, epic, Ural-Batur, nature, ethnos, myth, fairy tale, water, computer game.

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## Introduction

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In our time, man has achieved brilliant discoveries in the field of astronautics, technology, and nuclear energy. Daily complex medical operations are not an unusual event for doctors, and easy operation of a computer is no longer a sensation for the average first-grader.

Every person has many opportunities and desires to change the world. By understanding the laws of nature, we try to make it better. Numerous machines and various devices make it possible to understand the world, learn the rules and patterns, and influence the processes occurring in nature.

"You must have not only an eye, but also an inner sense of nature, you must hear its music and be imbued with its silence", – wrote the great artist I.I. Levitan [1].

Nature is something that is not created by man. Nature is a boundless world filled with mystery, magic and wonder.

Of course, since ancient times the world existed according to the same basic laws that still apply now, only these laws had yet to be discovered, and since then man has been interested in how nature works. And the first hypotheses about the origin of the world and man, about the laws of life turned out to be so interesting, beautiful, poetic, plausible that people still turn with surprise and joy to the wisdom of the ancient people who created these hypotheses, which were later rejected by science, but became endless, inexhaustible a source of art and literature, an indicator of the *relationship between ethnicity and nature* [2].

Naturally, we asked a reasonable question: how, by learning the laws of nature, do we try to change our attitude towards it?

To answer all these and other questions, we decided to conduct our own theoretical research and comparative analysis of the relationship between the Bashkir ethnic group and nature in the ancient epic "Ural-Batur" on the basis of "Points of Growth" Askino Secondary School №1 Republic of Bashkortostan [3].

## 2. Purpose of the study.

In this regard, the *purpose* of this work is to establish a connection between the current nature of the Bashkir region and Bashkir folk tales, as well as to show that Bashkir tales are of great educational importance for youth and the younger generation.

We considered the research *problem* in the article to be how exactly the concept of nature is reflected in the famous Bashkir folk epic "Ural-Batur", and how are ethnicity and nature connected in ancient Bashkir legends.

The *object* and *subject* of the study is the Bashkir folk epic "Ural-Batur" itself.

The *objective* of the study was to conduct a study of Bashkir legends to determine the relationship between the ethnic group and nature, the reflection of nature in the culture of the ethnic group, the influence of ethnic traditions on the attitude towards nature and environmental management.

As a research *hypothesis*, we made the assumption that in the image of the *Ural-Batur* and other Bashkir bators, typified features of the mentality of the Bashkir people appeared.

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Research *methods* within the literature available at our school are analysis of the texts of Bashkir legends, systematization, and generalization.

This work has *scientific* and *practical significance*, namely, it is a study devoted to the study of the history of the relationship between the Bashkir people and nature, the reflection of nature in the culture of the Bashkir people, the influence of Bashkir traditions on the attitude towards nature and environmental management.

### 3. Tales as an inexhaustible source of knowledge of the worldview of an ethnos.

In the fight against nature, modern man has armed himself with science and technology. All kinds of machines and instruments allow him to understand the phenomena occurring in the world, sometimes even influence them.

When studying the epic in the lessons of the Russian language, Bashkir as the state language, literature, and native language, we pose a number of motivational questions to students. Here are just a few of them that run like a red thread through the entire "*Ural-Batur*" epic.

But what instrument can measure the depth and strength of an individual's feelings? Which meter will warn of a growing human tragedy or environmental disaster? As of today, none!

Therefore, according to [4], it is possible to convey to junior, middle and senior students that in relation to themselves, a person has one of the great means of knowledge – art and literature. They do not reveal absolute, infallible truths, but they are the ones who explain to a person what he is and what he should become. Filling our hearts with light and beauty, they help find solutions in difficult moments of life, illuminate people with ideas, helping to understand ourselves and the world around us.

In those distant years, when people still had no idea about the causes of various natural phenomena (storm, hurricane, thunderstorm, flood), different peoples began to develop their own *legends* [5]. And also, through *myths* [6] and *legends* [7], people tried to understand the universe, the nature and place of man in this world.

Next, we will dwell in more detail on some Bashkir legends, which will give an idea of the "*kamil keshe*" (heroic personality), and will try to show not only the value for world culture, but also the enormous historical and environmental significance of the epic "*Ural-Batur*" [8], which represents is an original translation from Bashkir, Russian into English.

When translating fragments of the epic into English, we provide students with a literal translation of each line separately in order to try to convey the true meaning of the plot being studied. However, our literal and line-by-line translation will be very different from the academic [9] and literary [10] versions of the translation.

### 4. The relationship between man and nature in Bashkir legends.

The Bashkir people are rich in their fairy tales, legends and tales, in which the reader is presented with a wide range of views of the Bashkir people as an ancient ethnic group, rooted in the depths of the primitive communal system [11].

Having reached us from the depths of centuries, they embody the social, moral, aesthetic worldviews of our distant ancestors and reflect nature in the culture of the Bashkir people.

The Bashkir folk epic "*Ural-Batur*" is the most striking and monumental monument of the spiritual culture of the Bashkir people. Its popularity and enormous value lie in the fact that it reflects with high poetic skill the eternal themes of the relationship between man and nature.

The palette of artistic means of the work itself is colorful; its figurative system is rich and original, reflecting the peculiarities of the pagan consciousness of ancient man. He was part of nature, a child of nature, who did not know fire, living only by hunting wild animals.

For example, this is clearly shown in the following fragment of the epic "*Ural-Batur*", which we present in a literal translation of each line.

...An old man named Yanbirhe,  
With Yanbikah, his old woman,  
Adapted for yourself  
Lion Arslan to carry them,  
A falcon to kill the birds,  
A leech to suck blood,  
Pike to catch fish...

Here we inform the students that for *Yanbirhe* and *Yanbikah*, *Arslan* acts as a cab driver, which in translation from Bashkir means lion.

If we consider the fairy tale "*Khylyubika and Yarkei*" [12], we will see that it is permeated with subtle feelings of love for nature, which united people and pristine nature. Therefore, *Arslan*, who is also a lion, also means the desire to be strong, brave, courageous, which reflects the desire of the Bashkir people themselves.

For example, animals served *Yarkei*, were devoted to him, and were always ready to help: "*Going out into the field, he burned a hair from the mane of his war horse, and he, along with the dog and animals, was not slow to appear before the owner*".

### 5. Attitude towards animals in Bashkir legends and oral folk art.

A kind attitude towards animals and all living things is another distinctive quality of the Bashkir mentality, which is reflected in many works of oral folk art. A striking example of the manifestation of kindness is *Umys* [13] in the fairy tale of the same name.

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It is very important to show students what we can observe at the very beginning of the work, when he, as a child, gives his last money in order to buy a small donkey. Here is a fragment of the dialogue between the old man and the boy in a literal translation.

*"...He met an old man on the road who was leading a two-year-old foal. Umys really liked the foal. And he asked: Will you sell the foal, old man? I'll sell, – he answered, – the price is so many rubles. Umys was delighted: And I have just that much money. Here you go..."*

In another fairy tale, *"Alpamsha-Batur"* [14], the main character loved animals with all his heart. At the very beginning of the work, the story is told about his main find, which he was incredibly happy about. Here is a fragment from the fairy tale, taking into account the literal translation.

*"...One day in early spring Alpamsha found a sick gosling on the shore of a lake and was very happy about his find. He came out with a gosling, fed it, and by the end of summer the little gosling turned into a big goose..."*

Here we clearly and specifically focus the attention of students on the fact that *Alpamsha-batur* is not alone in performing feats, he is helped by his beloved and main assistant – *Akbuthat* (winged horse), together with him they resist evil and win. In general, according to Bashkir ancient writings, *Akbuthat* is literally translated as *"white-gray"*, the name of the famous winged horse from Bashkir legends.

When the hero whistles, *Akbuthat* is ready to fly to him at any moment, support and help him, no matter how difficult his request. Devotion and loyalty to the batur is reflected in the lines, which we give in literal translation.

*"...Alpamsha got off his horse and, before parting with him, agreed that if he needed the horse, he would whistle, Akbuthat would hear the whistle and come running to the cal..."*

Students should understand that the image of a faithful friend, *Akbuthat*, also occupies a special place in the epic *"Ural-Batur"*, with the help of which the main character accomplishes feats, fighting dragons, divas, devs, and snakes. It should be clarified that a dev is a popular creature from the epic legends and fairy tales of the Near and Middle East, which is a rather ugly, huge, hairy, fabulously strong monster, capable of flying in the air and capable of magic. Therefore, the natural source of strength and courage of the batur was the rich, virgin, untouched nature of their native land.

If we consider the plot of these works, we will see a lot in common, a lot of similarities in the characters, actions and behavior of the main characters. And, most importantly, you can be sure that the secret of their strength was given by nature. It was she who enriched her inner world, illuminated her with the light of new ideas, forced her to perform great feats and fight for justice.

The idea of the immortality of the feat of heroes fighting against the forces of evil, the glorification of an ever-living and renewing nature – this is the humanistic essence of the epic, passed on to the younger generation from school.

### 6. Ural-Batur as a prominent representative of the Bashkir ethnic group.

The epic *"Ural-Batur"* tells the story of the indivisible unity of the Bashkir people with their Motherland, with their native land, with their Land.

The main character of the epic is the *Ural-Batur*, who is a prominent representative of the Bashkir ethnic group, who has absorbed the best features of his people, faith, customs, the desire for justice, their love for nature, for trees, for everything that surrounds them.

Before analyzing the main character, it is necessary to convey to students that the batur is the hero of Turkic epic tales; a brave, reckless man. This word is derived from the Mongolian word *bakhatur* (*batur*), probably with the stress on the final syllable, but in a literal English translation, due to the phonetic structure of English words, it should be pronounced armor.

Let us give a line-by-line literal translation of a fragment of the epic that describes the connection between the traits of the Bashkir people and nature.

*...Father, come to your senses, look  
On the stick you hold in your hands,  
Run your eyes over it:  
She sang young in the branches.  
Today she is all planed,  
All beaten up, damaged,  
Turned into a naked club...*

Studying the epic in each parallel of classes, we emphasize that the image of the *Ural-Batur* reflects the moral, ethnic and aesthetic values, norms of behavior, preferences and priorities that have developed in the popular consciousness of the Bashkir's.

The epic most clearly characterizes the national mentality – the concept of *"yakshylyk"* – *"good"*, which is combined with such national character traits as *"baturlyk, irlek"* – *"masculinity"*. This means sacrificing one's life for the sake of life on earth, doing good in the name of the people, honesty, humanity, filial piety, that is, everything that makes the hero, according to the Bashkir's, an integral personality – *"kamil keshe"*. On the other hand, it is patriotism, responsibility, endurance, benevolence, and nobility.

The youngest son *Yanbirhe* was also distinguished by kindness. His love for the world around him is manifested in everything: for the bird girls, for the snake, that is, for everything good and bad. Here we show students that the *Ural-Batur* still stands out among other heroes in that his path is a search for absolute goodness, the preservation of all life on earth.



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As a distinctive characteristic of our hero, we present a literal translation of a fragment of his courage from the epic.

*...If one is stronger on those who are weaker,  
We would never hunt.  
If born from mothers,  
Without dying, they always lived;  
Kohl grass stems and tree crown  
Did not obey such a law,  
The rivers stopped flowing altogether,  
The banks are completely dilapidated;  
If only the streams would stop babbling  
What would be the use then?...*

As we see, *Ural-Batur* loved his land and all living things around him very much. Naturally, I wanted to make it even more beautiful, we understand this from the very beginning of the text, because the epic begins with a dispute: is it possible to destroy *Death* [15]?

Is it really impossible to remove one pattern from the eternal cycle in nature? *Ural-Batur* suggests that the animals stop hunting each other, suggesting that this would lead to the end of *Death*.

But *Raven* [16] gives our hero a detailed answer. He is against the proposal of *Ural-Batur*, linking the fight against *Death* with a change in the cycle of life. *Raven* explains that there is no benefit in stopping the extermination of the weaker. Animals and birds silently agree with the *Wise Raven*. This means that no one has the right to change the *Laws of Nature*.

Therefore, while studying the ancient epic and analyzing its lines with students, we clearly explain to them that it is in the image of the *Raven* that we are shown the true, deep connection between ethnicity and nature. It is also noteworthy that the crow here does not appear as an ordinary bird, but represents a wise and sacred image of one of the chains of the animal world.

## 7. Water as a source of life, energy and strength of batur.

Water as a source of life and energy plays an important role in nature. The tales of the Bashkir people contain many descriptions of natural phenomena, as well as the ability of water to both kill and revive.

For example, the source [13] cited above in the text describes the following: *"...Then she sprinkled Dead Water from the first bubble on the cut-up body of Umys. The cut parts of the body were joined together, and the body took on its original appearance. She poured Living Water from another bottle into Umysa's mouth. Then Umys came to life and stood up..."*

Here is another example from source [12], also given above in the text: *"I went out into the street and shot in different directions. As the old man predicted in his dream, one of the arrows hit the well. Yarkei washed himself with water from that well, and his eyes*

*immediately returned to their place, and he began to see better than before..."*

And in the ancient Bashkir epic, our hero *Ural-Batur* also went for living water, which gives immortality to man and nature, and destroys death. Let's consider a detailed translation of each line of a fragment of the epic, showing the life-giving power of water and one of the ways to achieve immortality, which all humanity has been striving for centuries.

*...Death is such a villain! She  
Not visible to the human eye.  
There is only one way here:  
There is a living spring.  
Someone will drink from it – and instantly  
He will immortalize himself, they say.  
Death will retreat, they say...*

As a detailed analysis of the fragment shows, *Ural-Batur* is the conqueror of *Death*; he becomes a cultural hero of the Bashkir people, bringing people an understanding of goodness and beauty. For students, we convey that the main feat of *Ural-Batur* is that he overcame countless obstacles, discovered the secret of the immortality of life on earth, and saves all living things from *Death*.

Let us give a line-by-line literal translation of a fragment of the epic in which our hero wishes to drink the *Living Water* from a healing spring.

*...Don't want to be forever  
Drink from the Living spring!  
What remains on earth?  
How all the best is created,  
Garden beauty and fragrance –  
This is goodness and beneficence...*

On the way to the *Living Spring*, our hero *Ural-Batur* meets an ancient elder, from whom he learns that the law of eternity is good. The old man, who drank the *Living Water* and suffered from immortality, associates the concept of "*immortality of people*" only with their good deeds [17]. In his opinion, if a person leaves behind noble deeds, he will be immortal and will live forever in the hearts of people. Do well and you will be immortal!

## 8. Ural-Batur's legacy to his descendants about preserving nature.

*Ural-Batur* achieves his goal – he finds the *Living Spring*, but without using it, which he himself won from dragons for people, he sprinkled everything around so that nature would become immortal, and it, fading, would become even greener and more beautiful. Students must understand what this means – a person does not need immortality, only he should not violate the laws of nature.

Let's consider the literal translation of the next fragment from the epic, taking into account line-by-line analysis.

*...Here in front of him is the Living Spring –  
He filled his mouth with water,  
To the mountains that raised to heaven,*

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*Sprinkled it with that water, they say:  
"Let the bare thickets be green,  
May they acquire the color of immortality?  
Let the birds chirp louder and sweeter,  
Let people sing funny songs!  
Let the people love this land,  
Let her bloom in a beautiful garden!"...*

The hero accomplished another feat for the people – he cleared *Lake Shulgenovo* [18] from evil spirits. Having drunk water from the lake, where dragons and snakes swarmed, of course, *Ural-Batur* died.

Let us present two fragments from the epic, taking into account literal translation without loss of meaning, showing the heroism and courage of the hero who sacrificed himself for the sake of the life of the Bashkir people.

*... "I'll drink the lake completely,  
I'll dry you up to the very bottom,  
From the divas who survived,  
Who doesn't give people peace?  
From Shulgen and other bastards  
I will deliver the people forever!"...*

After this, *Ural-Batur* appeals to his people not to make mistakes.

*... "Don't drink water from those lakes –  
Illness and pestilence await you there,  
Don't give the villains any favors  
Don't get stuck near the lake"...*

We believe that the words of *Ural-Batur*, addressed not only to the Bashkir people, are still relevant today. It is important here to show not only school students, but also all of humanity that he called for clearing rivers and lakes of all dirt; otherwise they pose a danger to life and health.

The courageous *Ural-Batur* is the personification of spirituality, morality, the desire to live and die for the sake of others. Despite immortality [19], our hero makes a tough decision between life and death, showing us, modern inhabitants of the earth that one of the central ideas of this epic is that the meaning of human life is not in eternal longevity, but in his good deeds for the benefit of the world. The last words – a testament to the people – were the words of the batur in the literal translation of each line of the fragment of the epic.

*... "Children, listen to my words:  
On the earth, purified by me,  
Bring earthly happiness to people.  
Let kindness be your mother  
High honesty and purity;  
Don't let filth come to your doorstep,  
And open the way for kindness!"...*

The hero of the epic, *Ural-Batur*, from the very beginning entered into the struggle for the eternal life of all people, sacrificing him for the sake of liberation from the evil forces of all mankind. Here it is important to explain to students that, despite the fact that the epic is permeated with the idea of universal

human destiny, it arose in a specific place, in a specific ethnic environment, and therefore is inextricably linked with the history, culture, and worldview of the Bashkir people.

As a follower of the glorious Bashkir family, *Ithel*, the son of *Ural-Batur*, continued his father's work and obtained clean water for his people. Here is what is said about this in the epic, taking into account the literal translation of the fragment of the address.

*... "Can I leave people without water?  
If I have a name – batur,  
If I don't knock out the sources of water –  
Who will call me a man?" –  
So said Ithel... And so  
He cuts down a mountain with his sword;  
Waters white as silver  
Flowed, ringing from the mountain  
The transparent ones carried gifts..."*

We, the descendants of the *Ural-Batur*, must also follow his behests: cleanse our rivers and reservoirs of pollution, preserve the pristine purity of our Bashkir nature, leave the Earth as beautiful and green for new generations!

We must cultivate in ourselves a sense of responsibility for everything that happens around us, to become the same as our hero. He is for us an example of attitude towards nature, life, people, and the future of his people.

Nature gives birth to living and beautiful things, teaching us all a bright lesson. And the main component of the power of nature is water – a miracle, magic that can create incredible things!

## 9. Etiological animistic motives in the epic "Ural-Batur".

To this day, much of what is described in the epic exists on the territory of the modern Republic of Bashkortostan. One of the leading places in "*Ural-Batur*" is occupied by etiological animistic motifs that existed in the minds of the ancient Bashkir's.

We consider this issue closer to grades 8-9, during extracurricular activities. Although, seniors in grades 10-11 usually find motives on their own when studying the epic.

As described in the epic, the *Ural Mountains* [20] are the road of the *Ural-Batur*, which he walked on his winged horse *Akbuthat*, fighting with the divas, and the highest peak of the *Ural Mountains* is the batur's grave. Popular fantasy claims that the remains of the beloved hero turned into gems and precious metal, and his blood is oil, the black gold of the Republic of Bashkortostan.

The content of the epic shows how everything connected with *Ural-Batur* serves the people. For example, his wife *Homai* [21] remained a bird and hatches beautiful chicks for the joy of people; she also brought various animals and birds to the *Urals*. Here we give an analogy for students that *Homai* is the legendary bird of good luck in the sagas and tales of

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some peoples of the East, which is said to bring good luck to anyone who manages to see it.

Artiodactyl animals originated from the bull that *Ural-Batur* defeated in a duel, but *Akbuthat* brought his herd and made friends between horses and humans. And the picturesque rivers of the Bashkir people, according to the above source [18], arose thanks to the sons of *Ural-Batur* and were named in his honor: *Yaik*, *Ithel*, *Nugush* and *Shulgen's* son – *Sakmar*.

Mount *Yamantau* in the south of the Republic of Bashkortostan arose from the dead body of *Azraki* (evil diva), defeated by the *Ural-Batur's*, and means *Bad Mountain* or *Evil Mountain*. Among the local population, she always enjoyed disrepute and inspired fear. It is still believed that if a person climbs to its top, he can bring disaster upon himself.

The famous *Kapova Cave* [22] still preserves the name of the elder brother of the *Ural-Batur's* – *Shulgen*. The drawings on the walls of the cave tell about the life of ancient people on the territory of modern Bashkortostan.

#### 10. Environmental problems of places in the Republic of Bashkortostan filled with legends.

*Kapova Cave* or *Shulgan-Tash*, named after the brother of *Ural-Batur*, is very famous for its historical value; many traditions and legends are associated with it. At one time, this cave was a real mythological center, since it was believed that the spirit of *Ural-Batur* lived here in the guise of a huge rider on the winged horse *Akbuthat*. Anyone who sees it will have good luck.

Like any cave, *Shulgan-Tash* has its own macro- and micro-nature, its own characteristics. Previously, the cave was known for sinter formations [23], such as stalactites, stalagmites, flags, calcite flowers, baths, cave pearls and other cave formations.

Despite the restrictions imposed, it is not possible to regulate the flow of tourists into the cave, as well as to force them to respect cultural monuments and not litter in the cave. The reserve's workers have to regularly spend "preventive days" in the cave, raking out from the ancient sanctuary what the "grateful" tourists left behind.

We are concerned that, without thinking about the fact that the cave is home to rare animals, visitors spoil the atmosphere of their habitat. They do not appreciate the gift of nature and scatter garbage, which has a detrimental effect on the internal environment of the cave.

Few people think about the fact that if you throw a twig, a rag, a piece of paper and other garbage, then organic matter will appear in the cave, and therefore microbes, and the cave will cease to be the way nature created it.

*Shulgan-Tash* still remains the center of attention of tourists from all over the world, which has the most negative impact on the condition of the rock paintings.

Scientists believe that in order to preserve the drawings, it is necessary to maintain a constant microclimate of the cave, which is incompatible with visits to the cave by people.

In an ideally clean cave there is not a single microbe in the air, and the very atmosphere of the cave, twilight, ancient stone vaults and the incessant melodic splashing of drops, relieves all stress from the overloaded nervous system of a tired inhabitant of the techno genic world, in the same way here people seek salvation from allergies and other diseases.

Recently, the drawings have begun to fade; scientists fear that they may disappear completely and forever. We believe that our cave has also been subjected to the harmful influence of people who do not appreciate the beauty and rarity of nature, which were formed over many millions of years.

The rivers that *Ural-Batur* bequeathed to preserve and protect also came under the negative influence of man: *Sakmar*, *Nugush*, and especially *Ithel*; a large number of enterprises were built on its banks. But *Ithel* is the pearl of the Republic of Bashkortostan. There is nowhere else where you can feel the majesty of the beautiful mountains of the Southern Urals, feel the spirit of the times and feel the power of wonderful legends and tales.

**11. Conclusion.** Thus, we believe that the culture, history and worldview of the Bashkir people are reflected in the epic "*Ural-Batur*". We recommend that the study of the ancient epic be included in the curriculum of secondary schools of the Republic of Bashkortostan, and possibly the whole country. The legend is a living spring for the moral and environmental education of the younger generation.

We believe that in any school in the world, children should learn about the Ural Mountains not only casually in geography lessons, but also in literature, culture and history lessons, studying the epic of the Bashkir people "*Ural-Batur*", so that the name of the ancient hero becomes known to millions of residents of our planets.

These mighty mountain peaks are an eternal monument to the exploits of the *Ural-Batur*, who forever gave the Bashkir land and all people incredible beauty of nature, inexhaustible wealth of mineral resources and great history.

We are confident that by studying Bashkir legends and learning the relationship of the ethnic group to the environment, you can cultivate responsibility for the state of nature as a whole.

Finally, for a detailed study of the entire epic, we have developed a computer educational game "*Ural-Batur*", which is interesting not only to school students, but also to the adult generation. The program is written in the C# programming language, which is studied in some schools and universities in the country.

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The computer game was developed on the eve of the International Mother Language Day, established by UNESCO [24]. We presented our work at the XII International Competition "*Bashkir folk epic "Ural-Batur" – the heritage of mankind*" in the nomination "*For the best game based on the epics of the peoples of the world*".

The international competition of young storytellers and performers of the Bashkir folk epic "*Ural-Batur*" in the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation and foreign languages was organized and supervised by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bashkortostan [25].

Due to the fact that we have presented only fragments of a huge research work, we are sure that many schoolchildren will be seriously interested in the

history of the Bashkir people, folk art and environmental problems of their native land. This will allow you to prepare more seriously for the Unified State Exam and present compelling arguments when writing an essay.

Today, the morality of children is sharply declining, but in legends questions of morality and human responsibility for the state of the environment are always raised. Therefore, reading folk tales, every person is able to rethink his attitude towards nature.

We strongly recommend that modern schoolchildren study not only history, but also the folk art of their indigenous people, participate in competitions that require knowledge of the culture and traditions of their ancient ancestors, do not stop at achieved goals, always try to go further and gain new knowledge.

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## Impact Factor:

ISRA (India) = 6.317  
 ISI (Dubai, UAE) = 1.582  
 GIF (Australia) = 0.564  
 JIF = 1.500

SIS (USA) = 0.912  
 PIIH (Russia) = 3.939  
 ESJI (KZ) = 8.771  
 SJIF (Morocco) = 7.184

ICV (Poland) = 6.630  
 PIF (India) = 1.940  
 IBI (India) = 4.260  
 OAJI (USA) = 0.350

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