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AMERICAN INDIANS AND KYRGYZ: SOCIO-CULTURAL PARALLELS

АМЕРИКАЛЫК ИНДЕЙЛЕР ЖАНА КЫРГЫЗДАР: СОЦИАЛДЫК МАДАНИЯТ ПАРАЛЛЕЛДЕР

АМЕРИКАНСКИЕ ИНДЕЙЦЫ И КЫРГЫЗЫ: СОЦИОКУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ПАРАЛЛЕЛИ

Abstract. The article discusses some facts from historical background, from language status, and some culture specific issues of American Indians and Kyrgyz. The main facts deal with possible common origin of both cultures which may explain such common issues as nomadic way of life, shamanism revealing consciousness of Indians and Kyrgyz, some aspects of marriage peculiarities. Being endangered languages American Indian languages are of special interest to anthropologists, thus stressing the importance of turning to informants. The historical hardships unite these people in the aspect of suppression of Indians from new settlers and gold searchers and that of Kyrgyz from the tsarist Russia. Though they both seem not to lose the core of their culture – being strong physically in hard and severe conditions of living and at the same time conserving and observing their customs and way of life, and their mentality of kind and hospitable people.

Key words: endangered languages; culture; religious aspects; rituals; tribe; community; treatment; hardships.

Аннотация. Макалада америкалык индейлердин жана кыргыздардын тарыхый фактылары, тилдик абалы жана маданий өзгөчөлүктөрү талкууланат. Негизги фактылар эки маданияттын мүмкүн болушунча жалпы келип чыгышына байланыштуу, алар көчмөн турмушу, шаманизм, индиялыктар менен кыргыздардын аң-сезимин ачып берген, нике мүнөздөмөлөрүнүн айрым аспектилерин түшүндүрө алат. Америкалык индейлердин тилдери жоголуп бараткан тилдер болгондуктан, антропологдор үчүн өзгөчө кызыктуу, бул маалымат берүүчүлөр менен байланышуунун маанилүүлүгүн баса белгилейт. Кыргыздардын падышалык Россия тарабынан, индиялыктардын жаңы келген конуштардан жана алтын издегендердин тарабынан болгон тарыхый кыйынчылыктар бул элдерди бириктирди. Экөө тең, өзүлөрүнүн маданиятынын маңызын жоготпойт – оор жана катаал жашоо шарттарында ден-соолугу чың болуу, ошол эле учурда алардын үрп-адаттарын жана жашоо мүнөзүн, ошондой эле боорукер жана меймандос элинин менталитетин сактап кала алышты.

Түйүндүү сөздөр: жоголуп бара жаткан тилдер; маданият диний аспектилер; ырым-жырымдар; уруу; коомчулук; дарылоо; кыйынчылыктар.

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются некоторые факты из исторического прошлого, языкового статуса и некоторые культурно-специфические особенности американских индейцев и кыргызов. Основные факты касаются возможного общего происхождения обеих культур, что может объяснить такие общие черты, как кочевой образ жизни, шаманизм, раскрывающий сознание индейцев и кыргызов, некоторые аспекты брачных особенностей. Будучи исчезающими языками, языки американских индейцев представляют особый интерес для антропологов,

что подчеркивает важность обращения к информаторам. Исторические трудности объединяют этих людей в аспекте подавления индейцев от новых переселенцев и искателей золота и кыргызов из царской России. Хотя они оба, похоже, не теряют сути своей культуры - быть физически сильными в тяжелых и суровых условиях жизни и в то же время сохранять и соблюдать свои обычаи и образ жизни, а также свой менталитет добрых и гостеприимных людей.

Ключевые слова: исчезающие языки; культура; религиозные аспекты; ритуалы; племя; сообщество; лечение; трудности.

The modern world turns to cultural issues as one of the ways of conserving our history, our past, our traditions, our "selves". Industrialization, globalization and the like notions seem to overwhelm over all other aspects of life. The rapid technological development, however, shouldn't exclude cultural wealth and enrichment. Development of tourism and turning to cultural artifacts, emergence of new linguistic and cultural disciplines (linguistic anthropology being one of the most important in this aspect), prove the significance of deep studies of culture. Moreover, the studies of any language are done effectively through comparison of absolutely structurally and morphologically different languages which may be proved by SAE (Standard Average European) and Hopi languages' comparison. [1]. Thus, American Indian languages and cultures may give lots of facts in order to enrich both cultures and to understand Kyrgyz culture, for example, revealing overt and covert categories of the languages and their culture specific peculiarities.

The Indian culture being unique and special deserves a deep study and consideration in the aspect of historical, religious aspects. As any culture is studied better in comparison with absolutely different culture, it is worth to compare the historical past and the culture of two cultures located in different continents but supposedly having the same origin. According to Michigan University investigations [6], the genotypes of Indian tribes are close in origin to the genotypes of some nations in Siberia. It proves the hypothesis that the ancestors of the modern American Indians and Eskimos came to America from Asia through the "Bering Bridge". The classification of either American Indian languages, or the languages of Chukchi as that of incorporating language types [2], contribute greatly to the relevance of our research due to the fact that these languages may have one Proto language.

Another issue is that nowadays lots of endangered languages are in a close consideration of modern linguists. The reason for that maybe in an attempt to save those languages and cultures, and quite possibly, the cultures contain invaluable and unique customs and traditions, close consideration of which could shed light on different unresolvable problems of history, culture and languages, and may be even to our social organization.

American Indian languages presenting great number of incorporating languages, at the same time, are in the face of disappearing. In the historical Motherland of American Indians Hittite language is practically the last living language in the group the Yenisei language family. The last reliable fixation of the use of its closest relative - the Yugian language - dates back to the 1970s. Other related languages - Pumpumpol, Arin, Kott (Assan) - became obsolete as early as the 18th-19th centuries [3]. Though the situation is not better in the New Homeland of American Indians - The US.

In America North of Mexico, more than 50 percent of the surviving languages have fewer than 1,000 speakers each. In short, even though the Indian population north of Mexico is actually increasing, most of the aboriginal languages are slowly dying out. Only a few languages are flourishing: Navaho, spoken in New Mexico and Arizona; Ojibwa, in the northern United States and southern Canada; Cherokee, in Oklahoma and North Carolina; and Dakota-Assiniboin, in the northern portions of the midwestern United States. Bilingualism is common even in these groups [4]. There is an urgent necessity to save those languages, and as linguists we can contribute by deep studies of those cultures.

The fact of being endangered makes anthropologists turn to those representatives of older generation being more or less reliable informant to give more information about facts from their past, from what they happened to witness or happened to hear from their fathers. [5]. Here, memory played a different role in the conservation of North American native custom. By means of memory, supplemented by archaeology and linguistics, they hoped to discover what life was really like before Europeans arrived [5]. The same is practiced also in Kyrgyz culture studies, at times being as invaluable source of facts about history, language and culture. For instance, remembering seven fathers in the genealogical tree has to be provided by our previous generations.

Though the supposition that both were under pressure and suppression of other nations would be too simplistic, still, it is also something uniting them. As the Kyrgyz nation was under suppression of tsarist Russia in 1916 and lots of them escaped to China, the same way of historical suppression was witnessed by five Indians tribes who were forced to move to Oklahoma State in 1830-1840 because of the whites' interest in their lands' resources [7]. And both suffered the hardships of their journeys losing lots of ill and weak ones.

The same as many non-Oklahoma Indians because of the collective experience of tragedy and triumph, defeat and survival, destruction and reconstruction, a shared fate of having to overcome setbacks and being forced to rebuild their communities and their nations several times [8], Kyrgyz people suffered the same, but the difference is in the system of the Soviet State organization, which was to be accepted by those who remained, and the system of Chinese government which was to be accepted by those who left for China.

Any culture is developed gradually, due to great work of individuals, and any intrusion may cause the damage to it, even loss. The consequences of Indian Removal are far-reaching: to remove entire cultures from their home places is to remove and forever change many different though overlapping national literatures. Today, the majority of Native writers affiliated with the South live and

work elsewhere. And many of the earlier texts are composed by non-Native authors [9]. The same might be said about Kyrgyz culture when intrusion of tsarist Russia leading to quitting all what they acquired in the sense of cultural heritage, also, and the forbiddance of institutions in the form of shamanism led to kind of stoppage of development of definite notions.

However, hardships and suppressions even make people stronger and resolute to conserve their customs, traditions. Oklahoma Indians are steeped in this Native ethos. The tribes of Oklahoma carried the ethos, the beliefs, with them during their removals to the Indian Territory, and it sustained them while they rebuilt their fires of communities during the nineteenth century [10]. Though, the same way as it happened with Kyrgyz culture, some attributives of it was lost or acquired another form or meaning.

Manichkin Nestor A. [11] conducted studies of Kyrgyz shamanism in Togolok Moldo's works and in the field works of modern Kyrgyz ethnographers, and came to conclusion that the division to black shamans (bakshy) and white shamans (moldo) altered in the sense of "softening" the affective techniques of altered states of consciousness. Though both types of shamans have inner knowledge in themselves. The influence of the Soviet system with forbidding of religious and other rituals of Kyrgyz people didn't let scholars, also, have deep studies in this respect. Another influence is in mixing Christian and Russian names into modern Kyrgyz rituals. For example, *Isa paigambar*, etc.

Other correlations deal with consciousness of Indian and Kyrgyz people. Oklahoma Indians who hold closest to their traditional beliefs also bear witness to the influence of ghosts, spirits, and witches in their lives. Indian traditionalists believe that spiritual beings have control over their lives, and they use protective medicines and take precautions to keep themselves safe. In this kind of life, the metaphysical is more powerful than the physical world, and certain ceremonies and important rites need to be performed in order to ensure that greater powers will give protection or bestow blessings [12]. As for Kyrgyz people, Byubyu-bakshy healing by means of "medicine" which were given by the spirits of dead ancestors is not practiced now. Though, ritual actions of shamans when he communicates with spirits is still existent in some regions. For example, in Chinese region of Kyzyl-Suu [13]. Nowadays most Kyrgyz people devote themselves to Islam, thus having suspicious attitude to shamanism.

There are some correlations in the attitude to family in both cultures. Though patriarchic organization of society is most peculiar to Kyrgyz culture, there are some similarities in relation to monogamy and polygamy. Indian family was monogamic with multi-gamic practice also. However, to provide the families the husband should have been wealthy enough. The point of the multi-gamic marriages was to protect captive women, not to let women become spinsters, or to keep the birth rate. Another thing is that a man could marry his brother's wife in case of his death. [14]. These facts seem to be close to Asian family traditions, however, wife's sister becomes wife also, or cousin becomes wife, and the fact that in some tribes a wife left her husband's house finding a new husband was not and is not peculiar to Kyrgyz people.

Moreover, a woman in Northern American Indian

tribes could decide to live with her husband or not, and if she decided to divorce her husband she could prepare the saddle and other belongings of her husband at the threshold. The husband had to return to his mother without saying anything in reply. Also, women had more rights for wealth accumulation. All the earned stuff had to be brought to the mother [17]. In Kyrgyz families after the collapse of the Soviet Union lots of women became widows, lots of them had to take up the role of the person bringing home the bacon, and the role of a woman acquired a new status. Though it is levelled by Asian patriarchic social organization, and the above mentioned cases do not characterize the Kyrgyz families in general.

Kyrgyz people, alongside with love and harmony, in the process of marriage were greatly influenced by parents' opinion and the purpose of strengthening relationship between people. From this we can conclude that the Kyrgyz are more dependent on public opinion and social affairs [15]. Being Kyrgyz means being part of the community. Jamaat are communities in villages where one was born, or where he or she has extended family lives. Whenever something happens in the community one is expected to take part in it and be helpful [16]. The same is peculiar to Indian culture who had to survive and withstand outside forces.

A child was put into a cradle wrapped up very tight in Indian culture [18], the same was practiced in Kyrgyz culture. The child lying all the time had a flat back of the head. The same had to experience Kyrgyz children whose mothers were too busy with housework so that to keep the child in their hands most of their time. However, there were lots of other advantages of using it: Making bone to develop in a right way, sleeping in a quiet position, etc. [19]. So, both American Indian cradle and that of Kyrgyz had mostly good sides, and served not only to make the life of a mother and a baby easier, but, also, had advantages for physiological and mental state of both sides.

To conclude, it is worth to mention the common historical origin of American Indians and Kyrgyz, though not being proved the hypothesis seems to be evident by such cultural aspects as nomadic way of life both cultures had in the past, the community dependent attitudes in the social organization, the latter influential even on the choice of future spouse. Rituals originating from spiritual values of the both cultures framed by shamanism as religious basis determine the way people were cured, the way people had constructed their imagination about the world. The suppression experienced in different locations by different superiors didn't let extinguish, on the contrary, cultures have survived, though with elements of outside cultures. Whatever was in the past, both cultures need to be revived, developed and transferred to future generations being unique and invaluable.

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