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## Russian old-settlers Yakutia: culture and landscape<sup>1</sup>



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### Abstract

Of the example of the areal groups of Russian old-settlers (ruskoustyintsy, pokhodchane, the Amga, the Lena and the Olyekma peasants) have been reconstructed the basic socio-economic parameters, has been highlighted the traditional image of the rural cultural landscape of Yakutia. Formation a culture of life-support Russian old-settlers in the region is seen as the result of the multivariate combination of natural and cultural complex in the peripheral area of the continuum.

**Keywords:** *landscape, ethnos, culture, the system of life supplies, nature-usage, outlook, Russian old-settlers, Yakutia.*

History of the Russian population has always been one of the key themes of the historiography of Yakutia. Considering the challenges of the accession to the edge of Russia, its socio-economic and cultural development, interethnic contact, the researchers could not ignore the history of the formation and the ethno-cultural development of the Russian population, the largest region of Siberia. Even before the Revolution, travelers and scholars have noted the peculiarity of the Russian people in the Far North. Mention of the Russian inhabitants of Yakutia we find in the works of S. Krasheninnikov, F. Wrangel, A. Middendorf, H. Shchukin and others. In more details the Russian old-timers of Yakutia are described in the research of A.P. Schapova [24], which, considering the questions of the influence on Russian population of the indigenous people of Siberia, concluded the transformation of the Russian nationality in the Yakut-Russian. At the end of XIX century published works of VI Jochelson [9] FJ Cohn [11], MS Vrutsevicha [3] raise the issue of ethnic and cultural development of the Russian population of Yakutia.

Prominent place in the study of pre-revolutionary history of the Russian population of Yakutia owned Maynovu II [12-14]. In his studies, he described the vast factual material economy, daily life, social relations and culture of the Russian peasantry, the first scientifically formulated and attempted to solve the problem of metisnom (mixed) Russian-Yakut and Russian-Tungus pop-

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ulation. Despite some shortcomings, is to idealize the peasant community and the desire to diminish the development of the capitalist relations in the peasant community, his works are still a valuable resource in addressing the various issues of the peasant way of life and the history of the Russian population of Yakutia in the general.

Prerevolutionary history of the Russian population of the north-east Asia and a number of works devoted to the Soviet historians. In the papers by G. Safronov [18-20, etc.], G.P. Basharina [1-2], V.N. Ivanov [5-6], A.A. Izbekovoy [8] detailed the process of the formation Russian old people, their economic activities and inter-ethnic contacts in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres. Modern researchers V.B. Ignatiev [7] I. Romanov [16-17], T. Petrova [15] E.A. Strogova [21] first tried to identify the demographic characteristics and the main trends of the development of Russian ethno-cultural old-timers in the early stages of their existence in a regional society of Yakutia, and in the latest period. In the ethnographical Russian population of Yakutia little studied, except for a series was reprinted historical and the ethnographic essays A.G. Chikacheva devoted to old residents of the Arctic region [22].

So, for nearly four centuries that have passed after the Lena region into Russia, Yakutia has developed a permanent Russian population, which most foreign and domestic researchers categorized old resident. It should be emphasized that Russian is not a carrier of one local culture. They moved to Yakutia in different periods, with different goals, settled in different natural and climatic and socio-economic conditions of the ground, themselves came from different social classes and regions. All this has left a definite imprint on their lives and led to the creation of groups in Yakutia old resident population is significantly different from each other. Such a group of Russian old-timers like Prilenskoye peasants, Cossacks, burgers Indigirka and Kolyma, characterized by varying degrees of changes in the economic and cultural type, perceptions of local traditions, different degrees of adaptation or loss of their language and cultural traits of maternal ethnicity. The role of these groups in different periods of the history of Yakutia was not the same.

Annexation of Siberia and the rapid advancement of the Cossack troops to the east, explained the started in XVII century the Russian colonization of the vast territory of the north-east Asia. Moving a "meeting the sun", the Russian built forts, and winter hut homestead. By the end of XVII - the beginning of XVIII century on the territory of Yakutia have two centers of the complex living Russian. First - South - was in the taiga zone and covers the coast from the town of Lena River Vitim (the border with the Irkutsk region) to the city of Yakutsk and the settlements on the river Amge, as well as resulting in the end of XVIII century settlement on the river Mae. This zone tend-

ed and Russian settlements on Vilyuy. Second - north - situated in the tundra and included the towns in the lower reaches of the Kolyma River, Indigirka, Yana, Lena and Olga.

In general, the complex cultural and geographical characteristics of Yakutia was similar to the Russian North and the following parameters (by VN Kalutskovu): remoteness, marginal status, lack of landlordism, the serfdom of extreme weather conditions, a close relationship with the nature of the economic cycle; comprehensive type of economy; polyethnicity regional society, the spread of bilingualism (mostly Russian-Yakut), says (indigirschina, pohodsky, etc.) [10, p. 169-172].

However, the natural landscape features of the each zone to determine the difference of the economic-cultural types and models of the adaptation to the extreme environments of the Russian region.

The basis of the economy of the Russian peasants of the central and the western Yakutia, descendants settled on the land and the serving industrial people and planted on the land of exiles, which merged the drivers actually relocated from Siberia and Central Russia for the device in the middle of the XVIII century, Irkutsk, Yakutsk post road (this is possible attributed Yakut Cossacks), was farming - arable farming and horticulture. Land, in the contrast to other regions of Siberia, where a longer summer permitted a triple plowing plowed twice - in the spring and fall, in the late August - early September. Usually seed produced in May, and the harvest begins in August and lasts until mid-September. While yields were at the national average - 15-25 centers per hectare. These yields are the result of the almost three hundred year of the effort of the peasants Vitim-Lena agricultural area produce specific farming techniques in the permafrost. Farmers acclimated significant amount of the grain and vegetable crops, brought its own wheat variety Teremok, were popular in the Eastern Siberia. Threshing usually begins with the onset of the severe cold (at the end of January-February). Current is arranged on the frozen lake, river, or in the yard, long and frequent watering selection area with water to form a thick and smooth ice, replaces the characteristic central Russia and compacted clay smeared current [21, p. 540-541, 546-547]. Great importance in the Russian peasant farms also had livestock: the old-timers keep cows and horses, in the southern districts - sheep, pigs and some chickens. Substantial support from the hunting and fishing. Livestock equipment borrowed from the Russian natives - Yakut descendants migrated for centuries before them Turkic-Mongol tribes, who were able to adapt to the conditions of the Far North pastoral economy [19, p. 376]. However, the Russian brought into these industries some advanced tools and crafts (spit-Lithuanian, networks, guns, etc.), types of farm buildings, vehicles (assuming that the Yakuts and Evenki borrowed from Russian sledges, before that they moved exclusively top). In a more severe climatic conditions were significantly modify

traditional dwelling, clothing, food, utensils, Russian immigrants. It is in these areas occurred most significant ethno-cultural borrowing from the local Aborigines.

In the ethno-contact areas - settlements Amginskikh, suntarskikh OLYEKMINSKY "Pashennykh" peasants, the areas adjacent to the Irkutsk-Yakutsk post road - there is intense assimilation and the acculturation processes. That is when there is a cultural phenomenon "obyakuchivaniya" local Russian population. Despite the fact that Russian and Yakut population initially were significant differences in the economic and cultural type, language, way of life and culture, few settlers, their distance and total isolation from his homeland led to the fact that for them very quickly became dominant due to the local population. In areas where employment in agriculture has ceased to have ethno-differentative character, such as a settlement and AMGA Vil-yui due to replication of economic-cultural type of indigenous people, language and spiritual culture of the Yakuts, changing under the influence of regular physical type of mixed marriages, for the second half of the XIX century, the local Russian began to identify themselves as Yakutia. Sustainable national identity despite bilingualism, and sometimes even a full transition to the Yakut language, continues to keep up to date Russian old-timers Lena region, managed to retain the traditional occupation - agriculture, due to the constant influx of voluntary and involuntary immigrants from Central Russia.

Other processes occurred in the north of Yakutia. In the Arctic zone at Russian veteran has developed a comprehensive commercial farming, the main components of which were fishing, polar fox hunting, mining seals, hunting wild reindeer and lenuyu game. Later, as a latrine fishing-spread production of ivory. Originally this area of residence of Russian old-timers cover the lower reaches of the Lena River in Yakutia, Olga, Yana, Indigirka and Kolyma. Settled here, mainly industrialists and tradesmen - people from the Russian North: Usty -uzhane, Usoltsev Mezentsev holmogortsy, pinezhane and others [22, p. 10]. To date, the steady Russian identity and ethno-cultural identity of the inhabitants kept only Indigirka (russkoustintsy) and Kolyma (pohodchane), others (Ust-Olenyek peasants Verkhoyansk burgers, etc.) are fully assimilated into the local native ethnic groups - Yakuts, Evens and Evenki.

Because of the natural features of the landscape tundra with permafrost soils, lots of lakes and rivers, the average temperature of  $-15^{\circ}\text{C}$  and snow for 8-9 months, is completely absent from agriculture and livestock. The main and the main occupation of the Arctic is Russian old-timers and is fishing. The words "fish" and "food" are identical, so often you can hear the phrase "there was food," "food well hunted", "No food sit" [22, p. 36]. All fishing areas traditionally reserved for individual families. This determined the settlement structure and features veteran who settled in dis-

persed small homestead on 1-4 farms along the river. For example, russkoustintsy, according to the exiled SR V.M. Zenzinov of the early twentieth century, a residence homestead in 29, original Russian names are: the old man, Stancyk, Lobaznoe, Kosuhin, Yar Ozhogino prodigal etc. testifies to the priority and limits of development of Russian-E Arctic Yakutia [4, p. 152-154].

The main kind of transport of russkoustintsev and pohodchan were sled dogs. In the contrast to the northern Yakuts have adopted herding of the aborigines, the Russian could not master this form of the transport. Even in conditions of forced introduces the Soviet period in the breeding of deer farms, russkoustintsy, for example, hired to care for them Yukagirs [23, p. 56]. The reason was here, obviously, in the need of the development of reindeer nomadism, that Russian meant a radical change not only the life support system, but the whole mentality.

Livestock or dogs were called skotina - flock, all about sled dogs asserted, in terms of the horse breeding. They used a method of the arranging the pair of dogs in harness, unlike fan-Nenetskiy and harp. Markedly different from the other residents of Yakutsk area of the home (in the direction from west to east, with two doors opening to the inside in case of drifts during a blizzard), Compound (more precisely, it is lacking in its traditional sense), clothing, food, particularly commercial activities Russian old residents of the Arctic. In the spiritual culture and russkoustintsy pohodchane had significantly more borrowing from indigenous peoples (eg, custom nimat - compulsory equal division of spoils among all members of the community, including the sick and young, hunting parties, known as attempts russkoustintsev become shamans, etc.). In Central Yakutia, where the position of the Russian Orthodox Church were more stable, Russian, despite the observance of certain rituals Yakut (feeding spirits hunting, making ribbons on trees, honoring sacred trees), in the home remained committed to their own customs and traditions.

However, it is the Kolyma-Indigirka old-group, despite its small size (at the beginning of the twentieth century, there were just over 2000 people, in the contrast to the southern group - about 25 thousand people) was able to the maintain much of their material culture, the original identity of the old native language and the identity. The main role was played here likely that severo russkim settlers did not have drastically change its economic-cultural type. Therefore, despite the presence of the constant contact with the local population, this group has not progressed beyond the stage of the ethnic adaptation.

In the twentieth century, with the beginning of the intensive industrial development of Yakutia, a significant influx of Russian and of other peoples of the former Soviet Union led to a "smearing" of the ethnic identity of Russian old-timers. According to the census of 2010, in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) live 353,649 people, who called themselves Russian. The whole mass

of the modern Russian population of the region can be divided into two groups: immigrants who arrived in Yakutia during its industrial development, starting from 20 years of the twentieth century, and their descendants, as well as current workers; Russian old-timers, whose ancestors settled in Yakutia XVII-XVIII centuries. To establish the exact number of each of these components is not possible, as separate statistics never conducted. It should be noted that according to the Constitution of Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) (Article 42), Russian, and other old-timers have equal rights to indigenous people and they are guaranteed their preservation and regeneration.

On the other hand, the surge of the ethnic identity of the people of the republic in the 90s of the last century was the catalyst for the consolidation processes among Russian veteran Yakutia. The result was independent design, independent of other social organizations of Russian-speaking population of the region, associations (Yakut Cossack Regiment, "The descendants of the sovereign's coachmen," Union of Russian veteran of Sakha (Yakutia), "Russkoustintsy" etc.). Upon recommendation of the leaders of these organizations, the law of Sakha (Yakutia) "List of indigenous peoples and places (areas) they are concentrated in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)" dated April 11, 2000 in the list, as a traditional lifestyle, have been included Russian old-timers in the Arctic (and russkoustintsy pohodchane) with spread to them the rights and benefits entitlement. However, already in 2004, due to the policy of bringing regional laws into line with federal law, Russian old-timers from the list of the indigenous peoples of Yakutia were excluded.

Problems of the interaction between the ethnicity, landscape and culture are among the pressing problems of the humanities. Multivariancy combination of the natural and cultural components, diverse lexical, economic, and ideological patterns led to the creation of the unique economic and cultural systems, one of the clearest manifestations of which is the culture of Yakutia Russian old-timers.

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