

# INFLUENCE OF YAKUT PHILOSOPHY ON ALAMPA'S POETRY

## ВЛИЯНИЕ МИРОВОЗЗРЕНИЯ НАРОДА САХА НА ПОЭЗИЮ АЛАМПА

### ALAMP ŞİİRLERİNE SAHA HALK FELSEFESİNİN ETKİSİ

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#### ABSTRACT

Alampa is the pioneer of social and philosophical lyric poetry in Yakutia. He shows in his works a complex world of his time, on the basis of folk wisdom and worldview of Yakut people. The character and mentality of the Yakut nation are clearly reflected in his poetry. The poet thinks a lot about the meaning of life, a man's place in the world and his essence, the problem of an individual and his role in society. He sees the destiny of a man, the meaning of his life in a peaceful, happy life with his family, in satisfaction of his urgent needs and procreation, which corresponds to national notions of happiness.

**Keywords:** Yakut Poetry, Pantheism, The Meaning Of Life, Human Values.

#### АННОТАЦИЯ

Алампа – зачинатель социально-философской лирики в якутской поэзии. В своих произведениях он показал сложный мир своего времени на основе народной мудрости, мировоззрения народа саха. В его поэзии ярко отразился характер, менталитет якутской нации. Поэт много думал о смысле жизни, сущности, месте человека в этом мире, проблеме личности, его роли в обществе. Он видел назначение человека, смысл его жизни в мирной, счастливой жизни в кругу семьи, в удовлетворении его насущных потребностей и продолжении рода, что соответствует народным представлениям о счастье.

**Ключевые Слова:** Якутская Поэзия, Пантеизм, Смысл Жизни, Общечеловеческие Ценности.

#### ÖZET

Alampa – Yakut şiirciliğinde sosyal-felsefevi lirikin kurucusudur. Kendisi eserlerinde Sahaların dünya görüşlerine ve hikmetine dayalı yaşadığı dönemin karmakarışık halini sergiler. Şiirlerinde Yakut milletinin karakteri ile mentalitesini ortaya koyulmuştur. Şair hayatın önemi, anlamı, insanın bu alemdeki görevi ve toplumdaki yeri, birey problemi hakkında fazlasıyla düşünmüştür. Kendisine göre halk düşüncelerinde olduğu gibi insanın

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görevi ve hayatın anlamı aile ortamında mutluluk içerisinde yaşamak, güncel problemleri çözmek ve nesileri devam ettirmektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yakut Şiiri, Panteizm, Hayat Anlamı, İnsanlığa Ait Genel Değerler.

According to researchers, the power of a great master is not in a perception and embodiment of existing concepts, but in his independent search of a most truthful and impressive reflection of reality, a distinctive disclosure of its new aspects, and its development. Anempodist Ivanovich Sofronov - Alampa is the considered a founder of the social and philosophical lyric poetry of Yakutia, who affected in his poems such philosophical questions as issues of morality, patriotism and civic duty. The researchers also noted a conscious historicism, high artistry, intense psychology and national identity of Alampa's poetry, and perceive him as one of the first artists of the Yakut words, who expressed national mentality.

The founder of the Yakut drama, a talented poet and prose writer, literary critic, translator, journalist – Anempodist Sofronov (1886-1935) shared the sad fate of his generation of writers whose works did not fit the Procrustean bed of political ideology. The writer was born in Boturussky ulus in a family of a prosperous farmer. Before the Revolution, he served as a clerk of a fish merchant. In the years 1912-1913 in a magazine "Voice of the Yakut," where he was in the Editorial Board, were printed his first literary works: the poem "Homeland", short stories, translations of Ivan Krylov, Vyacheslav Shishkov. In 1914 he wrote the drama "Poor Jacob." After the revolution of 1917, Alampa productively engaged in socio-political, cultural and educational work: he was chairman of the Cultural and Educational Society "Sakha Omuk", chairman of the association "Down with Illiteracy!", a member of the Council on the organization of the Yakut literature, a member of the Research Society "Sakha Keskile ", editor of the first newspaper of the Yakut - "Manchary ", editor of the literary and social magazine "Cholbon". He was the founder and first director of the Yakut theater and State cinema. Alampa was also a delegate to the first Congress of Soviets, a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> convocation of Yakutian Central Executive Committee, delegate to the 1<sup>st</sup> Turkological congress, held in Baku. In 1927 Anempodist Sofronov was arrested on false charges of involvement in the "conspiracy of confederalists" and exiled from the Republic. He was held in Novosibirsk, Kazan then Butyrskaya prisons and served a five-year exile in the Arkhangelsk and Irkutsk provinces. In 1933, he returned home seriously ill with tuberculosis. Anempodist Sofronov died October 24, 1935. He was reinstated for lack of evidence in November 15, 1962.

Yakut writer lived and worked in a complex historical era - the era of radical change in the destiny of the country and its people, which naturally was reflected in his deeply original works. This led to the formation of his perception of the world and had left its tragic mark on his artistic and personal destiny. In fact, he shared the sad fate of his generation of writers whose works could not fit the Procrustean bed of political ideology. His name for decades was derived from the literary process. It was only in the mid 90's, that readers and researchers were finally able to fully embrace his creative legacy.

Like no one else in the Yakut literature Sofronov-writer was a spokesman of the innermost thoughts, anguishes and hopes of his people. His prose, drama and poetry played

a fundamental role in the establishment and further development of Yakut literature. And as a poet, not only he succeeded to convey his attitude, his sense and comprehension of life that goes back to the traditional world and the spiritual heritage of the Yakut people in a clearly defined national form, but also he managed to do an enormous job to upgrade, and define identity of the Yakut verse. Particularly in the lyric poetry, which is distinguished by a high artistic level, are reflected the moral and philosophical views, ethical principles and aesthetic values of the writer.

Sofronov is representative of the poetry of natural philosophy, which is based on the pantheistic worldview. According to the beliefs of the Yakuts, everything surrounding a human being in this world is animated, whether it's a fire in the fireside, yurt, grass, flowers, forest, or a mountain. "Yakut does not consider himself the master of nature, he is only a part of it, and everything around him is treated with respect, pantheistic faith in an animate nature" (Semyonova, 2011: 127). Yakut idea about nature, where man appears as an integral part of the infinite space and time, were a specific key to understanding the world for the poet. In his works the poet reflected the fusion of nature and the inner world of a man. For example:

In the blue sky I shall ascend,  
And will get to the heavenly stars...  
I will wake up the stellar silence.  
I will stroke the moon with my hand...  
I'll find the deepest point  
Of the Blue Ocean  
And get an armful of  
Fish and underwater monsters...  
And then I'm going to whisper...  
With the most matchless  
Decoration of the earth -  
With flowers ...

(Transl. Listen. V.Solouhina) (Sofronov, 1984: 74)

The deification of nature, the inspiration by his powers, the spiritual unity of man and nature - these are the views embodied in the works of Alampa. He compares man's life to the fate of a fir-tree ("Spruce"), the larch ("Deadwood", "Whirlwind"), the flower ("In the rays of the sun"), the falcon ("Falcon"), etc. Poet idealized worship of nature as a symbol of eternal epitome of beauty and harmony, and thus, compared the image of a woman with a snowdrop or birch, her hair to rainbow and her gait to the stream. The natural is often endowed with features and qualities of the lyrical persona

Material and the spiritual are closely intertwined in his poetry. According to Sofronov, everything in the world has a common natural basis, everything that surrounds us is a living and intelligent, every object has a soul. The soul can live a separate life: soar in the clouds, enter the water, and it can also feel the invisible. Thus, in his early poem "Homesickness" a

soul of the lyrical persona, in a form of an eagle reaches the native Alas<sup>1</sup> and admires the beauty of the wide open spaces dear to his heart. It was also noted by the researcher N.N.Toburokov: "The poet does not turn himself into a wise bird, as it is done folk tales, but reaches his native alas with "power of thought" and imagination". (Toburokov, 1993: 117).

In his poetry sometimes one can detect a concern that the natural and living might be replaced by the mechanical and artificial. He does not want to be separated from the land, to lose touch with his roots. In his works, like in the works of the anti-urban-minded peasant writers, always lives the dream of returning to his homeland and the desire to live the life of the common people. This is reflected in the poem "From the other countries" (1925), "Letter to Father" (1926), "Dream" (1926). For example:

I would escape, I would leave

The treacherous,

The bustling city...

Would spend the rest of life,

In a low and miserable

Yakut yurt,

Covered with manure,

I would drink milk

And avoid the needless\*.

(Dream)

\* (Further my interlinear)

And in the poem "Harmony" (1926), he explicitly says that it is impossible to connect the incompatible, artificially regulate natural process and the nature. The poet seeks harmony of social and community life and the individuals.

Many researchers of Sofronov's poetry highlight the fact that the character and mentality of the Yakut nation were especially vividly reflected in his lyric poems. However he was a great writer, and did not limit the scope of his subjects by the national issues, but moved on, rethinking the eternal questions that preoccupied all the humanity for eternity. He thought a lot about the essence of a man's place in the world, the problem of an individual and his role in society, the meaning of life. For example, in the poem "The Man" (1921) he states that the person in this world is a guest, as we are all mortal. That is why during our brief stay on earth we should live without strife, peacefully:

In those few days

of existence on earth

it would be good

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<sup>1</sup>Alas - a steep-sided depression formed by the melting of permafrost which is found primarily in Yakutia; it contains a lake and is covered with grasses and other herbaceous vegetation. Alases are often used for pasturage for horses as well as hay-fields and thus usually inhabited by farmers (translator's note).

to feed and live,  
swearing no one, not being angry.

The main object of Alampa's poetry is a human life, with its contradictory manifestations. Internal genetic predisposition to the spiritual teachings of his people is reflected in his work. Thus in Sofronov's poetry a prominent place is occupied by poems about morality, about human behavior in different situations. If you connect all those elements of world perception, that are scattered in various works of the poet, and arrange them into a harmonious system, you can get a code of traditional morality, which reflects the philosophical, ethical, aesthetic and pedagogical views of the Yakut people. Thus the poet's works represent a record of the living memory of the people. These concepts are based on the everyday folk wisdom, and it is no mere chance that they sound and are understood as proverbs; the Yakut philosopher Teris calls them "notch verses": "Truth is gold", "Name and rank in this world are a powerful team," "In the woods trees are not the same", "The past, even alarming, is more precious than gold" etc. Alampa saw the destiny of man, the meaning of his life in a peaceful, happy life within his family, in satisfaction of his urgent needs and the reproduction of the kin, which corresponds to the national representations of happiness.

And for the comprehension of human happiness it is necessary to eliminate the evil. According to Sofronov, the evil in the bloodshed, violence, envy, oppression, lies, selfishness, betrayal, drinking, which come from the depravity of the world. Teris, who believed Sofronov to be one of the founders of the "Kut-sur" teaching - an Ethical school of Yakuts, writes: "Why do we call his poetry a teaching? Because Alampa teaches us how to live. He points out that the lie has many faces. The man in this life cannot escape losses. But do not lie, do not make evil. The person should be honest. Life is the service of Truth" (Afanasyev-Teris, 1995:4).

As is known, "Yakut philosophy, with its whole being and its whole essence, exalts the man, helps him find his spiritual niche in a changing world, providing moral and ethical guideline" (Utkin, 2000:177).

The same way in the poetry of Alampa one can distinguish poems-teaching. In such didactic writings is clearly seen the value orientation of the poet: the purpose of man on earth - to do good, to improve spiritually, reach enlightenment. Poems-teaching helps to understand man's place in the world, to realize the inestimable value of life, to abstain from immoral behavior, instruct people on the good way.

The problem of relationship between the individual and society Alampa considers basing on eternal concepts of folk wisdom. In Yakut folklore there are many proverbs that express the idea that a man can not be separated from society, "Rabbit in the forest will not perish, a man among men will not die", "Man is alive by people", "Fish in the water does not sink, a person with family and friends, does not experience hardships", etc. A human being can not exist apart. The poet celebrates the dependence of an individual from others. He will fail or succeed depending on how the people around will treat him. Alampa shows the negative role of human vices and bad consequences in the life of man in verses "Slandered", "Whose fun ...", "To be slandered..." and others. Warning against dangerous vices: drinking, gambling, greed is expressed in his great poem "Brothers". These works help the reader understand inestimable value of life and the necessity of refraining from immoral acts. Poems "Irkutsk" (1931), "The warm shrug" etc. tell about kind attitude of a

man to man, sympathy and support which inspire optimism and confidence. However in poetry of Sofronov people are not divided into good or bad. There are character traits that merely do not conform to the ideal of the poet, but the person is always more important to him than his beliefs. His views on the concepts of good and evil are reflected in his poem "Conversation of a man with a boy".

The depth and significance of the poet's attitude are reflected as well in philosophical poems dedicated to the eternal themes of life. Reflections on the fate of man, the meaning of his life, mental suffering, death and new life can be traced in many of his works. Alampa explores life in all its manifestations, raising the eternal in people's philosophy questions of life and death, good and evil, immortality, and the frailty of human existence. He meditated a lot on such timeless concepts as life and death. The poet also approaches the death from the point of view of his ancestors, who claim that "one does not die together with the dead". According to the beliefs of the Yakuts, death is a necessary reality, the condition of the appearance of a new human being. In the poem "If you think," it is stated that death is terrible and woeful. But if you think about it, there is nothing on the Earth, "in the Middle world" that does not die, that is not exhausted. And thus it is concluded:

One should not strongly grieve  
About the deceased,  
It is no good in crying  
For the dead.

Each phenomenon poet perceives dialectically, from different points of view. For example, in the works "Being a merchant," "Still" "Money", is being stated the idea that there is no evil without good, and no good without evil; that being rich and famous is good, but all this tinsel leads also to disaster, misfortune:

An abundance of money is good,  
But the fever of money  
Is wild and rampant.  
To have the power  
Is useful sometimes,  
But if you think about it,  
Happiness is not here.  
(Being a merchant)

However, being poor while free, is also bad. And Alampa indicates the middle way, the best way out - to live, without being carried away, without transient things. In many works, he points out a pattern of alternation of good and evil in the life - internal movement and development of a person as a continuous sequence of ups and downs, rises and crises. Grief and sorrow stimulate thought and feeling:

When you are in grief and trouble,  
When you sit in sorrow,  
Hearty, stout verse,  
Is suddenly born.

And if you  
Joyful and glad  
And if you  
Play and have fun,  
And everything is easy,  
Nothing and no one to be afraid of  
The bright, colorful thoughts  
Will not be born in my head,  
The passionate, hot feelings  
Will not be swarming in my soul...  
("When you are in grief and trouble")

In this respect, the Yakut people have their views expressed in proverbs and sayings: "The difficulties teach a lot", "The hardships will teach anyone anything". On this basis, Sofronov argues, that the difficulties temper a person, he becomes wiser. These poems are written in the form of an argument with oneself. Many philosophical works of Alampa are written in a form of a dialogue, where the lyrical theme is solved in an antinomy, a collision of two points of view, and in these doubts and contradictions is born a movement of thought ("Happiness and Woe", "Conversation between two people", "Talk between Sacred Mountains," etc.) .

Sofronov was the first to introduce into the structure of the literary work so-called "notch formula", or resistant formula - ethical concepts of the Yakut people carrying the ideological and aesthetic functions. The ancient folk wisdom contained in these formulas often becomes the main carrier of the semantic load of the work. They reflect the philosophical and ideological views, moral, ethical and pedagogical views of the people. The famous Yakut researcher P.A. Sleptsov first noted the presence of poems in Alampa's work, which is almost entirely composed of a measured stanzas of aphoristic content that are inextricably linked with the realities of life and folklore formulas (Sleptsov, 1986:91). Teris said: "The Yakut people enclosed their thoughts concluded in notch-verses. There are plenty of such verses. They were created over thousands of years and have concentrated in themselves the knowledge of nature and of human nature. Alampa understood the meaning of notch-verses and created his works using them "Afanasyev-Teris, 1995: 11). Here are some of them:

In the Middle world  
All that is made falls,  
All that is created dies,  
Eternity does not dominate,  
Unbreakable is not created,  
All that is bequeathed is worn out.  
Happiness comes  
From there, where one was born,

Glory depends  
On one's native land,  
Name is heard,  
Depending on the kin.

Formulaic expressions, perfected by people over the centuries, Sofronov remade, according to his own views and put into a poetic turn of speech, filling them with a new social content.

In the work Alampa sometimes are noted some existential motifs. The idea of the tragic existence of the individual in the world, which is present in his poetry, is closely linked with the social disasters of the time, the confusion in personal life of the writer and, finally, the endless harassment and groundless arrests and exiles. This fact was noted by critics of past years: Kyunde - fatalism and mysticism (Kyunde, 1926: 3), G.M.Vasilev-pessimism (Vasilev, 1965: 4). Still, in poetry of Alampa through dramatic pathos and high tragic intensity, can be traced love to life and the life-affirming principle. Realistically reflecting the life, the author emphasizes the resilience and nobility of a man, his spirit and greatness of mind. In the poem "Letter to Father" (1928-1929), written in prison in Novosibirsk, the poet says that no matter how hard and difficult, life really is beautiful and worth living, and there is always hope for the best:

I threw away the rope,  
Properly tightened,  
Pushed away  
Blade, cutting my throat.  
Preferred to spend life  
In the battle,  
I reached for the sun,  
Raving the light.

One may note the multiple aspects of content of the works of the Yakut poet, which is also inspired by the traditions and folklore. Some of the work is a deployed allegory with figurative description: "Talk between Sacred Mountains", "The answer to the picture", "Guess".

In poetry of Alampa are reflected echoes of ancient Eastern beliefs, which genetically stored in the historical memory of the people. These are the pantheistic attitude toward nature, the law of karma retribution (Upanishads), one of the tenets of Buddhism - life is suffering. According to Buddhism troubles and misfortunes of people are caused by their desires, and desires are endless, and the subject of them tends to change. According to Sofronov, life is not easy, because:

Everyone having a head  
Wishes for honor,  
All the two-legged  
Strive for fame...



He advises in many works to live according to conscience, life of a person depends on himself. For example:

You will be fed if  
You work without distractions; If you create  
Your happiness,  
By yourself, you will  
Go up in the world.

(Conversation of a man with a boy)

Eastern philosophy draws attention to the inner world of the individual. Creative work of Alampa comes in touch with it on this side; he is regarded as a philosopher, researcher of the soul, the nature of man. All of this came from the depths of his understanding of the world, from the innate aesthetic criteria, the genesis of which is associated with ancient memory kept in the blood. The aesthetic ideals of the people, at the same time, form the writer's own notions about Fine. The philosophical aspects of Alampa's creative work are becoming increasingly important in the modern era of spiritual rebirth of the people. His works open up new possibilities in the artistic comprehension of the philosophical depths of the human being and allow to open, to show the complex world of his time on the basis of the people's wisdom and philosophy of the Yakut people.

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