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THE BURYAT INFLUENCE ON THE BARGUZIN EVENKI PEOPLE AND THEIR LANGUAGE

BARGAZIN EVENKİ HALKI VE DİLİ ÜZERİNDEKİ BURYAT ETKİSİ



The Barguzin Evenki people, a small Tungusic group, live in the territory of Buryatia, Russia. In spite of the fact that they have lived among Buryats for quite a long period, they have preserved their language and culture. All of them are trilingual: they speak Evenki, Buryat and Russian.

In August 2009, I had the opportunity to carry out fieldwork¹ among the Barguzin Evenki people of the Kurumkan Region of Buryatia in Russia, where I experienced in person some of the specific grammatical features of the language and some of the peculiarities of the material culture.² In this paper I would like to present a short overview of the Barguzin Evenki people and on some linguistic criteria which help to distinguish late Mongolic (or Buryat) borrowings from the early loanwords.

Geographical position

Today the Barguzin Evenki people are a settled group inhabiting the northern part of the Barguzin Valley near Lake Baikal. They live in the village of Suvo in the Barguzin Region and in the villages of Alla and Ulyunkhan in the Kurumkan Region of the Buryat Republic. They number approximately 370 persons.

The area lies in the Barguzin Valley, and stretches between the Ikat and the Barguzin mountain ridges. The village of Alla, where I carried out my fieldwork, lies 40 km north of Kurumkan, the centre of the

Kurumkan Region, while from Kurumkan to Ulan-Ude, the capital of Buryatia, the distance is 412 km. This area is encircled by high mountains and abounds in rivers and forests.

Besides of the Barguzin Evenkis, on the territory of Buryatia, the Evenki people live in North-Baikal and Baunt regions. All these territories are situated in the northern part of Buryatia. Their total number in Buryatia is approximately 800 (Bulatova 2002: 268; Burykin &



¹ The report on my fieldwork was published in *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher* 24 (see Khabtagaeva 2010/2011).

² I am deeply grateful to my informants Baranova Avgustina Lavrent'evna (born in 1928), Delbonova Anna Nikolaevna (born in 1940), Berel'tueva Engel'sina Mukhanaevna (born in 1948) and Malakshinova Lyubov' Batorovna (born in 1958).

Parfenova 2003: 642), but their exact distribution is unknown.³

Naming of the Barguzin Evenki people

The Barguzin Evenkis sharply distinguish themselves from the Baunt and North-Baikalian Evenkis. While the Baunt Evenkis are called *oričēn* ‘reinder-breeders’, the North-Baikalian Evenkis are called *nyēu oričēn* ‘the northern reinder-breeders’. In the literature, the North-Baikalian Evenkis are known as *lamučēn* ‘fishermen’ from the Evenki word *lamu* ‘sea’.

Although the Barguzin Evenkis identify themselves as *ewenki*, they have been given various names, such as *xamnigan* or *murčēn*. The Buryats generally call them *xamnigan*, which is not identical with the Mongolian Khamnigans.⁴ The other name, *murčēn*, stems from their lifestyle. The Barguzin Evenkis were once nomadic or horse breeders like the Mongolic people, their lifestyle was adopted from Mongolic people.⁵

Today, the Barguzin Evenkis and the Buryats in this territory are no longer nomadic and live in villages. As the Barguzin Evenkis told me, their houses, food, clothes and customs are the same as those of the Buryats; only their languages differ. Similar findings were noted in the Barguzin historical chronicle of 1887: “The Barguzin Evenkis and the Buryats live in houses in winter, and in yurtas in summer; they keep animals and are engaged in agriculture...” (Vostrikov & Poppe 2007: 76).

³ Linguistically, there are two dialectal groups in Buryatia. The Baunt and the North-Baikal dialects belong in the southern sibilant group, but the Baunt dialect represents the hissing type (*s-*, *VsV*), whereas the North-Baikal dialect exhibits features of the hushing type (*š-*, *VšV*). In turn, the Barguzin dialect belongs in the eastern sibilant-spirant (*s-*, *VhV*) group.

⁴ The Mongolian Khamnigan people live scattered across the Trans-Baikalian region in the Aga National District of Chita Province (Damdinov 1968: 1974); in the north-eastern part of Mongolia in the Khentei Province (Kõhalmi 1959: 163); and in the north-eastern part of China, in the Khulun Buir Province (Janhunnen 1990: 11–12). Since their language has preserved many archaic features, the Khamnigan Mongol language is considered to be one of the archaic Mongolic languages (Janhunnen 2003: 83–101).

⁵ The terminology of livestock-breeding abounds in Mongolic loanwords (e.g. the names of domestic animals or their body parts), which are otherwise absent from other Evenki dialects.

Language status and use

Sociolinguistic researches carried out in Buryatia indicated that 70% of the Evenki people can speak the Evenki language (Burykin & Parfenova 2003: 642). Unfortunately, these statistical data are not in accord with the situation I experienced during my fieldwork. I found the number of active speakers to be much lower.



In Buryatia, the standard Evenki language is taught as a compulsory subject in eight elementary schools and as an optional subject in eight grammar schools. It is also taught in the Sunday school of the Evenki cultural centre *Arun* in Ulan-Ude. Since 1991, the standard Evenki language has been taught at the Department of the Northern Aboriginal languages (in Russian *kafedra korennyx narodov Severa*) of Buryat State University, where it is possible to earn a qualification as a teacher of the Evenki language and literature. Here only one hour per week of Evenki language teaching is provided. Every week, there are 20- and 30-minute broadcasts on the Buryat radio and television, respectively.

This situation relates to the Barguzin Evenkis also. All of the Barguzin Evenki children study Literary Evenki in the secondary school, which means 5 hours per week. However, the fact is that this relatively high number of lessons per week does not help them to learn the Evenki language very well, because Literary Evenki and Barguzin Evenki differ from each other in a considerable number of phonetic and lexical features. It follows that members of the families can not help the children in their studies. Of course, the families themselves are to blame as well, because most of the parents speak with their children in Buryat.

There are many reasons for the Buryat assimilation. The first is the great majority of the Buryat society. Officially, there are 1,066 inhabitants of the village of Alla, who are composed of three groups: 75 Russians (7%), 114 Evenkis (11%) and 877 Buryats (82%). Both the Evenkis and the Russians speak Buryat perfectly. The number of Evenki speakers with native competence is only 17, all aged above 50.

The next reason for Buryat assimilation is the mixed marriages with Buryats. The Barguzin Evenkis have seven different clans. The genealogy and the name of the clan play important roles in a person's life, because their societies are exogamous: marriage within one clan is not allowed. All Barguzin Evenkis know their genealogical tree very well, usually up to nine generations. Exogamy explains the high number of mixed marriages with Buryats. It is noteworthy that children born in such mixed families can not speak the Evenki language.

In spite of this difficult situation, the young generation and children have a strong national self-awareness.

The Barguzin Evenki clans

Information about the Barguzin Evenki clans, based on archive materials from the 18th and 19th centuries was published by Poppe (1933), Dolgix (1960) and Shubin (Šubin 1973: 8-21). Poppe (1933: 39) divided the clans into four tribes:

- a) the *mungal* tribe, including the *galdyōgir*, *čongōgir* and *asivagat* clans;
- b) the *balikāgir* tribe, including the *balikāgir* clan;
- c) the *limāgir* tribe, including the *limāgir* and *tepkōgir* clans;
- d) the *čil'čāgir* tribe, including the *yokōl* and *čolkōgir* clans.

My informants stated that the Barguzin Evenkis are members of seven clans: *balikāgir*, *limāgir*, *tepkōgir*, *kindigir*, *gald'ōgir*, *čongōgir* and *asivagat*. The *čil'čāgir* tribe is currently unknown among the Barguzin Evenkis, but the *yokōl* and *čolkōgir* clans are represented among the North-Baikalian Evenkis. Poppe did not give any information about the *kindigir* clan. According to Dolgix, the *kindigir* clan belongs in the „reindeer” Evenki group, together with the *čil'čāgir* clan (Dolgix 1960: 308; Šubin 1973: 11; 15). Vasilevich wrote that this clan was present from the 17th to the early 20th century on the vast territory ranging from the upper part of the River Angara to the western part of the Amur (Vasilevič 1969: 270).

The Mongolic influence is well observable even in the designation of the clans of the *mungal* tribe. The *galdyōgir*, *čongōgir* and *asivagat* clans are of Buryat origin and were added to the Barguzin Evenki clans during the 18th century (Dolgix 1960: 308). It is considered that the designation *galdyōgir* originates from the Khori-Buryat *galzūd* clan, *čongōgir* from the Selenga-Buryat *congōl* clan and *asivagat* from the Selenga-Buryat *ašibagad* clan (Poppe 1933: 39; Šubin 1973: 16). Širokogoroff considered that only the *galdyōgir* clan belonged in the *mungal* tribe, and the *asivagat* clan was an old tribe of Tungusic origin (Širokogoroff 1933: 133).

One of my informants, the 82-year-old Avgustina Lavrent'evna Baranova, told me the legend relating to how her clan, the *galdyōgir*, originated from the Buryats and became Evenki only four generations ago. The genealogical tree of her family appears in the following way:

- Daiwan (original Buryat name, probably he was of Buryat nationality).
- Dyālakan-Zayātu (cf. Buryat *zayātai* ‘with luck, good fated, happy’ < *zayā* ‘fate, fortune’).
- Urtei (cf. Buryat *ūretei* ‘with children’ < *ūre* ‘seed; child’).
- Seridek (cf. Mongolic: LM *seri-* ‘to awaken, revive; to recover consciousness; to become sober’).
- Girkiwūl (cf. Evenki ‘walker’ < *girki-* ‘to go’).
- Tuksawūl (cf. Evenki ‘running man’ < *tuksa-* ‘to run’).
- Turāki (cf. Evenki ‘crow’).
- Mikulai (cf. Russian Christian name of man *Nikolaj*).
- Lavrentij (Russian Christian name of man)
- Avgustina (Russian Christian name of woman).

The last three names are real Russian Christian names.

The Barguzin Evenki clans were headed by the *taisā*-s (← Buryat *taiša*) or elders, who were elected by the population, but approved by the governors. They were responsible for the collection of the taxes and the execution of the instructions of the administration, and they also tried the people of their clan for various offences, except serious crimes. The administrative system established in this

way was based on the self-administration of the Evenkis as guided by their common law, and observance of the traditions and customs of the people.



Religion

Three religious systems are present among the Barguzin Evenkis: Shamanism, Orthodox Christianity and Buddhism.

Traditionally, the religious beliefs of the Evenkis were based on Shamanism. The rich Barguzin Evenki folklore is preserved in the form of historical tales, legends, myths and folk tales, based on animistic concepts (see Voskoboinikov 1958; Zayceva, Intigrinova & Protopova 1999; Afanas'eva 1999). Today, most of the Barguzin Evenkis are Buddhists, similarly to the situation among the Buryats. They regularly take part in both the Buddhist and Shamanist ceremonies. In communist and socialist times, religion was prohibited, and all temples were closed and destroyed. From 1991, many new dachans were built in different parts of Buryatia and a re-flourishing of the religious life is observable. Recently, a large Buddhist monastery was built in Kurumkan.

The small part of Barguzin Evenkis had been christianized. An important feature of the Russian influence appeared in the proselytization to Christianity, which started at the end of the 17th century. Their Christianity, however, was essentially formal, most of the Barguzin Evenkis remaining shamanists (Vostrikov & Poppe 2007: 76). In the village of Alla, I had the opportunity to learn from Avgustina Baranova that she and her family had been christianized. As she told me, the Barguzin Evenkis „put a cross on their necks because of one slice of bread”. She showed me her copper neck-

cross, which „kept her safe throughout her life“. There was an Orthodox church in the village of Ulyun until 1930.

Buryat elements in Barguzin Evenki

Barguzin Evenki belongs in the eastern dialect group of the Evenki language,⁶ Evenki belonging in the northern Tungusic branch, together with the Lamut and the Negidal languages⁷ (Ligeti 1948; Cincius 1949: 35; Benzing 1955: 9–10; Doerfer 1978: 4-5; Atkine 1997: 111). The Tungusic languages together with Turkic and Mongolic form the Altaic language family.

Research on Barguzin Evenki dialect

The first researcher of the Barguzin Evenki dialect was Nicholas Poppe. In 1927, he published a short grammatical description and five tales.⁸ Nine years later, on the basis of the material of Poppe, Gorcevskaia (1936) compiled a grammar, including phonetic, morphological and syntactical descriptions. Although her work is more detailed, one of its shortcomings is that it was based on one speaker only. Some material on the Barguzin Evenki appeared in the famous Evenki–Russian Dictionary of Vasilevich (Vasilevič 1958). Recently some dialectal data are included in the small Evenki–Russian thematic dictionary of Afanas'eva (2004).

Phonetic criteria

There are more than 300 traceable Mongolic loanwords in Barguzin Evenki.⁹ The research results show that most of the Mongolic elements in Evenki belong in the oldest layer. In spite of the fact that the Barguzin Evenkis have lived among Buryats for centuries, most of the Mongolic elements in their language exhibit the ancient 'daguroid'¹⁰ peculiarities, and not Buryat. Below I present some phonetic criteria which help distinguish the Mongolic loanwords that belong in the early layer or in the later Buryat layer.

⁶ The Evenki language in Russia has 51 sub-dialects, which can be divided into northern, southern and eastern groups. The main criterion used during the classification of the dialects is the fate of the Common-Tungusic consonant *s in initial and intervocalic positions. The representations *h*, *s* and *š* appear in the three groups. Literary Evenki is based on the Poligus sub-dialect, which belongs in the southern or sibilant group, showing the hissing type (*s*-, *VsV*).

⁷ The Tungusic languages may be divided into two big branches:

1. The northern branch: Evenki, Even (or Lamut) and Negidal;
2. The southern branch:
 - a. The Manchuric group: Jurchen (Old Manchu), Manchu and its sole living remnant Sibe ~ Sibó;
 - b. The Amuric group: Nanai, Ulcha, Oroch, Oroch and Udehe.

⁸ His material was collected in 1925–1926 in Leningrad, from a native Barguzin Evenki student, Panteleimon Nikolaevich Baranov (Poppe 1927), the uncle of my informant Avgustina Lavrent'evna Baranova. She had not heard about the Evenki material collected by Nicholas Poppe, the reason probably being that from 1945 until the 1990s Nicholas Poppe was on the index of prohibited writers in the Soviet Union. Panteleimon Baranov presumably kept his connection with Poppe secret.

⁹ I deal in detail with Mongolic loanwords in Barguzin Evenki in a separate paper, which appeared in *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 63/1 (see Khabtagaeva 2010).

¹⁰ This term was introduced by Doerfer (1985: 161-169) for loanwords which display features that resemble or are identical to modern Dagur.

The main phonetic criteria of the Buryat elements in Barguzin Evenki are as follows:

1. The disappearance of the Middle Mongolic initial *h-*, which points to the later layer of borrowing, while the loanwords belonging in the early layer preserved it¹¹ (for details, see Khabtagaeva 2010: 18), e.g.

Barguzin Evenki *uyūr* 'rope, string' ← Mongolic **uyūr* < *uya-GUr* {Mongolic VN, see Poppe 1964: §155}: Middle Mongolic *huya-* 'to tie, fasten'; LM *uya-*; Buryat *uya-*¹² (cf. Dagur *xuyā-*; Khalkha *uya-*);

Barguzin Evenki *ehin* 'handle'¹³ ← Mongolic: Middle Mongolic *hesi* 'handle, grip'; LM *esi*; Buryat *eše* (cf. Dagur *xəš*; Khalkha *iš*);

2. The pharyngealization of the Mongolic initial *s-* points to the later (Old Buryat) layer, while the Mongolic loanwords with preserved initial *s-* reflect an earlier layer of borrowing¹⁴ (for details, see Khabtagaeva 2010: 14), e.g.

Barguzin Evenki *haki* 'to graze, pasture' ← Mongolic **haki-*: Buryat *haxi-*; cf. Middle Mongolic *saki-* ~ *saqi-*; LM *saki-* 'to guard, to look after, to watch over'; cf. Khalkha *saxi-* ← Turkic **saqi-*: cf. Old Turkic *saqi-* 'to wait for, watch' < *saq-* 'awake, alert'; The changing of the Mongolic intervocalic *VsV* > *VxV* via **VhV* in Barguzin Evenki.

3. The Mongolic loanwords belonging in the early layer were regularly pharyngealized,¹⁵ as in original Tungusic words¹⁶ (for details, see Khabtagaeva 2010: 15). Although this consonant was pharyngealized in the Buryat language too, the quality of the vowel in the last syllable shows that the loanword was not borrowed from Buryat.

Barguzin Evenki *uxō* 'ceiling' ← Mongolic **ühē* < *ös-(V)GA* {Mongolic VN, see Poppe 1964: §149}: Buryat *ühē* 'ceiling'; cf. LM *ös-* 'to grow, multiply; to increase';

4. The development of a long vowel from the sequence *VGV* as in Modern Mongolic languages, while the preservation of the Mongolic sequence *VgV* indicates the early layer¹⁷ (for details, see Khabtagaeva 2010: 19), e.g.

Barguzin Evenki *atān* 'avidity; jealousy' ← Mongolic **atān*: Buryat *atān*; cf. LM *atay-a* 'envy, jealousy; emulation, rivalry'; Khalkha *atā(n)*;

¹¹ Barguzin Evenki *helyē* 'kite' ← Mongolic: Middle Mongolic *hele'e*; cf. LM *eliy-e* (Buryat *elyē*; Khalkha *elē(n)*); Barguzin Evenki *hirugē-* 'to bless' ← Mongolic: Middle Mongolic *hirū'e-*; cf. LM *irüge-* (Dagur *šurē-*; Buryat *yürō-*; Khalkha *yerō-*); Barguzin Evenki *hukur* 'cow' ← Mongolic: Middle Mongolic *hūker*; cf. LM *ūker* (cf. Dagur *hukure*; Khamnigan Mongol *ūkūr*; Buryat; Khalkha *ūxer*) ← Turkic **hökür*: Old Turkic *öküz* 'ox', etc.

¹² The word *uyūr* is absent in Buryat Dictionary, but for the productive function of the Mongolic VN suffix *-Ūr* in Barguzin Buryat see Radnaev (1965: 101).

¹³ The Barguzin Evenki word probably belongs to the transitional layer, since in the later layer the Middle Mongolic initial *h-* disappeared, while in Modern Mongolic languages the intervocalic *-si-* changed to *-šV-*.

¹⁴ Barguzin Evenki *sura-* 'to ask' ← Mongolic **sura-*: LM *sura-* (cf. Buryat *hura-*; Khalkha *sura-*) ← Turkic **sorā-*: cf. Old Turkic *sōr-* 'to ask; to inquire about sg'; Barguzin Evenki *sunehun* 'soul' ← Mongolic **sünesün*: LM *sünesün* (cf. Buryat *hünehe(n)*; Khalkha *süns(en)*), etc.

¹⁵ Barguzin Evenki *balgahun* 'summer house' ← Mongolic **balgasun* < **balya+sUn*: LM *balyasun* 'ancient city, ruined city' (cf. Buryat *balgāha(n)*; Khalkha *balgas(an)*) ← Turkic: Old Turkic *balıq* 'town'; □ Barguzin Evenki *kadahun* 'nail' ← Mongolic **kadāsun* < *qada-GA-sUn*: LM *qadayasun* < *qadaya-* 'to fix, to set' < *qada-* 'to fix, to pin on, to pin up; to nail' (cf. Dagur *xada-*; Buryat *xadāha(n)*; Khalkha *xadās*); Barguzin Evenki *nahun* 'age' ← Mongolic **nasun*: LM *nasun* 'age, years, life, life-time' (cf. Buryat *nahan*; Khalkha *nas(an)*; Dagur *nas*); etc.

¹⁶ Literary Evenki *bosokto* 'kidneys' ~ Barguzin Evenki *bohokto*; Literary Evenki *ēsa* 'eye' ~ Barguzin Evenki *ēha*; Literary Evenki *mōsa* 'forest' ~ Barguzin Evenki *mōha*; etc.

¹⁷ Barguzin Evenki *emegen* 'saddle' ← Mongolic: LM *emegel* (cf. Dagur; Buryat; Khalkha *emēl*); Barguzin Evenki *imagan* 'goat' ← Mongolic: LM *imayan* (cf. Dagur *imān*; Buryat; Khalkha *yamā(n)*); Barguzin Evenki *bogoli* 'cord, rope; string' ← Mongolic **boγoli* < *boγo-li* {Mongolic VN, see Poppe 1964: §162}: LM *boγo-* 'to tie, to tie up, to bind, to bandage' (cf. Buryat; Khalkha *bō-*); etc.

11. The changing of the Mongolic initial *k-* → *h-* in Barguzin Evenki via the spirantized *x-* points to the Buryat layer, while in the early layer *k-* is preserved¹⁹ (for details, see Khabtagaeva 2010: 21-22), e.g.

Barguzin Evenki ***hukiru-*** ‘to call for help’ ← Mongolic **hükire-*: Buryat *hūxir-*; cf. LM *keükire-* ‘to fly into a rage’; Khalkha *xūxre-*;

Barguzin Evenki ***hilekēn*** (< **hile+kēn* {Evenki Diminutive, see Vasilevič 1958: 759} ‘open woodless place’ ← Mongolic **xile*: Buryat *xile*; cf. LM *kile* ~ *kili* ‘furrow between two fields, border, boundary; frontier; limitation’; Khalkha *xil*;

12. The changing of the Mongolic initial *č-* → *s-* in Barguzin Evenki points to the Buryat layer, while in the early layer it is preserved²⁰ (for details, see Khabtagaeva 2010: 20-21), e.g.

Barguzin Evenki ***sarsun*** ‘paper’ ← Mongolic **sārsun* < **čayar+sUn*: Buryat *sārha(n)*; cf. LM *čayalsun* ~ *čayarsun* ~ *čayasun*; Dagur *čās*; Manchurian Khamnigan Mongol *cārxun*; Khalkha *cās(an)*;

The Buryat origin of the Barguzin Evenki word *sarsun*, is not only proved by the initial *s-*, but by the middle consonant *-r-* as well, which is absent in other Mongolic languages. Presumably, the Buryat word was borrowed into Evenki when the pharyngealisation had not yet happened in Buryat.

Barguzin Evenki ***sapča-*** ‘to flit (bird)’ ← Mongolic **sabča-*: Buryat *sabša-*; cf. LM *čabči-* ‘to chop; to blink; to trample (with the front hooves)’; Khalkha *cavči-*;

In this Evenki word *sapča-* the changing to *-š-* had not yet happened in Buryat.

Lexical features

There are some Turkic loanwords borrowed from Buryat in Barguzin Evenki. These words are not observed in other Mongolic languages, e.g.

Barguzin Evenki ***sāji*** ‘plait, pigtail, braid’ ← Mongolic **sāji*: Barguzin Buryat *sāža* ‘braid; hair-slide on a hanging braid’; cf. Buryat *gezege* ‘plait, pigtail, braid’ ← Turkic:²¹ cf. Old Turkic *sāč* ‘hair’;

Barguzin Evenki ***urike*** ‘suslik’ ← Mongolic **ūrike*: cf. Buryat *ūrxe* ← Turkic:²² cf. Tuvan; Tofan *örge*; Khakas *örke*; Yakut *örgö*;

In some cases, the borrowing from Buryat shows a special meaning, which is not typical for other Mongolic languages, e.g.

Barguzin Evenki ***otog*** ‘hut made of bark’ ← Mongolic **otog*: Buryat *otog* ‘id’; cf. LM *otoy* ‘tribe; race; clan; lower administrative unit’; Khalkha *otog* ← Turkic: Old Turkic *otağ* ‘a small temporary building’; Barguzin Evenki ***kālga*** ‘shutter on window’ ← Mongolic **kālga* < *qaya-IGA* {Mongolic VN,

¹⁹ Barguzin Evenki ***karbin*** ‘the fat on the abdomen of an animal’ ← Mongolic **karbin*: LM *qarbing* ‘belly fat’; cf. Buryat *ar’ban*; Khalkha *xarwin*; Barguzin Evenki ***kahirik*** ‘two-year-old cow’ ← Mongolic **qasiray*: LM *qasiray* ‘three-year-old cow, heifer’; cf. Buryat *xaşarag*; Barguzin Evenki ***kirči-*** ‘to cut up, to cut into, to slice up’ ← Mongolic **kerči-*: LM *kerči-*; cf. Buryat *xerše-*; Khalkha *xerči-*; etc.

²⁰ Barguzin Evenki ***čog*** ‘ember’ ← Mongolic **čoy*: LM *čoy*; cf. Buryat *sog*; Khalkha *cog*; Barguzin Evenki ***čuglān*** ‘meeting, assembly’ ← Mongolic **čuglān* < *čuy-la-GAn* {Mongolic VN, see Poppe 1964: §149}: LM *čuylay-a(n)* ‘assembly, gathering, meeting; wrapper’ < *čuy-la-* ‘to gather, assemble; to wrap’; cf. Buryat *suglān*; Khalkha *cuglān* ← Turkic **čugla-*: cf. Old Turkic *čugla-* ‘to wrap, pack up’ < *čūğ* ‘bundle’; Barguzin Evenki ***čulē*** ‘free time’ ← Mongolic **čülō*: LM *čilüge*; cf. Dagur *čulē*; Buryat *sülō*; Khalkha *čölō*; etc.

21 For details of Buryat etymology see Rassadin 1996: 135; Khabtagaeva 2003/2004: 144.

22 cf. Turkic → Hungarian *ürge*.

see Poppe 1964: §161}: Buryat *xāлга* 'id'; cf. LM *qayaly-a(n)* 'gate, door' < *qaya-* 'to close, to block'; Khalkha *xāлга* ← Turkic: Old Turkic *qapıg* 'door, gate' < **qap-*.

Summary

This paper introduces the Barguzin Evenki as a people and their language. The phonetic criteria discussed above reveal the special position of Barguzin Evenki among the Evenki dialects, and the significant Mongolic (including Buryat) influence that is demonstrable not only in the culture and lifestyle, but also in the language. In spite of the fact that the Barguzin Evenki live among Buryats, and in their everyday life are rapidly proceeding toward assimilation, this dialect of the Evenki language is still a living one, though not with many speakers.

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