

Nazarbayev University
School of Sciences and Humanities

International Online Conference

Sacred Geography:
Multi-Disciplinary Approaches in Space and Time

(September 25-26, 2020)

Panel 1: DIGITAL METHODS IN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

September 25, 13:00-14:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel Chair: Paula Dupuy, Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan)

Andrea Nanetti, Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) 13:00-13:20 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 3:00-3:20 PM (Singapore Time)

Thinking Algorithmically: AI and Machine Learning for a New Science of Heritage

To feed AI and Machine Learning, the Engineering Historical Memory (EHM) research team based in the Laboratory for Bookish and Experiential Research (LIBER) of Nanyang Technological University Singapore proposes to use a tetrahedron of research methodologies (Artistic, Design, Academic) grounded on Art, Culture, and Heritage. The goal is to support the axiomatic formalisation of heritage as a new science and the building of its semantic taxonomies through the D.A.N.C.I.N.G. method (Definitions, Assumptions, Notions, Concepts, Interpretations, Narratives, Gamut) and the seven Aristotelian circumstances relevant to the understanding of human actions (who, what, where, when, by what means, why, and how; Nicomachean Ethics, 1111a3-8). The ambition of Heritage Science (beyond conservation sciences) is the interdisciplinary formalisation and integration of bookish scholarship and experience in the multidisciplinary domain of heritage (i.e., the inheritability of artefacts, oral traditions, scientific knowledge, social rituals, and other cultural practices that embody human experiences of the world and the human condition itself).

Ivan Sablin, Heidelberg University (Germany) 13:20-13:40 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 10:20-10:40 AM (Saint Petersburg Time)

Historical GIS from visualization to post-representational analysis

In recent years the term “space” has become an important part of the global academic discourse. Historians’ attention to the geographical context and geographers’ interest to cultural issues brought the two disciplines together and gave rise to interdisciplinary approaches. Along with the development of computer technology, this led to emergence of historical GIS — methods and techniques of integrated analysis of historical sources, combined in geographic information systems. Based on several projects, this article explores the possibilities of historical GIS methodology.

Q&A Session 13:40-14:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel 2: CHRISTIANITY: SACRED GEOGRAPHY AND SYMBOLISM

September 25 (Friday), 17:00-19:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel Chair: Daniel Scarborough, Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan)

Svetlana Koval'skaya, Lev Gumilev Eurasian National University (Kazakhstan) 17:00-17:20 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Христианские культовые объекты как часть общенациональных сакральных комплексов Казахстана

Доклад посвящен характеристике современных христианских культовых объектов, являющихся местами поклонения на территории Казахстана. Основное внимание будет уделено характеристике православных объектов, истории их возникновения в различных населенных пунктах и в различной удаленности от столицы Республики Казахстан Нур-Султан. В том числе речь пойдет о монастыре Рождества Пресвятой Богородицы, история которого началась в 40-х годах XX века в городе Караганде. В 1955 г. при храме была основана иноческая женская община, которая состояла из освободившихся из КАРЛАГА и других мест лишения свободы монашествующих. Мужская пустынь во имя святых преподобномучеников Серафима и Феогноста Алма-Атинских в Каскелене, Алматинской области также заслуживает отдельного внимания. Будут представлены также другие объекты, которые, к сожалению, не вошли в официальный список сакральных мест Казахстана.

Richard Brown, University of South Australia (Australia) 17:20-17:40 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 8:50-9:10 PM (Sydney Time)

The significance of the Ilibalyk Nestorian cemetery archaeological excavation as sacred space for Kazakh Christians: a sociological perspective

In 2014 a large Nestorian Christian gravestone with Syriac inscriptions was discovered by a local farmer near the present-day village of Usharal, east of Almaty, Kazakhstan. This led to the 2016 archaeological discovery of a Nestorian cemetery at the ancient Silk Road city Ilibalyk. This paper, based on semi-structured interviews, explores the views of Kazakh Christians on the significance of the cemetery discovery as sacred space from a sociological perspective. Christianity's arrival in Kazakhstan is often associated with Russian Imperialism. However, the discovery at Ilibalyk indicates there were significant Christian communities during the Mongol era along northern Silk Road routes. Artefacts discovered at the Ilibalyk cemetery include gravestones with Nestorian crosses and jewelry with Christian symbols. For present-day Kazakh Christians the discovery of the cemetery at Ilibalyk is significant as a sacred space for a number of reasons. For some, the discovery brings a sense of continuity with the past for their personal Christian faith. Knowing that there were ancient Christian Central Asian tribes existing in Kazakhstan who may have ancestral links brings meaning to the present and future for their faith. For other Kazakh Christians, the discovery provides a discursive strategy through which they can share their faith in a historical framework which contends with traditional religio-cultural labels. This paper then relates the Ilibalyk Christian cemetery discovery to present-day burial practices and experiences of Kazakh Christians who seek to create new sacred space in the contemporary landscape of Kazakhstan, and further avenues of research are suggested.

Jeanmarie Rouhier-Willoughby, University of Kentucky (USA) 17:40-18:00 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 7:40-8:00 AM (Lexington Time)

Negotiating Memory in Sacred Spaces

Western Siberia is the home to three holy springs that are attracting attention in the local community and beyond. Visitors come year-round to gather the water, to bathe in the spring, or to be baptized. Local priests/nuns have organized construction of churches and chapels on these sites as well as the

various other facilities (baptistry, indoor and bathing sites, icon/souvenir kiosks). The springs are all located on the grounds of former Stalin-era prison camps near Omsk, Iskitim and Tashtagol. This paper relies on annual visits by the author to the spring as well as on oral histories and interviews with visitors to the spring, members of the congregation and other locals to examine how memory of the sites is intertwined with memory of the USSR. In an area known for its conservative, pro-communist (and in some cases, pro-Stalinist) leanings, commemoration of the Gulag dead in this sacred spot is fraught with complexity. The attitude toward the springs is complicated as well by the age of the believers. Those who remember the camps and the Stalinist period have a markedly different view than their children and grandchildren toward these spots. This paper will examine the contested memory represented by the sacred springs in an effort to illuminate the lived Orthodoxy of the people in this region in the contemporary socio-cultural context.

Lyudmila Ivonina, Smolensk State University (Russia) 18:00-18:20 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 15:00-15:20 (Smolensk Time)

Сакральная символика дат заключения мирных договоров Вестфальской системы (1648-1815)

Проблематика мира всегда была актуальной, но в последние годы в мировой историографии стали уделять внимание символике и социокультурному проектированию мирных конгрессов. Это позволяет более глубоко исследовать восприятие современниками и потомками ключевых событий Европы раннего Нового времени и коммеморативные практики. Символическая сила «особых дней» - христианских праздников или событий исключительного значения – являлась для людей той эпохи украшением их повседневной жизни и моментом выражения своего отношения к реальности и власти. Анализ выбора государствами-противниками в войнах Вестфальской системы дат заключения мира демонстрирует три варианта последних. Первый – исторический пример (важное событие прошлого или античности). Так, мир в Пассаровице между Священной Римской империей и Портой (1718) и русско-турецкий мир в Кючук-Кайнарджи (1774) венчает одна и та же дата - 21 июля, повторяющая момент заключения Стамбулом Прутского мира с Петром I в 1711 году. Баденский договор между Францией и Империей (1714) был подписан 7 сентября, накануне Рождества Богородицы, а мир в Генте между Великобританией и США (1814) - в рождественский вечер 24 декабря. С века Просвещения, когда в политических теориях «право мира» стало конкурировать с «правом войны», дата мира могла быть непосредственно обусловлена завершением переговоров. По сути, и исторический пример, и христианский праздник, и сам акт завершения войны подчеркивали сакральный характер мира, как высшей ценности бытия.

Q&A Session 18:20-19:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel 3: ISLAMIC SACRED GEOGRAPHY

September 26 (Saturday), 10:00-12:20 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel Chair: Rozaliya Garipova, Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan)

Danielle Ross, Utah State University 10:00-10:20 AM (Nur-Sultan Time), or 10:00 - 10:20 PM (Logan Time)

"Walking the Long Road to Maʿrifa: Spiritual Journeys in Imaginary Spaces in Majlisi's Qissa-i Sayf al-Mulūk"

In Qissa-i Sayf al-Mulūk, a Chagatai-language poem by the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Khivan writer Majlīsī, the young Prince Sayf al-Mulūk sets out to find a fairy princess. He has seen her

only in a picture, but he is certain that he is in love with her and that he can never love another. His quest takes him on a circuitous, perilous journey before he finally reaches his beloved in the kingdom of the fairies. More than a tale of romantic love, Qissa-i Sayf al-Mulūk is a Sufi tale in which the hero's faith in God is repeatedly put to the test. Only through full submission to divine will is he able to complete his mission. This paper examines how Majlīsī converts Sayf al-Mulūk's spiritual journey into a spatial one and maps that journey onto the medieval Afro-Eurasian world. Some of the locations that Sayf al-Mulūk visits are real places. Others are purely fantastical. However, Sayf al-Mulūk's arrival at each physical location denotes a specific stage in his spiritual development. Majlīsī's imagined geography also offers a glimpse of a larger Muslim mythical-spiritual geography that was constructed in romantic and mystical poetry and circulated across the Turko-Persian world, including in Kazakhstan, where Qissa-i Sayf al-Mulūk was read in manuscript and published form from at least the early nineteenth century.

Lili Di Puppo, NRU Higher School of Economics, Moscow (Russia)
10:20-10:40 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 7:20-7:40 AM (Moscow Time)

Memory and revival: Reviving sacred sites in Russia's Volga-Ural region

The process of reviving Muslim sacred sites in Russia's Volga-Ural region involves different approaches to the presence/absence of past Sufi saints and to notions of memory, revival and space. I will analyse both the more official work of restoring these sites and the way in which they also allow local Sufi brotherhoods to re-establish continuity by reviving Sufi and clan lineages. More official commemorations can be found, for example, at the gravesite of the Sufi sheikh Zaynulla Rasulev in the city of Troitsk, where Muslim officials annually assemble for the Rasulev readings. Other sacred sites such as Narystau in Bashkortostan play a central role in the revival of a local Bashkir ethnic identity and the connection with ancestors. Sufi saints buried at different sacred sites in the Urals are seen as "alive", asking the living to restore a connection with the Bashkir land and identity through a link with ancestors. The site of Narystau can be approached as a site of contestation around the notion of presence, revealing how claims about presence become connected to claims about identity. Hence, local Muslim authorities do not recognise the existence of the graves of sahaba or companions of the Prophet, and thus, their presence at this site, while certain Bashkir Sufi murids experience the place as a pilgrimage site. The revival of sacred sites take place through different practices of remembering: more official commemorations that seek to construct a particular representation of a Sufi heritage and acts of remembrance seeking to restore a connection with ancestors, in which time is eventually transcended.

Matteo Benussi, University of California, Berkeley (USA) 10:40-11:00 (Nur-Sultan Time), or
9:40-10:00 PM (Berkeley Time)

Ethical Infrastructure in the Idel-Ural Region: The Spatiality of Halal Living

This paper explores the spatial, material dimensions of halal living in the Idel-Ural region through the lens of what I call "ethical infrastructure": the array of places, pieces of equipment, consumables, and material features upon which the very possibility of Idel-Ural Muslims' ethical striving is premised. After the dissolution of the Soviet order in Russia's Idel-Ural region, a galaxy of Islamic piety trends coalesced among the region's Tatars. The ethos of these piety milieus promotes theological awareness and "inner-worldly" asceticism as well as the pursuit of middle-class aspirations, with ethical consumption emerging as a crucial site of self-formation for Russia's "new Muslims". As a result of this development, concerns about halal and haram have become ubiquitous and halal infrastructure – encompassing cafes, shops, health/fitness facilities, beauty salons, etc. – has increased dramatically in importance and size. Furthermore, Muslims' ethical deliberations and strivings take place in a broader yet set of locales, which may be considered "ethical infrastructure" even without being explicitly marked as "halal".

Alice Smith, Chechnya State Pedagogical University 11:00-11:20 (Nur-Sultan Time), or
8:00-8:20 AM (Grozny Time)

Сакральные места Нарт-Орстхойского эпоса вайнахов

Вайнахские племена были одними из ранних обитателей примерно тех же районов Северного Кавказа, где они проживают и теперь. Они состоят из трех ветвей, образовавшихся со временем. Чеченцы получили свое название только в начале XVIII века от аула в плоскостной Чечне – Большой Чечень. Ингуши аналогично получили название от долины Ангушт (ныне Тарская в Северной Осетии). Третья группа – Буцбийцы, менее известно потому, что они теперь живут в Грузии и принимали христианскую веру. У чеченцев и ингушей есть еще собственные названия более древнее – нохчий и галгай. Эти самоназвания не связаны с аулом или местом, а гораздо сложнее объяснить. Немного сакральных мест, связанных с нарт-орстхойским эпосом, сохранились в Чечне, так как народ отказался от многобожия после принятия Ислама, но гора, курганы и рвы не так легко стираются, как память людей. Эти памятники остались, стоит просто искать их, опираясь на некоторых сказаний эпоса. Изучая цикл о Сеска Солса (это же осетинский Созрукьо, Сослан; кабардинский Сосрыко; абхазский Сасрыка) на аккинском земле и цикл о царе нарт-орстхойцев Наураз в Ялхой-Мохк, мы безусловно найдем древние источники чеченского верования. Многочисленные сказания свидетельствуют о земле Ингушетии, где гораздо легче найти доступ к сакральным местам, так, как ингуши только недавно принимали Ислам (в середине XIX века) и Джейрахский район, где находятся большинство памятных мест из эпоса – пограничная зона. Здесь можно любоваться историческими и мифологическими местами еще не испорчены современной цивилизации. Могила Бексултана Бороган в Яндыре, недалеко от Назрани, особенно интересно, так как никто не может объяснить, кому она принадлежит и каково ее значение.

Jesko Schmoller, Perm' State University (Russia) 11:20-11:40 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 7:20-7:40 (Berlin Time)

Reawakening the Land: Local Muslim Pilgrimage as a Means of Decolonisation

In a multi-cultural environment and especially in conditions of empire, pilgrimage can be a tool for individuals and groups to newly experience and define space. Nowadays, Muslims tend to be portrayed as foreign Others in the Russian media, even though it was the Russian Empire that expanded south to swallow the multi-ethnic populations of the Volga and Ural regions. This paper draws upon insights from post-colonial / decolonial theory and material religion to propose an approach stressing the formative and transformative potential of practice and interaction. The activities related to a local Muslim pilgrimage around the almost exclusively Tatar / Bashkir village of Barda in the south of Perm Krai have a direct effect on the surrounding space, where change acquires a material quality and can be seen and felt. Barda is located in a valley surrounded by seven mountains that once served as lookouts for guardians, who in time came to be venerated as holy men. When the pilgrims pay their respects at gravesites, springs and mountain slopes, the old paths of pilgrimage are being activated, baraka (a spiritual force) begins to flow, the landscape of the dead comes to life and a peripheral Russian area transforms into a mythic land of Tatar sages and warriors of central significance. Rejecting both representation and semiotics, the approach employed here is based upon the assumption that the changes taking place are not so much metaphorical than real.

Q&A Session 11:40-12:20 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel 1: **SACRED GEOGRAPHY OF KAZAKHSTAN**

September 26, 14:00-16:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel Chair: Ulan Bigozhin, Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan)

Gulzhan Karbayeva, Kulshat Medeuova, Lev Gumilev Eurasian National University (Kazakhstan) 14:00-14:20 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Частный случай сакрализации объектов: мемориальная арка и городское кладбище г. Нур-Султан

После принятия в 2016 году патриотического акта «Мәңгілік Ел» и конкретизации этого акта различными государственными программами, к которым относятся и программы по сакральной географии Казахстана, в Казахстане активизировалась исследовательская, аналитическая, идеологическая деятельность по концептуализации и выявлению определенных объектов, которые могли бы соответствовать этой номинации – быть сакральным объектом. Профильными исследовательскими институциями, к которым относится и научно-исследовательский центр «Сакральный Казахстан», была разработана методология определения статуса объектов в качестве сакрального, где было предложено иерархическое распределение между объектами общенационального списка (185) и регионального (500). В докладе будет проанализирован методологический подход который сформировал матрицу идеологической иерархии среди объектов претендентов на статус «сакрального». На примерах 10 объектов общенационального и 7 объектов регионального вошедших в реестры от Астаны/Нур-Султана, будет проанализированы контекстуальные особенности этих объектов. На примере двух объектов из обоих списков – «мусульманское кладбище Караоткель» и «Триумфальной арки «Мәңгілік Ел», будут верифицированы и запротоколированы реальные практики паломничества в столице.

Isabelle Ohayon, Le Centre d'études des mondes russe, caucasien et centre-européen (France) 14:20-14:40 (Nursultan Time), or 10:20-10:40 AM (Paris Time)

The making of new sacred places in Kazakhstan during the Brezhnev era

Cemeteries and graves have always had a sacred character in Central Asian lineage societies, such as Kazakh society. As places of pilgrimage, they can be related to ancestor worship (Privratsky 2000; DeWeese 1999) and/or to the honouring of tribal leaders or warriors of colonial and pre-colonial times (such as the figures of Zhangyr Khan, Shokay Baykanuly, Raymbek Batyr, etc.). (Muminov, 2013, 27). Numerous typologies drawn up by scholars point to this plurality (Snesarev 1969; Muminov 2013) and to the fluctuating boundaries between religious authority and social and political authority in the making of holy places (mazār) and venerated figures. The resort to various sources of legitimacy thus explains the propensity of Central Asian societies to invent sacred places. The Soviet state, despite measures designed to repress religious practices including the attendance of holy places, did not succeed in interrupting this process. In this paper, I will try to highlight two mechanisms at work in the creation of holy places related to funeral practices in Kazakh society during the Brezhnev era. Using archival sources and oral history research, I will first explore the phenomenon of building new mausoleums dedicated to local Soviet authorities. Secondly, I will discuss the process of rehabilitating abandoned cemeteries or tombs in order to practice healing rituals. In both cases, I will analyse how these strategies were articulated with the specificities of the Soviet system of access to resources and what social and economic issues were involved in the making of mausoleums and thaumaturgical spaces.

Nikolay Tsyrempilov, Ulan Bigozhin, Batyrkhan Zhumabayev, Nazarbayev University, Lev Gumilev Eurasian National University (Kazakhstan) 14:40-15:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Священный ландшафт нации: как в Казахстане реализуется масштабный национальный проект по сакральной географии

Статья фокусируется на стартовавшем в 2017 году в Казахстане проекте “Сакральная география Казахстана” в рамках общенациональной программы “Рухани жаңғыру” (“модернизация духовности”). Официально заявленной целью проекта является культивирование чувства патриотизма жителей страны к местам и объектам, имеющим значение для исторической памяти независимого Казахстана. По мнению авторов статьи, действительная цель проекта может заключаться в фундаментальной ретерриториализации, или перекодирования семантики пространства путем отбора, кодификации и артикуляции одних символов и практик за счет нивелирования и “забывания” других. Наш анализ показывает, что в случае с Казахстаном этот постколониальный процесс укладывается в отмечающуюся рядом исследователей тенденцию к этнонационализации страны, в рамках которой на высшем уровне продолжает воспроизводиться дискурс о гражданской нации, тогда как реальная деятельность в

большей степени направлена на усиление идеи о Казахстане как о государстве казахской нации. Институционализация процесса упорядочивания и перекодирования священного ландшафта вовлекает самые разнообразные группы: от Национального музея до краеведческих обществ и родовых земляческих обществ. Этими факторами может объясняться успех “Сакральной географии Казахстана” на фоне других проектов, действующих в рамках программы “Рухани Жангыру”.

Gaukhar Alzhanova, Saken Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical University (Kazakhstan)
15:00-15:20 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Компаративный анализ сакральных практик Западного и Северного Казахстана на основе паломничества к Бекет ата и Машхур Жусуп Копееву

В данной статье рассматриваются общие и особенные сакральные практики при паломничестве к Бекет ата и Машхур Жусупу Копееву. При этом мы опираемся на концепцию «мест памяти» Пьера Нора. Статья готовится на основе паломничества к Бекет ата в 2019 году и паломничества к Машхур Жусупу Копееву в 2018, также в 2020 гг. Оба памятника активно поддерживаются государством, входят в список 100 общенациональных сакральных мест Республики Казахстан. В обоих случаях мы проводили стандартные для паломников процедуры, о которых узнавали от знакомых, из интернета, от других паломников и шыракшы. Так, в рамках исследования проводится анализ биографий, деятельности данных личностей. Биографии Бекет Ата и Машхур Жусуп Ата имеют много общего; оба они были религиозными личностями, почитаются как святые, получили прекрасное образование. Сохранилось множество историй о совершаемых ими чудесах. Еще одним общим аспектом является присутствие травматической памяти, попытки забвения в советское время. Практики паломничества носят как общий характер, как жертвоприношение, ночевка, молитвы, приношение с собой еды, так и локальный, например спуск и подъем к мечети Бекет ата.

Q&A Session 15:20-16:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel 5: **SACRED WORLD OF SHAMANISM AND BUDDHISM IN INNER ASIA**
September 25, 18:00-20:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)

Panel Chair: Nikolay Tsyrempilov, Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan)

Stefan Krist and Möngönsan, Inner Mongolia University and Inner Mongolian Academy of Social Sciences 18:00-18:20 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 8:00-8:20 PM (Hohhot Time)

Disputed sacred land(mark)s: Evenk-Buryat inter-ethnic politics in Hulunbuir

This paper presents how both parties to a hundred-year-old land dispute in the Hulunbuir banner of Inner Mongolia, China, have been sacralizing landmarks, in order to spiritually connect to the land they live on, and discusses the role this practice has been playing in their conflict. The groups embroiled in this conflict are the Solon-Evenks and the Shenekhen-Buryats, of which both hold legal titles to land tenure in the region and claim that their forefathers had been living there already ages ago. So far members of both groups have been fighting for their cause in this conflict on three levels: (1) in physical fights on the ground – i.e. on disputed pasturelands – ranging from planned attacks to rather spontaneous, yet still quite bloody brawls; (2) by political and juridical attempts to settle the dispute, which, however, for various reasons, have not been successful so far; (3) by building, maintaining, and worshipping oboos – cairns erected on high places, arrayed with tree branches and prayer flags, and devoted to ancestor and/or local protector spirits. In the latter way members of both groups visually and ritually assert that the land around those landmarks is theirs. Although being sacred, spiritual, often plain religious (mostly Buddhist) practices, they do not mitigate the dispute, but rather constitute a case of a sacred geography of conflict, as, for instance, both parties lay a sole claim to the khoshuu, i.e. banner, oboo, thus to their principal land use right in the region.

Lubos Belka, Masaryk University (Czech Republic) 18:20-18:40 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 2:20-2:40 PM (Brno Time)

The Myth of Shambhala: Visions, Visualisation, and the Myth's Resurrection in the Twentieth Century in Buryatia

Mythogenesis, especially eschatological increases in the times of danger when also myths and rituals are being joined and mobilised. In the 20th century, various utopian expectations started to occur in Buryatia, Mongolia and Tibet more often than ever in the past. Utopian narratives appeared both in oral and written forms, rarely were they expressed in a visual form. Apart from the narrative forms of the Shambhala myth, we can see also visual depiction of the kingdom and the terminal battle. In Buryat monasteries, as well as in Tibetan and Mongolian, thangkas and frescoes with the kingdom of Shambhala have been found depicting the Shambhala terminal battle where the winning troops of the Good were led by the ruler Rudra Chakrin. The latter is represented by various kinds of pictures depicting the Shambhala king Rudra Chakrin. The recovery of the Shambhala myth in the first third of the 20th century in Buryatia had, like other features of religious life, two dimensions – an official i.e. monastic one, and unofficial, popular one. The former is based on monastic rituals and is more institutionalised. The popular version of the myth is looser, less bound to the official cult and ritual and is expressed by folk tales, narrations, legends, songs, prophecies etc. Rudra Chakrin's cult in Buryatia is illustrated e.g. by a small votive xylograph with his depiction. The myth has been resurrected during the 1920s-1930s in Buryatia and Mongolia in connection with the Civil War and anti-soviet uprisings by anti-bolshevik forces. Strangely enough, both sides of the armed conflict in the first third of the 20th century exploited the Shambhala myth for their own interests.

Melissa Chakars, Saint Joseph's University (USA) 18:40-19:00 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 8:40-9:00 AM (Philadelphia Time)

Creating Buddhist Sacred Geography in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Analyzing and Comparing Stories from the Buryat and Kalmyk Chronicles

This paper explores the creation of Buddhist sacred geography among the Buryat and Kalmyk peoples in the 17th and 18th centuries. It does so by examining Buryat and Kalmyk chronicles that were written between 1690 and the early 20th century and that provide stories about the adoption and spread of Buddhism. Chronicles were written by lamas and nobles and they relied on oral history and written sources. Chronicles were held in the libraries of monasteries until Soviet anti-religious policies led to the closing of all Buddhist institutions in the 1930s and many were forever lost. At the same time, a number of the chronicles ended up in various archives and Soviet scholars began to study, translate, and publish them. In particular, this study focuses on the available chronicles that offer origin stories about how Buryats and Kalmyks were introduced to the Gelukpa school of Tibetan Buddhism, how the religion began to expand and develop among them, and how religious and secular leaders worked to create sacred spaces. The paper argues that Buryats and Kalmyks did this differently and variations are revealed through studying the chronicles. Buryat chronicles emphasize the construction of monasteries and the creation of new geographical sacred places. The Kalmyk chronicles, instead, emphasize the importance of bodies and texts as sacred spaces rather than fixed geographical ones.

Chimiza Lamazha, B. Gorodovikov Kalmyk State University, Ul'yana Bicheldey, Aylana Mongush, Tuvan Institute of Humanities and Applied Social and Economic Studies (Russia) 19:00-19:20 (Nur-Sultan Time), or 16:00-16:20 (Elista Time)

Тувинское паломничество в буддийские центры России и мира

Возрождение буддизма с 1990-х гг. в традиционно буддийском регионе России — Республике Тыва выразилось в одном из интереснейших явлений — паломничестве тувинских буддистов в различные центры буддизма как в пределах России, так и за границу — в разные страны: Монголию, Индию, Китай (Тибет) и др. В советское время и сама Тува как приграничная территория (республика СССР на границе с Монголией) была закрыта для посещения иностранцами, и жители республики

почти не выезжали за рубеж. С 1990 года граница открылась в обе стороны. В 1992 г. Туву посетил Далай лама XIV, за ним последовали визиты других буддийских учителей. Сами верующие начали выезжать для совершения ретритов, чтобы получить учения, поклониться святым местам. Это движение не имеет большие масштабы и централизованной организации, его можно считать полустихийным. Тем не менее, паломничество развивается, расширяется, в него вовлекаются новые участники, увеличивается и география поездок буддистов. В докладе предполагается представить динамику процесса за двадцать лет, средний портрет участников, привести примеры из интервью с паломниками; назвать также проблемы паломничества. Буддийское паломничество есть в других российских регионах традиционного распространения буддизма (Калмыкии, Бурятии и др.). И это движение можно считать одним из важнейших факторов обогащения буддизма России, фактором межкультурного сотрудничества РФ и регионов Центральной и Южной Азии.

Q&A Session 19:20-20:00 (Nur-Sultan Time)