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Reading a 1908 Buryat Schoolbook on Buddhism in the Light of its Socio-Cultural Setting¹

Introduction

This article presents the text entitled *A Concise Teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni's Religion for Instructing the Buryat Children*, authored by Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb and published in St Petersburg during the turbulent years between the two Russian revolutions of the twentieth century. Written in the typical style of religious didactic literature inspired by ancient Indian and Tibetan literary traditions, it is arguably one of the first Buddhist textbooks created for Buryat secular schools. I claim that the textbook is a peculiar document of early modernity and could be considered as an example of how the Buddhist literary tradition was applied in the emerging projects of secular education and modern Buryat nationalism. This discursal transformation of the narrative is the major focus of this article.

Following the Foucauldian approach, in this analysis I define discourse as an array of related statements shaping various subjects and fields of enquiry. In this light, texts are

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viewed as instances of a discourse, and authorship – as a “function” of discourse which gives nodes of coherence to disparate utterances and initiates new discursive practices (Foucault, 1998, p. 219; Summers, 2013, p. 11). The author of *A Concise Teaching*, Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb, whose name untypically appears not in the colophon but on the front page, could be schematically considered such a “node”, cohering and transforming separate discourses. This entanglement of narratives, biographies and places forms a complex discursive story, which I attempt to present below.

This article starts with a brief biography of the author, followed by a short commentary on the text and the social context in which it was created. In the Appendix the reader will find my Roman transliteration of the Classical Mongolian and translation of the text into English.² Since the article is intended to be a sociological analysis rather than a philological one, it perhaps lacks references to the standard works in the field and editions of Buddhist texts. Nevertheless, I consider this text and the analysis appealing not only to linguists and specialists in Buddhist and Mongol studies, but also to those who are interested in the social and cultural history of late imperial Russia.

The Biography of Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb in the Context of the Times

While there are no academic works specifically devoted to Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb³ (Figure 1), he is still well remembered in his home region of Ivolga in Buryatia, where he is considered one of the prominent Buryat Buddhist figures. There are a few articles on the web written about Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb by local historians (Dorzhieva, 2015). I have managed to talk to some of the authors, including the local educator Tsypylma Dorzhieva and her husband Sergei Dorzhiev, an archivist of the Ivolga datsan. They provided me with additional information about the lama and shared some documents related to him. Thus, let me briefly present his story and the societal surrounding he was embedded in.

² I would like to thank Sergei and Tsypylma Dorzhievs for sharing details of Danja-a Erdeniyeb's life with me, Lama Dobdon Maksarov for reading and commenting on the translation of the textbook, and Odbayar Ganbaatariin for checking my Romanization of the Classical Mongolian text.

³ In this article, I use the Romanized spelling of his name in Classical Mongolian as written in the textbook. There are also other versions of his name, including Tsebak-Danzha Yrdyniev (Tsybikov, 2017), Danzha Dynzenov Irdyniev (on his grave plate), Tsebak-Danzha Dyngen Irdyniev (data from the Smolensky Lutheran Cemetery in St Petersburg).

Danja-a Erdeniyeb was born in 1863⁴ in the locality of Khatan Dabaa into a family of the Buryat Cossack Danzandorjo Erdeniin of the Sharaldai Kharanuud *ug* (origin, clan), in the parish of Yangazhin Buddhist monastery. After the inclusion into the Russian Empire in the early eighteenth century, the Buryat-Mongols were divided into the civil (*otoy*) and some Cossack groups (*qasay*). The Buryat Cossack troops performed frontier guard duties in the borderland with the Qing Empire. As a member of the Cossack community, from the age of seven Erdeniyeb studied at the *inorodcheskoe uchilishche* (elementary state school for non-Russian ethnic groups). He then performed his military service for six years in the Transbaikalian Cossack Host, where he reportedly rose to the rank of an officer. From 1890, he studied in the Buddhist monastery (*datsan*) of Tamcha, the main Buryat monastery at the time. Later he continued his studies at the faculty of Buddhist philosophy of the Yangazhin monastery. At that time *datsans* offered initial Mongolian language literacy and reading training, and taught principles of Buddhism to the Buryat children and adults (see more in: Montgomery, 1996). The most advanced students could continue their studies to become lamas (Lygdenova, 1997). In 1896, he attained the rank of *gelong* lama and was appointed Staff Lama of the Yangazhin monastery. In 1904, after receiving official permission from the authorities, he went on a six-month pilgrimage to the sacred Buddhist site of Wutaishan in the Qing Empire (Dorzhieva, 2015).

Danja-a Erdeniyeb received a multicultural education and reportedly mastered several foreign languages; he often served as an interpreter for Buryat deputations to the imperial capital of St Petersburg. While still a disciple at the Yangazhin *datsan*, he accompanied the Buryat delegation to the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II in May 1896. Like other members of the delegation (TSyrempilov, 2020, p. 19), Danja-a Erdeniyeb was awarded the imperial medal "For diligence" with the ribbon of the order of St Stanislaw. His further life was closely connected with St Petersburg, where the Buryat and generally Buddhist population was growing at the end of the nineteenth century, and where the Buddhist temple Gunzenchoinei was built in 1909–1915 (A. Andreev, 2012, p. 63).

The lama participated in various events of public life, including the first general population census of the Russian Empire in 1897 and – in all likelihood – the Buryat congresses in 1905 (Dorzhieva, 2015): the Transbaikalian Buryat congress held in Chita on 26–30 April, and

⁴ We know that he died in 1910 in St Petersburg at the age of 47, while his exact year of birth is not known. It could be either 1863 or 1864, depending on whether the Buryat or Russian age counting tradition was followed. The Buryats used to add an extra year counting from the Lunar New Year when the baby was born.

the Irkutsk *guberniia* (region) Buryat congress held on 20–26 August. The two congresses were organized in response to land reforms in Russia which had begun in 1900 and were unfavourable for Buryats, and the liquidation of self-government institutions (Buryat dumas); there was also the context of general ethnic tensions across the empire (Zajaczkowski, 2001). Both congresses called for Buryat self-government and augmentation of the Buryat land holdings; other demands included putting an end to educational Russification and making schools open to boys and girls of all faiths and operate in spoken Buryat and Classical Mongolian, and establishing newspapers in Classical Mongolian (Montgomery, 2011, p. 8, 2019, p. 7). The Chita congress elected a delegation of several religious and secular leaders, who arrived in St Petersburg in late autumn 1905 to lobby the imperial government to accept Buryat demands (Montgomery, 2019, p. 8). Although the tsarist administration rejected the administrative and landholding demands, the congresses were an important milestone in Buryat history, when the desire for the Buryat national autonomy was formulated for the first time.

It cannot be confirmed whether Danja-a Erdeniyeb participated in the congresses, but he served as an interpreter for the Buryat delegation in St Petersburg. At that time, he was invited by Agvan Dorzhiev to St Petersburg University Faculty of Oriental Studies to read lectures on Buddhism and ethnography; that is where he compiled *A Concise Teaching*. It is not known yet if Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb authored any other works, although Sergei Dorzhiev believes that they exist and are waiting for future research.

During his time in the capital, he worked closely with St Petersburg-based orientalists, including Aleksei Pozdneev and Gombozhab Tsybikov,⁵ and was also close to the Buryat religious leaders, Khambo Lamas, of the period like Agvan Dorzhiev⁶ and Choinzon Iroltuev.⁷ There is a photo dated 1913 showing Khambo Lama Dashi-Dorzhi Itigelov⁸ standing next to Danja-a Erdeniyeb's tomb in the form of a stupa in the Lutheran section of the Smolensky

⁵ In the introduction to his book *A Buddhist Pilgrim at the Shrines of Tibet* (1919), Gombozhab Tsybikov refers to Danja-a Erdeniyeb as his friend who sent him an important manuscript account (Tsybikov, 2017, p. xx).

⁶ Readers familiar with the Great Game probably know about the activities of the Buryat religious leader and diplomat Agvan Dorzhiev (1853–1938). He was a close associate of the 13th Dalai Lama, supporter of rapprochement between Tibet and the Russian Empire and one of the key figures in the history of Russian Buddhism in the twentieth century (Tsyrempilov, 2011).

⁷ Choinzon Iroltuev (1843–1918) was the Khambo Lama in 1896–1911.

⁸ Dashi-Dorzhi Itigelov (1852–1927) was a Buddhist religious leader of Buryats in 1911–1917. In the recent history, he became famous for his “imperishable body” found remarkably intact after exhumation in 2002. For more details in academic works see (Bernstein, 2013). The above-mentioned photo of Khambo Lama Itigelov with a man named Zhabai Legshed can be seen in the book by Yanzhima Vasil’eva *Pandito Khambo Lama Itigelov: Smerti net* [Pandito Khambo Lama Itigelov: There Is No Death] (Vasil’eva, 2014, p. 53).

cemetery in St Petersburg (plot no. 98). Danja-a Erdeniyeb died in the Russian capital in 1910 at the age of 47 due to an acute illness (Dorzhieva, 2015).

The grave-monument of Danja-a Erdeniyeb was not preserved, while the stupa, the name plate and some remaining elements were brought to the St Petersburg datsan in the 1990s, when it was returned to the Buddhist Sangha (Figures 2 and 3). On 24 July 2012, the consecration of the restored monument was held at the datsan. By the decision of the Sangha, the stupa is now dedicated to all lamas of St Petersburg datsan purged and executed during the 1930s Stalinist terror (Rosy, 2019).

The Buddhist Didactic Tradition

The period of late tsarist Russia was a pivotal moment in Buryat history, and the life of Danja-a Erdeniyeb and his work cannot be conceived outside this very historical and cultural setting. Clearly Danja-a Erdeniyeb was close to the Buryat “reformist” circles, represented primarily by Agvan Dorzhiev. The religious and secular leaders of this movement pursued the goal of adapting traditional Buryat religiosity to the new conditions, establishing links between Buddhism and modern European science, and freeing the religion from superstitions and elements of paganism, which, as they thought, had overgrown the original Buddhism (Ulanov, 2016; Zhukovskaia, 1994, p. 15). This reformist approach was a forerunner of a broader reformist movement following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution (see more: Sinitsyn, 2013). Didactic literature was one of the main tools in spreading the reformist ideas among Buryats.

The tradition of didactic literature among Buryats, and generally Mongols, has a long history. It is not possible to consider it a single genre because of its various forms, purposes, and origins. Didactic passages can be found in *The Secret History of the Mongols* (13th century), and in texts of teachings attributed to Genghis Khan (13th–14th centuries), which are known mainly through the manuscripts from between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as through oral tradition (TSendina, 2013, pp. 73–74). However, the major inspiration for the Mongolian didactic literature came from Indian and Tibetan Buddhist literary heritage which was translated, commented on and adapted to the Mongolian context. These texts held the basics of Buddhism and were available for laity in the Mongolian script, while profound religious literature was available only to lamas.

By the early twentieth century, the didactic literature had grown to a massive corpus of xylographic and manuscript books. According to estimates made by the scholar Svetlana Shobolova, these books accounted for up to 32% of all literature published by the Buryat datsans of the time (Shobolova, 2006, p. 69).⁹ Reportedly, 308 different texts of didactic character from 1 to 800 pages long were published in the Buryat datsans between 1866 and 1923 (Galdanova et al., 1983, p. 107), and more were issued in manuscript form. Didactic texts were usually minor works in the Classical Mongolian script which contained adapted passages of canonical literature, short tales, poems, usually of abstract moralistic character. In the second half of the nineteenth century, didactic literature acquired the character of critical essays and sermons expressing critical opinions on various aspects of Buryat society, the behaviour of both laity and lamas, and encouraging believers to advance in life according to Buddhist teachings. They were important testimonies of everyday life of the Buryats and the ways Buddhism was practised at the time. For example, some titles of the texts were “Advice on the Need to Honour Parents”, “Instruction for Women on Proper Behaviour, Wearing Clothes and Jewellery”, “On the Maliciousness of Gambling”, “Sermon on the Dangers of Smoking”, “Condemnation of Summer Games and Feasts”, etc. By the end of the nineteenth century, the lamas writing these texts were concerned with the Russification process and the fear of losing the “traditional” way of life (Dashiev, 1997). Thus, the didactic texts increasingly acquired a “Buryat” flavour, reflecting various details of the daily life in late tsarist Russia. These texts signify the attempts by the lamas to make Buddhist teachings influence the Buryat way of life and, eventually, form the “proper” social order.

While the authorship of many surviving texts remains unknown, the most popular Buryat authors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were Lubsan Galdan Rinpoche, Erdeni Khaibzun Galshiev (1855–1915), Dorzhi-Zhigmed Danzhinov (died 1899), Rinchen Nomtoev (1821–1907) and Galsan-Zhimba Dylgyrov (1816–1872). These authors played an important role in the formation of the Buryat reformist movement, which strived to make Buddhist teachings more available and comprehensible to the lay people (Abaeva & Zhukovskaia, 1983; Ulanov, 2016). I believe that *A Concise Teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni's*

⁹ It is not possible to establish the actual scale of printing activity of the Buryat datsans, but scholars maintain that by the end of the nineteenth century Transbaikalia was one of the largest centres of Buddhist literature in Inner Asia (Shobolova, 2006, p. 54; TSyrempilov, 2013, p. 189). For instance, according to the report of Khambo Lama Gomboev, in 1887 major Buryat datsans published the following number of works in Mongolian and Tibetan: Tsugol datsan – 169; Tamcha datsan – 97; Sartuul datsan – 52; Egita datsan – 44; Chesan datsan – 30 (Galdanova et al., 1983, p. 75; Shobolova, 2006, p. 52).

Religion for Instructing the Buryat Children and its author were embedded in this very discursive and institutional surrounding.

The Content of the Textbook

In this article I analyse two versions of the same text. The 1908 manuscript version is available on the website of the Endangered Archives Project (<https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP813-8-19>; hereafter EAP version) led by Nikolay Tsyrempilov. The original manuscript is currently in the possession of the Aga datsan in the Transbaikal region (Mongolian pagination in figures; Ms, Russian paper, black (?) ink, 22 lines on page, 8.5 x 22.5 cm, 1r–9v). It is almost identical to the 1910 print version of the text which was published in clear large font with Western-style movable types in the Printing House of the Imperial Academy of Science in St Petersburg (hereafter SPb version). I worked with a scanned copy of its second edition (Bur./4-129; 19 pages of text with pagination in Arabic numerals; see Figure 4),¹⁰ ordered from the Department of National Literatures at the National Library of Russia in St Petersburg. The print version was published in the form of European-type stitched notebook, while the EAP handwritten version was written on pages of “palm-leaf” format typical for Buddhist books of Mongols (Kara, 1972, p. 118). The latter contains some spellings influenced by spoken Buryat – for example *orsilang* instead of the standard *orčilang*; *ulamjalan* instead of *ulamjilan*; the affix *ta/te* instead of *tu/tü* (*nigül-te*, *buyan-ta*, *dotoyada*); etc. All those spoken language spellings are absent in the St Petersburg print version.

“[Since] we all profess Buddha’s religion” – this is how the textbook begins, reflecting what I believe was the project of construction of the Buryat national identity, based on Buddhism. Otherwise, the textbook is a typical intertextual compilation of didactic character. It introduces the general outline of the main Buddhist principles, cycles of rebirth, ten black sins and ten white virtues. The author introduces key Buddhist historic personalities and the dates of major events for Buddhist history. He uses the traditional Buddhist/Mongolian chronology of the twelve-animal cycle and translates it into the Russian calendar, for instance: “From the birth of Buddha Shakyamuni till the current year, 1908 according to the Russian calendar, there passed 2,868 years” (in the 1910 SPb edition it is 1911 and 2,871 respectively). This passage thus reveals the year when the text was written.

¹⁰ According to the bibliographic information on the front fly leaf of the SPb version, the first edition must have been printed in 1908.

A significant part of the text is devoted to the life of Buddha and his way to enlightenment. Like many biographies of the Buddha, it begins from the time, aeons before his birth, when he first made the vow to become a Buddha. The Buddha's most important life stages and achievements are summarized in the "twelve great deeds", which is a well-known trope in the Tibetan canon and is also known in the form of hymns and laudations popular in the region (Kiripolska, 2000, p. 17). The text also gives a detailed vision of the Buddhist cosmology: the worlds of the outer vessel and the inner content.¹¹ The vessel world could be compared to the Western notion of the environment (or the inanimate world), as it includes celestial bodies, landscape, and dwellings. The content world represents sentient beings, who inhabit the vessel universe: three bad fates (*animals, ghosts, hell creatures*) and three good fates (*humans, gods, demigods*).

The passages of the text devoted to the secular order are of particular interest. Didactic texts often mention to commoners the importance of observing not only the religious but also the secular hierarchy, seen as a significant element of the social order. The text says that "one should respect khans and vangs/kings, seniority, chiefs and local superiors, high officials, seniors and other elders. [...] Let the emperor, his queen, his princes, his appanage live long, let the government be stable". A passage wishing long life to the imperial family is rather rare for the Buryat didactic literature – the scholar Dandar Dashiev notes that unlike Tibetan and Mongolian didactic texts, the Buryat works do not contain the apology of theocratic government (Dashiev, 1997, p. 9). Although the author of the text does not mention a particular dynasty, in that historical context he presumably refers to the Russian imperial family. This trope is well known in Buddhist tradition as *mchod yon*, or the principle of two orders, *qoyar yosun*, where the balance between state power and religious order is seen as an important component of the ideal model of society (Kollmar-Paulenz, 2021; Vanchikova, 2001). Apart from the need to respect and worship the imperial family, the author also calls on commoners to respect the aristocracy and secular leaders, seen by lamas as partners in building the Buddhist society.

The text, somewhat disharmoniously, ends with the passage discouraging drinking alcoholic drinks and explaining what karmic and actual consequences drinking could bring. Consuming alcohol is considered to trigger sins caused by the mind, speech, and the body,

¹¹ The division of the material universe into the vessel and the inner content from *Abhidharmakosa* is presented for example in one of the earliest (16th century) and the most important texts for Mongol laity: *Čiqula kereglegči tegüs udq-a-tu šastir* [Treatise that Contains the Complete Meanings of the Most Important [Buddhist Concepts] To Be Used] by Širegetü Gүүsi Čorji (Bareja-Starzyńska, 1997; Sziregetü Gүүsi Czordži, 2006).

and thus to cause future sufferings in sections of the Buddhist hell. Condemning drinking along with consuming tobacco and gambling was a typical topic in didactic works by other authors who warned of various social problems and bad incarnations because of these misdeeds (see: Bawden, 1976; Sazykin & Kara, 1998).

The Text in the Context of the Times

While *A Concise Teaching* is written in the typical style of didactic literature, it is also unique and distinct because it is one of the first textbooks on Buddhism created for Buryat secular schools. The Buryats, despite having their own system of Buddhist education in *datans*, considered the system of state education of late tsarist Russia to be an important means of modernization, which also should answer the emerging Buryat nationalist projects. Thus, it is important to consider the institutional embeddedness of the text, and some paratextual elements of the book (Genette, 1997) could help to disclose the work of discursive authorities (Summers, 2013, p. 11), such as publishers, editors, and censors, who, along with the author, shape the final text.

The book carries a censorship visa of Pandito-Khambo Lama Choinzin Iroltuev, written in Russian and dated 9 August 1908, saying that “this textbook for instruction in the Buryat one-class elementary schools is recognized as sufficient and practical”. The so-called one-class schools were the lowest level of elementary education in the Russian Empire. The schools did not have a solid material base and were supported by local communities or private individuals. Only a limited number of the Buryat children could attend them.

The Buryat children attending these schools were taught according to the standard curriculum approved by the Russian Ministry of National Enlightenment, which included the Russian language and calligraphy, arithmetic, the basics of Orthodox Christian teaching and the Church Slavonic language. In Transbaikalia, children could additionally learn the basics of Classical Mongolian script; this practice was discontinued in the 1880s.¹² The language of instruction was Russian, which most Buryat children did not understand.

¹² It is worth mentioning here the Troitskosavsk Military School, which was established in the Russo-Qing border town of Troitskosavsk (Kyakhta) in 1832. Most of its students were of Buryat Cossack background; the three-year curriculum included the Russian and Mongolian languages, geography and history, arithmetic, and military science. The school is notable for its graduate Dorzhi Banzarov (1822–1855), who was the first Western-educated Buryat scholar. Unlike other native educational institutions, which depended on local community funding, the Military School received a significant government support until 1851, when it lost state funding; it closed in 1888 due to financial difficulties (I. Andreev, 1957; Montgomery, 1996, pp. 1–2).

As a result, the quality of this education was relatively low (Lygdenova & Sambueva, 2016, pp. 3–6; Montgomery, 1996, p. 20).

Russian as the language of instruction and strong Orthodox Christian content were the point of discontent among Buryats. In 1907, the Buryat scholar and activist Tsyben Zhamtsarano wrote: “The fact that the Buryats produced just a few members of European-educated intelligentsia is because schools – both primary and secondary, higher and special – are inaccessible to them. We have already mentioned what the conditions were to be a teacher [in these schools]: it was required to convert to Orthodox Christianity” (Varnavski et al., 2003). Some Russian intellectuals wrote that teaching Buryat children in their native tongue would help them understand Russian culture better and encourage closer integration (IAdrintsev, 1891, pp. 238–239). In 1904, the editor of the textbook Aleksei Pozdneev (1851–1920), a prominent Russian orientalist and a senior official of the Ministry of National Enlightenment (1904–1911), wrote a report “On the Ways to Improve the Buryat Schools”, presented to the Ministry, where he stated that instruction should be performed in the native language to improve the quality of education. Based on these recommendations, the tsarist government adopted new “Rules on Primary Schools for *inorodtsy* [non-Russians] Living in Eastern and South-Eastern Russia”, which stated that teaching in the initial two years should be done in the native language, and in the next two years the native language should be taught as a separate subject. According to scholars, however, the “Rules” did not introduce any significant changes in the work of the Buryat schools (Lygdenova & Sambueva, 2016, p. 7). Nevertheless, these developments show the growing ideological inclusiveness of the education system.

In 1905, Nicholas II signed the Decree on Religious Tolerance, allowing non-Orthodox believers to freely profess their faith. Regarding the Buddhists, then called “Lamaists”, the decree provided that they should not be called “idol worshippers and pagans” in official documents. The publication of the textbook could be considered part of these changes because Buddhism was planned to be introduced as a school subject in the state secular schools for Buryats. The Buryat historian Ksenia Gerasimova writes about other similar projects. Bato-Dalai Ochirov, a Buryat Duma deputy, planned to publish Buddha’s biography and texts from the Indian Buddhist work *The Dhammapada* along with the translation of textbooks on math and Russian literature in the Buryat language. They were expected to be printed in Agvan Dorzhiev’s Petersburg publishing house Naran. However, it is not clear if these books ever appeared in print (Gerasimova, 1957; Montgomery, 2019, p. 16).

The textbook by Erdeniyeb, who was close to Dorzhiev, was published by the Imperial Society for Oriental Studies (1900–1915) “under the Most August patronage of the Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich Romanov of Russia”. The Imperial Society of Oriental Studies was created in 1900 by the order of Minister of Finance Sergei Witte to promote the rapprochement of Russia with the East based on common economic and scholarly interests.¹³ It was not the first such project of the Society, as in 1906 it had asserted its intention “to aid the Russian *inorodtsy* in publishing schoolbooks” on various subjects, dictionaries, primers, readers on local and Russian literature. The Society considered education in the native language to be an important factor of improving *inorodtsy* schools, which in the prospect would answer one of its objectives as specified in its statute (constitution): “to serve as a conduit of the Russian culture among eastern nations within and beyond Russia” (Shvedov, 1907, pp. i–iv).

In 1907–1911, Pozdneev published several Kalmyk and Buryat textbooks in St Petersburg (Pozdneev, 1908, 1909a, 1909b, 1911) and was also the editor of *A Concise Teaching*. Scholars note an increasing demand for secular education and the rising number of secular primary schools in that period. The Buryat scholar and politician Mikhail Bogdanov estimated that within two centuries of Russian rule by 1905 only around one hundred Buryats had received more than a primary education (Montgomery, 2011, p. 17). During the period from 1900 to 1917, the number of Buryat primary schools in the Transbaikal province increased from 6 to 48, and in the Irkutsk province from 29 to 120. In general, the number of Buryat primary schools in Eastern Siberia increased from 35 to 170 (Lygdenova & Sambueva, 2016, p. 35). When the second edition of the textbook was released, by 1911 already 3,249 Buryat children had enrolled in primary schools in the Transbaikal and Irkutsk provinces, of whom 2,607 were boys and 642 were girls (Durinov, 1948, p. 44; Lygdenova & Sambueva, 2016, p. 5). According to the Buryat scholar Bimba Tsybikov, in the primary school in the town of Ivolginsk in the early 1920s, the pupils were to memorize this textbook by heart.¹⁴ Its further usage is unclear: due to its distinct religious character it might have been considered unsuitable for the atheist Soviet school curriculum, especially in the context of the violent anti-religious campaign in the 1930s.

¹³ For more information about the work and publications of the Imperial Society for Oriental Studies, see http://www.snor.ru/index-m=articles&an=sc_249.html (accessed: 20.06.2021).

¹⁴ This information, without authorship, is provided on one of the local web pages devoted to tourist attractions of the Ivolginsk district of Buryatia: “Nizhniaia Ivolga”, <http://travel-siberia.ru/np/npbur/656-poselok-nizhnyaya-ivolga.html> (accessed: 20.06.2021).

Due to the administrative decision to change the Buryat writing system from Classical Mongolian to Cyrillic in the 1930s and the ongoing language shift to Russian among the Buryats, there are few people, except linguists, who can read and understand this text in the original Classical Mongolian script. Nowadays, the text is entextualized to a new reality – the reality where the classical script is out of use and even the spoken Buryat is in decline. Thus, the textbook's content becomes unreadable, whereas its physical form is still present as an artefact of the past. While I was looking for the print version of the text, I found out that it is frequently displayed in various museum collections and exhibitions in St Petersburg, Kyakhta, Ulan-Ude and other places.

Currently, the textbook still functions to some extent in Buryat public life. Sergei and Tsypylma Dorzhievs told me about its version converted into the Buryat Cyrillic, made in 2008 by Bayar Dondogoi from the Ivolga datsan, which proves that the book is still vital and could be viewed as part of the broader revival of Buddhism (and so-called “Buryat Buddhism”) in the post-Soviet period. From 2009 Buddhism, along with Orthodox Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, is recognized as one of the four “traditional religions” of Russia, and as such is introduced in state elementary schools in the Buddhist regions, including Buryatia, under the subject “Foundations of Religious Cultures and Secular Ethics” (Sablin, 2018).

Concluding Remarks

The discursive story of the text illustrates how the Buddhist literary tradition was applied in the early modern projects of Buryat nationalism, which emerged in the early twentieth century as a reaction to the advancing Russification policy of the tsarist state. The debates on the form and content of the emerging Buryat national identity were the subject of various discussions among the Buryat leaders of the time, and Buddhism was invariably seen as its basic component (Varnavski et al., 2003).

Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb was part of this discourse, and his *Concise Teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni's Religion for Instructing the Buryat Children* could be seen as a link between the Buddhist didactic tradition and the literature of secular education. Although his work is an intertextual compilation of the widely known Buddhist postulates, it has more value as a manifestation of the Buryat political agenda of the period and adds more detail to the debates about the global formation of modernities.

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Figures

Figure 1. Photo of Danja-a Erdeniyeb, courtesy of Tsypylma Dorzhieva.¹⁵

¹⁵ However, in Zhamsuev & Vanchikova (2008, p. 378) the person in this photo is identified as Naidan Sampilov, the Abbot Lama of Chesan datsan.

Figure 2. Grave plate of Danja-a Erdeniyeb from the Smolensky Lutheran Cemetery, currently kept in the St Petersburg dastan; photo by the author.

Figure 3. Stupa dedicated to the lamas of the St Petersburg datsan purged during the 1930s Stalinist terror. The upper element of the stupa is an original part of Erdeniyeb's tomb; St Petersburg dastan; photo by the author.

Figure 4. Front page of Erdeniyev's textbook published in 1910, courtesy of the Department of National Literatures at the National Library of Russia, St Petersburg [Bur./4-129].

Appendix¹⁶

<p>[1a] <i>Buddha sigemüni-yin šasin-u tobči suryal egüni buriyad jon-u keüked-i suryaqu-yin tula stad blam-a danja-a erdeniyeb ber jokiyabai.</i></p>	<p>[1a] <i>A concise teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni's religion for instructing the Buryat children, authored by Staff Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb</i></p>
<p>[1b] Bide бүкүн бурқан Buddha-yin šasin sitүkü бүгед, Buddha-yin šasin-u yool yosun anu tobčilbasu, orsilang (SPb: orčilang) yerüngkei-dür jiryalang ügei, jobulang-un mүн činar-tai, ilangyuy-a yurban mayu jayayan-u jobalang tesdesi ügei, tegүн-eče aburqu čidal anu, yača kü čuqay degedü yurban erdeni-dür bayiqu tula, tegүн-i asida-yin abural-un oron-dur bariju, үнен jirүken-eče itegel yabuyulqu; kejiy-e mayad ügei үкүкү мүнгке busu-yi sanaqu, үкүгед, ügei bolqu busu dakin töröl abqu anu sayin mayu üile-yin erke-ber bolumui. tere-čү urida üiledegsen nigül-te (SPb: тү) üile-yin үre inү jobalang yaryaqu, buyan-ta (SPb: tu) üile-yin үre jiryalang yaryaqu, qayurmay ügei-yi sanaju, üile үre-dür</p>	<p>[1b] [Since] we all profess Buddha's religion, and the basic order of the Buddhist teaching, if laid out in brief, is that there is no [permanent] happiness in the universe [samsara], the true nature of which is suffering. Especially the three bad fates are hard to endure, and the only way to be saved from them is solely through the superior three precious jewels [dharma, sangha, Buddha], which one should catch at in the world of eternal refuge and practise the faith from the true heart; think of the possibility of a sudden death and the impermanence of existence. Even after death one does not disappear but finds a new incarnation according to the bad and good deeds – sinful deeds, committed earlier, bring suffering, virtuous deeds bring happiness. If one conceives no deceit</p>
<p>[2a] itegemjelkü (SPb: itegemjilkü) bui, tere tula jiryalang küsekü бүгесү buyan-i kičiyekü ba, jobalang үлү küsekü бүгесү, nigül-i čegerlekü (SPb: čegerlekü) kereg-tei, ker metü üile üiledүgsen tere metü үre-yi olqu bolomui kemen nomlaysan bui. Nigül kiged buyan anu ali metü bui kemebesü, tere inu bitegübčilebesü, arban qara nigül ba, arban čayan buyan kemen nomlaysan бүгед, nigül inu bey-e-yin egүden-eče üiledkü yurban nigül, kelen-ү дөрбен nigül, sedkil-үн yurban nigül-lүge arban бүгед, angqan-u yurban inu ali bui kemebesü, ami tasulqu, ese öggүgsen-i abqu, buruyu quričal üiledkü, ene yurban bolai (SPb: bui), kelen-ү дөрбен-inү ali bui kemebesü, qudal үгүlekü, qob үge, siregүн үge, jaliqai үge үгүlekü-lүge дөрбен bolai (SPb: bui),</p>	<p>[2a] and believes in the fruits of actions [karma], strives to do virtuous deeds, does not desire to suffer, one needs to beware of sins. According to the teaching one will experience the results of deeds according to his conduct. Let's explain what virtue [merit] and sin are: according to the teaching, those are ten black sins and ten white virtues. The sins are three sins caused by the body, four sins of speech and three sins of the mind, together they make ten sins. Regarding the first three sins, they are interrupting one's life, taking what is not given, engaging in improper forms of sex. Regarding the four sins of speech, they are telling lies, telling gossip/slander, saying coarse words, empty chatter.</p>

¹⁶ The Classical Mongolian script is rendered using the Mostaert-Vladimirtsov system. Page divisions follow the EAP manuscript version.

<p>[2b] sedkil-ün yurban-inu ali bui kemebesü, qomoyoljaqu sedkil, qoorta (SPb: qoortu) sedkil, buruyu üjel ene yurban bui, edeger arban qara nigül yeke bay-a dumda yurban-iyar jergelçilen, tamu birid adayusan (SPb: adayusun) yurban-dur türügülkü büged, eçüs-e amur jayayan-u töröl olabaçu (SPb: olbaçu), nasun ayur ebedçin jobalang olan-tai bolqu terigüten olan jobalang egüskemüi, tedeger arban qara nigül-i boyomtalaqui sanal-iyar tebçibesü, arban çayan buyan kemekü büged, üre-inü tengri (SPb: tngri) kümün-ü ali (SPb: ile) ündür-i olju eldeb jiryalang edlemüi. Busu basa tabun jabsar ügei kiged, arki tamkin (SPb: tamki) terigüten nayidangyui samayu nayadam üiledkü metü gem-tü üile büged-i tebçibesü tusa yeke bui, basa qan vang terigüten aqamad noyad ba oron nituy-un yekes</p>	<p>[2b] Regarding the three sins of the mind/heart, they are covetousness, feeling spite, having wrong views. These ten black sins are divided into major, middle, and minor ones, according to which one finds birth as a hell creature, ghost, animal, and even if one finally finds a peaceful incarnation, he will have, among others, a lot of ire, illnesses, and various sufferings during lifetime. Thus, if one trains abstinence from committing the ten black sins and [strives for] ten white virtues, this will result in a (SPb: +clearly) superior birth as a deity or human and he will experience various [ways of] happiness. Also, the great benefit would be to refrain from committing various sinful deeds like five heinous crimes¹⁷ as well as refrain from alcoholic drinks, smoking and turmoil games. Also, one should respect khans and vangs/kings, seniority, chiefs, and local superiors,</p>
<p>[3a] tüsümed ebüged bolon aq-a yeke-yi kündülkü yosutai, ilangyuy-a blama bayşi ba, eçige eke-yi ergün kündülkü, suryal-i sonusun yabuqu ba, açi-yi qariyulqu yosutai, doordos-nuyud-i asaran tedkükü ba, yerü amitan bükün-i enerin qayiralaqu-aça busu könügen qoorlaju oyto bolqu ügei, ejen qayan kiged tegün-ü qatun tayiji-nar ba, ayimay büles selte-yin ölmei batudaqu ba, törö tübsin arad albatu-nar bügede-yin amur jiryal delgerkü-yi jalbariju, çerig (SPb: čereg) kimural yang jud taqul ebedçin terigüten ülü küsekü yayumas ügei oron gürün-iyer tayibang ayu-yi küsejü mörgül jalbiral üiledkü yosutai bui. Qamuy-i ayiladuyçi-dur mörgümüi. Burqan Buddha sigemüni-yin</p>	<p>[3a] high officials, seniors, and other elders. Especially, one should respect and support teacher lamas and parents, listen to their teaching and repay their good actions. One should look after and support the inferiors, be compassionate towards common creatures as well as do no harm at all. Let the emperor, his queen, his princes, his appanage live long, let the government be stable, and the subjects should pray and worship for the spread of universal peace and happiness; not wish conflicts and wars, drought, severe weather, illnesses, epidemics and wish great peace in the state. Let's pay worship to the one who preached everything [Buddha]. The holiness/light of Buddha Shakyamuni</p>

¹⁷ Mong. *tabun jabsar ügei* "crimes without interval" or "crimes bringing immediate disaster" are: "having killed own mother; having killed own father; having killed the Arhat; shedding the blood of the Tathāgata body by many bad thoughts; causing divisions among the priesthood" (Bareja-Starzyńska, 1997, p. 22).

<p>[3b] gegen-ber angqan-dur, yurban asanggi yalab-un urida-ača qamuγ amitan-u tusa-yin tulada degedü burqan-u bodi (SPb: bodhi) qutuy-i olsuyai kemen bodhi-yin sedkil egüskeged, tendeče yurban asanggi yalab-tur buyan-u čiyulyan kiged, belge bilig-ün čiyulyan-i čaylasi ügei quriyaju ečus-e aginisda-yin oron-du tegüs jiryalang-un bey-e-yi ilete bolyan, burqan boluyad mün kü tere kšan-a jayun külti toγatu yirtinču-yin oron-dur qubilyan-u bey-e-yin teyin čenggel-iyer arban qoyar yeke jokiyal-i üjegülküi-lüge, degedü qubilyan-u bey-e ber tegüs bayasyalang-tu tngri-yin oron-du jalaraju aysan-a ene čambutib-un kümün-ü jayun nasulaqui čay-tu, temür bičin jil-ün jun-u ekin sara-yin arban tabun-a sakiy-a-yin ijayur-un ariyun idege-tü (sudaddana= Śuddhodana, he who grows pure rice) qayan ba ma-ha-may-a</p>	<p>[3b] first began three innumerable <i>kalpas</i> [aeons] ago, when for the sake of all living creatures he decided to achieve the supreme mind of enlightenment. Filled with the compassionate mind during three innumerable <i>kalpas</i>, he accumulated the infinite number of virtues [merits] and amount of wisdom, and in the end clearly attained the complete enjoyment body in the land of Akanishtha. After becoming Buddha during the above-mentioned <i>kshana</i> [moment] in the world of a hundred legs,¹⁸ due to the joy of transformation/emanation body and performing twelve great deeds he was dwelling in the perfectly joyful heavenly world [Tushita]. At the time, when people on this Jambudvīpa lived for a hundred years, in the year of the iron monkey, on the 15th day of the first month of summer, he was born as a son of King “who grows pure rice” (Śuddhodana) of Sakiya clan and Queen Mahāmāyā,</p>
<p>[4a] qatun qoyar-un kübegün bolon, eke qatun-u lümbini-yin čečeglig-tür orosiju bayiqu čay-tu mendulebei, tere čay-tu oyturuyi-ača čečeg-ün qura bayuqu ba, yirtinču-yin oron gegen genel-iyer tügegsen ba, (SPb: +qamuγ) küsegsen kereg-üd bütügsen tula, Arta Sidi buyu, jalayu tusa-yi bütügegči qan kübegün kemen nereyidebei. Burqan sigemüni-yin mendülegsen-eče edüge rus-un 1908-düki (SPb: 1911-düki) on-du qoyar mingγ-a nayiman jayun jiran nayiman (SPb: qoyar mingγ-a nayiman jayun dalan nigen) on bolbai, bay-a nasun-u üy-e-dü eldeb uqayan-u erdem-nügüd-i surulčaqu-dayan, bay-si-nar-un medegsen-eče ilegüü meden ayiladaqu terigüten yayiqamsiy-i üjegülbei, tendeče qorin yisün nasun-u sirui qulyuna jil kürtele, sačum-a¹⁹ terigüten qoyar qatud-i</p>	<p>[4a] when the mother queen stayed in the Lumbini garden. At that time, rain of flowers fell from the sky, the world was filled with bright/holy shine and (SPb: +all) the wishes were fulfilled, that’s why he was named Arta Siddhi [Siddhartha], or the Young Prince who accomplished his beneficial goals. From the birth of Buddha Shakyamuni till the current year, 1908 (SPb: 1911) according to the Russian calendar, there passed 2,868 years (SPb: 2,871). At his young age, when he studied various sciences, he showed amazing knowledge telling more than his teachers knew. Since then, till the age of 29, in the year of the earth mouse, he took two royal consorts/wives</p>

¹⁸ “pure land Akanishtha with a hundred segments”, according to the 3rd chapter of *Abhidharmakosha* [comment by Lama Dobdon Maksarov].

¹⁹ *sačum-a* ‘royal consort’; བཟའ།, *sa* ‘lady/princess’; མཚུན་མ།, *tsunma* ‘queen/consort’ [comment by Lama Dobdon Maksarov].

<p>[4b] abču qan törö-yi tedküjü bayiysan büged, mün jil-dür qan törö-yi tebčijü orkiyad üsnir-iyen kiryajuy toyin bolbai, tendече nirangjana müren-ü dergede ögede bolaju jiryuyan jil-dür bisilyal diyan-dur orsiju qatayujil üiledbei, tegün-ü ečüs-e magada-yin oron-a jalaraju ašodata kemekü bodhi modon-u dergede sayuju simnus-ud-un ayimay-i asaraq-u-yin samadibar nomoyadqayad öber-ün yučin tabun nasun-u modon morin jil-ün saka sarayin arban tabun-du ilete tuyuluysan burqan bolqu-yin yosun-i üjegülbei, burqan boluysan-ača düčin yisün qonoy önggeregsen qoyina varnasi-yin balyasan-du jalarju jun-u segül sarayin sine-yin dörben-dü,</p>	<p>[4b] and upheld the royal reign, but the same year he abandoned the royal throne, cut off his topknot and became a man of religion; from there he moved to the bank of the Nirañjanā River, where he passed six years in ascetic meditation. After this, he proceeded to the kingdom of Magadha, where, at the foot of the Bodhi tree called Ašodata, he pacified the army of demons with the tended/compassionate contemplation Samadhi, and at the age of 35, in the year of the wood horse, on the 15th day of the month of <i>saka</i>²⁰ he became a fully enlightened Buddha. 49 days after becoming Buddha, on the 4th day of the new moon of the last month of summer, he arrived in the city of Varanasi,</p>
<p>[5a] dörben ünen-ü nom-un kürdün-i angqan ergigüljü, tabun ayimay sayin nüküd, (ene inu burqan sigemüniyin qatayujil üiledkü-yin čay-tu baray-a bolju bayiysan nüked büged, ečüs-e burqan boluyad varnasi-yin balyasan-du angqan nom-ün kürdün-i ergigülkü üy-e-dü nom sonosju dayini daruysan-u qutuy-i oluysan šabinar bolai, nerelbesü eyin, könči yoonai-a, datul, langba, manšan, sandan) edeger terigüten tngri luus kümün ba, kümün busu olan-i bolbasurayulbai, tegün eče ulamjalan (SPb: ulamjilan) tngri kümün-ü oron-nuyud-dur jalarjau nomoyadqaydayun amitan-u erketen oyun-u jerge-ber yurban kölgen-u kiged,</p>	<p>[5a] where for the first time he turned the wheel of dharma of the four truths, and instructed five assembly of his good friends (these were those who accompanied Buddha Shakyamuni while he was practising austerities; and when he became enlightened Buddha, they listened to the teaching at the first turn of the wheel in the city of Varanasi, and became his disciples, who became arhats),²¹ their names are Könči Goonai-a, Datul, Langba, Manšan, Sandan, as well as deities, dragons/spirits, humans and many non-human creatures. From then on, he arrived in the realms of deities and humans to pacify them, and according to the intellectual and sensual capacities of creatures, composed teaching of three vehicles and turned greatly the wheel of dharma</p>

²⁰ ས་ག་རྒྱ་བ། 'birth, enlightenment', and departure to nirvana in the 4th month of the lunar calendar, when the moon enters the phase of the star Vishakha (Alpha Librae) [comment by Lama Dobdon Maksarov].

²¹ or "those who conquered enemies", from Tibetan བགྲ་བཙུག་པོ། [comment by Lama Dobdon Maksarov].

<p>[5b] dörben ayımay dandar-un nom-un kürdün-i ayui yeke ergigüljü, toy-a tomsi ügei amitan-i amur jayayan kiged, <u>amuyulang oron-u</u> (SPb: nirvan-u) qutuy ba degedu kölgen-ü mür-tür uduridun jokiyabai, tabin jiryaduñar modon taulai jil-ün baras sara-yin nigen-eče arban tabun kürtele yeke ridi qubilyan-i üjegülejü tirtika-nar-un jiryuyan bayši-nar tergüten olan amitan-i nomoyadqan jokiyabai, nayan nigen-ü temür luu jil-ün moyai sara-yin arban tabun-a nirvan düri üjegülbei. Tere metü burqan sigemüni-ber döčün tabun jil-ün üy-e-dür amitan-u sedkil nomuyadqaqu-yin tulada, amitan-u nisvanis-un yöröndeg-tür nayiman tümen dörben mingyan nom-un čoyčas-i nomlaysan büged, tobčilbasu kilinča yayun-i-ču ülü</p>	<p>[5b] of four divisions of tantra; thus, he led the innumerable number of creatures to the path to the tranquil fate, divinity of <u>the serene land</u> (SPb: nirvana) and the highest vehicle. At the age of 56, in the year of the wood rabbit, from the first day of the month of the tiger till the 15th, he showed great magical transformations, subdued six heretical teachers, and pacified a lot of creatures. At the age of 81, in the year of the iron dragon, on the 15th day of the month of the snake he displayed the appearance of nirvana. Thus, for 45 years Buddha Shakyamuni had preached eighty-four thousand sets of teaching for the sake of pacifying the minds/hearts of creatures and delivering antidote to <i>kleshas</i> [mind poisons]; in brief, do not commit any sin and</p>
<p>[6a] üiledkü ba, buyan-i qotala tegüs edleged, überün sedkil-yi oyoqata nomuyadqaqu, tere-inü burqan-u šasin mön kemen Buddha nomlaysan bui. Burqan bayši-yin arban qoyar yeke jokiyal kemebesü 1) tüsid-ün oron-ača yegügüdeküi (SPb: yegüdekü) -yin jokiyal; 2) eke-yin umai-dur orosiqu-yin jokiyal; 3) mendülkü-yin jokiyal; 4) uqayan-u oron-dur surulčaqu-yin jokiyal; 5) qatud-un čiyulyan-iyar qamta čenggeju, qan törö tedkeküi-yin jokiyal; 6) sayitur yaraju toyin bolqu-yin jokiyal; 7) berke qatayujil edlegesen jokiyal 8) bodi modon-u dergede ajirqu (SPb: ajarqu) -yin jokiyal; 9) asaraku-yin samadi-bar simnus-un ayımay-i daruqu-yin jokiyal; 10) ilete tuylju tuyluluysan</p>	<p>[6a] experience virtue in a complete way to pacify completely your own mind, this is the Buddhist religion as Buddha preached. The twelve great deeds of Buddha are: 1) the descent from the place of Tushita; 2) residing in the womb of his mother; 3) taking birth; 4) becoming skilled in various arts/sciences; 5) delighting in the company of royal consorts and upholding the royal power; 6) getting out and becoming a monk; 7) practising austerities; 8) proceeding to the foot of the Bodhi tree; 9) overcoming the army of demons with the tended/compassionate contemplation Samadhi; 10) becoming</p>
<p>[6b] burqan bolqu-yin jokiyal; 11) degedü nom-un kürdün-i ergigülkü-yin jokiyal; 12) nirvan-u düri üjegülkü-yin jokiyal-luy-a arban qoyar bolai. Qamuy nom-nuyud inu, sansar nirvan qoyar-dur baytamu; sansar inu, yirtinču büged, tegün-dür yadaşadu saba yirtinču kiged, dotoşodu sim-e yirtinču kemekü qoyar jüil bui, saba yirtinču-inü ali bui kemebesü, yirtinču-yin oron, yajar delekei, naran (SPb: nara), sara, ayula, usun, modon, čiluyun (+čiluyun), ger bayičin (+bayising), terigüten jiryuyan jüil amitan-nuyud-un törön tügekü-yin oron-nuyud mön bolai;</p>	<p>[6b] a fully enlightened Buddha; 11) turning the wheel of the superior dharma; 12) displaying the appearance of nirvana – together twelve deeds. All the teachings encompass the samsara and nirvana. Samsara is the world which is made up of the vessel world and the internal content²² world. Regarding the vessel world, these are land, earth, the sun, the moon, mountains, water, trees, stones, buildings, and other places where the creatures of six types are born and spread.</p>

²² Also translated as “outer” (inanimate) and “inner” (animate) “worlds” (Bareja-Starzyńska, 1997, p. 11).

<p>[7a] dotoyada (SPb: dotoyadu) sim-e yirtinčü inu ali bui kemebeşü, degereki saba yirtinčü-nügüd-tur törön tügegegsen jiryuyan jüil qamuγ amitan-i dotoyadu sim-e yirtinčü kemen nereyidekü bolai, jiryuyan jüil amitan kemekü ali bui, kemebeşü, tengri (SPb: tngri), asuri, kümün, adayusan (SPb: adayusun), birid, tamu, kemekü jiryuyan jüil bolai, edeger-eče, tngri asuri, kümün yurban inu sayin jayayan-u amitan büged, adayusan (SPb: adayusun) birid, tamu, yurban-inu mayu jayayan-u amitan kemegdümüi, angqan-u yurban-i yayun-u učir-iyar sayin jayayan kemekü bui gebesü, tedeger inü urida-yin buyan-tu üile-yin</p>	<p>[7a] Regarding the internal content world: the creatures of six types that are born and spread over the above-mentioned vessel world are called the internal content world. Regarding the creatures of the six types, these are gods, demigods, humans, animals, ghosts, and creatures of hell. From those six, gods, demigods, and humans are creatures of good fates, while animals, ghosts, and creatures of hell are creatures of bad fates. The first three incarnations are called good fates because</p>
<p>[7b] erke-ber törögsen büged, ene nasun-dayan-ču degedü buyan-i bütügegseger orčilang-un jobalang-ača getülkü-yin mür-i olju bolqu tula sayin jayayan-u amitan kemegsen bui, ečüs-ün yurban-i mayu jayayan-u kemegsen učir-inu, tedeger inu urida nigül üiledegsen-ü erke-ber törögsen büged, ene nasun-dayan-ču küčir jobalang-iyar nerbegdegsegen tula buyan bütügejü jobalang-un dalai-ača getelkü-yin mör-i olqu inu masi berke tula mayu jayayan-u amitan kemegsen bolai. Tedeger saba sim-e yirtinčü-nügüd kerkejü (SPb: kerkiju) yaruysan-inu siltayan üre sitün barildaju boda бүкүн бүтүкү бүгед urida yaruysan siltayan-dur sitüjü qoyidoki üre yaraq bolai, tere-ču amitan-nuyud</p>	<p>[7b] they occur due to previous virtues [merits]; they are called the creatures of good fate because they are born as such due to their previous virtues, and if they attain the highest virtue during this life, they can find their path out of the worldly sufferings. The latter three incarnations are called bad fates because they occur due to previous sins, and during this life they are afflicted by hardship and suffering and thus it is very hard for them to find the path out of the ocean of suffering by doing virtuous deeds. The reason why the vessel and content worlds emerged is because [material] substance emerges due to the link between reason and result, the fruits of deeds are coming out in link with the previously appeared cause. The living creatures,</p>
<p>[8a] terigülesi ügei-eče tataysan abiyas-iyar bar (SPb: abiyas-iyar) bi kemen barimtaqu ba, minu kemen ejerkekü metü buruγu üjil-tü nisvanis-iyar sitügülen eldeb üile quriyaysan-u (SPb: quriyaysan) erke-ber dakin dakin töröl abqu, ba ökün yegüdkekü-yin jobalang ürgülji amsuju arban qoyar sitün barildaqui-bar orčilang-dur usun-u kelkemel qobuyata ergigülge metü überün erke ügei ergilden tenün tögörimüi. Yirtinnču-yin doroyidul бүкүн-ü ündüsün inü, bi kemen barimtalqu inu uqamsar ügei nisvanis mün-ü tula, tegün-i bi ügei qoyosan (SPb: qoyosun) činar-i onoyasan bilig-iyer tasulun tebčiju orsilang-ača toniluysan nirvan-u qutuγ-i olqu bolomui. Arki kemekü soytoyuraquluyči umdayan inu, edlebesu tusa erdem</p>	<p>[8a] due to inclination existing from time immemorial, have the wrong views assuming the [subjective] existence of "self" and "mine", having the desire to possess. On the account of <i>kleshas</i> [mind poisons] they commit various deeds and experience constant suffering of going through births and deaths; on the account of twelve links of dependent arising in this world, one wanders and runs astray whirling limply like water in a ditch. The root of regression of the whole universe is the conviction about the [subjective] existence of "self", which is a mindless <i>klesha</i>; with the insightful wisdom of emptiness and non-existence of "self", one can resist and escape from the samsara to attain the sacred nirvana. Consuming <i>arki</i>, an inebriating beverage, does not bring</p>

<p>[8b]</p> <p>yaṛaqu yosun oyta ügei büged, qarin gem-inü, tegün-i edlegesen-iyer sedkil munqarin durityal (SPb: duratyal) bayuraju mungqay-i egüsken qamuṛ nisvanis-i türügülkü ba, bey-e kelen sedkil-ün nigül-tü üile-i üiledkegülkü mün-ü tula qamuṛ mayu gem-nügüd-ün ündüsün kemen burqan nomlaysan bolai, tegün-i ayuṛsan-iyar sedkil budungyuyiran mungqaraju omoy degerengküi töröged, busud-tur esergülen keregül egüskejü kelen-ü egüden-eče bolqu nigül-tü üiles-nügüd-i üiledkü ba, tegüber ülü baran bey-e-ber jodoldan alaldaju über busud-un bey-e amin-dur qoora üiledkü bolomui, teyimü tula yaṛçaqan ayay-a arkin-ača arban qara nigül tabun jabsar ügei terigüten mayu nigül-tü üile bögüde egüskejü bolqu bui, basa</p>	<p>[8b]</p> <p>any benefit and wisdom at all. Upon that the sin of consuming it [<i>arki</i>] leads one's heart/mind astray, reduces memory, initiates ignorance, makes one generate all mind poisons and commit the sinful deeds of the body, speech, and the heart/mind – that's why Buddha preached that it is the root of various bad sins. When one drinks [<i>arki</i>], one's mind/heart is beclouded, one becomes foolish, one's arrogance is increasing and he stands against others thus initiating conflicts, committing the sins of speech; moreover, one causes sins of the body fighting fiercely causing harm both to one's own and other person's body and life. That's why a single cup of <i>arki</i> leads to ten black sins, five heinous crimes and various other bad sinful deeds. Moreover,</p>
<p>[9a]</p> <p>ayuṛsan-iyar qanuqu ügei bolju ed jögeri yayun-i-ču qayira ügei aldaqu gegekü, ene bey-e-ben-ču kegere qayaju gemtegekü terigüten gem-i toyalaju baraydaqü ügei bui, tere tula, ečüs qoyitu töröl-dür ayuyči inu ukilan dayudayči tamu-dur törökü ba, ayulayči-inu tegün-ü nükür bolqu kemen nomlaysan bui. <u>Sayin süsüg-ten dabtatuyai. Uwam ma ni bad mei huum</u> (SPb: missing).</p>	<p>[9a]</p> <p>when drinking one cannot be satisfied, thus one mercilessly loses property or other things, and leaves his [unconscious] body in the wilderness, injuring it – these are innumerable sins. It was preached that as a result in the next incarnation the one who drunk will be born in the Hell of Great Screaming, and the one who persuaded him to drink will be his companion. <u>Let the good believers repeat it. Uwam ma ni bad mei huum</u> (SPb: missing).</p>

Reading a 1908 Buryat Schoolbook on Buddhism in the Light of Its Socio-Cultural Setting

This article is devoted to the text entitled *A Concise Teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni's Religion for Instructing the Buryat Children*, published in 1910 by Lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb. The study attempts to trace its complex discursive story, which shows the way the religious didactic narrative was transformed into a textbook for secular Buryat schools of the time. The story of this transformation requires a comprehensive comment on the historical and cultural setting of the early twentieth-century tsarist Russia, in which the author and his text were both embedded. In the appendix to the article, the reader will find my transliteration and English translation of this peculiar text.

Keywords:

Buddhist didactic literature; Buryats; Danja-a Erdeniyeb; schooling

Buriacki podręcznik religii buddyjskiej z 1908 roku w świetle uwarunkowań społeczno-kulturowych

Niniejszy artykuł poświęcony jest opublikowanemu w 1910 roku tekstowi pt. *Zwięzła wykładnia religii Buddy Siakjamuniego do nauczania dzieci buriackich*, którego autorem był lama Danja-a Erdeniyeb. Artykuł jest próbą prześledzenia złożonej dyskursywnej historii tego dokumentu, która pokazuje, w jaki sposób religijna narracja dydaktyczna została przekształcona w podręcznik dla ówczesnych świeckich szkół buriackich. Ukazanie tej przemiany wymaga rozległego komentarza na temat historycznego i kulturowego kontekstu carskiej Rosji początku XX wieku, w którym osadzony był zarówno autor, jak i jego tekst. Aneks do artykułu zawiera transliterację oryginału i tłumaczenie całości tekstu na język angielski, sporządzone przez autora artykułu.

Słowa kluczowe:

buddyjska literatura dydaktyczna; Buriaci; Danja-a Erdeniyeb; szkolnictwo

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