

Dogs as a constant of culture of Russian arctic old timers

Tatyana Berdnikova*

North-Eastern Federal University named after M.K. Ammosov, 58 Belinsky str., Yakutsk (Republic of Sakha), 677000, Russian Federation

Abstract. The article examines the zoomorphic code of a dog in the culture of the Russian Ustians - descendants of the Russian old-timers of the lower Indigirka. Russian settlers, having adapted to the harsh climate of the Arctic, created a polar version of Russian culture, in which dogs became an obligatory element. Their role in commercial and economic activities is extremely great. Having become the center of everyday life, the dog is a cultural code of the sub-ethnic group. The linguoculturological approach was adopted to analyze the involvement of dogs in the script of various folklore genres. The article describes materials of dialectal dictionaries and archival funds, demonstrating the linguistic representation of the image of a dog.

1 Introduction

Since the 17th century, islands inhabited by Russian explorers have appeared on the territory of northeastern Russia. For almost four centuries, the permanent Russian population - old-timers - has formed there. The settlers strove to preserve traditions of their ancestors: original language, folklore, traditional culture. Once in the north, the Russians did not feel the influence of the literary Russian language, which made it possible to develop dialects that differed from other dialects of both European Russia and Siberia as a whole and a special type of Russian "polar culture".

In the Russian Federation, there are three sub-ethnic groups of Arctic old-timers, two of which live in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia): Indigir and Kolym residents. The former live in the lower reaches of the Indigirka River, the latter - in the Kolyma. Accordingly, the places of compact residence of each group are the village Russkoye Ustye of the Allaikhovskiy district (the regional center is Chokurdakh) and the village Pokhodsk of the Nizhnekolymskiy district (the regional center is Chersky). Each local group has its own characteristics both at the level of language and in traditional culture and life, and the inhabitants are carriers of a lifestyle adapted to the Arctic conditions, which has absorbed both elements of Russian culture and local cultures of northern peoples.

At the republican level, thanks to the efforts of the local historian Alexei Chikachev, in April 2004, the law according to which the Russians and campers were equated in their rights with the indigenous peoples of the North was adopted. What made it possible to consider the descendants of Russian old-timers as representatives of the small peoples of the North? First

of all, these are specific local features of the economy, among which sled dog breeding plays a crucial role.

Breeding and riding dogs is an integral part of the life in the North. Along with the traditions, the everyday existence of folklore genres and the territorial dialect, sled dog breeding is a phenomenon of "outgoing nature". Since the early 1980s, dogs have been replaced by fast snowmobiles. The change in the mode of movement did not affect the labor processes of the Russian old-timers: they are still engaged in fishing and hunting.

2 Materials and Methods

The materials on dogs are an attempt to restore a fragment of the cultural and ethnographic community of the Russians, describing their identity within the northern variation of traditional culture in the North-East in isolation from the historical homeland and conditions of a different ethnic environment.

Dogs as a part of intangible culture are associated with various genres of folklore and inscribed in the lexical and phraseological systems of the dialect. The dog as an element of the culture of the Russian Arctic old-timers has never been described in terms of the linguoculturological approach.

The everyday neighborhood of man and dog allows us to speak about the special role of the zoomorphic code in the culture of the Russian inhabitants of Indigirka. The involvement of the dog in the life of the Russian person in the Arctic makes it relevant to consider this domestic animal as a constant of culture, creates a cultural context, in which various symbolic ties are woven both within the ethnic community and with neighboring ethnic groups – Yukaghirs, Evens, Yakuts.

* Corresponding author: berdnikovata@mail.ru

In traditional Russian culture, the dog is considered a symbol of loyalty, devotion and impurity. A large number of proverbs, sayings and ethnographic descriptions prove this attitude. This ambivalent attitude towards the dog can be explained by the relationship between the dog and the wolf. These two animals are members of the opposition, where the dog is thought of as a tamed animal, while the wolf always remains an alien to the human, an inhabitant of the forest, fraught with danger, personification of evil, cruelty. Echoes of the relationship between the wolf and the dog explain the negative attitude towards the dog. However, the change in the habitat has modified the attitude of the Northern Russian people towards the dog. Dogs have become the central link in the entire range of commercial and economic activities of the Arctic Russian.

3 Results

The presence of dogs became the basis of well-being. In Kolyma and Indigirka, people say: "Why do we fish - to feed the dogs, and why do we keep dogs - to fish". Without this mode of transport in Northeast Asia, it would have been impossible to sell fur, to hunt and fish, to provide economic, postal, trade and administrative needs [1, 2]. Some scientists say that the Russians borrowed dog riding from the inhabitants of Siberia, since this mode of transport did not develop in Western Siberia and the Russian North. V.G. Rasputin claimed that there were no Russian dogs in the North, and cited the fact that the Russians did not master reindeer herding since they used dogs [2]. In the Arctic conditions, sled dog breeding has become an interregional mode transport, played a huge role in the development of the north-east and the entire circumpolar civilization.

The role of dogs in the development of northern spaces has been described in the memoirs and diaries of polar explorers F. Anjou, F. Wrangel, G. Meidel, R. Amundsen et al. [2]. Russkoe Ustye was a place of equipment and a starting point for many expeditions, in which dogs became full-fledged participants, often sharing the sad fate of polar explorers.

A caring attitude to dogs is common for Russian Ustye residents. Dogs were like children. It was considered extreme disdain to freeze dogs: each owner had several collars 'fur bandages made of a polar fox or a hare, which were tied to the groin of dogs in the coming frost'. To avoid wounds on their paws, when the dog ran along the rezun 'thin crust that cuts the paws of dogs', the hostesses sewed special boots from strong fabric. If the dog did get hurt, its paws were treated with a special solution of hot water and gunpowder. When fishing in summer, the number of dog teams was always taken into account, often there were two or more of them in a family, and there could be from 8 to 12 dogs in a team. V.M. Zenzinov, exiled to the Russian Ustye in 1911-12 said that each owner tried to have two sledges: one for fishing, and one for domestic needs, which was about 20 dogs [3]. Three fish were fed to one

dog. There was an unspoken rule to feed the dogs once a day and after the ride. The 'daily ration for one dog team' was calculated. The dog food was called kondevka.

"No farm under local conditions is unthinkable without dogs. There are from 8 to 40 of them. All the work related to movement and transportation is done by dogs — this is the only "animal" of the Indigirans, as they call them... Dogs of indigirtsu are not cheap — 1 fish or 7-10 herring leaves per day for each dog (sherboy, i.e. boiled, half as much) ... 20 dogs a year eat 2,000 fish and 10,000 herring; the welfare of dogs largely depends on the success of the herring fishery, because herring is the main dog food, it is most profitable for their owner to feed them. The rich keep fish for sale and sell it to the "starving" in the fall (mainly goes to dogs) — 10 fish (chir, muksun) or 100 herring go for 1 p. (during fishing, 15-25 fish are given for a ruble)" [3].

V.M. Zenzinov gives an approximate household inventory and the annual budget of one of the poor Russo-Austrian Ivan, where dogs occupy a significant part of the expenses. Ivan had 10 dogs, 6 of them left - ran away with a sled and disappeared in a blizzard, 1 disappeared from old age; social activists helped by giving several old dogs - by autumn their own puppies had grown up, and Ivan began the winter with 8 of his dogs. About 10 fish a day went to the family — there were enough fish until the new catch. At the same time, Ivan sold the dog for 15 rubles, and the whole shovel cost the same amount – that is, a set of all men's winter clothes.

Talking about dogs was one of the obligatory elements of communication for Arctic old-timers: they talked about dogs, their habits, and the best riders. There were also famous dogs that everyone knew. During pre-revolutionary fairs, dogs served as an object of exchange for sled runners, and could be sold for 10-40 rubles. Ethnographic literature mentions that, going to the fair, the Indigir bourgeoisie harnessed 12-15 dogs, half of which they sold. Dogs were sold and exchanged in order to improve the breed.

Dog nicknames are of interest: Dear, Voronok, Bogatyr, Moka, Rooster, Tellik, Goluboy, Kolyma, Perchanka, Kushak, Owl, Rusak, Ugolek, Chess, Pestrak, Superik, Pin, Terbey, Winches, Volchok, Medvedko, Kobytka, Cherny, Murash, Kudrash, Sokolok, Lishenok (little fox), Valetka, Turkhan, Kralia, Lenda (ribbon), Karchina, Shepetkoy, Kurazhka, Burko, Sherko (gray), Ulka, Mokhnashka, Shelun (mischief), Sable, Chaika, Maid, etc. [4]. Some of the names were dialectal.

Having considered the role of the dog in everyday reality, describe it in various genres of folklore.

The Expedition Report of 1927-29 indicates that in Russkoye Ustye there was a custom to feed the puppy by each member of the family "in his own name" [4]. The existence of this custom led to the fact that by the age of 10, the boy, the future hunter-fisherman, knew habits of dogs well and made rather long trips on his own.

If a boy was born, he was taken in a dog's skin or dog hair was put under his cap [2]. The boy was given a dog nickname: Curly, Ugolyash, etc., so that the dog would protect him from evil spirits. It is possible that the ancient attitude towards the dog as a sacred unclean animal was manifested in this tradition: having given a dog's name to the child, the relatives tried to ward off all sorts of misfortunes from him. To confuse evil spirits, the dog's name was then passed on to the dog. Growing up, the child fed a puppy, with whom he did not part later as a close creature.

Sled dogs as a means of transport were used in the wedding ceremony, when the bride was taken to the wedding. After the wedding in the chapel, all the participants in the wedding train sat on the sled and "rushed like an arrow" to the headman's house. The harness of dogs was painted, the belts were trimmed with red and green cloth [3].

In a nursery rhyme the dog appears as an obligatory component of the surrounding reality.

The sun, the sun,
Look out the window:
Your children are crying,
Sulfur is bathed,
Dogs are thrown,
We are not given [2]

Some of the Russian Ustye signs, which are called sins, are associated with natural phenomena. The behavior of dogs indicated weather changes: if the dog buries itself in the snow, blizzard can occur; a dog scratches an ear means bad weather; the dog begins to somersault means blizzard. Another part of the signs is associated with everyday life: the woman cannot step over the dog - hairy children will be born; if you give the dog the insides of the killed bird, the gun will start to injure. The area of dreams is also associated with the animal: to see the dog in a dream is associated with the arrival of a friend [6]. During Christmas divinations, girls and young people went out into the street and listened to which side the dogs were barking – it was from that side that matchmakers should be expected or go to match themselves [2].

In fairy tales, the dog plays the role of a person's assistant ("Dog", "Merchant", "Chelbunchut", "Belomonet-hero", "Sunflower beauty", "Kotok da kobelek", etc.) [5].

In the most widespread folklore genre of modern residents of the settlements of the Russian Mouth and Chokurdy ditties, the image of a dog is also extremely rare, compared with other representatives of the fauna - fish, arctic fox, horse, goose. Here are some isolated recorded examples:

I'm walking along the Podgornenskaya,
Dogs bark at me,
Let them bark, they know about it,
I have my darling.

And mine is from the cute sly, sly,
He went to St. Petersburg on a goat,
And I didn't give a max,
I caught up with the dog [5].

4 Discussion

Cultural facts, examples of respectful attitude towards dogs could not but be reflected in dialectal vocabulary and phraseology. Cattle, dogs, males, one-nests [5] - these are the words that the old-timers used to call their faithful assistants. The vocabulary of Russian settlers that formed in the northwest experienced a semantic shift in naming realities. Once the whole set of pets narrowed down to one dog, it remained in the category of cattle. Consider the words that reflect the DOG fragment of the linguistic picture of the world. Analyze the units recorded in various dialectal dictionaries [7, 8, 9, 10].

Places for dogs in the yard – a kennel – were called flocks.

Dogs have been used as a means of transportation since Cover of the Day (October 14). By this day, in the European part of Russia, the cycle of agricultural work ended and the first snow fell. In the Arctic, the snow layer is already dense.

Names of the elements of the dog sled are various: alyk 'harness for a dog sled', underwear 'leash on which sled dogs are transferred without a sled', underbelly 'a thin strap under the belly of a dog, with which a harness is attached', a pull or leash 'a long belt to which the dogs are fastened in the harness, the central part of the harness ', the swara' the belt with which the dog is fastened to the pull ', the swivel' the iron part of the dog harness, which connects the alyk with the swara ', the nagorlik' the additional belt used to tie the dog to the alyk if it is lazy or trying to get ahead. ' In special cases, the team was decorated with a tie 'an embroidered collar' and a sherkunets 'small bell'.

To denote the pace of movement of the dog sled, there is a generic word 'riding'. There are 4 main sled riding speeds, for each of which there is a special name: gallop, trot, ride and step. No self-respecting musher or dog lover will force his team to ride at a gallop. The ride had to be measured, with stops every 8-10 kilometers. Such stops were called poberda. The clear alternation of work and rest made it possible to navigate well in time, rarely when the musher was late for more than 5 minutes. A trot was a run in which the dog put one front and one hind leg on the ground at the same time. The step marked the slowest step of the dog sled. The pace of movement of the team is also expressed with the help of stable expressions – to ride 'to go fast' and swara not to slacken 'good to go in the harness'.

Puppies were harnessed even before they reached one year. Puppies born in winter were considered more hardy than summer ones, so they were put in harness starting from eight months. In the dialect, there is a

stable expression according to the first (second) alyk 'about a sled dog aged one or two years'.

Particular attention was given to the leader or the leading dog. It was on his instinct that the man could rely in bad weather, when the road was covered with snow, and only the leader took the team to the dwelling. The ability not to stray from the route in bad weather is expressed in phraseological units such as to drive the trail 'go on the paved snow, without a road'. The image of bad weather is clearly expressed in the unit the front dog cannot see 'don't see anything at close range'. The loss of the team could lead to the death of the musher himself, which is why it was so important to have a well-trained leader. The leading dog was appreciated; in Kolyma and Indigirka there was even the expression "Yes, it is better to give a wife than a leader" [2]. According to the function performed in the harness of the leader there was a draft dog - a dog pulling well in the harness. Only castrated males were used to work in the harness.

There were special names for hunting dogs: an industrial dog and a bear dog.

In dialectal dictionaries, there are units characterizing dogs: 1) by color: a lobash dog 'black with a large white spot on the forehead', a chubarko 'dog of gray color with spots'; 2) by appearance – a crest 'shaggy dog'; 3) by behavior – neim 'a dog that is not given in hand', a simple 'dog that got loose and left the leash'.

The team was controlled with the help of special order words: go 'to the right', 'stop', 'to the left', 'forward'. The musher commanded the team, and the dogs obeyed his commands. At the end of the ride, a stick with which the dog team stopped was used.

Zenzinov noted that the most terrible curses were expressions such as "dog infection, dog keel" [3].

The "dog theme" was constantly recorded in the field dialect records of different years (examples are given with the preservation of the phonetic features of the Russo-Ust dialect).

onethousandninehundredsixtythree: This puppy is near the oldest, from that big puppy was born. At home, she's a dog, she'll go to the poor guy.

1964: We cook rib and feed dogs with varon...And we have "potpo-potpo" on the Indigirka, they talk, they drive codes and on dogs. This is the command of the leading dog, she understands this word well. So they say, when the dogs need to go to the right; Atsel on the Kuluma, then you can get pramo, they say. We used to ride on dogs in the winter time.

1967: A collar is put on for a dog. If she freezes her groin, a collar will be made of fur. If the dog feeds, they put on her bib; the dog's shoulder blade is also buvat. We mix food for dogs with this spatula.

1978: Dogs feed us, dress us, save us. The dogs are our cattle, dear cattle; The old dog knew the way, she knew the way home. Perennya-that dog was taught. Here she leads all the dogs in a team. She will grow old, it's a pity to kill, then she will die herself. If he dies, we bury him in the ground. I had faith – I give bows to the dog, then we bury it. Dogs have a nickname.

5 Conclusion

Having considered the dog as one of the elements of intangible culture of the sub-ethnic community of the Russian old-timers of Indigirka, we came to the conclusion that the image of the animal combines both the traditional vision, characteristic of many peoples, and that formed in the Arctic. The data of dialect dictionaries and ethnographic literature provide facts for considering the zoomorphic code in culture and other local groups of Russian old-timers: in the Kolyma camp, in the Magadan region, in Anadyr. We also consider it useful to apply the comparative method in the linguoculturological description of the dog and its meaning for the indigenous peoples of the North.

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