

“Shamanic Rituals and Religio-Cultural Revival: An Empirical Analysis of Demographic and Cultural Differences among Attendees at Shamanic Ceremonies in Buryatia, Russia”

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As part of an interdisciplinary research project examining indigenous religious revival in post-Soviet Russia, Quijada *et al.* (2012) collected ethnographic and survey data on attendees at five shamanic ceremonies in Buryatia, a republic in Southern Siberia abutting the Mongolian border. Close to 30% of the population of Buryatia is comprised of the republic’s titular nationality—the Buryats—who have traditionally observed shamanism as a religio-cultural practice. As with other indigenous communities in Russia, the Buryats witnessed an aggressive attempt at the extirpation of native language, culture, and religion at the hand of the Soviet government throughout the twentieth century.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the increased autonomy that accompanied the status of Republic within the Russian Federation, many Buryats have begun the process of reviving the traditional religious and cultural practices that had been suppressed during the Soviet era. The Local Religious Organization of Shamans, Tengeri,<sup>1</sup> for example, is a legally recognized collective of practicing Buryat shamans located in Ulan-Ude, Buryatia’s capital city. Through years of ethnographic study in Ulan-Ude, Quijada (2009) followed Tengeri, examining it as a locus for the revival of traditional religious belief and national identity. Now, with the collection of survey data at Tengeri’s ceremonies, these ethnographic accounts may be augmented by an analysis of statistical trends found among the attendees.

In this paper, I seek to place the results of this newly collected survey data in dialogue with Quijada’s ethnographic work in an attempt to provide a more comprehensive understanding of *who* is attending these ceremonies and *why* they are choosing to do so. Of particular interest are the demographic and cultural differences between those attending the small clan ceremonies (*tailgans*<sup>2</sup>) and those attending the larger touristic ceremony held annually at Olkhon Island in Lake Baikal, a UNESCO World Heritage site on the western border of Buryatia. Statistical analyses and advanced data mining techniques are used to inquire into the demographic background and cultural behavior patterns of attendees to determine whether these ceremonies attract disparate groups of observers. Given the nature of these ritual *tailgans*, it is hypothesized that individuals attending the Olkhon ritual are less likely to report cultural behaviors and

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<sup>1</sup> Rus. *Mestnoe Religioznoe Organizatsiia Shamanov Tengeri*; henceforth: Tengeri.

<sup>2</sup> While Russian words are pluralized with the suffix *-i*, the English suffix *-s* is used here for ease of reading.

attitudes that would index “traditional” Buryat identity, such as speaking the Buryat language or having a history of attendance at other shamanic ceremonies.

Following Vergote’s (1997) assertion that a non-reductive empirical study of religion must begin with a description of the specific religious phenomenon under study from the perspective of believers, this paper begins by reviewing the broader social, cultural, and religious atmosphere of Buryatia, including the development of the ethnonym “Buryat” as both an ethnic category and as a national identity. Next, the survey design of Quijada *et al.*’s (2012) project is explained, along with several key findings. Finally, these results are placed alongside existing ethnographic and empirical literature on Buryatia. Particular emphasis is given to the disparities between ethnic self-identification and engagement with certain cultural practices deemed to be ‘traditional’ among the Buryat community.

### **Contextualizing Tengeri: Shamanism and/in Buryatia**

According to Mikhailov (1996), “Buryat” as an ethnic category emerged in the late nineteenth century as an ethnonym for the Mongol-speaking indigenous communities of the Baikal region of southern Siberia.<sup>3</sup> Formally conquered by the Mongolian empire in 1207 (see Cleaves 1982), these “Buryiad” tribes were strongly influenced by Mongolian language, ethnicity, and culture over the nearly four decades that they fell under Mongol control. Even today, Buryats in Russia retain strong cultural ties to Mongolia, and the use of the term “Buryat-Mongol” as an ethnic self-identity is not uncommon in Buryatia (Sarangerel 2013).

At the time of their conquest, Buryats lived in semi-nomadic, pastoral herding tribes and engaged in ritual spiritual practices that are now referred to as “shamanism”.<sup>4</sup> When European Russian explorers reached the Trans-Baikal region in the early 1600s, they estimated the Buryat population to be around 30,000 people, making it one of the largest—and most militarily powerful—populations in Siberia (Chakars 2008). Along with these explorers came Russian Orthodox missionaries hoping to convert shamans and their clients<sup>5</sup> to Christianity. At roughly the same time, Buddhist missionaries from the Gelugpa branch of Tibetan Buddhism came to the Baikal region from central Asia and were ultimately more successful at converting Buryats, particularly those in the east who were more culturally tied to Mongolia.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, many Buryats

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<sup>3</sup> Although archaeological evidence suggests that humans, likely of Yeniseian origin, first entered Siberia around 45,000 BCE (Vajda 2013), the usage of the term “first inhabitants” here is meant only to signify those who had cultivated the land and developed a territorial association with it. Furthermore, the use of the term “indigenous” to describe Buryats is often debated, particularly given Transbaikalia’s territorial dominance by the Evenki in the fifth through ninth centuries. For a discussion of how the term “indigenous” is used in contemporary socio-political discourse, see Graber (2012).

<sup>4</sup> “Shamanism” as an anthropological category is highly contested. While some theorists criticize “shamanism” as an umbrella term used by Western intellectuals to reductively amalgamate a wide variety of indigenous religio-cultural beliefs (Kehoe 2000), others have embraced it as an expansive term that can be used to index a universal religious phenomenon found among almost every indigenous population on the globe (Eliade 1964). Regardless of its expansiveness, the members of Tengeri use the term “shaman” (*bö* [m.] and *udayan* [f.]) to describe themselves professionally and are widely recognized by Buryat citizens as such (Quijada 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Some scholarship refers to those who go to shamans as “shamanists”, however this term is not uniform. The term client is used here as consistent with Quijada (2009).

<sup>6</sup> Tibetan Buddhism made a cultural impact on Mongolia since the capture of Tibet by the Golden Horde in the 1240s (Jagchid 2013).

at this time feared that conversion to Christianity would inherently require an abandonment of the Buryat-Mongol cultural identity due to the ways in which religion and culture were interrelated within these communities (see Bawden 1985 for discussion). As a result, Buddhism was able to become much more deeply ingrained in Buryat culture and is often considered part of indigenous religious belief, alongside shamanism (Chakars 2008; Quijada 2009).

Despite the proselytizing goals of the Christians and Buddhists, the two religious groups came to coexist with Buryat shamans in tenuous peace during the era of the Russian Empire (Quijada 2009; Holland 2014). The ease at which Buddhist, Russian Orthodox, and shamanic traditions were able to concurrently thrive in Buryat society was largely facilitated by the fact that many people in Buryatia did not follow only one religion exclusively, but instead participated syncretically in several, choosing the faith that they believed will be most helpful for their current spiritual situation (Quijada 2009). This trend has continued into the present day: although it is common for Buryats to report that they identify with one specific faith or as atheistic (Holland 2014), very few engage with only one religious community.

In 1861, Tsar Aleksandr II officially abolished serfdom in Russia, which, combined with a rapid population rise in European Russia and the government's desire to develop agriculture in the eastern territories, led the Russian government to encourage Siberian immigration, a development that drastically altered the Siberian landscape both socially and economically (Forsyth 1992). Furthermore, with the outbreak of the Russian Civil War in 1917 and the emergence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1922, a cultural sea change that heavily affected religious and spiritual life overtook Russia. Although religion was never banned outright, the USSR was the world's first officially atheist state and took a hostile view toward religion more broadly, seeking its eradication as an ideological goal. As part of the USSR, the Buryat-Mongolian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR)<sup>7</sup> was founded in 1923.

Under Soviet ideology, shamans were regarded as particularly dangerous, savage purveyors of cultic and primitive religious practice. To that end, shamans were often cast out of mainstream Soviet society, denounced formally by the government, and denied basic rights such as suffrage (Pospielsovsky 1987). In addition to the shaman's status as a religious professional, the Soviet government also attempted to extirpate shamans during the Stalinist purges because of their ability to act as powerful sources of resistance, working to undermine Soviet governmental structures in order to preserve indigenous culture (see, for example, Balzer 1983). In the eyes of the Soviets, shamans were powerful symbols of anti-revolutionary subversion that needed to be forcefully suppressed in order for communist ideology to take hold in Siberia. As such, any shamanic practice during the Soviet era was forced underground.

In this same vein, Soviet leaders in Moscow developed an aggressive campaign of "Russification" (*Rusifikásiya*) during the mid-twentieth century that sought to modernize the indigenous peoples of Siberia.<sup>8</sup> In the Buryat ASSR, for example, public schools were forced to stop teaching the Buryat language and Mongolian script; traditional forms of art were proscribed; and any discussion of traditional Buryat heroes, such as the Mongol King Geser, was banned

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<sup>7</sup> The term "Mongolian" was removed from the name in 1958 as part of a "Russification" movement.

<sup>8</sup> This is in stark contrast to the "Indigenization" (*Korenizatsia*) campaign developed in the 1920s. For a discussion of this earlier approach to Siberian indigenous communities, see Martin (2001).

outright (Blitstein 2001; Chakars 2008). At the heart of these nationalization efforts was an attempt to downplay the ethnic and cultural similarities between Siberian indigenous communities and Eastern Asia.

Although the most violent era of the Soviet period came to a close with Stalin's death in 1953, shamanism remained heavily persecuted during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras. However, following a Soviet restructuring policy of the 1980s known as *perestroika* in which religious freedom rights began to expand, the USSR officially dissolved in 1991 to be replaced by the Russian Federation. Buryatia officially became an autonomous republic of the Russian Federation in 1992, with Ulan-Ude as its capital. Today, Ulan-Ude boasts over 400,000 residents (roughly 42% of Buryatia's population; Federal State Statistics Service 2010), making it the third largest city in Siberia. Buryats comprise roughly 28% of the population of Buryatia and are one of the most highly educated indigenous groups in Russia (Quijada 2011).

Because Buryats responded more readily to Soviet modernization than many other communities in Siberia, there is very little ethnic violence or political strife reported in the region today. In many ways, the Soviet government viewed Buryats as a "model minority" because of their limited opposition, high education rates, widespread literacy and Russian language skills, and prevalence in professional occupations (Chakers 2008). Yet, at the same time, many Buryats view the Soviet period as a time of grave cultural loss. In a recent Buryat publication called "Traditional Culture of the Buryats" (Gerasimova et al. 2000), for example, local intellectuals hoping to revitalize cultural, religious, and ethnic traditions of the Buryat community lament that "70 years of socialist forces transforming the 'old world' have brought society into a state of crisis" (cited in Quijada 2009:77). To be sure, there is widespread agreement among Buryats that traditional culture has been lost in the tides of Soviet oppression, and many consider its revival to be a cultural imperative (Quijada 2009). At the same time, however, considerable debate has developed surrounding what this revival of tradition should entail, as there is disagreement over what "Buryat tradition" in fact constitutes in the modern day. It is under this ideological backdrop that *Tengeri* rose to prominence in the early twenty-first century.

### **Understanding *Tengeri*: Buryat Shamanic Cosmologies and Religio-Cultural Revival**

The "Local Religious Organization of Shamans, *Tengeri*" received legal recognition as a religious organization in 2003,<sup>9</sup> though they had been practicing for close to a decade prior. It is the third officially recognized shamanic organization in Buryatia, but is by far the most visible today (Quijada 2009). Centered in Ulan-Ude, the collective was founded by former businessman Budashab Purboevich Shiretorov and former engineer Victor Dorzhievich Tsidipov with the goal of restoring traditional Buryat practices that had been lost to Soviet suppression. In 2005, the organization comprised close to fifty members, thirteen of whom made up a core group of practicing shamans. Today, however, it has grown to over 80 members, most of whom are

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<sup>9</sup> In the Russian Federation, "religious organizations" are able to petition to the government to be legally recognized as an institution. As of 2005, there were 177 registered religious organizations, over 100 of which are either Orthodox Christian or Buddhist in orientation (Quijada 2009).

shamans, and affiliate offices have been constructed in the nearby Chita and Irkutsk Oblasts.<sup>10</sup> The shamans of Tengeri are both male and female and range in age from their early 20s to their 50s. In order to more fully understand the societal role that Tengeri plays in contemporary Ulan-Ude, it is first necessary to develop a background in Buryat shamanism more broadly.

Similar to other indigenous cosmologies throughout Siberia, traditional Buryat cosmology describes the universe as trifurcated into three worlds, where spirits primarily occupy the Upperworld and Lowerworld but are able to influence the lives and fortunes of humans who reside within the Middleworld (Eliade 1964; Pratt 2007). The Buryat spiritual multiverse is comprised of benevolent and malevolent gods (*tenri*), place deities (*ežens*), ancestor shamans (*ongons*), and non-human animal spirits (Pratt 2007). These spirits have names and often discernible personalities (Quijada 2009). For the purposes of this paper, the *ongon* spirits—ancestors who act as protectors of their lineage—are of particular importance, as they are the spirits most commonly worshipped at the ceremonies analyzed below.

Tengeri shamans understand their work to be particularly critical in this historical moment. Those at Tengeri believe that many *ongon* spirits have become enraged by the years of disregard and neglect that resulted from the aggressive suppression of shamanic practice during the Soviet era (Quijada 2008, 2009). Tengeri shamans read the myriad sociological effects of the fall of socialism—including widespread poverty, unemployment, and alcoholism in Buryatia—as indications that the spirits are angry and therefore causing social problems as well as blocking attempts at improvement. These shamans believe that, by rectifying the relationship between the living and spirit world through ritual communication and shamanic practice, many social problems that Buryats face will be tempered over time.

While Buryat shamans often hold private ceremonies, such as divinations, for clients in order to diagnose and treat spiritual ailments on an individual level, the most common ritual they perform is the *tailgan* (Tugutov 1978; Quijada 2008), which is studied in this paper. Past ethnographic accounts of the *tailgan* ritual present it as a ceremony in which a shaman leads a clan—a group of interrelated families that make up a community—in a communal sacrifice (usually of a sheep), which is performed to honor ancestor spirits and/or the place deities that reside in the clan’s homeland (Tugutov 1978; Long 2008).

Although it has been debated as to whether it is truly “traditional” (Jokic 2008), the Buryat shamans of Tengeri also enter into altered states of consciousness (ASCs) to embody these spirits during the *tailgan* rituals. Once the shaman enters into a trance state and becomes embodied by an *ongon* spirit,<sup>11</sup> members of the audience are able to ask the spirits questions in the Buryat language. While *ongons* do not prophesize the future, they are able to inform clients—often rather cryptically—as to whether an illness or hardship has a spiritual cause, and, if so, how that may be remedied. At the ceremony’s end, the spirit will leave the human body, allowing the shaman’s soul to reenter; it is common for the shaman to be unable to recall anything that was said or done during the possession.

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<sup>10</sup> Although the organization has grown dramatically since 2003, it has also splintered due to discord among shamans. Several of the original core shamans have left to begin their own shamanic organizations that now compete with Tengeri for clients.

<sup>11</sup> The Tengeri process of entering into trance and spirit possession is documented in depth in Quijada (2009).

As Quijada (2009) notes, the shamans who work at Tengeri assert that they are reviving authentic (*nastoyashii*) and traditional (*tradtzionnii*) shamanic practices that had been suppressed during the Soviet era through ritual practice. By framing the organization as an attempt at the cultural “revival” of genuine religious practice, however, this discourse conflates the notion of “authentic” with that of “legitimate”, thereby placing a value judgment on different types of ritual practice. This is to say, among many Buryats, those rituals that are viewed as most traditional are also viewed as the most legitimate. From an analytic perspective, however, it is important to note that all traditions are invented patterns of behavior that are only labeled “traditions” once their origins have been forgotten or reimagined in the collective conscience (Quijada 2009). As a result, these labels of authentic and traditional may not necessarily reflect pre-Soviet or pre-colonial histories but instead index a perceived cultural past from the perspective of modernity.

Nonetheless, these labels retain social significance, as local scholars and other shamans often dispute whether individuals are “real shamans” or charlatans and whether certain practices are authentic or ersatz (Quijada 2009). This persistent debate at least partly emerges from the fact that discourses on authenticity and tradition are commonly tied to a community’s sense of ethnic identity in Siberian indigenous communities; by identifying what is truly traditional, Buryats are able to contextualize themselves within and work to bring back their cultural heritage. This interpretation also leads to anxiety, however, as many Buryats do not feel as though they are able to adequately judge what is “authentic” due to the loss of cultural knowledge during the Soviet period (Buyandelgeriyn 2007; Quijada 2008).

While the fine details of Buryat ritual practice are often debated, it is commonly accepted that “traditional” shamanic practices in pre-colonial Buryatia were clan-based (Tugutov 1978; Quijada 2008, 2009). Each clan was to have its own shaman who practiced alone and honored the ancestors and place spirits associated with her or his own community. As such, Tengeri, an institutionalized collective of shamans that does not maintain a specific clan affiliation, drastically departs from this historic form.<sup>12</sup> Although the members of Tengeri acknowledge this historical dissonance, they argue that their shamanic organization is integral to the revival of traditional structures given the social reality of contemporary Buryatia.

Because they are centered in Ulan-Ude, a city of over 400,000 people, the shamans of Tengeri must accommodate a panoply of prospective clients instead of one specific clan. A large majority of Buryats currently living in Ulan-Ude come from families that had migrated to the area since the 1960s (Humphrey 2002), and many are unable to identify their home village or clan affiliation. Thus, in addition to holding ceremonies for a litany of clans (each of which may have regional variations in ritual practice), Tengeri shamans must also identify ways in which clients can meaningfully communicate with their ancestors despite not knowing who they are. In addition, Tengeri opens its doors to individuals who do not identify as Buryat, including the notably large Russian population of Ulan-Ude, holding that the collective exists as public health service for *anyone* living in the Buryat territory. In order to accommodate such a diverse clientele, the Tengeri shamans have refashioned the traditional *tailgan* discussed above into what

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<sup>12</sup> However, according to Quijada (2009), some shamans argue that shamanism did take an institutional form during the Mongol empire, and thus the tradition that they are attempting to restore dates back to the thirteenth century.

Quijada (2008) calls a “city *tailgan*”. In the city *tailgan* ritual shrines to ancestor spirits (*oboos*) are placed in public urban spaces, as opposed to the ancestors’ homelands. Much of the ritual performance is retained, however, including animal sacrifice, offerings, and methods of entering into trance possession.<sup>13</sup>

One specific *tailgan* examined in this study is part of an annual celebration that takes place on Olkhon Island, a 730 square mile island in Lake Baikal on Buryatia’s western border. As the third largest lake-bound island in the world, Olkhon boasts a population of about 1,500 people as well as numerous tourist resorts. In Buryat shamanic cosmology, Olkhon Island, and especially the large rock formation on its western coast called *Shamanskaya Scala* (or *Shamanka* for short), is considered an *axis mundi*—a vortex that connects the three worlds that make up the cosmos—as well as the resting place of the Spirit Master of Baikal (Bernstein 2008).<sup>14</sup> In 2002, a Tengeri shaman went into trance by *Shamanka* and was told by the Spirit Master that he had become angered by the environmental degradation, decades of neglect, and volume of tourists who sunbathe on the rocks. In order to atone for these wrongdoings, the Spirit Master prescribed that the shamans hold a *tailgan* once a year for the next 17 years in honor of the gods of Olkhon (*oikony noyod*).

The summer *tailgan* that took place in 2012, marks the tenth anniversary of the Olkhon Island ceremony, now called the “International Shamanic Conference”. In addition to the ritual offerings and trance possessions that accompany the *tailgan*, Tengeri also imagines this event as a way for indigenous shamans from other communities to meet and share their techniques and knowledge (Quijada 2011).<sup>15</sup> As such, the Olkhon Island *tailgan* is a much more large-scale ceremony than others performed by Tengeri and has grown exponentially in size since its inception in 2002.

Quijada (2008) argues that the *tailgans* performed by Tengeri—though not traditional in the most historical sense—act as sites for the revival of traditional religious, cultural, and national identity for Buryats in the post-Soviet period. While there is much literature supporting this claim (*cf.* Humphrey 2002), less is known as to the ways in which different *tailgans* operate, even within one shamanic organization. For example, do the demographics of those attending the large-scale Olkhon event differ from those attending smaller ceremonies put on by Tengeri? Can disparate reasons for attendance be identified between Olkhon and other *tailgans*?

Broadly speaking, these questions may help us to better understand whether *the nature* of a given Tengeri ceremony is associated with who is drawn to it or whether it is *the ceremony itself* that draws attention. This paper analyzes survey data collected by Quijada at Olkhon Island as well as four smaller ceremonies in the summer of 2012 to provide a more holistic picture as to just how these *tailgans* operate as sites of religio-cultural revival in Buryatia and also what cultural and demographic differences exist between them. Analyses of these participants based

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<sup>13</sup> Humphrey (2002) suggests that such “urban shamans” are able to effectively use these rituals as a way to re-imagine urban spaces and connect them to the ancestral hinterlands outside Ulan-Ude.

<sup>14</sup> This deity is sometimes referred to as *Hoton Khan*, *Hoton Noën*, or *Khan Khoto Babai*. The inconsistency in naming reflects the variability in shamanic cosmologies across Buryatia.

<sup>15</sup> Quijada notes that shamans have visited the International Shamanic Conference from California, Germany, and Inner Mongolia, and that the event is getting increased attention among New Age websites internationally.

on demography, spirituality, and relationship to traditionally indexed Buryat behavior patterns will help reveal who is drawn to each of these ceremonies.

### **Examining Tengeri: Survey Construction and Empirical Results**

Data were collected by Quijada *et al.* (2012) from five ritual *tailgans* performed by Tengeri in July and early August of 2012 as part of a larger research grant provided by the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER). The NCEEER grant approved funding for a multifarious research project investigating Buryat religious revival that included qualitative research by a linguistic anthropologist, quantitative survey collection, and the development of a photographic archive of Tengeri ceremonies.

The surveys distributed as part of this collaborative project included basic demographic information as well as questions regarding one's association with traditional Buryat culture and, more specifically, shamanic ritual. All survey questions were written in English as well as Russian and Buryat. Two students at the Buryat State University in Ulan-Ude assisted with survey translation, data collection, and data processing.

Data were collected at the following ceremonies:

*July 1* – A ritual *tailgan* was held outside Ulan-Ude at a hilltop shrine in observance to *Bukhe-Baatar*, a patron deity of masculinity and the Selenga River. *Bukhe-Bataar* is associated with masculine qualities, such as physical prowess and success in sport.

*July 7* – A ritual *tailgan* held at the Tengeri Center in Ulan-Ude to worship *Losad Khan*, a water deity prayed to most often for protection and safety while engaging in fishing and similar maritime ventures.

*July 15* – A ritual *tailgan* held in a building reserved for members of the *Darkhan* (the Blacksmith Clan) in Buryat society.

*July 21* – A ritual *tailgan* held outside of the Tengeri Center in observance of *Khihaan Ulaan*, a Tengerin sky deity that is responsible for an individual's fate. It is common for Buryats to pray to *Khihaan Ulaan* for success in business, for health, and for family matters such as finding a partner or becoming pregnant.

*August 4* – The International Shamanic Conference held on Olkhon Island. During the conference, a *tailgan* was held to honor the Spirit Master of Lake Baikal.

Surveys were given to each individual at the ceremony; although no data was collected regarding rates of completion, anecdotal evidence from Quijada *et al.* (2012) suggests that completion rates were high.

Each survey began by asking several basic demographic questions about the respondent, including Gender (male or female), Marital Status (married or unmarried), and Age (grouped as 18-23, 24-35, 36-45, and 46 and older).<sup>16</sup> An ethnicity variable was also provided asking individuals whether they self-identified as ethnically Russian, Buryat, Both, or Other (where those who responded Other could write in their ethnicity). However, because of the low number

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<sup>16</sup> By loosely grouping ages into Soviet historical eras, we are better able to identify whether age and the ideological circumstances of one's upbringing are at all associated with one's decision to attend a particular ceremony.



of individuals who reported *both* Russian and Buryat ethnicities (n=5) and because of the diversity of ethnicities listed in the Other category, this question was broken down into two binary variables, Russian and Buryat, for statistical analysis. Those who reported both ethnic categories were coded as present for both, and thus the two variables are not mutually exclusive.

After completing questions regarding demographics, respondents were then provided an open-ended question regarding their reasons for attending the ceremony. Following Miles & Huberman (1994), this qualitative information was coded into quantitative variables through the generation of a provisional “start list” used by two separate coders: whether the individual attended the ceremony for spiritual/religious reasons (Spirituality); for reasons specific to the context of the ceremony (Ceremony Specific);<sup>17</sup> for reasons related to kinship (Kinship); and out of a general interest that was unrelated to the traditional theology of Buryat culture (Curiosity). Intercoder reliability (ICR) was 93.5%. Again, categories were not mutually exclusive.

Respondents were next asked a series of yes/no questions about current or previous association with Buryat culture. Two questions were asked regarding Buryat language use, specifically whether the respondent Spoke Buryat as a child and whether the respondent Speaks Buryat currently. Four questions were also asked regarding each respondent’s relationship to shamanic practice. The response to the question “Did your family engage in shamanic practices when you were growing up?” was used to index Childhood Shamanic Practice. Similarly, the response to the question “Do you attend clan *tailgans* for your family?” was used to index Family Shamanic Practice. Participants were also asked whether or not they had attended other Tengeri ceremonies before (Past Tengeri Attendance) as well as whether they had attended other ceremonies by *any* shaman or shamanic organization (Any Ceremony Attendance).

For analysis, the variables Spoke Buryat, Speaks Buryat, Childhood Shamanic Practice, Family Shamanic Practice, and Any Ceremony Attendance were summed together into one Buryat Traditionality Scale (range=0-5), which was used to measure one’s relative association with perceived traditional indices of Buryat cultural identity.<sup>18</sup> The reliability of this scale, however, was modest (KR-20=0.62). The mean score was 1.63 (SD=1.77) for the full sample; broken down further, Buryats scored an average of 3.34 (SD=1.31) whereas ethnic Russians scored an average of 0.48 (SD=0.88). (66.9% of Russians [n=168] scored a zero on the scale). A one-sided, two-sample t-test using Buryat ethnicity as the reference group showed that this difference was statistically significant ( $t=-28.47$ ,  $p<0.00$ ).

Finally, the Location of the ritual—the outcome variable for this analysis—was recorded. Because this paper is primarily focused on the differences between the Olkhon Island ceremony

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<sup>17</sup> It is not uncommon for Buryats to attend a ceremony that is specific to their current concerns or aspirations. For the July 1 ceremony, this would include the health of men or a reason related to “masculine qualities”, such as success in sport. For the July 7 ceremony, this would include any reason related to maritime ventures, such as fishing. For the July 15 ceremony, this would include anything related to the *Darkhan* blacksmith clan. For the July 21 ceremony, this would include prayers related to fate, such as success in business or the healthy birth of a child. Finally, for the Olkhon ceremony, this would include health, strength, and well-being as well as any mention of Olkhon as an *axis mundi* or Lake Baikal as a sacred site.

<sup>18</sup> It should be noted that the development of this scale is not meant to reify the idea of what is to be appropriately defined as “traditional”; instead, these variables are only meant to reflect what are commonly seen to be markers of “tradition” among Buryats living in Buryatia.

and the smaller clan ceremonies, the location variable was dichotomized to reflect whether the survey was collected at Olkhon or at a smaller clan ceremony. Of the 479 completed surveys, 64.7% (n=310) were completed at the Olkhon Island event and 35.3% (n=169) were completed at smaller ceremonies.<sup>19</sup>

Basic univariate statistics for each predictor variable can be found in the first column of Table 1 (Appendix A). Of note, 61.0% (n=289) of the sample identified as female, which is higher than population statistics for the Republic of Buryatia that indicate that women make up 52.4% of the republic's population (Federal State Statistics Service 2010). A breakdown of participants by age revealed that those ages 24-35 made up the highest age group present at the ceremonies (37.8%, n=181). Given that over half the sample is over the age of 35, however, it is interesting to note that only 57.9% (n=275) of the sample were married.<sup>20;21</sup>

Regarding variables related to ethnicity, most individuals attending these ceremonies identified as Russian or Buryat, which is consistent with the demography of Buryatia. The 2010 Russian Census found that 66.1% of individuals living in Buryatia identified as Russian, whereas 28.0% identified as Buryat (Federal State Statistics Service 2010). Very few individuals in the sample (5 of the 438 who did not report an Other ethnicity), however, reported that they identified as more than one ethnicity, despite the high prevalence of individuals with multiple ethnic backgrounds living in Buryatia. The politics of ethnic self-identification and the differences between self-identity and genetic ethnicity are discussed in the following section in greater detail.

Questions regarding Buryat language use showed that 34.5% (n=165) of attendees had some knowledge of the Buryat language at some point in their lives. Broken down by ethnicity, 76.6% of Buryats (147 of the 192 Buryats in this sample) had some language knowledge, whereas this was true for only 7.2% of Russians (18 of the 251 Russians, only 1 of whom also identified as Buryat). The high prevalence of Buryat language use is notable considering a recent study suggesting that only 2.4% of Ulan-Ude residents use Buryat at work or at school (Khilkhanova 2007, cited in Quijada *et al.* 2013).<sup>22</sup>

Consistently, fewer respondents reported that they had engaged in indigenous ritual practice than reported that they had not. Of these variables, attendance at another shamanic ceremony had the highest rate of affirmative responses at 45.3% (n=217). Only 43.2% of the

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<sup>19</sup> Specifically, 59 were collected at the July 1 ceremony; 29 at the July 7 ceremony; 49 at the July 15 ceremony; and 32 at the July 21 ceremony.

<sup>20</sup> The average age of marriage in Ulan-Ude depends on one's gender and ethnicity. For Buryat men and women, mean ages of marriage were 28.7 and 26.5 respectively, while mean ages of marriage for all other ethnic groups in Ulan-Ude, including Russian, were 26.0 for men and 24.7 for women. These differences were shown to be statistically significant (Eremina & Kucher 2010). However, the reason our proportion of married individuals appears to be low given age trends is likely due to the fact that divorced and widowed were not listed as options.

<sup>21</sup> A Chi Square Test of Independence revealed that married individuals in this sample were significantly more likely to marry endogamously ( $\chi^2=178.6, p<0.000$ ). These results are consistent with past literature on Buryatia suggesting that Buryats choose to marry from within their own ethnic group in much higher rates today than during the Soviet era (Lesse & Lesse 2007).

<sup>22</sup> These language questions did not address, however, in what capacities these individuals use Buryat. See Skrynnikova (2003) for discussion of how the Buryat language has lost its polyvalence in modern Buryatia. Graber (2012) further provides a broader background of Buryat language use today.

sample (n=207) reported that they came to a Tengeri ceremony for spiritual reasons; meanwhile 48.2% of the sample (n=231) reported general curiosity.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, 15.5% (n=74) of respondents' reasons for attendance were specific to the ceremony. Of this subset, close to 75% were also attending the ceremony for spiritual reasons. Finally, 18.2% (n=87) attended out of a kinship obligation, more than 80% of whom also attended for spiritual reasons.

As predicted, the Phi coefficients displayed in Table 2 (Appendix A) reveal that each of the cultural indicators of Buryat identity were positively correlated with one another as well as with one's attendance for spiritual, kinship, or ceremony specific reasons. Attendance out of curiosity was also *negatively* associated with each indicator. Moreover, each variable was also positively associated with self-identifying as ethnically Buryat and negatively associated with self-identifying as ethnically Russian (again with the exception of curiosity, which showed the opposite trend).

In addition, several associations with demographic variables were also identified. For example, men, individuals who were older, and individuals who spoke Buryat as a child were more likely to be married. While older people were not more likely to have spoken Buryat as children, they are more likely to speak Buryat currently. Furthermore, regarding age, older people in this sample were less likely to be male. Men were also more likely to indicate a ceremony specific reason for their attendance than women; however, this difference is likely due to the fact that one ceremony was conducted to honor *Bukhe-Baatar*, a patron deity of masculinity, and another to *Losad Khan*, a water deity who watches over fishermen and other mariners, positions commonly reserved for men. Finally, those who were married were more likely to have attended a previous ceremony performed by Tengeri, but past Tengeri attendance did not differ by age. The relative strengths of these statistical relationships are found in Table 2.

Bivariate Chi Square Tests of Independence comparing attendance at Olkhon Island with each demographic and cultural variable are supplied in Table 1 (Appendix A).<sup>24</sup> Significant differences were not found for gender, age group, or marital status. Regarding ethnicity, as predicted, significantly more Buryats attended the smaller ceremonies and significantly more Russians attended the large-scale Olkhon Island event. Clients who attended the ceremony for spiritual, kinship, or ceremony-specific reasons were much more likely to attend a small ceremony, whereas those who attended out of curiosity disproportionately attended Olkhon. Furthermore, those who scored positively on each of the indicators of indigenous Buryat culture attended smaller ceremonies in significantly higher numbers.

Variables that were significant at the bivariate level were next placed into logistic regression classification models for multivariate analysis.<sup>25</sup> This was performed in order to determine whether these variables of interest would *independently* correlate with one's

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<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that 16 responses to the open-ended question of why one chose to come to the ritual were coded as both for spiritual reasons and out of curiosity. Most of these responses indicated an engagement with prayer but also general, non-theological interest as to what was happening at the ritual itself.

<sup>24</sup> All bivariate and multivariate data analyses were performed using bootstrapping techniques to control for the possibility of individuals attending multiple ceremonies. See Horowitz (2001) for explanation.

<sup>25</sup> The logistic regression models determine the probability of one's attendance at Olkhon Island given one's responses to listed variables. By using *classification* modeling, we can further compare one's predicted attendance to one's actual attendance choice to determine the relative success of a model.

attendance choice when considered simultaneously. As can be seen in Table 3, eight multivariate models were run. In Models 1 and 2, each of the five variables used to create the Traditionality Scale were used, whereas Models 3 through 5 instead took into account the collapsed index.

Additionally, because of the modesty of the traditionality scale, binary factor analysis (BFA) was performed as an exploratory data mining technique.<sup>26</sup> BFA provides a promising approach to the empirical study of unquantifiable latent constructs—such as culture—since the analysis takes into account response patterns and net effects of variables to empirically identify what elements underlie them. As such, this analysis was performed in order to determine the utility of one scale to index traditional Buryat identity. BFA revealed that the variables of interest best fit into two separate factors; geomin rotated loadings of these factors showed significance in Factor 1 for the Spoke Buryat and Speaks Buryat variables, whereas significance for Factor 2 was found for Childhood Shamanic Practice, Family Shamanic Practice, and Any Ceremony Attendance. Heuristically, then, Factor 1 can be said to reflect linguistic components of Buryat traditional culture whereas Factor 2 can be said to reflect behavioral elements. These two factors replaced the Buryat Traditionality Scale in Models 6 through 8.

Each of these three clusters of models—those with the five cultural variables, those with the summed scale, and those with the BFA factors—were run with and without the Buryat and Russian variables to determine whether ethnicity confounds any relationships seen (Models 2, 4, and 7). Further, in the latter two clusters, Buryat ethnicity was also interacted in order to investigate the *combined* effect of ethnic self-identification and high scores on traditional indices of Buryat culture together (Models 5 and 8).

As seen in Table 3 (Appendix A), individuals who attended a ceremony by Tengeri before were about 70% less likely to attend Olkhon Island in each of the eight models. Similarly, individuals who reported that they attended a Tengeri *tailgan* for a reason specific to the ceremony were between 75 and 80% less likely to attend Olkhon, depending on the model. In contrast, those who reported that they attended out of curiosity were between 7 and 9 *times* more likely to attend Olkhon. In four of the five models where the ethnicity variables were included, Buryats were more likely to attend the small clan rituals, whereas no differences were found with regard to the Russian ethnicity. Significant differences were not found for the scale variable or any of the five ‘tradition’ variables when analyzed separately, but those with higher scores on either factor variable were less likely to have attended Olkhon.

### **Discussing Tengeri: Empirical Data and Ethnographic Research in Conversation**

The overall aim of this study was to examine a broad range of demographic and cultural data on attendees at different shamanic ceremonies performed by Tengeri in an attempt to better understand how the varying *tailgans* operate from within the shamanic organization. Given that this sample also provides an almost complete picture of those in Buryatia who attended a Tengeri *tailgan* during the summer 2012 season, some general comparisons may also be made between

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<sup>26</sup> Exploratory factor analysis is commonly utilized as a statistical method to examine the ways in which the correlations of the variables of interest are structured in order to help identify the number of latent constructs that underlie a proposed scale (Fabrigar *et al.* 1999).

the descriptive statistics of this sample and national census data, although more advanced modeling cannot be completed without a random and republic-wide sample.

However, we are, at the same time, examining the demographic and cultural patterns of only a small—and likely non-random—subset of the Buryat population. Following Quijada's (2008) claim that Tengeri shamans have reimagined the 'traditional' Buryat *tailgan* so that it may be situated into a post-Soviet, urbanized space, it is likely that those who choose to attend these ceremonies are, on average, less connected to 'traditional' Buryat culture more broadly. While empirical data does not yet exist to test this hypothesis, ethnographic work strongly supports this claim (Quijada *et al.* 2013). The descriptive statistics garnered from this study, therefore, should not be read as indicators of indigenous religio-cultural revival across Buryatia, as it is likely that this sample comprises individuals in Buryatia who are disproportionately interested in such a revival and also lack other more 'traditional' structural mechanisms—such as clan affiliations or other social networks—with which to engage with Buryat culture.

To begin with analyses of the demographic variables, no gender differences were found at the bivariate level between those attending the small clan *tailgans* and those attending Olkhon Island. This is noteworthy given that past literature indicates that gender roles and patriarchal systems of gender inequality are embedded into Buryat shamanic practice for both the shamans and their clients (Buyandelgeriyn 2013).<sup>27</sup> While more research is needed to more fully capture the gender dynamics at play among clients at these rituals, this study does suggest that women and men do not significantly differ with regard to what *types* of religious structures they seek from within Tengeri. Future empirical research may also want to specifically consider a broader analysis of women in Buryatia to determine whether the higher prevalence of women at Tengeri (60.97% of the sample) is due to a gendered interest in shamanic practice.

Furthermore, it is interesting to point out that age was not found to be statistically significant at the bivariate level. Because this survey only included adults and because the age question did not request a numeric age but instead an age category, one cannot compare the descriptive statistics of this sample to the median or mean age listed in the most recent Russian census of Buryatia. Nonetheless, the insignificance of age in this study is considerable given the dearth of scholarship surrounding how older generations of Buryats navigate religious belief systems in the post-Soviet period. Both Rogers (2009) and Young (1997), for example, suggest that generation may have a considerable and under-estimated impact on rates of reported religious practice, in that elders traditionally take on more religious responsibilities. However, at the same time, older individuals alive today were also born during the Soviet era and educated through Soviet atheistic pedagogies that may have profoundly influenced their understanding of and relationship to religious practice.

Given this almost paradoxical positioning, cultural and behavioral differences across age groups prove a particularly compelling point of analysis. The aforementioned association between age and *tailgan* attendance for kinship reasons in Table 2 may be read to suggest the revival of traditional roles for older generations: these individuals reported that they attended a

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<sup>27</sup> The lack of an association between gender and attendance for kinship reasons is particularly noteworthy given that Buryat gender roles suggest that women often pray on behalf of their families. This insignificance holds even when subsetting the sample to only Buryats.

ceremony for kinship reasons in significantly higher numbers than other age groups. However, the fact that older individuals are no more likely to attend the smaller, more clan-based rituals than younger people may speak against this claim. Many of the smaller rituals in this study—such as the *tailgan* celebrating the *Darkhan* clan—are more strongly built on honoring kinship relationships or obligations than the Olkhon Island event is.<sup>28</sup> Statistical insignificance thus implies that, while many older clients are attending these events for kinship reasons, the *type* of ceremony being performed does not appear to play a major role, perhaps further suggesting that people may not be aware of the structural differences between ceremonies more generally.

The most interesting results of these analyses, however, emerge from the disparate findings between self-reported ethnicity and the variables or scale used to index traditional Buryat identity in the multivariate models. At the study's origin, it was hypothesized that both these five variables and also the Buryat scale would be highly correlated with Buryat ethnic identity (which was confirmed, as discussed *supra*). Underlying this hypothesis was the assumption that one's ethnic self-identification and the cultural behavioral practices one chooses to participate in are both manifestations of a latent construct: one's connection to a Buryat identity. If this assumption were true, it would stand to reason that statistical findings would be consistent between the two, given that they are highly correlated and measure the same underlying concept.

However, in no multivariate statistical model did the five indices of traditional Buryat practice—or the scale created to sum them—show statistical significance. Only when these variables are placed into a more complex data mining technique that teases out specific relationships among the variables themselves that significance was found. In stark contrast, self-identification as ethnically Buryat significantly increased one's probability of attending a smaller ceremony in four of the five models. With the possible exception of Model 8,<sup>29</sup> these disparate findings could not be read as the result of confounding or multicollinearity, as the models were run with and without the ethnicity variables as well as with and without an interaction term.

This result proves particularly compelling if we consider that ethnic self-identification in Buryatia, as with any multicultural society, is embedded with both social and political meaning (Cheshko 2000; Skrynnikova 2003). Given the complexity of identity politics in Russia—particularly surrounding the connections between ethnicity, race, and nationhood (Lemon 2002)—it is therefore integral to first provide a theoretical framework for how ethnicity is understood and navigated in contemporary Buryatia before analyzing the significance of our results.

Although a full review of literature surrounding conceptions of ethnicity is outside the scope of this paper, suffice to say that ethnicity in Russia has been heavily informed by ethnographic theory predicated on *primordialist* (or naturalistic) paradigms. In contrast to Western anthropological work employing a *constructivist* framework—which suggests that

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<sup>28</sup> Additionally, when comparing age groups against the Buryat culture index, those who were older did score slightly higher—though insignificantly so—on the Buryat culture index than the overall sample (1.89 compared to 1.63; ANOVA  $F=1.93$ ,  $p<0.12$ ). This result suggests that older generations in this sample are no more or less likely than other age groups to participate in Buryat traditional culture or engage with other shamanic practices.

<sup>29</sup> Variance inflation factors in the interaction terms of Model 8 indicate a problem with multicollinearity here.

ethnic categories, as well as the boundaries between them, are socially constructed, negotiated, and maintained through instructions and social practices—Soviet ethnography and Soviet era governance treated ethnicity as much more rigid and inherent (Gellner *et al.* 1975; Martin 2000).

The eminent anthropologist Sergei Shirokogorov (1923) laid the foundations for a primordialist understanding of ethnicity in Russia by developing the concept of “ethnos” (*etnos*), which he defined as “a group of people, speaking one and the same language and admitting common origin, characterized by a set of customs and a lifestyle preserved and sanctified by tradition, which distinguishes it from other [groups] of the same kind” (translated in Sokolovski 1999:5). According to Shirokogorov and his followers, numerous distinguishable ethnoi fleck the Russian landscape, each with their own territory and cultural value systems. This theory of ethnos is still the dominant theoretical framework for the understanding of ethnicity in Russia for many ethnographers (Schindler 1997) as well as the Russian citizenry more broadly (Rutland 2010).<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, the self-reported ethnicities of those attending Tengeri ceremonies may not necessarily map such a deterministic conception of ethnicity. For example, the ethnographic work conducted as part of the interdisciplinary research by Quijada *et al.* (2012) suggests that many people who attended the ceremonies have genealogical linkages (sometimes very recently so) to both Russians and Buryats, but yet only just over one percent of respondents reported that they were “Both Buryat and Russian”.<sup>31</sup> In spite of—or perhaps because of—the dominance of a primordialist concept of ethnicity, individuals make considerations as to how they choose to self-identify. While it would be inappropriate for scholarship to reassign ethnic identities based on genealogical or genetic pedigrees, these inconsistencies reflect important elements of how ethnicity is conceptualized and manifested in Buryatia today, particularly for people with multi-ethnic backgrounds where ethnicity may be more fluid. Although our research project does not attempt to directly address what factors contribute to an individual’s choice of ethnic self-identification,<sup>32</sup> this theoretical review does help to contextualize the ethnicity variables within the primordialist framework.

While language use or past engagement with indigenous religious practices may in part inform one’s decision to identify as Buryat, these five variables and the Buryat ethnicity variable displayed drastically inconsistent results in the multivariate models. As seen in Models 1 and 2, none of these five ‘traditional’ variables significantly predicted whether an individual was present at Olkhon Island or at a small ritual. Furthermore, Models 3 through 5 reveal that this is also the case when we consider the number of traditional variables on which one responded affirmatively (i.e. a single scale variable) instead. As such, it appears that individuals at both of

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<sup>30</sup> Rutland (2010) notes that the Western view of ethnicity as partly voluntaristic has not strongly taken hold within the Russian Federation, even despite its promotion by Russian Nationalities Minister Valentin Zorin from 2001 to 2004.

<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the large number of self-identified Russians in a sample of individuals engaging in a *Buryat* cultural practice indicates either an increased interest on the part of European Russians in indigenous religion or that many people who identified as Russian nonetheless have strong cultural and/or ethnic ties to Buryats. The latter would be more consistent with our ongoing ethnographic research as part of this project.

<sup>32</sup> Some of the factors that are suggested to drive self-identity include language use (Yalaeva 1999) and “ethnic self-consciousness” (Chimitdorzhiev 1996). See Skrynnikova (2003) for discussion.

these ceremonies have relatively similar relationships to traditional Buryat culture, when controlling for other variables.

However, Models 6 and 7, read together, suggest that certain relationships between these five variables, as indicated by their BFA geomin rotated loadings, correlate with one's attendance choice. This is to say, while the individual *variables themselves* are not associated with ceremony attendance, the *latent factors* that appear to underlie them are. More empirical and ethnographic research, therefore, is needed to better understand and map these constructs.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the fact that exploratory BFA found *two* factors to underlie this cluster of variables suggests that 'traditional' cultural practice as we define it here contains two distinct elements (which were defined heuristically above as "Linguistic" and "Behavioral"). From this information, it can be argued that a single index—as was utilized in Models 3 through 5—may myopically reduce the complex constellation of elements that make up one's cultural identity in a way that is both theoretically and empirically inappropriate. Following this, Models 6 through 8 may be viewed as the most complete and least reductionist set of analyses used to map the Tengeri ceremonies.

### **Concluding Remarks**

On balance, the variety of descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate modeling techniques discussed above provide valuable insight into the community of individuals who attend these ceremonies. From the empirical data, we find that the clienteles of the Olkhon Island ritual and of the smaller *tailgans* prove similar in most respects, with the noted exceptions that the Olkhon Island event had significantly larger numbers of those who attend out of curiosity and who attended for the first time but significantly lower numbers of those who self-identified as ethnically Buryat (though this does not suggest that those at Olkhon score any lower on variables relating to Buryat traditional identity). Furthermore, those who chose to attend a ceremony for reasons specific to that ritual appeared at the smaller *tailgans* in a much higher proportion. These findings are consistent with our *a priori* assumptions given how Tengeri has developed its ceremonies.

Interestingly, however, spirituality- or kinship-based decisions to attend Tengeri did not show statistical significance in any multivariate model. This is to say that, after controlling for other significant factors, there is a relatively equal probability that one would attend either ceremony type based on those criteria alone. Furthermore, the fact that none of the 5 'traditionality' variables were significant at the multivariate level suggests that these reasons cannot be used as indicators of which Tengeri ceremony a client will attend. The disparate findings between the ethnicity variable and indicators of traditional Buryat identity provide evidence that the two operate differently in relation to these ceremonies.

As is stated several times above, more research—both at the ethnographic and at the empirical levels—is needed to more fully capture how the Tengeri clientele differ in relation to the population of Buryatia more broadly. Additionally, more research with this data set subsetting to *only* those who identify as Buryat stands as an intriguing future direction for better understanding ethnicity and cultural behavior patterns in this sample. Nonetheless, the current



study provides meaningful and novel insights into *how* and *for whom* Tengeri's city *tailgans* operate as sites of indigenous religio-cultural revival in contemporary Buryatia. This work can be utilized to inform future ethnographic scholarship surrounding this shamanic community and any revivalist movements associated with it.

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## Appendix A

**Table 1: Bivariate Chi-Square Tests of Independence for Each Predictor Variable against Location of Ceremony Attendance**

	<u>Total Sample</u>		<u>Small Rituals</u>		<u>Olkhon</u>		<u>Chi Square Test</u>		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	X <sup>2</sup>	d.f.	p
<i>Gender: Female</i>	289	60.97	92	55.76	197	63.75	2.89	1	0.089
<i>Age</i>	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.42	3	0.701
<i>18-23</i>	48	10.02	18	10.65	30	9.68	--	--	--
<i>24-35</i>	181	37.79	59	34.91	122	39.35	--	--	--
<i>36-45</i>	107	22.34	42	24.85	65	20.97	--	--	--
<i>46+</i>	143	29.85	50	29.59	93	30.00	--	--	--
<i>Russian</i>	251	52.40	45	26.63	206	66.45	69.55	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Buryat</i>	192	40.08	121	71.60	71	22.90	107.98	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Married</i>	271	57.42	105	62.50	166	54.61	2.76	1	0.132
<i>Spoke Buryat</i>	152	31.73	98	57.99	54	17.42	83.10	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Speaks Buryat</i>	144	30.06	95	56.21	49	15.81	84.93	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Any Ceremony Attendance</i>	217	45.30	104	61.54	113	36.45	27.78	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Childhood Shamanic Practice</i>	110	23.01	62	36.90	48	15.48	28.22	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Family Shamanic Practice</i>	158	32.99	94	55.62	64	20.65	60.53	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Past Tengeri Attendance</i>	156	32.57	108	63.91	48	15.48	11.68	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Spiritual</i>	207	43.22	127	75.15	80	25.81	108.51	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Ceremony Specific</i>	74	15.45	57	33.73	17	5.48	66.80	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Kinship</i>	87	18.16	59	34.91	28	9.03	49.28	1	<b>0.000</b>
<i>Curiosity</i>	231	48.23	14	8.28	217	70.00	166.84	1	<b>0.000</b>

X<sup>2</sup> = Chi-Square value, d.f. = degrees of freedom, p = bootstrapped p-value. Those p-values significant at p < 0.05 are highlighted in bold.

**Table 2: Phi Coefficient Correlation Matrix of Predictor Variables**

	Gender (Female)	Married	Age	Spoke Buryat	Speak Buryat	Any Ceremony	Childhood Practice	Family Practice	Tengeri Attendance	Russian	Buryat	Spiritual	Ceremony Specific	Kinship
Gender (Female)	<b>-0.110</b>													
Married	<b>0.093</b>	<b>0.286</b>												
Age	-0.023	<b>0.095</b>	0.065											
Spoke Buryat	0.022	0.089	<b>0.115</b>	<b>0.835</b>										
Speak Buryat	-0.062	0.027	0.049	<b>0.353</b>	<b>0.382</b>									
Any Ceremony	-0.031	0.001	0.029	<b>0.452</b>	<b>0.403</b>	<b>0.303</b>								
Childhood Practice	-0.056	0.042	0.085	<b>0.552</b>	<b>0.547</b>	<b>0.512</b>	<b>0.485</b>							
Family Practice	-0.049	<b>0.133</b>	0.047	<b>0.474</b>	<b>0.506</b>	<b>0.442</b>	<b>0.333</b>	<b>0.545</b>						
Tengeri Attendance	0.054	-0.034	-0.086	<b>-0.581</b>	<b>-0.560</b>	<b>-0.384</b>	<b>-0.426</b>	<b>-0.621</b>	<b>-0.471</b>					
Russian	-0.029	0.071	0.054	<b>0.696</b>	<b>0.709</b>	<b>0.471</b>	<b>0.477</b>	<b>0.687</b>	<b>0.550</b>	<b>-0.812</b>				
Buryat	-0.021	0.073	0.021	<b>0.401</b>	<b>0.421</b>	<b>0.315</b>	<b>0.237</b>	<b>0.428</b>	<b>0.401</b>	<b>-0.401</b>	<b>0.490</b>			
Spiritual	<b>-0.102</b>	0.023	0.045	<b>0.230</b>	<b>0.261</b>	<b>0.133</b>	<b>0.224</b>	<b>0.241</b>	<b>0.221</b>	<b>-0.229</b>	<b>0.228</b>	<b>0.268</b>		
Ceremony Specific	0.051	0.071	<b>0.099</b>	<b>0.214</b>	<b>0.258</b>	<b>0.235</b>	<b>0.274</b>	<b>0.303</b>	<b>0.343</b>	<b>-0.299</b>	<b>0.345</b>	<b>0.376</b>	<b>0.383</b>	
Kinship	0.015	<b>-0.140</b>	-0.027	<b>-0.407</b>	<b>-0.423</b>	<b>-0.350</b>	<b>-0.290</b>	<b>-0.499</b>	<b>-0.546</b>	<b>0.435</b>	<b>-0.542</b>	<b>-0.707</b>	<b>-0.320</b>	<b>-0.433</b>
Curious														

Phi Coefficients are listed in each cell. The further a value is from zero, the more strongly two variables are correlated; positive values indicate positive correlations, whereas negative values indicate inverse correlations. Those significant at  $p < 0.05$  when bootstrapped are listed in bold.

**Table 3: Multivariate Logistic Regression Classification Models with Attendance at Olkhon Island as Outcome**

	No Data Reduction			Data Reduction: Cultural Index			Data Reduction: BFA		
	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)	Model (6)	Model (7)	Model (8)	
<b>Past Tengeri Attendance</b>	0.30 (0.11)***	0.31 (0.12)**	0.33 (0.12)**	0.34 (0.11)***	0.33 (0.11)***	0.31 (0.12)**	0.32 (0.11)***	0.32 (0.12)**	
<b>Spirituality</b>	0.66 (0.24)	0.69 (0.27)	0.61 (0.21)	0.64 (0.22)	0.64 (0.23)	0.67 (0.24)	0.70 (0.26)	0.69 (0.26)	
<b>Kinship</b>	1.08 (0.39)	1.15 (0.44)	1.22 (0.43)	1.29 (0.47)	1.30 (0.45)	1.08 (0.39)	1.14 (0.46)	1.16 (0.41)	
<b>Ceremony Specific</b>	0.24 (0.09)***	0.21 (0.09)***	0.23 (0.10)***	0.21 (0.08)***	0.20 (0.08)***	0.23 (0.09)***	0.21 (0.09)***	0.21 (0.09)***	
<b>Curiosity</b>	9.48 (4.66)***	8.81 (4.08)***	8.46 (3.90)***	7.71 (3.53)***	7.95 (03.56)***	9.31 (4.14)***	8.78 (4.00)***	8.79 (4.13)***	
<b>Spoke Buryat</b>	0.48 (0.21)	0.55 (0.29)							
<b>Speak Buryat</b>	0.76 (0.36)	1.00 (0.51)							
<b>Any Ceremony Attendance</b>	1.32 (0.47)	1.47 (0.57)							
<b>Childhood Shamanic Practice</b>	1.07 (0.39)	1.14 (0.45)							
<b>Family Shamanic Practice</b>	1.57 (0.60)	1.97 (0.81)							
<b>Buryat Traditionality Scale</b>			0.92 (0.09)	1.09 (0.13)	1.18 (0.25)				
<b>Buryat</b>		0.28 (0.17)*		0.25 (0.14)*	0.30 (0.21)		0.29 (0.17)*	0.26 (0.16)*	
<b>Russian</b>		0.65 (0.38)		0.57 (0.31)	0.57 (0.31)		0.66 (0.35)	0.59 (0.34)	
<b>Traditionality Scale - Buryat Ethnicity Interaction</b>					0.88 (0.22)				
<b>Factor 1 (Linguistic)</b>						0.17 (0.10)**	0.29 (0.17)*	0.81 (1.22)	
<b>Factor 2 (Behavioral)</b>						3.86 (2.03)**	0.66 (0.35)**	1.67 (2.06)	
<b>Factor 1 - Buryat Ethnicity Interaction</b>								0.25 (0.44)	
<b>Factor 2 - Buryat Ethnicity Interaction</b>								3.38 (4.68)	
<b>Constant Term</b>	2.16 (0.82)*	3.54 (2.33)	2.53 (0.93)*	4.70 (2.88)*	4.40 (2.86)*	2.27 (0.81)*	4.41 (2.71)*	4.91 (3.23)*	

<b>Pseudo R2</b>	0.391	0.401	0.376	0.387	0.388	0.393	0.402	0.404
<b>% Correctly Classified</b>	80.75%	80.75%	80.13%	80.13%	80.33%	81.21%	80.17%	79.75%

In each cell, odds ratios are listed; values of less than 1 indicate negative associations with Olkhon, whereas values greater than 1 indicate positive associations. Confidence intervals are found in parentheses. \*= $p < 0.05$ , \*\*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*= $p < 0.001$ . All p-values and confidence intervals have been bootstrapped.