

## **Erenzhen Khara-Davan: Asiatic Eurasian**

Erenzhen Khara Davan is one of the great Kalmyk publicists, historians, politicians of the first half of XX century. In emigration he was a member of the Eurasian movement, which represented one of the directions of the Russian thought, which broke radically with Eurocentrism and addressed to the cultures of the peoples of East and especially to the nomadic cultures. His heritage is returned to us today, but there is no idea about historical and scientific significance about Khara-Davan and his works among the scientists as well as bride public.

Erenzhen Khara Davan (Erenzhen Davayevich Davayev) was born in 1883 in Maloderbetov ulus of Kalmykia in the family of farm-hand. His father's name was Dava Arshiyev, he was nicknamed as "Khara" ("black") for his tan skin, that is why his son's last name is Khara-Davan (he began to sign like this when he became a student, until 1908 it was signed as "Erenzhen Davayev" in the documents). A public fund established to support children from poor Kalmyk families paid for study of small Erenzhen at Ulus School (as his family had no money). A gifted pupil was sent to Astrakhan gymnasium after school. During study in gymnasium Khara-Davan met Russian orientalist A.Rudnev, who collected Kalmyk songs. He became interested in Kalmyk folklore under his influence and collected songs, the collection of which he gave to Rudnev after graduation of gymnasium in 1906, when he came to St.Petersburg. Khara-Davan studied at St.Petersburg Military-Medical Academy (his father's friend, a wealthy cattleman-Kalmyk Dorji Balzanov paid for his study).

He made friends with other Kalmyk students in St. Petersburg, there were four Kalmyks besides him; three of them – Badma Ulanov, Sanji Bayanov, Dorji Majiyev studied at Law faculty of St.Petersburg university and another one – Nokha Ochirov studied at Faculty of Oriental studies. They met with liberal professors-orientalists, who saw the germ of national Kalmyk clerisy in them and took under their wing. Kalmyk students try to set folk epic "Jangar" (which was recorded by Nokha Ochirov), argued about politics, enlightenment of Kalmyk people. Political views of Khara-Davan formed in this period, he became national-democrat, orientable on the party of cadets. As he explained his choice later,

judgement of Russianized policy of the government and slogans of national autonomies for some non-Russian people of the cadets attracted him like other “foreigners”. Afterwards, he created Kalmyk national organization “The banner of Kalmyk people”, a subdivision of All-Russian union of teachers with his friend Badma Ulanov.

After February revolution in 1917 Khara-Davan was actively engaged in politics, participated in meetings of Kalmyk people, works of the new authorities, promoted the idea of Kalmyk autonomy in the membership of new democratic Russia. He made sure that Interim government was not going to provide autonomy to Kalmyk people and joined the Bolsheviks. After October revolution he was delegated by the Board of deputies of Maloderbetov ulus to the meeting of “labor Kalmyk people of the Caspian region”. In the spring of 1918 he headed Kalmyk subdivision of the executive board of Astrakhan governorate council. However, soon there were disagreements with the Bolsheviks. Khara-Davan was opposed to the cattle expropriation of wealthy Kalmyks and socialization of Kalmyks’ land that endangered the government’s discontent. When it became clear, that executive board was not going to fulfill its promise to give self-government to Kalmyk people, ruptured with the Soviet government and joined Denikin’s army.

Together with the whites he fought, then a book “Genghis khan” by Mongolist Vladimirtsev was published in 1922, which caught Khara Davan’s interest and also inspired him to research in the field of the history of Mongols (who brought glory to his name later). At that time he began to take interest in the works of Eurasianists (N.S.Trubetskoi, P.N.Savitsky, G.V.Vernadsky), which proposed to understand Russia not as European, but Eurasian empire and cultural influence on Russia and Russian people of Turan including Mongols was noted.

The legacy of Khara-Davan began to come to the Russian reader only in the years of reconstruction. His book about Genghis khan republished several times: in Elista in 1991 (with final word by L.S.Burchinova), in Alma-Ata in 1992 (with final word by Gumilyev and Ermolayeva), in the content of the book “At the crossroads of the continents and civilizations...From experience of formation and dissolution of the empires in X-XVI centuries” in Moscow in 1996 (reprint from Alma-Ata publishing), in the content of the book “Mongolian Ruthenia. Genghis-khan and Mongolian sphere” (with final word by Taratorin and final article by Dugin) in Moscow in 2002, at last in Moscow in 2007 (a book “Genghis khan and his heritage” with final word by Lazarev). Other works by Khara-Davan were less fortunate: only his article “Eurasianism from the viewpoint of Mongol from “Eurasian chronicle” (in the book “Mongolian Ruthenia. Genghis-khan and

Mongolian sphere”) was reprinted in our days. The articles from other Eurasian publications, from other Russian emigrant newspapers and magazines, finally, from Kalmyk emigrant magazines were not republished and are well-known only to specialists on Kalmyk emigration. As a result, there was a wrong image of Khara-Davan as a historian of Mongolian of Middle ages, at all importance of Genghis khan’s problem, it was secondary for him. The primary one was the fight against Eurocentrism, justification of nomadic people and their cultures and further fate of Kalmyk people.

As a result there was a wrong way Khara-Davan as Mongolian historian of the Middle Ages, when in fact, for all the importance to them of Genghis Khan, it is still secondary for him. Primary was fighting Eurocentrism, rehabilitation of nomadic peoples and their cultures and the fate of the Kalmyk people.