

IN THE MEMORY OF PROFESSOR DR. SERGEY A. ARUTYNOV (July 1, 1932 — December 21, 2023)

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The including discipline, anthropology ethnology, has suffered a grave loss on December 21, 2023, when Sergey Arutynov, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, breathed his last Moscow, Russia. He was an ethnographer with extensive experience in field work in many countries of the world, with encyclopedic knowledge in the fields of archaeology, botany, geography, history, and linguistics. He was a world famous scientist, a teacher, a poet, and many more.

Hundreds of condolence letters are coming to our Institute of ethnology and Anthropology from all parts of the world – USA, France, Japan, Georgia, Armenia, and India. One of them is written by Dr. Kailash Chandra Malhotra, former Professor of Anthropology and Human Genetics, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, India: “On this solemn day I send my heartfelt condolences to Sergey’s family, friends and colleagues. I am shocked, and deeply saddened: I lost a well-wisher and a very dear friend. I enjoyed each moment I spent with him during field visits and visits to Soviet Union. He played a very important role in the successful implementation of Indo-Soviet Biological Project in India. The academic community lost a brilliant and outstanding anthropologist. He had exceptionally great qualities, he knew many languages, he was well conversant with all sub discipline of anthropology, he was a leader, a loving teacher, a team man and with exceptionally rare qualities of establishing rapport with ease among all sections of society. He was an inspiring teacher, philosopher and guide. All of us will miss his humble personality, humor and integrity. We pray his soul rest in peace. Om Shanti, Shanti” .

Sergey Aleksandrovich Arutyunov since 1954 was a PhD scholar, and since 1957 – a research fellow of the Institute of Ethnography, now the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow. The diapason of his knowledge and interests can be understood, if we observe the range of his students and PhD scholars, research areas: myself, Svetlana Ryzhakova, doing Indian and Baltic studies, M.M. Bronstein and K.A. Dneprovsky are well-known researchers of Inuit (Eskimo) culture, L. Missonova is a specialist on the ethnography of Sakhalin island, K.L. Bannikov and Daria Trynkina did their studies in Japan, there are several Caucasus experts, such as R. Taziev, M.D. Karaketov, A. Bulatov, N.M. Abdushelishvili, L.A. Tedeeva, and many more.

Let me tell you some interesting and important facts from my dear teacher's life. Sergey's father, Alexander Arutynov, grew up in a family of winemakers and wine merchants, not very rich, but quite wealthy. The ancestral house was in the beautiful village of Kardanakhi in Eastern Georgia. The family was of Armenian origin, but culturally completely Georgian. They belonged to the Armenian Apostolic Church, but their daily life was organized in a Georgian way. Sergey's mother, Olga Salomon, belonged to a Russian noble family. "Shalomon" was the surname given to one noble Pecheneg who was baptized in the 12th century in Hungary, in the reign of the King Geza II. Hebrew names were all the rage back then! This Shalomon was the first one in the poor, but noble Hungarian family. When Russian, Moscovite count, Tsarevich Alexei in the late 17th century was married to a princess of the House of Habsburg, a number of Austrian subjects entered Russian service. Among them was Shandor Shalomon, from whom the noble Russian family of Salomons is developed.

The youngest of the sons of Sergey's maternal great-grandfather, Pyotr Salomon, Andrei, went to Italy at a young age. He was a passionate man. He lived in Naples, became interested in archaeology, and spent his entire fortune on financing the excavations of Pompey. The Italian contractors cheated him shamelessly: they slipped him fakes, which he was incredibly happy about, and paid bonuses. Andrei married an Italian lady, Louise Cappaccio. They had children – a daughter Sophia, and a son, Sergey's grandfather – Pyotr. Both grew up in Italy, but then moved to Russia. Both are half-Russian, half-Italian, with Hungarian-Pecheneg roots, Orthodox Russian subjects. Such was the family!

Grandfather of Sergey, Pyotr, in the late 19th century became a student of St. Petersburg University and, in his youth, became a leftist. He was involved in "Narodnaya Volya" or even Marxist organizations in the 1890s. Then Lenin began his activities; who knows, may be they even met on circle grounds! Pyotr was swept away, deprived of the rights of his fortune, the nobility and exiled, however, to Caucasus, to the Kutaisi province – then it still was a place for exile. Meanwhile, his great-grandfather (he was already almost 80 years old) asked for forgiveness before the emperor, so that soon Sergey's grandfather Pyotr received the highest forgiveness, restoration of his rights, to the nobility. The office of the Viceroy of His Imperial Majesty considered that he had influence at court, so he began to quickly rise socially. By the time of the October Revolution and the beginning of the Sovietization of Georgia, he was already in the position of full State Councilor (which corresponded to a Major General), and was in charge of the Land Management Department. In addition, he married successfully. His wife happened to be Antonina Ivanovna Kirichenko-Steingoff, the daughter of a wealthy Ukrainian landowner and German colonist. She traveled around Georgia, and, overwhelmed by romantic ideals, met a handsome young man, then still vegetating as a typesetter in some Kutaisi newspaper, fell madly in love with him, and despite the indignation of

her relatives, she married him – a “rogue, a convict”! And who knew that he would soon be forgiven, move to Tiflis, and begin to pursue a bureaucratic career. They had three daughters: Sergey’s mother, Olga, and his two aunts – Tanya and Lyudmila.

Sergey was born on July 1, 1932 in Tiflis. A multi-ethnic city! His friends, playmates, schoolmates were children from Polish, Jewish, Greek, German families. Various languages were spoken at homes and outside.

At that time, Sergey was interested in entomology. The works of Jean Henri Fabre were his favorite children’s books: wasps, ants etc., life of insects. Sergey used to say, that insects and people cannot be compared: after all, flies have no society, they are not collective animals, as well as a hive or anthill is not a society, it is rather a kind of holistic “organism”, consisting of individuals, just as we are composed of cells. But zoology at large is an area much closer to anthropology, and the data obtained here can give a lot to the researcher of people. An anthropologist studies people in somewhat the same way as an ornithologist studies birds. It is important to know that a bird will not become an ornithologist, and an ornithologist should not strive to become a bird. Probably, an anthropologist, to some extent, should not be just a “person,” but should cultivate in himself special spiritual qualities of kindness, empathy, and altruism. Sergey realized this fact later.

Sergey’s grandmother and mother died during the Second World War, and his father came home blind in 1944. Then the boy was only 12. It was a time of incredible difficulties, a turning point in his life, when he suddenly realized that he had become an adult. And in the same year he realized that he would be an Orientalist!

Sergey’s aunt Sonya was married to a sea captain of the “Dobroflot” company, who commanded the steamship Petersburg (on which famous Russian writer, Anton Chekhov once returned from Sakhalin to Odessa). The ship sailed between Vladivostok and Odessa with stops at Nagasaki, Singapore, Colombo, Aden, and Suez. Captain Egorov bought a lot of Japanese and other Oriental artifacts as gifts to family. When aunt Sonya was widowed, she moved from Odessa to a house in Tiflis; she had no children. She brought a lot of Japanese junk, among which Sergey grew up. During the war, almost everything was sold: lacquer tables, chairs, cabinets – everything was exchanged for food. Sergey was terribly interested in the world that was depicted on these objects: people in strange costumes, with huge umbrellas, houses, pine trees, chrysanthemums.

Shortly before her death (Sergey was eleven years old at the time), Sergey’s mother assigned him to the Library of the House of Officers in Tiflis, and he began to purposefully look for books with similar pictures, and also began to read Japanese and Chinese literature – everything that could be found in translations. This interested him very much, and at the age of twelve he decided that he would grow up and study this seemingly incomprehensible mysterious world. At the age of fifteen (it was 1947) he suddenly saw a Japanese-Russian dictionary in a store,

bought it and began to try to learn Japanese from it.

Sergey Arutynov became a student on the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies in 1950; after graduating in 1954, Sergey became an *aspirant* (PhD scholar) at the Institute of Ethnography, Russian Academy of Sciences. He began writing a dissertation on the ethnogenesis of the Japanese. At the Institute of Ethnography, he was very cordially met by Maxim Grigorievich Levin: a graduate student who knew Japanese was useful to him; he was then writing a work on the anthropology of Japan. Levin became his teacher and the person who played the greatest role in his professional life. Arutynov considers G.F. Debets, N.N. Cheboksarov, as well as Evgeniy Mikhailovich Zhukov (a specialist in the modern history of Japan and the formal supervisor of Arutynov's Ph.D. thesis) to be his other teachers. Sergey was always grateful to them for their participation and help. He joined the Department of East Asian studies in the Institute of Ethnography. Sergey Arutynov thesis "Ancient East Asian and Ainu components in the ethnogenesis of the Japanese" contains an extensive linguistic and archaeological material; due to long expeditions, it was defended only in 1962.

In 1957, the International Festival of Youth and Students was held in Moscow, which influenced the fate of many people: for the first time, a closed USSA country suddenly became little bit open, in a sense. Sergey enthusiastically worked in the Organizing Committee of this festival, and also acted as an interpreter from Japanese, and then visited the forum of the International Student Union in Kyiv.

In the same year, 1957, far from both Moscow and Japan, an extraordinary event happened that turned the life of Sergey upside down and expanded his horizons even wider. The world of ancient Inuit (Eskimo) culture opened up. In 1956, Dorian Sergeev (a student of famous A.P. Okladnikov and an archaeologist who then worked as a rural teacher in Chukotka) discovered ancient Inuit burial grounds in Uelen and Ekven settlements. S. Arutynov joined the Chukotka expedition of M.G. Levin, which was started in 1957, and where he worked until 1987. These were unique monuments where various components of the ancient Inuit culture were found and stratigraphically determined; the only analogue to them is the Ipiutak burial ground in Alaska.

In the course of this work, together with Dorian Sergeev, discoveries were made that Sergey considers the most important in his scientific life. He developed a typological diagram of harpoon points, more than 1000 of which were found in two burial grounds. Sergey Arutynov distributed them into groups, identified their occurrence, compatibility and revealed what they were, how they were linked to chronology, ecology, and the clan structure of the population. Arutynov's student, M.M. Bronstein later participated in the classification and dating of these artifacts, and developed the evolutionary scheme of their ornaments. Publications of the results of these expeditions – "Uelen burial ground" (1969), "Ekven burial ground" (1975) – are the most important part of world Inuit studies; it is impossible to talk

about the culture and economy of Arctic sea hunters without referring to these works (they were translated into English and available in electronic version for quite a long time, and in 2007 they were completely published in the USA in English translation, supplemented and updated by S.A. Arutynov).

Another unique and world-famous discovery of Sergey Arutynov with his colleagues Igor Krupnik and Mikhail Chlenov was Whale Alley in Chukotka. Their research of 1977 showed that before the onset of the “Little Ice Age” (14-18 centuries AD), Inuit (Eskimo) society was much more diverse and stratified. A unique civilization arose here, but it was on the verge of human capabilities; a slight deterioration in ecology threw society back to an atomic state. In many ways, this was revealed already during the study of burial materials.

At the same years, Sergey continued his Japanese studies. In 1960, he came to Japan for the first time, where he began conducting field seasons. Japanese newspapers wrote that a young foreign scientist had appeared who spoke Japanese and followed the norms of Japanese etiquette in a way that was beginning to become rare in Japan itself. At the same time, Sergey Arutynov learned the basics of Japanese religious culture through communication with the Zen monk Ariga Kenzaburo, whom he also considered to be his teacher.

In 1968 Sergey was 36 years old; his wonderful book “Modern Life of the Japanese” was published in Moscow, in which, on the basis of extensive ethnographic material, the patterns of interactions between traditional and so-called international cultures are revealed. This formed the basis of the *rotation mechanism* of transformations in culture, a concept proposed and described by Sergey Arutynov: when borrowed elements cease to be a novelty and curiosity, traditionalized, sometimes even become invisible against the general cultural background, and almost disappeared old elements again return to their prestigious function. In collaboration with G. Svetlov (Komarovsky), Arutynov published the famous book “The Old and New Gods of Japan” (1969). In May 1970, Sergey defended his doctoral dissertation, “Processes of change and development of the domestic sphere in modern Japanese culture.”

In 1970-1980s, he participated in numerous anthropological and ethnological expeditions: to Pechora, Ob and Yenisei (1972–1986), to Japan (1968–1972), to Armenia (1974–1988), and of course to India, from 1974 to 1983, with V.P. Alekseev, M.G. Abdushelishvili and I.M. Semashko.

Sergey Aleksandrovich was the editor and co-author of collections of materials on the ethnogenesis and ethnic history of the peoples of South Asia, which includes unique data from Indian-Soviet expeditions (1971-1983) – “The Origins of the Formation of the Modern Population of South Asia” (Moscow: Nauka, 1990) and “Ethnogenesis and ethnic history of the peoples of South Asia” (Moscow: Nauka, 1994). There are many other publications by Sergey Aleksandrovich on more

specific issues, in Soviet and foreign ethnographic and anthropological publications. In 1989, the monograph “Peoples and Cultures” was published, which describes in detail another important general cultural pattern – areal stability, due to a number of factors (micro- and macro-topographic features of the landscape, selectivity of contacts, “throughput” of various cultural communication channels). This theory was supported, in particular, by linguistic, archaeological and ethnographic studies of the cultural areas of Japan. In 2000, the book “Peoples and Cultures”, in a revised and expanded form, was published in the USA under the title “Cultures, traditions and their development and interaction” (“The Edwin Mellen Press” in Lewiston–Queenston–Lampeter).

In March 1984, Sergey Arutynov delivered a brilliant speech at the anthropological conference in Osaka, Japan, with a report on parallels in the processes of urbanization of Japan and Armenia, published in Japanese in the book “*Toshiki-no-bummeygaku*” (“Cultural Studies of Urbanization”, Tokyo, 1985). Everything that happened there became an obvious recognition of S.A. Arutynov as an outstanding Russian scientist who has earned not only respect, but also sincere sympathy and admiration from colleagues from many countries.

In 1985, Sergey Arutynov became the head of the Caucasus Sector in the Institute of Ethnography, Russian Academy of Sciences – in a sense, a “return” to the real cultural area of his childhood. The very leadership of the Caucasus Department in the following years meant not only calm, planned academic work, but also active involvement in public discussions, participation in numerous television and radio programs, interviews and the preparation of newspaper publications. Arutynov often has to give expert opinions and speak at trials on the issue of inciting ethnic hatred. His brilliant speech, fundamental knowledge, and the most objective point of view on the most complex, controversial problems of our time make a deep impression on his listeners.

Sergey Arutynov was an outstanding lecturer; he taught a lot, in Russia, Armenia, at the universities of Cambridge, Berne, Pittsburgh, Arizona (Tempe), Alaska (Fairbanks), Stanford, Georgetown, California (Berkeley), Hokkaido. He knew how to explain concretely and simply the most complex concepts and analyze theories. He could unfold the typical elements of the Inuit language through the details of whale hunting, the specifics of the social organization of Ainu society while giving the example of salmon fishing, the destruction of a large family among the mountain peoples of Vietnam describing the forms of development of personal initiative through raising goslings and piglets.

Sergey Arutynov was at his working cabinet and worked hard till March 2020; he was 88. After the lockdown in the time of Covid-19 happened, he “nested” himself in his home, but continued to work. I visited him very often, and recorded many of our talks and discussions. On the basis of his memories we penned and published a book “Gusaba: pulling the chariot of nonsense. Reflections of life

and memories” (Moscow: Polymedia, 2023, in Russian). He was very happy and proud about this text and he gifted the copies of the book to many. In 2023, we started another project with the title “Indigenous India on the eve of great changes: ethnographic observations during the Indo-Soviet expeditions of the 1970-80th, and contemporary outlook”. We discussed it in depth till October 2023, when I went to India. But in November his health deteriorated; even then he used to joke: “dear Svetlana, – he told me, – after you left, some *rakshas* must arrived and I really do not know, what will happen. . .” He remained an active speaker and jested a lot till the last, and even comforted us, who were with him and worried a lot.

A most wide range of his interests, a creative approach, rich life experience, the ability to analyze, to see patterns behind disparate phenomena, an innate sense of humour combined with a talent for ironic statements, love of life, sociability, an active life position – all this made Sergey Arutynov constantly in demand in scientific and public circles.

Sergey’s personality contained all shades of meaning, ideas, discoveries, revelations, joy, wisdom, poetry and charm – everything eternal and absolute. And the main focus of his personality was the harmony of intellect and morality, reason and dignity. Sergey Arutynov was loved and respected by all his colleagues, students and even people, whom he knew very little. He had a phenomenal talent for speaking simply about complex things and jokingly playing out the historical dramas of civilization.

Sergey Arutynov was an outstanding scientist with a worldwide reputation, a person of the Renaissance measure, an erudite and a brilliant speaker. All my talks with him, my dear teacher, enriched me profoundly and always consoled me, since his life experience and analytical mind made it possible to extract unshakable foundations and harmony from the disturbing events and changes of today’s uneasy and disquieting world’s situation.

