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Bair Dugarov

People's poet of Buryatia, translator, ethnographer, Doctor of Philosophy



A leader of contemporary Buryat poetry, Bair Sonomovich Dugarov is a literary, academic, and

public figure who has made a significant contribution to the development of Buryatia's culture.

Bair Dugarov's first collections of poems, "Golden Saddle" and "Mountain Tambourine" (Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, 1970s), immediately won readers' hearts with their beautiful poetic voice, love of life and their native land, and sense of oneness with nature. In 1978, the talented Buryat poet was accepted into the Union of Writers of the USSR.

B. Dugarov gained widespread recognition in 1980 with the publication of his book of poems, "Wild Acacia" (Moscow, Sovremennik). Since then, collections of his poems have been published in central and Siberian publications: the magazines "Moscow," "October," "Friendship of Peoples," "Smena," "Baikal," "Siberia," "Siberian Lights," the almanac "Poetry Day," and in "Literary Gazette," among others.

Later, the poet B. Dugarov continued to be creative. New collections of poems were published in Ulan-Ude: "City Clouds" (1981), "Skyline" (1986), and in Moscow, collections of "Horseman" (Sovremennik, 1989), and "Moon Doe" (Soviet Russia, 1989) were published.In 1994, a book of B. Dugarov's poems, "The Star of the Nomad," was published in Irkutsk as part of the famous "Siberian Lyre" series.

Poetry lovers and literary critics have praised this collection as a significant phenomenon in contemporary Siberian literature and our time in general. Poet Bair Dugarov was deservedly awarded the State Prize of the Republic of Buryatia in Literature and Art in 1995.Bair Dugarov's poems are distinguished by a high poetic culture and an artistic synthesis of classical poetry and Eastern Buddhist poetry. He created a unique form of versification, most clearly demonstrated in the cycle "Long-drawn Hymns," which combines traditional Buryat verse, built on anaphora, with the rhythm of the hexameter. B. Dugarov is the author of song lyrics known in Buryatia and beyond. The most popular of these, "The Nomad's star" is recognized as one of the best Buryat songs of the 20th century.

We are very pleased to begin publishing the poems of the renowned folk poet of Buryatia, Bair Sonomovich Dugarov.

The Nomad's star

To man belongs the path, to woman – the hearth.
Lest my ancient lineage wither and die,
Give birth to a son – I pray and implore.
An arrow flies, while the man lives on.

For man is the smoke, for woman – the flame.
And so that my horse ne'er stumbles in fight,
I must know that a fire warms the yurt tonight,
Like a sacred banner our ancestors passed down.

In man is the spirit, in woman – the soul.
Trembling, a blade of grass holds up the sky.

Bereft of a hearth, a son, and my love,
Like a lonely whirlwind, o’er the plains I shall die.

My Homeland, a Rider

My homeland is a rider,
Bearing Baikal’s azure bow,
With a quiver of a thousand arrows –
Of rivers, springs, and streams that flow,
Fletched by the taiga’s green embrace.

My homeland is a rider,
Crowned in the ermine snow
Of the Sayan peaks above,
Robed in a mantle of celestial blue,
Hued like the sky by eternity illumined.

My homeland is a rider,
Who has saddled both space and time,
Whither does your steed now gallop,
As the stirrups ring and chime
With the waters of Angara and Onon?..

The Steppe Muse

The spirit of Genghis Khan guards the Great Steppe’s golden nomad lands,
Thoughts of the homeland are bathed in the light of the sun and the moon.
Sanctifying earthly moments with the wisdom of ancient lore,
The Steppe Muse descends from the heavens, cradling my songs in her hands.

The eternal expanse spreads like felt, wide as the universe untamed,
Blades of grass sway in the wind, like the manes of centuries reclined.
The ambling stride of echoing time resounds in each rustling blade,
Or is it the Steppe Muse awakening, echoing deep in my mind...

To be continued...

Prepared by Dr. G.Gerelchimeg