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Repatriation, Doxa, and Contested Heritages

The Return of the Altai Princess in an International Perspective

Using Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and doxa, the authors analyze the contested heritage debates surrounding the sensational Scythian burial discovery of the Altai Princess, also called the Ice Maiden, on the Ukok plateau. Her 2012 repatriation to a special Gazprom-funded museum in the Altai Republic of Russia is politically contextualized and compared to cases of the Kennewick Man in the United States and the Lake Mungo Burials of Australia. The authors stress the importance of "heritage in the making" and conclude that diverse approaches to the Altai Princess must be understood through the historically constituted dispositions of various agents and their interaction with the structures governing society.

Different groups have different heritages and perceive and employ "things" from the past in close relation with their own value systems and agendas (Ashworth, Graham, and Tunbridge 2007). In many postcolonial settler societies different valuations and competing appropriations of heritage, combined with epistemological and institutional barriers (Ross et al. 2011), have often been the basis for conflicts over the past that encompass broader socioculturally embedded struggles

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for recognition and legitimacy (Nicholas and Hollowell 2007). Besides creating tensions and undermining the stability of contemporary multicultural societies, these conflicts particularly undermine effective heritage management and threaten the very heritage valued by the different parties involved.

Such a situation is especially exemplified in the conflict and polemic surrounding the Altai Princess, a unique 2,500-year-old Scythian mummy excavated in 1993 in the Altai Republic of Russia. Since her discovery, indigenous activists and the Russian archeological community, spearheaded by the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography, Siberian Branch, Russian Academy of Science (IAE SB RAS), have engaged in a heavily debated conflict over the mummy's fate. This stalemate has undermined the sustainable preservation of the region's archeological heritage and broader development of local expertise and awareness, key ingredients for effective cultural resource management. After all, the growing tourism sector and building boom is increasingly affecting Altai's unique heritage. After almost twenty years of indigenous demands for reburial, in September 2012 the Altai Princess was repatriated and is now stored in the recently renovated national museum. This renovation was financed by Gazprom, which has controversial plans to construct a pipeline in the near future passing through the Altai to China. It is expected that rescue excavations in the context of this pipeline will reveal more skeletal material that might similarly become contested.

This unique repatriation is an important moment for the Altai Republic and Russia's archeological community. As illustrated in many settler societies, repatriation of significant cultural objects is not just an average event. As part of the material culture (see Appadurai 1986) of different groups in society, repatriations of cultural heritage objects are momentous events in any indigenous context, entailing restitution of power and broader acknowledgment of indigenous rights and interests, as well as challenging disciplinary needs and interests. While already standard in the United States and Australia since the 1980s and especially 1990s, recent developments in the broader post-Soviet world may herald the 2010s as the decade of reburial and repatriation. In July 2013 in Kazakhstan a similar Scythian skeleton, called the Saka King, was reburied after ten years of indigenous activism (Shambaeva 2013). Both the Kazak and Altaian cases are not isolated events but important precedents that will impact the future of cultural resource management and archeological practice in the post-Soviet world.

Various scholars have investigated the events surrounding the Altai Princess from an anthropological perspective. Besides providing a careful description of the events and narratives connected with archeological finds, Agnieszka Halemba (2006, 2008) and Ludek Broz (2009, 2011) have focused on the indigenous perception of ancestry, archeological artifacts, and supranatural connections between excavations, amid myriad misfortunes. In contrast, Mikhailov (2013, this journal issue) has discussed use of archeological objects and narratives in the context of Altaian nationalism, linking the struggle over the fate of the Princess with

ethnonational activism of the 1980s and 1990s.

In a recent paper (Plets et al. 2013) analyzed the pluralist, historically rooted epistemological and power-related differences that constitute the conflict over the Altai Princess. Here, we evaluate the events surrounding her repatriation. We appraise this recent repatriation through a comparison with similar heritage conflicts such as the Kennewick Man/Ancient One (United States) and the Lake Mungo Burials (Australia). This comparison is imperative to understand and contextualize the impact of the events surrounding the repatriation in Altai and its broader social significance. However, as heritage objects are locally constructed and thus each repatriation case is unique and demands a case-to-case judgment, a careful assessment of the different actors and involved contexts is necessary. Understanding pluralistic social phenomena such as cultural heritage requires comprehensive examination of the entire social space where interactions and events occur. We use the structural constructivist approach of Pierre Bourdieu (1990) as our underlying theoretical framework for conceptualizing heritage and repatriation conflicts.

It is important to stress that we apply a multiactor approach. Earlier papers investigating the Altai Princess, as well as other scholarly work examining the societal dimensions of archeology and heritage conflicts, mainly focus on explaining the actions and discourse of indigenous people (see Matsuda and Okamura 2011, Pyburn 2011 for more in-depth critiques). Because heritage and interrelated heritage conflict is inherently pluralist and the Altai Republic is a multicultural space, the different groups that impact the heritage field should also be similarly assessed, ranging from discussion of *Homo archeologicus* (cf. Bourdieu 1988), to the local and federal government, to the government-supported multinational Gazprom corporation.

The outcome of this particular multiactor assessment and comparison with landmark repatriation cases from the United States and Australia raises some important questions about the recent repatriation of the Altai Princess. Like any repatriation case, the recent return of the Princess is unique, demanding critical ethnographic analysis and dialogue. Particularly uncommon in restitution of heritage objects is the involvement of Gazprom and lack of broader governmental and archeological willingness to accommodate local and indigenous values, potentially undermining the development of a decolonized archeological practice. This makes the recent events both distinctive and disputable.

Before proceeding to an appraisal of the social implications of the Altai Princess's repatriation and comparison with similar cases from other settler societies, the applied theoretical framework will be illuminated and events surrounding the excavation, contestation, and repatriation will be explored. There will be a short discussion of the involved actors' and the realities of Altaian society. Interpretations presented in this paper are based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2010–11, the authors experience with excavations in the region, and a careful assessment of the literature about Altai and repatriation.

Heritages dialectically in the making: when social theory meets heritage studies

We hope to provide readers with intercultural insights on the complex process of cultural heritage creation and recreation in the post-Soviet Altai Republic. Inspired by the work of Barth (1987) on ritual variation among the Melanesian Mountain-Ok society, the central thread throughout this work is the idea of heritages in the making—cultural heritage as a pluralistic concept that is constantly reproduced through a dynamic interaction among multiple actors and historically rooted agency and social space.

Heritage is not about the past but about the present. It involves values that are attached to objects and narratives from the “past,” selectively employed for political purposes and perceived and conceptualized in contemporary society (Lowenthal 1998). Something from the past is not a heritage object just because it is from the past; heritage is not self-defining but the result of a social action of meaning making (Byrne 2008; Harrison et al. 2008, p. 2; Smith 2006). Assigned by humans, heritage is subject to variation depending on the particular space and time meaning is assigned (Lipe 1984; Tainter and Lucas 1983, p. 713). An object becomes heritage when people attach values to it and use it for their own agendas. These values are not universal but individually held, context-dependent, and a reflection of what groups of people appraise or repudiate in the present or future (Davison 2008, p. 33; Tainter and Lucas 1983). Heritage is the result of a social practice, conceived sociologically, and inherently intangible (Byrne 2008). Each society or community consists of various groups, each forming a subsociety or community enabling a set of people that, depending on the scale, have similar social, cultural, and epistemological characteristics and a shared position in society. Subsequently these groups each construct and use their own “heritage” and interrelated discourse; very often the same references to the past are read differently and other values are attached. Therefore, within a single society we should always speak of cultural *heritages* instead of cultural heritage (Ashworth, Graham, and Tunbridge 2007; Graham and Howard 2008; Smith 2006, pp. 80–82).

To understand and assess the recent repatriation’s potential impact on a social milieu that includes various agents this paper will start by investigating different approaches to the Altai Princess through a heritage studies framework. The Altai Princess is a conceptualization and appropriation of the past by different social agents in the present whose arena is contemporary society. Heritage is presented as both the outcome of a social action and a social action itself, part of a group’s material culture (Tilley 2006, p. 17), constituting social identity and constantly reshaping the social space. As an intangible conceptualization, social theory is imperative if we want to understand the underlying processes of meaning making that constitutes heritage.

Since heritage is both a personal valuation related to an agent’s historical background and a politicized selective creation in relation to the rules and power

relations governing the broader social arena, a relational framework was chosen that considers both the internal structures governing human agency and the social arena's power relations and external structures. Bourdieu's logic of practice enables us to accommodate the internal and external dimensions of heritage. According to Bourdieu, social practices are the outcome of the dialectic interplay of habitus, field, and the availability of capital. An agent's habitus refers to one's dispositions, a set of internal structures highly interconnected to our way of argumentation, ethos, feeling, being, processing knowledge, and value system (Maton 2012, p. 51). One's habitus conditions how one will act in a certain way and engage with the surrounding world. A habitus on its own is formed through interaction of a social agent with the external structures that shape social space (field). These structures and schemas of the social arena also define "rules of the game" and can restrict or direct social action. Power relations in the field, in contrast, depend on the amount of resources (capital) that can be invested to consolidate or improve one's position in society. Field and habitus on their own are constantly restructured through the social practice of agents in the field. In short: [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice (Bourdieu 1984, p. 101).

Through the interplay of habitus, capital, and contextual field structural properties, particular processes can occur in a particular social space. Though many important mechanisms operate in the social space, impacting people's position and dispositions, we wish to spotlight one that is especially important given complexities of cultural heritage policy, archeological practice and sociocultural transitions: doxa. In Bourdieu's appraisal of social practice, doxa relates to a society's unquestioned and taken-for-granted truths and schemas (including status), that in conditions of "structural crisis" become questioned and radically challenge the structure of the field and the position of its agents in it.

The excavation, the earthquake and the return

Between 1990 and 1996 the Ukok Plateau became the focus of a large-scale international archeological project led by the IAE SBRAS. The Ukok Project especially aimed to revive research in frozen burial contexts through a multidisciplinary survey and excavation (Molodin et al. 2004). The nexus of global warming and the uniqueness of frozen archeological contexts was a vital impetus for the project. In the 1950s numerous archeological monuments still had permafrost, resulting in unique preservation of the organic archeological record (see, e.g., Rudenko 1970). Global warming, however, ensured that by the 1990s only few monuments in the less-accessible high mountainous valleys potentially had optimal preservation conditions. In 1993, during the excavation of the Ak-Alakha III burial mound an intact female mummy and numerous outstanding organic finds were discovered. Related to the so-called Pazyryk culture (sixth–third century B.C.E.), the Ukok Project's archeologists called her the Ice Maiden and she quickly became one of the most important archeological discoveries of the 1990s. In 1995 a smaller frozen burial

on the Ukok Platteau (Verkh-Kaldzin 2) was unearthed, the well-preserved body of the “Man of Vergh Kaldyin” (Molodin, Polos’mak, and Chikisheva 2000). Directly after the discovery, mummies and artifacts were transported to the laboratory of the IAE SBRAS in Novosibirsk for conservation and restoration.

Sensational coverage by the mass media ensured that many were attracted to the magnificent finds (Filimonov 2004a, 2004b; Gordeev 2004). Given 1990s changes, the female mummy quickly became integral to reviving Altaian culture as an important national symbol (Figure 1) (Broz 2009; Mikhailov 2013). The idea was spontaneously cultivated that the archeologists from Novosibirsk had excavated a mythical progenitor, who became known as the Altai Princess or Princess Kadyń (the worshipped ancestor of the Altaians), or Ochy Bala (a hero girl who saved her people) (Halemba 2008, pp. 285–87; Telnov 2007).

However, various indigenous intellectuals and leaders expressed discomfort with the excavations and demanded reburial and a moratorium on archeological excavations. The Altai Princess became a constant point of reference to explain a broad range of misfortunes ranging from drownings, car problems, the crash-landing of the helicopter transporting the mummy, suicides, droughts, even federal events like the unrest in Chechnya and the 1993 Russian constitutional crisis. The most widely discussed disaster connected to the removal of the Altai Princess was the severe earthquake that shook the Kosh Agash region, almost completely destroying the village of Beltir (its 1,400 inhabitants were forced to relocate) (Halemba 2008; Maslov 2006). The land and mountains that destroy the life of the people who inhabit them is a strong metaphor for Altaian shamanists and was widely discussed. The devastation, subsequent archeological hiatus, and media politicization led many Altaians to voice discontent with the removal and accelerate demands for her homeland return (Filimonov 2004b; Halemba 2008; Michajlov 2010; Mikhailov 2013).

Since the Altai Princess’s fate was so intensely discussed, in 1997 the El Kurltai (state assembly of the Altai Republic) passed a decree “On Prohibition of the Excavation of Burial Mounds in Kosh-Agach District.” This decree made non-development-related research dependent on local consent, ultimately terminating numerous IAE SBRAS research projects. In 2002 the legal context of the moratorium changed, because the 2002 federal heritage law stipulated that archeological sites are of federal significance. In 2009, when the IAE SBRAS did an excavation in the Chuya region and received complaints by indigenous leaders (Luchansky 2009; Pustoliakova 2009), the archeologists turned to the Federal Service for monitoring compliance with cultural heritage protection law and the regional moratorium was dissolved (RIA Novosti 2010). ADD FIG. 1 ABOUT HERE

Indigenous demands, repatriation, reburial, the moratorium on excavations, and the mythologization of the finds were countered by Russia’s archeological community. Using a positivist scientific discourse these claims and connections were discarded as the mythical and obscurantist “whims of a small group of nationalists far removed from science” (Molodin and Polos’mak 1999). The archeologists perceived the excavations as their duty to *humanity* (Postscriptum 2001) and were

afraid that if they did not achieve their research agenda, Russian science would lose face abroad (Strauss 2004). If repatriation or reburial were to proceed “we lose the opportunity to obtain a fundamentally new scientific knowledge” (Molodin and Polos’mak 1999).

The debate over repatriation and reburial became further complicated when genetic and biological anthropological research provided important details about the genetic distance between Scythian (Pazyryk) people and contemporary Altaians (Agranovich 2004; Broz 2009; Gordeev 2004; Larko 2001). Leading scientists such as Nikolai Makarov, president of the Institute of Archeology, Russian Academy of Science, stated that modern Altaians have no right to undermine archeological research because they do not have any biological link with the Ice Maiden (Agranovich 2004). Such public statements exacerbated the conflict.

Indigenous demands should not have been viewed as a complete surprise. In the eighteenth century, local Turkic nomadic families reacted to the looting (at that time a common and even government-subsidized practice) of burial mounds by Russian settlers. For example, in 1745 a large group of settlers planning to loot various sites in the Chulyzman Valley were stopped by nomadic families inhabiting adjacent valleys (Demin 1989, p. 16). In addition to reactions against subsistence looters, protests occurred against archeological investigations. In 1826, Carl Friedrich von Ledebour carried out the first scientific excavations of burial mounds in Altai. In his diary, he wrote that locals who he employed as workers were unhappy with burial excavation. He reported that Altaian clan members said this disturbed the “peace of their fathers” (Ledebour, Bunge, and Meyer 1993, p. 99). Only when the scientists decided to rebury the skeletons did the Turkic nomads agree to participate. Even during excavations in the Stalinist 1940s and 1950s, many villagers were openly frightened and outraged by the actions of renowned archeologist Sergei Rudenko. Subsequently, archeological fieldwork increased, with finds displayed in museums throughout Russia. Despite the Soviet times, when the political climate was hardly conducive to protests, people reacted negatively to the acceleration of excavations in the Republic. Social change since perestroika and glasnost enabled local discontent to be publicly voiced. Inhabitants of the village of Kulada (Karakol Valley) forced archeologists of the IAE SBRAS, who had an official permit, to stop their scheduled excavations; the archeologist had to leave.

Despite broader support by the public and the media for indigenous demands, the federal government never intervened. When in 2004 the main archeologists of the Ukok Project, Molodin and Polos’mak, were awarded the prestigious State Prize of Federation of Russia for their work on the Scythian mummies, it became clear that their perception of the past was still the “official heritage discourse” (see Harrison 2012; Smith 2006).

When repatriation requirements were imposed by the IAE SBRAS (guaranteeing the preservation of the mummy), the Ice Maiden was returned to Gorno-Altai. The other mummy and all the grave goods remained in Novosibirsk and the Maiden was not to be reburied (in agreement with the preservation ethic of the IAE SBRAS). Almost twenty years after her discovery, on 20 September 2012 the Altai Princess

finally returned in Gorno-Altaiisk (see Figure 2). The return was coordinated by the Altaian Ministry of Culture; for many inhabitants of the Republic, this was a very important event (Novosti Gornogo Altaia 2012). Not only local leaders and intellectuals, but also many ordinary people eagerly awaited and prepared for the return of their mythical progenitor. Rituals were held; after her return a ceremony was held at the excavation site, and shamans asked the spirits of the mountains to calm down (RIA Novosti 2012).

The official inauguration of the museum took place a few days after the return (26 September 2012). The event drew a big crowd; representatives of republic authorities and Gazprom chair Aleksei Miller, who paid for the renovation and climate-controlled sarcophagus, participated in the ceremony. After a traditional Altaian rite of consecration (smudging with juniper), the museum was opened to the public. The repatriation and museum opening represented a momentous episode in the recent history of the Altaian nation and a public relations stunt serving the corporate image of Gazprom, with coverage on republic and federal TV channels. [FIG. 2]

The return of the Altai Princess mummy was positively perceived by the vast majority of local people, regardless of ethnicity. The return and financing of a new museum about Altai's past and culture generally pleased many Republic inhabitants, and relations with the IAE SBRAS became less fraught. However, although political elites and Altai Republic people considered the repatriation a significant step, many do not view it as a final victory in the struggle for the restitution of Altaian historic and cultural heritage. Local authorities insist that all archeological materials held in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Novosibirsk should be restituted. And a significant number of Altaians think the mummy should be reburied, although this view is not as commonly voiced after the repatriation.

Archeologists reacted to the repatriation of the Ukok Princess as follows. Shortly before the Ice Maiden was transported to the National Museum of the Altai Republic, Molodin insisted that there was still a need to excavate frozen burial mounds because of the threat of global warming. He proposed resuming research in Altai, beginning with royal mounds in the higher reaches of the Karakol Valley (near the village of Kulada), the same monuments he had not been allowed to excavate before. Despite a changed legal framework, Republic authorities were not willing to support renewed research in the Altai Mountains (Tikov 2012). This eagerness to continue research indicates that the IAE SBRAS archeologists had not yet come to terms with the limiting ramifications of repatriation. Furthermore, during a press conference before the repatriation her status as "Princess" was denied, indicating a lack of recognition and understanding of the Altaian heritage discourse:

If there were kings, whose burials we attribute to the Pazyryk culture, these were buried near the village of Kulada. . . . The Ukok Plateau is too far from this region, a region [referring to area around Kulada] that is interesting because undisturbed burial complexes with permafrost are preserved there. (Tikov 2012 reporting about press conference at IAE SBRAS)

Archeologists from Altai Republic reacted positively to the transfer from Novosibirsk to the republic. They hope for closer cooperation between Gorno-Altai and Novosibirsk archeologists. This collaboration is imperative because the confrontation between the Novosibirsk IAE SBRAS, the republic authorities, and the indigenous Altai population had a negative effect on archeological research in the context of cultural resource management. In recent decades, numbers of expeditions in the Altai decreased, although the pace of construction of tourist facilities, especially in the northern regions, demanded an increase in archeological work.

Recent developments in eastern Kazakhstan clearly show that the events surrounding the Altai Princess skeleton are not an isolated case in the postsocialist world. In late June 2013 the Saka King, a Scythian skeleton (eighth–sixth century B.C.E.) excavated in 2003 was reburied near the village of Chilikty. Demands for reburial were made after the indigenous community connected the excavation with misfortunes such as destructive floods, dying cattle, and sickness among local children. Despite debate, the scientists agreed with the indigenous demands and the finds were returned to the community (Regnum 2013; Shambaeva 2013).

The Soviet Altaian animist, institutionalized *Homo archeologicus*, centralizing government apparatus, and land-hungry resource developer; outlining different heritages

Altaian heritage discourse should be understood through its historically rooted land-based ontology, Soviet structures that have colonized consciousness (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1991), and struggles for internal and external legitimacy given recent ethnocultural revival. First, all aspects of everyday Altaian life are lived and interpreted through an indefinite people–land prism (Halemba 2006; Tiukhteneva 2009). Being Altaian is determined by the link between the Altai Mountains and the people inhabiting them; all people with a common approach to land who dwell or dwelt in the Altai are considered Altaian. Historical migrations, DNA, or physical anthropological difference are not markers of relatedness, but the Altai as venerated space and homeland is (Broz 2009, p. 47). Traditional Altaian funerary practices and general perceptions of the dead should also be understood through this distinctive unity of “people–land.” Ancestors and burial places are part of the Altai; once buried the connection between people and the homeland should be maintained. Excavation or looting disturbs this balance and it is believed that the spirits inhabiting the place can cause misfortunes, such as earthquakes, and affect the living (see Halemba 2008; Maslov 2006).

Second, although shamanist ontologies underly many aspects of Altaian life and heritage perception, almost seventy years of Soviet policy, operationalized through collective farms and boarding schools, have colonized the consciousness of most Altaians. Three important colonial, structural ways of thinking have become internalized: (1) a sense of Altaian identity, with interlinked processes of identity politics, (2) heritage as a discourse (i.e., as a political tool for internal and external

identity legitimacy), and (3) the importance of scientific research.

Third, interrelated with the impact of Soviet policy and the role of Soviet-trained intelligentsia in the ethnocultural revival (Tiukhteneva 2009), the struggle over the Altai Princess should be seen as a politicized effort to overcome tribal divisions¹ and crystallize a sense of Altaian identity (see Mikhailov, this issue). The past has been used within a political discourse and has proven a useful tool for establishing group identity, creating ethnic distance, national prestige, claiming land, or justifying nationalistic claims (Kohl 1998; Kohl, Kozelsky, and Ben-Yehuda 2007; Smith 2006). As illustrated by Shnirelman (1996, 2012) and Kaplonski (2004), archeological heritage and historical figures have similarly served the ethnonational activism of many groups throughout the postsocialist world. Mythical and metaphorically strong figures from the past are often popular symbolic capital in a group's nationalist discourse. Frequently, specific attributes are magnified and linked with the needs of the present, provoking a sense of continuity and pertinence of current issues (Eriksen 2001, p. 292). The image of the Altai Princess as the nomadic heroine who saved her people is particularly significant. Nomadic lifeways are important for many native peoples in Central Asia, as it is integral to their ontologies, a link to their ancestors, cultural values, worldview, and the intrinsic link with their venerated environment. These have come under pressure during and after the Soviet period, for example with increased tourism and [concerns over flooding caused by the Katun Dam].

Archeologists' discourse has to be understood through their historically entrenched dispositions (*habitus*), power relations (availability *capital* and position in society) and difficulties with the changing post-Soviet social arena. Archeology as a discipline is not a neutral instrument but depends on the given context and historical trajectory of a nation (Ucko 1995), ensuring that a "critical sociology of archeology practice" (Shanks and Tilley 1987, p. 24) is imperative to understand the position and knowledge system underlying the actions of *Homo archeologicus*. First, how the past is read is connected with the particular ideals and values of Russia's archeological community. As argued by diverse scholars (Hamilakis 2007; Matsuda and Okamura 2011; McGuire 2008; Pyburn 2011; Smith 2004), the theoretical orientation of a particular archeology largely discloses how one looks to the past and how one deals with nonexpert-based valuation of the past. Archeology in Russia comprises a mix of cultural-historical and processual approaches. Particularly diagnostic for the cultural-historical approach in Soviet and post-Soviet times is emphasis on studies retracing migrations of "cultures" and unquestioned primordialist stances toward culture as ethnicity, including interrelated ethnos theory (Shnirelman 2012, p. 15). Central in ethnos theory is the point that ethnicity and identity are approached through so-called objective primordial variables such as blood relations, material culture, language, religion, and cultural traits (Kohl 1998, p. 231; Shnirelman 1996, 2012; Tishkov 1997). Objectively quantifiable variables govern the way relatedness is perceived, and the case of the Altai Princess DNA serves as a primordial marker that fueled Nikolai Makarov's reaction

against Altaian claims. Throughout the Soviet period there was an increasingly scientific approach to archeological thinking (Klejn 2012; Kradin 2011) linked to methodological developments in “new archeology,” termed processualism (Klejn 201, p. 5). This ensured that aspects of archeology became governed by positivism, empiricism, and objectivity. Similar to positivist archeologies, Russia’s archeology has been governed by a hardly negotiable conservation ethic (see Lipe 1974) whereby archeologists perceive themselves as privileged stewards of the past, who ensure optimal and objective protection and study of the past (Smith 2004, p. 143). In a strict positivist archeological worldview, repatriation and the excavation moratorium not only undermine objective study, they also add to concerns that antiquities threatened by global warming will be lost or that reburial will destroy unique archeological data. This rigid positivist approach has furthered the argument that indigenous demands are not based on scientific reasoning but on seemingly subjective political and animist connections.

Second, the actions of Russian archeologists must be understood through their privileged status in society. Archeology and the government intersect in the area of cultural resource management. The government grants specific roles for archeology, and this largely reveals the extent to which the government recognizes and authorizes the archeological ethic and discourse (see McGuire 2008; Smith 2004). Soviet and post-Soviet archeology legal frameworks include the mid-twentieth-century legislation that introduced rescue archeology (Bulkin, Klejn, and Lebedev 1982; Klejn 1994), the code of ethics endorsed by the Ministry of Culture (Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation 2013), and the 2002 heritage law that explicitly legitimized the role of archeological experts in the government-supported cultural resource sector (Federal Service for Monitoring Compliance with Cultural Heritage Legislation 2002). Archeologists’ heritage discourse has historically been the official authorized heritage discourse (Harrison 2012; Smith 2006). Such external official recognition enforces the discipline’s status in society and the feeling that one’s own ideals and values are the right ones. This sense of disciplinary authority might have been further enforced through the prominent position of science, particularly the Academy of Sciences, in Soviet society (Graham 1993; Graham and Dezhina 2008), the institutionalization of research, and the impact of Soviet propagandist rhetoric, which cultivated a strong sense of self-confidence in the merits of its own discipline and presented research products as “successes of Soviet archeology” (Klejn 2012, p. 10).

Third, during the Soviet period archeology and science in general had one of the world’s largest networks and was comparable to other generously subsidized sectors in Soviet society (Bulkin, Klejn, and Lebedev 1982; Dolukhanov 1995; Graham 1993; Klejn 1994; Trigger 1989, p. 207). During reorganizations in the 1980s and 1990s, funding was drastically reduced and archeology’s authority became increasingly challenged by the broader society; archeologists were drawn into an unfamiliar social space. Their resource (the archeological record) became appropriated by other players in the social field and their discourse came under fire. In a way scientists’ struggle is similar to the indigenous struggle, as it is also

about legitimization and recognition of the cultural identity of science within the broader social arena.

Although Gazprom ultimately was able to negotiate the return of the Altai Princess, its actions are imbued by a geopolitical and economic agenda. Gazprom is planning to construct a major pipeline through Altai to China, which will cross thousands of archeological monuments and will affect the sacred landscape of the region (Nyiri and Breidenbach 2008; Plets et al. 2011). To win over the local inhabitants, Gazprom has established a promotional campaign. A lot of money has been invested in Altai infrastructure: reconstruction of an airport, roads, sports facilities, and schools. Through facilitating the return of the Altai Princess, Gazprom aimed to resolve Altai's most important symbolic conflict and ultimately gain more credibility and approval (Figure 3). While Gazprom has no intrinsic attachment to regional archeological heritage, its officials value the significance of heritage to the indigenous people, as a type of capital that when exchanged enables it to pursue construction plans. ADD FIG. 3 ABOUT HERE

Regional and local government constitute another important actor, having a huge impact on the social arena through legal frameworks that influence the legitimacy of a particular heritage discourse. While the federal government remained the most important level, growing regionalism in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's collapse enabled the Altai Republic to develop its own cultural heritage policy, culminating in the 1997 moratorium on archeological excavations. However, deregionalization (recentralization) politics under President Putin are increasingly undermining the federal model (Goode 2010) and the possibilities for indigenous titular nations. Until now, the federal government has abstained from integrating international standards because of the reluctance to provide indigenous peoples rights over land and its resources, and fear of ethnic instability (Donahoe et al. 2008, p. 1009, Newcity 2009). Only small and manageable groups of under 50,000 people are recognized as "official" indigenous peoples (Donahoe et al. 2008, p. 1010; Donahoe and Halemba 2006). In Altai, the Kumandins, Chelkans, Tubalars, and Telengits, recognized as so-called "indigenous numerically small peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East," were granted land rights, privileges, and grants. This recognition is contested, as many supra-regional indigenous groups (such as the Altaians) are too large to be recognized and the unity of a particular nation is challenged because subregional groups, such as the Telengits, Kumandins, Chelkans, and Tubalars, seek this recognition (see Donahoe et al. 2008). Other cases exemplifying limited attention to indigenous needs and interests include: federal reforms of late 2003 that stipulated that the Kremlin would appoint the heads of the federal regions; the 2006 NGO law impedes international funding and interference (Kamhi 2006), and recent efforts to dissolve RAIPON, one of Gazprom's harshest critics (see Balzer 2010). But the recent end to the moratorium on excavations and a regional law that provides a framework for the protection of sacred sites undermines the basic recognition of indigenous heritage. Many of these reforms should be understood through the efforts of the government to ensure Gazprom's construction plans.

The Kennewick Man and Lake Mungo burials: prelude and impact of repatriation and reburial

Though involving different sociopolitical contexts and historically rooted dispositions, the polemic surrounding the Altai Princess is in a way very similar to other indigenous cultural heritage and repatriation struggles in postcolonial contexts (Burke et al. 2008; Fforde, Hubert, and Turnbull 2002; Kakaliouras 2012; McNiven and Russel 2005; Smith and Jackson 2006; Smith 2004; Watkins 2005). Two monumental repatriation cases; the Kennewick Man/Ancient One (United States) and the Lake Mungo Burials (Australia) particularly have clear similarities disclosing important insights in the repatriation process and the broader social context of heritage conflicts. Both cases were initially heralded as milestones in investigating the occupational history of the respective continents and archeologists and biological anthropologists claimed that their universal scientific potential superseded indigenous claims (Jones and Harris 1998). Simultaneously, growing indigenous activism was asserting claims over land and heritage, requesting repatriation and reburial. Ultimately the Kennewick Man/Ancient One and the Lake Mungo Burials not only were scientific milestones but also cathartic doxa breakers for Australian and American archeology—illustrating the particular impact of repatriation on the social space. Ultimately, through the support of public opinion, politics and the media, repatriation and indigenous concerns became debate-worthy in archeological venues, influencing archeologists' processual conservation ethic and providing momentum to their ability to create alternative archeologies, such as indigenous archeology, community-based archeology and public archeology. These are more inclusive types of archeology that, while objectively investigating the past, pay more attention to consultation, mutual understanding, and fruitful collaboration (Atalay 2006; Greer 2010; Greer, Harrison, and McIntyre-Tamwoy 2002; Nicholas 2008; Smith and Jackson 2006).

The impact of the Kennewick Man and Lake Mungo Burials on their societies and especially on the archeologies of the respective countries enables us to contextualize the current events in Russia. Very importantly, in contrast to the Ice Maiden conflict, the conflict over both the Kennewick Man/Ancient One and the Lake Mungo Burials changed archeological practice and the relationship with indigenous people. While far from ideal, a growing intercultural dialogue transformed archeology, making its work more relevant and responsive to the needs and interests of the other agents in the social field (Atalay 2006; Nicholas 2008; Watkins 2005, pp. 435–36; Zimmerman 1996).

Repatriation in the United States: NAGPRA and the Kennewick Man/Ancient One

As early as the 1960s there was growing Native American opposition to research on human remains and ancestral grounds (Atalay 2006, p. 288, Smith 2004, pp. 23–24). Throughout the 1970s this activism increased and more repatriation demands were

made. In the 1980s critiques of the many museums and universities holding and displaying skeletal remains gained momentum and demands for repatriation and reburials accelerated (Atalay 2006; Smith 2004; Watkins 2003a, 2005; Zimmerman 1996). However, while American archeology was not entirely blind to indigenous demands (McGuire 1992; Trigger 1980; Zimmerman 1989), many archeologists publicly voiced their opposition and opposed reburial and repatriation (see Zimmerman 1996 for overview). Repatriation was not only diametrically opposed to the conservation ethic of that time—it could not be reconciled with the common belief in processual archeology that their “archeological record” should be used in a politically neutral way (Smith 2004). The failure of archeology to come to terms with indigenous demands forced the federal government to intervene, resulting in the ratification of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (Zimmerman 1996). After almost a century of privileging the archeological discourse, NAGPRA radically changed the terms of archeological research (when skeletal remains were involved) and consultation with native communities became increasingly important (see McManamon 2002 for overview of NAGPRA).

However, while NAGPRA instigated a decolonization of archeological practice and brought native and archeological stakeholders closer, the structures of the decolonized field were not fully internalized in archeologists’ habitus. The broader archeological establishment still had not come to terms with its responsibilities to the wider public, as became apparent after the discovery of the Kennewick Man in 1996. This 9,300-year-old complete skeleton was a scientific treasure. Biologically unrelated to Native Americans, it challenged existing theories about the colonization of the Americas (Chatters 1997, 2000; Taylor et al. 1998). After the discovery Native American tribes claimed their “Ancient One” based on NAGPRA. However, because the discovery could rewrite the history of the entire American continent and had a significant “distance of time” (Atalay 2006), this repatriation was legally contested by some archeologists and anthropologists. Ultimately the judge decided in favor of the archeologists’ demands.

Despite its outcome, the Kennewick Man/Ancient One was an important structural conflict, a doxa breaker questioning traditionally held principles. Because of the particular role of the media, public opinion, and the Interior Department secretary (Smith 2004, p. 162), scientific ideals began to be openly questioned. It quickly became apparent that the Kennewick conflict would “determine the course of American archeology” (ibid., p. 1 quoting Preston 1997, p. 72). Scholarly debate and a myriad of papers in the aftermath of the Kennewick case clearly showed that not only did the way archeologists engage with human remains have to change (as NAGPRA insisted), it also underscored that the whole practice and objectivist mindset had become outdated (Watkins 2003b). Although the conflict remains unresolved and the relationship with indigenous people is still fraught, the legacy of the Kennewick Man should not be underestimated. NAGPRA and especially Kennewick promoted a new archeological practice whereby intercultural and consultations became central; alternative archeologies also received more attention” (Atalay 2006; Silliman 2008).

Lake Mungo Burials and a shared stewardship over cultural significant remains

In the late 1960s, along with growing Aboriginal activism and initial granting of First Nation rights, demands for repatriation and reburial were openly made. In subsequent years, illegally acquired, named remains were returned, and by the 1980s the return of biologically affiliated skeletal remains was no longer contested. In 1984 it became obvious that legal changes granted the Aborigines the right to request the return of all collected skeletal remains and artifacts, including fossil remains, which were perceived as ancestors because of links with their ancestral lands (Dolon 1994; Fforde 2002; McNiven and Russel 2005; Smith and Burke 2007). The scientific community (governed by positivism) openly opposed these demands, stating that the finds were “of great scientific significance and too old to be legitimately claimed by one group of people to the detriment of the world community” (Fforde 2002, p. 34). Other prominent researchers compared reburial with destroying the Taj Mahal or the pyramids and questioned why the aborigines should claim an archeological heritage that has universal human values, similar to those governed by the UNESCO principle (Mulvaney 1991, p. 18).

The conflict escalated and became both a national and an international issue when claims were made to rebury the famous Lake Mungo Burials (Kow Swamp, Willandra Lakes region, state of Victoria). Similar to the Altai Princess and the Kennewick Man, these burials are of paramount importance in an understanding of the earliest occupations of Australia. Discovered forty years ago, these burials are among the oldest archeological sites of Australia (60,000 B.P.) (Smith and Burke 2003, pp. 185–87; Thorne et al. 1999). Morphological studies of the finds showed that the remains were not related to the current indigenous population. Supporting the theory that multiple migrations occurred into the Australian continent, this research rendered the current Aborigines just a phase in a long history of migrations (Dolon 1994, p. 75; McNiven and Russel 2005, p. 241; McNiven and Russell 1997). In the aftermath of new repatriation legislation in diverse states, it was requested that the Lake Mungo Remains be reburied. In the context of repatriation of other fossil remains, this led to disagreement with bio-anthropologists and archeologists. Indigenous claims and reburials were refuted based on positivist principles, the significant distance of time (Mulvaney 1991), and lack of objective proof of direct ancestry (Jones and Harris 1998, p. 258).

Due to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage (Interim Protection) Act and the publicized conflict over the fate of the Lake Mungo Burials, Australian archeology has moved away from a strict stewardship ethic to a more multivocal and relativist archeology. While many positivist structures still permeate the archeological discourse (Byrne 2008; Smith 2004), the broader social field forced archeologists to collaborate with indigenous stakeholders and set up intercultural dialogue. Funding bodies, ethical committees of universities and museums, and excavation permits depend on written proof of consent and collaboration with the indigenous communities (Smith and Jackson 2006, pp. 323–25)

Besides influencing public opinion, breaking the doxa of Australian archeology and furthering Aborigine political struggles, the Mungo Burials have also come to symbolize how repatriation can be a negotiated action ultimately serving different agendas. When the finds were repatriated in 1992 they were placed in a safe that could be opened only with two different keys, one held by archeologists and the other by the local community. The safe was buried at the place of excavation. The reburial did not mean that research stopped. The only difference was that research became a highly collaborative joint venture based on negotiation and mutual understanding of specific aims. After the return, dating and DNA research took place. Although the results could (and ultimately did) further prove the large distance of time as well as biogenetic distance from the indigenous population, these tests were able to occur (Smith and Burke 2003, p. 168). Although relationships among the indigenous people, archeologists, and government are far from ideal in Australia today, Claire Smith and Heather Burke (2003, p. 186) have noted that “the lesson to be learned from [the Lake Mungo repatriation] is that sharing the past can provide a foundation for working together in the future.”

Discussion: Repatriation of socially constituted remains and the impact on the social arena

Heritage concerns not only politicized power relations or historically rooted dispositions, but both. It is a type of authoritative resource (Giddens 1984) or symbolic capital that is socially constructed and, through commodification, impacts society. Capital that was ultimately used and exchanged by Gazprom for authorization and “indigenous-washing” of their project (compare the ecology propagandizing of “greenwashing”), in relation to their broader economic agenda. Compared to repatriations discussed earlier, the return of the Altai Princess did not come from within Russia’s archeology community nor was it instigated by the federal government, making the repatriation unique and vulnerable to dispute.

In settler societies such as the United States, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, the importance of a decolonized heritage practice has been put on the agenda due to support by public opinion and broader political efforts. This support has created field conditions favorable for indigenous stakeholders, forcing archeologists to change positions, begin intercultural dialogue, and come to terms with indigenous demands. Institutional frameworks were created, shrinking epistemological and institutional boundaries to heritage collaboration for indigenous and nonexpert groups. Besides constituting legitimization and cultural self-determination, repatriation in various postcolonial settler societies was an important step in coming to terms with problems in both past and present, and an emotional rite of passage uniting deceased ancestors and their possessions with the ancestral homeland. Clearly repatriation is more than the return of an object or acceding to isolated whims of a small group of people. In our opinion the commonly voiced argument that reburial of some finds is unacceptable because of their importance to human-

ity and universal heritage values (the Altai Princess, Kennewick Man, and Lake Mungo Burials) is itself unacceptable. Just like heritage (Logan 2012), repatriation is both a universal phenomenon and a basic human right (Ojala 2009, pp. 234–36), explicitly included in the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Article 12):

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the rights to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.

2. States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned.

While indigenous rights have evolved globally over the past twenty years, native peoples in Russia still do not have rights and social recognition comparable to those of settler societies like Canada, the United States, and Australia in the late 1980s, undermining a decolonization of archeological management and practice. By awarding the highly prestigious State Prize of the Russian Federation and stressing the importance of the Altai Princess for Russia as a nation, Russia's government emphasized that the archeologists' heritage remains the official authorized discourse and that the archeological process need not be adapted to indigenous needs. In the 1990s the Altai Republic was relatively independent and empowered to make decisions on a broad range of sociocultural matters. Today, especially given political reforms during President Vladimir Putin's administration, Moscow's power over the federal republics has considerably increased, disclosing similarities to Soviet period indigenous policy. This political reality not only undermines the development of a multivocal heritage practice, but also raises questions about the recent repatriation of the Altai Princess by Gazprom. Repatriation is a political act of respect, recognition of indigenous cultural values, and legitimization of indigenous control over the past by the political field. Repatriation marks an important moment in decolonizing a country's heritage praxis and forces archeologists to come to terms with changes in power relations over the past. However, Russia's contemporary political climate is difficult to align with the recognition of indigenous power over their past. The question becomes whether return of the Altai Princess is repatriation or a "political commodity" in pursuit of a highly lucrative project.

In addition to its interrelationship with official legitimization of indigenous needs and interests, another diagnostic of repatriation is that it openly questions principles that are taken for granted—repatriation as a *doxa breaker*. When considering the impact of repatriation legislation and the intense debate about significant archeological objects such as the Kennewick Man and the Lake Mungo Burials, archeologists were drawn into a conflict zone where prior ideals and principles were reevaluated. In Australia and the United States the dominant positivist principles of archeology's foundations became radically challenged. Because the political field

is one of the most important fields of practice for archeologists, as it governs the financial and social assets of science, American and Australian archeology became synchronized with new structures. Previously held doxa and unquestioned status became openly questioned, the doxa was broken, and reflectivity about one's own practice was put on the agenda (Hodder 2003). Similarly, in the Soviet world much doxa was created throughout its bumpy historical trajectory and interaction with the government. In the post-Soviet field, this was challenged by public opinion and indigenous communities, but not by the political field. Eventually many Soviet imbued doxic principles and the doxic status remained relatively well preserved and unquestioned within Russia and by academics. Discussing the entrenched cultural-historical stance toward ethnicity in Russia's archeology, Victor Shnirelman similarly states that principles openly questioned elsewhere still survive in the framework of the Russian *Homo archeologicus*:

On several occasions, various Western scholars have criticized the ethno-genetic studies carried out by Soviet researchers and inherited by post-Soviet scholarship. . . . This criticism is poorly understood and negatively perceived by the local archeologists, and thus they continue to adhere to cultural-historical methods based on the primordialist approach. Why? In my view, the issue is neither the local archeologists "backwardness" nor their aspiration to stubbornly follow Soviet traditions. (Shnirelman 2012, p. 15)

Although repatriation of the Altai Princess happened quite recently and it is too early to evaluate the events compared to other repatriation cases, especially due to lack of political reforms and the role of Gazprom, the return will not initiate a restructuring of Russia's archeology and it will not be a doxa breaker! The positivist research ethos and a strict preservation approach remain intact.

Recognition of traditional philosophies and acceptance of limitations is not "giving in" to obscurantism and mysticism, or legitimizing poor scientific research. First, conceding to indigenous demands and legitimizing local interpretations of the past is objective, depending on how objectivity is defined. Using a strict positivist stance, objectivity is inextricably linked with scientific variables. Using a broader perspective, objectivity is much more than about science. Lewis Binford argued: "[Objectivity] simply means that the rules for observation are made explicit so that another observer using the same rules for looking it would see the same fact if given the opportunity" (Binford 1987, p. 392). Taking into consideration the social context and historically constituted habitus of the Altaians (and also of the archeologists and diaspora communities inhabiting the Republic) and comparing it with similar processes in other settler societies, divergent ways of perceiving the past are objectively understandable: an underlying logic explains the different agents' actions.

Second, as stressed by Hodder (2011) and Wylie (2005) in the context of negotiation and intercultural dialogue, it is crucial that as archeologists we need to be explicit with interlocutors concerning our own values and interests. Implied/tacit

consent is not a solution, because then the other parties will never get an insight in our positions. Without clearly communicating our interests we would be creating the feeling that science is gagged, rather than furthering the universal positivist value of academic freedom. If we can explain why we think in a certain way and the possible benefits of our actions, simultaneously acknowledging its negative impact, we believe a consensus is possible.

Third, recent work in the field of indigenous archeology proves that active involvement of indigenous people and respect for local philosophies does not undermine the archeological process (Nicholas 2008; Nicholas and Bannister 2004; Silliman 2008; Smith and Jackson 2006). The decolonization of archeological practice has added innovative dimensions to research projects and ultimately has contributed to the development and consideration of alternative epistemologies (Nicholas and Hollowell 2007). Despite critics such as McGhee (2008), indigenous archeology has become more mainstream in archeology and has proven that it is possible to do archeology in indigenous contexts in a constructive and sustainable manner. Indigenous archeologies show that recognition of joint stewardship and restrictions to research actually advance the discipline toward a more multivocal archeology rather than threaten its scientific potential. Furthermore, it provides local communities with much-welcomed knowledge and expertise, not only about their own history, but also about how to set up their own heritage frameworks (Nicholas 2008; Nicholas and Hollowell 2007; Silliman 2008). Ignoring the benefits and successes of these archeologies and continuing the same research strategy would be unscientific and unsustainable.

In many cases, indigenous communities recognize the importance of knowledge produced by archeologists and scientists. Donald Sampson (2008, p. 41), former director of the Confederate Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (United States) argues: "We want the public and scientists to understand that we do not reject science. In fact, we have anthropologists and other scientists on staff, and we use science every day to help protect our people and the land." Altaians, like other indigenous peoples in settler societies, have respect for science, and have a flexible knowledge system that relates to objectivity, logic, and the value of empirical data. Early contacts with Russian merchants and missionaries, and especially the policies of the Soviet Union, inflicted a colonization of consciousness, with axioms of scientific truth and objectivity, as well as concepts such as nationalism and ethnicity. These became integral to the Altaian habitus.

Common ground exists between archeology and indigenous communities, and in many cases archeologists can continue the research agenda they envisioned. It is a matter of taking the initiative of consulting, negotiation, and involving descendants in the whole archeological process, which explicitly recognizes the legitimacy of indigenous worldviews. Examples such as the Kwaday Dan TsInchi, a Canadian ice mummy (Beattie et al. 2000; Hebda, Greer, and Mackie 2012; Watkins 2005) or the Lake Mungo Burials illustrate that within a consultative context, even investigations on ancestral remains that could undermine genealogical links are possible.

Conclusion

In this investigation of different cultural heritage discourses in the Altai Republic, we have appraised events surrounding the repatriation of the symbolically important Altai Princess. There is no doubt that the diverse approaches to the Altai Princess must be understood through the historically constituted dispositions of various agents and their interaction with the structures governing society. Demands for repatriation and reburial, plus archeologists' responses to indigenous heritage claims, reveal neither backwardness nor ill will. They all must be understood as encounters of their historically rooted habitus with a changed field, where the value of heritage as symbolic capital makes contrasting heritage discourses difficult to reconcile.

Comparison with similar cases from the United States and Australia shows that postrepatriation archeology can still be scientific and objective. Comparisons also raise questions concerning whether the return of the Altai Princess can be conceptualized as a proper repatriation. First, whereas repatriation and the development of indigenous heritage frameworks mostly correlate with a broader decolonization of society, Altaians do not have basic indigenous rights or privileges comparable to other settler societies. Second, it is too early to estimate the impact of repatriation on Russia's archeology. It does not appear that intercultural dialogue is growing, nor that the strict cultural-historical and positivist doxa is being deconstructed. We argue that there is room for intercultural collaboration and that ultimately multiple parties could profit from closer collaboration. Although global warming and tourism are serious problems, establishing intercultural dialogue based on a mutual recognition should be the first priority for any archeologists working in the Altai Mountains.

Although repatriation contexts require case-by-case judgments, recent events in Kazakhstan might create a broader matrix for repatriation in the post-Soviet world and ultimately challenge existing doxa in the post-Soviet archeological community. Such a development is imperative for the sustainable development of archeological heritage. Future research will investigate events in Kazakhstan through a similar multi-actor framework, and ongoing changes in the heritage field of the Altai Republic will be monitored.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank our fieldsite interlocutors and IWT-Flanders for financial support. We appreciate the feedback of Keir Reeves and Jean Bourgeois during various stages of this paper. We also thank Marjorie Mandelstam Balzer for inviting us to submit the paper for publication in *Anthropology and Archeology of Eurasia*.

Note

1. Altaian nationality and sense of group membership as we know it today is itself an artificial Soviet relic. At the end of the Russian Empire some growing nativism already

existed across tribal boundaries (i.e., Burkhanism and the short-lived Oirot Republic). However, due to historical tribal particularities and various colonial influences, when ultimately in 1922 the Bolsheviks took over, the indigenous people were still fragmented, without a sense of common identity, not considering themselves as one “nation.” The idea of an Altaian nationality was introduced only during the Soviet period, when people were required to have an ethnicity on their passport. State ethnographers (e.g., Potapov) created designations based on perceived primordial cultural variables such as language, material culture, biogenetical information, shared past, and religion.

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OMIT? PERMISSIONS?

Figure 1. Altaian girl dressed as the Altai Princess during the biannual El Oyin festival. Since the ethnocultural revival the El Oyin festival has become integral to the Altaian culture. During these festivities historical objects and narratives often play a prominent role, including the Altai Princess. © cheinesh.ru.

Figure 2. On her arrival the Altai Princess was awaited by local leaders and her sarcophagus was transferred by six Altaian men in national dress. © culture-altai.ru.

[IN FIGS. 2 & 3, WEB ADDRESSES VISIBLE at bottom

ADD FIG. 3 ABOUT HERE

OMIT FIG. 3?

Figure 3. The publicized opening of the renovated museum drew a big crowd. In the picture one participant is holding a sign stating “Gazprom reliable partner.” © gorno-altaisk.info.

