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**THE BEGINNING OF THE 1900S, RUSSIAN CIVILIZATION OF THE
OUTER MANCHURIA SEEN FROM THE ARTISTIC WORLD:
AKIRA KUROSAWA'S "DERSU UZALA",
VLADIMIR ARSENYEV'S BOOK, THE RUSSIAN FAR WILD EAST,
AMERICAN WILD WEST AND GREENLAND**

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The article deals with the history and the problems of civilization of the Russian Far East in the beginning of the 1900s, seen from a perspective of a book "Dersu Uzala" from 1923 and two Russian movies of the same name from 1961 and 1975, respectively. How Russian civilization was perceived in the Far Eastern region on the border between Russia and China at the beginning of the 20th century? In a comparison with the Danish civilization of Greenland and the American Wild West, the article will shed new light on the perception of the reclamation of new land in Russian Far East, in nowadays Primorsky Krai. Furthermore, the article addresses the visualization methods the director's use to express their views on the Russian Empire politics of civilizing the areas around the Amur and Ussuri rivers. The question if the films show a historically correct insight into the period in which the Russian Empire incorporated Wild Far East is analysed.

Keywords: Dersu Uzala, Khabarovsk, Russian Far East, Siberia, Nanai people, Vladimir Arsenyev, Indigenous people, Greenland, Modernity, Agasi Babayan, Siberian romanticism, Sikhote-Alin mountains.

**НАЧАЛО 1900-Х ГОДОВ, ВЗГЛЯД НА РУССКУЮ ЦИВИЛИЗАЦИЮ
ВНЕШНЕЙ МАНЬЧЖУРИИ ИЗ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО МИРА:
«ДЕРСУ УЗАЛА» АКИРЫ КУРОСАВЫ, КНИГА ВЛАДИМИРА
АРСЕНЬЕВА, ДИКИЙ ДАЛЬНИЙ ВОСТОК РОССИИ,
АМЕРИКАНСКИЙ ДИКИЙ ЗАПАД И ГРЕНЛАНДИЯ**

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В статье рассматриваются история и проблемы цивилизации Дальнего Востока России в начале 1900-х гг. на основе анализа книги «Дерсу Узала» 1923 года и двух одноименных российских фильмов 1961 и 1975 гг. Как воспринималась русская цивилизация в Дальневосточном регионе на границе России и Китая в начале XX века? В статье в сравнении с датской цивилизацией в Гренландии и американским Диким Западом проливается новый свет на то, как осваивались те новые земли Дальнего Востока России, которые сегодня составляют Приморский край. Кроме того, в статье рассматриваются методы визуализации, используемые режиссером для выражения своих взглядов на политику Российской империи по освоению территорий вокруг рек Амур и Уссури. Также проанализирован вопрос о том, насколько исторически верно в фильмах отражен тот период, когда Российская империя включила в свой состав Дикий Дальний Восток.

Ключевые слова: Дерсу Узала, Хабаровск, Дальний Восток России, Сибирь, нанайцы, Владимир Арсеньев, коренные народы, Гренландия, современность, Агаси Бабаян, Сибирский романтизм, Сихотэ-Алиньские горы.

Russian Far East

Russia is indeed a vast country. The history of Far Eastern Siberia is a living proof of this claim. The conquest and mapping of Siberia began in the 1500s when the Conquest of the Khanate of Siberia took place. It was situated near the modern town of Tobolsk. In the following centuries Russia conquered Siberia all the way to the present Russian Pacific east coast. Around the year 1850 the Far East region was virtually integrated into the Great Russian Empire. However, a piece of land was

missing, and that just north of the Russian-Chinese border, present-day Khabarovsk Krai and Primorsky Krai. A land area of around the size of France and Germany. The first documented Russian presence in the region dates back to the summer of 1655, when Russian Cossacks visited the northern Primorsky under the command of Onufriy Stepanov. Originally, the name of the area was Outer Manchuria, because until the 1850s it was a part of the Chinese province of Manchuria. However, with the Treaty of Peking (1860) the last part of Siberia became part of the Russian Empire. Shortly after taking over the area, the Russians began to look around for a place to build an ice-free port [4, p. 215].

The election fell on an area in 1860, where the city of Vladivostok is found today. Exploration and mapping of the former Outer Manchuria had to be postponed for later, the vital infrastructure having an absolute first priority. Together with the military outpost Khabarovsk the civilization of the area began. However, rising tensions with Japan caused serious tensions around the Yellow Sea to be tightened in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The controversy was about taking over the Chinese part of Manchuria and the Korean peninsula, and thereby the supremacy of the region. This unleashed the Russo-Japanese war in 1904-1905. Japan triumphantly withdrew from the war and the Russians began to take an interest in Khabarovsk Krai and especially in Primorsky Krai [2, S. 17-18].

This event meant that Russia began to be interested in exploring, mapping and building infrastructure in these two regions. The area was sparsely populated with a very harsh climate. In summer up to 30 degrees and baking hot sun and in winter down to thirty degrees below zero and heavy winds. A rugged terrain with large forests covering almost 90% of the region, swampy areas with mosquitos and wild animals, dangerous for all human beings. Furthermore, you find the Sikhote-Aline Mountains, a barren mountain massif, where maps can be useless. Literary the end of the world. In nowadays Bikin National Park, you still find some of this original landscapes and species of animals only known in this region of the world, like Ussuri brown bear, Amur tiger, Blakiston's fish owl and the Chinese merganser. [2, S. 17-18].

On the other hand, the former Chinese territory is rich of minerals. A number of large and unique deposits of various minerals have been discovered in Primorsky Krai in modern time. This region has the most powerful mining industry in the Far East of Russia. There are coal deposits, deposits of tin, deposits of complex ores containing zinc, lead, copper, and silver. Gold deposits are located both in the south of the region and in the north. The largest in Russia deposit of boron is located near the town of Dalnegorsk. Several phosphorite deposits are discovered on the shelf of the Sea of Japan. There are also several small oil fields, large deposits of germanium [2, S. 14].

Nanai tribe

This rugged terrain with the harsh weather is the home of the Tungusic peoples, an ethnolinguistic group formed by the speakers of the Tungusic languages. The nomadic Peoples of the region are as well of Chinese as of Russian origin. Whereas the Primorsky Krai had been Russian territory for only 160 years, it had been Chinese territory for several hundreds of years. In the middle Ages there were two Chinese empires on this territory, which successively replaced each other: Empire of Jin (1115-1234) and Empire of Eastern Xia (1215-1233). In the early 13th century the territory of East Asia suffered the Mongol invasion. This led to the fall of the empire of Jin, but some provinces in the east preserved independence and formed an independent state known as Eastern Xia. In 1233 after another invasion this state ceased to exist too. After that, the region was in ruins and attracted people persecuted in surrounding countries (bandits, adventurers, political dissidents).

In this article the Nanai tribe of the southern branch of the Tungusic peoples is at the centre of the analysis. Famous hero of two Russian movies, known as Dersu Uzala, belongs to the Nanai tribe (also known as the Goldi tribe), that lives along the Amur, Sunggari and Ussuri rivers. The Nanais are excellent fishermen. Very rarely, they go hunting and trapping. The economy of the Nanais was mainly based on fishing and they were frequently living in contemporary villages along the banks of the rivers. Agriculture and domestic animals like pigs fed with fish only played a minor role in their society. Their main food was also fish – fresh or dried.

The traditional clothing was also made out of fish skins – sewn together. These skins were left to dry. Once dry, they were struck repeatedly with a mallet to leave them completely smooth [4, p. 210].

What depends the religion – the Nanais are mainly Shamanist, with a great reverence for the bear (*Doonta*) and the tiger (*Amba*). They consider that the shamans have the power to expel bad spirits by means of prayers to the gods. During the centuries, they have been worshipers of the spirits of the sun, the moon, the mountains, the water and the trees. According to their beliefs, the land was once flat until great serpents gouged out the river valleys. They consider that all the things of the universe possess their own spirit and that these spirits wander independently throughout the world. In the Nanai religion, inanimate objects were often personified. Fire, for example, was personified as an elderly woman whom the Nanai referred to as Fadzya Mama [4, p. 214].

The Nanai tribe did not differ significantly from the many other groups of Tungusic people. They were all surrounded by a primitive culture with a natural religion, living in pact with nature. In the beginning of the 1900s the Nanais and the other Tungusic peoples in Primorsky Krai had lived in a primitive society for centuries. Isolated from the rest of the world. However, now civilization came in the form of modern Russian soldiers with tools, modern equipment and thoughts/life style that never had entered this remote area of the vast Russian Empire [9, p. 116-117].

The consequences of modernity for Indigenous peoples

The debates over indigenous peoples and development are often framed within the discussion on the shift towards modernity, the imposition of economic liberalism and resistance against external interventions, with a tendency to see indigenous peoples as a possible alternative to the world economic order. However, looking at many development agencies' discourses, the idea that indigenous peoples will actually benefit from modernity prevails. The literature and the movies are divided along these two conflicting views and dominated by binary oppositions: traditional/modern; backward/advanced; sustainable/unsustainable, etc. However, is it

at all relevant to think in terms of modernity/tradition in the case of Indigenous peoples?

Since the great voyages of discovery began in the 1400s, the problem of civilizing so-called indigenous peoples has existed. Even today in 2020 this problem still exists. Around the globe, this civilization has different forms. The way to civilize other peoples or backward area of a land area are different from country to country. It can be with or without military power. It may be a situation where the country that colonizes an area forces the indigenous peoples to take over their value systems, perceptions of democracy, etc. (France and Great Britain in Africa). However, it may also be forced democratization and the creation of patronage of selected people from the indigenous peoples who are trained and trained to introduce colonial value systems in the rest of the indigenous peoples (Denmark in Greenland). However, the reality is that real indigenous peoples do not always exist in the areas that are being integrated into the modern world. Remote and backward areas in a certain country can also be a subject for local civilization.

In order to put the civilization of the Outer Manchuria in a larger perspective two different types of civilization of so-called backward areas must be explained here. Subsequently, in the conclusion comparisons of Greenland and the American Wild West will be made with the Russian civilization of Far Eastern Siberia, seen from the artistic world.

Although Denmark is a small country, there is also a history here of colonization and civilization of larger or smaller land areas around the globe. Greenland, the world's largest island is a good example of such a civilization of an indigenous people, the Inuit. Along with Iceland and the Faroe Islands, Greenland was Denmark's outpost to the north for centuries. The Danes have been in Greenland for several hundred years. At the beginning of the 11th century Danish / Norwegian Vikings began to settle in Greenland. In the following centuries, Danes lived side by side with the local Inuit. It was not until 1814 that the island became an official Danish colony with the Danes completely taking over the island's administration. The Danish colonial power in Greenland, which at one time perceived itself as a

civilization agent with the mission as spearhead and as an economic agent (not to mention exploit) with the people of Commerce as actors, had this linguistic problem from the beginning. One had to communicate with the Greenlanders for the sake of nurturing their soul and for the sake of securing their blubber. The first required greater linguistic knowledge than the last and it is therefore not strange that it was initially the Danish missions which undertook to establish an education in the Greenlandic language and its associated textbooks. The alternative could have been to force the Greenlanders to learn Danish. Other measures to make the Inuit into Danish citizens were the forced removal of the Eskimos' children to Denmark. Here they were trained to be Danish citizens, whose task it was to spread the Danish value system on the island.

The result of this civilization was that the Eskimos had to give up their traditional ways of life and give up lands to foreign powers and industrial enterprises. The result of this civilization was a rising crime rate and rising problems of alcoholism in Greenland. Something that is a big problem to this day in 2020 on the island. The reason for this civilization of the Inuit was not that the Danes would benefit from large deposits of minerals and oil or strategic purposes of Denmark, on the other hand, has lost a lot of money on the island - but a forced civilization that would bring Greenland into the 21st century as a modern state. Like the Chinese politics towards the Tibetans [6, s. 304-307].

Another example of a civilization of a land area is the American Wild West. Native Americans long dominated the vastness of the American West. Linked culturally and geographically by trade, travel, and warfare, various indigenous groups controlled most of the continent west of the Mississippi River deep into the 19th century. Spanish, French, British and later American traders had integrated themselves into many regional economies, and American emigrants pushed westward, but no imperial power had yet achieved anything approximating political or military control over the great bulk of the continent. But then the Civil War came and went and decoupled the West from the question of slavery just as the United States industrialized and laid down rails and pushed its ever-expanding population

ever farther west. Nevertheless, then unending waves of American settlers, the American military and the unstoppable onrush of American capital conquered all. The United States removed Native groups to ever-shrinking reservations, incorporated the West first as territories and then as states and for the first time in its history controlled the enormity of land between the two oceans [16, p. 253-257].

The “Indian wars” so mythologized in western folklore were a series of sporadic, localized and often brief engagements between US military forces and various Native American groups. The more sustained and more impactful conflict, meanwhile, was economic and cultural. The vast and cyclical movement across the Great Plains to hunt buffalo, raid enemies, and trade goods was incompatible with new patterns of American settlement and railroad construction. Political, economic, and even humanitarian concerns intensified American efforts to isolate Indians on reservations. Although Indian removal had long been a part of federal Indian policy, following the Civil War the US government redoubled its efforts. If treaties and other forms of persistent coercion would not work, measures that are more drastic were deemed necessary. Against the threat of confinement and the extinction of traditional ways of life Native Americans battled the American army and the encroaching lines of American settlement [16, p. 127-132].

Hardly any indigenous peoples have been bypassed by modernization: their subordinate incorporation into the modern nation-state has been followed by their integration into the national productive system and their subjection to a variety of mechanisms of social control ranging from state bureaucracy to education and religion. Consequently, indigenous resistance to domination, although informed by the historical memory of ancestral forms of social organization, has been largely mediated by the dominant framework and has taken place on the state’s terms. Thus, indigenous movements have seen the cure for their subordinate position in fuller incorporation into the institutions and mechanisms of national or regional decision-making. Although these achievements may contribute to the improvement of the material position of some indigenous people, they may also mean their greater incorporation into dominant rationality.

Dersu Uzala and Vladimir Arsenyev – the Book

The theme of this article is the civilization of the abovementioned region of Russia's far eastern parts of Siberia. Or more precisely how this civilization of primitive culture with a natural religion and primitive societies was described in the so-called civilized part of the world and especially in the artistic world. Neither in Russian or international literature nor in Russian or international film world the consequences of modernity for indigenous peoples in this remote area of the world has been particularly thoroughly dealt with. In the world of literature it is mostly travel books, explorer's stories, diaries and scientific descriptions of the primitive communities that characterize the offering of books. This means that analyses of the consequences of human change for the indigenous population that took place in the region do not fill much in Russian or international the literary world.

However, a work stands out. Vladimir Arsenyev's (1872-1930) memoir about Dersu Uzala (1849-1908) in the book with the main character's name as title. The book's action takes place in Primorsky Krai between 1902 and 1908 and the book was published in the 1920s. The book was part of the author's trilogy about his explorations in the last possibility of describing the original life of the primitive societies in the area. The two other volumes were "In the Ussuri Territory" (1921) and "In the Sikhote-Alin Mountains" published posthumously in 1937. Furthermore, Vladimir Arsenyev is also famous for authoring many other books about his explorations, including some 60 works on the geography, wildlife and ethnography of the regions he travelled [3, p. 9-12].

From 1902 the Russian explorer Vladimir Arsenyev undertook twelve large expeditions to the then largely unexplored area between the coast of the Pacific Ocean and the Ussuri River. There he did scientific studies and described the flora and fauna as well as the geology and topography of the unknown country, but above all he was interested in the local tribes of the Nanais, Udeges and Orochs, whose customs and languages he researched. Vladimir Arsenyev literarily immortalized the hunter and ranger in the book "Dersu Uzala", first published in 1923 [1, s. 7].

Although the person Dersu Uzala is real and the discovery trips took place in the areas around the Ussuri River, some facts were slightly changed. As mentioned above, as well the books as the film's main character, Dersu Uzala, was described as a Nanai trapper and hunter in the forest. In the biographical book, the trapper lives on the banks of the Ussuri River. Dersu Uzala had lived alone in the forest after the smallpox death of his wife and children, before he met Vladimir Arsenyev and accompanied him on several expeditions. A deep friendship developed between the two. Dersu Uzala showed Vladimir Arsenyev during the joint expeditions many previously unknown plants and animals and together he explored the regions around the Sikhote-Alin massif and the Ussuri tributary Bikin. He saves Arsenyev several times, for example, during a storm on Lake Khanka. As Dersu Uzala became increasingly blind, as he got older, Vladimir Arsenyev offered to live with him in the city. However, Uzala could not gain anything from city life. In the spring of 1908 he returned to the Ussuri region. There he was murdered near the railway station of the town of Korfovsky not far from Khabarovsk, probably because of a valuable rifle that Vladimir Arsenyev had given him as a farewell gift. Now in the village of Korfovsky, not far from the site of Derzu's death, a granite block has been set up in memory in the 1970s to Vladimir Arsenyev and Dersu Usala was erected, pine trees planted around it [1, s. 38-42].

Vsevolod Petrovich Sysoev (1911-2011), a popular author in the Far East, director of the Khabarovsk Local History Museum, dean of the Geographic Faculty of the Khabarovsk Pedagogical Institute, suggested that Dersu Uzala was an Udege and not from the Nanai tribe. The author motivated his assumption with the following: 1) Vladimir Arsenyev meets Dersu Uzala in lands in the coastal outskirts. 2) Dersu is dressed in Udege clothing – trousers and a buckle leather jacket, worn in high boots. 3) Dersu and his family lived in the taiga in winter – in a yurt of Poles covered with measles, in summer – in a birch bark booth as well as nomadic Udege people; Gold's (Nanai) did not wander. 4) Furthermore, Dersu is a hunter, not a fisherman; he knows the taiga well, all mountain rivers and keys, remembers every hill and 5) Dersu teaches the Arsenyev Udege language, not Nanai. The conversation

with Vsevolod Petrovich Sysoev was recorded by Far Eastern author and publicist Julia Shestakova in the essay “Dada” and was included in the book “Star People”. Since accounts of the Nanai people in the 1800s have not been written down, it will probably be difficult to get an answer to Vsevolod Petrovich Sysoev claims. In addition, the various Tungus peoples are so difficult to separate from each other that even modern DNA tests used as a tool to find the proper kinship, is sometimes not enough evidence [13, p. 224-225].

The narrating author, Captain Vladimir Arsenyev, the Russian geographer and cartographer, had written a memoir of two surveying expeditions in the rugged Siberian wilderness, the Ussurian taiga. Arsenyev tells the story in a series of flashbacks of his days with Dersu Uzala, a man, who lived in this remote region, and with whom he formed an uncommon friendship. The book traces this friendship and its effects on both men – one a cultured, well-educated scientist and military officer, the other a mountain man living alone in the forest in one of the world’s harshest environments. The story of these two men and the complex emotional bond they form is told against a backdrop of spectacular natural beauty, with the changes of seasons in Siberia echoing the changes in their relationship. The book is like a panoramic vision, like a series of beautiful photographs, each capturing the colours and textures of nature untouched by humankind. The author focuses steadily on expansive scenes so that they appear to be still shots, moving only enough to capture the global movements of the characters. Vladimir Arsenyev’s experiences that he has reported in his text are nowadays counted on the classics of the Russian canon of literature. The book, which is written on original locations, was created not only with the fascination of the nature of the Ussuri area again, but primarily describes the human adventure or better the adventure of friendship between two protagonists [3, p. 303-304].

Two persons, who come from completely different circles of civilization

In addition to a sensitive portrait of a Siberian trapper is therefore also a plea of Vladimir Arsenyev to preserve this kind of lifestyle from the modernization of previously untouched areas. Dersu Uzala, in the book presented as a person who fully

accept the unity with his surrounding nature lives and the inexplicable forces, becomes an antagonist of the Russian soldiers in this pristine world. A new approach to disseminating the soldiers' topographical knowledge. The book's descriptive and observant way of conveying the world, however, means that the critical attitude towards the advancement of civilization is lost in the emotional description of nature presented by Dersu Uzala and the culture presented by Vladimir Arsenyev. In the episode where the Siberian fur hunter moves home to Arsenyev, therefore, only becomes an interlude where the indigenous peoples and their lifestyle have completely outplayed their part. Symbolized by the death of Dersu Uzala. This view of the relations between the natives and the Russians, in a relationship where the Russians must have had some help from the natives to survive in the remote area, was completely in line with the official communist attitude of the former Soviet Union, even though communist ideology is not traced in the books of Vladimir Arsenyev. [12, p. 51-56].

Dersu Uzala – the Movies

As mentioned above, neither in Russian nor in the international film world, the consequences of modernity for indigenous peoples has not been particularly thoroughly dealt with. Nevertheless, Dersu Uzala's life story was filmed twice. The abovementioned book of Vladimir was more or less screenplay for both films. In 1961 the film "Dersu Usala" was created under the direction of the Armenian director Agasi Babayan, in which Kasym Zhakibayev took on the role of Dersu Uzala. Akira Kurosawa, a Japanese Director, made the film of the same name from 1975. A movie far better known and one of discussed movies ever. In this film adaptation, Uzala was portrayed by Maksim Munsuk. The last-mentioned film was recognized as the best foreign language film at the 1976 US Academy Awards. Following his physical recovery, however, he assumed a different persona. He was more affable and social; granting interviews with the news media in stark contrast to his earlier, reclusive self. Like Dersu, Kurosawa had become a social outcast, wandering in the wilderness of his mind without human connection. In addition, like Dersu, his catastrophic change

led to a second entry into human life, with all of its complexities, ironies, and limitations [11, p. 180].

Although, the Russian movie industry was nationalized around 1917 and became a tool of the communist regime until 1990 Russian film is largely synonymous with world cinematic aesthetic and cinematic theories, not least thanks to pioneers such as Vsevolod Pudovkin, Alexander Dovzhenko, Sergei Eisenstein and Dziga Vertov. During the silent film era they helped formulate the still young film language in their works and in theoretical texts that are read and used to this day. Since then, poets and film philosophers such as Mikhail Kalatozov, Sergei Parajanov, Andrei Tarkovsky and Alexander Sokurov took over, while a modern master like Andrei Zvyagintsev portrays a nation that has fallen morally, humanly and spiritually.

Nevertheless, Agasi Babayan's movie in 1961 was produced by the Soviet nationalized film industry and even though the focal points of Babayan's movies were nature and human beings, the homage for the communist ideology can be traced in his movie. Agasi Babayan's moral of indigenous people is also completely in line with the official communist attitude of the former Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, and thereby the communist ideology, respected as well the nature as indigenous people. The trapper Dersu Uzala is, therefore, a real movie hero. The young Soviet or in this connection the young communist scientist Vladimir Arsenyev engages in the study of the Ussuri region of the Russian Empire. The Soviet film industry was more or less a propaganda tool for the communist regime. In the taiga he meets hunter Dersu Uzala who becomes his guide and faithful friend. Dersu amazes Vladimir Arsenyev with his excellent knowledge of taiga, the ability to read it as an open book and his special attitude to nature. Traveling through the taiga, the detachment encounters a tiger that Dersu only drives away with conviction; creeping through the swamp; meet with poachers who confiscate illegally obtained valuables and expel them from the Ussuri region. During one of the crossings, Vladimir Arsenyev finds a piece of coal and after separating from the detachment joins Dersu to search for his landfill. During this campaign Arsenyev became ill and falls into a forest fire from which Dersu rescues him.

After being reunited with the detachment, Arsenyev and Dersu continue the journey. Winter catches them along the way. After taking a boat from the locals, the liberation floats on a freezing river and descends where all property perishes – hot stuff, cartridges, food. In such conditions, the detachment continues its journey, and after spending one night in the evening, travellers celebrate the New Year. Fortunately, the journey ends, as New Year's Eve spent quite a short distance from the seashore. The release reaches the shore, where Arsenyev and the others, warmly bid farewell to Dersu, depart for the ship and wait for them. In the final scene, Vladimir Arsenyev gives Dersu Uzala a visit card written in Russian, which means that the main character understands Russian. Dersu Uzala became the people's hero, and at the remake of the movie in 1975. Dersu Uzala was a film character that was well known to the Soviet movie audience, but not at all to rest of the world.

The second production of the movie "Dersu Uzala" was a Soviet-Japanese production with world famous Japanese director Akira Kurosawa in the director's chair. This film is an example of how the Soviet film industry gave completely independence to a foreign director with several international film awards. Nevertheless, the Soviet production company cut twenty minutes of Kurosawa's movie, citing that the Japanese was guilty in their eyes of a lack of sympathy of the great Soviet hero. Babayan's version of "Dersu Uzala" has certainly not been in vain. The result was more than 20 million visitors in local cinemas all over the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, Akira Kurosawa was in a serious existentialist crisis. He attempted suicide on December 22, 1971. His last Japanese movie "Dodesukaden" (1970) was a giant flop and his relations to the Japanese film industry and Japanese investors did almost not exist. Therefore, "Dersu Uzala" was his first movie in a foreign language [10, p. 195].

The film begins with an overlay, "1910", in front of one long shot on a dense forest that the cinemagoers temporal context of the action explained. Vladimir Arsenyev (played by Yuri Solomin) is looking for in a lumberjack settlement a grave that was under large cedars, but which apparently felled during the establishment of the settlement were. After the short and little gaining knowledge talking to one of the

residents, the plot ends and another display, "1902", announces the viewer a leap into the past. An expedition of soldiers and horses singing through the forest. They all represent "civilization" in the remote corners of the world at the same time; they show awe of the scary surroundings, but at the same time the beauty of the Siberian nature impresses them. In his diary, the landscape reminds him of the gruesome and scary stories of Walpurgis Night, in which witches had to gather in such places. The nature is not only a positive symbol in Akira Kurosawa's movie universe [5, p. 191-192; 14, p. 64].

That night the men suddenly hear a noise and Dersu Uzala finally appears from the forest. The representation of nature has arrived. At the fire camp, the soldiers wonder whether he is a Chinese or a Korean soldier. He is indeterminate by age. Even the trapper himself does not know his real age. Time does not matter in nature. The answer of Uzala is that he is from the Nanai (Goldi) tribe. He tells about his family and their death by smallpox. Already that early in the movie, Arsenyev has realized that civilization cannot do without the help of nature. Therefore, Arsenyev finally asks him if he does not want to be a guide or tracker for the expedition. Dersu, who, due to the death of his family, had to choose between loneliness and meditation instead of company with other people and dissemination of knowledge, opts for the latter variant and leads the squad the next day as a beginning. During the tracks, Dersu Uzala calls the soldiers 'children', whose eyes could not see and therefore cannot manage to live alone in the forest or know how to survive. The Russians are not able to interpret correctly signs in the forest. Civilization has to learn from nature or otherwise it will not survive. The Nanai man, who through his whole life in the wilderness has gained an amazing insight in the mechanisms of the nature, fascinates Vladimir Arsenyev and, furthermore he has a beautiful soul, because he really cares for the people who he has not met before. Dersu Uzala respected all kinds of lives and respect its existence. The sun, the moon, the water, yes even the fire were from him to human life regarded as equivalent and therefore respected accordingly. Dersu's role within the visualization of Arsenyev's travel reports therefore quickly becomes clear [7, S. 191-193].

Dersu Uzala acts as an intermediary between two different peoples and cultures, whereby the message becomes a kind of heritage for the posterity. A kind of legacy to the posterity. However, the focal point of Akira Kurosawa is on the friendship between two men, who have an adventure and experience in the harsh wilderness. Every evening, at the fire camp, they come together to discuss life's different issues. After Dersu had learned Arsenyev the Tungus language. Moreover, not the other way round. Nature is in the leading position. In the most important scene of the first half of the movie, the two men are surprised by a very tough winter storm. Dersu saves Arsenyev's life by building an emergency shelter out of steppe grass. Nature is the culture superior to disaster situations like this. A farewell is inevitably. Arsenyev returns to the civilization in Khabarovsk. Dersu Uzala declines an offer to follow his friend in the city [15, p. 155-157].

In 1907 Vladimir Arsenyev leads another expedition in the Sikhote-Alin Mountains. Again, he meets Dersu. The two men fall into each other's arms and are very happy to see each other after such a long time. Soon an experience happens that once more shows nature is in the leading position. An Amur tiger for a longer distance hunts Dersu and Arsenyev. Suddenly the Nanai trapper screams in the forest and asks the tiger to take a different path, after all there is enough space for as well the animal as the two men and neither of the men wants to shoot at the tiger. The Amur tiger obeys Dersu Uzala and finds another path in the wilderness. The superiority of Nature is evident in the universe of Akira Kurosawa. The eligibility of the indigenous people and their lifestyle are evident. Communication with the animals and harmony with the nature are superior versus culture and civilization. The trapper does not destroy the nature or kills the animal for fun or for gain. The experience means that soldiers release animals and dismantle them from traps and snares unless they eat them to survive [8, p. 230-231].

In contrast to the representation of nature's vulnerability, another scene shows her danger. When crossing a river the raft of the men is carried away, whereby Dersu and Arsenyev narrowly escaped death. The Nanai man had to thrust the Russian officer into the water, so he could escape. However, Dersu Uzala was in real danger.

The men therefore tied their belts and holsters together to float a tree on the river, on which Dersu could be drawn to the shore. The danger of wilderness therefore consists of both wild animals and the like tiger, as well as in the forces of nature itself. After the situation even Dersu Uzala shoots at the wild animal, what he himself considered a crime against God of the forest, Kanga, who will surely punish him. After this experience, the hunter has changed and he no longer tolerates any offense against nature. In addition, the eyesight of the Nanai trapper wears off, one fact that he himself as punishment of the god of the forest for his outrage realizes that if he can no longer hunt, he is in the wilderness and can no longer survive. Vladimir Arsenyev takes him into the city of Khabarovsk [5, p. 196].

In Khabarovsk the confrontations between nature and society culminates. Modern world is preparing Dersu Uzala incomprehension. The hunter has no task there anymore; he just stares into the fire. Trapped like a prisoner, living in a cage. One day, when the wife of Vladimir Arsenyev buys firewood, he is so outraged that he went to a local city park and fell a tree and Dersu is arrested. Finally, the Nanai man asks the Russian officer to go back to the mountains, because he will not survive mentally in civilization. The latter agrees and gives him a modern rifle as a gift. However, this becomes the fate of the hunter. A little later, a telegram arrived that a robber killed him, because of his valuable new weapon from the new modern society. At Dersu's grave, which he also was looking at in the beginning of the movie, Arsenyev is not looking at his friend's grave, but also as at Nature's grave. The death is due to the modernization or the advancement of the civilization. Nature and the lifestyle of indigenous people will disappear just like Dersu Uzala himself [7, S. 195-196].

The civilization of the Outer Manchuria in a wider perspective

Overall, Dersu Uzala is a plea by Akira Kurosawa against the destruction of nature. Whereas in the movie by Agasi Babayan, the focal point is mostly beautiful landscapes, pictures and heroes of the Soviet Union. Especially to see in the camera work of the Armenian. A little, like an old propaganda movie of the communists. The long shots that were to capture the landscape of the plot thought even awareness of

the increasing destruction to sharpen them. The film, which definitely influences, who should have artists and the art of later years, represents the contrast between untouched nature and civilization destruction by its two main characters. With his expeditions, Arsenyev laid the foundation stone to the disaster. Destruction of what he is so fascinated with namely the World of Dersu Uzala. The latter can only live and function in the wilderness. The Nanai man withers and is destroyed in Khabarovsk that represents civilization.

The plea for respect for life is the same in the film shown explicitly several times. Dersu rescue the animals, his communication with all kind of life types as well as perception of his own wickedness against the law of the wild, when he killed a tiger that dies useless. All this underlines the message of Akira Kurosawa. However, this is often lost because the Siberian romances of bygone times in the centre of the movie plot. Nature is perceived, however not always interpreted in the sense of Kurosawa, who through it tried to make long settings tangible. In contrast to Babayan's version of "Dersu Uzala", the camera work in the movie of Akira Kurosawa does not take place for ideological reasons, but Kurosawa tries to catch former time greatness, from an era in the history of Russia, which is long before the communist Soviet Union. Nevertheless, also this era has disappeared like nature in Kurosawa's movie. Thereby, the perception of Kurosawa's message is lost in translation. The director's camera work continually suggests that man is a weak and small creature, at same time as it becomes more and more evident that Dersu Uzala and thereby the old peoples and their lifestyles will die and disappear.

Nevertheless, the film is a significant insight into Russia's history and the opening up of the "wild East" within its borders. As well in the book as in Babayan's version of the movie, Dersu Uzala is represented as a romantic figure from a literature canon or a relic of the past that cannot exist in modern Russia. In the movie of Kurosawa Dersu Uzala has to die. Civilization will conquer nature, although modern human beings treatment of nature was getting worse and worse in Kurosawa's universe. Therefore, even though Dersu Uzala is getting weaker and

weaker, modern man can learn a lot from him. Nevertheless, fact is modern society will outperform the old primitive systems.

A critic, absurdly, called the movie a western, but Akira Kurosawa replied quite accurately that in this movie the focal point was uniquely the mystique of the Eastern world. Furthermore, a Japanese critic, Yikichi Shinada, has spoken of Kurosawa's arrival in "Dersu Uzala" as a new objectivity in which human beings exist as but one element in the universal scheme of things. This seems true, too. However, this brings us to the comparison between the above types of consequences of modernity for indigenous peoples, we were discussing in a former chapter. In this perspective, the comparison with an American western is also completely shot next to the dial. In the conquest of the American Wild West, capitalism, the railway and guns have been the most important tools. This was evidently not the situation in the Outer Manchuria. Fighting with natives about settlements did not fill much of the history books. However, the fact was that the area was filled with military. However, great fighting between the natives and the Russians did not take place on a scale like in the United States. And extinctions of animals like bison and other eatable animals did not take place in the Outer Manchuria, too.

Like in the Danish colony of Greenland, a state intervention and forced introduction of educational and political systems has not taken place in the measure in the Outer Manchuria. However, Dersu Uzala and other indigenous peoples were more or less abused in communist propaganda, where he became a Soviet hero. A direct state intervention did not take place. As least not in the same way as in Greenland. All in all the conquest of Outer Manchuria was a kind of third way, what depends civilization of native people in remote areas of a country.

Conclusion

Fully aware of the power of nature, Dersu knows that he is an insignificant part of it. He lives a form of animism by which he imparts a spirit to all things. He refers to fire, water, and wind as three mighty men and the sun as the most important man. Dersu is part of a myth that he does not view as myth (i.e., as symbolic). By joining the soldiers, Dersu risks being torn out of the myth and becoming stranded alone in a

world of symbols he cannot read. Dersu's is a world in which the nature of reality is intertwined with imagination, dreams, and spirit. He does not wake up from his dreams; his dream life is continuous with waking life. This is Akira Kurosawa's description of society's outperforming of nature indigenous peoples and primitive lifestyle. The price of this entry is the acknowledgment as well as forgetting of uncomfortable historical facts. A revisiting of Kurosawa's film, set in 1902-1907, against the historical foil of the two world wars, reveals that this cinematic memorial to a Nanai tribesman silently acknowledges and laments as well of Russia's as of Japan's participation in the extermination of the minority peoples of the Outer Manchuria and in the destruction of pre-industrial pan-Asian Siberia.

The question in the beginning of the article was about the films, the book and the artistic world showing a historically correct insight into the period in which the Russian Empire incorporated Russia's Wild East in the subsequent Soviet Union. The answer is as well *no* as *yes*. A *no* because a lot history is left out in the movies and you cannot give description of the real historic events in Outer Manchuria. Nevertheless, a *yes* because, in this way, Akira Kurosawa describes the innermost core of the fact that ancient lifestyles, traditions and indigenous peoples must change their lifestyle and adapt to a modern world. A communication is method only literature or cinema powers to communicate. A method of dissemination would never be recognized in a scientific discipline as history. In this way, the aforementioned films and books add new knowledge to the colonization of the Outer Manchuria and add further information to this period of Russia's history. In this context, especially mastered by world-renowned director Akira Kurosawa and partly by Russian author Vladimir Arsenyev.

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