

## **FRACTURES OF THE WHOLE: A DEPICTION OF THE SHAMANIC UNIVERSE ON KAČA DRUMS BROUGHT BY J.J. SEDERHOLM FROM SIBERIA IN 1917**

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This paper is a brief description of two drums brought back by the Finnish geologist Jacob Johannes Sederholm from his expedition to Siberia in 1917. These two drums have not previously been described in any scholarly work. Therefore, research on the drums, based on ethnographical sources and museum collections, was done to identify their provenance.

### INTRODUCTION

The Finnish geological expedition to the Inner Asian state of Uriankhai took place in 1917. Today it is the Republic of Tyva, a part of the Russian Federation.<sup>1</sup> Among the expedition members were the Finnish geologist Jacob Johannes Sederholm, the head of the expedition, Steinar Foslie from Norway, and Helge Backlund of the St Petersburg Geological Museum. The expedition was conducted despite the troubled political situation in the world: World War I in Europe, the Civil War and Revolution in Russia, the recent end of Manchurian rule, and the Russian protectorate and the approaching independence in Tyva (Uriankhai). The Uriankhai expedition members returned from Siberia in November 1917. After the Revolution, mineral explorations in the territories controlled by the Soviets, including Tyva, were not possible due to political reasons. The results of the expedition went mostly unnoticed, with the exception of scientific reports by the leaders J.J. Sederholm, H.M. Hausen, S. Foslie, and H.G. Backlund, which were published in a small edition in 1918. Hans Hausen included a chapter about Uriankhai in his biographical book *Över kontinenter och oceaner: En geolog ser på världen* (1945), and the story of the expedition was published as a book in 1979 by one of its members, geologist Ernst Håkan Kranck.

The photographic archive of the expedition and the diaries and reports of the participants are unique, for they describe the pre-revolutionary situation in Russia. The expedition's heritage is also valuable as a detailed account of nature and observations on the local ethnic groups. However, this paper is dedicated to a small aspect of the expedition's heritage: two shaman drums which

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<sup>1</sup> Uriankhai is a former unofficial name of the Republic of Tyva. Different transcription versions of the name exist, but Urjanchai was the one used by the Finnish geological expedition members in their publications and diaries.

J.J. Sederholm brought back from Siberia in 1917. The drums are called the “Painted Drum” and the “Broken Drum” because of their most distinctive features. The Painted Drum has spectacular images on the drumhead in black, red, and brown colours, which have not faded even after a century without any special preservation. This fact would suggest that at the time of acquisition, the drum was new, in contrast to the Broken Drum, which shows signs of extensive use: some of its images are barely visible, there are two patches on the drumhead, and there is also a long cut in the centre of the drumhead.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

The article aims to introduce Sederholm’s drums for further scientific use. The work seeks answers to the following research questions: What is the drums’ provenance? What kind of semantic interpretations can be made from the drums’ parts and the images on the drumheads? Due to the absence of firsthand descriptions, the drums themselves have become source material, although their use in this regard is inherently problematic because of the stated lack of information:

When studying ethnographic objects in public or in private collections, the very first problems deal with the critique regarding the use of objects as research material. To use artefacts as research material, the value of each single object as a source has to be weighted together with written sources. (Hämäläinen 2004: 273)

To this end – to use studied objects as research material – I have applied a comparative method based on various written sources: ethnographies of the Altai-Sayan peoples (Anokhin 1924; Djakonova 1981; Katanov 1893) and descriptions and typologies of Siberian drums (Ivanov 1955; Nazarenko 1988; Potapov 1949; 1981; Prokofieva 1961). In addition, I have studied drums in the collections of different museums. A visit to the Minusinsk Martyanov Museum was especially helpful, due to its rich collection of Siberian drums from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Research on Sederholm’s drums has consisted of three stages: in the initial stage, the ethnic affiliation of the drums was narrowed down to the Khakas people; further studies tied them to one ethnic group – the Kača; and, finally, an attempt to provide interpretations of the drums’ parts and drumhead images was made. I am careful in my attempt to provide semantics of the drums’ details and images because, as noted by Mebius (1968: 13, cited in Rydving 1991: 34), they “can lead the interpreter dreadfully astray”. Interpretation of pictures can be arguable because “pictures, which represent common shaman realities, can be considered canonic. The variety in pictures is caused by personal spirit-assistants and guardians of the Kača shamans and their perception of spirits of specific deceases” (Potapov 1981: 137). Dyrenkova (2012: 299) suggests the same, namely, that motifs which appear on a drumhead are common for a certain ethnic group, but there are individual features, too:

Although pictures on the drum usually repeat those on the shaman-ancestor’s drum, who passed his gift on to the new shaman, the new shaman decides how to draw pictures according to directions from the spirits. Surely this way of drawing brings individual features.<sup>2</sup>

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2 This and the following translations in the text were done by the author.

This paper addresses the above-mentioned stages of research and gives a detailed description of both drums brought by J.J. Sederholm.

## NOTE ON ETHNONYMS

In the previous scholarship, the Khakas people have had different ethnonyms: Abakan Tatars, Abakan Tadars, Minusinsk Tatars, or Yenisei Kyrgyz. Often a researcher would give names of the large clan groups: Bel'tir, Sagai, Kača (Xaas), Kyzyl (Xyzyl), and Koibal; all of them are considered as belonging to the Khakas (Radlov 2007; Anderson 2005; Prokofieva 1961).

## IDENTIFICATION OF THE DRUMS' ETHNIC AFFILIATION

The only firsthand piece of information about the drums was found in the private correspondence of J.J. Sederholm. He wrote about one of the drums – although it is unknown which one of them – in a letter dated 26 June 1917, and sent from Minusinsk:

I have made a deal with a man who collects antiquities. He had, among others, a very peculiar Tatar magic drum, used by shamans, with pictures painted on the front. Backlund has told that museums would pay 1 000 Finnish marks for one. I have got it for 50 roubles, which is 75,90 marks. He himself has given 35 roubles for it. They are very difficult to obtain.<sup>3</sup> (Sederholm 1917, letter in the private archive of Barbro Scheinin)

The ethnic affiliation mentioned by Sederholm is Tatar, one of the previous ethnonyms for the Khakas people. There is no more direct evidence on the origin of the drums. Based on Sederholm's letter, however, the geographical area of the drums' origin can be located in the Minusinsk valley, the home of the various groups who today are called the Khakas. This information helps to narrow down the search to objects originating from the territory which is currently part of the Republic of Khakassia and the Minusinsky District of Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia. The Soviet scholar Sergei Ivanov (1955: 177–179), who studied the Khakas drums, observed:

The number of drums known to us is 60. If we add to this number the drums which are described in the ethnographic literature but do not have pictures, the total number of drums would be 70.

Table 1 gives basic descriptions of several drums, including the drums which are studied in this paper, the Painted Drum and the Broken Drum. Photographs and descriptions of the two drums in the selection were accessed online, as they have been placed on the website of the Glinka National Museum Consortium of Musical Culture (Russia) and the Stockholm Museum of Ethnography (Sweden). The photographs and a description of the Sagai drum were generously shared by the staff of the National Museum of Khakassia. Finally, I was able to study drums in the collection of the Minusinsk Martyanov Museum during fieldwork in Siberia in April 2017.<sup>4</sup>

Potanin (1893: 13–14) developed a classification of the Siberian drums based on the form of the handle. He distinguishes between three types of drums: the Altai-Sayan type has vertical wood and horizontal iron crosspieces; the Tungus type has a wood or iron cross as the handle, tied to the shell

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<sup>3</sup> *Jag har gjort en affär för egen del med en man som samlat fornsaker. Han hade bl.a. en mycket egendomlig tatarisk trolltrumpa sådan shamanerna använde, målad med figurer på framsidan. Backlund sade att museer betalt ända till 1 000 mk för sådana. Jag fick den för 50 rubel = 75.90 mk. Han hade sjelf givit 35 rubel. De äro mycket svåra att få.*

<sup>4</sup> Fieldwork was conducted in March and April 2017 in partnership with the ethnomusicologist Dr Robert O. Behrs, University of Pittsburgh.

Table 1 A Comparative table of drums

Drums	Shape/Dating	Handle	Encircling lines	Partition of a drumhead	Images
The Painted Drum	Irregular circle, early 20th century	A vertical bar with a narrow mid-section, a bow, pendants, textile pieces	Encircling	Three parts	Celestial objects, trees, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures
The Broken Drum	Ellipse, early 20th century	Φ-grip	Encircling	Three parts	Celestial objects, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures
KP-3349/579 The Glinka National Consortium Museum of Musical Culture	Irregular circle, early 19th century	Φ-grip, a bow, pendants	Encircling	Two parts	Celestial objects, trees, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures
1892.03.0354.A Stockholm Museum of Ethnography	Irregular circle, early 19th century	A vertical bar with a narrow mid-section, a bow, pendants, textile pieces	Semicircle	Two parts	A celestial object, trees, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures
OF 4656/26 The National Museum of Khakassia	Irregular circle, 19th or early 20th century, identified as Sagai (Khakas)	A vertical bar with a narrow mid-section, a bow, pendants, textile pieces	Semicircle	Two parts	Celestial objects, trees, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures
2176 The Minusinsk Martyanov Museum	Ellipse, early 19th century, identified as Kača	Φ-grip, a bow, pendants	Semicircle	Two parts	Celestial objects, trees, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures
2178 The Minusinsk Martyanov Museum	Ellipse, early 19th century, identified as Kača	Φ-grip, a bow, pendants, textile pieces	Encircling	Four parts	Celestial objects, trees, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures
2190 The Minusinsk Martyanov Museum	Ellipse, early 19th century, identified as Kača	Φ-grip, a bow, pendants, textile pieces	Semicircle	Three parts	Celestial objects, trees, birds, zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures

by straps or strings; and the Samoyed type is also connected to the shell by straps, while a horizontal bar is in the middle of the handle. According to Potanin's classification, both drums studied in this paper fit into the Altai-Sayan type. Further specifications provided by Prokofieva (1961: 478–480) allow Sederholm's drums to be assigned to the Shor variety of the South Siberian type used by various ethnic groups: the Shor, Kača, Sagai, Bel'tir, Teleut, and Kumandins. Prokofieva (1961: 443) emphasises that the Kača drums have two different handles: with an Φ-grip and as a vertical wooden bar with a narrow middle section for holding. According to Dyrenkova (2012: 288), the

handle in a form of a wooden vertical bar with a narrow mid-section for a grip is “typical for the Sagai, but can be seen among the Kača and Bel’tir, too”.

Prokofieva (1961: 444) gives the most specific features of the Khakas drums, which belong to the Shor variety of the South Siberian type: the Kača drums are up to 75 cm in height and 70 cm in width, two types of handle (a vertical bar with a narrow middle section and an  $\Phi$ -grip), and the crosspiece of the handle has metal bells, pendants, and textile pieces; the Sagai drums are similar to the Shor drums with a handle in a form of the vertical bar and a narrow middle section for a grip; the Shor drums are described as large with a horizontal width of up to 70 cm; the Bel’tir drums are similar to those of the Sagai; and the Sagai and Kača drums have differences in their drumhead images and details of their construction.

Sederholm’s drums have an encircling pattern of zigzags and dots bordering on the drumhead, while its surface is divided into three sectors by similar lines of zigzags and dots; two of the sectors are situated in the upper part of the drum. This type of border is absent in a typology of the Khakas drums, which includes 16 types of borders: nine with encircling lines, five with semicircles, and two drums with no borders (Ivanov 1955: 185), although a partitioning of the drumhead into three sectors is present on Kača drums with a semicircle border.<sup>5</sup>

Except for their handles, the Painted Drum and the Broken Drum share common features: a frame shape as an irregular circle; approximately similar sizes; a variety of images on their drumheads; their colour design and its location; and the partition of the drumhead into three sections. All of these features serve as identifiers, which taken together are strong enough to suggest that the drums obtained by Sederholm have a Khakas origin and, most probably, originally belonged to the Kača people.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PAINTED DRUM

Form: irregular circle

Height: 60 cm

Width of the widest section: 58.5 cm

Depth of the drum shell: 12–14 cm

The frame is in the shape of an irregular circle. It was made from an aspen tree.<sup>6</sup> Two lines of the willow stem hoops tie up the frame and hide, and the hide is stretched on the wooden frame (Fig. 1). The hide’s edge is pinned to the shell, and it is laced along the perimeter with a leather string and tied up inward. This particular type of connection of a membrane to the frame is “typical for the Altai and Telengit peoples; but not for the Soyot or Uriankhai” (Potanin 2007: 436). There are six knobs under the skin on the top of the shell. Knobs are called “horns” (Potapov 1981: 126) or “nipples”, which feed the shaman and spiritual entities (Jakovlev 1900: 57; Dyrenkova 2012: 288).

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5 Inventory no. 2190, in the collection of the Minusinsk Martyanov Museum. The drum’s height is 66 cm, the width is 63 cm, and the handle has an  $\Phi$ -grip, a crosspiece, pendants, and textile pieces.

6 A farmer and specialist in agronomy and forestry, Carl-Johan Lindén from Sjunby, Finland, has determined the varieties of wood used for building the drums. Carl-Johan’s father Erik Gabriel Lindén participated in the expedition to Uriankhai in 1917. He mostly accompanied Hans Hausen during trips to the Tannu-Ola mountains.



Figure 1 Painted Drum, drumhead



Figure 2 Painted Drum, backside

Details on the back, or inner, side of the shaman drum have a meaning and purpose of their own as “hidden messages” (Pentikäinen 2010: 7). The handle grip is larch, and two blades are spruce (Fig. 2). The handle has guards and three-sided blades, which resemble the three-feather fletching of an arrow. This association is supported by notches cut into the blades’ “feathers”, which can be seen as an imitation of a natural feather. Notches can be interpreted either as the number of spirit-helpers of the shaman or as marks made by the shaman on the world tree on his way into the sky; the middle blade could be the mountainous landscape in the otherworld (Dyrenkova 2012: 298–299).

An iron beam goes through the handle just above the upper guard (Fig. 3). The beam is named *kipic*, which in the Khakas language means ‘bowstring’ (Potapov 1981: 127). According to Tatarintsev (2004: 160–161), this is a Turkic word and has other meanings as well: ‘a tendon, a nasal cartilage, a sinewy string, or a rope’; in the Tyva language, it carries the additional meaning ‘tense, complicated’. Textile pieces, a bell, an iron ball, and two pendant-tubules decorate the beam. The hollow pendants on the beam serve as the shelter of the shaman seeking to hide from his foes (Dyrenkova 2012: 299).



Figure 3 Part of the handle, a metal beam with pendants

Six blade-shaped iron plates hang from the shell. According to Potapov (1981: 127), the blade is called a *sabre* [кылыс, kīlis], and together with the “bowstring” it belongs to the shaman’s symbolic weaponry. Dyrenkova (2012: 288) describes the drum with the idea that although this type is frequent to the Sagai people, the Beltir and Kača peoples have it, too;<sup>7</sup> however, she observes a distinction between the handle forms of drums which belong to different ethnic groups:

The drum has a massive vertical wooden handle [*марс*, mars], its upper and lower sections have six pairs of holes and ridged stripes with the angular ornament. The middle section of the handle is significantly narrow and suitable for its girth. A metal stick [*kipic*, kiris] with metal hangings goes

7 Inventory no. 2390-1, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Russian Academy of Sciences. See Dyrenkova 2012: 289.

through the upper section of the handle[...] Drums of the Kača and Bel'tir have a different form of handle. Its middle section is wider than the upper and lower blades. The  $\Phi$ -cut allows holding.

The Sagai drum in possession of the National Museum of Khakassia has a handle with a narrow middle section,<sup>8</sup> a “bowstring” beam, textile pieces, metal bells, and pendants. The details of the drum’s inner side match Dyrenkova’s description of the Sagai drum handle; however, images on the head of this drum are significantly different from the images on the two drums brought by J.J. Sederholm, which are united by a certain similarity of motifs.

In terms of a description of the head of the Painted Drum, compared to the more intimate backside, the frontside is a “space for collective symbolism” (Pentikäinen 2010: 6). The drum has pictures in three colours: brown, black, and red. The encircling border consists of two parallel lines of brown colour and, between them, there is a triple zigzag with red dots. Dyrenkova (2012: 301) notes that the encircling type of border can be seen on some of the Bel'tir drums,<sup>9</sup> while “drums of the North Altai people and Minusinsk Turks have a semicircle”. According to Dyrenkova, the encircling line is called *mezip-kypy* [tegir-huru] or *mizip-xypy* [tigir-huru], which can be translated literally from the Khakas language as ‘sky-belt’. Some shamans see it as the Milky Way, while dots or crosses in gaps of zigzag lines represent stars. Some shamans consider this belt as a sky road of the shaman, or stairs, by means of which the shaman crosses the sky on his way to the heavenly spirits (Dyrenkova 2012: 302). It can also be a hanging bridge (Ivanov 1955: 187), a rainbow (Jakovlev 1900: 57), or a mythical wool bridge [*хыл кобиртки*, *hıl kobirtki*], which connects a shaman and his guardian (Butanaev & Moldobaev 1988: 30; Tatarintsev 2004: 215). A framed zigzag-and-dots ornamentation in brown and red divides the surface into three sections, two of which are situated in the upper part. The line which separates a drum into two parts symbolises “the middle world” between the heaven and underworld:

The drum’s surface must be seen as a picture depicting not two, but three worlds: upper – the sky, middle – the earth, lower – the underground world. Images of animals and a human are placed at suitable locations against this background. (Ivanov 1955: 185–186)

The three-sphere model of the universe is one of the foundations of the shamanic worldview (Devlet & Devlet 2005: 251). All birds, animals, and human-like figures on the membrane move towards the East.

### Upper Left Section

An upper part of the drum depicts the celestial sphere, the heavenly world (Fig. 4). As Burnakov & Tsydenova (2012: 271) explain, “A man perceives the sky as a space, close and akin to him, with which he is in constant contact. In the traditional worldview, it was characterised as an unalterable, constant, eternal.” Above all, there are several brown dots: six are clearly visible and possibly two dots have faded away. There is a red-coloured circle with a cross inside and radial rays. In 1946, Kača shaman Roman Kandarakov, who at the time was 67 years old and

<sup>8</sup> Inventory no. OF 4656/26. The drum does not have supporting written documents, as was revealed in 1976 during inventory of the museum collections (according to information given in private correspondence with Arthur Kyrzhinakov, PhD, the staff researcher of the National museum of Khakassia, on 22 February 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Inventory no. 2164-1, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Russian Academy of Sciences. Published in Dyrenkova 2012: 301.





Figure 4 The heavenly world, a part of the shaman's universe

lived in the Abakan river valley (currently the Republic of Khakassia), explained pictures on drums to the researcher L.P. Potapov. According to Kandarakov, the red celestial object in the upper left is the moon (Potapov 1981: 135). Three large black and three smaller brown birds fly towards the East. The birds on drums are interpreted as ravens, eagles, geese, sparrows, or cuckoo birds (Potanin 2007: 440; Potapov 1981: 135; Dyrenkova 2012: 302). In particular, Kandarakov told that the black raven helps the shaman in his long journey; the raven catches the soul of the sick man and traps it in the shaman's drum, so the shaman can return the soul to his patient and heal him; the sparrow's task is to mediate between the celestial objects and to establish contact with them and a shaman. A cuckoo bird is "the sacred bird of the Earth, and it 'pulls' out the grass and leaves in spring, helps a shaman to recite the names of the mountains and rivers across which he travels during the ritual, as he cannot follow the long road in unknown places without it" (Potapov 1981:135).

Two illustrations of human-like figures with animals are red-coloured. One depicts a horse-back archer, whose bow is loaded with an arrow. The archer holds reins and has a semicircle object on the back, as well as perhaps headwear. The horse is pictured with four legs, a fine tail, and a bridle. In the chapter "Minusinsk Tatars" in *Among the Turkic Peoples*, Katanov (1893: 540) lists images on the shaman drums and their meanings; for instance, a red man riding a red horse would be a guardian of chestnut horses, who also cures head and eye diseases. Potapov's interlocutor explained that "the man with the chestnut horse is the shaman's body-guard (in red colour), and if the shaman is attacked (during the ritual) by another shaman, whom he meets 'en route', this bodyguard will protect the shaman" (Potapov 1981: 135).

Another illustration consists of a man with headwear and a long staff. Djakonova (1981: 151) mentions that the staff has magic properties and that it is "one of the earliest cult attributes of shamans known to Turkic-Mongolic peoples, to Evenks and to Kets. According to numerous evidences, obtaining it has preceded receiving other shamanic attributes: a drumstick, drum, or costume." The man on the drum stands behind an animal, which, considering the proportions

of the figures, could be a horse; however, not being so properly drawn, it is different from the bridled horse of the archer described earlier.

### Upper Right Section

One of the celestial objects – perhaps it is the sun – stands away from the others, separated by dots. It is a circle with lines inside, and its lower rays are longer than its upper ones. Three other celestial objects are placed in the East. In the record of the shaman Kandarakov, the three stars on the drums' upper section are named *Ûс муӱах* [Ûs miigah], which means 'Three Does', the name of three stars in the Orion constellation (Potapov 1981: 135). Other ethnic groups in the Altai-Sayan area also called Orion the Three Does, among them the Altai, Tuva-Uriankh, Buryat, Darkhat, and Dörbet (Potanin 2007: 480).

There is a Khakas story of the hunter Köketei, who had a grey horse and a hound named Khubai-Khus, the fastest being in the world, born from the egg of a scoter duck. Once Köketei was chasing three does, but in order to help them the Master of the Lake dragged Khubai-Khus to the lake bottom. Furious, Köketei cursed all the gods, and as punishment for such sacrilege he was turned into the star Sirius (*Көкетеӱ чылтыс* [Köketei čiltis] in Khakas language) and doomed to the eternal chase of the does, which found their place in the constellation of Orion. Its third brightest star, Bellatrix, is believed to be Köketei's arrow (Butanaev 1975: 236–237). A similar myth connecting Orion with a hunter chasing a doe also exists among the Tyva people: "As an offering to this constellation, Tyva hunters before the hunt had fed the star which symbolises the legendary hunter's arrow" (Devlet 2008: 320). The deer painted in red – it is female because it does not have antlers – has found a shelter under the constellation on the drumhead.

There are two other animals: a black one with a prominent mane and long bushy tail and a brown one with indistinct features; both can be interpreted as horses. Two brown-coloured trees grow from the line which separates the heavenly world from the lower part of the drum. Branches of one tree grow up, while the other's branches are turned down. Dyrenkova (2012: 306) wrote that pictures of two "birches rich of golden leaves" with roots in the underworld and tops in the heavens are compulsory for drums. The Kača shaman Kandarakov described the tree on drums as *бай казынг* [bai kazıng], 'the sacred birch'. The Spirit-Master of the Mountain would reveal to Kandarakov the nature of his patient's sickness after looking at the tree (Potapov 1981: 135). Katanov (1893: 540) added, "The shaman rests in the shadow of two birches during his exhausting flight in the heavenly world."

### Lower Part of the Drum

There is the sacred tree, only in a black colour, in the lower part of the drumhead. Black is the dominant colour of the lower part, although there are some figures in brown and one in red. The shaman, drawn in brown, leads the procession with a drum, depicted as a circle with a cross inside,<sup>10</sup> and a drumstick in his hands. He wears a shamanic outfit of a fluttery coat and headdress. The same headdresses are worn by all the other human figures: a man in black with a staff, seven brown figures (Fig. 5), and nine black ones. The figures in both groups are holding hands and their movements are expressive. Circular items, held at their waists, look

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<sup>10</sup> The idea of identifying as drums the circular objects on the waists of figures was suggested by archaeologist Marja Ahola (University of Helsinki) on 30 August 2016, during the summer school for doctoral students.

like drums. Additionally, the groups' leading figures hold staves. The drum described above from the collection of the Glinka National Museum Consortium of Musical Culture has similar anthropomorphic figures in the lower part: nine black and seven brown forms, and one black figure with a staff is situated between two different-coloured groups. Drum 2177 in the collection of the Minusinsk Martyanov Museum, identified as Kača in origin, has an even number of black and brown figures (seven of each).



Figure 5 Seven Yellow Maidens, daughters of the Master of Karatag mountain

Sources agree on the identity of these anthropomorphs: “seven yellow maidens, daughters of the Mountain Master, protector of the brown horses” (Katanov 1893: 540); “seven yellow girls are drawn next to each other. They come to the shaman from the Mountain Master” (Dyrenkova 2012: 304). Potapov’s informant Roman Kandarakov told:

The Master of the Karatag mountain had nine sons and seven daughters whose responsibility was to control shamans, their work and lifespan. A black fir Kara-syby grew on Karatag and brands of all living shamans were on that fir; if the shaman was sick or weak his brand would start to fade, and then the children of Karatag would find him a replacement. (Potapov 1981: 128)

Further in the text, Potapov (1981: 129) describes the seven-day initiation process of the new shaman, making his outfit, and attributes among the Kača people:

The significant moment of the ritual, specific to the Kača, was the choice of assistants for the shaman during the ritual: nine young men and seven girls, who symbolised the sons and daughters of the future shaman, similar to the children of the Master of Karatag.

The nine men and seven girls in Katanov’s description are related to the number of black and brown figures on the drumhead. The Master of the Mountain and his sons and daughters appear frequently in the folklore of the Altai-Sayan peoples. The functions and traits of relationships of non-humans and humans are similar in the cosmologies of various groups. Consider, for instance, the Tyva story about the hunter who charmed with his play on the *igil*, a traditional

music instrument, the Master of the Tangdy, who was a beautiful young woman; she had seven brothers who wore red coats and rode chestnut horses (Arapchor 1995: 23).

A black anthropomorphic figure with a staff, surrounded by animal-like figures, can be identified as “кара талај кан олы [kara talai kan oli] – ‘the son of the black sea’s khan’, he is considered to be a water spirit, a guardian of the hunt accompanied by its dogs” (Dyrenkova 2012: 303). The figure in black leads a group of black zoomorphic figures with brown fish among them. The fish can be *кер палык* [ker palik], or ‘bay fish’. “This spirit-assistant is specially given to the shaman by the Master of Water and helps the shaman when an evil spirit hides under the ground or water” (Dyrenkova 2012: 303–304). The *кер палык* [ker palik] is also interpreted as “a gigantic monster who lives on the sea bottom and helps shamans to treat abscesses” (Ivanov 1955: 213).

There are a variety of zoomorphic figures in the lower section. Nine black figures are identified as

the nine black dogs who catch evil spirits and take them away from people, and a black bear guided the yurt’s door and was a friend of the spirit of fire; they had one language, because both of them protected the yurt. [...] *Пага* [paga] – a frog (black) – served the Master of the Lake and with his help treated ‘bad diseases’. (Potapov 1981: 135)

Katanov (1893: 540) wrote that the guardian of palomino horses was visualised as a snake or a frog and the guardian of bay horses as a pike. He listed the “medical specifications” of other figures: “the big fish, healing malignant abscesses, the pike cures chest diseases, the snake cures leg problems, the deer is the guardian of the shaman’s horse. [...] lizards cure, like a pike, chest diseases.”

The snake, the frog, the lizard, and the bear – all in black – are on the bottom of the drum’s surface.<sup>11</sup> A brown-coloured tailless figure with a compact body and prominent ears could be a hare. Katanov (1893: 540) noted that a Pjurjut clan of the Kača worshiped a hare as their guardian. Another brown-coloured animal – with shovel-shaped, or palmate, antlers – is situated above the “hare”. Due to the antlers’ shape, the creature can be identified as either a deer or a moose. The only red figure in the lower part of the drum could be a fox. It was not possible to identify one zoomorphic figure which follows the black man with a staff in the lower part of the drum. The unidentified zoomorph has a long body, somewhat short legs, a bushy tail, and pricked-up ears.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE BROKEN DRUM

Form: irregular circle

Height: 58.5 cm

Width of the widest section: 57.5 cm

Depth of the drum shell: 11.5 cm

The frame is in the shape of an irregular circle (Fig. 6). Two lines of willow stem hoops tie up the frame under the hide. They are visible because a hide membrane on the shell top is rugged. On the top, there is a red leather hanging loop, “the girl’s braid” (Prokofieva 1961: 444). The hide is stretched over the wooden frame, while the thin line, bending inward, is glued to the shell. The edge is laced along the perimeter with rough yarn. Additionally, there are two lines of yarn stitches on the bottom of the shell.

<sup>11</sup> The image looks like a frog (see Fig. 1), but its size is large compared to other beings depicted next to it; the same image could be interpreted also as a lying bear or a wolverine.



Figure 6 Broken Drum, drumhead



Figure 7 Broken Drum, backside

The handle consists of three parts: upper and rear blades and, in the middle section, an  $\Phi$ -grip with two pommels (Fig. 7). Each blade has a carved rhombic pattern, and two wings have notches and holes. Their numbers are different. The upper blade has 12 holes: six per wing. The rear blade has eight holes: four per wing. This type of handle falls into the description given by Dyrenkova (2012: 290): “the Shor people name the drum’s handle and master as *ала көстүг барс* [*ala köstüg ala bars*] – a lion with mottled eyes; the Sagai *алты көстүг ала марсы* [*ala köstüg ala marsı*], the mottled lion with six [equal to the quantity of holes on the upper blade] eyes”. Sample illustrations of the Sayan-Yenisei variety of the South Siberian type of drums given by Prokofieva (1961: 478) include the Kača drum with a similar  $\Phi$ -grip. Nevertheless, the Broken Drum does not have a metal beam [*кiрiс*, *kiris*] – a detail which is present on other drums marked as Khakas in the existing research and available museum collections: the double-knuckle Bel’tir and  $\Phi$ -gripped Kača drums (Prokofieva 1961: 470); the  $\Phi$ -gripped Kača drum described by Potapov (1981: 126); the  $\Phi$ -gripped Khakas drum in the collection of the Glinka National Consortium Museum of Musical Culture in Moscow;<sup>12</sup> and the double-knuckle drum, dated to the nineteenth century and brought from Khakassia (and affiliated with the Black Tatars), in the collection of the Ethnography Museum in Stockholm.<sup>13</sup>

### Patched and Broken

The first things to catch the eye are the cut and patches on the membrane. A small oval and large triangular-shaped patches are neatly made of thin hide pieces; they are glued to the membrane, overlapping pictures. Because of the drum’s connection with the shaman’s well-being and life, use of a patched drum is rare but not exceptional. One of the illustrations in Prokofieva’s article is a photograph of a Kača shamaness holding a drum with a long patch.<sup>14</sup> Dyrenkova (2012: 313) wrote that the Shor and Sagai shamans, if “the spirits accept”, would change the skin on the drum every three to five years. Otherwise, the membrane was patched by sewing or gluing on a hide piece.

It was a common practice among the peoples of the Altai-Sayan region to destroy the drum of a deceased shaman to release any spirits that inhabited it: “Immediately after the shaman passed away, his drum had to be cut by a knife” (Potapov 1969: 384). Potapov (1949: 199) continues: “A man had to beat a drum with a drumstick over the grave of the deceased shaman with an intense power, so the drum was broken.” And Dyrenkova (2012: 315) confirms this as a wider practice: “Among the Bel’tir, the invited shaman destroys the drum and a drumstick of the deceased shaman and rips off textile pieces on the drum, while saying: Death came to him, and he died.”

Zigzags with dots comprise the framing circular image, and lines of zigzags with dots divide the drumhead into three parts. This division is similar to the previous drum: two parallel lines go along the perimeter, except for a dotted zigzag, which on this drum is not triple but singular.

The colour design differs from the first drum. The upper circumferential line, zigzag, and dots are red. The inner circumference is light brown, being the same with a composition dividing the upper part of the membrane into two.

12 The drum with inventory no. KP-3349/579 is in the electronic catalogue of the Glinka National Consortium Museum of Musical Culture, Moscow, Russia. <89.175.96.254/kng/item/item.jsf?id=109>, accessed 16 Aug. 2016.

13 The drum with inventory no. 1892.03.0354.A is in the electronic collection of the museum. Its height is 82 cm, width 77 cm, and depth 15 cm. <collections.smvk.se/carlotta-em/web/object/1027761>, accessed 15 Sept. 2016.

14 Inventory no. 5061-6, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Russian Academy of Sciences. See Prokofieva 1961: 443 and, for a sketch of the front surface with images, Ivanov 1955: 179.

Although the paint has faded, it is still possible to recognise a few images. In the top left, there are two solar symbols, a bird, and a man on a horse. The equestrian holds long reins in one hand and a circular object in the other. In the top right, there is a tree with branches turned upward and a bird at its top. A black figure next to the tree is a bird, whose prominent talons allow it to be identified as an eagle or another bird of prey. A similar, better preserved image of two black birds with emphasised talons is found on a drum in a collection of the Glinka Museum in Moscow. It is from Khakassia and dated to the nineteenth century, although its author is unknown; its diameter is 63 cm and the depth of the shell is 12.8 cm.

In the lower half of the drum, on the right, there are brown figures in headdresses, holding hands. Part of the picture is under patches, leaving visible only four complete figures. One figure can be seen only partially. On the left side, there are indistinct images in black.

## DRUMSTICKS

Currently both sets of drumsticks are kept together with the Broken Drum; therefore, it is impossible to say which set was originally with which particular drum. The drumsticks' name in the Khakas language is *orba*, which is common among the Turkic-speaking peoples of the Altai-Sayan region (Prokofieva 1961: 443–450).

Drumstick 1: length 24 cm

The drumstick is carved from one piece of light-coloured wood and consists of two parts: a cylindrical handle and an elliptical head (Figs. 8 & 9). It is plain, except for a wavy line which goes from the handle to the pointed end of the head. The red leather loop goes through a hole drilled in the handle. A piece of textile and a thin rope are connected to the loop. The same type of red leather is used as a loop for the Broken Drum, but this detail does not prove that the drumstick accompanied the Broken Drum.



Figure 8 Drumstick 1, front



Figure 9 Drumstick 1, back

Drumstick 2: length 25 cm

This drumstick is also carved from one piece of wood and consists of two parts: a handle and a head (Figs. 10 & 11). The main colour is dark brown with a visible light-coloured body under the dark surface. The head's front is carved so that the surface consists of two angular parts. Triangular lines are carved and coloured with white paint, and the space between them has an interchange of red and green colours. A metal ring is inserted into the handle's end. Another metal ring, connected to the first one, includes a bundle of various textile pieces.



Figure 10 Drumstick 2, front





Figure 11 Drumstick 2, back

## SUMMARY

The comparative method is not sufficient to determine the drums' ethnic affiliation with absolute certainty, because the majority of drums in the museum collections do not have firsthand interpretations given by those who built and used them. Nor are particular meanings assigned to each detail and image. Nevertheless, study of the features of Sederholm's drums and a comparison with other drums from the same area and timeframe (the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) allows a determination of their most possible provenance. The following features of the drums were studied and compared: the form and size of the shell, the connection of the drumhead to the shell, handles, bordering lines and a variety of pictures on the drumheads, and their partitioning into sectors. Both of Sederholm's drums are in the form of an irregular circle, which is typical of different Khakas drums belonging to the Kača, Sagai, and Bel'tir. While a handle with a vertical bar and narrow middle section as a grip (as in the Painted Drum) can be found among all three of these groups, the  $\Phi$ -grip (as in the Broken Drum) is characteristic of Kača and Bel'tir drums. Encircling bordering lines can be seen on Kača and Bel'tir drums (Dyrenkova 2012: 301), while a partitioning of the drumhead into three sectors is specific to Kača drums, although Ivanov (1955: 208) suggests that a drum with an encircling border and three sectors on the surface can be of either Sagai or Kača origin.<sup>15</sup>

It seems appropriate to suggest that the two drums studied here have the same ethnic affiliation because they share a number of common features: a similar way of connecting the drumheads to the shell (a hide is stitched to the shell); three sectors and an encircling border on the drumhead (as Kača and Bel'tir drums); and their approximate size. The height and width of the Painted Drum and the Broken Drum are 60 and 58.5 cm and 58.5 and 57.5 cm, respectively,

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15 Drum no. 910 in Savenkov's archive, Minusinsk Martyanov Museum (Ivanov 1955: 208).

while the depth of the shells are 12–14 cm (the Painted Drum) and 11.5 cm (the Broken Drum). The size of Sederholm's drums are close to the size of several Kača drums in a collection of the Minusinsk Martyanov Museum.

Some of the images on the drumheads – two groups of anthropomorphic figures in black and brown colours, horseback anthropomorphs, birds, and trees – fit the description of the Kača drum given by the shaman Roman Kandarakov (Potapov 1981: 129). All features serve as identifiers, which together are strong enough to suggest that the drums obtained by Sederholm in Siberia in 1917 have a Khakas origin and, most probably, originally belonged to the Kača people.

The depiction of the shamanic universe on the drums is fascinating, but equally interesting are the historic processes through which the expedition acquired the drums and how the drums circulated from shamanic ritual practice into archives. The evidence of shaman drums – as well as their paths of acquisition – speaks to problems of power and knowledge exchange in historic encounters with indigenous peoples of Imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet Inner Asia. This paper is one of the ways to repatriate indigenous knowledge embodied in the studied drums back to the place and people of their origin.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank for their help in completing this article the grandchildren of J.J. Sederholm, Barbro Scheinin and Tom Sederholm, as well as Tom's wife Harriet. I express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers of *Studia Orientalia Electronica* for their helpful advice and also to Carl-Johan Lindén from Finland, Vera Chernysheva and Timophei Kliuchnikov of the Minusinsk Martyanov Museum, Andrei Gotlib and Arthur Kyrzhinakov of the Khakassia National Museum, Dmitry Funk of the Moscow State University, and my research partner Robert O. Beahrs.

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