

Mentality of Mongolian herders

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I. Introduction

Mongolian country and Mongolian livelihood cannot be imagined without cattle, herders, and rural areas. These are unified as complex, interacted to each other, and exist in undivided co-existence in order to create a complex comprehension of animal husbandry. Animal husbandry has existed in Mongolia from generation to generations, still exists as an initial and main type of labor occupation. The nomadic Mongolian herders has created

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this basic dominating economy, get engaged in, and feed it; therefore, Mongolian herders are the real owner of nomadic culture and civilization, the real image, creator, and container of the culture. It is impossible to separate Mongolian person from his homeland used to live in and from the precious livestock.

Mongolian herders that live in a nomadic way in the outstanding home country of wild steppe, desert land, and mountainous area combination, where it is available to move any time throughout the year to seek for the freshest of the pasture and grass, the best of drinking water, and the nicest of the nature due to its nomadic livelihood, in the changeable climatic conditions of -40 - +40 degrees must be healthy, strong, generous, and smart that they appreciate and protect the Mongolian cattle and to receive the favor of cattle.

From different evidence, historical and archeological facts, ethnological and other research results, you can see the history of the millennium and the traditions and inheritance of different periods created and brought by Mongolian herders. Anyway, we have a clear inevitable evidence that Mongolians have inherited the herder nomadic way of life herding its cattle and receiving their favor for at least 10 centuries.

Herders are **real genuine owners of 5 types of livestock** that has been a way of livelihood for Mongolian people up to now.

Only herders have permanent contacts with herders and nature,

make permanent observations, have researched thoroughly, and handle their attitudes. The mind of herders contains rich experiences of animal husbandry and cattle rearing, observation and comparison, and unfinished reserves of smart mentality that has been inherited from generation to generation² |.

Mongolian herders are specialized persons with various knowledge, skills, and experiences of different fields. It is not an empty appraisal that herders are a holder of thousands of professions³ |. It is also a profession that works busy all the days and nights without any pauses and vacations. Within the framework of the herder's occupation, there are many comprehensions, understanding, and notions such as science to live on animal husbandry, psychology to contact and attitude to cattle, cattle related traditions and customs, teachings, phrases about cattle, symbolism and restrictions related to cattle. It is necessary to conduct a specialized research and studies on the meaningful teaching of smart herders, to promote and advertise, and to inherit to the next generations. Mongolian herders have a nomadic way of life that is suitable for 4 seasons of the year and boast with "professor" level

2 | The breeder has a panoramic mindset. When a cattle breeder grazes a herd, travels to the highest elevation of this area, then dismounts from a horse, lights a cigarette, looks around him and contemplates the beautiful nature of his native land, he often sits, engulfed in deep thoughts about the laws of the Universe and the essence of human life. The deep philosophical thinking of a Mongolian person is largely determined by this everyday experience

3 | This famous expression has been passed on since ancient times

knowledge on nature and climate, pasture and grass, water and feeds, animal diseases and damages, behavior and attitude, fertility and outcomes of their cattle.

Dr., Prof. Dashnyam L., an honored worker of Mongolian Sciences, has determined the features and general trends of Mongolian herders' mentality as follows: "Mongolian person has a unique feature of mentality to keep items in reality and to find himself rich and get satisfied with such an existence. They used to be calm and peaceful if their cattle and horses were around their dwelling; however, now their tendency has changed to see their cattle as products. They imagine the amount of milk to obtain from their cows, the cashmere and wool to comb from their small cattle, and the price of their fast horses etc."⁴ | It is true in the real life.

II. Various characteristics and roles of Mongolian herders

Dear Mongolian herders,

Your memory, IQ, works and experiences, points of view, actions and will, interests and demands, livelihood and living environment completely must be in the concentration of state and governmental

4 | About this see. L.Dashnyam To his younger siblings in the world UB., 2009

policies in order to receive various assistances and supports as you are:

- **Direct producers** as you are legal owners, advocates, bearers, herders, and raisers for your cattle;
- **Various service providers** to social members, suppliers of own demands and consumptions, and creators of livelihood and other sources as you process cattle leather, wool and cashmere, milk, and other outcomes;
- *A skillful driver* that teaches your cattle for transportation, uses skillfully for mount and cart, *a reliable business partner* that supplies ram materials of animal origin to the necessary places and market, and **a shorthand businessman** that sells and exchanges extra products with items necessary for their life;
- **A tailor and knitter** that sews and makes yurt roof and wall felt, shades, carpets, laces and cords, own dwelling, hats, shoes, dresses, infant cradle and diapers, cattle undergarment and cloth, rope and tethering;
- **A designer** that repairs, fixes, updates, and uses Mongolian Ger-dwelling that is a top sample of nomadic shelter, a unique architectural solution distinguished by the many years' life and herders' life experiences and experiments on basis of their personal reserves and opportunities; **a sculptor** that enhances, updates, and develops furniture, outside utensils, equipment, and

other appliances of their shelter – Mongolian Ger;

- **A special sportsman** that trains untrained horses at their suitable age through unique methodology to use for riding and loading, catches untrained horses with ropes and lasso, trains and stands on the back of horses, have permanent contacts and touches with cattle through strengthening and fixing his body and fits;
- **Real Mongolian image maker, Mongolian culture and inheritance reserving person, and Mongolian language protector** are rural herders. There are many proverbs, phrases, terms and comprehensions that is related and derived from cattle and animal husbandry in connection with the feeling and mentality of herders. Researchers have once mentioned that only colors and images of horses can be named, noted, and identified with 500 words while big cattle – with over 200 words. It is very interesting, important, prideful, and outstanding of one side and it is a great pity that such traditional words and expressions, comprehensions and terms are missed and forgotten, from other side. It is very respectful and prideful that Mongolian state-prized, national literature and honored art worker Dogmid B. has once appraised that “we have composed several volumes of encyclopedia on only words and expressions related to cattle”, worried and concerned about “distancing and separating from the unique big culture and inheritance” related to herders and cattle.

- **Smart creator and outstanding art worker**, who appraises, loves, and protects cattle, composes and inherits thousands of proverbs, riddles, phrases, saves in the different history, legends, stories, poems, and creature, glorifies in different appraisals, titles, and symbolic words and expressions, sang and played music for days and hours;
- Meteorologist that forecasts and determines weather conditions on basis of personal observations on the sky and land conditions, movements of the sun, moon, and stars, daily conditions, winds, seasonal conditions, land and grass fertility, animals' movements and conditions, attitudes and behavior of cattle;
- A professional psychologist that gives a proper name to cattle in accordance with the color, image, calls their cattle with their proper name in cute ways, mutually understands each other, restores proper relations between calf or baby came and their mother that rejected their youngsters through melody of horse-headed fiddle through touching their heart, making them cry and knows the restrictions related to cattle;
- **Nature protector** that has very close attitudes and relations with nature and environment, get adapted with the nature and environment during the movements and travel throughout the year in any seasons, loves, protects, and smartly uses natural resources and treasures in accordance with strict traditions and customs,

restrictions and rules, obeys national traditions and customs, protects water, river, and springs, trees and bushes, natural unique places and sightseeing through an ethical procedure named “sin”, protects the land and soil through uprising the front of their boots and sticking leather in the sole of their boots;

- **Distributor of modern news**, memories, ideas, points of view, life experiences, intellectual culture through recognition, understanding of interlocutor during the conversation and chatting, exchanging with snuffboxes with others in the pasture, and mediation and thinking, observation of different actions, phenomena while herding the cattle in the open nature; therefore, ... your memory, work and experiences, points of view, actions, wills and desires, demands and needs, livelihood and environment must be completely under the attention of the state and governmental policies in order to receive various assistances and supports⁵ |.

III. Mentality of the Mongolian herders

Livestock has too enormous efficiency, deeds and favor, results, and

5 | Interest in the study of mentality has recently grown, a dissertation on the topic of Vladimir I. (2013) was defended *Ertөтсийг үзэхийг төлөвшүүлэхэд mentalitetийн гүйцэтгэл үүрэг*. Doctorin зэрэг горилсон ботел. UB., 2013

outcomes. A person engaged in animal husbandry and a herder rearing his cattle can be healthy, wealthy, and peaceful both physically and physiologically, can play a better life and earn a wonderful fortune. According to Mongolian state-prized, national literature and honored art worker Dogmid B., “a child risen near the cattle recognizes and understands the world earlier”, “becomes kind and generous”, loves, protects, honors, and has proper attitudes to cattle, and receives favors of cattle.

Due to droughts and dzuds (which are aggravated by heavy snowfall and extreme cold), herders have to move hundreds of kilometers away, choosing a suitable location. According to Graivoronsky V.V., a well-known Mongolian researcher, “One of the peculiarities of Mongolian herders, for example, is that, unlike farmers, they do not sit still⁶¹. It is the constant movement and constant changes in living conditions that form the basis of herder labor. “Only through mobility did Mongolians living in remote geographical areas have the

61 | The famous Mongolian scholar, Soviet-Russian scientist Graivoronskiy V.V., who worked in Mongolia for many years, investigating the historical transition of the nomadic way of life to settled life, noted that the cattle breeder's family migrated 700-800 km a year. By the way, here, in Mongolia, at one time they said that V. Graivoronsky visited all the families of a Mongolian cattle-breeder. Now the Deputy Chairman of the Russian Society of Mongolian Studies, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Head. Sector of Mongolia of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the author of more than 130 scientific papers.

opportunity to easily meet people from the West, the East, trade, and expand their horizons."⁷ |

Among social groups, herders have better living standard, leading life quality, and better opportunity to rise in future in accordance with different surveys, statistics, and evidence. Herders do not play delicate life; however, their consumption is adequate. I have never heard about herders of lower living standard with poor life. Around one year ago, I heard appraisals and boasts of cattle favors and fertility from the conversation of an average herder guy with average annual income of over 60 million tugrik. I never forget his conversation. The only concern and real statistics that really worry me is that the number of cattle has risen twice for the last 25 years; however, the number of herders has reduced twice in opposite.

Mongolian herders should be proud of the fact that they have developed a way of life that is environmentally friendly and must introduce/promote it to the world as one of the contributions to human civilization and to the world. We hope our article shall be informative and help people to receive more understanding.

7 | Kimura Ayako (2008) Mongolian society in the last decade of the twentieth century. Ulaanbaatar. (In Mong.).

IV. Conclusion

The wisdom of our ancestors, the minds and methods of Mongolian herders are invaluable heritages to us like the sunshine from afar behind a mountain before dawn and sunrise.

Over time, the processes of life, such as raising children, herding livestock, benefiting from them, and moving around from one place to other, the harsh natural conditions and environment made Mongolians adaptable, fast, resilient, and taught the ability to make independent decisions.

As Mongolians move into a sedentary way of life and are only in the second and third generations, the nomadic mindset can be found at every step. Sedentary value time, while nomads value space.

As a nomadic nation, herders have always lived in harmony and adapted to changing environmental conditions by seeking solutions from nature itself. Then, there is the tradition of recognizing various natural phenomena and tones of time through observation and managing of their lives.

The herder destiny of nomadic Mongolians must be the name card, national pride of Mongolian people as the respect to herders, honoring attitude to herders should be the saint rule of Mongolian people.

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Abstract

Mongolia is a country of livestock. Herds men play special roles in Mongolian social life. Mongolian herds men have great knowledge, skills and experiences. An accident that they are called. "Masters of a thousand professions". The herds men's job is buzy and hard. This article is about the Mongolian herd men's multiple senses and abilities.

The article formulates and examines the main features, characteristic features of the Mongolian national mentality, thinking and behavior of the Mongolian herders, their relationship with geographical, climatic, geopolitical, historical and cultural factors, and emphasized the features and abilities of these herders.

Keywords national character, mentality, tradition, value, mobility