

Report on NY/DC Informational Trip

Carol Hiltner · January 16-29, 2007

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Trip Objectives

- 1) Support global distribution of traditional Altai music.
- 2) Identify and meet with organizations and individuals with potential to offer resources for critical development needs of Altai Republic.
- 3) Further existing relationships.

Background

In November in Altai, I was introduced by **Ezher Tatin** to **Urmat Yntaev**, leader of the musical ensemble **Altai Kai**, whose music is currently available in the US at www.OtisMountainPress.com/titles/titles-altai.html. Ezher said the Urmat planned to participate in a “performers’ showcase” conference in NY in the latter part of January, and that he, Ezher, planned to accompany him to translate and support Urmat’s possible contract negotiations. Ezher is our official liaison person with the Altai Republic government, so I suggested that I could join them in NY, provide any needed assistance, and arrange meetings for us with organizations in NY and DC that could potentially assist in the development of Altai.



Altai throat-singer Urmat Yntaev being interviewed by Sofiya Blank for Radio Nadezhda, an American national cable channel in Russian language.

At the last minute, Ezher couldn’t come, but fortunately Urmat’s cousin **Synaru Kuyukova** was in NY studying English and was able to support Urmat, while I went ahead with the anticipated meetings.

At one point, I purchased several Altai Kai CDs from Urmat, and he donated quite a few more. He is actively looking for people to sell the CDs, so this is a potential fund-raising opportunity.

Actions:

1. Put link for Altai Kai on Altai Mir University website; strategically distribute CDs

2. E-mail Urmat and Ezher, inviting them to “Education for World Citizens” Congress near Chelyabinsk in June.

Wednesday, 17Jan07

Leonard Benardo and **Megan Buskey**, the “Russia office” at **Soros Foundation “Open Society Institute,”** were out of town during my whole visit.

Action:

Contact them by phone during 1st week of February

Thursday, 18Jan07

Urmat and I spent the day visiting the Statue of Liberty, followed by an interview of both of us by **Sofiya Blank** on **Radio Nadezhda (Hope)**, a national Russian-language cable radio station. **Larisa Bartone-Margoshova** translated.



Carol Hiltner with the Statue of Liberty

Actions:

1. Contact Larisa regarding translation
2. Contact **Lana Yenikova**, principal of Radio Nadezhda, regarding possible further interviews.

Afterward, we met with ethnomusicologist and curatorial consultant **Thomas Miller**, who is working with Altai Mir University on the project to digitize old tape recordings of throat-singers. Our next step in this project is still to get a clearer idea of exactly what is there and what the Altai people want done with it, so that a plan can be formulated. However, Urmat, who is himself a throat-singer, explained that spiritual power has three components: *kan*—genetic lineage; *kam*—shamanism; and *kai*—throat-singing. Altai culture was seriously repressed during Stalinist times—that 500 shamans were summoned to Novosibirsk in the '30s and only a handful returned. The Altai culture is just beginning to recover. Urmat had heard about the recordings, which he understood were recorded by some of the last great throat-singers, who transmitted the Altai oral history through direct connection to Spirit rather than through memorization. Urmat said that Russian ethnographers were interested in the '40s, and scientific monographs on the subject by **Arkhan** were published in Russian.

Actions:

1. Ask Polina Jarryd to research Arkhan
2. Continue efforts to access tapes

Friday, 19Jan07

I flew up to Vermont to meet with **Jennifer Banks**, Development Director for **Project Harmony**, which has put computer centers in several cities in Russia. I was hoping to initiate something for Altai. I provided them info about Global Technology Academy—the Seattle organization in which high school students refurbish computers and deliver them around the world. Jennifer promised to pass this info on to **Thomas Hill**, Project Harmony’s country director in Moscow, with whom I can meet next time I pass through. Jennifer also recommended that we ask UNDP for their strategic plan for Altai, to see how our work can interface with that.

Actions:

1. Contact Thomas Hill re working with us in Altai
2. Ask UNDP in Moscow for their strategic plan for Altai.

I contacted **Phyllis Arata-Meyers**, Executive Director for **Altai Conservancy**, who is also in Vermont. We weren't able to meet, however, but agreed to follow up by phone.

Action: Telephone Phyllis to follow up regarding collaboration.

Monday, 22Jan07

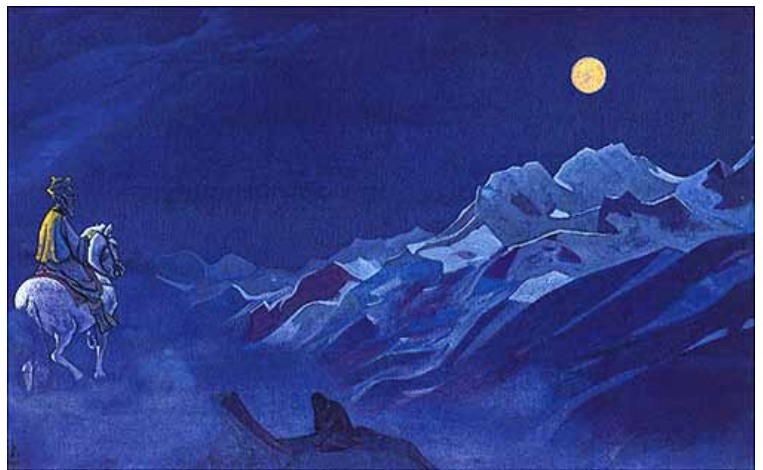
I spoke with **Sam Cook**, of **UN PeaceWomen Project**, which monitors and works toward rapid and full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. Sam says they are a clearinghouse for information. The mechanism is that information about women's peace initiatives is submitted to them, and they post for purposes of policy making regarding Resolution 1325.

Action:

Submit info about Altai Mir University and related activities and needs, in their format, for posting on their website. (1325news@peacewomen.org)

Tuesday, 23Jan07

I had a great meeting with **Daniel Entin**, Director of the NY **Roerich Museum**, and **Aida Tulskeya**. I was glad to finally see the wonderful paintings there. Daniel gave us contact info for **Barbara Valocore**, a possible funder who is friend of the museum; **Michael Roach**, who has computerized Tibetan texts; and **Olga Olkhovaya**, head of the Novosibirsk Roerich Society. He also mentioned **Bill Pfeiffer** and **Olga Kharatidi**. Daniel also donated, on behalf of the museum, 100 "banner of peace" pins.



Oiroi—Messenger of the White Burkhan
by Nicholas Roerich, 1925
(White Burkhanism is the religion of the Altai people)

Actions:

Contact Barbara, Michael, Olga, and Olga.

Wednesday, 24Jan07

I spoke with **Kate Dobson** at **UN Foundation** in DC, who said that the UN Foundation is not actively working in Russia, except for the Kamchatka area, at this time. Further, the UN Foundation works only with governments. She sent me on to **Margaret Hayward** at **Counterpart International**. Margaret arranged a meeting for me with their president, **Lelei Lelaulu** (see Monday, 29Jan07)

Rene Wadlow introduced me by e-mail to **Luc Roulet**, Consultant, Leadership and Development; Public Sector Governance at **World Bank**. We had a great meeting of minds. However, Luc is shortly headed to Madagascar to work there, so he won't be in a position to work with Altai directly. However, he sent me contact URLs containing program information and contact info for **World Bank Leadership Capacity Development Program (Michelle de Nevers)**, and **World Bank Global Development Learning Network (Misha Bunchuk in**

Moscow), which are very much of interest. I invited him to the Global Leadership Forum in May in Novosibirsk, and further, to visit Altai.

Actions:

Follow up with Michelle de Nevers and Misha Bunchuk

Friday, 26Jan07

Jason Kelleher at **Academy for Educational Development** was unable to meet because of some pressing time-commitments. Further, USAID announced that the RFP on which we were working was closed early (as of December 31st). So we will continue to prepare our materials to be ready for the next round, which will probably be announced in June 2007.

Action:

Keep in touch with Jason.

Saturday, 27Jan07

I met **Sarah Harder**, **Tom Bertrand**, and NPF Board Member **Cathy Sultan** at the **National Peace Foundation** headquarters, and we went out onto the Mall where a big peace rally was underway—discussing collaborative possibilities as we went. Later, we met with **Joan Kuriansky** for further discussions. I sent them a written report (available by request) on the various collaborative efforts we are getting underway:



Peace march on the Mall, 27Jan07

- § Open World “emerging leaders” exchange programs between Altai and Alaska on land registration and communication infrastructure;
- § the Mustang project;
- § the “feminine aspect of citizen diplomacy” book;
- § the peace quilt and 2010 10th anniversary of Women’s Summit.

Action:

Follow up on report action items

In the evening, I chatted on the phone with **Jerry Greenberg**, Chairman/Co-Founder of **World Development Endowment Foundation** about his exciting plans to create a World Peace University as part of a permanent “World’s Fair” for future world leaders at Governors Island, NY—teaching ethics and life-long learning. He is a proponent of Roerich’s “Banner of Peace.”

Action:

Track his progress for possible future collaboration.

Monday, 29Jan07

I met with **Lelei Lelaulu**, president of **Counterpart International**, and his staff member **Altinay Kuchukeeva** (Program Officer, Civil Society Division) who has been working in Kazakhstan. Lelei confirmed that USAID funding in the region is winding down, but that in

nearby Kazakhstan, Counterpart International has well-trained staff and Russian-language curricula about many of the issues facing Altai (**Jamila Asanova**, Exec. Dir., **Civil Society Development Association ARGO**). They also suggested that I contact **Galina Negrustuyeva** at the **Partner Foundation**, Russia, and **Preeti Shroff-Mehta**, Director, Civil Society and Social Change; **World Learning for International Development**.

Lelei suggested several great strategies:

1. At the Russian Federal level (ministries such as Indigenous Affairs, Education, Autonomous Regions, Rural Development), reasons to support Altai:
 - a. Safety of the million tourists
 - b. To minimize “footprint” of tourists
 - c. This is the UN Decade of Indigenous Peoples; and Russia has signed on to this Resolution.
 - d. Develop fraternal relations with Kazakhstan
2. UNESCO has a sustainable tourism program; also see about environmental protection
3. Invite tourism from Kazakhstan, which will bring hard currency. Raising the cost of visiting Altai will reduce the impact.
4. Promote “health and wellness” tourism
5. Involve international environmental orgs, such as Alpine Institute (in Bellingham, WA), and Mountain Institute.

Actions:

1. Follow up on leads.
2. Send pictures of Altai to Lelei and Altinay.

On my flight home, I sat next to a man whose wife, **Cristy Willer**, has worked with indigenous people in Alaska for the past 20 years, and was given her contact information to help us find the best possible contacts for the National Peace Foundation exchange program.

Action:

Contact her.