A Critical assessment of Mongolian idioms and their cultural similarity in Tamilnadu social context

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Introduction
Both Mongolian and Tamil are rich in tradition dating back to 3000 BC. It appears that religions and belief systems of these two societies appear similar in more than one way. India has rich cultural heritage and a wealth of long tradition. Indian has numerous languages, religious systems and traditional beliefs. Though the society is complicated with diversity in culture and tradition, the people of India have learnt to coexist. The different religious and traditional systems have helped the people to complement with each other in more than one way. Among the regional culture, the Tamil culture has its own significance and it is influenced by many other culture and regions. Mongolia has experienced influence from Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism, and from China. Since the 20th century, Russian and, via Russia, European cultures have had a strong effect on Mongolia. For 3000 years, the people of the steppes have adopted a pastoral way of life moving in the search pastures and campsites. They live by and for their livestock, in the forefront of which the horse undoubtedly was the first animal domesticated in these infinite meadows. Nomadic life thrives in summer and survives in winter. Considering climatic conditions, especially during winter, such lifestyle may seem to the outside world to be a very hard way of living. Traditionally, Mongolian nomads raise 5 species of livestock known as the five 5 muzzles: horses, cows, sheep, goats and camels. Khalkha Mongolian is the official language and is spoken by 90 percent of the people. Minor languages include Khazakh, Russian, and Chinese. Khalkha Mongolian is part of the diverse Uralic-Altaic language family, which spread with the ancient Mongol Empire and also contains Korean, Manchu, Turkish, Finnish, and Hungarian. Each of these languages features highly inflected grammar. Khalkha Mongolian may be written in traditional Uighur (vertical) or Cyrillic script.

The most important public festivals are the Naadam. For families, most important festival is Tsagaan Sar (English: white month), which is roughly equivalent to the Chinese New Year and usually falls into January or February. Family members and friends visit each other, exchange presents - very popular presents for all opportunities are the khadag- and eat huge quantities of dumplings. New Year becomes a big event, and it is one of the biggest celebrations, comparable to Christmas in the West.

Idiom and its significance
An idiom is a combination of words that has a figurative meaning, due to its common usage. An idiom's figurative meaning is separate from the literal meaning or definition of the words from which it is made. Idioms are numerous and they occur frequently in all languages. Normally idiom is used for a specialized vocabulary or an expression that is not obvious. If you are studying a foreign language, idioms are the hardest phrases to translate. Most idioms do not seem to make any sense because their origins are so old. Some of them come from ancient literature or even classic films. People use idioms to make their speech more attractive and impressive. Idioms are a way to make language more vivid and descriptive. Language is always changing, people come up with new words and phrases every year. Idioms also allow speakers to say things indirectly, sometimes in a playful way so that the listener will not get offended. In that way, they can soften the blow. Another reason people often use idioms is that they can save time. Saying that something is a “hot potato” can be more interesting than saying that something is a problem or that someone is offended. In that way, they can soften the blow. Another reason people often use idioms is that they can save time. Saying that something is a “hot potato” can be more interesting than saying that something is a problem or that someone is offended.

Family/ life
1. авын чөжч гаргах –father’s chest show (to act like adults)-
If a young boy talks and behaves like old people, old family members or older people use this idiom.

Жишээ нь: “Хөөрхий дээ, ядарсан амьтан юм даа. Юун ч хар явлаараа авьын чөжч гаргаав дээ!” хэмээн бодсоор би ар аас нь алхан унаанд даа суу.( Я. Ганбатар, “Нутгаан гүйсэн адуу” огүүллэг)
It is commonly used in Tamil culture highlighting how a young fellow behaves like a matured person. In Mongolia it is used for acting like brave and it is used in a positive way. The context and the suggested meaning are the same in both the culture.

2. араар нь тавих- behind put (cheat someone)- when husband or wife betrays each other, people use it.

Жишээ нь: Ямар хүний тоглоой өр бүлээ араар нь тавих бодол төрдөг байна аа. (Д. Боддхүяж, “Хар” өгүүлэг)

In Tamilnadu also similar situations occur like any other society as it is a universal problem. It is also used when a brother or a sister cheat the elder or younger ones. It is often used when son betrays his father.

3. гай газар дурсоос- troubled ground underarm (happen an unexpected thing) – to suddenly become very angry or upset with the unexpected trouble and they nag and use it.

Жишээ нь: "Намайг тайван байглана. Ямар гай газар дурсоос өрөгөө өрөгөө "гэж углэв."(Зулын сарын борон” өгүүлэг)

In Tamil culture mostly troubled ground under the feet is In Mongolia it is used only by the older people encourage young people by words to make them well, they use it

Жишээ нь: Нас нарчны дундаа байхгүй болсон нь өгүүллэг "Муу замаа ололч" гэж төвөгтөө асуудлыг угсгэл байгаа. (П. Батхүяг, “Загас мэт” өгүүллэг бөлөгчөө)" (blood, sweat and tears)

This idiom is also exactly similar to Tamil idiom which conveys the same meaning and uses finger as a symbol.

9. Хэл амма ололчоо- tongue mouth find (make peace with husband or wife)- after argument and misunderstanding, family members make peace with each other and understand each other well, they use it

Жишээ нь: Суулгийн үед үүх шалтаг мундахгүй болсон нь газрын бүрэн тоглолттай асугдлыг угсгэл байгаа. (Х. Болэр-Эрдэнэ, “Төрөл сарын шон”) The Mongolian idiom conveys that ‘the tongue finds its own mouth’. The context is found in Tamil culture but the idiom is not used.

Older people

1. Амма барих- mouth hold(regret)-older people usually warn the young people not regret after doing wrong things

Жишээ нь: Миний санах амарч тайвшрахдаа няггэ болгодог уг айлд хийх нь амма барив.

(Г. Монхныасан, “навч” өгүүлэг. Утга зохиол урлага) Though it is of common usage, it is used as an idiom in a special way in Mongolia. In Tamil culture it is more attached with exclamatory expressions with a typical guessture of closing the mouth with the palm of the hand

2. Алгана амт үүлэх-пalm taste show(slap)- when older people are angry with younger people or naughty children who make mistakes and wrong things, older people want to punish them and use this idiom

Аавын минь алгана амт үүлэх гэдэг мөч надад дакхин олдожгүй ашиг байж дээ гэж одоо бодоо яагалдаг юм. (Ж. Пүрэв, “Аавын алгана амт”) It is more symbolic in Tamil culture with showing slapping gesture. It is commonly used in almost places by everyone irrespective of age group. In Mongolia it is used only by the older people

3. задарсан хар тархин- disassembled black brain(very naughty child)- when older people are angry with naughty children who make mistakes, they nag and say this idiom

Жишээ нь: Хагархай Хамбал Хөлөрсөн зулайгаага алч зуурра, “Золоон хийх шалтаг л байхгүй гоо, задарсан хар тархин” гэв. (С. Пүрэв, “Чөлөөгүй бага Гүнсэл” өгүүлэг. Өөрөөдрийн монгол)

It is typical Mongolian way of describing the characteristic of a child who is very mischievous. For Mongolian black colour is something to do with strange and unusual things. Child is riddle and it is considered a mischief.

4. нас залуу, цус шинэн- age young, blood thin(very young)-older people encourage young people by words to make them brave

Нас залуу, цус шинэн, тархин нь сэрээлэн та нар шиг удэ коо юм гэхээс энэ нь хөгж болох зүйл вэ дээ.(Ш. Баяржаргал, “Эрэл ”)

In Tamil culture it is used in a negative connotation which compares a young fellow who acts like an adult with the imperfect ripening of a fruit. In Mongolian tradition it is used in a positive way.
In Mongolia sky is compared with freedom or rights of an individual. It is also symbolic of having descendants. So it is used to express when men are not able to have children.

**Village/tribal/countryside people**

1. Баян хөөлдө: rich stomach (loser)- when a child who rode a horse becomes a loser in horse race, adults caress them and use this idiom to call them

2. Газар явган  нөхцөг: pig hopeless, dog noble (to become poor) - when people lose their last property such as horse or house, they use it. 2. People use this idiom for the very poor people

Жишээ нь: Хүний  газар  гүнүүг нутагт  газар явган  хавцаг  биеэ  хэмээн  Догорог  үйлдэхдээ хүрвэлсэн хэсэг  даган даажингээ  босохгүй. (Ч. Лодйдамба, "Тунгалаг тамир" роман)

When people loose even the minimum property they have, they are considered to be unworthy. Similar symbolic representation of poverty is used in other society also. But the idiom like ‘dog noble’ is unique of Mongolian culture

3. Дөрөө нийлүүлж - stirrup(pedal) combine(go parallelly)- when two people go to far place together by horse, they use it

Жишээ нь: Үүнийг  холны  замд  дөрөө нийлүүлж  явах  нь  хэмээн  хэцэгүй буцах болсон Үргэнэсэн  өдөрөө  бий явсан  байлаа.(Ж. Бамба, "Газар эх")

It is only of common usage but Mongolians use it as an idiom

4. Дөрөө нийлүүлж- pillow join (marry)- countryside people usually don’t say “marry” instead of it they use this idiom

It is interesting to note in Mongolian culture that joining pillow is symbolic of marriage. It is symbolic in Tamil culture but it is communicated non-verbally only.

Жишээ нь: Арван найман наасанда нүгэл Догорог  бүгдийгээ дөрөө нийлүүлж,  гээр бэрж  амдрав. (Ч. Лодйдамба, “Тунгалаг тамир” роман)

5. Мод толгой- wood head( pipe)- countryside people use this idiom

Жишээ нь: а.Тэргээийнхээ сүүлдээт тавтай завлан сүүлдээ өрөгөөсөө мод толгой гаргаж, таамга татах утаа нь алгүүрэн түлэн гаргах зуур ногооны зуур ньрэн ороздоно. (Ч. Лодйдамба, "Тунгалаг тамир" роман)

6. Жишээ нь: Өө нь эхлэн буга чин чөөрөөсөө үгүүлэн уудагаа. Хаврын  ташрэнд турж  ухсэн  байна уу, эвлэл сүүлдээ сүүлдээ  чөөрөөсөө моод толгой гарган хүнинг  салдайж над руу харахаа. - Би чамаас  ийгээх уу гээл?  

It is common usage to tell about a wood. It has nothing to do with human expression or emotion

7. Сүүлдээ чөөрөөсөө тээвэрлэсэн хүнийгээ мон өрөгөөсөө монд бага тамир гаргаа. (Н. Надмид, “Зочигий чөөрөөс” огүүлэл)

Mongolians do not like killing animals and they consider the hunters as cowards. Similar context may be found in Tamil culture.

Тоогоны жүн-пөлсөн дарга( wife)- countryside man calls his wife because she works as a housewife and she cooks, washes the dishes in kitchen
Looking at woman as a ‘pot’s person’ is different. But in Tamil people are common among societies. However in this context and their activities. Symbolic representation of things and Imaginary characters and things are attached to human beings culture most of the women can be seen with pot on their hip.

өшиглөж эгшинтэй төрсөн ухаан дөрвөн байгаа мань мөнхий бөлөгч нь их гүйцээций төлөхийн тулд шахам. (Т. Бум-Эрдэнэ, “Америкт зорчсон Жийжээ”, бичил түүж)

In Mongolian culture symbolism is given much importance. Imaginary characters and things are attached to human beings and their activities. Symbolic representation of things and people are common among societies. However in this context looking at woman as a ‘pot’s person’ is different. But in Tamil most of the women can be seen with pot on their hip. Hence the idiom is recongizable in the Tamil culture.

8. Xотоо харлуулах- place blacken(kill all cattle)- when someone regrets after killing all cattle because of drought and storm, herdsman use this idiom.

Жишээ нь: Хамаг хонино хэдэж хотоо харлуулах өгөх байгаагаа намайг хамт тоошоохих. Би хөдөө хониндээ дөрөөн хөөрхөөнийг илүү хаиртай.(Сан. Пурэв, “Од шүүрхэ ухаан”)

Black colour is something very much attached to destruction, sadness, melancholy and gloomy atmosphere as far as any society is concerned. It is same with Mongolia and Tamil. But the uniqueness here is ‘blacken place’ which is symbolic of ‘killing all the cattle’.

9. Өрхний оосроо татуулах- chimney strap pull(to take a bride into one’s house)- when men want to marry someone, they use this idiom.

Жишээ нь: Ямар сайндаа Сарлаг Дамбын охин Сайхан төрсон Думагцаар
Өдөрөг төрсон аваан хүү Өрхний оосроо татуулах... өгөх дуу гарахав.(Жа. Пурэв, “Турвалжин”)

Pull chimney strap is symbolic of bringing a happiness into the family by way of marriage. It also brings in light. Similar context is used in Tamil context saying that the ‘woman comes to lit the lamp of the family’.

10. Хүлгэр шар- crop- eared yellow-(marmot )- hunters usually abstain from saying some animals’ names directly, they give names which described using their appearance and features and use it.

Жишээ нь: Буун дуу тасхийлээ. Хүлгэр шар намсийх ээгээдий өрхөн би гэдэг хүн гүйн очиж, түүнийг өшиглөж өрхөн биелээ.(П. Наранбаатар, “Халуун чулуу”)

This kind of saying is often used in Tamil culture and people give different names based on the appearance and characteristic of each animal.

Thus the similarity between Tamil culture and Mongolian culture has been assessed and it makes a revelation of interesting facts about human life and living. It is found that they both highlight the main aspects of life and project the positive side of human life. The Mongolian idioms are found to be easy to understand and read like the ones used in Tamil context.

**Bibliography**


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