

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the description of real conditions and opportunities of development of civil society organizations in the field of cultural heritage preservation in Buryatia, which is a federal subject in Russia.

The theoretical part includes basic approaches to the concept of civil society, the definition of culture, a brief excursus into the history of civic activism in Russia, and an overview of laws and regulations governing the activities of Russian non-profit organizations. In the second part the author, through semi-structured interviews and a document analysis, seeks to provide a detailed insight into the context in which the organized civil society exists in Buryatia nowadays and to understand what role it plays in the process of rediscovering and promoting the Buryat national culture that was suppressed during the Soviet period.

The conclusions of the thesis point to general improvement in the conditions for civil society in Buryatia over the last 27 years, and also contain recommendations on a range of actions that should help overcome the current barriers.

Key words: civil society, non-profit organization, culture, nation, national revival, Buryatia, Post-Soviet period, democracy.