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| Buryatia  Republic of Buryatia is a distinctive, bright and peculiar region of Russia. Endless steppes, impassible taiga, impetuous rivers and the blue eye of the Earth -Lake Baikal, breath of the North, sultry winds from the East, history of the "Tea Path", ancient and distinctive culture of nations living here in peace.  Located deeply inland, far away from the sea and oceans Buryatia has a contrast climate that is combining cold winter and hot summer, clear sunny days and sand storms. Rich nature and diversity of landscapes had created natural conditions for peaceful co-existence of republic multinational population with different culture and religion, distinctive traditions and peculiar way of life. History of settlement on the territory of republic counts many tens of thousands years, for several hundreds of years Buryats and Evenks, Russians and Ukrainians, Tatars, Jews and people of other nationalities have been living in peace on the land of Buryatia. City of Ulan-Ude as many other Siberian cities was settled in 17th century by Russian pioneers. The year of 1666 is considered to be the time the city was established.  After having in Moscow a festival of Buriat arts in 1940 a decision was made to construct an Opera and Ballet Theatre in Ulan-Ude. Though the war had delayed the construction. The Theatre opening happened in 1952. Author of the design was A.Fedorov. A sculptural group of "Horsemen" with a flying banner was mounted above the central portal. The sculptor was A.I. Timin. National ornament was used in decorating the interior and the exterior of the Theatre. An impressive colonnade on the Southern part is adding lightness, air-like appearance and special expressiveness to it. Inside the Theatre there is a round shaped hall, a lobby, wide entrance halls, convenient walk ways between the floors, stained glass in the windows, chandeliers, wall brackets, standard lamps, a parterre, a stage, loggias and balconies, which decorated in the national style. A huge bowl, which is decorating the dome of the Theatre, was ordered for manufacturing to lecturers from Moscow Institutes, Professor G. Rublev, B.Jordansky and V.Bordichenko. The artists came to Buriatia, visited local villages, made sketches, and participated at national holydays. Decorating of the bowl was going for three years. This is a paining of national triumph, triumph of the art. In the Theatre lobby there is a bas-relief devoted to friendship between nations.  Buryatia is very small compared with many other sites of Russia, yet it is a surprisingly varied land in many different ways: the diversity of landscape in different parts of the country, a long history which is rich in great events, a varied cultural heritage; long-lived customs and traditions; a rich mixture of peoples who live in the country | On June 20, 1891 the Grand Duke Nickolay Alexandrovich, successor of the Russian throne visited Verkhneudinsk. A stone made Arch was constructed in honor of the visit by the cesarevitch (young tsar).  In 1890 the famous Russian writer A. Tchekhov went to Sakhalin through Verkhneudinsk. In one of letters to his sister he wrote: "On how I rode along the bank of Selenga and after that across Transbaikal I'll tell you at out meeting, and now I can tell you only that Selenga River is a compete beauty and in Transbaikal I would find everything I wanted: the Caucasus and Psla valley, Zvenigorodsky district and the Don. During the day you ride in Caucasus, at night - in Donskoy steppe, and in the morning you wake up, look out and there you already see Poltavskaya province - and this is how it changes within one thousand miles. Verkhneudinsk is a lovely town:". In 1869 a civilian hospital capable of holding 40 beds was established with town own funds. Hospital personnel had a doctor, two medical attendants and 14 service personnel.  Verkhneudinsk, located on the bank of picturesque Selenga River and its confluent Uda River, was considered as one of the best towns in Siberia in the 19th century. In 1833 famous Siberian writer and researcher of local lore, history and economy V. Parshin made a stop here on the way from Irkutsk to Kyakhta. He recorded in his notes that Verkhneudinsk was very beautiful and in terms of size it was looking like a nice model. He called it a smiling dandy of all towns of Irkutsk province.  The so called Big Arcade that was built in 1795 was the busiest place in the town, it was a centre of trade transactions, purchase and sale of goods, in particular during trade fairs. Initially the Big Arcade was wooden and later on, June 3, 1803 a gathering of merchantmen and rich bourgeois decided to build a stone made Arcade on the basis of joint stock company arrangement. Massive stone made buildings with a great number of trade and storage facilities were built. The major builder was a 1st guild merchant M. Kourbatov. Later (1834) he was awarded a title of "Honorary Freeman of Verkhneudinsk". The Arcade has remained up to the present time (on the Revolution Square). In the 19th century stone made buildings were constructed in the centre of town in the classic architecture style. Experts had called them buildings "of pure architecture". These are - the Odigitrievskiy Cathedral at the beginning of Big Street (presently Lenin Street) built in 1741, and a Minor Arcade on Troitskaya Street (Kuibysheva Street). Monuments of ancient wooden architecture have remained up to the present time. Delicate wood engraving on finish casings and cornices, carved galleries, attics, stairs passages, main entrances are striking with singularity and beauty even now. They have remained on Pochtamtskaya Street, Nekrasova Street, Mostovaya Street and Smolina Street.  In 1971 reconstruction of the Soviets Square - an administrative centre of the Republic capital city was completed. Opening of the monument to V.I. Lenin was an accomplishing feature in creating the square ensemble. The sculptors were G.Neroda, Y.Neroda and architects A.Doushkin, P.Zilberman. In 1973 Ethnographic Museum of Transbaikal Nations was opened in the North-Western part of the city at Upper Beresovka area.  In 1982 a construction of one of the most significant buildings in the city - a new building of the Buriat State Academic Drama Theatre called after Khotsa Namsaraev, was completed. |