Speaking in 1978 on the local Ulan-Ude radio program The Socialist Way of Life, a Buryat woman named Darizhap Zham'ianova described how her life was very different than that of her mother. Her mother was orphaned at age seven and had been forced to work for kulaks, a label applied to supposed wealthier herders. The book challenges the common notion that the process of modernization during the later Soviet period created a Buryat national assertiveness rather than assimilation or support for the state.