

## Antropologicheskii Forum # 4

### **Forum: Discussion of Catriona Kelly's article, The School Waltz: The Everyday Life of the Post-Stalinist Soviet Classroom**

Catriona Kelly's article was published in the first issue of Antropologicheskii Forum and is devoted to everyday life in a post-Stalinist Soviet school. The article attempts to describe a post-Stalinist Soviet school from the inside, giving a child's-eye view, as it were. At the same time, it is written by an adult observer from a different culture, and is written retrospectively, relative to the events described. In an attempt to describe everyday life in the spheres where written sources are almost absent or are unreliable causes the researcher turn to oral history, which has several decades of separate experience and stories about this topic. In this case we are obviously faced with retrospective rationalization, 'syndrome of false memory', and auto-stereotypization etc. The discussed article raises a number of general questions, which were answered by researchers of Russian and other nationalities.

### **Articles**

*Vitaly Bezrogov.* Between Stalin and Christ: The Religious Socialization of Children in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia (Based on Memoirs)

The article based on memoirs of childhood reconstructs some biographic strategies of the religious/atheistic socialization of Russian children of different generations (from 1910s up to 1990s). It shows how children's consciousness and subculture could mediate the nationwide influences of anti-religious/religious propaganda.

*Pulkin Maksim.* Primary education for *inorodtsy* in the North of European Russia

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a system of educational establishments in the North of European Russia, purposefully and regularly working in the name of familiarizing *inorodtsy* with the Russian language. The activity of schools was paradoxical from the very beginning. As a matter of fact, the difference between schools for *inorodtsy* and those for Russians lay only in the fact that in the latter teaching in the native language was legalized, and in the former it was forbidden. The paradox was different. Schools aimed to gradually remove *inorodtsy* languages from everyday use. In Karelia this task was even more complicated: here it was supposed to put a halt to the spread of the Finnish language and Lutheran propaganda. But in reality local schools 'also promoted the spread of Finnish literacy', because a person literate in Russian became educated and then independently studied Finnish. Apart from the formation of a system of educational institutions, the very existence of the local intelligentsia was connected to the preservation of native languages.

*Dmitry Baranov.* V.N. Tenishev's Peasant Programme: Text and Context

Prince Tenishev's Programme for Collecting Ethnographical Information about the Peasants of Central Russia discussed in the article, is regarded not only as a method of studying culture, but also as a disguised metalanguage of a science, representing a level of knowledge and dominating scientific paradigms and preferences. This makes it at the same time a source on the history of science and an ethnographic source allowing the partial reconstruction of knowledge accumulated since the time of its creation, and this was the basis of the questions included in the programme.

*Igor Krupnik, Elena Mikhailova.* Landscapes, Faces and Histories: Alexander Forshtein's Eskimo Photos (1927–1929)

The article deals with the contribution to studying the Eskimo population of the Chukchi Peninsula, and scientific career and private life of the Russian ethnographer and linguist A.S. Forshtein. The authors

of the article turn to the collection of Forshtein's photos from the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (MAE) taken by him in Eskimo settlements, and on this basis reconstruct the history of his research of the indigenous population of the Chukchi Peninsula. The result of this work was the return of Forshtein's photos to the Chukchi Peninsula within the framework of the joint project 'returning knowledge' between the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC) and the MAE of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Saint Petersburg).

*Ekaterina Melnikova. Otchityvanie: Practices and Discourses*

The article is devoted to the history of exorcist practices and discourses about exorcism. One of the most popular terms used for describing this ritual, *otchityvanie*, was borrowed by peasant folklore in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from the educated discourse of that time. The reception of the ritual performed by a priest determined the appearance and spread of practices and stories about the so-called magic use of a book in the country. The work considers questions of the interaction between various points of view on the ritual of exorcism, and also its role in peasant rituals and folklore.

*Tatiana Volodina. Unchristened Flesh: The Woman's Breast and Breastfeeding in Traditional Slavic Culture, with Especial Reference to Belorussia*

The article deals with folk beliefs on the woman's breast in Belorussian tradition. The author also refers to ritual, folklore, linguistic and visual data from some other peoples, mainly Slavic. Special attention is paid to the semantics of a parent breast and milk, breastfeeding, the first weaning, and ethnomedicine, as well as beliefs about dummies/the breast of animals and demonological characters, and the reproductive and erotic aspects of the image of a woman's breast in phraseology.

*Margarita Zhuikova. Why did Marinka Burn Dobrynia's footprints? (Notes on the Origin of Love Magic)*

The article is devoted to the problem of the origin and development of some methods of love magic and its connections with other kinds of magic. The author looks at the rituals and spells of love magic, known in Russian folk tradition as *prisukhi* or *prisushki*. The research is based on the analysis of an example of love magic described in the *bylina* 'Dobrynia and Marinka' of the Kiev cycle, with reference to ritual, folklore and linguistic data.

*Yulia Krivoshchapova. An Entomological Calendar in the Mirror of Russian Language and Folk Culture*

The article is devoted to an entomological interpretation of calendar time in the Russian tradition. In folk culture the processes of calendar regulation correspond to spheres of reality which are also cyclical, in this case — to the lives of insects. The article presents a reconstruction of an entomological calendar on a linguistic level on the basis of the lexicon and phraseology of Russian dialects.

*Tatyana Shchepanskaya. Mythological Characters in Informal Discourse of “Field”*

The text examines stories about the mythological characters in informal discourse (folklore) in the professional milieu of ethnographers, anthropologists, archaeologists, and folklorists. This text is part of the research into a phenomenon of scientific expeditions in the context of the scientific community's professional traditions. Expeditions are considered a very significant practice, playing an important role in forming interpersonal relations and professional identity among the members of a number of scientific disciplines. Here we shall be limited to the analysis of expeditions with a humanitarian structure. The research is based on a collection which consists of 181 narratives written down during dialogues in situations ranging from the informal to professional milieu. Among them, 27 (mystical or comic) are about the communication between the researcher and mythological (virtual) characters. These narratives are examined in a pragmatic aspect, in particular as a means of the self-presentation of the story-teller in a professional environment. In submitted narratives several types are mentioned: local traditional representations, the modern popular mythology of drivers and tourists, those that arise in internal discourse between the members of an expedition (the stories about them are usually perceived as jokes or a game), essences or phenomena without names having poorly expressed visual (luminous circles) or audio aspects (muffled sounds of human speech, signals of machines, city noise in deserted places). The stories describe virtual characters that have two types of spatial localization: they occur in a road or in the location of the expedition. The virtual characters (and those embodied in the material form of idols) are used in the context of social regulation. The pragmatics of the mythology related to them is a process of establishing, legitimizing and reinforcing (by fear), but sometimes they overcome the rules determining the internal life of the temporal collective. These characteristics symbolize the communication (connection) between an expedition and a district, where this takes place. The mythology related to a road or a stay outside of the base (in deserted settlements, temples, and houses) has different functions. Its function is the self-presenta-

tion of the story-teller (or representation of the central character of the story — the researcher) as involved in an authentic experience that is typical for the natives. The authenticity of his interpretations is sometimes proved by statements of the local inhabitants. Thus, his right to represent the local point of view, to speak on behalf of tradition is legitimated.

### Museum

*Jane Garnett, Gervase Rosser.* Representing Spectacular Miracles

The publication is devoted to the exhibition Spectacular Miracles organized by the authors at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. It displayed photos of pictures and statues from various sacred places in Northern Italy, to which supernatural forces are attributed. The authors explain the plan and principles of the organization of the exhibition, its exhibits and the impression made by it.

### Reviews

*Polly Jones.* Frederick C. Corney. Telling October. Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004. 320 p. Michael S. Gorham. Speaking in Soviet Tongues: Language Culture and the Politics of Voice in Revolutionary Russia. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003. 277 p.

The reviewed publications are devoted to the history of representation: on the one hand, the creation of the canonical history of the October coup at the tenth anniversary of the revolution in 1927, and on the other, the controversy of the 1920s surrounding the language and terminology of the new government.

*Mikhail Lurie.* Kormina Zh.V. Send-Off to the Army in Post-Reform Russia. An Attempt of Ethnographic Analysis. M.: New Literary Review, 2005. 376 p.

The review of Zh. Korminas monography emphasizes the author's approach to the analysis of recruit ritual and the folklore, implying their discussion in the context of other facts of peasant culture. The reviewer believes that it allows the author of the book not only to see the meanings and pragmatic implications incorporated in analyzed rituals and verbal texts more clearly, but also to describe some general models of forming a new ritual system (recruit ritual was first formed no earlier than the 18<sup>th</sup> century) on the basis of existing rituals (in this case, wedding and funeral rituals). The reviewer also mentions how applying a diachronic approach in the research allows the author to track changes in recruit rituals and the attitude to military service during the course of more than a hundred years (the latest data

collected by the author is from the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century), determined by many historical, political and sociocultural factors.

### **In memoriam**

The section contains three obituaries, of Vladimir Nikolaevich Toporov, Eleazar Moiseevich Meletinsky and Evgeny Alekseevich Kostiukhin. The authors — George Levinton, Albert Baiburin and Tatiana Ivanova — look at the scientific career, biographical information and legacy of these greatest Russian scholars.