

## Antropologicheskyy Forum # 12

### Forum

#### Urban Studies

This time the Editorial Board did not use a detailed questionnaire, but instead asked participants 1. to comment on the state of urban studies in their particular discipline, and 2. to identify what they saw as the most pressing issues for further study. The comments that resulted are published in this section.

Keywords: urban studies, urban anthropology, urban history.

#### Articles

*Caroline Humphrey*. Odessa: Pogroms in a Cosmopolitan City

This historical article investigates the co-presence in one city of cosmopolitan practices with ethnically-targeted violence against Jews (pogroms). Odessa at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was famed for its multinational mercantile elite, its brilliant intellectual and musical life, its pursuit of wealth and its lively café society. Yet pogroms were

a regular occurrence, and 1905 saw the most violent attack against Jews in the whole of Russia. Rather than advancing a causal analysis of pogroms, on which there is already a vast literature, the chapter uses the ideas of Gabriel Tarde of ‘crowds’ and ‘publics’ to show how pogroms happened. It suggests that in contrast to the relatively self-contained institutions of ethnic groups, civil estates and economic classes, pogrom mobs and cosmopolitan circles were in both cases dynamic, temporary, molecular ‘assemblages’ that moved across social boundaries. The two were opposites, yet the actors were aware of the other’s potential presence, and analysis of the content of relations in each case shows that they were to some extent reactions to one another. Odessa, founded by French, Italian, Greek, and Russian cosmopolitans, was host to this contradictory dynamic from early in its history. A ‘post-cosmopolitan’ sensibility is not new there, and after the cataclysm of 1905 an ‘immunity’ [Gerasimov 2003] to ethno-confessional violence also developed in the complex configuration of this city.

Keywords: pogrom, crowd, public, cosmopolitanism, immunity.

*Levon Abrahamian. Yerevan: Memory and Forgetting in the Organisation of Space of a Post-Soviet City*

The rapidly urbanized Yerevan is observed through the old and new names of its streets and squares, changes in planning and space forming, both official and popular. A city, claiming its almost 28-century long age, trends to rid itself of living two-century long history to newly shape its space in accordance with the national narrative. The space of the city is discussed in the context of rallies of late 1980s and 2008: the competition of squares in their function and shape and the re-evaluation of streets through marches and political actions. A case is discussed when an architect plans a certain unrealized urban situation, referring to an imaginative precedent, which suddenly comes to life in the future in a quite different context. In other cases architectural buildings win the fight for supremacy in space not by “their own will,” but as a result of concurrence of circumstances. And the final case discusses the successful attempt of a post-Soviet sacred space and its marker — the Cathedral breaking off a centuries-old tradition and its well-established reference points.

Keywords: architects, urban planning, urban space, sacred center, monument, memory, renaming, historical reconstruction, history construction.

*Paul Manning.* The Theory of the *Café Peripheral*: Laghidze's Waters and Peripheral Urban Modernity

Cafés can express aspirations for urban modernity in very different ways, depending on whether the cafés are themselves at home among friends and family in European modernity (the Café Central), or whether they are the vanguard of modernity elsewhere (the Café Peripheral). In this paper I bring together two contemporaneous forms of café theory and practice in Georgia: what I will call 'modernist cafés', the cafés imagined and sometimes even built by Georgian bohemian intelligentsia, and 'modernizer cafés', cafés like Laghidze's café, cafés that concretely express the parallel modernist aspirations of the so-called technical intelligentsia. The paper then follows the different ways cafes like Laghidze's can express aspirational urban modernity from the Tsarist to the Postsocialist period.

Keywords: cafes, modernism, technology, brand, infrastructure.

*Victoria Donovan.* Being 'Civil': Narrative Constructions of Provincialism in the Oral Histories of Russians from the North West

In the paper, oral histories of Russians living in the towns of Novgorod, Pskov, and Vologda provide the principal source for a discussion of how the notion of provincialism is constructed (and deconstructed) in everyday talk. The resulting analysis constitutes a selective representation of an ongoing dialogue on several broader themes related to provincial identity in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia. The author considers how the perceived provincialism of the towns has been romanticized in the accounts of urban migrants who moved to the towns in the late-Soviet period; how informants engage with stereotypes of the provinces, and how these are deconstructed through techniques of self-irony; and, finally, the inversion of the conventional capital-province dichotomy in informants' narratives and the implications of such strategies for their understandings of themselves and their communities.

Keywords: provincialism, stereotypes.

*Olga Boytsova.* 'Don't Look at Them, They are Bad': Non-Professional Funeral Photography in Russia

The paper based on a collection of more than 600 amateur funeral pictures and on interviews, deals with the phenomenon of amateur funeral photography, which was widespread in Russia in the 20<sup>th</sup>

century and can still be observed today. Attitudes towards funeral photography in Russia has changed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is now controversial. A fear of death and the private nature of grief described by Philippe Aries in modern Europe, which is true for Russia as well, come into conflict with the ritual nature of a funeral which requires documenting as any other 'rite de passage'. Nowadays people who own funeral pictures are scared of them but cannot get rid of them, because beliefs connected with death conflict here with beliefs connected with photography. As a result, one keeps these pictures in the house but hides them from guests, from children, even from oneself.

Iconography of amateur funeral pictures in Russia which is different from Western post-mortem iconography is also analyzed in the paper. It is argued that Russian funeral iconography can be traced to Orthodox icons of the 'Assumption of the Virgin Mary'.

Keywords: amateur photography, funeral photography, post-mortem photography, rite de passage.

*Dmitri Gromov.* Conduct Norms of Youth Street Groups (based on data from Soviet cities in 1970s–1980s)

The article addresses the formation of conduct norms of the Soviet youth street groups in the 1970s–1980s. The key organising principles behind these norms derive from the codes of hegemonic masculinity, the gender contract, perceptions of the proper behaviour within the us-them dichotomy, the need to construct a proper street status and the need to regulate aggression. The article suggests the sources of these conduct norms: rural and urban traditions of young people's leisure, military traditions, the moral codes of the criminal community and Soviet sport.

Keywords: youth, youth street groups, criminal groups, moral codes, customary law, conduct norms, aggression, masculinity, gender.

*Mikhail Alekseevsky, Mikhail Lurie, Anna Senkina.* The Legend of the Monument to Gogol in Mohilev-Podolsky: a Commentary to a Fragment of Local Text

The article analyses tales about the monument to N.V. Gogol in Mohilev-Podolsky (Ukraine, Vinnitsa region), which were collected in folk expeditions in 2007–2008. The story in question is a significant element of the local literature of Mohilev-Podolsky. The second part

of the article is dedicated to oral versions of the legend which is analyzed in context of urban folk narratives about monuments.

Keywords: urban anthropology, local text, urban folklore, local history, narrative, story, monument.

### **Reviews**

The section contains reviews of books on the anthropology of movement and the history of childhood in Russia and of love in the Soviet Union. Reviewers briefly describe the contents of reviewed books and mention their merits and failings.

Keywords: anthropology of movement, childhood, Soviet history, cultural studies.