

Antropologicheskyy forum No. 20

Forum

10 Years (and 20 Issues) On

A decade ago, in 2004, the first issue of “Antropologicheskii Forum” appeared. At that time, the “Forum” was dedicated to the most significant developments in the study of culture, particularly anthropology, in recent years. In the current issue we initiate a discussion on the developments that have taken place over this last decade. Participants of the “Forum” answer questions about the most important changes to have taken place in their particular specialist areas of knowledge and in their discipline as a whole.

Keywords: Social anthropology, cultural anthropology, ethnography, history, folklore.

Articles

Sergei Sokolovskiy. Mirrors and Reflections, or Once More on the Situation of Russian Anthropology

The current situation in Russian anthropology is assessed on the basis of citation, co-citation and co-authorship data, with the e-library.ru Russian citation index being used as the main source of these data. Yet another source is the analysis and comparison of the editorial policies

of 20 Russian journals that regularly publish articles on anthropology. The discipline's characteristic citation trends are compared to similar citation distributions in other disciplines within the humanities and social sciences in Russia, as well as to trends in how anthropology has developed in certain other countries. The results of the citation analysis are mapped in the form of co-citation graphs. The citation distributions demonstrate that Russian anthropology is currently divided into two large research networks with different research priorities and agendas: on the one hand are political anthropologists, specialising in applied research into inter-ethnic relations, ethnic conflicts, nationalities policy etc., and on the other are anthropologists who specialise in the study of traditional culture and contemporary folklore and rituals. Stable and productive co-authorships, in which authors' competencies complement one another and enhance the quality of work produced remain rare; "administrative" co-authorship where one partner has an administrative position and contributes much less than the other partner are more frequent. An analysis of the co-citation distributions of journals confirms the Russian anthropological community's division into two autonomous networks.

Keywords: Russian anthropology, co-citation maps, academic journals, comparative bibliometric studies.

Yuri Berezkin. Different Models of Political Development in the Pre-State Epoch and Their Study Approaches

Anthropologists studying the emergence and development of early complex societies realised that it was impossible to delineate precise borders between the stages of political evolution. Many scholars still believe, however, that the developmental trajectory of societies existing in similar environments was more or less identical even when these societies had no historical links between them. The comparative study of the Central Andes and the Near East, i.e. of two independent, early and rather environmentally- and economically-similar centres of early civilization, casts doubt on this theory. Though sharing a basic developmental trend (the growth of technology, demography and social complexity), the two regions are totally different in terms of the nature and successive emergence of certain evidence of complexity that are known thanks to the archaeological research (monumental constructions, rich burials and the like). These differences reveal a dissimilarity of methods used by the elites to consolidate power (controlling the production of staples, circulation of prestige goods and sacred knowledge). The very first complex societies emerged before the spread of productive economies, or at least before this type of economy began to play an important role. The paths of socio-political development in the Near

East and the Central Andes may have begun to diverge in the Paleolithic period and the factors responsible for it are still not known. Comparative studies of pre-literary societies should be based on traits visible thanks to archaeological research, while labels devised by anthropologists (chiefdom, early state, etc.) should be applied with the utmost caution. States can only be recognised as “real” when their status is based on both etic (archaeological data) and emic evidence (statehood becoming the norm for members of corresponding societies).

Keywords: Early complex societies, middle range societies, early states, neoevolutionism, Central Andean archaeology, Near East archaeology.

Elena Berezovich, Ksenia Osipova. Our Life is What We Eat: Low-Fat Soup and Weak Tea Reflected in Language

The article investigates the Russian dialect, plain speech lexemes, phraseologisms and aphorisms which define negatively-estimated food — low-fat soup and weak tea. The analysis provides a background of data from other Slavic languages, primarily Polish, Ukrainian and Belarusian. The study reveals the aspects of motivation for naming “junk” food. The names of low-fat soup and weak tea are designed to reflect the dish’s colour, cooking technology and ingredients, denoting those who cooked the dish or ate it, or times of starvation when this product used to be a primary foodstuff, among other aspects. The authors propose a semantically-motivated interpretation of “vague” names: *demyanova ukha, loshchenka, kulikovy ryzhiki* etc.

Keywords: Russian vocabulary and phraseology, Slavic dialectology, ethnolinguistics, semantically-motivated reconstruction, image of world language, “food” code of culture.

Igor Kometchikov. The Tradition of “Yakutalstvo” as the Delimitation of So-Called Social Immunity in the Kaluga Countryside and “Anti-Yakutalstvo” from the 1930s until the Beginning of the 1960s

The tradition of professional poverty — “yakutalstvo” — in a number of villages of the Kirov and Chvastovichy districts of the Kaluga region dates from the pre-revolutionary period. At times of collectivization and dispossession that were so crucial for the countryside, “yakutalstvo” once again experienced a surge in popularity. It fitted into the social immunity offered by the countryside and became one of the most effective survival strategies. Attempts by the authorities to combat “yakutalstvo”, first by making arrests and imposing exile and later by creating “alternative” employment and new social identities in the villages, proved futile.

The gradual decline of “yakutalstvo” took place as the result of the establishment of cooperative economy in the countryside and the migration of people from collective farms to towns.

Keywords: “Yakutalstvo”, professional poverty, tradition, social immunity, survival strategies, peasantry, authorities.

Reviews

Vera Tolz. *“Sobstvenny Vostok Rossii”*: *Politika identichnosti i vostoковедение в позднеимперский и раннесоветский период*. M.: NLO, 2013. 332 p.

This is a review of the Russian translation of Vera Tolz’s book “Russia’s Own Orient”, which charts the features of Russian Orientalism. Reading through Tolz’s polemic with Edward Saïd, I conclude that she takes up a cautious position, which allows her simultaneously to adopt some of the points of Saïd’s critique while distancing herself from its most radical and homogenising claims. This caution, in my view, does not imply an unwillingness to take a firm stance on Saïd’s argument, but rather an acknowledgement of the complexity of historical processes in Russia at the turn of the twentieth century.

Keywords: Orientalism, oriental studies, nationalism, Russian empire, Saïd, Marr, Oldenburg.

Mary Douglas. *A Very Personal Method. Anthropological Writings Drawn from Life*. Los Angeles et al.: Sage, 2013. 318 p. (*Yuri Berezkin*)

Mary Douglas is almost unique among prominent anthropologists as someone for whom faith (Douglas is Roman Catholic) has been a significant factor in her professional activity. Thanks to her deep understanding of the nature and role of ritual in human culture, which Douglas has been developing since childhood, she is able to understand adequately how the African societies that she studies function. Ritual is necessary because people are unable to easily cut their ties with particular social units. Higher social tension and more perceptible dividing lines between units lead to more elaborate rituals.

Keywords: Mary Douglas, ritual, the Lele of the Kasai, the Pygmies and the Bantu, food taboos.

Kevin K. Birth. *Objects of Time. How Things Shape Temporality*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. (Culture, Mind, and Society). (*Arkady Blumbaum*)

The review is devoted to this book, which examines the role of gadgets (clocks, calendars) in the social construction of time. The reviewer examines the book in the context of historical research into this issue.

Keywords: Social construction of time, temporality, gadgets, anthropology.

Status dokumenta: Okonchatelnaya bumazhka ili otchuzhdnnoye svidetelstvo? / Ed. I.M. Kaspe. M.: NLO, 2013. 408 p. (Dmitry Kalugin)

The book in this review is devoted to the issue of document status in culture. Similar to the term “literariness” (*literaturnost*) proposed by Roman Jakobson, the term “documentness” (*dokumentnost*) is introduced and on this basis specialists from different fields (sociologists, anthropologists, philosophers, historians, political scientists, philologists and others) examine different types of document. The authors analyse a variety of cases in which the status of documents manifests itself — from political power and bureaucratic institutions to academic communities and literary texts.

Keywords: Document, *dokumentnost*, paper, archive, politics, trauma, evidence.

Traditsionnaya kultura Uljanovskogo Prisureja. Etnodialektny slovar. M.: Indric, 2012. V.1–2. (Elena Levkievskaya)

The review of the ethnodialect dictionary “Uljanovsk Prisurej Traditional Culture” expresses an appreciation of the significance of this publication for modern research into traditional culture. The review analyses the principles of making ethnodialect dictionaries, structuring the dictionary entries, ways of presenting field material and methods of researching local ethnic dialects. The dictionary realises new methods of describing individual ethnocultural dialect traditions, including an analysis of the pragmatic aspects of ritual situations in the form of original speech acts which are reproduced in specified communicative contexts.

Keywords: Uljanovsk region, traditional culture, ethnodialect dictionary.

Olga Malinova-Tziafeta. *Iz goroda na dachu: Sotsiokulturnie factory osvoenia dannogo prostranstva vokrug Peterburga (1860–1914).* SPb.: EUSPb, 2013. (Stephen Lovell)

This review discusses a new work on urbanization in late imperial St.Petersburg. Taking the dacha tradition of nineteenth-century

Russia as its object of inquiry, it looks beyond the city in order to explore a range of urban problems and preoccupations — from sewage to suicide.

Keywords: Dacha, urbanization, St.Petersburg.

Laura J. Olson, Svetlana Adonyeva. *The Worlds of Russian Village Women: Tradition, Transgression, Compromise.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013. 368 p. (*Andrey Moroz*)

The reviewed monograph is devoted to analysing the self-perception and world view of several generations of Russian rural women. The study is based on field data collected by the authors. The authors show how the history of Russia in the twentieth century is reflected in the mirror of autobiographical narratives and folkloric texts.

Keywords: Folklore, anthropology, gender studies, ego-history, narratives, songs, field research.

Ken Hillis, Michael Petit, Kylie Jarrett. *Google and the Culture of Search.* N.Y.: Routledge, 2013. 240 p. (*Ilya Utekhin*)

The book attempts to show that Google search technology, which has become a part of everyday human experience, is transforming everyday search practices. The resulting reality is given shape by ranking algorithms whose underlying principles are not neutral. A broad historical and cultural context is provided as the background for discussing the cultural implications of this situation.

Keywords: Google, search practices.

In Umbra: Demonologia kak semioticheskaya sistema / Ed. D.I. Antonov, O.B. Khristoforova. Issue 1. M.: RSUH, 2012. 545 p. (*Svetlana Adonyeva*)

The anthology “In Umbra: Demonology as semiotic system” is characterized by its editors as a publication that unites papers devoted to “demonic and demonized enemies”. Multicultural studies of an “incorporeal” enemy and its “material” confidants are fruitful for understanding the role of discourse in the social construction of the image of the enemy. But the linguistic anecdote — “research devoted to enemies” — is a precise metaphor for the impression left after reading the papers in this anthology, which can be long or short, interesting or obscure, and which are based on various material and use different analytical tools. Something was left in the shadow.

Keywords: Demonology as a semiotic system, demonology in books, demonology of the European Middle Ages, demonology in folklore,

demonology in different religious systems, demonological motifs in contemporary political discourse.

In Umbra: Demonologia kak semiotičeskaja sistema / Ed. D.I. Antonov, O.B. Khristoforova. Issue 1. M.: RSUH, 2012. 545 p.; Issue 2. M.: Indrik, 2013. 400 p. (*Igor Morozov*)

This review of two issues of the collection “In Umbra” gives a brief overview of the publications — written originally Russian as well as translated from other languages — on various aspects of the “demonic” in different thematic and disciplinary discourses. The reviewer outlines the key themes and concepts used by the authors and compilers and provides a critical analysis of the main headings and the most interesting articles included in both the collections.

Keywords: Demonology as a semiotic system, demonology in books, demonology of the European Middle Ages, demonology in folklore, demonology in different religious systems, demonological motifs in contemporary political discourse.