

Antropologicheskyy forum No. 22

Forum

Equal Opportunities and the Academic Career: Chimera, Ideal, or Reality?

It is common for the career path of young academics to involve a good deal of stress and uncertainty. Also, in Russia, Western Europe and the USA there is a marked asymmetry in appointments made to positions of any kind among people from certain ethnic minorities, while progress to the highest levels of academic appointments is much less common among women than among men. All this raises important questions about how to organise the processes of study, recruitment and promotions in order that the candidates who are genuinely the best actually get preferment and the demands of equal opportunity are satisfied. Some of these questions were discussed by the participants of this “Forum”.

Keywords: academic career, career opportunities, positive discrimination, discrimination in academia.

Articles

Konstantin Bogdanov. Negroes in the USSR: Ethnography of an Imaginary Diaspora

The article is dedicated to the beliefs in Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet culture regarding the

black population of the planet. What has shaped these beliefs and how were they supported in the absence of any black people in pre-revolutionary and Soviet Russia? The author suggests that the social and psychological aspects of interracial communication in these cases are explained by the vicissitudes of collective curiosity and the ideology of imaginary internationalism, whose transformations should be sought not so much in national politics as in the field of fictional ethnography and daily routine.

Keywords: Negros, Russia, social and psychological aspects of interracial communication, internationalism, diaspora, fictional ethnography.

Vladimir V. Emelianov. Calendar and Chronopsychology (On the Semantic Opposition of Spring and Autumn in the Texts of Ancient Mesopotamia)

The paper attempts to explore calendar rites in terms of chronopsychology. The objective of the study is to identify the semantic opposition and symmetry of the spring and autumn rites of the peoples of ancient Mesopotamia, as well as the relation between this opposition in a collective ritual and periods of crisis in the individual consciousness. The study establishes that the calendar rites of spring and autumn help the people of the Ancient Middle East to adapt to changing seasonal rhythms; they created a framework for the ritual expression of destructive emotions in socially acceptable ways, thereby preventing extreme variance in the activity of the mind.

Keywords: calendar, chronopsychology, ancient Mesopotamia, semantic opposition, temporal perception.

Ekaterina Holler. Rural Tourism and Development Strategies of Austrians Farmers: The Impact of the Tourism Industry on the Authenticity of Peasant Culture

In the modern urbanized world it is fair to say that peasant culture has been transformed from the dominant culture to a subculture. However, peasants have managed not only to adjust to the present socio-economic situation, but also to position themselves in growing service industries. They began to offer tourists so-called “eco vacations” on traditional farms by rendering different services, such as tasty, healthy food, spa treatments and the opportunity to immerse themselves in real peasant life.

Have farmers managed to find a middle ground between the preservation of their culture and needs of post-industrial society? The presented paper is dedicated to this very problem.

We propose assessing how much globalization and the tourist industry have influenced traditional ways of life and researching modern trends in Western society — “Eco tourism on a farm” — using the examples of two of the oldest and biggest administrative lands in Austria: Styria and Lower Austria. The fundamental tasks are to find out which strategies are used by peasants to develop rural tourism and attract customers, how they manage to keep their own identity whilst simultaneously being tourist managers and peasants and how rural tourism has developed in Austria and whether it has had an impact on the authenticity of peasant culture. The paper is written on the basis of interviews, observations and literature analysis.

Keywords: Austrian peasants, rural tourism, tourism, globalization, identity, tradition, innovation, ecology, authenticity.

Conference Proceedings

“Anthropology. Folklore Studies. Sociolinguistics”

From the Compilers (*Mikhail Lurye*)

The collection of papers presents proceedings of the conference “Anthropology. Folklore Studies. Sociolinguistics” (2013). The introduction briefly reviews the papers presented.

Keywords: anthropology, study of folklore, sociolinguistics.

Vladislav Trentiev. Religious Practices of Nomads of Western Mongolia: The *Setertey Mal* Custom of Derbets

This paper describes a widespread modern Derbet tradition of unbloody cattle sacrifice via its consecration. Through analysing field samples and a multiplicity of published papers we discuss the main subjects of this phenomenon and identify historiographical points of view.

Keywords: Derbets, western Mongols, Turkic peoples, sacrifice, Buddhism, cattle breeding.

Natalia Petrova. The Curare Poison, Frozen Corpse and Wax Counterpart: The Illness and Death of Lenin in Rumours of the 1920s

This paper focuses on the identification of folklore parallels in rumours of the 1920s about Lenin’s illness and death, which were recorded in the memoirs, letters and news reports of OGPU. Early Soviet texts about Lenin contain the motifs of the good king, punishment of the sinner for the destruction of churches, and

complex motifs of the deliverer king. The discreteness of the first Soviet leader's image in the uncensored Soviet tradition of this period was due to the absence of a fixed official canon, which solidifies with the spread of the leader's cult.

Keywords: uncensored Soviet folklore, Lenin, rumours, folklorisation of history.

Anna Kozlova. "Plasticine Craft, Paper Craft, Handmade Cards..." or The Paradigm of Children's Gifts

The paper is dedicated to handmade gifts that children make for their mothers on International Women's Day on 8th March. The tradition of making this kind of present is reflected in the educational programs of kindergartens and schools. The author gives a history of the transformations in the material shape of the children's gift, which correlates to changes in its semantics and pragmatics. Particular attention is paid to children's gifts made of brittle and fragile materials, which are not destined for practical use or long-term storage. This form of present gained in popularity in the educational practices of the 1950s. The deficiency of any practical purpose for the child's gift was replaced by symbolic content (a gift has come to mean a child's love, hard work and care, works of art). The semantics of these objects is determined through the context of how children's gifts exist and are preserved in the material world of the recipient parent.

Keywords: gifts, Soviet holidays, 8th March, soviet childhood, institutionalization of ritual, sociology of objects.

Sergei Mokhov. "Memory Lives Not in Stones": The Rogozhskoe Cemetery Space in Visitors' Stories

Visitors to modern city graveyards are a very diverse group of people. They may be relatives of the buried, funeral service workers, members of a subculture or outcasts. The varied purposes of these visitors gives rise to a great many images, semantic meanings and practices of exploration for the same space. The research is based on four semi-structured interviews carried out during walks at the Rogozhskoe cemetery, Moscow (the go-along method). The respondents were the cemetery gatekeeper, a beggar, a woman visiting her relative's grave and an amateur historian. Basic markers and practices of graveyard exploration were discovered during the research. These are envy, projection, mysticism, neighbourhood influence and the educational role of gravestones.

Keywords: cemetery symbolic space, city cemetery, necrosociology.

Reviews

Pierre W. Orelus. *Rethinking Race, Class, Language, and Gender: A Dialogue with Noam Chomsky and Other Leading Scholars.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Pub., 2011. 203 p. (*Olga Blinova*)

The book being reviewed is a compilation of interviews with U.S. and British scholars in race theory, discrimination and social inequality. The conversations deal with incorporating discrimination studies into school and college-level teaching, Barack Obama's presidency, as well as the prospects of combatting inequality in our society.

Keywords: discrimination, race theory, social inequality.

Chris Gilleard, Paul Higgs. *Ageing, Corporeality and Embodiment.* L.; N.Y.; Delhi: Anthem Press, 2013. 212 p. (*Lubava Shatokhina*)

Chris Gilleard and Paul Higgs's *Ageing, Corporeality and Embodiment* introduces its readers to a number of established theories on aging and the body in the context of contemporary Western culture, and formulates original ideas by way of cases from the modern history of body regimes. The study's starting point is the recent so-called somatic turn in the social sciences. It places its main emphasis on the multiplicity and transformations of the logic of corporeality in 20th-century American mass culture. The main dimensions of the relationship between corporeality and age addressed in the book are gender, race, disability, and sexuality, as well as such practices as sex, dress, cosmetics, fitness, and aspirational medicine.

Keywords: corporeality, embodiment, aging, sexuality, gender, race, disability.

Jo B. Paoletti. *Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys from the Girls in America.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2012. 169 p. (*Olga Boytsova*)

The reviewed book explores ways of dressing children which have served to tell girls from boys in the USA during the 20th century. The author of the book traces the origins of strictly gendered cuts and colours and gives sociological and historical explanations, among which the generational paradigm is especially convincing.

The reviewer points out that despite Jo Paoletti's explicit statement that she rejects the semiotic idea of the language of fashion, the book makes an important contribution to the semiotics of fashion, and shows ways in which it may be helpful to semioticians.

Keywords: fashion studies, semiotics, pink, blue, children, boys, girls, gendered clothing.

Jack Goody. *Metals, Culture and Capitalism. An Essay on the Origins of the Modern World.* Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 349 p. (Yuri Berezkin)

Jack Goody is a patriarch of British anthropology who carried out important field work in West Africa. His new book is about the patterns of global history seen through a prism of the history of metallurgy and metal-working. The author frequently diverts his attention on topics that are not directly related to his theme and makes a lot of factual mistakes. His book is mostly based on general and often obsolete works and is aimed at readers who know little about the Neolithic or the Bronze Age but enjoy engaging in a quasi-scientific discourse. *Metals, Culture and Capitalism* is more akin to an imitation of a scientific text than as a study of history. In his concluding essay on monotheism, metals, democracy and other matters the author positions himself as a severe critic of the Eurocentric view of history. Here I would agree if it were an accurate analysis and not politically-engaged statements. Considering his age (well over 90), my criticism is not so much against Goody himself but more against people who considered this book as worthy of publication.

Keywords: Jack Goody, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze Age, metals, early civilizations, Eurocentrism.

Peter Trudgil. *Sociolinguistic Typology: Social Determinants of Linguistic Complexity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011 (reprinted 2012). 236 p. (Nikolai Vakhtin)

This review briefly reviews Peter Trudgill's book *Sociolinguistic Typology: Social Determinants of Linguistic Complexity*. The main conclusion of the book is that isolation leads to the growing complexity of language systems, while contact leads to their simplification. The book is useful not only for linguists because it poses important questions: Do languages accumulate changes? Do human cultures undergo irreversible changes? What is "the norm": the isolation of human languages and cultures, or their active interaction in contact?

Keywords: sociolinguistics, language complexity, language simplification, language contact, mature language features, Germanic languages.

Bocharov V.V. *Nepisanny zakon: Antropologia prava. Nauchnoye issledovanie.* 2nd ed. SPb.: AIK, 2013. 328 p. (Anna Asessorova)

The review is dedicated to a new monograph on legal anthropology by V.V. Bocharov – *Unwritten laws: Legal Anthropology. Scientific*

Research. The author has an original approach towards the content, structure and methodology of anthropological research into law.

Keywords: anthropology of law, law, legality, understanding of law.

Antropologia goroda. Issue 1: Kuturnye simvoly v gorodskom prostranstve. Einichnost i gorodskaya identichnost / Yu.P. Shabaev, I.L. Zherebtsova (eds.). Syktyvkar: Institut YaLI Komi NTs UrO RAN, 2013. 192 p. (*Victor Semenov*)

The review is dedicated to the book, which examines the role of ethnic cultural symbols in cities. The reviewer briefly describes the contents of the reviewed book and mentions its merits and failings.

Keywords: ethnic identity, cultural symbols, urban.

“My zdes zhivem”: sotsialnaya antropologiya malogo rossiiskogo goroda / V.A. Tishkov (ed.). M.: RGGU, 2013. 684 p., ill. (*Alisa Maksimova*)

The review briefly describes the idea and structure of the book *“We Live Here”:* *The Social Anthropology of Small Russian Towns*, based on field work in twenty towns. Consideration is given to the methodology and results of the study, as well as drawbacks regarding the coherence of the research standpoint, ways of presenting the findings and the quality of the text. In conclusion, the author touches upon some interesting issues.

Keywords: small towns, Russia, field trips.

Conferences

Denis Ermolin. Conference “Thanatological Practices and Narratives in Contemporary Culture: The Soviet and Post-Soviet Periods”

The publication reviews the conference on thanatological practices and narratives in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. To discuss the issue in a wide perspective the organization team stressed the transdisciplinarity in their research approaches and apparatus. The review consists of summaries of all the papers presented.

Keywords: rituals, death rites, commemorative practices, memorials, cemeteries.

Svetlana Ryzhakova. Anthropology in Contemporary India: On Signs and Symptoms of the Epoch. Reflections on the 44th Annual Conference of Indian Anthropological Society on 17th–19th January 2014 (Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India)

The paper offers an analysis of the major trends and perspectives of the discipline and knowledge of anthropology in India today. It is

based on the 44th Annual Conference of Indian Anthropological Society “Anthropology in Contemporary India: Prospects and Challenges” in January 2014, in Raipur (Chhattisgarh, India). The concepts of “development”, “traditions”, “modernization”, “social unrest” and “ethnicity” are discussed and scrutinized in detail. The idea of “anthropological knowledge”, the positions of local anthropological schools and the phenomenon of biography and personality in anthropological research are observed and studied.

Keywords: Indian anthropology, anthropological knowledge, development, tradition, trends.