

## Antropologicheskyy forum No. 23

### Articles

*Victoria Chervaneva.* Man as Natural and Supernatural (According to the Language of Mythological Prose)

In my paper I describe the system of character nomination in oral mythological prose texts, namely nominative units relevant to characters in natural and supernatural incarnations. Particular attention is paid to a syntagmatic level of analysis — methods of introducing characters and the linguistic tools engineered for this function. I also attempt to elucidate the role of this verbal system in the organisation of the narrative and the relationship between character references and content and communicative nature of the text.

Keywords: mythological narrative, narrative organisation, mythological character, nomination, reference, function.

*Kira Sycheva.* Ways of Traditional Knowledge Representation as Ritual Mythological Genres: On the Example of Altai Tradition

Ritual mythological genres are considered to be different ways of representing traditional knowledge that produce different text structures and content. Using the example of Altai tradition I have attempted to study and differentiate ritual

mythological genres and to describe them using simple semantic formulas. In this paper I propose a method of recording ritual mythological texts in such a way as to reproduce their content and grammatical integrity, which can often be damaged while they are being communicated.

Keywords: folklore genres, Altai tradition, myth, ritual, text structure, oral discourse structure.

*Elena Vorontsova.* Spiritual Verse in Modern Old-Believer Traditions in the South Vyatka Region

This article, using a set of sociological tools, deals with some problematic points of the oral tradition of spiritual verse, namely: the keepers of this tradition and its significance. The empirical basis of the investigation consists of the results of empirical research carried out during expeditions to the South Vyatka in the 1970s–2000s. This article traces the transformation of the modern oral tradition of spiritual verse among the Bespopovtsy Old Believers in this region.

Keywords: spiritual verses, Old Believers, Fedosevtsy, Fillipovtsy.

*Svetlana Koroleva.* The ‘Farewell to the Soul’ Ceremony with Ritual Substitution of the Deceased Person (Folk Phenomena of the Russian-Komi-Permyaks’ Transgressive Zone)

The article considers a funeral ceremony that includes a live substitute for the deceased person; this form of funeral ritual is atypical of Russian traditional culture. The ceremony takes place among Yurlinsky Russians — an ethnographic group of Russians who live among representatives of Komi-Permyak ethnos. A comparative analysis of ethnographic facts reveals that this ceremony is a result of interaction between the two ethnos. The figure of the ‘soul’ (a ritual substitute for the deceased person) and ‘pre-performance’ ritual behaviour of participants of the Russian funeral ceremony have been influenced by Komi-Permyak ceremonial practice. Komi, Maris, Mordvinians etc. have similar funeral ceremonies. The ritual equipment of the ‘soul’ for travelling ‘to another world’ becomes point of interaction of two different traditions. The Yurlinsky Russians developed a special form for this ceremony (involving sack tailoring, prayer singing, folk spiritual verse and lamentations), which is typical of Russian traditional culture.

Keywords: Russian traditional culture, Komi-Permyaks, interethnic communication, folk funeral ceremonialism, folk funeral lyrics, pre-performance ritual behavior.

**New and Traditional Religious Life in Modern Cities**

*Natalia Shlikhta.* ‘Orthodox’ and ‘Soviet’: On the Identity of Soviet Believers, 1940s — Early 1970s

The article examines the identity of the servants and the flock of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Ukrainian Republic through the post-war period. Drawing mainly on archival sources and using the theoretical framework suggested by Western and Russian historians, anthropologists, and sociologists, the author considers the process of constructing a ‘timely’ identity as an efficient survival strategy of the Church in the Soviet state. The article raises the following questions: what were the reasons in favour of dual identity; how was the dual ‘Orthodox-Soviet’ identity constructed; and how did this identity manifest itself in the daily life of Soviet citizens?

Keywords: identity, the Church, Orthodox, Soviet.

*Marat Safarov.* Mosque Attendance in Contemporary Religious Life of the Moscow Tatars

The ‘Religious renaissance’ in the Moscow Tatar community in the 1990s was mostly supported by the strong tradition of observing Muslim rites, which continued without interruption even during the Soviet period. Moscow Cathedral Mosque played an important role in the Islamic religious life of Moscow Tatars and functioned also as a social object. The perception of the Mosque as a place of collective prayer, solemnization and meetings with compatriots firmly established it as a central hub for Tatars. Attendance at the Mosque was understood to be an expression of ethnic and confessional identity.

However, despite increased total numbers of Tatars, especially young people, in the parish of the Moscow Cathedral Mosque, the overall percentage of Tatars decreased because of the presence of other nationalities. The changes in ethnic composition in Moscow Cathedral Mosque’s parish can be divided into two stages. First was an increase in the number of immigrants arriving from the North Caucasus. Secondly came an influx of labour immigrants from Central Asia. This alteration in the parish’s ethnic composition has had a substantial influence on the internal life of the Mosque.

The decrease in the proportion of Tatars among Moscow Cathedral Mosque’s parish is usually accounted for by the issue of overcrowding in both historical and current temporary buildings during collective prayer. Mental and axiological factors also seem to play a part. Factors such as the changing generations, urbanization, the Russification of a large part of the Moscow Tatar community and a profound involvement in Moscow life create a fundamental divide

between 'new' Tatars from those from rural areas with traditional lifestyles. Common features are typical in modern megacities: ethnic diversity in Moscow Cathedral Mosque's parish, lack of the social contact between 'old' and 'new' parishioners. These are extremely unusual for Moscow Tatars who have the traditional perception of the Mosque as a hub for the ethnic and confessional identity.

Keywords: Tatars, Islam, Moscow Cathedral Mosque, rite, urbanization, migration, identity.

*Elena Nosenko-Stein. 'Their' and 'Our' in the Modern Russian City: Jewish Sacred Geography*

In this article the author writes about the profound transformation of cultural memory in the former Soviet Union which resulted in fundamental changes in the cultural identities of all ex-Soviet ethnic and religious groups. This transformation led to a change in perception of sacred and profane spaces and their connection to the urban landscape. Nosenko-Stein emphasises that the modern Russian Jewish community is highly heterogeneous and that traditional Jewish sacred places including synagogues have lost their influence. Moreover, in some cases non-Jewish sacred places, like Christian churches have paradoxically become Jewish sacred places. According to the author, the so-called Jewish renaissance in post-Soviet Russia has led to a revived interest in Judaism and Jewish traditions. Therefore, Jewish community centres, philanthropic and youth organisations, centres for economic support, leisure time activities and places for Jewish sentiments and memories also function as Jewish sacred places. This inversion of sacred and profane spaces, typical of post-modern culture, is especially visible in small urban areas where there are no synagogues and the role of secular or semi-secular Jewish organisations is growing.

Keywords: religiosity, cultural memory, urban landscape, sacred and profane spaces.

*Victor Shnirelman. The End of Time or the Beginning of the New Cycle? Views of the End of Time in Christianity and Esotericism*

All global religions are anxious about the 'end of times'. Yet, while the Christians wait for an absolute end, esotericists believe in cyclical time and so for them, the 'end' means the beginning of a new cycle, or the New Age. Christians are scared by the arrival of the Antichrist and the persecution of believers, while esotericists are happily expectant of the birth of a new race which is viewed as more developed than a previous one. This article analyses the evident differences

between Christians and esotericists in their perception about what is going to happen in the future.

Keywords: Christianity, Russian Orthodoxy, esotericism, eschatology, race, Antichrist, Jews, New Age.

### Materials from Expeditions and Archives

*Evgeny Duvakin.* Evenki Folklore Texts from the Laboratory for Computational Lexicography Archive, Lomonosov Moscow State University

The paper is dedicated to Evenki (Tungus) folklore texts kept in the Laboratory for Computational Lexicography Archive, Lomonosov Moscow State University. The texts in question have been recorded in Western Evenki dialects and were collected in Western and Eastern Siberia during linguistic expeditions under the direction of Dr. Olga Kazakevich in 1998–1999, 2005–2009.

The Western Evenki corpora includes aetiologial, trickster, shamanic and demonological stories. Resumés of 57 texts, data about the storytellers, notes concerning particular motifs and their area of distribution are included in the article. Several narratives are of special interest because the motifs they contain have been recorded for the first time either in a particular Evenki dialect (texts No. 14, 20–21, 24, 35, 55) or in the Evenki tradition as a whole (texts No. 2, 47–48, 55).

Keywords: endangered languages, Siberia, Western Evenki, folklore, comparative mythology.

*Yury Kvashnin, Alexander Tkachev.* A Place of Worship on Lake Nyambo-to

This article describes a place of worship and burial site in the lower reaches of the Taz River, near Lake Nyambo-to. The discovery in the cemetery here of Selkup- and Nenets-type graves suggests that there is a zone of interethnic contact between tundra Nenets and Selkups. Based on the analysis of ethnographic sources and field data, the conclusion reached is that a place of worship and a cemetery were created by the Selkups in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is suggested that Selkups descendants, having mixed with the Nenets, began to bury their dead according to Nenets customs and continued to perform religious activities at the former Selkup ‘holy place’.

Keywords: Nenets, Selkups, Taz River, Lake Nyambo-to, burial, place of worship, spirit depiction, ceremony, interethnic contact, acculturation.

### **Ethnographic Notes**

*Konstantin Loginov.* 'Distribution of Pain and Fear' in Russian Boyish Games in the Mid-20th Century (On the Example of Vytegra and its Adjacent Areas)

The paper investigates specific folk games that helped boys learn to tolerate pain and fear from an early age. The study is based on the records of the author's own experience, which happened to have occurred in a decade when this folk tradition was actively declining and certain 'trends' were appearing in response to the demands of the emerging globalization subculture. The author believes this category of games has its roots in an archaic era, when the ability to tolerate pain and fear from childhood was needed for an initiation rite, which was mandatory for one's passage to adult life.

Keywords: traditional games, Russians, Karelia people.

### **Reviews**

*State Secularism and Lived Religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine /* Ed. by Catherine Wanner. N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2012. (*Sergey Shtyrkov*)

The book under consideration consists of articles on different aspects of secularisation policy and religious life in the Soviet Union. It presents a new anthropological approach to these themes and locates the issues within the wider processes of the social transformation of religion in secular and post-secular society.

Keywords: secularisation policy, Soviet religious practices, secular and post-secular society.

**Douglas Rogers.** *The Old Faith and the Russian Land. A Historical Ethnography of Ethics in the Urals.* Ithaca; L.: Cornell University Press, 2009, xvii+338 p. (*James White*)

This review examines Douglas Rogers' 2009 book *The Old Faith and the Russian Land*. This work studies the priestless Old Believers of the town of Sepych in the Perm' region over the course of three hundred years from an ethnographic perspective. I first set out the historiographical context in which Rogers' work is situated and then move onto analysing the key conceptual tools that he uses. I conclude that this admirable book is valuable for all readers with an interest in Old Belief.

Keywords: Old Belief, priestless, Russian Orthodoxy, ethnography.

**Stephanie Taylor, Karen Littleton.** *Contemporary Identities of Creativity and Creative Work.* Ashgate, 2012. (Anna Zhelnina)

The review analyses this book by Stephanie Taylor and Karen Littleton which focuses on the careers, identities and professional subjectivity of creative workers. The human dimension is supplemented by an analysis of the impact of professional networks as well as external economic conditions on the identification processes of creative professionals.

Keywords: creativity, precarity, subjectivity, creative careers.

**William Mitchell.** *Ya++: Chelovek, gorod, seti* [Me++: The Cyborg Self and the Networked City] / Tr. from English. Moscow: Strelka Press, 2012. 328 p. (Andrey Vozianov)

The chapters of this book by William Mitchell are brought together not so much by subject matter, but rather by context — the vigorous penetration of technology into everyday human life. The author shares his observations regarding the new options for storing and transmitting data, the ever more complicated infrastructure of social communication, the blurring of distinctions between the body and the environment, the physical and the virtual, production and consumption. The text combines a description of what has recently appeared and a prediction of what will emerge in the near future. The speed of technological evolution makes it harder to identify whether engineer-trained Mitchell was more successful using his intuition or with an ethnographical approach. Ideas that were novel to readers in 2003 (the year of the 1st edition in English) may well seem banal a decade later.

Keywords: city, digital humanities, new media, anthropology of perception.

**Yuri Takhteyev.** *Coding Places: Software Practice in a South American City.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012. 261 p. (Lubava Shatokhina)

Yuri Takhteyev's *Coding Places: Software Practice in a Southern American City* proved a particularly absorbing text because of the researcher's specific place in the field. Both an ethnographer and programmer, Takhteyev aims to understand the work of software developers in their local context. According to the author, the world of programming is a global entity that is nevertheless characterised by a core and periphery. Paradoxically, in a situation in which the work of a software developer is global and universalized, the location of the work itself has a strong impact on the nature of the practice. Thus,

the choice of Rio as a field research site is, while unusual, justified by the logic of the study's design.

Keywords: anthropology of professions, world of practice, open-source software, cultural geography.

*Antropologicheskiye traditsii: stili, stereotipy, paradigmny* [Anthropological Traditions: Styles, Stereotypes, Paradigms] / Ed. & compiled by A.L. Elfimov. Moscow: NLO, 2012. 208 p., ill. (*Galina Grosheva, Elena Khakhalkina*)

The reviewed collection contains articles or 'controversial essays' by well-known anthropologists on a variety of issues in anthropological research in the Western countries and the Russian Federation. Among the most important issues are anthropology's identity search as a discipline in the context of colonial and post-colonial eras, how to define the limits of modern anthropology and its correlation with similar disciplines, society's perception of it and the role and position of anthropologists and anthropology in the humanities etc.

Keywords: Western anthropology, Russian anthropology, socio-cultural anthropology, colonialism, post-colonialism.

**Anna Sirina.** *Evenki i Evensy v sovremennom mire: samosoznanie, prirodopolzovanie, mirovozzrenie* [Evenki and Evens in the Modern World: Self-Consciousness, Nature Management and World View]. Moscow: Vostochnaya literatura, 2012. 604 p., ill. (*Andrian Vlachov*)

The reviewed book is Anna Sirina's study *Evenki and Evens in the Modern World* which has initiated a lively discussion within the Russian anthropological community. The author's approach to the two peoples' ethnic identity is reviewed through the constructivist theory of ethnicity but at the same time also as a part of traditional Tungus ethnographic studies. The major conclusion of Sirina's book is that it is not possible to draw a distinct border between Evenki and Evens in the modern world, which is quite contrary to traditional views.

Keywords: Evenki, Evens, indigenous peoples of Siberia, constructivism.

**Olga Khristoforova.** *Ikota: Mifologicheskiy personazh v lokalnoy traditsii* [Ikota: Mythological Characters in Local Traditions]. Moscow: RGGU, 2013. 304 p. (*Ekaterina Melnikova*)

The review considers Olga Khristoforova's book which is dedicated to one of the most exotic phenomenon of the popular culture known



as *ikota* or *klikushestvo*. The author uncovers rich material on modern folklore and everyday practices related to *ikota*, their genesis, development and meaning in the tradition of Bespopovtsy Old Believers of the Upper Kama region.

Keywords: popular belief, folklore, mythology, Old Believers, klikushestvo.

**Olga Khristoforova.** *Ikota: Mifologicheskiy personazh v lokalnoy traditsii* [Ikota: Mythological Characters in Local Traditions]. Moscow: RGGU, 2013. 304 p. (*Ludmila Vinogradova*)

The review evaluates the results of Olga Khristoforova's new research dedicated to the phenomenon of *klikushestvo* ('*ikotnichestvo*'), which remains relevant in modern folk beliefs among those living in the Upper Kama region. Although the book's subtitle draws attention to the demonological aspect of the study ("Mythological Characters in Local Traditions"), in fact the author's main focus remains on a much wider circle of issues that typify ideas about being possessed by a pathogenic spirit ('*ikotka*' / '*poshibka*') as an extremely complex socio-cultural phenomenon and that describe a special explanatory model that regulates the processes of interpersonal communication.

Keywords: cultural anthropology, popular folk beliefs, local tradition, mythological character, klikushestvo.