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V. N. Tenishev's 'Peasant' Programme: Ideology and Practice

Any programme for ethnographical fieldwork of whatever kind inevitably acts, alongside its role as an instrument for the study of culture, as a meta-textual expression of the scholarly tradition from which it is drawn: of the levels of knowledge and governing analytical paradigms within that tradition, and of the subjective interests that drive work within it. The text of the programme will consist, as it were, of quotations from a variety of different scholarly and cultural sources. In this regard, such a programme can be considered at one and the same time as a source for the history of the discipline, and as an ethnographical source in its own right, facilitating the reconstruction of the state of scholarly knowledge that existed when it was put together, the fragments of information that formed the basis for the questions in the programme itself.

The above comments are extremely relevant to the 'Programme for Collecting Ethnographical Information about the Peasants of Central Russia', the grandiose fieldwork project put together in the late nineteenth century by Prince Vladimir Nikolaevich Tenishev, the well-known

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Russian industrialist, known in his day as ‘one of the foremost devotees of Russian ethnography’. The purpose of the programme that Tenishev set up the Ethnographical Bureau in St Petersburg to support in 1897 was to *‘illuminate as fully and widely as possible the spiritual and daily life of the Great Russian population and thus to fill the gaps relating to this subject in our ethnographical literature’* [Tsirkulyary 1899].

Obviously, it would be impossible to reconstruct all the circumstances that determined the ‘personality’ of the Programme, the character of its contents. V. N. Tenishev’s personal attitudes and methodological principles, the political and socio-economic conditions in Russia, the state of ethnographical knowledge itself — all this and more underpinned, whether directly or indirectly, the structure of the Programme. However, one particular factor about the project, perhaps the most significant, the most influential in terms of the project’s intellectual character, can be mentioned. This was Tenishev’s attraction to positivism, an intellectual trend that had developed in sociology and that asserted the exceptional intellectual status of the natural sciences and of mathematics, disciplines that were credited with expressing internal objectivity. Tenishev’s positivist convictions expressed themselves at several levels: in the way that the aims of the Programme were formulated, in the orientation of the questions themselves towards social facts, and in the method of collecting information, which assumed that what was required from the project’s correspondents was *‘facts, not generalizations or conclusions; hence, the response to the questions must take the form of individual fragmentary observations, where the author acts as a reliable witness of things actually heard and seen in the daily life of the people’* [Programma 1898: 5]. In addition, according to V. N. Tenishev’s plans, the programme for collection ethnographical facts was supposed primarily to have practical ends in view, most particularly, forming a basis for reliable predictions about people’s behaviour and actions.

Tenishev’s attraction to positivism is easy to explain if one bears in mind that the supposed ‘objectivity’ of the study of culture was from the earliest times a problem of the ethnography’s professional status, related to the difficulty, within ethnography, of verifying data and the results based on these. In turn, the problem of the reliability of scholarly conclusions and interpretations became obvious against the background of the governing academic schools within the study of ethnography and folklore from 1850 onwards — mythological, historical, and evolutionary — of their emphasis on archaic and ancient materials, on so-called ‘survivals’, and their tradition of concerning themselves primarily with reconstructions of the past as experienced by different peoples.

At the same time, there were voices raised in favour of moving ethnography's focus from 'archaeology' to more practical applications, above all, the study of the contemporary culture of different peoples. Thus, the political philosopher Nikolai Chernyshevsky, criticising ethnographers' capacity to ignore topical problems, and setting ethnography's agenda for the new age, noted that ethnography should not concern itself *'merely with olden times; it should study the daily life of peoples in the modern world, contemporary social and economic reality, and "generally the current state of the manner of thinking among the people"'* [Tokarev 1966: 277]. The so-called 'new' ethnography with its practical aims, concerned with the study of daily life 'right at this moment' was supposed also to have its own method for the acquisition of knowledge — the observation of reality and the collection of empirical facts. In the words of the compiler of one of the countless programmes for studying the *pozemelnaya obshchina* [land commune] published in the late nineteenth century, the scholar was to stick to sober logical conclusions and to impartial assessments of the facts [*Opyt programmy* 1878: 2].

The late nineteenth century was marked by the dominance of positivist views in European academic thinking generally, and also by an upsurge of interest in the history and present state of the peasantry, most particularly in issues connected with customary law. As a result, an impressive number of programmes for ethnographical fieldwork came out — this was at the time an immensely popular genre of scholarly text. Thus, scholarly attention progressively shifted from the question of origins to the question of the contemporary significance of phenomena. In the 1890s, at the time when Tenishev's Programme was compiled, this tendency had made itself felt in Russian academic practice as well, leading to a desire to study normative culture of the present day, rather than to collect 'curiosities' and 'exotica'. This was also the era when, in the West, Durkheim's pioneering sociological texts were being published, with their call to study social facts, like any others, by the methods of academic positivism [Tokarev 1978: 207]. In other words, what a modern scholar has called *'the assimilation of social processes to "natural" ones, as studied in the social sciences'* had taken place [Sokolovsky 2004: 83].

The drive for accuracy and objectivity in the description of culture, a drive meant to elevate the status of ethnography from the positivist point of view, also had expression in public activities of various kinds. Already in 1864, a Society for Amateurs of the Natural Sciences — with ethnography included among them — was set up at Moscow University. At this point, interest within the discipline shifted towards the study of social relations, of the family, the community, and customary law — that is, into the sphere where, as the members of the society believed, the study of ethnography would have relevance

to real life. Dozens of programmes directing the collection of information about common law, communal land use, and family relationships began appearing; some were later used as the basis for Tenishev's own 'Peasant' Programme.¹

This, then, was the academic and social context in which Tenishev's Programme appeared, first as a 'draft' version (Smolensk 1896). A year later — after consultations with the Smolensk ethnographer and local historian V. N. Dobrovolsky and with A. F. Bulgakov, another local historian — it appeared in significantly expanded form, as *Programmes for the Collection of Ethnographical Information about the Peasants of European Russia*,² a second, corrected and enlarged, edition was published in 1898.

Tenishev's Programme occupies a special position among works of its kind. In essence, the project that he proposed was the first ever attempt to initiate a unified academic study of the peasantry in all its ramifications. In order to get to grips with the task of organising '*an all-round study of the daily life of the Great Russian peasantry*', Tenishev placed at the basis of his Programme a classification that he had worked out for, and set out in, his earlier book, *The Activities of Man* [Tenishev 1897]. Following this, the issues to be studied were organised '*according to the demands of the individual and of the social life of humanity, to which, in the given environmental conditions, the actions and behaviour of the particular people under study contribute*' [Programma 1898: 2].³

The concept of '*life needs*' that V. N. Tenishev formulated at this stage in some respects anticipates Malinowski's theory of needs as formulated some decades later, and it underlies the organisation of the thematic sections used by Tenishev himself in his Programme, and the inter-relations between these, explaining the differing lengths of the different sections and the greater or lesser degree of detail embraced by the questions included. Even at a cursory glance, an emphasis on social, legal, and economic relations, which the compilers of the Programme considered entirely subject to accurate documentation, is obvious. Almost half of the roughly 2500 questions included relate to these topics. On the other hand, significantly less space is occupied by the sections relating to ritual practices, to folk beliefs and the folk calendar, to medicine, and to material culture — that is, to subjects which, in Tenishev's view, were marginal in terms of the interests of modern ethnography.

From the point of view of today's ethnographical traditions and the

¹ All such sources are listed in [Programma 1898: 9–10].

² *Programmy etnograficheskikh svedenii o krestyanakh Tsentral'noi Rossii*. Smolensk, 1897.

³ On Tenishev's attitudes, see [Firsov 1988].

classifications currently in use, the disposition of questions among thematic sections often seems curious and indeed illogical. For instance, it seems decidedly odd to see different aspects of wedding practice divided up in the following way: **Ж)** *Beliefs. Knowledge. Language. Writing. Art.* and **И)** *Intimacy between the Sexes. Marriage. Deviations from Legitimate Marriage*. This appears, however, to be a reflection of Tenishev's underlying attitudes to culture, which in turn caused him to draw a distinction between the 'irrational' phenomena associated with the wedding (beliefs, omens, sorcery and magic, etc.) — as placed in section **Ж)** — and the 'rational' phenomena associated with it (time, location, participants, rules, prohibitions and so on — as placed in section **И)**. Much the same picture is evident in the case of occupations, habitations, domestic utensils, etc. — the concepts associated with these and reflected in rituals and everyday behaviour were assigned to section **Ж)**, while the everyday realities of work, domestic life, etc., which were deemed to be immediately observable empirical facts, went into section **З)** *The Family. The Customary Ordering of Life*.

Section **К)**, *Exceptional Circumstances*, has, as the title suggests, a very particular character. Here Tenishev included issues that, in his view, were to be considered cultural anomalies: death, illness, quarrels, crimes, extra-marital relationships, the hermit life, natural disasters and so on. The creation of this section was determined by the 'theory of needs' that I mentioned above, according to which '*exceptional circumstances*' impede people from '*carrying out their needs in individual and in social life*'. This classification in turn reflected the positivist view of culture, which saw pragmatism as exclusively characteristic of the daily life of the peasantry; crises of whatever kind, such as might recur from time to time, and the solutions evolved for these, were assumed to lie within the field of 'ordeals' and 'superstitions', i.e., to be part of the cultural domain that, in terms of the 'natural sciences' paradigm, was classified as 'irrational'.

When analysing the scientific potential of Tenishev's Programme, it is extremely helpful to adopt the position that every question included in the pro-forma must have had something approaching an anticipated answer; after all, one can only ask about topics of which one already has some degree of knowledge. Perceived in this way, the questionnaire can be seen to contain an analytical classification and an interpretive schema. In other words, the information that the Ethnographical Bureau collected was to a significant extent pre-determined by the phrasing and content of the questions that it employed. The primacy of expected answers to which I refer derived from the fact that the questions formulated for the 'peasant' Programme were based on the answers already received to earlier programmes evolved by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society

and the Imperial Society of Amateurs of Anthropology and Ethnography [IOLEAiE]. In turn, these answers enabled the compilers of the Programme (Dobrovolsky and Bulgakov as well as Tenishev) to expand and fine-tune their questions, on the one hand, and to introduce elements of suggestion and direction on the other. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to claim that the *Programme for the Collection of Ethnographical Information about the Peasants of European Russia* represents the result of accumulated experience not only as related to the ‘questions’ posed in the past, but also in relation to the answers received. Thus, the questions in the Programme can be seen as containing ethnographical information, and often a ready-made interpretation of cultural phenomena, in advance.

As an illustration, one might take the questions relating to popular beliefs (section Ж), and attempt to make explicit the ethnographical facts that are contained in these. Even if one has no idea of the answers that Tenishev’s Programme in fact generated, the formulation of the questions would allow one to partially reconstruct the world-view of the Russian peasants.

Nature. During thunder and heavy rain the skies open; several different skies can exist at one and the same time; the sun and the moon can have families (mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives); a falling star means that someone is going to be born or die, or that an angel has rebelled against God; the rainbow is a bridge along which you can get to heaven, or a living creature that drinks water; the Milky Way is the path along which dead people go, and known as the ‘Goose Way’; the Northern Lights mean a battle between the forces of good and evil and can predict misfortune of some kind; during eclipses, people make noise to bring the phenomenon to an end; in order to stop lightning striking the house, people hang *gnilushki* (fly agaric) at the windows; during thunder devils hide behind people or trees; the rain that falls after the first clap of thunder is considered to have healing powers; during snowstorms devils play or dead men come out of their tombs; there are sacred groves and trees; it is a sin to chop down an old tree, and if you do, it means bad luck; a hollow oak can be used for healing people; in the courtyard, people usually keep a ‘chicken god’; in order to make rain fall, frogs, fleas, and crickets are used, or women may mow a lake or push passers-by into it.

Demonology. Devils can be married, but they can also be single; a column of dust in a whirlwind shape will have been raised by a devil whirling round during a demon marriage, and if you throw a knife into the middle, then it’ll get covered with blood; devils can have sexual relations with women and with priests; devils visit women in the form of fiery dragons; before children are christened, devils can catch them and swap them for one of their own; devils love to take the form of a black dog and a black cat; when thunder strikes, black

cats and dogs are driven out of the house; the devil can enter a covered vessel holding water, or the mouth of someone yawning, if he or she doesn't make the sign of the cross at it; the word 'devil' may not be said aloud; a child whom its parents have cursed in their hearts will be seized by unclean spirits; drink and tobacco were invented by the devil; the devil shows drunks the way home; a person with no eyelashes is taken to be a devil; a suicide is popularly described as 'the devil's ram'; stories about supernatural beings — Dolya, Nedolya, Zlydna, Beda, Gore, Likha, Moroka, Mara, are in wide circulation among the people; shape-changers¹ are the souls of unbaptised infants or dead warlocks; in order that werewolves² don't devour a sleeping person, you have to open the gates and make the sign of the cross; at Christmas, werewolves take the form of young men and jesters or of a mare who devours young women; a house-spirit lives in every dwelling, and helps the people who live there; when people move into a new house, they invite the house spirit in; house spirits are mischievous, and will grab you by the topknot, they smother sleepers at night; the house spirit can foretell the future; sometimes the house spirit will have a fight with a house spirit from somewhere else; in order that the house spirit doesn't torment a horse, people tie a whip, mittens, wheel-rims [*onuchi*] to the horse's sides; wood demons live in forests and they lead people astray or tickle people who are lost to death; wood demons can make herds of wolves attack stock in the fields; if you cross a wood demon's tracks, it may make you ill; in order to cure an illness, you leave bread and salt in the woods; wood demons have wives and families; they abduct girls so they can marry them and unchristened children; wood demons teach people they have abducted to be sorcerers; you can call up a wood demon and make a contract with him; other spirits who live in the woods include the *rusalka*, the *borovik*, the *mokhovik*, and so on.

One could proliferate examples, but enough have been cited to illustrate that many questions in Tenishev's Programme literally 'script' the answers received, directing them along particular channels that were determined in advance. This especially applies to the 'narrow' questions that were formulated when the second edition of the Programme was put together, and which were made more detailed in the attempt to increase the 'reliability' of the material collected. In some cases, the Programme compelled its users to observe only those incidents and details which fitted existing concepts about the culture under study, which corresponded to certain distinctive categories. The questions were put together by concrete individuals with their own visual and conceptual experience, which

¹ *oborotni*, i.e. werewolves, werebears, etc. [Editor].

² *volkolaki*. [Editor].

in turn made them observe reality from one or other point of view. This confirms the well-known phenomenon whereby the governing paradigm in a discipline influences the way reality is perceived, in sciences and social sciences as well as humanities.¹

Here I would like to cite a particularly vivid and instructive example: the Italian astronomer Schiaparelli's discovery of 'channels' on Mars, a phenomenon never seen by anyone before; after Schiaparelli had made this discovery, later investigators using the same equipment obediently also 'espied' these notorious channels; this continued for decades. It is telling also that another astronomer, Graff, complained that he had never seen these channels himself because he lacked the 'imagination' with which many of his colleagues were endowed [Lem 1993: 347].

Moving back to Tenishev's Programme, it is worth observing also that any ethnographical questionnaire is not only a vital instrument for collecting information, but a special genre of academic investigation in its own right, characterised by an objectively observable striving to categorise and structure the information received. This is reflected both in the order of the questions and in the way they were formulated. The governing model in his or her discipline 'forces' a scholar to put together fieldwork programmes in ways that confirm the viability of the model itself.

It's entirely natural that the academic assumptions that shape the questions should touch on this or that local tradition. However, the Tenishev programme was intended as a template for collecting material from almost the whole of European Russia. In this context, questions start to 'hedge in' the information once they start being addressed to traditions other than the ones that shaped them in the first place.

The problem of constrictive formulation can be examined with regard to the above-mentioned section *Ж) Beliefs*, which was put together by Dobrovolsky, who to a large extent worked on the basis of the material most familiar to him — the ethnography and folklore of Smolensk and Oryol Provinces. Although Dobrovolsky did cite N. A. Yanchuk's *Programme for the Collection of Ethnographical Information* [Dobrovolsky 1896], he still made a number of changes to the template that can only be explained by his use of other materials drawn from a specific local tradition (in this case, Western Russian).

In addition, the influence of the author's own fieldwork experience is betrayed in the dialect words and phrases that are used. Thus, in paragraph no. 204 of the Programme, relating to occupations, we find the following question: *'Are there any popular spells exhorting*

¹ See the discussion of objectivity in fieldwork published in *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*. 2006. No. 2. [Editor].

spirits that embody different illnesses to attack people? Does anyone say, zagodui vas dvenadtsat tysyach rodimtsev ili Perun [may twelve thousand babies or Perun overcome you] or varagusha tebya zatryasi [may fever shake you]?’ This clearly bespeaks personal experience. Dobrovolsky’s use of lexis from Smolensk province — his fieldwork was all done in Western Russian — in turn points to the area of distribution of the customs that he mentions (Roslavlsky District, Smolensk Province). And another question in the Programme, *‘Will the host be angry if someone shouts over the fence when he is planting hemp, “konopelki tyu-tyu”’*¹ [C 222], depends for its existence on the fact that this custom was current in Porechsky District, also in Smolensk Province. *‘If anyone calls cross the hedge, konopelki tyu-tyu, the peasant man will become fearfully angry: he regards this as a spell’* [*Smolenskii slovar’* 1914: 340]. Also in this category is the question in paragraph 187 relating to rain falling when the sun is shining: *‘Is it not the case that people say, “The sun has grimaced”’* [solntse vykalilo]² [*Smolenskii slovar* 1914: 857].

One finds ‘narrow’ questions derived from local traditions not only at the level of linguistic usage, but of ritual practice as well. For example, in paragraph 220, it is asked: *‘What rituals are used by bee-keepers to drive out strange bees when these get into the hive? Do they perhaps use a wolf’s jaw-bone?’* Once again, Smolensk practices lie at the root of the question [*Smolenskii slovar* 1914: 83]. This is true also of a question about the ritual for summoning up rain: *‘What do you do with crickets, fleas, and frogs to call up rain.’* Here it was Dobrovolsky’s experience in Oryol Province that prompted the question: *‘They kill frogs and tie them on a string along with crickets and fleas, and hang these creatures up somewhere on a tree’* [*Smolenskii slovar* 1914: 173].

Once again, many more examples could be found, but enough has been said to make clear that a question prompted by a researcher’s knowledge of ethnographical materials in one place (and very productive in relation to this) will, once included in a programme that is aimed at the coverage of a very large territory, only allow the researcher to mark the boundaries of distribution of the particular phenomenon of culture that he or she happens to be interested in.³ At the same time, fairness compels one to recognise that there are counter-examples as well. For example, the Programme included questions on the couvades, a phenomenon ignored by N. A. Yan-

¹ Roughly, ‘Oh-ho, hemp!’ [Editor].

² The slightly awkward translation reflects the fact that the original is a leading question. [Editor].

³ That is, questions of this kind were likely to produce the response, ‘I’ve never heard of anyone doing that,’ rather than to establish what customs actually applied in a locality. They functioned as what would now be described as ‘closed questions’. [Editor].

chuk, because a variant of the practice — the sole example then known in the East Slavonic area — had been discovered by Dobrovolsky in the course of his work on Smolensk [Dobrovolsky 1894: 371–2]. The answers that were received to the Tenishev questionnaires made a major contribution to ethnographical knowledge about the geographical distribution of the couvades; it turned out that the custom was known not only in Western Russia, but almost everywhere in Russian traditional culture as well.

One has to assume that the characteristics of Tenishev's Programme that have been outlined above are not idiosyncratic features found only in this and explained by subjective factors, for example the accumulated knowledge of the Programme's compilers or the precise nature of their field experience. It would seem that any general programme attempting a unified description and underpinned by a view that the culture of an entire people is something existing in reality as a complete whole, in generalised form, and not as a multiplicity of variants, is likely to be similar to this.

It is clear that this and other peculiarities of the Programme made it difficult for it to be used, as the compilers' positivist standpoint had made them hope that it would be, as the instrument of an 'objective' description of cultural forms. In addition, the questions themselves, or, to be more accurate, the way that they were formulated, assumed radically different methods of collecting data in different cases: as a result, the data collected was bound to vary in terms of its reliability. Some questions were addressed to the correspondents of the Tenishev Bureau themselves, most of whom belonged to the village intelligentsia,¹ asking them to describe the ethnographical material they could observe around them. It should be noted that though the circulars sent out *'to the localities'* contained a call to place oneself in the position of *'a reliable witness of things actually heard and seen in the daily life of the people'* [Tsirkulyary 1899], a certain degree of construction of ethnographical reality was inevitable at the level of observation, given that the facts were filtered through the 'sieve' of the correspondent's personal experience and concepts, on the one hand, and shaped by the nature of the question on the other. All in all, the Programme — or, to be more accurate, the theory of needs that lay at its foundation — to some extent determined what given correspondents would observe and record, and what would escape their attention.

Other questions, however, were aimed at getting answers directly from informants, and here textual space was given over to peasant

¹ i.e. were working as schoolteachers, agronomists etc.; these were people who would have received some kind of secondary education at least, and hence been at a distance from the 'traditional culture' they were asked to observe. [Editor].

'voices' and interpretations. The answers given here represent quite a different kind of ethnographical source: not 'primary' experience, but a verbalised articulation of this, a 're-telling', and hence at some level also an interpretation of this. Thus, the questions in the Programme were right from the beginning aimed at different methods of collecting and describing ethnographical material, a point that undoubtedly shaped the different characters of the responses as an informational resource.

One other important trait of the 'peasant' Programme, or to be more accurate, of the organisation of work to implement the programme, was represented by the work of the staff of the Bureau regulating the collection of information. Here once more, V. N. Tenishev's interest above all in 'practical' ethnography, aimed at the understanding of popular life 'at the present moment', comes through. In the circulars sent out to correspondents, the latter were told what kind of material they were supposed to collect, and what kind was not considered to have scholarly value. Not surprisingly, folkloric texts 'drew the short straw'. In a circular from 1899, this point was put as follows: *'bearing in mind, that the most important cycle of folk tales has been exhaustively documented by Afanasyev and Dal, and that recording endless variants of these stories is an activity of little interest and value, the Bureau has decided that from now on it will accept only recordings of folk tales that portray the relationship between landowners and their serfs in former days, or between priests and the peasantry'* [Tsirkulyary 1899].

Similar priorities are made clear in other documents from early 1899 relating to the collection of spells and of folk songs: once again, most of these, in the view of the staff of the Bureau, had already been documented, and genres such as the *chastushka* and the 'factory' song had no particular value. Hence, correspondents should *'concentrate on collecting soldiers' songs or those sung for the departure of recruits into the army, and lyric songs of an archaic kind'* [Tsirkulyary 1899]. There is no doubt that the effort to restrict the collection of folklore, and more particularly, the motives given for this, derive from the characteristic view at the period of folklore as a static, closed, once-and-for-all created corpus of texts, and not as the process of generation of new texts, a 'living' phenomenon, endlessly varied in its ontological essence.

Another far from unimportant factor prompting the staff to advocate constraints of this kind was the underlying and problematic ambition of illuminating, if possible, all aspects of the culture of the Russian people. The Programme was unprecedented in terms of the number of questions included, and had been sent to correspondents all over the 23 provinces of Central Russia; it had pretensions to covering the entire life of the Russian peasantry. Inevitably, it also generated a positive deluge of ethnographical information, far beyond the

capacities of anyone to work through and analyse. As the avalanche mounted in 1899, new circulars were sent out to correspondents stating that material was no longer being collected under some sections of the Programme, or as relating to certain provinces (for instance, Vologda, Oryol, and so on) where the staff of the Bureau felt that exhaustive documentation already existed. Thus, in March 1899, the Ethnographical Bureau announced its intention to cease accepting material under section *I) General Information on the Life of the Peasantry*, section *II) Public Prescriptions, Customs, or Laws Regulating the Relations of Peasants with Each Other or of Peasants and Society More Broadly*, and section *Ж) Beliefs. Knowledge. Language. Writing. Art*. Not much later, an announcement went out that only information received on the basis of personal observation would be accepted, and not anything derived from ‘rumours, paraphrases, or accounts that have appeared in print’ [Tsirkulyary 1899].

All the same, despite these restricts, over a three-year period (1898–1900) of work implementing the Programme an immensely rich archive of material had been collected, which in turn gave a uniquely detailed overview of Russian traditional culture across twenty-three provinces of European Russia during the second half of the nineteenth century. The efforts of 364 correspondents produced a full 1873 manuscripts; these, together with 2356 typescript copies made in 1898–1901, comprised the archive of the Ethnographical Bureau.

In coming to a general evaluation of Tenishev’s *Programme*, I would first of all emphasise the all-embracing nature of the project — to a greater or lesser extent, the questions included touch on almost all elements in peasant life — and at the same time, its positivist character, as expressed above all in the structural dichotomy that runs right through the project, classifying all ethnographical material that might come within its purview as either ‘rational’ or ‘irrational’.

On one level, the Programme represented the culmination of existing work on compiling fieldwork schedules as it had taken place over the second half of the twentieth century, drawing both on the questions previously asked and on the answers that they had adduced. At the same time, it itself became in turn the basis upon which further programmes of a more specialised and thematically-oriented kind were in time to be composed.

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