

Antropologicheskyy Forum No. 16

Forum

Anthropology and Sociology

This “Forum” is dedicated to the relationship between sociology and social (cultural) anthropology. The Editorial Board asked scholars of both disciplines to write about the divisions and differences between them.

Keywords: social sciences, sociology, anthropology, ethnography, social anthropology, cultural anthropology, traditional culture.

Discussion of Sergei Sokolovsky’s Article

Sergei Sokolovsky’s article “On Copyright and Culture” is published in this section. The paper is followed by a discussion of traditional culture and folklore as intellectual property. Scholars from different countries take part in the discussion.

Keywords: traditional culture, folklore, intellectual property, copyright.

Articles

Sergey Alymov. The Concept of “Survival” and Soviet Social Sciences in the 1950s–1960s

The article looks at the functionality of the concept of “survival” in Soviet ideology and the social sciences in the 1950s–1960s. This concept, coined by the evolutionists of the 19th century, acquired a very broad interpretation in the Soviet Union and was used to designate

almost all negative social phenomena which contradicted socialism. The widespread usage of the concept led to some attempts to understand why these “survivors” do not “die out”, and to uncover their social roots. The author analyzes these attempts in philosophy, ethnography and sociology during this period and claims that the concept of “survival” was of central importance in the revival of empirical social research in the Soviet Union in the 1950s.

Keywords: survival, Soviet ethnography, Soviet sociology, communist ideology, history of concepts, social thought during the “Thaw”.

Oksana Gailit. Religion in a “Young” Society: Notes on the Formation of Soviet Everyday Life

The article considers the formation of new Soviet everyday life. Everyday life is regarded as the world of ordinary culture which has a standard set of things, situations and acts, and also habitual and clear ways of explaining and perceiving reality. The formation of Soviet daily life was influenced by different factors: the new government’s secularization policy, de-urbanization and marginalization due to the war and the Revolution, changes in the age and social structure of society. The influence of such contradictory factors led to a revival of pagan and mystical trends in culture, and also to the transformation of religious representations into quasi-religious ones.

The active participation of young people in this process became one of key factors of the formation of Soviet society. The first generation of Soviet youth became the carriers and translators of new values and ideals that were free from religion. However, their denial of religious beliefs was not the result of their worldview but a socio-political choice. Denying religion in hope of social and career growth, these people had a peasant habitus. Elements of a religious worldview, first of all adhering to archaic ritual practices and at a more mature age to orthodox ceremonies, were brought into atheistic daily life.

Keywords: religion, religious consciousness, Soviet society, everyday life, youth.

Darya Dimke. Soviet Children’s Games: Between Utopia and Reality

The perceptions of a child and childhood in different societies are reflected through children games both that are taught by grown-ups to their children or invented by the children for themselves. The present paper proposes the analysis of children games — specifically in the Soviet socialization system of the 1960s, which were associated with physical labour — and different techniques for internal control

over the child collective and the perception of an ideal society. This paper presents the specific features of such games and shows how this perception of childhood was inherited and transformed among children at the beginning of the 1960s. Soviet childhood and children's games are viewed as special phenomena, inherent for "utopic communities". The empirical data for the present paper was taken from interviews with members of the Young Frounzensy commune — a special pioneer school which functioned in Leningrad at the beginning of the 1960s.

Keywords: childhood in the USSR, 1960s, perception of childhood, utopia, cultural memory, children's games.

Anastasya Ilchenko, Alexander Panchenko. "Where Are You Going, Whores?": Characters of Contemporary Jokes and the Migration of Folklore Plotlines

Folklorists studying contemporary joke cycles often have to discuss the relationship between particular plotlines and their characters. Until recently, researchers paid excessive attention to the functional and fictional features of joke characters rather than carrying out a comparative analysis of joke plotlines. The paper deals with the history of migration and the semantic transformations of an international joke that is represented in contemporary Russian culture by two subtypes: "Odessatrain" and "Where are you going, whores?". It seems that the joke appeared initially in British and American culture as a reaction by the "collective subconsciousness" to the feminist movement and the struggle for women's rights. In Russian culture, the joke moves to the domain of school / teenager folklore and loses its "adult" connotations. The plotline undergoes partial "re-semantization", a process which is often an effect of the migration of literary and folklore subjects.

Keywords: contemporary jokes, migration of folklore plots, student folklore, school folklore, projective inversion, feminist movement.

Seminar "Soviet Traditions"

Dmitry Baranov. The "Taming" of Tradition: The Inclusion of the Concept of Tradition into the Narrative of the Soviet People (Based on the State Ethnographic Museum of the Peoples of the USSR)

The article is based on the analysis of museum objects from the State Ethnographic Museum of the Peoples of the USSR marked as "traditional". The author traces how the concept of tradition was included into the narrative in 1950s–1960s, when it was problematized.

Keywords: Soviet people, tradition, ethnography, the State Ethnographic Museum.

Konstantin Bogdanov. Soviet Champagne: Holiday History

The article is devoted to the history of “Soviet Champagne”. It is regarded against the broad background of the political history of the USSR.

Keywords: Soviet Champagne, Soviet history.

Victoria Donovan. “Idya nazad, shagaem vpered”: Kraevedcheskie Museums and the Making of Local Memory in North West Russia, 1956–1981

The author examines the creation of regional post-Stalin kraevedcheskie museums based on the case study of the Russian North West, and specifically of Novgorod, Pskov, and Vologda. These towns were localities with specific historical associations in Russian culture that were emphasized, reinterpreted, ignored, or challenged in accordance with their correspondence to the vision of national history endorsed by the Soviet State.

At the same time, sites of local memory were made to correspond with the central tenets of post-Stalin ideology: transformative modernization, the improvement in the material wellbeing of the Soviet people, and democratic governance were consequently important themes in any presentation of the local reality. The regeneration of interest in the local past gave rise to public challenges to established historical narratives and expressions of patriotism that departed significantly from the conservative and presentist understanding of local identity in official discourse.

Keywords: kraevedenie, kraevedcheskie museums, Novgorod, Pskov, Vologda, post-Stalin.

Kirill Maslinsky. Teacher at a Railroad-Sponsored School (On the Typology of Soviet Pedagogical Communities)

This article presents a case study of Soviet teachers’ professional identity based on interviews with former teachers of railroad-sponsored schools in the Orenburg region. This group demonstrates a great deal of loyalty to their institutions and has a high perception of their professional autonomy and status. The proposed explanation for the specific professional identity of the studied group is at the level of the structure of the local pedagogical community and its

relations with the educational authorities. All Soviet railroad-sponsored schools were subordinate not to the local educational department but to railroad branches of the educational department (often geographically remote). This created two symbolic resources for teachers' professional experience: first, a translocal professional community of railroad branches, and second, an administrative barrier between railroad schools and the local educational administration, heavily used by former teachers in constructing narratives on professional autonomy.

Keywords: anthropology of education, Soviet education, teacher, professional identity, autonomy, railroad-sponsored schools.

Alexandra Piir. On an Unformed Tradition: Work with Children in Leningrad Households

For thirty years, from the mid-1920s until the mid-1950s, Soviet government agencies of different levels were trying to organize residence-based work with children. The main aim of this work was proclaimed as fighting child neglect and hooliganism. There were many Soviet organizations which had to solve the problem of "non-supervision": the society "Drug detei" ("Children's Friend"), the Pioneer organization and the Komsomol, schools and children clubs, public education authorities and cultural and household committees. The intention was that tenants of apartment buildings would take an active part in work with children and it would become part of Soviet everyday life.

However, all efforts turned out to be unsuccessful: whereas the authorities, ideologists and enthusiasts were trying to organize work with residence-based work with children, ordinary city-dwellers either ignored or just overlooked this. The only realistic chance to take control of children outdoors since pre-revolutionary times had been the *dvornik's* (caretaker's) supervision, regardless of attempts by philanthropists of the 1910s and activists of the 1920s to save children from it. In general this situation satisfied everybody apart from the Soviet authorities themselves and to some extent those who were burdened with government regulations and instructions.

Keywords: work with children domiciliary, child neglect, hooliganism, society "Drug detei" ("Children's friend"), Soviet everyday life.

Reviews

This section contains reviews of books on anthropology and folklore. Reviewers briefly describe the contents of the reviewed books and

mention their merits and failings. Olga Khristoforova's book "Sorcerers and Sacrifices: Anthropology of Witchcraft in Contemporary Russia" is discussed in this section by several scholars. Participants of the discussion raise the problems of contemporary field research.

Keywords: anthropology, art, folklore, anecdotes, Stalin, witchcraft.