

Editors' Foreword

The Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg (Kunstkamera), the European University at St Petersburg, and the European Humanities Research Centre, University of Oxford, are delighted to present the first issue of *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*, the parallel publication in English of *Antropologicheskii forum*, whose first issue appeared in Russian earlier this year.

Our parent Russian edition will appear in two issues a year, each of about 350 pages in length. The novelty of *Antropologicheskii forum* lies at several levels. First, it is an inter-disciplinary venture, with participation from anthropologists, ethnologists, folklorists, cultural and social historians, linguists, and museologists. Second, the contents of the journal, like the membership of the editorial board, is international in character. Third, each issue will be centred round an exchange of views about topics of current interest to specialists in anthropology, cultural studies, and cultural and social history. The intention is that the journal should facilitate genuine dialogue between specialists working in Russia, and in the Russian field, and those working elsewhere and in other areas, a process that has till now been hindered by the language barrier, and by lack of direct contact between the different scholarly traditions.

This first issue of *Forum for Anthropology and Culture* reproduces the first issue of *Antropologicheskii forum* almost in its entirety (the single item omitted is a response by Kirill V. Chistov to a discussion of the journal *Sovetskaya etnografiya* by D. D. Tumarkin, since the discussion concerned is not available in English).¹ Two items inserted in the Russian edition after this went to press, a report on the Readings in Honour of N. N. Miklukho-Maklay, April 2004, and an obituary of the St Petersburg anthropologist and human rights activist Nikolai Girenko, will appear in the second number of *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*. Alongside the Forum itself — devoted to the question of 'whither the study of folklore and popular culture', and including participants from Britain, America, and Australia as well as Russia — appear articles drawn from across the range of disciplines to be included in *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*. There are many different methodologies on view, and this is precisely our intention. Through the entire history of the Soviet Union, the study of culture was one of the branches of science and scholarship most vulnerable to ideological interference. The opportunity to examine this material from diverse perspectives, and to examine the viability of approaches

¹ D. D. Tumarkin, 'Yu. V. Bromlei and Sovetskaya Etnografiya', in Yu. V. Bromlei i otechestvennaya etnologiya [Yu. V. Bromlei and Russian and Soviet Ethnology]. Moscow, 2003. Pp. 212–228.

drawn from the study of other cultures, is therefore particularly valuable. At the same time, the presentation of this material in English is intended to showcase the excellent work on the study of culture that is being done by Russian scholars, and to foster proper intellectual co-operation and cross-fertilisation, rather than to advocate the imposition of one particular set of conceptual principles and techniques.

Alongside articles, we include a guide to the holdings of objects relating to the Tlingit Indians held in the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, a publication of documents on the Saami in the early modern era, with extensive annotations and commentaries, two reports on conferences, one held in St Petersburg, and the other in Oxford, and a section of reviews — which, in the spirit of international collaboration characterising the journal in general, include two discussions by Russian scholars of work by Western European specialists in Russian culture, as well as a dissection of a Russian-published book on North American culture. This last is included not just because it might save a specialist in the area who does not know Russian from worrying about how to get access to the contents of a book that does not in fact merit such anxiety, but also because it raises important issues of professional responsibility: how we can ensure that books which are not only (in A. E. Houseman's famous phrase) 'an interruption to our studies', but positively detrimental to serious intellectual endeavour, from reaching the public domain. In Britain at least, the publication of shoddy work is often blamed on non-academic factors, and particularly government research audits in the shape of the so-called Research Assessment Exercise. As Yury Berezkin points out in his review, however, it is academics themselves who are initially and finally responsible for the quality of work in their field.

Forum for Anthropology and Culture will in future be appearing on an occasional, rather than regular, basis, carrying, alongside the Forum discussions themselves, selections of the articles and other publications that are likely to be of most interest to a non-Russian-speaking audience. The next edition will appear, we hope, in the summer of 2005.

The editors would like to express their thanks to the Humanities Division, University of Oxford, the Modern Humanities Research Association, and New College, Oxford, for their generous sponsorship of the costs of translating and editing this English-language edition. We also express our thanks to the translators: Andy Byford, Adam Fergus, Emily Lygo, and Sarah Turner, who have worked with exceptional dedication; to the authors of the articles and other materials originally published in Russian, who have given detailed and helpful advice about the translation into English of technical terms, toponyms and ethnonyms, and non-standard phrases; and to Andy Byford, for help with copy-editing the English.

Albert Baiburin and Catriona Kelly

Note on conventions

Annotatory material has been slightly adapted for the benefit of readers who do not know Russian. Editorial notes are identified by [Editor]; all other notes are authorial. As well as the general **Glossary**, containing persistently-used Russian words such as *verst*, and explanations of terms such as ‘folk epic’, there is also a special glossary after Aleksei Zhukov’s publication on the Saami, as this contains a large number of historically specific terms. **Transliteration** is based on the British system (ya not ia, yu not iu, -sky rather than -skii in surnames and geographical terms) but with some modifications: Andrei not Andrey (ditto Sergei, Slobodskoi etc.) The soft sign has been omitted, though the sign ’ has been included where it marks the vowel yer (as in the documents relating to the Saami). Soft sign followed by e is transliterated -ye: Troepolye etc. Initial soft e usually E. Famous names that are not usually transliterated according to this system (Yermak, Yeltsin) are left in their familiar forms; exceptions are also made for the names of individuals who preferred or prefer their names to be transliterated in certain ways (N. S. Trubetzkoy, Marina Ilyna, Levon Abrahamian, Yuri Berezkin). **Quotations from primary material** are given in italics.

The names of contributors from Russia and other Slavonic countries are given in the form first name-last name, rather than name-patronymic-surname; however, to help in identifying publications made under the form ‘initials plus surname’, patronymics are listed in the Table of Contributors below.

All authors were invited to vet the translations of their contributions; in cases where no response was received to the invitation, this has been made clear in an initial note.

The Forum represents an informal exchange of views, and as such, no attempt has been made to adapt citations etc. to ‘house style’.