

AFRICAN STUDIES AT THE 14TH AND 15TH CONGRESSES OF ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND ETHNOLOGISTS OF RUSSIA

African studies have recently boldly gone beyond the rather narrow confines of the traditional linguistic discipline. Topics that take into account the civilizational specifics of the peoples of the Black Continent are taking over many areas of the humanities. The role of African studies in anthropology and ethnology is becoming more and more noticeable. This is confirmed, in particular, by the growing participation of Africanists in congresses of the Association of Anthropologists and Ethnologists of Russia. Until recently, Africanists hardly participated in such forums. The situation changed only a few years ago. For example, about 10 Russian Africanists took part in the XIV Congress of Anthropologists and Ethnologists of Russia held in 2021, but that forum did not have a separate section on the culture, ethnology and history of African peoples. Africanist topics were much more representative at the last — 15th Congress of Anthropologists and Ethnologists of Russia. Africanists presented in 20 sections. When comparing the Congresses, one can clearly see the continuity and significant expansion of the topics, as well as the reaction to the dynamics of the development of the world's peoples and the search for answers to new challenges associated with this process. There was a noticeable increase and expansion of the share of such research method as the use of digital technologies. Many sections were characterized by a combination of geographical and thematic approaches of anthropology and ethnology. The sections on the culture of specific ethnic groups or entire regions, as well as on specific aspects of culture, also used African materials. It should also be noted that, on the one hand, there is a growing interest in the anthropology of African peoples in the context of the problems of general ethnology, on the other hand, Africanists go beyond the narrow limits of geographically defined sections. They are actively working with new research methods, and their contribution to the development of digital research methods is significant. The recognition of Africanists as full-fledged participants in this area of humanities research has also manifested itself in the appointment of a number of them as heads of sections. Although the main backbone of African studies in anthropology and ethnology is made up of specialists of the older generation, it is encouraging to note the emergence of new names of scholars of younger generations. It is also worth marking the participation of African anthropologists in the Congress, who presented both independent papers and joint papers with Russian scholars.

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