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Адрес редакции:

119991 Москва, Ленинский проспект, 32-А
Институт этнологии и антропологии РАН

Контакты:

По вопросам этнологии, социокультурной антропологии

Мартынова Марина Юрьевна

martynova@iea.ras.ru

journal_of_anthropology@mail.ru

По вопросам физической антропологии

Васильев Сергей Владимирович

vasbor1@yandex.ru

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Marina Yurievna Martynova

martynova@iea.ras.ru

journal_of_anthropology@mail.ru

Physical Anthropology

Sergei Vladimirovich Vasilyev

vasborl@yandex.ru

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Original article

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THE TEMPORALITY OF FOOD SECURITY OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTHEASTERN PART OF THE SAKHA REPUBLIC (YAKUTIA)

The purpose of the article is to consider the temporal heterogeneity of food security in the Allaikovsky and Nizhnekolymsky regions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), manifested both linearly and cyclically. The study is based on the materials the author obtained during fieldwork in 2019, 2021 and 2023. Instability and limited time are the most important constraints of food security for the population of the region, which reflect the deep connection between the system of subsistence of local communities and environmental rhythms. The flow of time in the north of Yakutia is directly related to the transformation of the affordability of the gastronomic landscape. The dominance of ecological temporality leads to a lack of stability in food security, since variability forms its basis. The strengthening of the role of seasonal rhythms in many areas of everyday life of local residents, observed in the post-Soviet period, often does not occur in a harmonious interweaving of different temporalities, leading to an increase in food security of the population, but acts as an inevitable mode of energy regimes in conditions of shortage of quantity and quality of resources. The involvement of actors in a cyclical pattern of functioning indicates the unification of the temporal pattern and signals great difficulties in the implementation of other temporal forms of food security.

Keywords: Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), Allaikovsky district, Nizhnekolymsky district, food security, foodscape, food, temporality

Author Info: Goncharov, Nikolai S. — Ph.D. in History, Researcher of Department of Siberian Ethnography, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera) RAS (Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation). E-mail: Nikola.gon4arov@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0755-4877>

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RUSSIAN IDENTITY AND NATIONAL UNITY AMONG THE RESIDENTS OF THE FAR EASTERN REGIONS (REPUBLIC OF BURYATIA, ZABAYKALSKY KRAI, PRIMORSKY KRAI)

The author analyzed the Russian national identity and patriotism among different socio-demographic groups based on the results of a sociological study (survey, in-depth interviews) conducted in October 2023 — September 2024 in three Far Eastern regions (the Republic of Buryatia, Zabaykalsky Krai and Primorsky Krai). The paper presents general trends in the formation of Russian identity and the actualization of patriotic sentiments. It was found that, amid external challenges and threats, there is a consolidation of that part of the population in the regions that supports the country's foreign and domestic policies. This solidarity manifests itself in active efforts to assist SMO participants, patriotic events, and youth outreach. Based on the data obtained, it was concluded that the unity of the population of the three subjects in terms of belonging to "citizens of Russia" is one of the most significant collective identities for respondents. In the ranking of identity types, respondents to the questionnaire ranked generational identity first, Russian identity second, regional identity (Transbaikal and Buryatia) third, urban/rural identity (Primorye) fourth, and ethnic identity fifth. The Russian identity type was characterized as state-national, as respondents were usually choosing the "common state" as the main factor uniting them with other Russian citizens. The experts who conducted in-depth interviews identified the following foundations of national unity: "the Russian language", "a multinational state," "patriotism," "strength of spirit," "family and children," "the ability to unite in difficult situations," "historical memory," "traditional values," and "trust in the authorities." The foundations of patriotism as an integral part of Russian identity and the values that unite various social groups were analyzed. Patriotic sentiments were found to be widespread among the region's population. Most respondents and experts consider themselves patriots and are willing to instill a sense of patriotism in their children.

Keywords: Russian identity, patriotism, civic unity, Republic of Buryatia, Zabaykalsky Krai, Primorsky Krai

Author Info: Petrova, Elena V. — Dr. Phil. in Social Science, Associate Professor, Leading Research Fellow, Institute for Mongolian, Buddhist and Tibetan Studies, Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Ulan-Ude, Russian Federation). E-mail: elenapet_05@mail.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4612-3471>

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MODERN PATRIOTISM (BASED ON THE DATA ANALYSIS FROM FOCUS GROUP STUDIES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE REPUBLICS OF BASHKORTOSTAN AND TATARSTAN)

The article is based on data analysis from focus group studies of young people in the Republics of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan. This research method, due to the depth and quality of the information received, is recognized by ethnologists and sociologists as an important research tool that allows researchers to understand the attitudes of a particular population category to the problem under study, their mentality, and sometimes understand the true motives of human behavior. The analysis and interpretation of the data revealed several issues, trends and patterns related to patriotism, patriotic education, ethnic and all-Russian identity, attitudes to state and republican symbols, etc. Arguments about patriotism among almost all participants in the discussion were associated with love for the great and small Motherland, heroes of Russia and veterans of the Great Patriotic War. Among the factors uniting Russians, the Russian language, common history and territory of residence, a similar worldview, etc. were listed. The youth demonstrated a request for social justice, and some expressed uncertainty about the future and the fear of long-term planning. But in general, the vast majority of the participants in the focus groups called themselves patriots, demonstrating an active desire and were eager to work and serve for the sake of their homeland.

Keywords: *Patriotism, youth, focus group, Russia, Republic of Bashkortostan, Republic of Tatarstan, Russian identity*

Authors Info: **Migranova, Elza V.** — Ph.D. in History, Senior Researcher in the Department of Ethnology, Institute of History, Language and Literature Ufa Federal Research Center of the RAS (Ufa, Russian Federation). E-mail: mig.el@mail.ru
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8227-2357>

Psyanchin, Aibulat V. — Dr. of Geography, Head of the Department of Ethnology, Order of the Badge of Honour Institute of History, Language and Literature Ufa Federal Research Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences. E-mail: psyanchin@mail.ru
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1428-4337>

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THE POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION IN THE CHECHEN REPUBLIC

The article is devoted to the processes of post-war reconstruction in the Chechen Republic, from 2000 to the present. Nowadays, the issues of reconstruction and overcoming the consequences of ethno-political conflicts are not so often the focus of attention of social anthropologists. The author relied on field materials collected in 2023–2024 in the Chechen Republic. The article examines the demographic, socio-economic and cultural damage caused to Chechnya as a result of the conflicts. It considers the difficult process of rebuilding the social infrastructure, as well as the means and methods by which this became possible. Based on field materials and literary data, the article analyzes the role of some Chechen traditions, social institutions and Islamic moral values in the restoration of Chechnya. The article also analyzes the processes and problems that were observed in rural areas in Chechnya, both immediately after the end of active hostilities, and in our days.

Keywords: traditions, Islamic values, social institutions, post-conflict reconstruction

Author Info: Korytin, Georgy S. — Postgraduate student, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: e.korytin@list.ru

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THE PROVINCIAL DIMENSION OF SOCIOCULTURAL CHANGE: BASED ON THE ETHNOLOGICAL MONITORING OF THE OSTROMA REGION IN 2020–2025

This article presents a study of economic and sociocultural changes in the Kostroma Region from 2020 to 2025. Drawing on a variety of ethnological monitoring data, the authors examine the achievements and challenges arising as a result of inevitable societal transformation. The primary focus is on socioeconomic development, living standards, and the daily challenges of the region's residents, as well as on changes in traditional lifestyles, the impact of globalization and urbanization, and the preservation of cultural heritage and traditions. The paper analyzes factors contributing to the shift in the cultural identity of provincial residents, including migration, the region's economic development, and others. The study reveals that despite positive trends, such as growing interest in the history and culture of the region, significant challenges remain, including economic decline, low incomes, and poor healthcare and education. The authors offer a number of recommendations for improving the situation, including creating conditions for the development of local initiatives, supporting youth projects, and implementing educational programs aimed at preserving and promoting local cultural heritage.

Keywords: *ethnological monitoring, sociocultural changes, Kostroma Oblast, demography, problems, achievements*

Authors Info: **Belova, Natalya A.** — Ph.D. in History, Research Fellow at the Center for Ethnopolitical Studies, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: belova@iea.ras.ru ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7675-7419>

Belov, Andrey M. — Doctor of History, Professor, Kostroma State University (Kostroma, Russian Federation). E-mail: belovi_1957@mail.ru

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THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF RELIGION

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Original article

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A VILLAGE CANNOT STAND WITHOUT A RIGHTEOUS MAN, NOR A CITY WITHOUT A SAINT: ORTHODOXY IN A SMALL RUSSIAN TOWN

This study is a part of the complex project “The Population of a Russian Small Town in the 21st Century” realized by the Center for Human Ecology of the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology since 2017. A comprehensive approach to the problem of adapting the population to modern challenges was developed during field studies in 2017–2025 in small towns of Central Russia (Belev, Tula region; Staritsa, Tver region; Danilov and Poshekhonye, Yaroslavl region; Gorokhovets, Vladimir region). The program “History and Contemporary State of the Orthodox Church in Small Towns of the Central Russia” is one of the topics of the study. While planning the program, we focused on the events of the recent decades of the history — the years when churches and monasteries closed in Soviet times were transferred to the Russian Orthodox Church. Many of them were renovated and rebuilt from the ruins, and parish and monastic services were resumed. We were interested in how these processes affected citizens and, conversely, how churches and monasteries interacted with locals. We designed an expert survey questionnaire for priests, rectors and abbots of local churches, and a cluster of related questions was included in the mass survey questionnaire (300 people in each town in 2018–2021). Materials from the field studies in the small town of Belev (Tula region) in 2017–2019 provided the basis for the present paper.

Keywords: *small towns, the Russian Church history, cultural heritage, restoration of monasteries and temples, Belev, Tula region, Russia*

Author Info: Grigulevich, Nadezhda I. — Ph.D. in History, Senior Researcher, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: nadia100@rambler.ru
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1562-9234>

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“VISUAL ATLAS OF FAITHS”: (ANTI) RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA AND CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SCIENCE AND CINEMA OF THE 1920s–1930s

The paper considers visual and anthropological sources and examines anti-Catholic movie documents from the USSR's “cultural revolution” in the context of its visual propaganda policy. An important issue in the scientific study of confessions in the USSR during the 1920s and 1930s was the search for possible forms of their visualization. Religious cartography, in particular, became an important method for studying the religiosity of the population of the Union, undertaken by Leningrad scientists. Ethnographic and religious studies of Catholics were carried out in the 1920s and 1930s as part of anti-religious expeditions directed by L. G. Brandt. Alongside scientific research during this period, visual means of constructing images of Catholicism were developed (St. Jorgen's Day, Gadfly, The Cross and the Mauser, Forest Past (Lesnaya byl), Blue Express). The most indicative among the film documents of the era was the feature film St. Jorgen's Day (1930) by Yakov Protazanov, who not only used innovative cinematic techniques, but also built a line of anticlerical satire in an entertaining form. The article also analyses the images of the Catholic Church, produced by Protazanov's film, and presents assessments and criticisms of this film based on the materials of the antireligious press such as Anti-Religious and Atheist. The article concludes that scientists, propagandists, and filmmakers developed their anti-religious propaganda in parallel in the 1920s and 1930s, gradually transitioning from research and artistic reflection to class struggle against faith.

Keywords: *anthropology of religion, visual anthropology, anti-religious propaganda in the USSR, anti-religious film, Catholicism, film document, cultural revolution*

Authors Info: **Golovnev, Ivan A.** — Doctor of History, Leading Researcher, Center for Arctic Studies, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera) of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation). E-mail: golovnev.ivan@gmail.com ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4866-7122>

Golovneva, Elena V. — Doctor of Philosophy, Professor of the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Ethnic Sociology, Saint Petersburg State University (Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation). E-mail: golovneva.elena@gmail.com ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0709-4615>

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UACILLA: AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH TO THE CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SACRED OSSETIAN CHARACTER

The article is devoted to Uacilla, a sacred character of the Ossetian ethnoreligious pantheon, which has been studied many times before, but always within a separate approach, which resulted in significant conflict of interpretations. The article examines the main historiographical approaches to the study of both the Ossetian ethnic religion in general and Uacilla in particular. Thus, a cross-comparative analysis of the image and cult of Uacilla was undertaken within an integrative approach, which allows us to ultimately abandon one-sided categorical interpretations of Uacilla's origins and essential characteristics, making it accessible for multidimensional perception. An important aspect of the study is the analysis of possible Islamic influences on the image and cult of Uacilla, since the first time such an analysis has been conducted in Ossetian studies. Previous interpretations have included Iranian, autochthonous Caucasian, Christian, and Jewish influences.

Keywords: ethnic religion of Ossetians, Uatsilla, integrative approach to study, Judaism, Christianity, Islam

Author Info: Ktsoeva, Sultana G. — Dr. of History, Leading Researcher, the North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian and Social Research named after V. I. Abaev — Branch of the Federal Scientific Center “Vladikavkaz Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences” (Vladikavkaz, Russian Federation). E-mail: sultana_t@mail.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1221-2820>

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WOMEN'S RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY IN THE NORTH CAUCASUS: HISTORICAL AND ETHNOGRAPHICAL ASPECT (THE CASE OF DAGESTAN)

The article examines the religious activity of Muslim women during the Soviet era and at present using archival and ethnographic materials, the results of field expeditions, empathy, and comparative historical analysis. The chronological framework of the study allows us to identify periods when women's religious activity increased or declined. The relevance of the topic stems from the surge in women's religious activity in the context of the re-Islamization of Dagestan society. The purpose of the work is to highlight the problems of gender asymmetry in religion and to identify the causes, opportunities and periods of women's activity in religion, revealing their real role in spiritual life and religious practices. Research showed that opportunities for women to participate in public religious activities arise for women during periods of extraordinary events. An increase in women's activity is noted during the anti-religious campaign of the 1920s and 1930s: instead of repressed clergy, many religious practices were carried out by women. Despite the multitude of publications on this topic, there is clearly a lack of research devoted specifically to Dagestan. In this regard, such a research is a very important step toward preserving the history of the region.

Keywords: *Islam, gender, religion, women's activity, religious practice, North Caucasus, sufism, ziyarat, Dagestan*

Authors Info: **Sirazhudinova, Saida V.** — Ph.D. in Political Sciences, Associate Professor, Dagestan State University of National Economy (Makhachkala, Russian Federation). E-mail: saida_kant@mail.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6069-6076>

Mutieva, Oksana S. — Doctor in History, Professor, Dagestan State University (Makhachkala, Russian Federation). E-mail: mutiewa.oksana@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7669-3558>

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THE DOUKHOBORS AND THE ORTHODOX CHURCH: A HISTORY OF CONFRONTATION (1760^s — THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY). PART 1

The article is devoted to the history of the relationship between the Doukhobor sect and the Russian Orthodox Church in the last third of the 18th century, when the clergy encountered an already established religious organization, which remained unknown until its self-disclosure in 1768. The author shows the reasons that allowed the sect to remain outside the Church's field of vision for a long time. The article examines two possible outcomes for the Doukhobors after they were discovered among Orthodox parishioners: the return of repentant apostates to the bosom of the Orthodox Church or the transfer of the more stubborn ones to secular authorities for punishment. Attention is drawn to the mechanism of interrogation and admonition of the Doukhobors, conducted by the Orthodox clergy, and how the sectarians themselves behaved in response to it. The degree of reliability of the testimony obtained by the clergy during interrogations and admonitions is analyzed. The author uses specific examples to show the consequences of liberalizing the legislation concerning religious dissent during Catherine II's reign, and concludes that the Doukhobors not only did not hide their teachings during interrogations, but tried to affirm them in polemics with the Orthodox clergy.

Keywords: Doukhobor sect, creed, Orthodox Church, parish clergy, teaching priests, admonitions, ecclesiastical punishments

Author Info: Inikova, Svetlana A. — Ph.D. in History, Leading Researcher, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: ovis2@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4925-8817>

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THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF PERFORMANCE

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THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF PERFORMING ARTS. HOW AND WHY STUDY PERFORMANCE?

The article considers performing arts as a way of transmitting social norms, values and identities through collective bodily and cultural experiences. Performative practices in this case are not just a form of artistic expression, but also a key tool for social organization and communication, ensuring the continuity of traditions and the development of society. For a long time, the humanities have studied performance using an external approach — an art-historical, critical view from the outside, from the perspective of the audience. Modern social anthropology helps to reveal the insider experience of a researcher included in the communities they study, focusing on how the researchers' performing experience influences their academic texts. In this paper it is proposed to use both of these approaches and to examine the current theoretical and methodological trends in the anthropology of performing arts.

Keywords: performing arts, choreology, music, cinematography, performance, dance and movement studies, theatre

Author info: Samarina, Tatyana N. — Junior Researcher, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: tatyana.samarina@iea.ras.ru ORCIDID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-5138-3580>

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DANCE JAMS: A SYSTEMATIZATION AND REVIEW OF PRACTICES IN THE CONTEMPORARY DANCE COMMUNITY

The article explores the concept of a jam session — an improvisational event that brings together a group of performers — musicians or dancers. It examines the historical roots and cultural context of jams, starting with their origins in music, jazz and soul culture, and their significance in modern dance styles such as break, house, hip-hop, contemporary and contact improvisation. By collecting information from different dance communities, it becomes possible to unify many practices under a single terminological framework to trace their development and variability for further study of their individual aspects. The article also provides an overview of modern jam practices and how they are perceived through various artistic means: cinedance, films, performances and poetic translations. Particular attention is paid to the prospects of using jam practices in psychology, training of dancers at the amateur and professional levels, as well as to their role in the performing arts. The article describes an experiment conducted by the author, in which the interdisciplinary combination of dance with other arts — writing, drawing and photography — revealed the potential of jams as a medium for using nonverbal communication, which can promote the development of interaction skills in dance.

Keywords: jam session, contact improvisation, hip-hop, contemporary dance, performance, improvisation

Author Info: Pastukhova, Anna E. — Student, Saint Petersburg State University (Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation). E-mail: muranna15@gmail.com; st106107@student.spbu.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-4149-8458>

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“RASKOSETS”: FROM HOBBY TO COMMUNITY

Along with national projects to popularize traditional Russian culture, spontaneous independent communities arise around this interest. This article is based on two years of observations (2022–2024) of an amateur urban folklore ensemble in Moscow. Included observations and a series of in-depth interviews made it possible to trace the group’s development, to answer the question of what this association means to the group, and to analyze folklore’s real role within the group. The analysis identified signs of various community categories, such as an interest group or subculture, but none were confirmed as the main category. Performing folklore fosters communication within the group, and forming the community fulfills the city dwellers’ need for security and acceptance more than maintaining their ethnicity.

Keywords: *community, urban community, interest group, folklore, cultural practices, leisure, local communities, group identity, subculture*

Author Info: **Andriushchenko, Ekaterina Y.** — Master Student, University of Bologna. East European Studies (Bologna, Italy). E-mail: zapall@mail.ru

For citation: Andriushchenko, E. Y. 2025. “Raskosec”: from Hobby to Community. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 4: 191–201.

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IRISH DANCE: AT THE ORIGINS OF THE TRADITION

The present study examines the development of Irish dance through various musical, athletic and ritual practices that existed in Old Irish culture, as recorded in Old Irish sagas and poetic texts. Although no direct references to dance practices have been preserved in ancient texts, we can analyze the available references to games, rituals, songs and music that could have formed the basis for Irish dance as such. Moreover, referring to the past traditions allows us to formulate hypotheses regarding the potential origins of modern styles in Irish dances. Based on descriptions of ancient rituals, games, and the role of music in mythological plots, we can identify the prerequisites for the emergence of modern social and sports dances and their division into different styles (old style, festival style, competitive practices, dance shows).

Keywords: *Irish dance, Old Irish literature, game, competition, ritual, music*

Author Info: **Ilgova, Daria A.** — Ph.D. in Cultural Studies, Lecturer, Russian State University for Humanities (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: dailgova@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4442-0835>

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BODY POLITICS AND MAGDALENE LAUNDRIES IN IRELAND

The Magdalene Laundries were correctional institutions for “fallen women” that existed in Ireland since the 18th century up to 1996. The main methods of rehabilitation were heavy manual labor, prayers, and enforced silence. Such a long history of the Laundries may be explained by the great impact of the Catholic Church on the society which remained strong up to the beginning of the 21st century. The “loose behavior” (which in fact meant sexual behavior) led to serious consequences. This case illustrates the theory on body politics, which was developed by Michel Foucault (Foucault 1995). According to his research, the relationship of power has direct control over body. Building on Foucault’s ideas, medical anthropologist Margaret Lock came to the conclusion that the body is not natural but a social and cultural construction, subject to historical and geographical change (Lock 1993). Thus, viewing the body as a site for demonstrating power gives the researcher a new perspective of the studied communities. This paper will consider the Irish traditional dance in relation to the body politics. In the context of Ireland, traditional dance becomes a visual representation of this systematic suppression of sexuality and the influence of body politics.

Keywords: Body politics, Irish dance, Ireland, Magdalene Laundries, performing arts

Author Info: Glazovskaya, Alexandra A. — Postgraduate Student, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: a.glazovskaya@yandex.ru
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9823-5160>

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THE ELEMENTS OF TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND MYTHOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE SERIES

Cinematography is often not taken seriously. Film scholars even debate whether a movie should be considered artwork. However, in our opinion, it can definitely be used as a source for anthropological studies. It is no coincidence that visual anthropology is becoming an increasingly popular field of study today. At first glance, films with a lot of computer graphics or fantasy films may seem unable to reflect reality, but they can. Mass cinema could be used as a source for research. One could ask why a film becomes popular and what makes it appealing to spectators. Chinese cinematography is actively developing. Not only is the realistic genre popular, but the fantasy genre is too. The xianxia genre (Chinese: 仙侠) has become particularly popular; books and series in this genre contain many references to Chinese culture. An anthropologist might find it interesting to observe how traditional culture becomes part of daily life and gains new popularity. However, books can only show us mythological plots, while movies and series also depict traditional clothing, architecture, and festivals.

Keywords: *traditional culture, mythology, China, series, visual anthropology, performance art*

Author Info: Gorbushina, Anna D. — Graduate of the Ethnological Department, History Faculty, Lomonosov Moscow State University (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: gorbushinaann@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-0199-4497>

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TRADITIONS AND WEDDINGS

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Original article

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FORMATION, DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE TRADITIONAL KHALFACHI TRADITION

Every nation in the world places great importance on ensuring that wedding ceremonies are meaningful and beautiful, and are held in an uplifting and joyful atmosphere. The songs, dastans, lapar performances, and national folk games performed at Uzbek weddings not only illuminate the life, history, ethnography, and religious beliefs of the Uzbek people, but also embody the people's worldview, life realities, dreams, and spiritual, cultural, and material worlds. At the core of these rituals lies a well-thought-out, carefully developed, and time-tested "script." Wedding rituals in the Khorezm oasis consist mainly of local folklore samples. The folklore traditions of wedding ceremonies in the Khorezm oasis evolved alongside the art of storytelling (dostonchilik) and the performing mastery of halfa (halfachilik). This article presents information about halfas, the female singers of Uzbek wedding ceremonies in Khorezm — and their artistry. Halfa artistry is widely spread as an independent genre and possesses rich traditions, history, and distinctive features. The article describes the types of halfa artistry and how they have developed. It also provides information about the special role of halfas in wedding rituals. In particular, based on an analysis of existing scientific literature and field recordings, it substantiates the repertoire of halfas, their ritual songs, and the presence of specific melodies and songs performed for each ritual.

Keywords: Folklore, khalfa (folk singers), solo and ensemble khalfas, merry melodies, joyful melodies, narration, songs and dance

Author Info: Matkarimova, Nazokat M. — Ph.D., Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of History, MAMUN University (Khiva, Republic of Uzbekistan). E-mail: ms.mnm.79@mail.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7858-1640>

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CULINARY “CODES” IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY OF UZBEKS AND KARAKALPAKS

The article is devoted to the study of the role of culinary “codes” in Uzbek and Karakalpak wedding ceremonies. The authors note that the wedding traditions of these peoples represent a unique combination of ancient beliefs, cultural values, and social norms. An important element of these traditions is the various dishes and culinary practices that carry deep symbolic meaning. The article analyzes how these culinary “codes” reflect worldviews, beliefs, and rituals associated with one of life’s most significant events — a wedding. The authors detail the features of wedding rituals among the Uzbeks and Karakalpaks, focusing on matchmaking rituals, cooking and presenting food, and bread-related rituals. Special attention is paid to the symbolic function of food practices, which serve as a means of nonverbal communication that unites the relatives of the bride and groom and perform magical functions aimed at ensuring the well-being of the newlyweds. The authors conclude that food symbols play a key role in wedding ceremonies among these peoples and that Uzbek and Karakalpak weddings are complex rituals filled with symbolic actions and culinary “codes.” These ritual practices express wishes for love, happiness, and a large family and serve as informational signals that mark the various stages of the wedding cycle.

Keywords: *culinary code, wedding ceremony, Uzbeks, Karakalpaks*

Authors Info: **Zununova, Gulchehra** — Doctor of History, Leading Researcher, National Center of Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Tashkent, Uzbekistan). E-mail: zunnunova@yahoo.com ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9278-4740>

Kurbanova, Zemfira — Doctor of History, Senior Researcher, Karakalpak Scientific Research Institute of Humanities of the Karakalpak Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Nukus, Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan). E-mail: sapphire.ethno@gmail.com ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3478-2042>

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THE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN THE WEDDING TRADITIONS OF THE KARAKALPAK (THE EXAMPLE OF PRE-WEDDING CEREMONIES)

This article analyzes pre-wedding traditions among the Karakalpaks involving mutual assistance from friends and relatives. In Karakalpak culture, providing mutual assistance in organizing large family events is crucial. Over time, the institution of mutual aid, which formed within social structures, has evolved into a stable tradition. Similar traditions exist among many peoples and are known by various names. In Karakalpak culture, it is called “kómek.” A comprehensive study of mutual assistance traditions in modern Karakalpak pre-wedding rituals reveals that they have changed and modernized. During field data collection in various districts of Karakalpakstan, the forms of kómek in pre-wedding rituals were documented and analyzed comparatively. The author’s field materials support all the aforementioned conclusions and serve as the foundation for this research. This study draws on data collected from 2021 to 2024 to ensure the reliability of the results. Data were collected in nearly all districts of Karakalpakstan, indicating the broad scope and diversity of the phenomena studied. The most comprehensive and detailed data were obtained in the following districts: Chimbay, Karauzak, Kegeyli, Kanlykol, Kungrad, Muynak, Nukus, Shumanay, Turtkul, and Ellikkala. Analysis of the collected data reveals how the kómek tradition depends on the region. The socioeconomic development of a district significantly influences the mutual assistance traditions. For instance, in urban areas, mutual assistance tends to be more formal and related to financial support, while in rural areas, it tends to be more traditional and involve practical help. Within this study, pre-wedding mutual assistance can be classified according to its role. Examples include the traditions of “nemeurin”, “zhabıw”, “oramal salıw”, and “on bolsı” during pre-wedding events, as well as the assistance provided by relatives and friends.

Keywords: Karakalpaks, wedding, seeing off the bride, mutual assistance, the tradition of “nemeurin”, the tradition of “zhabıw”, the tradition of “oramal salıw”

Author Info: Khojaniyazova, Gulshana M. — Doctor of Philosophy in Historical Sciences (Ph.D.), University of Innovation Technologies (Uzbekistan, 230100 Karakalpakstan, Khojeyli district, Takhiatash street, 28). E-mail: gulshanx@internet.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-0732-507X>

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OSSETIAN WEDDING CEREMONY DURING THE PANDEMIC

Tradition is shaped by historical and economic living conditions, which change in the context of social transformations and external influences. In this study, we assume that tradition has a stable core and a “protective layer” that faces external challenges and reacts to changing conditions by producing innovations that often become part of tradition. This article aims to trace how tradition changes under the pressure of emergency situations, particularly pandemics. We consider the wedding ceremony in the context of strict sanitary and epidemiological restrictions related to the spread of the SARS-CoV-2. Ethnographic materials, including in-depth interviews collected by the author made it possible to identify preserved traditions and new ritual forms that developed in a short period. Preliminary study results allow us to conclude that a stable “core” was preserved, enabling the ritual to survive in dangerous conditions. The adaptive ability of the protective layer gave rise to certain updated models. Monitoring the described rituals will show if innovations have become part of everyday life, if they sparked a departure from obsolete traditions, or whether they were temporary and faded with the lockdown, possibly resurfacing afterwards.

Keywords: Tradition, wedding ceremony, pandemic, lockdown, innovation

Author Info: Daueva, T. — Ph.D. in History, Senior Researcher, the North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian and Social Research named after V. I. Abaev — Branch of the Federal Scientific Center “Vladikavkaz Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences” (Vladikavkaz, Russian Federation). E-mail: tdaueva@mail.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8178-1889>

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ARCHIVAL SOURCES

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Original article

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MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO IMMIGRANTS TRAVELING TO SIBERIA AND THE FAR EAST IN 1930–1950^s

The article addresses the issue of organizing medical assistance for peasant immigrants traveling from the territory of Mordovia to Siberia and the Far East in the late 1930s and 1950s. The study is based on the documents from the Central State Archive of the Republic of Mordovia, Saransk (F. 473), which have never previously been used in a research. The analysis of published and archival data showed that it was obligatory to provide medical personnel to support families sent to Siberia by train or waterway. It was demonstrated that, despite the shortcomings, the state was able to provide medical care to migrants en route and prevent epidemics from spreading beyond the Urals during the Great Patriotic War and the post-war period.

Keywords: *Siberia, the Far East, Mordovia, medical assistance to immigrants, sanitary and hygienic conditions, medical centers, paramedic centers, medical personnel*

Author Info: Shchankina, Lyubov N. — Doctor in History, Professor of the Department of Civil Law Disciplines, Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education “Plekhanov Russian University of Economics” (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: schanckina@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5512-679X>

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SCIENTIFIC ETHICS

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Original article

© *Ivan Shirobokov*

ON THE ETHICAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF STUDYING HUMAN REMAINS

This article explores the ethical challenges faced by archaeologists and physical anthropologists engaged in the study of human remains. It examines the diversity of perspectives on the special status attributed to human remains across different cultural and historical contexts. The analysis highlights the inherent ambiguity in defining the status of such remains—as scientific objects, cultural heritage, and, at times, as entities accorded special rights. Particular attention is given to the role of physical integrity and the persistence of social and historical ties between the living and the dead in shaping attitudes toward the treatment of remains. The article also addresses the dualistic conception of the human being, which presumes a separation between personhood and the physical body after death—a notion reflected in the traditional cultural detachment toward “old bones”.

Keywords: *ethics, human remains, physical anthropology, archaeology, museum collection, personality, social interaction*

Author Info: Shirobokov, Ivan G. — Ph.D. in History, Senior Researcher, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera) of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation). E-mail: ivansmith@bk.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3555-7509>

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Original article

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PALEODEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE MEDIEVAL CITY OF POLOTSK (BASED ON EXCAVATIONS OF THE UPPER CASTLE NECROPOLIS)

Excavations on the Upper Castle site were conducted from 2019 to 2022 under the general direction of I.V. Magalinsky as part of the rescue archaeological research. Analysis of the archaeological material revealed that the burial ground dates to the 11th–13th centuries. A total of 145 individuals were found in both regular and irregular burials at the Upper Castle necropolis. Sex estimation identified 38 male, 55 female, and 51 subadult skeletons (aged under 15). One skeleton belonged to an individual aged 16–18, whose sex is unknown. We conducted a paleodemographic analysis using J. Angel's (Angel 1969) methodology. The peak mortality rate in the group occurred in the first, childhood age cohort (0–5 years). Adults, both men and women, most often died at the age of 40–45. The infant mortality rate in the Polotsk group was 35.17%. This means that one-third of the population died in childhood, before reaching the age of 15. This figure is consistent with the relative demographic stability of the group. Almost 50% of children died before age 5, and 18% died before age 1. The final age cohort is not representative; only 2.76% of the population survived to age 50. The average life expectancy of the Polotsk group was almost 24 years, which is comparatively low. The average age at death for adults, both men and women, was low compared to other groups from Russia and Belarus, at approximately 34 years. The Upper Castle group exhibited an abnormal ratio of adult women to men, with 18% more women identified.

Keywords: *paleodemography, survival indices, age cohort, infant mortality rate, life expectancy, peak mortality, final age cohort*

Authors Info: **Borutskaya, Svetlana B.** — Ph.D. in Biological Sciences, Researcher of the Department of Anthropology of the Faculty of Biology, Lomonosov Moscow State University (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: vasborl@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0753-151X>

Emelyanchik, Olga A. — Ph.D. in Biological Sciences, Docent, Associate Professor. Euphrosyne of Polotsk State University (Novopolotsk, Republic of Belarus). E-mail: emeljanchik@psu.by ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8813-4411>

Vasilyev, Sergey V. — Doctor of History, prof. Chief Researcher, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: vasborl@yandex.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0128-6568>

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DENTAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL STATUS OF THE PSKOV POPULATION IN THE 15th–17th CENTURIES (PRELIMINARY RESULTS)

The biological issues of the formation of the northwestern Russia population are the focus of many works by Russian and Soviet anthropologists. From a dental anthropological perspective, data on ancient Russian and relatively modern populations are quite representative. However, there are some gaps in how the periods of the Late Middle Ages and the modern era are represented. The author examined more than 600 crania from the 15th–17th centuries according to the dental anthropology program. Half of these crania originate from the territory of Pskov (raw data on the sample are being published). Dental anthropology allows us to compare cranial samples with the modern population without additional calculations (unlike craniometry). Data on the North-West from different eras were compared. The first findings reveal morphological differences between the populations of the Late Russian period and the population of the 1970s — 80s. This is likely due to the trans-epochal variability and the cross-border status of the Pskov population. This indicates the contact character of the region. The aspect of the population history revealed by this study is associated with the contacts between different dental anthropological complexes from several regions — central Russian, the Baltic region, and Northern Europe.

Keywords: dental anthropology, paleoanthropology, biological anthropology, Pskov, North-West of Russia

Author Info: Smertin, Pavel R. — Researcher, Institute of Humanitarian Studies, Perm Federal Center of Ural Branch RAS (Perm, Russian Federation); Postgraduate Student, Perm State Humanitarian Pedagogical University (Perm, Russian Federation). E-mail: paulsmert@mail.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-5765-3573>

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TURKIC STUDIES AT THE RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES N. N. MIKLOUHO-MAKLAY INSTITUTE OF ETHNOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

The article provides a historiographic review of the research carried out by Turkologists at the Russian Academy of Sciences the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (formerly the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR Academy of Sciences), from the formation of the Moscow group to the present. It pays tribute to the contributions of scientists of different generations, including such luminaries as S. P. Tolstov, V. N. Basilov, S. I. Weinstein, T. A. Zhdanko, M. A. Itina, B. Kh. Karmysheva, S. A. Tokarev, M. N. Guboglo, and our distinguished contemporaries G. L. Khit, E. P. Batyanova, N. A. Dubova, I. A. Arzhantseva, V. I. Kharitonova and others. The author analyzes the subject matter and geographical scope of their studies. The scientific legacy of the Soviet era has conveyed unique ethnographic data to posterity. Although somewhat uneven, attention was paid to almost all the Turkic people of Central Asia, Siberia, the Volga region, the Caucasus, and beyond. Nearly every monograph examined the history of a particular ethnic group from ancient times to present, relying extensively on archaeological, paleoanthropological sources, written evidence, and field ethnographic materials. At that time, the comprehensive study of the Turkic people on a truly scientific basis was gaining momentum in the country. In the context of modern Russia, the IEA RAS has begun to devote considerable attention to ethnosociological and ethnopolitical research. Many books demonstrate the preservation of the traditions of classical ethnography, although they also reflect a desire to update research methodology and explore new topics and approaches. International and interregional cooperation is primarily expressed in the preparation of books in the series "Peoples and Cultures," "National Movements in the USSR and in the Post-Soviet Space," and others.

Keywords: Turkology, ethnology, history of science, intercultural interaction, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology

Author Info: Martynova, Marina Yu. — Dr. of History, Professor, Head of the Department for European Studies, the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: martynova@iea.ras.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7280-7450>

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**THE FATE OF ORTHODOXY IN THE MIDDLE VOLGA REGION
BOOK REVIEW: TAIMASOV L. A. ORTHODOX MISSIONARY
WORK IN THE MIDDLE VOLGA REGION IN THE FIRST HALF
OF THE 19TH CENTURY. CHEBOKSARY: IZDATEL'STVO
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This is an overview of the most significant results of scientific research on the history of Orthodox missionary work in the Middle Volga region in the first half of the 19th century. The monograph contains original information on state religious policy, missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church, implementation of missionary and educational projects among New Baptismal peoples, and specifics of ethno-confessional transformations. The research is based on a variety of sources, including, to a large extent, the author's archival materials. The book will be useful and informative for specialists in ethnography and history, as well as a wider range of readers.

Keywords: religion, missionary work, Orthodoxy, Middle Volga region, ethnic and religious situation, Russian Orthodox Church

Author Info: Sushkova, Iuliia N. — Dr. of History, Professor, Professor of the Theory, History of the State and Law and International Law Department, Ogarev Mordovia State University (Saransk, Russian Federation), Senior Researcher, the N. N. Miklukho-Maklai Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Moscow, Russian Federation). E-mail: yulenkam@mail.ru ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4388-0610>

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им. Н. Н. Миклухо-Маклая РАН
119334 Москва, Ленинский проспект, 32-А