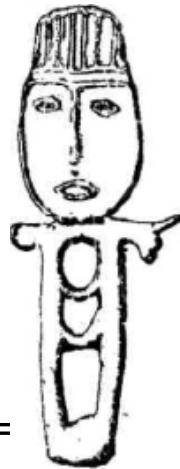


N.N. Miklouho-Maclay RAS
Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology

VESTNIK ANTROPOLOGII
HERALD OF ANTHROPOLOGY



2024 № 2

The journal “Herald of Anthropology” was established by the RAS Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology Academic Council decision of 20/03/2014

The journal is registered with the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation. Registration number PI No. FS77-61734

*The Journal is indexed in the
Russian Science Citation Index (RSCI)*

By the order No.21-p of The Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation of 12/02/2019 “Herald of Anthropology” is included in the list of peer-reviewed scientific journals recommended for publishing scientific results of theses for Candidate and Doctoral scientific degrees



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ISSN (print) 2311-0546

ISSN (online) 2782-1552

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MEASURING HUMAN POTENTIAL

UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/7-32

Original article

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THE FATE OF FORECASTS BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF ETHNORACIAL GROUPS

The paper reviews V. I. Kozlov's book on immigration and ethnic-racial problems in Great Britain (1987) and evaluates his forecast going back to the 1980s on the future evolution of the migration situation. The author compares the 35 years ago scenario with the nowadays realities and concludes that mass migration and the policy of multiculturalism have caused radical changes in the national and ethnic identities of the British population. On a basis of England and Wales 2011 and 2021 censuses he analyses multiply identities and changes in favor of Britishness identity versus Englishness, especially among the country's non-white population, whose role in this country's life has grown greatly, causing a reaction of English nationalism, but not hindering the scenario of nation-building based on a culturally inclusive pan-British identity. The article includes elaborations on super-diversity debates and on how contemporary census practices destroy narrow understanding of ethnicity as culturally homogeneous groupings.

Keywords: Great Britain, England and Wales, population censuses, population categorization, ethnoracial groups, Britishness and Englishness, theory of ethnicity, national and ethnic identity, immigration, V. I. Kozlov

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For citation: Tishkov, V. A. 2024. The Fate of Forecasts Based on the Concept of Ethnoracial Groups. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 7–32.

Funding: The article was prepared in the framework of a research grant funded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation (grant ID: 075-15-2022-328).

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RURAL AS SOCIAL IN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/33-44

Original article

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RURAL AS SOCIAL

The article raises the question of the rural sociality, which, from the point of view of anthropology or sociology, could be characterized as the specific social relations in rural areas. The author believes that the general image of the village in the 19th century was accompanied by the idea of the special ‘rural sociality’ usually known as ‘Obshchina’ or a special communal way of life or mentality. However, the concept of community, created at the turn of the century, implicitly contains the elements of the urban structure and modernity at that specific historical stage, as the community was defined in contrast to them. At the turn of the 20th–21th centuries the change in the relationships between city and countryside due to a more active position of city residents in rural space is not the only obvious trend. The very concept of the village is being reassembled and reconstructed around the new issues: freedom (anarchist and volunteer movements), environmental friendliness (eco-settlements, neo-pagan movement) etc. Perhaps the only problem common to the notion of village construction processes of both the 19th–20th and 20th–21st transitions is the problem of authenticity of historical development. The paper provides a brief summary of four articles from the present issue: by E. P. Zhelanskaya about urban-type settlements, by P. A. Burobina about neo-pagan rituals in rural areas and in the city, by E. S. Sanova about the volunteer movement “Benevoyage” and by E. A. Krykov about an anarchist rural settlement.

Keywords: rurality, community, rural, urban, neo-paganism

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For citation: Tutorskiy, A. V. 2024. *Rural as Social. Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 33–44.

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BASE, VILLAGE, NATURE: TRANSFORMATION OF THE LOCAL IMAGE OF AN URBAN-TYPE SETTLEMENT IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH — EARLY 21ST CENTURIES

The article is devoted to the study of the urban-type settlement status in the second half of the 20th — beginning of the 21st centuries, specifically, to the analysis of ideas about rural and urban and the boundaries between rural and urban as seen by modern residents of the southern part of the Arkhangelsk region. This paper studies from an ethnographic point of view the Soviet project of transformation of a rural settlement into an urban one using the concepts of “first”, “second” places and “non-places” (following M. Augé). Based on field material and newspaper articles, the author shows that the official vision of the urban-type settlement as a modern urban settlement does not coincide with how the residents, who took part in the implementation of this project, see it. The first settlers came from rural areas and their vision of the urban-type settlement had been changing from a workplace in the forest to an attempt to organize a living space based on the village experience. Then it started to be perceived as a territory, which has not been fully urbanized, and, finally, as a transit point on the way from the village to real cities and vice versa.

Keywords: urban-type settlement, rural, urban, Russian North, “first place”, “second place”, “non-place”

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For citation: Zhelamskaya, E. P. 2024. *Base, Village, Nature: Transformation of the Local Image of an Urban-type Settlement in the Second Half of the 20th — Early 21st Centuries. Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii) 2: 45–66.*

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“IN-VILLAGE ANARCHY”: RETHINKING “RURAL” AS A NEW LIBERTARIAN WAY OF SOCIAL LIVING

The ideas of the “green” anarchism libertarian ideology, based on a radical criticism of urban industrial production and the associated reorientation of the human value system in a capitalist society, find their expression in ecological settlements, organized according to the principles of non-hierarchical and ecological consciousness of autonomous homesteads as network units and development of horizontal social connections. This article proposes to consider the anarchist rethinking of the “rural” in the context of the practices of developing non-urban space in order to build a new society. The author analyzes squatting as a specific method and philosophy in the context of the experience of global projects of rural and urban anarchist communities, including global projects of ideological communes and comparing this experience with the situation in Russia. The paper analyzes the collected information from activists in the Russian squat commune Skvoshino and provides reflection on the life of modern builders of “in-village anarchy” and the “novelty” of a different form of social structure as a declared alternative to the “failed in-city anarchy” and the urban way of life in general.

Keywords: Skvoshino, in-village anarchy, “green” anarchism, anarchist libertarianism, squatting, ideological commune

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For citation: Krykov, E. A. 2024. “In-Village Anarchy”: Rethinking “Rural” as a New Libertarian Way of Social Living. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 67–85.

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INTO THE VILLAGE FOR THE GOOD OF THE VILLAGE? HUMANITARIAN TOURISM TO THE COUNTRYSIDE IN RUSSIA

The city and the village are traditionally opposed to each other as spaces dictating and defining a different way of life. The countryside was associated with a place to leave from, but at the same time it gradually became the cherished territory of the “non-city”, with special rural relations based on openness, mutual assistance, collectivism. In this article, the author will try to study the dialogue between the urban and the rural, what the townspeople are taking with them when they leave for village, and whether it finds any response from the locals. The study focuses on the introduction of urban patterns and urban infrastructure into the village space, analyzing the example of the young organization “Benevoyage”, whose declared goal is the development of the village. Analyzing the structure of the organization, methods of working with local residents and rural activists, the author concludes that the organizers create new objects and relationships in the village that are characteristic of urban space, and thereby, under the banner of “village revival” or recreating the idyllic image of the village they actually urbanize rural space and rural social relations, reshaping them for implementation of their own projects. Rural sociality, which includes tendencies towards equality, mutual assistance, and empathy, is being replaced by an effective organizational structure that really develops and economically transforms territories, but triggers the process of changing their social structure from rural to urban.

Keywords: development of territories, small towns, village, activists, rural

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For citation: Sadova, E. S. 2024. Into the Village for the Good of the Village? Humanitarian Tourism to the Countryside in Russia. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 86–101.

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CONSTRUCTING THE IMAGE OF THE VILLAGE IN THE RITUALS OF RUSSIAN NEO-PAGANS

The article studies the ritualism of Russian neo-pagans and the ways in which townspeople construct a certain image of the village. The author describes a neo-pagan rite in an extra-urban space and the transformation of participants in urban and rural environments before, after and during the rite itself. The study shows how Russian neo-pagans relate to villagers and whether there are ways of their interaction. The paper is based on a field study of the Russian neo-pagan community in 2020–2021. The author identifies the ways of constructing the virtual ruralness and highlights the elements of the created image of the village. The article discusses the main elements of Russian neo-pagan rituals conducted by the studied community and describes the appearance of the participants and the way they interact during the ritual. This study emphasizes the main elements of the ritual that contribute to the construction of the virtual village. The study also shows how long the constructed image of the village exists after the rite is over, and how much this depends on the type of rite and the environment. The article raises a question as to whether the atmosphere of the ritual and the village that is created matters itself, or whether the participants are mainly driven by the desire to preserve the culture and become part of it.

Keywords: construction of the image of the village, community, ritual, rural area, virtual ruralness

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For citation: Burobina, P. A. 2024. Constructing the Image of the Village in the Rituals of Russian Neo-Pagans. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 102–117.

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CYBER-ETHNICITY AND DIGITAL CULTURE

UDC 008+39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/118-128

Original article

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DIGITAL CULTURE AS A SUBJECT OF MODERN CULTURAL STUDIES

The perception of science is currently undergoing changes. Post-academic science is replacing academic science as a system of fundamental scientific knowledge regulated by social scientific institutions and relations, aimed at obtaining the truth. It is mainly concerned not by theoretical issues, but by practical knowledge, which is widely and quickly implemented in all spheres of activity. There are certain contradictions between these two ethos of science, giving rise to a whole range of problems, including the commercialization of scientific research and its results, the loss of ethical standards of a scientist's work, disregard for the criteria of scientific knowledge and for strict, scientifically proven methodology of scientific research, etc. As a result, today the implementation of technologies and scientific solutions surpasses their theoretical understanding. This, in turn, leads to a violation of the balance in the relationship between man and the universe. One of the most important elements of human-universe interaction is digital culture. Today it is studied by a range of scientific disciplines: natural, humanitarian, technical and social sciences. Various approaches and methods bear numerous definitions of digital culture, which cannot always be reduced to a single understanding and interpretation. This affects the quality of the results obtained, leads to the metaphorization of concepts and often to their semantic distortion. In this work, the author attempts to study the multifaceted phenomenon of digital culture as a subject of modern scientific knowledge, based on the fundamental knowledge of academic science, which includes three main levels: anthropological, social and civilizational.

Keywords: digital culture, information civilization, sphere of public life, man

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For citation: Gryaznova, E. V. 2024. Digital Culture as a Subject of Modern Cultural Studies. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 118–128.

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UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/129-146

Original article

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ETHNO-BLOGGING AMONG THE EVENKS: VIRTUAL SELF-PRESENTATION AND THE THEORY OF SOCIAL DRAMATURGY

The small village of Khatystyr, Aldan district of the Republic of Sakha, has recently become the center of activity of popular ethno-bloggers. Local bloggers on social networks tell the whole world who the “modern Tungus” are. The stories are told in different ways, voices, styles. Evenks talk about their lives, introducing themselves personally and their people, fighting for audience and openly competing with each other. This new type of ethnic self-presentation has become possible only in recent years, thanks to digitalization and the active development of cyberspace. Today, the significance of the problem of self-presentation in anthropology is reaching a new level. Ethno-bloggers are the new guides to the world of traditional cultures. A virtual type of self-positioning of communities and traditions in the first person is born. This paper is an exploration of what constitutes self-presentation in an evolving cyberspace. This is an attempt to analyze the self-presentation of Evenk ethno-bloggers in terms of the relationship between theatricality and reality, publicity and intimacy, “front stage” and “backstage”. The concept of social dramaturgy, developed in the middle of the last century by the American scientist Erving Goffman, was chosen as the scientific basis. How applicable is the theory of the pre-Internet era to modern times, especially in its authentic “Tungus” versions? How relevant is the theory of social dramaturgy in 21st century communication, in particular, for self-presentation on the Internet?

Keywords: cyber-ethnography, ethno-blogger, evenki, self-presentation, Goffman, IT-camp, digitalization, blogging

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For citation: Golovnev, V. A. 2024. Ethno-blogging among the Evenks: Virtual Self-Presentation and the Theory of Social Dramaturgy. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 129–146.

Funding: The study was funded by the Russian State Foundation, project number № 23-78-10079 <https://rscf.ru/project/23-78-10079/>

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UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/147-158

Original Article

© Ekaterina Yagafova

CYBER-ETHNICITY OF THE CHUVASH: REPRESENTATIONAL PRACTICES

The article examines the structure of the Chuvash cyberspace, characterizes the ethnic (Chuvash) content, describes the forms and methods of representing ethnicity, and evaluates the role of the Internet in the shaping and maintaining the Chuvash ethnic identity. The virtual space of Chuvash ethnicity is a projection of the real one, it reflects the self-awareness of the people and their regional communities, contains current forms and ways of expressing identity in the public environment through ethnically marked cultural elements, which help to construct an ethnic image that influences the formation and preservation of Chuvash ethnicity in the real world. The cyberspace of the Chuvash is an effective way of satisfying ethnic needs and familiarization with the cultural and linguistic values of their people when real communication is limited, promotes the transmission of knowledge about the history of the traditional culture of the people, intra-ethnic communication, the exchange of information among network users and their integration into the virtual space.

Keywords: *cyber-ethnicity, research practices, Chuvash*

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For citation: Yagafova, E. A. 2024. Cyber-Ethnicity of the Chuvash: Representational Practices. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 147–158.

Funding: The study was funded by the Russian State Foundation, project number № 23-28-00018 <https://rscf.ru/project/23-28-00018>

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SACRAL SYSTEMS, SEMANTIC IMAGES AND RITUAL PRACTICES

UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/159-169

Original article

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AL-TİYARAH AS AN ANCIENT ARABIAN RITUAL

*The article considers the phenomena of Arabian “auspices”. Based on the evidence of Medieval historians and lexicographers, the author analyzes etymology of terms al-ṭiyarah, al-‘iyyāfah and al-zağr, which point to fortune-telling by the behavior of birds, mammals and reptiles. While the concept of al-ṭiyarah indicated the whole range of superstitions connected with the animal world, the term al-‘iyyāfah meant passive observation of movements of birds or their calls with the following interpretation, and al-zağr indicated stimulation of selected animals by the soothsayer. A whole complex of archaic Arabic representations about the world and a human determined which animals were used for the fortune-telling. Animals, considered chthonic, included scavengers, birds or cattle with a physical defect, owls — totemic creatures that personified the human spirit separated from the decayed body. The author reconstructs the ritual al-zağr as an action designed to scare the animal and force it to move — to the right (*sāniḥ*) or left (*bāriḥ*) side. While in Najd objects located to the right of the observer or moving from right to left were considered as ‘good messengers’, in Hijaz, on the contrary, the ‘blessed’ objects were located on the left side of the augur. Separately the author analyzes connection between the left and right sides with the visualization of temporal coordinates (as a rule, ancients Arabs identified *bāriḥ* with the past and *sāniḥ* with the future) and with the cardinal points (*bāriḥ*, *ša(i)māl* — north, *sāniḥ*, *yamīn* — south). Finally, it is concluded that the customs of al-ṭiyarah were weakly institutionalized in Jahili society.*

Keywords: Jāhiliyah, Ancient Arabia, Auspices, Augurs, Arab Literature

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For citation: Nofal, F. O. 2024. Al-Ṭiyarah as an Ancient Arabian Ritual. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 159–169.

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PUPPETS AND THEIR RELATIONS WITH SPIRITS (MALI)

The puppet tradition is one of the most popular in Mali. This is a living tradition, which self-identification of Bamana and Bozo peoples is based, according to the informants themselves. This article is based on conversations with the famous Malian puppet master Yaya Coulibaly. His marionettes delight all people, however, their main task is to please the spirits, in particular faro — the spirits of the water. That is why puppets are most often performed among the Bozo fishermen, who have a closer connection with water than others. Making puppets also requires the certain rituals: traditionally they were made from specific types of wood. As with any tradition of this kind, there are legends about the origin of marionettes, and according to all of them people received this art from spirits. There are several types of puppets themselves, from string marionettes to rod ones, and all of them have different roles and performances. Puppets are used for both entertainment and sacred purposes. The marionettes performance called sogobo is the ritual of the beginning of the rainy season and the sacrifice to the faro spirits, but marionettes also participate in the rituals of secret male unions (Ceko). Puppet performances are divided into three parts according to the degree of sacredness: the first part is accessible to all spectators, while the third is only for a narrow circle of initiates. The connection between people and spirits is not broken even for the sake of Islam, since holidays, especially such as the appearances of puppets and masks, are themselves sacrifices for spirits.

Keywords: Manden, marionettes, tradition

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For citation: Zavyalova, O. Yu. 2024. Puppets and Their Relations with Spirits (Mali). *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 170–185.

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UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/186-206

Original Article

© Nikolay Medushevsky

FETISHES AKLAMA KPAKPEWO OF THE ADAN PEOPLE: TRADITION AND INTERPRETATION

This article studies the tradition of creating Aklama kpakpewo fetishes of the Adan people, who are a part of the large Ewe ethnic group and live in modern Ghana and Togo. The traditional religion of this society is the Vodun cult, with a complex sacred system formed within it, which includes several levels of hierarchy of deities, spirits, mystical creatures of Aziz, ancestral spirits and amulets of magical properties. All these elements have a physical expression in the form of fetishes, the most typical of which are the Aklama kpakpewo figures. These figures are simple, but extremely diverse, which makes them difficult to interpret. In this paper, the author attempts a comprehensive analysis of this type of fetish based on materials collected by anthropologists and ethnographers starting from the end of the 19th century. The work uses historiographical analysis and an empirical approach. The latter is based on the author's study of a large collection of fetish figures located in museums, private collections, as well as in the author's personal collection.

Keywords: Adan people, Ewe people, fetishes of Aklama kpakpewo, Vodun religion, Ghana, Togo, Yates' typology

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For citation: Medushevsky, N. A. 2024. Fetishes Aklama Kpakpewo of the Adan People: Tradition and Interpretation. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 186–206.

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UDC 398.21+291.21-23

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/207-227

Original Article

© Irina Denisova

THE UNDERGROUND WORLD OF THE RUSSIAN FAIRY TALES: THE IMAGERY, SEMANTICS OF GIFTS TO THE HERO

The article examines the imagery of the fairy-tale underworld according to materials from East Slavic fairy tales, mainly based on a plot type SUS (CVC) No. 301A, B (Three Underground Kingdoms), its first part (before the secondary fall of the hero). The author analyzes semantically significant details in the motifs of the hero's descent into the underworld and passage through it to the central locus, marked by the golden palace. Examples of fairytale images of the underworld, similar to the earthly world, are given, and the question is raised about the ideological origins of such an analogy. The earlier semantics of the entire plot (preceding the explicit marriage semantics) is revealed based on a comparative analysis of the "gifts" of the underground princess and the character himself. The author suggests that at least two chronological layers overlap to form this plot.

Keywords: the underworld, underground princess, miracle waters, gift-egg, serpent-giver, underground light/fire

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For citation: Denisova, I. M. 2024. The Underground World of the Russian Fairy Tales: The Imagery, Semantics of Gifts to the Hero. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 207–227.

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WATER IN ROMANIAN INCANTATIONS AND IN THE INCANTATIONS OF THE ROMANIAN-SPEAKING POPULATION OF THE TIMOK VALLEY

The article considers the concept of water both in the narrow functional plane as an element of the subject sphere of the actional component of an incantation and as an image in its verbal component (in text). The main sources of the study are the Romanian spells of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, represented in the collections of Romanian researchers such as S. Fl. Marian, E. Niculice-Voronca, E. Hodos and A. Gorovei, the incantations of the Romanian-speaking population of the Timok River valley collected by C. Sandu-Timok, contemporary researchers S. Gacovici and V. Popovic, as well as texts and descriptions of incantation rituals collected by the author together with N. Golant in expeditions to the Eastern Serbia in 2018 and 2019. The paper presents different names of the types of water used in Romanian incantations. Using the example of an incantation from the collection of S. Fl. Marian the author demonstrates the close connection between the actional and verbal components of the incantation, where water plays an organizing role and is represented in a dynamic process of transition from one type to another (flowing, special, incanted, etc.). Water is a basic element of many therapeutic and love incantations and divination practices. Examples covered in this article show that water is endowed with a special magical power and is an element uniting the actional and verbal components.

Keywords: Romanian incantations, incantation water, action component, incantation text, object component

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For citation: Ryzhova, M. M. 2024. Water in Romanian Incantations and in the Incantations of the Romanian-Speaking Population of the Timok Valley. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 228–245.

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FOLK KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONS

UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/246-262

Original Article

© Nadezhda Dubova, Tolkunai Kadyrbekova, Michail Nikiforov

KYRGYZ STAR CALENDAR

Along with the well-known lunar and lunar-solar calendars, widespread in the Orient, lunar-star calendars are also theoretically possible. In such calendars, the duration of the month is determined by conjunction of the Moon with some star located near the ecliptic plane. One of such calendars, described by Boris A. Kuftin (1916), was based on the conjunction of the Moon and the Pleiades. The present article analyzes the field materials obtained in 2023 in the Naryn district of Kyrgyzstan. They include four calendars of the local stargazer (esepchi) Sh. Cherekchiev for 2017, 2019–2021, created by him for his village, which are based on togools — conjunctions of the Moon and the Pleiades. The presence of calendars allows us to compare the tabular dates of togools with the calculated values, determine their accuracy and analyze their functioning. Analysis of Cherikchiev's calendars confirms the theoretical model of the lunar-star calendar we proposed earlier, in which the heliacal sunrise of the Pleiades is the starting point, and the months are counted according to the conjunctions of the Moon and the Pleiades. The verification also showed that only the dates for the first half of 2017 can correspond to real observations, and the deviation of the calculated and calendar dates for the rest of the period varies from 2 to 4 days. This means that the calendar has ceased to be adjusted with the actual movement of the Moon since the second half of 2017.

Keywords: Kyrgyzstan, folk astronomical knowledge, astronomy of Middle Asia, time counting by Pleiades

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For citation: Dubova, N. A., T. K. Kadyrbekova and M. G. Nikiforov. 2024. Kyrgyz Star Calendar. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 246–262.

Funding: The work was supported by the Russian Science Foundation (project 22–18–00529).

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FOLK MEDICINE OF THE NORTHERN SELKUPS

The article focuses on the traditional medicine of the Northern Selkups, one of the un-studied elements of the traditional Selkup culture. Based on field materials, the author identifies, classifies and describes plant and animal-based medicines, medicinal derivatives of combustion (smoke and heat) and inorganic substances. The study revealed that the current generation of middle-aged and older Selkups remembers well the folk remedies which their grandmothers and mothers used to treat them, when official medicine was inaccessible and older relatives had to perform the duties of family doctors. The relatively small number of natural medicines used by the Selkups and the lack of images responsible for the vitality in Selkup mythology, suggest that Selkup medicine did not develop sufficiently and played a smaller role in the life of the Selkups than magical shamanic healing techniques. At present, when the official medicine plays a significant part in the life of Selkups, the folk medicines are gradually falling into disuse.

Keywords: Selkups, traditional culture, ethnomedicine, official medicine, shamanic treatment of diseases, folk medicines

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For citation: Stepanova, O. B. 2024. Folk Medicine of the Northern Selkups. *Her-
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UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/277-287

Original Article

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THE PERSISTENCE OF TRADITIONS IN THE CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE BASHKIR TABYN CLAN

The article examines the persistence of traditions in the Bashkir rural hinterland in modern conditions and the practice of museumification of ethnographic material. Members of the Bashkir family Tabyn, who live in the basin of the Zilim river in the Gafuri district of the Republic of Bashkortostan, have been breeding Bashkir horses since ancient times. The horse was and remains an indispensable assistant in the household. Occupations, mentioned in the written sources of the XVIII-XIX centuries as typical for the Tabyn clan, are practiced by them to this day. Bashkirs breed horses, collect honey (both from domestic and semi-wild bees). Commercial and artisanal occupations are also associated with cattle breeding and bee-keeping. Men make sledges, carts, horse harnesses and wooden vessels for making kumis and storing honey. The items are made not only for personal use, but also for sale. Bashkir families also willingly accept tourists who come to relax in the tranquility of nature, offering to ride a horse, treat themselves to kumis, honey and mead. Tabyn masters receive orders from historians and restorers for horse ammunition to be used in various Russian and republican historical reenactments (for example, the participation of Bashkir horsemen in the Patriotic War of 1812). Thus, age-old traditions are not only preserved, being passed on from generation to generation, but have also acquired new significance in modern life.

Keywords: traditions, Bashkirs, expedition, National Museum of the Republic of Bashkortostan, museum fund

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For citation: Nigmatullina, Z. F. 2024. The Persistence of Traditions in the Cultural and Economic Life of the Bashkir Tabyn Clan. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 277–287.

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UDC 394

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/288-301

Original Article

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CHILDREN-FOCUSED FAMILY LIFE CYCLE TRADITIONS AMONG KARAKALPAKS IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

At the present stage, the processes of globalization have an impact on the daily life, culture and customs of every nation. This impact affects the sphere of family rituals, including rituals and traditions of the children's cycle. Studying the rituals related to the birth and upbringing of children, we can observe how new rituals and customs are taking root among Karakalpaks under the influence of modernization. The results of field research show that traditional rituals undergo transformations, adapting to new conditions. Innovations are especially evident in such rituals as the Gender Party held during pregnancy, naming ceremonies with new names gaining popularity, the "Tusau Keser" ritual, which turned into the celebration of the "year" with the same name, and others. The study shows that these changes are influenced by the media, especially television, the processes of assimilation and integration of different cultures, as well as the Internet space, which has become an integral part of life in the republic.

Keywords: Karakalpaks, traditional rituals, innovations in children's rituals, transformation, globalization

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For citation: Turekeev, K. 2024. Children-focused Family Life Cycle Traditions among Karakalpaks in the Context of Globalization. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 288–301.

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UDC 394

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/302-309

Original Article

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MUTUAL ASSISTANCE AMONG THE KARAKALPAKS IN CRISIS SITUATIONS AND NATURAL DISASTERS

The study examines the tradition of mutual assistance among the Karakalpaks during natural disasters. The collected field materials demonstrate the importance of mutual assistance in the life of the Karakalpaks during periods of natural disasters, floods, fires and droughts. Special focus is placed on mutual assistance during the Covid-19 pandemic. Unity and cooperation were manifested in the willingness to share money, food, medicine and during various family events such as funerals, weddings and others. Despite the strict quarantine imposed by the state, family events among the Karakalpaks continued to be held according to conventional norms. The paper describes in detail how, during quarantine, relatives, neighbors and friends provided assistance to people undergoing difficult situations.

Keywords: Karakalpaks, natural disasters, tradition of mutual assistance, pandemic, quarantine

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For citation: Khojaniyazova, G. M. 2024. Mutual Assistance among the Karakalpaks in Crisis Situations and Natural Disasters. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 302–309.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH TIME

UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/310-321

Original Article

© Maria Sysoeva

CAUCASIAN STUDIES OF THE MOSCOW SCHOOL OF COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS AS REMEMBERED BY ITS PARTICIPANTS

Throughout the 19th century, comparative and historical linguistics (also known as comparative linguistics) occupied dominant positions in world linguistics. The methodology of this scientific direction aims at reconstructing and comparing known languages, establishing linguistic contacts and connections. In the 1960s, the Moscow School of Comparative Linguistics (also called the Nostratic School), a unique intellectual community that became the world's leading one in the study of distant linguistic affinities, emerged in Russian linguistics. At first, its research focused mainly on the active development of the so-called Nostratic hypothesis, which assumed the kinship of Altaic, Kartvelian, Dravidian, Indo-European, Uralic and Afroasiatic languages. However, Nostratics was not the only interest of subsequent generations of comparativists. Thus, the article presents a scholarly analysis of the theoretical contribution of the Moscow school of comparativism to Russian and world Caucasian studies. Attention is drawn to one of the landmark and, at the same time, controversial ideas of this linguistic school — the Sino-Caucasian hypothesis put forward by the outstanding linguist S. A. Starostin in the 1980s. Verification of this colossal idea required, in turn, first to reconstruct the language families that make up the basic composition of the Sino-Caucasian languages (Sino-Tibetan, North Caucasian and Yeniseian languages). This long and fruitful work resulted in the publication of the Etymological Dictionary of North Caucasian Languages by S. L. Nikolaiev and S. A. Starostin in 1994, which made a certain breakthrough in Caucasian studies. Based on interviews with Starostin's colleagues and close associates (2020–2022) collected by the author, the article describes the history of the idea's origin and its realization, the support and criticism of colleagues, and the public response caused by the proposed classifications.

Keywords: *history of science, comparative and historical linguistics, caucasology, S. A. Starostin*

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For citation: Sysoeva, M. E. 2024. Caucasian Studies of the Moscow School of Comparative Linguistics as Remembered by Its Participants. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 310–321.

Funding: The research was carried out within the framework of the RNF project 20-10-00159 ‘Language relationship and chronology of ethno-linguistic branching in the research of Moscow School of Comparative Linguistics: legacy, innovation, significance for related sciences and science studies’.

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UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/322-334

Original Article

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HISTORICAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF HEREDITARY AND PROPERTY RELATIONS OF THE MORDOVIANS BASED ON MATERIALS BY V. N. MAINOV

The focus of the study is the property and hereditary relations of Mordovian peasants who lived in the Volga region in the second half of the 19th century. This problem, as well as the issues of contractual and family relations of the peasant population of Russia as a whole, was reflected in pre-revolutionary science. At this stage, the research expanded significantly the amount of sources on this topic and introduced abundant data from the relevant legal practice. The present article is based on "An Essay on the Legal Life of the Mordovians" by Viktor Nikolaevich Mainov published in 1885, which includes all the information he collected in 1877 during ethnographic research in the provinces of the European part of the country (Kazan, Nizhny Novgorod, Penza, Samara, Simbirsk and Tambov). The monograph addresses important elements of family law (in particular, the forms and conditions of marriage, property division, relationships between family members) and considers hereditary, property, material and contractual law in the life of Mordovians on a large factual material. The author of the article highlights the significance of V. N. Mainov's work for studying the history of the legal culture of the Mordovians, since many of its aspects, in particular, the hereditary law of Mordovian peasants, still remain understudied in Russian historical and legal science.

Keywords: Volga region, Mordovian peasants, hereditary relations, property relations

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For citation: Shchankina, L. N. 2024. Historical and Legal Aspects of Hereditary and Property Relations of the Mordovians Based on the Materials by V. N. Mainov. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2:322–334.

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TESTING CURRENT APPROACHES TO ETHNOGENETIC RESEARCH

UDC 572.2

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/335-346

Original Article

© Aleksei Buraev, Yaroslav Dikiy

ETHNOGENETIC PROCESSES IN EASTERN SIBERIA AND THE FAR EAST

The article consideres two ethnogenetic braches in Eastern Siberia and the Far East: the Manchu-Tungus and the Baikal-Mongol (according to V. P. Alekseev). The peoples belonging to these branches are rather close anthropologically. However, there are characteristic anthropological differences. Recent genetic studies have not revealed genetic traces neither of assimilation of the Evenk groups by the Buryats, nor the inclusion of Buryat groups in the Evenks. The results of paleoanthropological studies suggest a genetic continuity between the population of the Mohe and Burkhotuy cultures with the modern the Manchu-Tungus and Mongol peoples respectively. A craniometric study of medieval tribes revealed certain anthropological differences between the Mohe and Burkhotuy samples. Considering modern ethno-historical realities and anthropological data on medieval tribes, the authores come to the conclusion that there were two centers of ethnogenesis. By the middle of the 1st Millennium AD these centers can be defined as Manchu and Mongolian. The Manchur center gave rise to the modern peoples of the Far East. Craniometric data suggest that the Evenks separated from the Manchu peoples of the Amur region, settling far to the north and north-west along the taiga zone of Eurasia. The Mongolian peoples, originating from the Argun region, advanced southward to the territory of Buryatia, Mongolia and Northern China. At the same time, the data from the canonical analysis demonstrated a significant similarity between the Mohe and Burkhotuy people based on cranial data. The authors try to interpret this controversy, but the problem requires further paleoanthropological research.

Keywords: anthropology, Burkhotuys, Buryats, Manchus, Mongols, Mohe, Turkic peoples, Evenks, craniology, ethnogenesis

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For citation: Buraev, A. I., and Ya. V. Dikiy. 2024. Ethnogenetic Processes in Eastern Siberia and the Far East. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 335–346.

Funding: The study was carried out as a part of the research plan of the Institute of Mongolian, Buddhist and Tibetan Studies of Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences №121031000241-1.

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PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

UDC 572

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/347-363

Original Article

© *Svetlana Borutskaya, Sergey Vasilyev, Aleksandr Vashanau, Maryia Tkachova, Valentsina Vinnikava, Olga Marfina*

PALEODEMOGRAPHY OF THE BELYNICH POPULATION IN 17TH–19TH CENTURIES (BELARUS)

The paper presents a paleodemographic study of a 17th–19th centuries population from the town of Belynichi, Mogilev region, Republic of Belarus. The average life expectancy was 27 years, while the average life expectancy of the adult population was 38.5 years. That is consistent with the data on the population of many Russian cities of the late Middle Ages and New Age. The sex ratio in the group was unusual: about 39% adult men and almost 23% more women. The reason for such difference should probably be sought in historical events. The percentage of child mortality is very high—just over 50%. That is, half of the population died in childhood, with almost a quarter of them under 5 years of age, and 10% under one year of age. The high infant mortality in the group from Belynichy is similar to that in Nizhny Novgorod (burial ground of the Nizhny Novgorod Kremlin) and the Blokhino-I fortress of the 17th–18th centuries. The final age cohort is not representative, neither in the male nor in the female part of the sample. 64% fewer men than women lived to the age of 50. The main peak of mortality in the group is 0–5 years of age. The second-high mortality peak is observed between 40 and 45 years. The extremely low mortality in the early adult age cohorts of 15–20 and 20–25 years in the studied group is unusual for its time and location.

Keywords: age cohort, palaeodemography, mortality peak, percentage of child mortality, life expectancy, final age cohort

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For citation: Borutskaya, S. B., S. V. Vasilyev, A. N. Vashanau, M. I. Tkachova, V. Y. Vinnikava, and O. V. Marfina. 2024. Paleodemography of the Belynichi Population in 17th–19th Centuries (Belarus). *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 347–363.

Funding: The article was prepared within the framework of the RNF-BRFFI grant 23-48-10011 “Bioarchaeological Reconstruction of the Lifestyle and Physical Characteristics of the Medieval Population of Belarus and the European Part of Russia”.

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UDC 572

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/364-388

Original Article

© Olga Grigorieva, Olga Alyokhina, Guo Lin

FACIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF HOMININS OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE MIDDLE PLEISTOCENE PERIOD FROM CHINA (HUALONGDONG, JINNIUSHAN, DALI, HARBIN)

*The work is devoted to the facial reconstruction and study of hominins of the second half of the Middle Pleistocene period in China: the skulls from the Hualongdong, Jinniushan, Dali, and Harbin sites. Contour and graphic reconstructions were performed using the “Appearance Algorithm” facial reconstruction program, and verbal portraits summarizing the specific features of each skull were composed. The finds date back to the Middle Pleistocene period (around 330–146 kyr). The study revealed a significant similarity between the four finds. All four individuals are undoubtedly pre-modern hominins, distinct from *Homo sapiens*. The portraits of individuals from Dali, Jinniushan and Harbin are similar to each other, while the one from Hualongdong is somewhat different, which may be explained by his younger age, greater antiquity, or individual variability. The study suggests that they belong to the same monophyletic group. The possibility of the existence of a distinctive hominin lineage in Asia, which may represent Denisovans, is not excluded, which requires further evidence, including new genetic investigations.*

Keywords: China, anthropological facial reconstruction, hominins, Middle Pleistocene of Asia, Hualongdong, Jinniushan, Dali, Harbin

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For citation: Grigorieva, O. M., O. I. Alyokhina and Lin Guo. 2024. Facial Reconstruction of Hominins of the Second Half of the Middle Pleistocene Period from China (Hualongdong, Jinniushan, Dali, Harbin). *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 364–388.

Funding: The research was carried out within the framework of the research topic «The Evolutionary Continuum of the Genus *Homo*». Sub-topic «Anthropology of Ancient and Modern Populations».

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REVIEWS

UDC 39

DOI: 10.33876/2311-0546/2024-2/389-395

Review

© *Marina Martynova*

SMS MESSAGES AND VIBER COMMUNICATION — MODERN WRITTEN CONVERSATION FROM ATHE SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGIST'S PERSPECTIVE

**BOOK REVIEW: MILINA IVANOVIĆ BARIŠIĆ. SMS AND VIBER MESSAGES:
MESSAGES FOR EVERYONE AND EVERY OCCASION. BELGRADE: THE INSTITUTE
OF ETHNOGRAPHY SASA. 2023. 181 P.**

Texting, receiving and sending SMS messages via mobile phones and Internet messengers is a relatively new research field for social anthropologists and ethnologists. Meanwhile the mobile telephone, the Internet and other innovations of the late 20th century are far more than just scientific breakthroughs in engineering and human thought — their introduction into today's life has given rise to many changes in cultural and domestic life. Modern information technology has led to an unprecedentedly rapid spread of news streams. The transcultural and transcontinental nature of this phenomenon from an anthropological point of view leads to incredible acculturation. Thus, it is particularly relevant to consider not only the general patterns of electronic communication in society, but also their local variants. SMS messages as a verbal form of communication are narratives that have specific and recognizable forms. The functions of short written texts are informative, entertaining and integrative. Obviously, they reflect the social, political, and cultural specificity of a particular society. The interest in this topic was provoked by the publication of a monograph by Serbian researcher Dr. Milina Ivanović-Barišić, scientific adviser at the Ethnographic Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. She analyzed Serbian SMS and Viber message content from an ethnological/anthropological perspective, studying their subject matter, dialogue etiquette, writing culture and other socially relevant parameters. The researcher concluded that messaging has not only become an essential part of our everyday life, but has also changed business communication in various professional spheres. At the same time, she saw in the short text messages a certain continuity of traditions and even a new folklore narrative that accumulated folklore genres created throughout human history.

Keywords: mobile phone, text messaging, SMS, Viber communication, Internet
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For citation: Martynova, M. Yu. 2024. SMS Texting and Viber Communication — Modern Written Conversation from the Social Anthropologist's Perspective. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 389–395.

Funding: The study was carried out as a part of the research plan of the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology.

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BOOK REVIEW: NIKOGLO, D. E. ETHNICITY IN THE GAGAUZ FICTION LITERATURE. CHIȘINĂU: S. N., 2022. 248 P.

The aim of the review is to highlight the book author's approach focused on the study of ethnicity in Gagauz fiction. D. E. Nikoglo presents the formation and development in the Republic of Moldova of the research direction that emerged in the post-Soviet period and aims to study how the ethno-cultural component is reflected in the books by writers who themselves belong to certain ethno-social groups. The author analyzes the literature as one of the mechanisms of ethnic identity construction. He reveals the attitude of Gagauz writers to regional identity, native language, religious and moral values, elements of spiritual and material culture. The review emphasizes the importance of Nikoglo's approach to studying the ethnic identity among the Gagauz intellectual elite.

Keywords: ethnoliterature, ethnic identity, identity construction, Gagauz studies, literary heritage

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For citation: Stepanov, V. P. 2024. Book Review: Nikoglo, D. E. Ethnicity in the Gagauz Fiction Literature. Chișinău: S. n., 2022. 248 p. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 2: 396–404.

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Scientific Journal

2024. № 2

HERALD OF ANTHROPOLOGY (Vestnik Antropologii)

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Signed for print 06/1/2024 Format 70 x 108/16

35,44 conventional printing sheets; order № 237

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