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Abstracts

Stories on the Road: Long-Distance Driving in Sakha (Yakutiia)

Tanya Argounova-Low

Roads have always been a significant element of social life in the North. But issues of movement, navigation, road use, road safety, and speed started receiving careful attention in anthropology recently. This paper highlights the significance of roads and movement in the increasingly mobile and fluid North. Using material from Sakha (Yakutiia) I analyse the transformative effect of roads in the region related to industrial and economic development. I investigate the concept of road through performance of driving, road experience and various practices of long-distance drivers and other road-users. This paper builds the relationship between roads and concepts of perception, time, and narrative and uses the prism of these relationships to address the phenomenon of roads.

‘Relying on my own two’: Walking, Routes and Strength among Orochen-Evenki Hunters and Herders of Zabaikal’e (East Siberia)

Donatas Brandisauskas

In the presentation, I will explore Orochen walking, sign-making and use of routes as being linked to powerful metaphors that reveal hunter’s and herder’s sense of belonging to the land. I will elaborate on the image of the ‘Walking Tungus’ (R. Peshyi Tungus), which was widely employed in a pejorative way in Imperial and early Soviet literature. Under the Tsar, Orochen-Evenkis were referred negatively as ‘wanderers’, but today Orochens consider their walking abilities to be their strength. Walking is, for them, both a means and a skill that is essential to hunting and herding activities. Hence, I will invert earlier negative images and replace it with the study of how the themes of pedestrian journeying and use of forest pathways provide central dimensions to the Orochen-Evenki worldview and moral code.

Temporality and Scale of Movement of Northern Baikal Evenkis

Vladimir Davydov

Soviet administrators and territorial formation officers often interpreted the space of the village as if the village were a completed portrait. However, such a narrow view does not take into consideration villagers' movements and their temporality. In this sense, the stay in the taiga and the stay in the village should not be approached as the contrasting lifestyles; rather they are the complementary life phases which together constitute the strong sense of locality and the way of life of local people who adapted to the combination of different types of movements in their routine practices. The way of life of the northern Baikal hunters, fishers and reindeer herders includes movements of two different scales. Thus, small-scale movements are those which do not cover large distances and usually imply a return to the same point within a short period of time. They involve the use of one main base where a movement starts and finishes. Large-scale movements usually do not mean a quick return to the same place and cover larger distances; yet, they are built upon a set of small-scale movements with a return to certain points of a route, such as winter log house (*zimov'e*) or hunting base (*baza*). That means they are built upon the use of several bases. The temporality of movements depends not only on the practical activity, but also from the season, weather, time of day or night, from the seasonal movements of animals in the taiga and fish in the river, as well as on economic factors. At the same time, both in the case of large-scale movements of reindeer herders and hunters, as well as small-scale movements of fishers the village functions as a point of constant return.

From the Reindeer Path to the Highway and back - How Infrastructural Innovations Enable Distinctive Lifestyles in Western Siberia

Stephan Dudeck

No region in Siberia underwent as dramatic changes in transportation infrastructure as the oil producing Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug. In only one generation's time the forest

was covered by a network of roads and highways between the newly established settlements and oil fields. Forty years ago reindeer sledges and canoes were the only means of transportation to reach the reindeer herders' camps. Nowadays a lot of Khanty reindeer herders are using private cars to commute between the oil towns and their forest camps over roads established by oil companies.

Contrary to the common expectation that the reindeer herders' lifestyles would adapt to the mainstream society and Khanty culture assimilate to Russian culture, Khanty reindeer herders living in the vicinity of oil fields around the cities of Surgut and Kogalym preserve their language and distinctive lifestyles more than Khanty in regions not affected by oil production. Over centuries, the Khanty reindeer herders' main strategy of resisting Russian colonization was to combine a partial integration with retreating into the forest where they avoided contact and hid cultural practices. Their exclusive knowledge and technology of transportation made the local indigenous population the masters of movement in an area covered by swamps and taiga forest. New forms of transportation, communication and interaction challenged that position. They brought new possibilities of communication, but also new possibilities to prevent contact, new forms of movement, but also new possibilities to prevent movement.

The paper explores the Khanty reindeer herders' strategies to integrate technological change into their distinctive lifestyles and their changing concepts of movement. It develops the analytical framework of technological and social change, a theme introduced into social sciences of the Arctic by Pelto's "Snowmobile Revolution" as far back as the 1970s.

Reconnecting Alaska: Mexican Movements and the Last Frontier

Sara V. Komarnisky

In this presentation I will present my planned doctoral research, which will explore the historical and ongoing connections between Alaska and Mexico and how and why those connections have been obscured or ignored. It is also about places: Alaska, and "the

north” more generally, and Latin America, and Mexico specifically. There are powerful imaginaries associated with these places, and interesting things happen when they are brought together through movement.

People from Acuitzio del Canje, Michoacán began travelling to Alaska (Anchorage, and elsewhere) to work in the 1960s, and movement between Mexico and Alaska has continued across generations since then. Today, many Acuitzences that live in Anchorage maintain a close relationship with friends and family members in Acuitzio, and travel back and forth regularly. However, this movement is obscured by ideological work that makes Alaska seem separate, isolated, wild, and a place where Mexicans are not imagined to be. Mexican movements into Alaska over time disrupt this vision, showing how Alaska is connected to multiple other geographies, and making the US-Mexico border a salient reference point in everyday life in Anchorage. When the South moves into the North, it can make us think about both “Alaska” and “Mexico” in different ways, perhaps. When the US-Mexico border is relocated to Anchorage, if only for a moment, it can elicit a reaction of humor or surprise. Why is that? And what does this have to do with how people actually live in an interconnected place?

‘I love the city but I have to leave’: Migration, Mobility and Connectivity among Vorkuta Youth

Hilary Pilkington

This paper considers what patterns of current and prospective mobility and migration among young people in the city of Vorkuta in the Russian Arctic tell us about the connection between people, culture and (peripheral) place in ‘global’ times. It is based on the analysis of data arising from sociological research conducted as part of a larger AHRC funded project ‘National identity in Russia since 1961’ in the cities of Vorkuta and St Petersburg (2007-08). The research was conducted collaboratively with Elena Omel’chenko (‘Region’, Ul’ianovsk) and designed as a mixed-method study comprising a survey (n=1500) and in-depth interviews (n=80) with young people aged 16-19.

Survey data from the research suggest that 85% of young people in Vorkuta expect to leave the city. This appears to confirm a vision of Vorkuta as a globally disconnected, deindustrialising and anomic city, which young people are desperate to leave. Drawing on qualitative (interview) data collected, however, the paper interrogates any simple vision of a deterritorialised world in which territorial roots and the cultural distinctiveness of places have been lost (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 9). The paper explores young people's patterns of mobility and connectivity (actual and imagined) in their historical and cultural context. It suggests that this connectivity is *rhizomic* rather than *rooted* in nature (Deleuze and Guattari 2004: 7) and is itself a product of Soviet period, 'deterritorialization' in which temporary territorial relocation - during military service, work placements, holidays at work-based sanatoria and pioneer camps – was encouraged as part of the Soviet identity project but employed by individual subjects as a means of social and material mobility. Earlier deterritorialization projects, it is argued, structure the mobility of young people in contemporary Vorkuta and the ensuing networks of connectivity map out for them possible lives elsewhere. The paper suggests, nonetheless, that young respondents' narratives of Vorkuta do not demonstrate the death of the 'local'. On the contrary, their continued connection to, and affection for, the city as well as their reflection on their future in or out of it, illustrate one way in which a new kind of self-aware local subject is reproduced in 'global' times and places.

The Place of the Urals in the System of Russian Geopolitics. The Role of Water Transport Communication in the Economic Development of Russia

Yakov Samodelkin

The take pay attention to the project proposed to use Arctic Ocean. The Arctic water transport communication was the unique shortest and safety rout jointed Russia both Europe and Far East. In USSR the arctic ships proved the real opportunity of the existence of Navy traffic from Europe to Far East.

The Arctic seaways were proposed to use by the Russian generals for military aims. The Russian naval forces in the Baltic see could be block and could be destroy by Germany

and (or) English naval forces. Russian defensive policy demanded the construction of new safe ports. Russian government decided to build new safe ports for Russian naval forces in Kola Peninsula and Kamchatka Peninsula. Kola Peninsula and Kamchatka Peninsula had become the territory of priority of the development. Before the Russian – Japanese war Russian government began to build the war infrastructure as base for future the North naval forces in Murmansk seacoast of Kola Peninsula. (The construction was finished by 30 -y. XX the century). Duration the I world war Russian government built the railway from St. Petersburg to Petrozavodsk to Murmansk (1915-1916). In result, the Murmansk railway enhanced the Russian geopolitical position. The Urals was link with Murmansk port. Murmansk port was outlet for the productions from the Urals metallurgical plants.

In 20-s XX century the government of the Soviet republic discussed the project to construct the railway from the Urals and Western Siberia to Murmansk port. The government of Soviet republic was continued to find the shortest transport communication from the Urals and Siberia to European ports. The Soviet government supported the former projects of the technical-economical development of Russia. The Soviet government wanted to get safety ports for international trade. The former western boarder of Russia was drafted on the east of country. Russia had the borders with news states from the Eastern Europe. The positions of Soviet Russia were not fast in Asia-Pacific Ocean. Japan occupied the half of Sahalina as the result of Russian-Japan war. Russia had lost the influence on Korea, China. Russian navy base was destroyed. Russia needed the outlets for the Urals and Siberia resources in the region of the South-Eastern Asia. In 1921 V. Lenin organized the scientific group to study Yamal region. The railways connection the Urals and Siberia with Maresale or the other the arctic port gave the opportunities for safety international world trade. Russia could be safe her political, economical, military powers having ports in Arctic Ocean.

Relocation and Finding One's Roots: Ideologies, Ideas and Perceptions of Movement and Emplacement in the Russian Arctic

Florian Stammer

Moving large parts of the human population inside of the country was one among several officially recognised instruments for achieving development goals during the Soviet Union. Throughout the 20th century this has led to the Arctic's largest relocation project ever in geographical terms affecting more than 10 million people. Consequences of this project are addressed as a legacy of the Former Soviet Union by recent development policies for the Arctic as an increasingly important resource frontier of the earth. This presentation looks at the consequences of development caused relocation within the Russian Arctic among indigenous peoples and to/from the Russian Arctic by incomers. Basing on historical research, policy analysis, literature studies and anthropological fieldwork Soviet policies of strategic consolidation and sedentarisation of indigenous minorities and large-scale establishment of resource extraction towns are described. The consequences of the Soviet development induced northern settlement system are analysed as a model of integrated long-term care by a state not for its human rights record but its political and economic development ideology. This system only at first glance seems to contradict recent development initiatives such as strategic downscaling of 'Arctic surplus population' in Russia. Such a diachronic approach lets me to conclude that

- a) post Soviet Russia continues to see population movement as a valid policy instrument to pursue particular agendas for development
- c) relocation projects can lead to viable multicultural communities even in unknown, harsh and hostile environments, in spite of tremendous suffering and millions of victims.
- d) long distance relocated people have 'roots and wings at the same time', leading to 'place polygamy' and multiple place-based identities.

Nomads and School: The Experience of Russia's North

Eva Toulouze

Nomadism has always been a problem for authorities wishing to have full control of a territory. School has been one part of the controversial treatment of nomads: how is it possible to provide education to children, when they are permanently moving around? Authorities have reacted to this situation in different ways. This presentation focuses on three periods in Russian history: the tsarist period, with the endeavours of the missionaries (with a focus on the Obdorsk mission and its head, Irinarh Shemanovski) ; the Soviet period and its ambitious projects of equality, standardisation and transformation of mankind and the post-Soviet period, in which costs have become much more central than ideology for the State. For Arctic nomads, these different approaches and policies have had a variable impact the presentation focuses on.