

Ethnographic manuscripts. For the introduction

The website ethnomanuscripts.ru (Этнографические рукописи) is a private scientific website for publishing texts in electronic form on various areas of ethnography that for one reason or another have not been printed or cannot be printed. From the point of view of the philosophy of science, we talk about a very simple thing. It is not enough to know the solution to a problem, you also need to know who you will be dealing with when publishing the solution found.

The website ethnomanuscripts.ru was created to publish works on topics that are currently in very little or no demand. It all began with allegations of the disappearance of the subject of ethnography under the onslaught of civilization and ended with the inclusion of ethnography in the so-called anthropology with the rejection of an independent subject-matter. Gradually, this led to a complete mistrust of the development of its own conceptual apparatus. In the end, science was replaced by a kind of philanthropic activity, and the formulation and solution of problems shifted to the area of purely terminological exercises.

Therefore, this website was created for those who believe in the existence of a science called ethnography. Faith as opposed to belief requires proof. And the purpose of this site is to prove the existence of ethnography. Ethnography as science consists of two subsets: the union of elements of traditional culture, including folklore, and the union of theoretical objects in the form of scientific proposals that connect these elements.

Indeed, Western anthropologists abandon their own empirical basis, separating it from themselves in the form of a special, purely descriptive science called ethnography. As a result, the internal theory of ethnography is artificially replaced by an external theory made up of randomly assembled elements of sociology, psychology, and biology. In this regard, Western scientists are surprisingly in agreement. Claude Levi-Strauss: "How did anthropology come into being? It has made itself out of all kinds of refuse and left-overs from other fields" (1953: 349). Clifford Geertz: "One of the advantages of anthropology as a scholarly enterprise is that no one, including its practitioners, quite knows exactly what it is" (1985: 623). Many other statements of this kind show that the "anthropologists" are entangled in their own subject.

In comparison to Western "anthropology", domestic "marxist ethnography" had a significant advantage. Despite all the theoretical costs and absurdities (according to the principle: I found no new stage of development - the day went by in vain) and in strict observance of the dogmas of "historical materialism", in practice Soviet / Russian ethnography used pre-revolutionary research models. This allowed her to maintain her relative integrity in terms of the "science of (traditional) culture" (see Edward Tylor).

Tylor pointed out that traditional culture is at the heart of modern civilization. This is the essence of Tylor's concept of "survivals". From this point of view, the disappearance of the traditional culture from real life does not mean its disappearance as an object of study. In this capacity this culture is endless and will always exist in ethnographic sources, i.e. in the records of field ethnographers.

Modern anthropologists (i.e. *former* ethnographers) have a favorite toy in the form of a suggestion that purports to explain the meaning of their work. "Know thyself through another". "An sich" this

idea is certainly correct, only "für sich (für uns)" it has nothing to do with ethnography, because this expression reflects the subject of the study of psychology in its purest form. Thus, the place demanded by anthropologists has long been occupied by psychologists. We can say that anthropologists have made great efforts to replace ethnography with psychology.

In no case may God's gift (ethnography) be confused with fried eggs (anthropology). When we talk about folklore as an integral part of anthropological research, psychologists have absolutely nothing to do in myths and fairy tales, since the subject of studying psychology includes exactly what unites representatives of different cultures (on the question of ethnopsychology). Ethnography as a theoretical discipline began with the thesis of the unity of the human psyche (see Bastian). It is unlikely that the opposite will ever be proven. Of course, such attempts take place from time to time, but each time they fail and make their authors world famous.

The idea of evolution in ethnography is the flip side of the unity of the human psyche. If we deny the theory of evolution, we deny the unity of humanity, and this will not even allow us to begin the study of traditional culture. Therefore, the doctrine of the evolution of culture may be termed Elementary ethnography or "foundations of ethnography."

In principle, the education of students specializing in ethnography should be to teach certain paradigms. If such paradigms do not exist, how is it possible to write textbooks on ethnography? After all, if such paradigms are absent, how can one distinguish an ethnographer from a sociologist, psychologist and philologist? (Recently there was a new misfortune - the invasion of "culturologists"). The only hope is that at least these three know if they really know what to do. Then the ethnographer can be obtained by simple subtraction. He should eat the remains of the cake from the dinner of the so-called "related sciences". The problem is that the latter leave nothing to ethnographers. Sometimes, for example, you have to listen to such conversations on the sidelines: The best ethnographers are philologists! Or: Ethnography is not science! In general, a good ethnographer is a professionally deceased ethnographer.

As an example of the concept of ethnography as a subject of instruction, we take Thomas Kuhn's comments on the system of science teaching. Then the "basis of ethnography" consists of only three or four simple questions: the question of basic research units, the question of how they interact with each other, and the question of which questions the ethnographer is allowed to ask, and therefore the question which methods can they use. The answers to these questions form the process of training the student ethnographers - preparation for the professional activity and obtaining the eligibility.

The basic units that make up the ethnographic reality are, as we have already said, the phenomena of traditional culture, defined as the results of human abstraction, regardless of their material form, such as for example: habitation, clothing, tools, myths, rites, kinship systems, etc. "ethnographic universals".

Such universals are completely homogeneous as a subject of study. As the founder of modern ethnography as a science Miklouho-Maclay once said: it is important to gather information about things, but not just to collect things as such.

The internal methods the ethnographer can use to solve scientific problems are based on two theories that are falsely considered obsolete. This is the theory of evolution of Tylor and the theory of cultural circles of Graebner, which form the foundations of ethnography. The functional theory of Malinowski is nothing but a failed attempt to regard these two concepts as elements of a unified theory.

The activation of "personal settings" at the beginning of an ethnography training program and later on own research is possible only on an extremely high level of abstraction or, on other terms, under the condition that the material is examined on a large temporal and spatial scale. In this regard, the above theories are precisely those elements of scientific knowledge that Kuhn called paradigms: "These I take universally recognized scientific achievements that provide a model of problems and solutions to a community of practitioners". Ethnography in its history has amassed enough of such scientific achievements.

[In the end, ethnographers can agree with ethnologists. With anthropologists, things are much more complicated. Modern sociocultural anthropology lives by the principle: we don't know what we are doing, but as one song says, it's better than digging a ditch.]