

REVIEW

VEKHI NA MYSAKH [LANDMARKS ON CAPES]: PAPERS IN HONOR OF SERGEI ARUTYUNOV ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY

Edited by Mikhail Bronshtein and Igor Krupnik, 2012. Moscow State Museum of Oriental Art. Paper, 180 pages, photographs, drawings. ISBN 978-5-903417-33-9; approx. \$40.

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Editors Mikhail Bronshtein and Igor Krupnik present this volume in recognition of Sergei Arutyunov's efforts to advance the study of arctic societies. The volume focuses almost exclusively on Chukotka but also features a broad view of the peopling of the Arctic in the context of world civilizations and trade (Plumet, pp. 114–119). It includes contributions by thirteen authors and drawings by two artists. Among other visual materials are depictions of museum objects, images pertaining to the themes of individual articles, and photographs of Arutyunov at different stages in his career. The book is in Russian, with a volume overview and brief descriptions of most chapters in English, offered at the end (pp. 178–179). The main contents feature archaeological investigations (Bronshtein and Dneprovsky; Dneprovsky and Lopatin; Lopatin; Mikhailova), analyses of museum objects (Sukhorukova), description of a Yupik language archive (Vakhtin), and several detailed ethnohistorical reconstructions (Chlenov and Krupnik; Nefyodkin; Weinstein-Tagrina). The cover photograph shows a prehistoric maritime residence in the process of being excavated. Evoking fairytale imagery, the back cover simulates the feel of Soviet-era children's books, set in Chukotka.

Presented in a less-expected format are two contributions by Charles Weinstein: excerpts from his diary

chronicling experiences in Chukotka from 1993–1999 (pp. 130–141) and the Chukchi-Russian-French-English dictionary of the Chukchi lexicon pertaining to cosmology and shamanism. A number of Weinstein's diary entries mourn the decline of indigenous language use, while the appended vocabulary manifests the semantic and cultural richness of what is being lost. Some terms are followed by an expression or a sentence in Chukchi, further elucidating their cultural context. The introductory narrative explains that the material is actually a small part of the thematic dictionary (yet to be published in its entirety), in which Weinstein organizes the linguistic and interpretive material he has assembled into a total of thirty-seven themes, each illuminating a particular domain of Chukchi indigenous knowledge as expressed through language.

On a similar topic in Chukchi spirituality, but focusing in depth on its specific expression, is the article by Zoya Weinstein-Tagrina, which takes on the challenge of reconstructing the tradition of shamanic family singing. Weinstein-Tagrina chooses the type of celebration called Mn'egyrgyn, a thanksgiving to and for the animals that are central to Chukchi livelihood, as an example of a cultural milieu where the shamanic family singing is performed. The author synthesizes Bogoras's documentation of the Chukchi ceremonial celebrations

with her own analyses of rhythmic structure, content, sound qualities, and the performance context of select songs. She succeeds in simulating an immersion experience for the reader.

The reconstruction of Mn'egyrgyn and Weinstein's shamanic vocabulary could assist in developing teaching materials for secondary and higher education curricula in Chukchi studies. Due to a lack of access to newer instructional aids, Native language teachers in Chukotka are constrained by the use of Soviet-era books, which are deprived of such content. If properly adapted for local educational needs, the work of Weinstein-Tagrina and Weinstein could help connect such contemporary aesthetic expressions as indigenous dances to the worldview that forms their ancestral foundation. Similarly, the description of "lullaby" singing to polar bears unveils the sentience ascribed to bears and speaks to the kind of human-animal relationship that is being disrupted by the denial of polar bear quotas for Chukotka hunters.

Vakhtin's review of material collected by Ekaterina Rubtsova on Yupik language and lore may serve a similar educational purpose. The article describes Yupik texts, currently being prepared for publication, according to the author (p. 94), assembled into a nearly five-hundred-page reference. Vakhtin comments on the linguistic geography of the Chukotka Yupik (usually called "Asian/Asiatic Yupik" in Russian literature and "Siberian Yupik" in most English language sources). He lauds the progressive and "brave" (p. 92) foresight of Rubtsova to have documented regional diversity in Yupik speech. Interwoven with the archive review is a very moving and admiring portrait of Rubtsova, one the first Soviet teachers in Chukotka and a dedicated scholar of Yupik language and storytelling. Vakhtin is critical of the tendency to overlook the seminal contributions of ethnolinguists like Rubtsova to ethnographic studies (and vice versa).

Scholars of archaeology may benefit from the methodological insight provided by Dneprovsky and Lopatin's overview of best practices in excavating permafrost-embedded semisubterranean dwellings, such as modifying the quadrant method and implementing conservation steps between excavation seasons. In a separate chapter, Lopatin analyzes the pottery from the Ekven and Paipelghak sites, establishing a typology based on five criteria—shape, slab mold, texturing, edge thickness, and molding technique. In part through the lens of his own experimentation with locally harvested clay, Lopatin comments on the relative homogeneity of prehistoric pottery on the peninsula, in con-

trast to claims of diversity in shape and technique made by previous authors.

Chlenov and Krupnik provide an account of the last voluntary Soviet-era Yupik migration. The experience of the Ungazmiut, the Chaplino Yupiget, migration to the shores of Kresta Bay and Gulf of Anadyr illuminates the centrality of cohesive hunting crews in the social system of arctic maritime societies. Another ethnohistorical reconstruction in the volume is Nefyodkin's article on Chukchi maritime warfare of the mid-seventeenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, which offers a condensed version of the author's book on this subject.

The two names appended to the volume contributor list (pp. 176–177) are those of the artists Sergei Bogoslovsky and Nina Survillo. Numerous drawings of Old Bering Sea artifacts are incorporated as visual aids in Sukhorukova's article, which analyzes the transition from object ornamentation to a stylized visualization of narrative composition between the early and later periods of the Old Bering Sea (pp. 42–51). We deduce from the specialization mentioned in Survillo's bio-sketch that these illustrations should be credited to her. The featured field drawings by Bogoslovsky were created over the course of his expeditions to Chukotka between 1980 and 1988. Choosing to emphasize what he perceived as the significant features of each place, the artist sheds many details of the physical environment while retaining recognizable likenesses of each location. The artist's hand elevates the atmosphere of the drawing's content, triggering a different feeling in the viewer than would a photographic depiction. Readers would benefit from a professional critique of this impressive body of work. However, the drawings are marginalized by their presentation at the beginning of each chapter—seemingly at random and unconnected with the chapter contents. They function decoratively, merely as part of the layout.

We save our concluding remarks for the volume's lead article: "Sergei Arutyunov: A Scholarly Portrait in the Setting of Eskimology," by Bronshtein and Krupnik. Written affectionately by close colleagues, this reverent account of Arutyunov's career "landmarks" takes the reader to the most significant "capes" of Chukotka's cultural legacy. Arutyunov first came to Chukotka when he was 26, to work on an Ekven excavation with his graduate advisor Maksim Levin. The "commute" entailed a train trip across country, a steamship voyage from Vladivostok to Provideniya, and passage by whaleboat along the coast of the Chukotka Peninsula. Members of this 1958 expedition

had the good fortune to visit Chaplino and Naukan in the final year before these communities were subjected to forced closure and relocation. The trip laid the groundwork for over sixty contributions to arctic scholarship, noted in the bibliographic compilation of Arutyunov's select works (pp. 172–175). "Everyone has their own Arutyunov," say Bronshtein and Krupnik (p. 9). "Goosyaba," "Goosiaplik," and "Little Goosyik" (lit. "little gosling") are among the nicknames mentioned in the book (pp. 71, 72). Still thinking of him as "Sergei Aleksanrovich," we join the volume contributors in sending best wishes to Professor Arutyunov on his eightieth birthday.