

Folkloristic discoveries relating to the old stratum of traditional culture continue to be made in Russia on the threshold of the new millennium. This time new facts have come from America, from the archival materials of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition.

When in 1897 the American Museum of Natural History conceived of the expedition for the comparative study of the culture and genesis of the peoples in north-eastern Siberia and north-western America and began work, Russian scholars were brought in to take part. Vladimir Bogoraz (1865-1936) and Vladimir Jochelson (1855-1937) headed the Siberian north-eastern section of the expedition. Both had had experience living on the Kolyma River as political exiles and experience in ethnographic research in this region.

Despite its peripheral position among the main scholarly tasks of the expedition these scholars did not overlook the phenomenon of the enclave of Russian culture on the Kolyma River (Yakutia) and the Anadyr River (Chukotka), and its preservation of an old stratum of folklore.

As is generally known, ethnic groups distinguished by a mixture of the blood of Russian newcomers and aborigines has been formed since the middle of the seventeenth century on the Kolyma and Anadyr Rivers, as a result of the discovery and colonization of this Siberian outlying area. First of all, this included the Yukagirs, Chuvans (one of the Yukagir tribes), Yakuts, and absorbed Russianized families from these and several other tribes. The Russian language, Orthodoxy, and Russian folklore remained the cultural milieu that nourished the non-material manifestations of these groups.

Bogoraz made transcriptions of Russian folklore on the Anadyr River in 1901 and Jochelson on the Kolyma River in 1902. These scholars had phonographs at their disposal.⁽¹⁾

The texts of the Russian songs taken down by Bogoraz in the 1890s during his Kolyma exile have for the most part been published and have attracted the attention of philologists long ago. The texts of the bylinas transcribed by him during the American expedition have also been discovered in the Archives of the Academy of Sciences in Petersburg. In particular, this concerns the notebook "Phonograph. Texts for the recordings in Markovo in 1901." (Markovo is a Russian village on the Anadyr River.) G. L. Venediktov, who published these materials, established the following facts: "Obviously the notebook on the whole does not represent decipherings of the photo-recordings -- the fate of the cylinders with the recordings is unknown."⁽²⁾ This means that the music and melodies recorded on the phonograph were unknown and were not listened to.

The fate of the cylinders can be conjectured. Since the president of the American Museum of Natural History, the banker and philanthropist Morris Jesup, subsidized the expedition, it would be natural to expect that the whole collection had been sent to America.

Now, after an exchange of archival materials became possible, I have received the sought for recordings. This was not at all simple because even though the phonograph collections of Bogoraz and Jochelson belong to the Museum in New York, they are preserved in the Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. I wish to express my appreciation to the Archive of Traditional Music at Indiana University for making the materials available and also to David Anderson who pointed out the location of the phonograph cylinders, to Professor Carol Scott Leonard, and to the archivist Marilyn Graf, all of whom arranged to send copies of the recordings to me.

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of the recordings for the study of Russian folklore. Eighty two specimens appear in the copies sent to us. Of course the quality of the sound vastly complicates not only their deciphering and notation, but also their identification. Nevertheless we have identified the majority of the specimens. These are the bylinas: "Alyosha Popovich," "Dyuk Stepanovich," "Dobrynya and Marinka," "Ivan Kulakov," " Ilya Muromets on the Falcon Ship," seven historical songs about events of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one ballad, three Christmas "vinograde" and six canonic carol hymns, six lyric songs, two wedding songs, eighteen round dance and game songs, and twenty five dance songs and instrumental tunes (for violin and balalaika).

Preliminary knowledge of the material is a big help. The author herself happened to record and publish the folklore of the Russian speaking Kolymians and Anadyrians in the 1960s and 1980s.(3)

The recordings of the Jesup expedition have significantly expanded the geography of the location of Russian epic melodies, having moved it almost to the very north-eastern border of our country.

The recordings of the unique Kolyma genre of love improvisation called the "andylyshchina" are especially interesting. The name itself is noteworthy -- a word with a Yukagir root and Russian suffix. The genre emerged from the contact and blending of two cultures. On the one hand, the endemic Kolyma culture includes features characteristic of the so-called "personal songs" of the Siberian aborigines; on the other hand, features of several Russian genres have been absorbed. Recordings of the "andylyshchina" amount to only a hand full and the melodies were published for the first time only two years ago.(4) I think that this genre as a phenomenon must be taken into account by contemporary ethnographers in their conclusions about the way in which the Kolymians have formed a special ethnos with its own self-consciousness and its own name.(5) I would add that they have done so with a self-consciousness capable of generating a new folklore genre.

And finally the specimens of violin tunes from the sound collection of the Jesup expedition will become an important contribution to Russian ethnomusicology. Until now only verbal descriptions of the playing of the Kolymian and Anadyrian musicians and their homemade instruments were known. These recordings have also expanded the boundaries of the location of

Russian violin tunes that until now have been known to exist only in Western Siberia.

We now have much work ahead of us: continuing the deciphering and notation of the specimens, analyzing new material originating a century ago, and introducing them into the context of facts already known to the study of folklore.

NOTES

1. "The Jesup North Pacific Expedition." *The American Museum Journal*. Vol. 3, no. 5 (October, 1903): 109, 115.
2. *Russkii folklor*. Vol. 24 (1987): 148.
3. See, for example: T. S. Shentalinskaia. "Russkaia pesnia an Chukotke" [The Russian song in Chukotka]. *Sovetskaia muzyka*. no. 11 (1972); "Markovskie vecherki: Russkie narodnye pesni" [Markovo evenings: Russian folk songs]. Magadan, 1983. (A collection of songs recorded in the village of Markovo on the River Anadyr.); "Russkaia epicheskaia poeziia Sibiri i Dalnego Vostoka" [Russian epic poetry of Siberia and the Far East]. Novosibirsk, 1991. (The article "Napevy russkikh epicheskikh pesen Sibiri i Dalnego Vostoka" [Melodies of Russian the epic songs of Siberia and the Far East], the musical texts, commentaries to them, and an attached recording.)
4. T. S. Shentalinskaia. "Andylyshchina (zhanr-endemik)" [The andylyshchina (an endemic genre)]. In *Ekspeditsionnye otkrytiia poslednikh let*. SPb., 1996. 107-14.
5. I. Erunov. "Russkie starozhily nizovev Kolymy: Istoriia formirovaniia" [The Russian old-timers on the lower reaches of the Kolyma: History of their formation]. *Rossiiskii etnograf*. no. 12 (1993): 108-25.