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THE MOST EUROPEAN SCIENCE IN RUSSIA: DEFINING THE EMPIRE ANTHROPOLOGICALLY¹

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of mega- and meso-areas aims at explaining the dynamics of historically and geopolitically defined complex regions. While the “vertical” (mega↔meso areas) system of communication seems to me more or less theoretically and empirically clear, the “horizontal” (mega↔mega areas) dimension of communication and interaction presents a more interesting case. Historically, economically and geopolitically defined mega-areas can belong to the same “intellectual mega-area” on the mental map of the contemporaries, sharing the same repertoire of languages of self-description and self-construction (e.g. the discourse of “Enlightenment” or “Modernity”), and thus being able to understand each other and interact. At the same time they pretend to be self-sufficient entities (a “world in itself”) that produce discourses of self-description and self-definitions by themselves and thus do not need any validation from the outside. The understanding of mega-area as an “attractor” (in the sense this concept is used by synergetics theory) and, in a way, a synthesizer of meso-areas predetermines the view of a mega-area as a complex, dynamic and internally heterogeneous construction. It is the interactions inside mega-areas and communications among them that provide for the creation of common language(s) of communication and mechanisms of cultural transfer and “translation” (one has to remember, that the mega- and meso-areas model is built around the fundamental situation of “communication”). The analysis of that internal and external interaction of mega-areas requires a special analytical optics focusing on the issues of intercultural translations, geopolitical imagination and the limits of cultural expansion, characteristic of mega«mega areas interaction.

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In this chapter I investigate a case of mega↔mega areas communication, where one mega-area (Europe) plays the leading role of a standard-setting civilization (a superior mega-area), while the other (Russian Empire) is, presumably, a subordinate mega-area. However, since our analytical model defines the mega-area as a complex entity aspiring for self-sufficiency (which is, in turn, a product of multiple “vertical” and “horizontal” communications of mega↔meso and meso↔meso areas), the simplistic scheme of communication directed from the donor (a superior mega-area) to the recipient (a subordinate mega-area) can be rejected from the start. Rather, in this case, one deals with two different versions of the same common language of mega↔mega areas communication, which in our case is the language of modernity. At the same time, in our analysis we have to take into account how the actors of communication position themselves: it is quite possible that what looks like an instance of superiority/dependency, or even as mega↔meso areas communication by one side, is perceived as a mega↔mega areas interaction by the other side. The boundaries of social actors and of the competing mega-areas on the mental map of people do not necessarily coincide with actual geographical borders (for when we talk about mega-areas as intellectual constructs we eventually deal with actual people and groups producing knowledge and discourses).

For example, a group of Russian intellectuals in the focus of my research viewed themselves as representatives of the “European science” – a virtual mega-area of European modernity, thus surpassing the conflicting or subordination vectors of mega↔mega areas communication. They developed the Russian science of physical anthropology, the science that adopted a “western European” language of racial analysis to redefine Russian imperial space and population in terms of “modernity” and the European nation-state paradigm. Nevertheless, the transfer of European methods of anthropology into Russia did not reinforce the proliferation of nation-state or colonial models in Russian anthropological discourse, but rather it generated peculiar spatial imaginaries based on *volosti* (see below). Therefore, Russian physical anthropology for a while remained “useless” to the authorities, who could not transform the categories of analysis offered by the science into the categories of political practice. Only during the early Soviet period

did anthropology begin to affect the geopolitical imagination of the power-holders involved in the designing of Soviet national administrative divisions (new meso-areas of the Soviet mega-area). However, the discussion of this development is beyond the scope of this paper.

All these thoughts testify to the complexity of mega↔mega areas system of communication: European racial thought adopted in Russia gave rise not only to a peculiar Russian version of anthropology that reflected the heterogeneity of the Russian imperial mega-area, but also to specific visions of Europe itself as an intellectual and geopolitical mega-area. Russian anthropologists constructed the virtual mega-area of European modernity that reflected their ideal of intellectual communication across the political and cultural borders.

If we attempted to compose a catalogue of major notions that define the European mega-area of the mid-nineteenth – first half of the twentieth centuries, the notion of “race” would be among the first to come to mind. Indeed, this notion and the science of physical/racial anthropology had become central for Western European culture in the mid-nineteenth century and lost its influence only after World War II. During this time an inherently inexact and ambiguous term, “race”, was reconnected with another major European concept – the concept of “nation”. In the words of Nicolas Hudson, who studied the genealogy of the European usage of “race” from the Renaissance through the Enlightenment into the early nineteenth century:

[T]he re-union of “race” and “nation” had such important consequences because of the way these terms had been redefined during the Enlightenment. “Race” now meant more than just a “lineage” or even a variation of the human species induced by climate or custom. It meant an innate and fixed disparity in the physical and intellectual make-up of different peoples. “Nation,” in turn, was more than a group of people living under the same government. It was the very “soul” of personal identity, the very life-blood churning through an individual speaking a particular dialect in one of Europe’s innumerable regions. From the often violent coupling of “race” and “nation,” re-fashioned in these new forms, were spawned the most virulent forms of nineteenth-century racism, and finally the political barbarities of our own century.²

² Nicholas Hudson, “From ‘Nation’ to ‘Race’: The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29:3 (1996), p. 258.

In modern post-colonial scholarship, the notion of “race” and the science of physical anthropology have been linked with yet another defining European experience – the experience of colonialism. From this perspective, from the mid-nineteenth to the turn of the century anthropology was reconceived as an imperial science for “white Europeans” to use knowledge in order to manipulate cultural distances, to observe and distance other, distinctly different non-European races.³

The mental map of scholars who study both paradigms – the “racialising” of nation and Orientalism – until recently had excluded Russia. The debates about the so-called “Russian orientalism” and the notion of “race” in modern Russian political and cultural discourse, characterize the very latest stage of the historiographic redefinition of Russia as a part of European modernity.⁴ The issue under consideration

³ Among general works on the category of “race” and cultural otherness see: G. Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York, 1968); C. Bolt, *Victorian Attitude to Race* (London, 1971); J. Burke, “The Wild Man’s Pedigree: Scientific Method and Racial Anthropology,” E. Dudley and M. Novak, eds., *The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Pittsburgh, 1972), pp. 259-280; P. Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945* (Cambridge, 1989); Edward A. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1978); Idem, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, 1993).

⁴ See: D. Brower, E. Lazzarini, eds., *Russia’s Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917* (Bloomington, Indianapolis, 1997); C. Clay, “Russian Ethnographers in the Service of Empire, 1856-1862,” *Slavic Review* 54:1 (Spring 1995), pp. 45-61; N. Knight, “Grigor’ev in Orenburg, 1851-1862: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?” *Slavic Review* 59:1 (Spring 2000), pp. 74-100; Ex Tempore, “Orientalism and Russia”: A. Khalid, “Russian History and the Debate over Orientalism”; N. Knight, “On Russian Orientalism: A Response to Adeeb Khalid”; M. Todorova, “Does Russian Orientalism Have a Russian Soul? A Contribution on the Debate between Nathaniel Knight and Adeeb Khalid,” *Kritika: Exploration in Russian and Eurasian History* 1:4 (Fall 2000), pp. 691-728; Modernization of Russian Empire and Paradoxes of Orientalism: D. Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, “A Subtle Matter – Orientalism”; A. Etkind, “The Saved Man’s Burden, or the Inner Colonization of Russia”; N. Knight, “Was Russia its own Orient? Reflections on the Contributions of Etkind and Schimmelpenninck on the Debate on Orientalism”; E. Campbell, “On the Questions of Orientalism in Russia (in the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries),” *Ab Imperio*, No. 1 (2002), pp. 239-311; Discussion: E. Weitz, “Racial Politics without the Concept of Race: Reevaluating Soviet Ethnic and National Purges”; F. Hirsch, “Race without the Practice of Racial Politics”; A. Weiner, “Nothing but Certainty”; A. Lemon, “Without a ‘Concept’? Race as Discursive Practice”; E. Weitz, “On Certainties and Ambivalencies: Reply to My Critics,” *Slavic Review* 61:2 (Spring 2002), pp. 1-65.

is whether we can apply to Russia the models and paradigms that were designed by “the West” to understand and represent Western European modernity. However, when we talk about the “European intellectual mega-area,” we have to keep in mind that this particular “Europe” had been imagined by Western Europeans as much as it was imagined by Russians. In this sense we can measure both Westerners’ and Russians’ “Europeaness” by their own standards and by their imagined Europes and modernities.

The science that existed on the margins of the official Russian academic world – Russian physical anthropology of the mid-nineteenth – early twentieth century – “professionally” worked with such an archetypical modern European notion as the notion of “race,” but applied it to the Russian imperial context. Russian physical anthropologists – a community of professionals (physicians and teachers) and academics (university professors) – developed a common identity of belonging to the most modernized and “European” science of their time and shared a very specific sense of modernity and Europeaness. Their story is yet to be written; today many Russian anthropologists are known to researchers either as ethnographers or geographers, some are treated as a part of the foreign academic milieu: for example, in Efron’s pioneering book “Defenders of the Race,”⁵ the Russian Jewish anthropologist Samuel Weissenberg is described as primarily German in his intellectual, political and cultural appearance. Efron ignores the specifically Russian context and implications of Weissenberg’s scholarship as being secondary to the historical understanding of his anthropological agenda – the perception that follows from the simplistic (donor-recipient) model of mega-areas interaction discussed above. Yet Weissenberg was actively involved in the grand project of Russian anthropology – the anthropological cataloguing of the empire. As a renowned anthropologist, Jewish ethnographer and activist he also participated in the construction of Russian-Jewish identity within the borders of the Empire (as against the cross-border Ashkenazi or Ost-Juden Identities) – another example of mental mapping of the inner heterogeneity of the Russian imperial

⁵ John M. Efron, *Defenders of the Race. Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-Siecle Europe* (New Haven, London, 1994).

mega-area. A native of Elisavetgrad, he benefited from German anthropological research scholarships and published in German academic journals, yet his major anthropological agenda and his application of anthropological methods that he learned in Germany cannot be explained from the perspective of German anthropological discourse (or, as Efron does, from the perspective of German Jewish anthropological discourse). His European knowledge was reconfigured by the Russian “world in itself.” And Weissenberg is just one example...

Further I will draw a picture of Russian physical anthropology as a scholarly discipline and an academic community that attempted to redefine the Russian mega-area (as a complex entity) in terms of Western European scientific discourse of Modernity. I will discuss self-visions and self-descriptions of Russian anthropologists, their methods and major achievements, and their grand project of the anthropological description of the Empire. At the end I will suggest the examples of alternative usage of academic anthropology in Russia (an attempt at racialising the nation) and bring the discussion to its last point, which is about the imagined Europe and “European science” constructed by Russian anthropologists as the ideal for their Russian anthropological utopia.

THE MYTH OF ORIGIN

When, in 1900, Russian anthropologists started their own scholarly journal – *Russkii Antropologicheskii zhurnal* (Russian Anthropological Journal, RAJ) – they felt confident enough to reflect on the history of Russian anthropology, which at that time, by their estimations, was 40-45 years old.⁶ The early stages of this history were directly linked to western European anthropology with the first Russian anthropologists been referred to as the “pupils of Linnaeus”

⁶ In 1902 Prof. A. A. Ivanovskii, one of the leading Russian anthropologists, calculated the age of Russian anthropology as being around 40 to 50 years. See: Al. Ivanovskii, “Ob antropologicheskome izuchenii inorodcheskogo naseleniia Rossii,” *Russkii antropologicheskii zhurnal* (RAZh) 9:1 (1902), p. 113.

rather than members of the Imperial Geography Society or ethnographers. Their German origin and foreign scholarly culture (they wrote in Latin and German) were also stressed (Karl fon-Ber, Middendorf, Kastern, Shrenk, Grubber were named among the first Russian anthropologists).⁷ At the same time, the most natural predecessor, Russian ethnography, was considered a problematic source for Russian anthropology. While in 1900 the leading Russian anthropologist, Moscow university professor D. Anuchin, credited the Imperial Russian Geographical Society and its Ethnography Division for “occasionally collecting anthropological data,”⁸ in 1916 he noted skeptically that taking ethnography as the predecessor seriously means going back into history to the time of the *Primary Chronicle*. This is pointless and wrong, Anuchin assumed, since Russian ethnography had never studied “physical characteristics of [human] tribes” before the works on the human brain by academician Fon Ber appeared in the 1850s.⁹

The *RAJ*, the mouthpiece of the Anthropological Division of the Moscow-based Imperial Society of Lovers (*liubiteli*) of Natural Sciences, Anthropology and Ethnography, contrary to traditionally *Trudy* [*Papers*] published by closed corporate academic societies, was intended for a broad academic and non-academic audience. The journal was very outspoken in equating the history of Russian anthropology with the history of the Moscow Anthropological Division. “The history of Russian anthropology begins with the foundation, on the initiative of Prof. A.P. Bogdanov, of the Anthropological Division of the Society of Lovers of Natural Sciences,” declared Anuchin in one of his articles.¹⁰ Al. Ivanovskii called Professor

⁷ Russian anthropologists customarily stressed the German origin of the first Russian scholars in the field as well as the importance of French, German and other European examples of anthropological societies for the Moscow anthropological division of the Imperial Society of Lovers of Natural Sciences, Anthropology and Ethnography. As a typical example see: D. Anuchin, “Beglyi vzgliad na proshloe antropologii i na ee zadachi v Rossii,” *RAZh* 1:1 (1900), pp. 34-35.

⁸ Among the “anthropological activities” of Russian ethnographers Anuchin mentions their interest in ethnographic physical anthropology (Mainov, Schapov) and prehistorical archeology (Poliakov, Merezhkovskii). *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁹ D. Anuchin, “Na rubezhe polutora- i polustoletiia,” *RAZh* 37-38:1-2 (1916), p. 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

of Zoology of Moscow University, A. P. Bogdanov, "the first apostle of anthropology in Russia," who transmitted it from French to Russian soil.¹¹ Ivanovskii hinted that Bogdanov was inspired by the French anthropological society founded in 1860 and directly transplanted French anthropology into Russian - Muscovite - soil. This was the right fitting predecessor for Russian anthropology, not local ethnographic and geographical societies.

The pre-Moscow stage of Russian anthropology was painted in the journal as either non-existent or dependent on direct foreign influence and participation. The very fact noted by the same Anuchin that by 1864 - the time of the Division's foundation - "beside Bogdanov himself, there were no specialists [in anthropology] in Moscow," did not challenge his major assumption about Petersburg or any other possible pre-Moscow anthropological past.¹² This was, indeed, striking, especially in the case of St. Petersburg - the major locus of Russian imperial sciences - geography and ethnography. In the dominant anthropological communal discourse formed and reflected by the *RAJ*, St. Petersburg emerged as just one of the centers of Russian anthropology alongside Derpt, Kazan, Kiev, Khar'kov, Siberia (due to the ethnographic activities of the exiles) and a few others. Moscow, on the contrary, was the only and the most natural center of attraction and influence for all these "anthropological provinces." Such rhetoric persisted even after the establishment of two academic anthropological societies in St. Petersburg: the Russian Anthropological Society of the St. Petersburg University (1888) and the Anthropological Society of the Military-Medical Academy (1893).¹³ Yet, even before this, thanks to an enthusiast of physical anthropology from the Military-Medical Academy, Prof. A. I. Tarenetskii, St. Petersburg became an actual leader

¹¹ Ivanovskii, "Ob antropologicheskom izuchenii," p. 113.

¹² Bogdanov started kranio-metrical research of archeological materials as a way to conceptualize the "great Russian anthropological type." In 1865 he published "Materialy dlia antropologii kurgannogo perioda v Moskovskoi gub." He translated into Russian Paul Broca's instructions for anthropological observation. It was Bogdanov who recruited the first Moscow anthropologists and helped to establish a department (kafedra) of anthropology at Moscow University.

¹³ The Russian Anthropological Society of St. Petersburg University was established in 1888 and the Anthropological Society of the Imperial Military Medical Academy was established in 1893.

in terms of the quantity of anthropological dissertations defended by his pupils.¹⁴

These obvious facts, as well as the generic connection to and intellectual legacy of St. Petersburg were consciously downplayed by the group of anthropologists centering around the Moscow Division and the *RAJ*. They invented their own “myth of origin” in order to separate themselves from the old Russian imperial science connected (for them) with St. Petersburg. The new community of anthropologists that united academics and professionals outside academia searched for a common European past for itself and pretended to participate in the community of European anthropologists on equal terms. A colonial-like pattern of communication with Western European anthropology ended up with the establishment of the Moscow Division. Now the mission of Russian anthropology, besides “our own national self-cognition,” consisted in “broadening the limits of human cognition in general, of cognition of humanity’s bodily and spiritual variations, their mutual interconnections and correlations, their dependence on the environment and time, etc.”¹⁵ German anthropologist Rudolf Virhov was cited as stating that the general progress of anthropology depends on Russia, which holds the keys to the major problems of modern European anthropology.¹⁶ Thus, the symbolic (and actual) transfer of the center of Russian anthropology from Petersburg to Moscow was simultaneously an attempt at mental reconfiguration of the Russian modern “intellectual mega-area” and a step toward modern Europe. It signified the universalist stance of the new science, its ultimate “objectivity” and its actual newness, its distance from the old Russian imperial science.

¹⁴ Professor A. I. Tarenetskii was one of the leading Russian medical anthropologists who promoted an anthropological approach in the modern Russian military science. Many medical-anthropological, sanitary-anthropological and ethnographic-anthropological dissertations were defended under his tutorship. Among them: the anthropological description of Ossetians by N. V. Gil’chenko, of Buriat – by I. I. Shendrikovskii and M. T. Porotov, of Arminians – by I. K. Tvar’ianovich, of Bashkirs – by D. N. Niko’lskii, of the Jews – by M. P. Iakovenko etc. These dissertations are preserved and catalogued in the Library of the Medical Military Academy.

¹⁵ D. Anuchin, “Beglyi vzgliad,” p. 40.

¹⁶ Ivanovskii, “Ob antropologicheskoi izuchenii,” pp. 112-125, at p. 112.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL MODERNITY

Existing on the margins of academia (which was not initially a conscious choice but rather the result of the very low level of institutionalization of the new science),¹⁷ Moscow-oriented anthropologists (actually, the majority of Russian anthropologists) were creating their own anthropological utopia, a peculiar kind of anthropological modernity. They used a scholarly journal as a means of empire-wide professional communication within the virtual community of anthropologists, rejected any national or religious biases and allowing into the community representatives of all peoples of the empire, stimulated *inorodtsy* anthropologists to study the Russian people as well

¹⁷ Russian anthropologists routinely complained about the inadequate level of institutionalization of their science. Even a few Russian anthropological textbooks treated this issue among the most important. For example, the textbook of E. G. Landau featured a list of countries where anthropology was taught in the universities (Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Switzerland, France, Austria, Hungary, Spain, Japan, etc.) In Russia, according to this textbook, anthropology was “flourishing” only in Moscow and St. Petersburg universities. See: E.G. Landau. *Kratkoe rukovodstvo k izucheniiu antropologii* (Jur’ev, 1912), p. 2. In fact, in 1912 – the year of Landau’s textbook publication – anthropology was included (in various forms) in the geography academic programs in Moscow, Petersburg, Khar’kov and Novorosiisk universities. See: D.P. Nikol’skii, “Novyi antropologicheskii organ,” *Trudy Antropologicheskogo Obschestva pri Imperatorskoi Voenno-Med. Akademii*, tom 7 (za 1901-1904 ucheb. G.) (St. Petersburg, 1912), pp. 7-14. Anthropology was also taught at the St. Petersburg Military Medical Academy and in St. Vladimir Kiev University. Moscow University was the first one to introduce a Kafedra of anthropology in 1876 with the help of private donation from K. F. Von Mekk. Yet, the new University Statute of 1884 did not recognize its legitimacy and instead made provisions for a Kafedra of Geography and Ethnography (where anthropology was allowed to be taught) at the departments of History and Philology. However, one year later Kazan University suggested to move these Kafedras from the History and Philology departments to the departments of Physics and Mathematics. St. Petersburg University created a special commission composed of the Professors of the Department of Physics and Mathematics to discuss this issue. The commission accepted the idea of moving Kafedras of Geography and Ethnography to the departments of Physics and Mathematics and instructed these Kafedras to teach two-semester courses in geography, ethnography and anthropology. However when these recommendations reached the Russian Ministry of Education, anthropology as a special university course disappeared from the final version of the University statute of 1884. Anthropology was formally allowed in the Kafedras of Geography, but its status was unclear. See: F. Volkov, “Antropologija i ee universitetskoe prepodavanie (K peresmotru universitetskogo ustava),” I. Rudenko, *Ezhegodnik Russkogo Antropologich. obschestva pri Imperator. Petrograd. Un-te* (Petrograd, 1915), pp. 99-107.

as their own (and *vice versa*), and positioned themselves as a part of the cultural world obsessed with self-cognition.

Obviously, they were measuring, calculating and systematizing. In this sense, they represented a modern type of scholarship. Taxonomy, at the same time, was not an end in itself. Typically of the scholarly discourse of the late nineteenth century, Russian anthropology was searching for the laws of historical development, the basic causalities: as Ivanovskii put it, “modern physical anthropology is not any more satisfied with a simple description and assertion of a fact; it aspires not only to discover morphological variations of mankind, but also to explain the causes of their emergence.”¹⁸ Anthropology was “a natural history of Man,”¹⁹ and as such provided a new modern scientific umbrella for old disciplines that were to be modernized through their incorporation into anthropology. In Russia this evolution from being one of the sciences exploring the history of humanity, alongside “history proper, the history of culture, ethnography, sociology, geography, geology, etc.,”²⁰ to self-perception as a mega-science encompassing three fields – “physical anthropology, pre-historical archeology and ethnology” (and the latter included the study of folk culture, the history of primitive religions, law and art, and comparative linguistics), took less than two decades.²¹

The methods of study were universal: the language of numbers, formulas and graphs did not know state borders. This was, in fact, the language of the imagined European “mega-area” of modernity. Theoretically, there were no special provisions for the study of Russians as against Tatars or Jews. In fact, anthropologists studied not peoples, but the variations of this or that anthropological trait within the population (of a *volost'*, a *guberniia*, a region, a country...). The anthropological utopia was, in a sense, the utopia of numbers, of the endless accumulation of anthropological data: “Let us imagine that everywhere in Russia, in various big and small centers observers-anthropologists are dispersed; they collect – according to a certain system and with certain methods – data about the variations of a [racial] type in the surrounding area, data about the distribution among the nearby population of the hues of skin,

¹⁸ Ivanovskii, “Ob antropologicheskom izuchenii,” p. 114.

¹⁹ Anuchin, “Na rubezhe polutora- i polustoletiia,” p. 4.

²⁰ V. V. Vorob'ev, “Velikorossy (Ocherk fizicheskogo tipa),” *RAZh* 1:1 (1900), p. 45.

²¹ Anuchin, “Na rubezhe polutora- i polustoletiia,” p. 4.

hair, stature, body proportions, the forms of head and face, morphological deviations, physiological and pathological distinctions." The data were to be placed on the maps, and organized into graphs, diagrams and tables.²²

Medical doctors and local teachers were to be the utopian "observers-anthropologists" who acted under the guidance and with the assistance of the Moscow Anthropological Division.²³ Obviously, the accent on professionals, on the technological side of the enterprise, revealed a modern utopia that hardly reflected the realities of turn of the century Russia. Compared to their Western European colleagues, Russian anthropologists felt the disadvantages of living in an under-regulated and, in this sense, undermodernized state that did not provide the anthropological community with systematic population statistics. They explained that anthropology was a science of culture and thus a privilege of "cultural countries," where one could rely on such institutions as mass conscription, mass schooling, the systems of industrial control, social medicine and charities to get the needed quantitative data for anthropological analysis and comparison.²⁴ In Russia, Anuchin was the first to use military data on the height of conscripts to compose a map of height distribution within the *Velikorusskii* population and tried to find correlations between the variations of height and other anthropological traits. But in most cases Russian anthropologists had to rely on themselves in collecting primary data; hence the utopia of thousands of anthropologists working literarily in every corner of the Empire compensating for the underdevelopment of the modern Russian state.

Russian anthropologists were no less concerned with the impact of urbanization, industrial revolution, etc. on the development of human nature. Regardless of the fact that Russia definitely could not hold "the keys" to this particular problem, which was most intensively studied by American and British anthropologists, Russian anthropologists felt it natural to pose the theme of "degeneration" as equally important for Russia. Even participating in the "degeneration" of civilization, their Russia was becoming more modern.

²² D. Anuchin, "O zadachakh i metodakh antropologii," *RAZh* 9:1(1902), pp. 72, 73.

²³ See Anuchin's speech at the VIII Congress of Russian medical doctors: Anuchin, "O zadachakh i metodakh antropologii," pp. 63-88.

²⁴ Ivanovskii, "Ob antropologicheskom izuchenii," p. 32; Anuchin, "Na rubezhe polutora- i polustoletiia," p. 5.

It is very tempting to declare all this preoccupation with systematization, classification and tables a classic case of the systematization thinking of modern intellectuals-experts – the “taxonomy” phenomenon described by Foucault.²⁵ But does it really help us to understand the type of modernity shared by the Russian anthropological community? Anthropology was, indeed, a new science, especially in Russia, and its fixation on taxonomy could be easily explained by a real necessity to collect and accommodate a lot of individual data. Foucault’s “taxonomy” model acquires more explanatory power when viewed through the prism of the analysis of genesis, which is, according to Foucault, embedded in taxonomy. One of the major late nineteenth century anthropological dilemmas, of the polygenesis versus monogenesis of humankind,²⁶ could have indeed turned anthropological taxonomy into a potential source of population manipulation policy – another well-known feature of modernity.

Yet, the case of Russian anthropology illustrates how misleading this scheme may be. First of all, the Russian state was a very complex organism whose functioning depended on different groups, administrative and political forces with often competing understandings of modernity and modernization. But most importantly, the society actively modernized itself, compensating for the state’s inability to satisfy its needs and aspirations and often refused any “social contract” with this state. Russian anthropologists wanted to have a more efficient and modernized – “cultural” in their own language – state, but they were very careful in preserving their anthropological taxonomy from being used by the state or exploited by any state project. This was one of the reasons (though not the only one) why they were never called by the state “to action,” i.e. the state never attempted to “privatize” anthropology and put it into the service of Russian national, imperial, or some modern sanitary project. Russian anthropologists successfully utilized well-developed early–twentieth-century Russian channels of *obshchestvennost’* or civil society. Anthropology in Russia even became an alternative venue for a pseudo-academic career for those who were

²⁵ M. Fuko, *Slova i veshchi. Arkheologiya gumanitarnykh nauk* (trans. From French by V. P. Vizgina, N. S. Avtonomovoi), (St. Petersburg, 1994).

²⁶ Theories of respectively one or several initial “racial types” that preceded the present human diversity.

deprived of this opportunity by the state. Two leading Russian Jewish anthropologists, Samuil Weissenberg and A. Elkind, used the Moscow Division, the *RAJ* and the informal anthropological network in general to build up solid academic reputations and enter the world of academia through the back door, so to speak. While Weissenberg never abandoned his medical practice in Elisavetgrad,²⁷ Dr. Elkind, under the tutorship of Anuchin, defended his dissertation on Jewish anthropology and got an academic degree from Moscow University. In 1916 he became the editor of *RAJ*, which was the peak of his “alternative” academic career.

Naturally, Russian anthropologists had their own political views and ideological biases, but the anthropological discourse in which they participated was consciously cleaned up from any extra-scholarly, in their understanding, considerations. Not only political discussions, but also value judgments were censured on the pages of *RAJ* (which does not mean that we cannot deconstruct these texts as ideological). When Weissenberg, writing about the Caucasian Jews, allowed himself such a judgment, he was reproached by a fellow anthropologist Kurdov for being not quite objective and scientific. Russian anthropological taxonomy was kept value free, and there was no other hierarchy except the hierarchy of figures and the alphabetical order hierarchy. This is especially evident in the case of Russian Jewish anthropologists, almost all of whom participated in the Jewish sanitary project either in its Zionist version, or later on within the framework of the Society for the Preservation of the Health of Jews (*Obshchestvo okhraneniia zdoroviia evreev*). At the same time, they never allowed this kind of “applied” anthropology in their “academic” writings. Being latecomers to the European anthropological community, Russian anthropologists had the advantage of learning from others’ mistakes. In a sense, their anthropological modernity was more modern than the European one, for they retained the ideal of a value-free, objective and universal science. They could live with this illusion because the semi-modernized Russian state did not actually need their modern discourses to redefine itself as a modern manipulative state. Thus the specific Russian conjuncture of political, cultural and social factors and the questionable “practicality”

²⁷ Weissenberg neither moved to Moscow nor emigrated to Germany, where he was known as a distinguished anthropologist. In other words, his “alternative” anthropological career did not involve actual relocation to the centers of his science.

of anthropological activity within the Russian context motivated Russian anthropologists to produce a utopian hierarchy of intellectual meso- and mega-areas topped by the idealized mega-area of European modernity.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EMPIRE

Western European anthropologists of the turn of the century directed their efforts at studying the “uncivilized people” outside Europe as well as “civilized” European populations, the natural scale for the study of which was provided by the nation-state: French anthropologists were studying the racial outlook of the population of France; German anthropologists were doing some of their research within the borders of the German state, etc. Russian anthropologists, living in an empire, demonstrated very little interest in “colonial” anthropology and were inspired by the European anthropological project. Being European for them meant, among other things, placing Russia on the anthropological map of Europe. They seemingly easily adopted the scale of the empire to the normative European nation-state principle of anthropological grand-projects. In fact, accepting as a legitimate framework the borders of the Russian empire and studying, measuring, cataloging and classifying its different peoples, Russian anthropologists carefully avoided the core-periphery or a more explicit colonial model. Instead they were fascinated by the picture of interactions and successive changes of racial types over a huge territory “from Poland in the West to the Amur region and Kamchatka in the East, from southern people (*narodnosti*) of Trans-Caucasus, Middle Asia and the borderland Chinese lands to the abandoned (*zabroshennye*) in the Far North *lopari*, *samoedy*, *tunguzy* and *chukchi*. Within these wide limits multiple physical types succeed each other...”²⁸

²⁸ Anuchin, “Beglyi vzgliad na proshloe,” p. 41. Nathaniel Knight in his dissertation (“Constructing the Science of Nationality: Ethnography in Mid-Nineteenth Century Russia,” Ph.D. dissertation; Columbia University, 1995) made a categorical statement that Russian ethnography failed to produce a “colonial other.” Russian ethnographers studied all peoples of the empire including Russians and thus did not share in the European racial discourse. Knight makes general conclusion about the redundancy of the category of race in the history of modern Russia. Focusing only on ethnographers, Knight does not study anthropologists actually working with the concept of race and with European race discourses. More important, he views ethnography (and anthropology) as a colonial science and does not consider its evolution on the European continent under the impact of nationalism.

What actually could be distilled from hundreds of individual texts of Russian anthropologists was a vision of the “empire” that could be metaphorically presented as a huge patch-work quilt, every scrap of which was painted with a number of fusing colors. The general number of colors was fixed for the whole quilt, only their proportions and combinations varied. Since nobody in the Russian anthropological community rationalized this vision and explained it in political terms (this would have been against the high scholarly code of the community), we can also speculate that their political ideal was some kind of *Rossiiskaia* nation within the common historical borders of the empire. In any case, advancing the project of the “anthropological exploration of Russia,”²⁹ Russian anthropologists inescapably acted within the imperial context, but in their “exploration” they used the language and the format of European turn of the century nation-state anthropology. They recognized how difficult and complex the task of anthropological exploration of the Russian Empire was, but they never questioned the very nation-state principle adopted from the West. The only problem they saw was the problem of Russia’s size and unprecedented inner diversity, but this problem was not of a methodological nature and only stimulated their taxonomist zeal: the “ethnic composition of the Russia’s population is characterized by a degree of diversity that has no parallels in any western-democratic state – the diversity of physical types and cultural stages. To break this composition down into its component parts, to choose among them the most and least important, to find their similarities and differences, to establish the level of their kinship...”³⁰ seemed to be a huge, but realistic task.

The map of a nation-state where the outer borders defined the natural limits of anthropological enquiry and the inner borders were drawn by the anthropologists according to their vision of the population’s “physical type” or “types” was the most adequate graphic model of nation-state European anthropology and definitely the most

²⁹“ Antropologicheskoe izuchenie Rossii”: A. Ivanovskii, “Ot Antropologicheskogo Otdela Imperatorskogo Obshchestva Lubitelei estestvoznaniia, antropologii i etnografii,” *RAZh*, 1:1 (1900), p. 1.

³⁰ Ivanovskii, “Ob antropologicheskom izuchenii,” p. 112.

logical form of representation for the anthropological taxonomy in the age of nations and nationalism. In fact, the most adequate analogues to the exemplar maps cited by the Russian anthropologists – the maps of the relative recurrence of the dark-haired types in Germany, Belgium and Switzerland (Ranke), the map of the distribution of height of the male population in France (according to Broca), the map of the relative distribution of the dark-haired types in France (according to Topinar), the map of the distribution of the figures of cephalic index (according to Collignon and Houze), etc.³¹ – would have been, in the Russian case, the map of Siberia, or the map of inner Russia or any other map of a relatively small historical region with an ethnically more or less homogeneous population. But the state-nation model adopted by the Russian anthropologists to their imperial setting necessitated the natural limits of their ideal maps – the existing borders of the Empire, i.e. of their state. Curiously, in this approach Russia simultaneously stood for mega-area (the largest self-sufficient entity) and meso-area (a nation-state on the map of Europe). D. Anuchin, the leading Russian (Moscow) anthropological voice, invited his followers to carry out an “anthropological photography of Russia, which is a project similar to topographic or geological photography, a statistical survey, the investigation of soils, or – and this analogue is better – to the collection of observations about the elements of climate that are gathered by a net of meteorological stations; on the basis of these data conclusions are made about the climate of the whole country...”³² Not surprisingly the main form of graphic representation of data in each of the fields cited by Anuchin – topography, geology, the study of soils, meteorology – was a map.

While the outer borders of the anthropological map of Russia as mega-area were set up “historically,” the inner borders (i.e. the scale of meso-areas) depended on the focus and scale of a particular research project. In fact, the criteria for drawing the anthropological meso-areas remained vague. There was a general disparity between the actual prevailing anthropological practice of studying the regions (the

³¹ For their analysis see Anuchin, “O zadachakh i metodakh antropologii,” pp. 72-81.

³² Anuchin, “O zadachakh i metodakh antropologii,” p. 72.

Western Region,³³ the Caucasus,³⁴ the Volga region,³⁵ etc.)³⁶ – the proto-nation-states, and a popular theoretical premise according to which the smallest administrative unit for the anthropological research of Russia was the *volost'*. The idea of studying racial variations *volost'* by *volost'* was, of course, born out of the Russian anthropological utopia, but it was justified on the grounds of a critical assessment of the *uezd* or *gubernia*-scale anthropology: typically, these type of studies gave so many variations of physical characteristics that it was impossible to postulate any dominant “physical type.”³⁷ For example, studying the racial outlook of the *Velikoruskii* population of Russia, anthropologist V. V. Vorob'ev examined 325 men born in the Riazan Province (*guberniia*). He failed to find any pure “physical type” among the group and concluded that the predominant *guberniia* Great Russian racial type was the “mixed” one (60 percent).³⁸ Such examples can be multiplied.

³³ See, for example, Iu.D. Tal'ko-Gryntsevich, “Poliaki,” *RAZh* 5:1 (1901), pp. 1-30; idem, “Pol'skaia antropologicheskaiia literatura (s portretami I. Maiera i I. Kopernitskago),” *RAZh* 5:4 (1900), p. 76. See also À.D. El'kind, “Evrei (sravnitel'no-antropologicheskoe issledovanie, preimushchestvenno po nabludeniiam za pol'skimi evreiami,” *Izvestiia Imperatorskogo Obshchestva Lubitelei Estestvoznania, Antropologii i Etnographii* 104 (1903); A.D. El'kind, “Evrei (sravnitel'no-antropologicheskii ocherk),” *RAZh* 11:3 (1902), pp. 1-44.

³⁴ S. Weissenberg, “Die autochthone Bevölkerung Palästinas in anthropologischer Beziehung (Fellachen, Juden, Samaritaner),” *Zeitschrift für Demogr. und Statistik der Juden (ZDS)* (1909); Idem, “Peki'in und seine Juden,” *Globus* 96:3 (1909); Idem, “Die jemenitischen Juden,” *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, No. 3-4 (1909); Idem, “Die Spaniolen,” *Mitteilung der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft in Wien (MAGW)* 39 (1909); Idem, “Die persischen Juden in anthropologischer Beziehung,” *ZDS*, No. 1 (1911); Idem, “Die mesopotamischen Juden in anthropologischer Beziehung,” *Arch. für Anthropologie*, No. 2-3 (1911); Idem, “Zur Anthropologie der nordafrikanischen Juden,” *MAGW* (1912); Idem, “Kavkazskie evrei v antropologicheskome otnoshenii,” *RAZh*, 30-31:2-3 (1912), p. 137; “Noveishie issledovaniia evreev d-ra S. A. Weissenberga,” *RAZh* 30-31:2-3 (1912), p. 190; A.N. Dzhavakhov, “K antropologii Gruzii: gruziny Kakhetii,” *RAZh* 27-28:3-4 (1907), pp. 127-165; Idem, “K antropologii Gruzii,” *RAZh* 33-34:1-2 (1913), pp. 99-161; Idem, “Kavkazskie evrei,” *RAZh* 32:4 (1912), p. 58; K.M. Kurdov, “Gorskie evrei Dagestana,” *RAZh* 23-24:3-4 (1905), pp. 57-87; Idem, “Gorskie evrei Shemakhinskogo uezda, Bakinskoi gubernii,” *RAZh* 30-31:2-3 (1912), pp. 87-99.

³⁵ Robert P. Geraci, *Window on the East: National and Imperial Identities in Late Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca, 2001), Chapters 5 and 9.

³⁶ For more details see: Ivanovskii, “Ob antropologicheskome izuchenii,” pp. 114-115.

³⁷ Anuchin, “O zadachakh i metodakh antropologii,” p. 82.

³⁸ V.V. Vorob'ev, “Ob antropologicheskome izuchenii slavianskogo naseleniia Rossii,” *RAZh* 9:1 (1902), pp. 103-109.

Yet, we should not forget that the *volost'* – *uezd* – *guberniia* – region hierarchy at the beginning of the twentieth century was the most popular scheme of *obschestvennost'* / *Zemstvo* network-building (the project of *volost'* agronomists, the discussions about the *volost'* *zemstvo*, etc.). It was, actually, the modernist project of nation building bottom-up, a project of the self-organizing *obschestvennost'* substituting for the state. In this sense, Russian anthropological discourse recoded the language of social mobilization into the language of scholarship and constructed *volost'* as the elementary unit of the ideal anthropological map of Russia. At the same time, the *volost'* argument could have been an unconscious reaction to the inadequacy of the nation-state model for the anthropological research of Russia: the imperial borders did not allow for the construction of the ethnically homogeneous and racially more or less fixed “state-nation,” the *volost'* borders, at least, allowed for a possibility of locating a more or less definite “physical type.”

The model of a nation-state within the Russian context lacked a nation. The anthropology of Russians only superficially resembled the anthropology of Germans or of the French, for the symbolic and geographical boundaries of Russianness were not clear. Russian anthropologists preferred to use such categories as *Velikorusy*, *Malorusy*, but the favorite one was the least precise – the “Slavic population” of the empire: the “...modern Slavic population of Russia,” wrote a leading expert in the anthropology of *Velikorusy*, V. V. Vorob'ev, “is not only mixed, but it varies according to different places of habitation; it is composed of different racial elements, or of the same elements which interact differently in different regions.”³⁹ Anthropological examination not only fragmented the “Russian nation” to the level of *volost'* “type,” but also explicitly postulated the presence of “physical traits characteristic of the peoples (*narodnosti*) of other anthropological groups”⁴⁰ within the Slavonic anthropological group. Anuchin dared to study “Russians” (*russkii narod*), but the method was a “comparative anthropological analysis that has to explicate the racial composition of this people, to establish its types and show their relation to the types of West and East...”⁴¹

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Al. Ivanovskii, “Opyt antropologicheskoi klassifikatsii naseleniia Rossii,” *RAZh* 15-16:3-4 (1903), pp. 153, 155.

⁴¹ Anuchin, “Beglyi vzgliad,” p. 41.

The project of anthropological description and cartography of the empire received its most ambitious expression in the works of Aleksei Arsenievich Ivanovskii, a graduate of Moscow university and a holder of the Doctor of Philosophy degree (*Doctor philosophiae at atrium*, 1894-1895) from the university of Leipzig, where he specialized in geography (under the tutorship of Professors Fr. Ratzel and Gettner) and anthropology (with Prof. Em. Shmitt). His first dissertation at Moscow University – “About the anthropological composition of Russian population” – brought him an MA in geography. Prior to the defense he had to pass three magisterial exams: in geography, meteorology and anthropology. In 1913, after the successful defense of the dissertation “World Population. An Attempt at Anthropological Classification,” he became a Doctor of Geography. Such educational background made Ivanovskii a perfect candidate for an anthropological synthesis on the imperial scale.

The comparative method of anthropological classification invented by Ivanovskii was based on a number of major racial “indicators” (*pokazateli*) such as the color of hair and eyes, the height and the form of the head, the “height-longitudinal” skull index, facial index (a ratio of the maximum width of the face to its length), nasal index (a ratio of the maximum nasal width to nasal length), the length of the body, length of arms and legs, etc. Having calculated these indicators for all population groups studied by Russian anthropologists within the limits of the empire, Ivanovskii coded them and established three levels of racial kinship amongst all the population groups/*narodnosti*: the highest level of kinship had a ratio of differences between the “indicators” of less than one; the second level – less than two and the third – no more than three.⁴² The classification itself was organized in alphabetical order starting with Afghani (*afgantsy*), followed by Aisors, Armenians, Bashkirs, Buriats, Belarusians..., Great Russians and then the other peoples in alphabetical order up to the Yakuts at the end of the list. The Russian alphabet was the only organizational principle of Ivanovskii’s classification. Overall, it produced an impression of the absence of pure “races” (except Jews – but this is a special topic for discussion) that could have been used as

⁴² Ivanovskii, “Opyt antropologicheskoi klassifikatsii,” pp. 107-165.

“objective” bases for constructing nations. The level of racial heterogeneity within the Slavic group was simply unprecedented. Ivanovskii distinguished the “Slavonic anthropological group” that included Great Russians, Little Russians and Belarusians (yet excluded the Little Russians of the Kiev Province and the Kuban’ Kozaks), Poles, Lithuanians, Kazan Tatars, Bashkirs and Kalmyks.⁴³ As a result of such a grouping, one of the major terms balancing the Russian imperial order – “*inorodets*” – lost any sense: if Tatars belonged to the “Slavonic racial group,” how could they be viewed as literally *ino-rodtsy*?

However, Ivanovskii’s decomposition of the Russian population did not stop here. The groups composing the Great Russian *narodnost’* demonstrated only the third level of racial kinship.⁴⁴ At the same time, Great Russians measured at a *guberniia* level showed the highest level of kinship with Poles, and only the second and third degrees of kinship with Belarusians. However, compared to the Great Russians, the Little Russians were diversified even more. “Regional differences of the Little Russian type express themselves in such a sharp way that cannot be found either among the Great Russians, or among the Belarusians” wrote Ivanovskii. “Little Russians of the Kiev Province stand absolutely alone, Little Russians (*kozaks*) of the Kuban’ district enter an entirely different group (the Osetians’) and only Little Russians of Volyn’ Province possess the third degree kinship with the Little Russians taken as a group and with the Belarusians.”⁴⁵ And all this diversity of types and kinships, established on the basis of thousands of measurements and calculations, was put on maps.

Ivanovskii’s immense efforts resulted in a classification that was, with some reservations, adopted by the anthropological community and provided a general scholarly framework for the realization of the Russian anthropological utopia. It remained an expression of the ideal of objective, total and universal science, whose language and form of representation were “European.” However, actual European anthropology at that time was becoming increasingly monopolized (in different forms) by the nation-states and the language of science was quickly turning into the language of a new social (sanitary projects in

⁴³ Ibid. p. 153.

⁴⁴ Ibid. pp. 153, 155.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 156.

Great Britain and Germany) and national politics. The ideal Europe as a world of a modern universalistic and humanistic culture (the ideal of human self-cognition is, of course, a great humanistic ideal) kept inspiring the anthropological community of the country whose European status, as well as membership in the community of cultural nations, were questionable for many Europeans. In Russia, the grand-anthropological project designed under the influence of Western nation-state anthropology, did not provide for the construction of either a “soil and blood” type of Russian nation (mega-area as a nation-state), or the three-part Russian nation (Russian mega-area composed of three meso-areas (namely, Great Russian, Little Russian, and Belarusian meso-areas), or the imperial vision of the Russian core and *inorodtsy* periphery (a colonial model).

ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE NATION

This is not to say that there were no attempts by other agencies beside the state to use anthropology and the category of race in politics, especially at the beginning of the twentieth century with rapid modernization, the emergence of mass politics, the rising importance of the “national question” in the empire, etc. In this respect, the most interesting cases were Russian Jewish anthropology (in its connection to the Zionist and Diaspora national projects) and the racialization of Russian popular nationalist discourse. Both topics remain understudied and the question of whether new political discourses influenced the integrity of the dominant scholarly anthropological discourse and changed the “power-knowledge” balance in Russian anthropology are still unanswered.

Among the cases of direct application of racial anthropology by the ideologists of Russian nationalism, probably the most interesting is the case of Ivan Alekseevich Sikorskii, Professor of Kiev St. Vladimir University, a recognized psychiatrist and neurologist, whose scholarly works were translated into European languages and acknowledged internationally. Today he is mostly known for having been a medical expert in the Beilis trial, at which he testified in favor of the ritual

murder version.⁴⁶ Sikorskii's nationalist vision has not been seriously studied, even though he was one of the modernizers of Russian nationalism and consciously worked with the category of race.⁴⁷ Writing about the Russian nation and nationalism, Sikorskii posed as an academic anthropologist and tried to build a corresponding scholarly reputation.⁴⁸ The documents from the Kiev archives tell the story of his and a few other Kiev university professors' attempts to found an academic anthropological society in Kiev.⁴⁹ As a university professor he tried to teach the anthropological ABC to his students and even published a catalogue of his home library, which contained a relatively large number of anthropological works, mostly foreign, in order to make them accessible to his students.⁵⁰ Quite in line with the spirit of the epoch of "nations and nationalisms" he redefined the empire along the lines of the nation-state model with the Russian nation constructed as a majority (a historical amalgam of Great Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians), a core population surrounded by the racially inferior *inorodtsy* population (interestingly, to get such a result

⁴⁶ For more see the collection of documents: R.Sh. Ganelin, V.E. Kel'ner, I.V. Lukoianov, *Delo Mendelia Beilisa. Materialy Chrezvychainoi sledstvennoi komissii Vremennogo pravitel'stva o sudebnom protsesse 1913 g. po obovneniiu v ritual'nom ubiistve* (St. Petersburg, 1999).

⁴⁷ More on I. A. Sikorskii, see A. Tkach, "Rytsar' nauki," *Zerkalo nedeli*, No. 31 (7-13 August 1999), pp. 3-4; Sergei Vyrovoi, Sergei Karamash, "Ivan Sikorskii - vrach, uchenyi, chelovek," *Agapit: Ukrain's'kyi istoriko-medychnyi zhurnal*, No. 13 (2001); L.I. D'iachenko, "K istorii razvitiia psikhiatricheskoi nauki v Ukraine," I.I. Kut'ko i P.T. Petruk, eds., *Istoriia ukrainskoi psikhiiatrii: Sbornik nauchnykh rabot Ukrainського NII klinicheskoi i eksperimental'noi nevrologii i psikhiiatrii i Khar'kovskoi gorodskoi klinicheskoi psikhiatricheskoi bol'nitsy No. 15 (Saburovoi dachi)* (Khar'kov, 1994), Vol. 1, pp. 45-48. As the most detailed recent research see Vadim Menzhulin, *Drugoi Sikorskii. Neudobnye stranitsy istorii psikhiiatrii* (Kiev, 2004). Sikorskii's name in the context of the discussion of Russian nationalism see D.A. Kotsiubinskii, *Russkii natsionalizm v nachale XX stoletii: Rozhdenie i gibel' ideologii Vserossiiskogo natsional'nogo souza* (Moscow, 2001), pp. 78, 83, 102, 117, passim.

⁴⁸ See the following of Sikorskii's works: "Cherty iz psikhologii slavian," "Dannye iz antropologii," "Russkie i Ukraintsy," "Kharakteristika chernoi, zheltoi i beloi ras v sviazi s voprosami russko-iaponskoi voiny," "Antropologicheskaiia i psikhologicheskaiia genealogiia Pushkina," "Ekspertiza po delu ob ubiistve Andrushy Iuschinskogo," "Znaki vyrozhdeniia," in V.B. Avdeev, *Russkaia rasovaia teoriia do 1917 goda* (Moscow, 2002).

⁴⁹ Derzhavnyi arkhiv m. Kyiv (DAK), f. 16, op. 465, spr. 255, ark. 25-28; See also: Tsentral'nyi derzhavnyi istorychnyi arkhiv Ukrainy v m. Kyevi (TsDIAU), f. 707, op. 262, spr. 8.

⁵⁰ *Sistematicheskii katalog chastnoi biblioteki, prinadlezhashchei professoru Universiteta Sv. Vladimira Ivanu Alekseevichu Sikorskomu* (Kiev, 1895), Razdel "Antropologiiia," pp. 33-39.

he ignored the existence of Volga Tatars living in the midst of the Russian “core” nation). The initial unity of the Russian nation had been formed at the stage of its racial existence (Sikorskii insisted that Jews were stuck at this pre-historical stage) and currently, at the stage of a national existence, remained the elementary basis for a more sophisticated historical, cultural, and psychological unity. Russians, in Sikorskii’s interpretation, were “Aryans,” representatives of a higher race. Thus, using the authority of academic anthropology, he introduced the models of racialized national discourse and racial hierarchy. He used the same models that were consciously rejected by the Russian anthropological community, even though at a practical level they allowed a solution to many burning issues of modern Russian politics: they helped to adjust the archaic empire to the nation-state standards and defined it as a modern geographically, culturally and racially unified (even if potentially) mega-area; and they made the national claims of *innorodtsy* look irrelevant since *inorodtsy* were “objectively” destined to be absorbed by a higher racial and cultural entity. Most importantly, only such a reading of anthropology allowed one to construct a “Big Russian nation,” for the category of race was something much more fundamental than any “linguistic” or “cultural” nationalism. And this reading was “European,” as was the discourse of the Russian anthropological community at the turn of the century. However, Sikorskii had never been allowed into the anthropological community; his name was never mentioned on the pages of *RAJ*.⁵¹ On the other hand, Sikorskii tried to limit his “scholarly” references to quotations from foreign anthropologists and very limited and biased quoting of Russians; Sikorskii’s unique (for Kiev) anthropological library did not contain *RAJ* or published anthropological dissertations defended in Moscow or St. Petersburg.⁵²

⁵¹ To be more precise, since 1889 Sikorskii was a member of the Russian Anthropological Society of St. Petersburg University. However, he did not participate in its activities and never published in its periodicals and collections. See: S. N. Danilo, ed., *Protokoly Zasedanii Russkogo Antropologicheskogo Obshchestva pri Imperatorskom SPb. Universitete za 1889 g.* (St. Petersburg, 1890), pp. 1-12, 13.

⁵² For more on Sikorskii’s racial discourse see: M. Mogil’ner, “Entsiklopediia russkogo natsional’nogo proekta: predislovie k publikatsii,” *Ab Imperio*, No. 3 (2003), pp. 225-240.

* * *

... After a short break *RAJ* was resumed in 1916. In the Editorial the newly appointed editor, A. Elkind, wrote that the popularity of anthropology as a science would grow with the spread of culture.⁵³ Even the realities of the European war did not challenge the basic paradigm of Russian anthropology – the paradigm of a universalistic modern culture with Europe as its major locus. Probably, such was the paradox of “catching-up development” that many historians tend to understand as a disadvantage. In recent historiography the “catching-up” metaphor has been replaced by the metaphor of “telescoped development,” which implies two things: first, the stages of development that in their original context took a lot of time to traverse, in the Russian context lacked this time, mingled, and distorted each other; and secondly, that Russians did not actually experience many processes (capitalism, industrialization, etc.) that they fiercely criticized, dismissed, and reconsidered together with the “modernized” world. It seems that Russian anthropologists knew – both from the experience of their own country and from foreign experience – what they were criticizing and rejecting, they had less time compared to their western colleagues, but they also joined the movement at its advanced stage and were wise enough not to “re-invent the bicycle” – an authentic Russian anthropology. They used the language and methods of European anthropology and designed their grand-project according to the European plan. And they did not “distort” the plan. Interestingly enough, they managed to extract its major components and save them from what they considered as distortions: from the manipulative state, from the constructivist nationalist projects, and from the vulgarization of the scientific method.

They synthesized an anthropological modernity as a universal European “intellectual mega-area” free from excessive geographical determinism. The controversy between the anthropological Russia as a mega-area (composed of meso-areas of different levels, from “nations” and “racial types” to *volost'*) and the other Russia as a meso-area on the

⁵³ A. El'kind, “O zadachakh vozobnovliaemogo zhurnala,” *RAZh* 37-38:1-2 (1916), pp. 1-3.

anthropological map of Europe did not seem so obvious within this imagined space. The European “intellectual mega-area” of Russian anthropologists was based on the ideals of universal culture and objective science – an instrument of human self-cognition and human perfection. In this sense Russian anthropology was more “European” than its inspiration – the archetypal European anthropological science.