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By Way of Conclusion

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The importance of this anthology as an outcome of the Russian-American academic co-operation must be clear at the outset. The anthology comprises selected papers given at the first two (of four that have taken place by now) Forums of the Russian-American Research Nexus which is a kind of “grassroots initiative” of a group of Russian and American anthropologists. The Nexus and its Forums have not been initiated by any institution — they are outcomes of an informal initiative of the colleagues who strongly believe in importance of international academic co-operation for the progress of science and beyond — for humanization of the world.

At the same time, the anthology is an academic publication and thus must have academic merits first of all. This volume is just an anthology — not a collective monograph with a clearly defined topic and conceptual integrity of chapters. The papers given at the Forums were on a great variety of topics related to anthropology of the Americas from the archaeological past to the present. This means that each paper in the anthology may be important in itself and should be assessed individually. The

general estimation of the volume will depend on the estimation of separate contributions to it. Yet, if there is something essential what unites the papers in the volume, it is all the authors' devotion to combining anthropology with history in their works — at the levels of preferred topics, sources, methods, etc. So, despite the volume is really not a collective monograph, it is still more than a simple collection of articles. It does have internal integrity.

The anthology opens with the paper by Sergei Kan in which he makes use of a combination of the methods of cultural anthropology (extensive fieldwork) and historical anthropology (utilizing of archival documents). He deals with a specific case. In 1904, the Tlingit Indians of Sitka, Alaska held a major potlatch ceremony attended by numerous visitors from the surrounding native communities. Prior to the potlatch, its hosts promised the Governor of Alaska and other local American officials that this would be their last ceremony of this kind, yet the promise was never kept. By providing a deep analysis of this interesting case Kan shows convincingly how productive integration of historical evidence into an anthropological research can be.

The importance of deep interaction between anthropology and history is also testified by the next paper in the anthology, by Gleb V. Aleksandrov. While Kan's paper shows how historical sources can be important for an anthropological research, the paper by Aleksandrov demonstrates the fruitfulness of anthropological perspective for a basically historical analysis. He studies two native language manuals published in New England in the 17th century and shows that in the colonial context, both works offered "models" for native-colonial relations, quite different from the ones promoted by colonial leadership. Aleksandrov explores the political dimensions of language education in British North America in the 17th century, focusing on both the "models" of native-colonial interactions and the wider implications of the authors' of the manuals intent.

Maria Filimonova shows how anthropology and history can be combined at an even deeper level: she directly attempts at an anthropological analysis of a historical topic in her paper "Anthropology of Disease in the United States in the Late 18th Century". She focuses on three grave diseases — smallpox, yellow fever, and tuberculosis. Filimonova discovers that, very interestingly, these diseases found different reflections in the United States culture of that time. Smallpox was associated with the practice of inoculation, or variolation. Yellow fever and the way it was treated became a cause for political controversy in the course of the party struggle during George Washington's presidency. Finally, tuberculosis was associated with the idea of vampires.

The archaeologist David H. Dye bases his study of the rituals that were widespread in indigenous eastern North America at European contact and can be found even nowadays on the assumption that ritual practice is a primary mechanism by which people create and renew their worlds. They often do it through prayer and supplication to nonhuman beings residing in other worldly realms, and Dye discusses in much detail beaver supplication and veneration, as reflected in various artistic genres and imagery in eastern North America from the time of Hopewell cultures in the early first millennium to the present day. This discussion allows him to relate human cosmology to their social and political organization, as far as, Dye argues convincingly, by accessing Above World and Beneath World powers, people are able to create opportunities for aggrandizement, political power, privilege, and social status.

J. Christopher Gillam, Richard J. Chacon, and Gregory M. Lamb's contribution is a wonderful piece in the way it combines archaeology, history, and ethnography, on the one hand, and shows how scholarship can serve society, on the other. The authors describe how ongoing research with descendants of the enslaved at Antebellum Bratton Plantation in South Carolina, interaction

with descendants of other southern plantations, and continued fieldwork on slave quarters at Historic Brattonsville are enabling new pro-social activities and discourse between descendants of the enslaved, historic site managers, universities and the general public. Gillam and co-authors emphasize that this pro-social research and outreach effort is a means of further improving historically-tense race relations in the region, encouraging the embracement of slave descendance within the African-American community, and the promotion of understanding in a shared, yet divergent, cultural heritage through pro-social educational and archaeological activity.

Jennifer A. Lucido studies the formation of colonial identity in Spanish-Mexican California. Her contribution can be considered as a good piece in the classical tradition of historical anthropology on the theoretically important and actively debated by many scholars issue of identity formation. She focuses on the life histories of two sisters of mixed (African and Spanish) ancestry. Examining how they navigated the frontier of Spanish California from childhood to adulthood, Lucido contributes to furthering understanding of the lived experiences as women of mixed ancestry in the colonial landscape. Through biographies of particular people, she skilfully approaches the whole problem of mixed identity formation in Spanish-Mexican California.

Spanish America is the sphere of interest of Anastasiya V. Kalyuta, too. In her two papers she studies the personalities of Hernan Cortés and his companions-in-arms from different perspectives. In her first paper, utilizing colonial sources of the 16th century, she analyzes religious, juridical and political concepts of Hernan Cortés and his companions-in-arms. Importantly, Kalyuta successfully tries to unearth the dynamics of Cortés and his companions-in-arms' views, relating their evolution to their progress in conquering the American lands. She also traces the perception of their views in historiography of the Conquest of

Mexico in course of five centuries of Colonial and Postcolonial Mexican history. The comparative focus permits her to present ample panorama of conquistadors' ideology and its influence in memories of the Conquest during Colonial period and at present.

In her second paper in the anthology, Kalyuta concentrates on initial perception of Hernan Cortés and his followers by indigenous population of Mexico in the light of historical and philological evidence available from the sources written during the Conquest and in the first years of Spanish rule in Mexico. In this paper, she discusses the much-debated hypothesis that the native population of Mexico identified Cortés with returning god Quetzalcoatl and focuses on misinterpretation of historical sources that gave birth to this long-standing hypothesis.

Tatiana S. Tereschenko studies the opposite — perceptions not of Europeans by Native Americans but of Native Americans by Europeans, as those perceptions manifested themselves in the 16th century European art. The images of Native Americans in the European art of that time had general characteristic features: rigidity (exploitation of schemes and images of art of previous periods); persistent depiction of inhabitants of the New World as savage, weak, harmless, representation of Europeans' superiority over them and so on. There also existed images sympathizing the inhabitants of the New World which represented cruelties of Europeans towards them. However, as Tereschenko shows, the ideas of Eurocentrism and superiority of Europeans in various forms remained typical for representation of Native Americans in the European art throughout the whole 16th century and beyond.

Finally, Christopher Davis in his contribution on Amazonian animism argues that Ancient Amazonians entered a land that had already been patterned by forces and animals that informed those who acknowledged and heeded them. Amazonian animism is based on a legacy of honoring nature's patterned relationships. It was constructed from observed natural associations — identifying the

conditions accompanying desired outcomes. The wisdom of that animism was shared through myths about animals and fantastic beings. The habits of animals and characters in myths may seem fanciful at first glance, unless we consider that the information they preserve animates relationships within the natural world. Davis discusses how one such relationship produced a landscape where naturally-occurring red and yellow lichen circles highlight natural clearings at Monte Alegre where he did fieldwork.

To sum up: each paper in the anthology may be of interest to specialists in respective topics. At the same time, we dare to say that the volume as a whole has some value, too. The importance of the separate papers is an outcome of their good quality, while the anthology in general may contribute to the long overdue restoration of the link between anthropology and history.

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Настоящий сборник содержит работы российских и американских антропологов историков, касающиеся древних и современных культур и обществ Нового Света. Проблематика работ обширна и касается таких вопросов, как воображаемое раннеколониальной Америки и Европы, так и выживания и возрождения традиционной культуры этнических меньшинств в наше время. Собранные здесь работы впервые были представлены на I и II форумах Российско-Американского научного центра (RARN), прошедших в 2020 и 2021 гг.