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Editorial Article

Ural-Volga Research Contacts and Prospects

Редакционная статья

Урало-поволжские исследовательские контексты и перспективы

One of the priority areas of modern domestic humanities is the study of the ethnocultural diversity of Russia, which is a unique spiritual heritage. Languages, ethnographic habits, literature, reflecting the traditional worldview and the transforming peoples world perception on different semiotic “tiers”, make up the many-sided integrity and originality of Russian civilization. They are interesting both in themselves and from the point of view of comparative / parallel consideration: in order to better know, to hear oneself, one often needs the voice of another, an approximation of the distant, unlike. And if comparative linguistics has not just significant theoretical and methodological tools that “bring together” linguistic elements of varying degrees of kinship, then literary criticism has a less established comparative experience, many reading techniques, methods of comparative correlation are only being added up, verified, selected by the scientific community. This is primarily about the literary and artistic traditions of the peoples of Russia. The space of the Volga region, the Urals, where Finno-Ugric peoples, Turks, Slavs lived in good neighborhood for many centuries, has attracted and continues to attract researchers from various fields of humanitarian knowledge with the multidimensional reality of intensively flowing intercultural

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communication, harmonious coexistence and multi-level interaction of related and unrelated languages, stage- typological parallels and aesthetic, ethno-mental dissimilarity of literatures.

A special issue of the journal, dedicated to the languages and literatures of the peoples of the Ural-Volga region, is indicative not only in terms of identifying “internal”, purely national problems, their constructs, but also sub specie understanding the “routes” of the movement of science, in a broad sense associated with national cultures. Despite the seeming thematic eclecticism of the presented articles, there are analytical plots that unite the authors: the dialogue of languages, the theory and practice of bilingualism, the complexity of literary translation, the forms of manifestation of ethnic identity, the system of concepts, the contexts of the formation of the literary language, the development models of modern national literatures. It is noteworthy that bilingualism as a phenomenon is mainly of interest to specialists in Finno-Ugric languages and literature. Modern Finno-Ugrians of the Volga region and the Urals do not just live in the mode of national-Russian bilingualism — for many ethnophores, the Russian language is more native, “mastered”. Finno-Ugric writers in their creative searches also often switch from their native language to Russian (this is especially true for the Mordovian ethnos). Increased attention to the aspect of literary translation is due both to the theoretical importance of this area, and the presence of rich and diverse empirical material, illustrating a large number of problematic areas and undercurrents in the implementation of “translation transfers”. Researchers from the Turkic-speaking republics are focused on the synchronic and diachronic realities of language development. The range of actualized linguistic contexts is the history of the language, morphology, lexicology, semantics, linguoculturology, etc.

The literary block includes articles addressed to the history and theory of national literatures, their genre modifications and linguo-aesthetic characteristics; Russian literature of the Urals at the turn of the 20th — 21st centuries is also considered. A separate place in the structure of the issue is occupied by the format of dialogue / discussion. It is the ethnic content of the author’s world texts, artistic narratives that seems to us to be a common denominator that sets the most expressive context for reading the analyzed national literatures. Some writers managed to show the depths and heights of their ethnophilosophy, while others consciously or unconsciously lost their original ethnic identity, its nutritional resources in the artistic word. At the crossroads of the Volga region, the Urals, different things happen ...

This issue, dedicated to the Volga region and the Urals, continues the wonderful tradition of special issues, covering ethno-regional zones of Russia that are significant in terms of humanitarian understanding. The idea of creating such special issues belongs to Professor U.M. Bakhtikireeva, who has been inviting colleagues from different countries and Russian research centers

for cooperation for many years, and successfully implements fundamental research projects. The transition to the Volga region and the Urals occurred after semiotic contact with the cultural landscape of the North Caucasus. And therefore, words of gratitude must be said to the editor-compiler of the Caucasian special issue, Professor Z.A. Kuchukova.

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