



EDITORS' FOREWORD

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This year's *Forum for Anthropology and Culture* focuses on the relations between humans and the non-human. As the citations in the articles indicate, analysis of this topic in the Russian Empire and USSR goes back several hundred years, an indication of the importance of animals to the political, economic, social and cultural life of Eurasia. However, conscious reflection upon the boundaries between the human and the non-human is, as in other countries, a more recent development.

The energy and rapidity with which the field is evolving was made clear by the quantity of submissions to the 'Forum': the exchange ended up with over 30 participants and ran to over 200 pages. Because of the need to accommodate articles and reviews in the English-language number, only selected answers to our questionnaire appear. However, they give a strong idea of the variety of participants in terms of disciplinary and interdisciplinary background, generation, conceptual and methodological approach, country of residence and individual research interests.

Meanwhile, our articles include two primarily focused on the place of animals in the history of science during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries; both also address the prominence of animals as tokens of status and prestige in transnational exchanges, from the early history of diplomatic gifts to the sharing of scientifically preserved carcasses of the European bison in the second half of the nineteenth century. The third article takes a different approach, considering how Komi and Nenets reindeer herders simultaneously recognise that animals

should not be judged by human moral standards, while at the same time, in some contexts, all the same applying to them moral judgements. Under review are two major studies by American scholars in the field, Alex Blanchette's anthropology of intensive pig rearing, *Porkopolis*, and Ryan Tucker Jones's history of whaling in the USSR, *Red Leviathan*.

This particular issue of *Forum for Anthropology and Culture* represents a revival of the international dialogue that has been under severe stress in recent years. We hope that may be a harbinger of the future, and that the reasons behind the stress will also melt into the past. In the meantime, we would like to express our gratitude to the guest editors of *Antropologicheskij forum* no. 62, from which most of the material is taken, Maria Pirogovskaya and Aleksandra Zakharova, to the authors of the articles, reviews and comments that we have included, to Ralph Cleminson for his translation into English of the material originally published in Russian, and to the editorial staff of *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*, particularly Olga Boitsova, Alexandra Piir and Aleksandra Zakharova.

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