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Lifestyle in Siberia and the Russian North, edited by Joachim Otto Habeck, illuminates a wide variety of recent lifestyles in Siberia and the Russian North. Discussing and elaborating the concept of lifestyles theoretically, the volume analyses the effect of changes in infrastructure and technology on lifestyles that the region has experienced in the last decades. The ten anthropologists who contributed to this volume pay particular attention to how habits of travel and visual self-representation changed over time. The research presented in the volume was conducted in 2008–2012 as part of the research project “Conditions and Limitations of Lifestyle Plurality in Siberia,” within the organizational framework of the Siberian Studies Centre of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Germany.

“This book is about lifestyle,” as Habeck states. More precisely, it is about lifestyle viewed from two perspectives. First, the concept of lifestyle is seen by the authors as most useful in describing today’s diverse realities of everyday life in Siberia and the Russian North, a region which since the eighteenth century, including during the Soviet modernization project, has been seen as mainly backward, a region that had to be “cultivated” and delivered a “bright future.” Until recently, the focus of anthropological investigations has been on traditional culture of the indigenous population, as the authors state. Feeling the need to look at the region from different perspectives, the authors take a fresh approach by describing various realities of everyday life through the concept of lifestyle from an anthropological perspective. While some findings presented in the book are more specific to the region studied, many observations do not have to be limited to the region but can be seen in a wider context of (provincial) Russia.

Second, the book is about the concept of lifestyle itself. In the absence of an existing definition encompassing all the aspects that the authors saw as part of the concept, the team developed, based on a large corpus of scholarship, their own definition. Lifestyle can be seen “as a particular *mode* of identification,” as an “expressive, routinised, stylised mode of identification” (p. 16; emphasis in the original). With this definition, the team takes into account various concepts of lifestyle, including early ones that focus on lifestyle as an expression of membership in a social class through consumption, such as the concept by Thorstein Veblen (1899), or the “stylisation of life” in status groups who are the specific bearers of conventions (Weber [1922] 1946). They also looked carefully at concepts by Pierre Bourdieu ([1979] 1984), who pointed to the non-reflexiveness of following socially established patterns, and Anthony Giddens’s (1991) concept of lifestyle, consciously selecting from different options and establishing a narrative of self-identity. Although the team developed a definition every mem-

ber could work with, they kept working with other conceptualizations, especially by David Chaney (1996). “Surfaces” and “sensibilities”—keywords in Chaney’s definition—are of special importance to the understanding of lifestyles in this volume. The former indicates an affiliation to a certain group, and the latter is used as a metaphor for collective concerns and moral judgments.

The team agreed to explore the concept of lifestyle particularly in connection to changes in technology and infrastructure. It decided to approach the study of lifestyle from two different vantage points: the changing habits of travel and the visual forms of self-representation (p. 437). The authors conducted interviews in ten different field sites—from cities like Novosibirsk with around 1.5 million inhabitants at the time of interviews to a village in the North of Russia called Chavan’ga with only 87 permanent residents. For these semistructured interviews (photo elicitation interviews as well as travel biography interviews) the researchers had agreed on common guidelines. While in photo elicitation interviews the interviewees were asked to select six pictures to “characterise your personality in different periods of time” (p. 197) and answer questions about what, how, and why photos were selected, in travel biography the aim of interviews was to understand the motivations and meanings behind travels for different individuals. One hundred and ten individuals, selected by the snowball principle, had been interviewed, 79 photo elicitation interviews and 82 travel biography interviews selected, and 484 photographs analyzed. The researchers in the team shared their sources, analyzing not only interviews and pictures they collected themselves but also those collected by other team members.

The first half of the book investigates the changing habits of travel, while the second half looks at the visual forms of self-representation. Accordingly, the first half of the book—chapters 2–5—examines lifestyle in connection with mobility and immobility. In chapter 2 Dennis Zuev and Joachim Otto Habeck give a (rather descriptive) portrait of technological and infrastructural changes in the observed region over the last 40 years and show how those changes influenced the attitudes about travel, communication, and photography. They see consumer goods and financial resources as expanding lifestyle options and analyze—by comparing cities and countryside, as well as the past and the present—the limitations their absence can bring. In chapter 3 Masha Shaw draws attention to a different perspective: She looks at lifestyle opportunities that villages, which are traditionally seen as places with limited opportunities, can offer and shows how certain characteristics of the countryside gave her three protagonists the possibility to choose their preferred lifestyle and live up to their personal moral values. To her, lifestyle is “a creative process of achieving self-fulfillment rather than as the disposal of final consumable products” (p. 127).

In chapter 4 Luděk Brož and Joachim Otto Habeck study different types of vacationing in Soviet times, such as recreational and educational vacationing, and show how travel biographies started to diverge in the first post-Soviet decade, when some vacationers changed their attitudes to staying in the home region while others increasingly visited foreign countries. Brož and Habeck argue that tastes and desires—sensibilities—of vacationing have changed in recent decades and new factors such as exotic cultures and local ethnic traditions—“otherness”—have started to attract

tourists. In chapter 5 Joseph J. Long looks at how movement and place are represented in biographical narratives and photography. Combining the analysis of these two sources, he uncovers common themes of biographical narratives such as imagined destinations, places of recreation, and *rodina* (usually translated as homeland in contrast to the current place of residence).

Authors of chapters 6–10 explore different visual forms of self-representation. Using the method of photo elicitation interviews, analyzing the selection of the photographs, the photos themselves, and the stories told around those photographs, Jaroslava Panáková elaborates on the concept of happiness and its changes in the last decades. She shows that in her sample of 484 pictures happiness is often illustrated by the protagonist as being part of a collective. While for protagonists who spent most of their life in the Soviet period happiness was achieved through self-realization contributing to moral deeds, family, community, or the “Motherland,” recently the focus of happiness has shifted to achieving material well-being.

Chapter 7 stands at the beginning of four chapters where Chaney’s definition of “surface” and the idea that “visualisation has become the central resource for communicating and appropriating” (quoted on p. 263) are of major importance. Eleanor Peers illuminates how what Alexei Yurchak (2005) has called “authoritative discourse,” the symbolic reproduction of phrases, pictures, and behavior, and the appropriation of *kul'tura* to socially differentiate, had an effect on visualization of ethnicity in Soviet times as well as on today’s national revival of the Sakha culture. She shows how these elements of the Soviet past can explain why a picture of “Baiaanai, the spirit guardian of the forest for both past and present generations of Sakha people” (p. 270) can be used without its spiritual meaning but as a symbol of a Sakha identity or a symbol of the Sakha people.

Chapter 8 by Artem Rabogoshvili and chapter 9 by Ina Schröder analyze lifestyles of people exploring and reviving their ethnic cultures and traditions. Rabogoshvili studies cultural organizations of ethnic minorities and how the activities they offer widen the range of possible lifestyles of their clients and reveals common characteristics of people who are actively engaged in these cultural organizations. Schröder looks at playful appropriation of ancestral memory in a youth camp in Western Siberia. While giving the reader a good understanding of how this playful appropriation is organized by the camp leaders and what participants feel and think when they participate in the role-playing game recreating indigenous life and traditions of their ancestors, she examines the transformation of discourses on tradition, gender roles, and normative lifestyle.

Tatiana Barchunova and Joachim Otto Habeck look at a different kind of vacation camps—live-action role-playing (LARP)—in chapter 10. They examine the relevance of lifestyle to taste, play, and game and explore the borders between game and reality. They show that LARP games do not have a finite time nor a finite place but that their borders are blurry and how, for example, emotions in a game can become “real” emotions or how participants might identify themselves during their “real life” with the character they usually play in the game.

In the last chapter the editor discusses general developments observed in Russia in the last years, namely conservatism, patriotism, the increasing influence of the Rus-

sian Orthodox Church, attitudes toward consumption, and increase in mobility and international tourism. After summing up the main findings, Habeck picks up the question of the interconnection of lifestyle, repeated action, and reflexivity: "The intensity of involvement and the personal significance of the activity ... become objects of self-reflection," which should be taken in account when working with the concept of lifestyle (p. 424).

All in all, the book follows the idea articulated by sociologists Benjamin Zablocki and Rosabeth Moss Kanter, "not specific life-styles themselves but their range and diversity constitute the most interesting sociological problem for investigation" (quoted on p. 293), by analyzing a wide variety of surfaces and sensibilities and their different intensities, different lifestyles. At the same time, each chapter focuses in detail on a different specific lifestyle. The reader might wonder in the beginning how they were selected. Although the two focuses on travel and visual self-representation are mentioned early in the book, it might not be immediately clear to the reader why, for example, LARP is included in the book, until in the end the most obvious answer is given—that apart from special economic and infrastructural conditions at different field locations the individual interests of the researchers were also decisive for the selection of topics and cases. The team has succeeded very well in exploring and demonstrating the variety, conditions, and limitations of lifestyle plurality in Siberia and the Russian North with partly innovative research approaches. The book reads so well not least because it is based on a research concept developed and pursued jointly by all authors and a common thread is never lost. It enriches the reader through its careful, textbook-like methodological approach and amazes by its methodological coordination. It can be very well used as a guide for reflecting on one's own fieldwork and inspire research groups for developing a joint understanding of a research topic and approach. The methodological explanations have nonetheless their price: some chapters tend to be a bit long, and the reader who is mainly interested in the various lifestyles themselves might have to skip some explanations. However, those who are able to skim through the book according to their own interests will read it with great profit. *Lifestyle in Siberia and the Russian North* can be recommended to anyone who is interested either in the methodology of anthropological research, the theoretical discussion of the concept of lifestyle, or—most importantly—in different lifestyles and their changes since the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

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