

FLORES

It was during the glittering hours of a beautiful and never forgotten evening in May 2003 on occasion of the tercentenary of Saint-Petersburg when the author of these essays was invited as a guest of Kunstkamera in order to join the manifold celebrations during the festival program. We sat outside the turret, high above and close to the top of Kunstkamera's roof-gallery, and we enjoyed the grandiose perspective to the ships parade and the fantastic nightly illumination of the City. Everything was perfect at this unique place and the collegial hospitality was great. From such privileged point of an "overview about everything" it was only a small step to get inspired for new ideas and perspectives about the realization of future projects. First it was my good friend Efim A. Rezvan, with a colored air-balloon in his hand, who philosophized about a revision of history of Kunstkamera by new biographic studies, shortly to say: "we should do something to look behind the many repeated summaries".

We looked through our materials and singled out some still open subjects which for the first time were recognized by the author in connection with her study on history of cartography. Many years before publications of Christian Martin Fraehn already have been of some importance during author's research in mid of the 90ties in connection with early Oriental records about Middle Europe and River Rhine region. The material boxes were opened again in 2003 and a lively correspondence was spread in order to achieve new and yet unpublished archival materials. The result was edited soon after and became well accepted by its readers. Some years later, the subjects became refreshed in connection with some running archival projects in Kunstkamera, the discreet question — now spoken with a charming smile — became focused about "do you know something about German archival materials on former Kunstkamera's director Friedrich Wilhelm Radloff?" Finally another biographic study became the result when exciting but unpublished records about the interpretation network of 19th/early 20th century Kunstkamera's identity were added into the study [1].

Although Chr. M. Fraehn and Fr. W. Radloff obviously had really different characters and tempers, fields of interest and research — Fraehn was focused to field of numismatics, and Radloff came from Turcologic linguistics, teaching and ethnographic field of research — they both spent their lives in similar ways. They left their German homeland by personal and professional reasons and spent some time in Kazan where they met the Oriental twin-culture of polycultural Russia [2]. Fraehn and Radloff both belonged to this world and they continued the long line of Kunstkamera's directors [3] mostly from from Baltic-German descent — as well as L. Blumentrost (1692—1755), J.D. Schumacher (1690—1761), J.C. Taubert (1717—1771), P.S. Pallas (1741—1811), J.H. Busse (1763—1835), A.F. Postels (1801—1871), K.A. Baer (1792—1876), J.A.B. Dorn (1805—1881), F.A. Schiefner (1817—1879), L.I. Schrenk (1826—1894), who all dedicated their personal energy and enormous knowledge to the new place in their life. One can mention here also such Radloff's successor as V.V. Barthold (1869—1930), V.V. Struve (1889—1965) and D.A. Olderogge (1903—1987) [4], who also belonged to the "German line".

Even in our time when ideology-based ignorance of old scientific traditions propagates such fields of interest to be "old fashioned" — especially in field of fruitful German-Russian scientific traditions —, and when such subjects are less mentioned in university curricula or ignored by cultural debates — it is our opinion that knowledge of such personal histories will encourage both Russian and German researchers and young students, too, to be curious about each other — as the initiators of these essays happily have been many years ago.

As her personal congratulation for Kunstkamera's tercentenary the author expresses her great thanks to the editor of *Manuscripta Orientalia* adding a reflection from point of ancient history and turning around the friend's question "...and what do you know about basic roots of kunstkameras as an imagination of human attempt to protect and develop cultural identity...?"

Notes

1. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Polina Matveeva who was my Russian partner in this research and congratulate her with recent publication of her book «Все человечество едино»: В.В. Радлов и МАЭ (please, see at: http://kunstkamera.ru/lib/rubrikator/08/08_02/978-5-88431-253-1).

2. Cf. also the instructive interview by Mikhail Piotrovsky and Efim Rezvan about "Accademic Classics", in: *Hermitage VIII* (Saint Petersburg, 2007), p. 48.

3. In 1818 Chr. M. Fraehn became the director of the Asiatic Museum, previously the part of Kunstkamera.

4. See, for example, short biographies published in *The Kunstkamera 295 anniversary. History, collections, research*. Ed. and comp. by Yu. K. Chistov, Efim A. Rezvan, Ju.A. Kupina, E.A. Mikhailova (Saint Petersburg, 2009), pp. 37—59.