

E. A. ANNENKOVA

Genrikh Manizer: “IT’S DECIDED! THIS YEAR I AM EMBARKING ON A GLOBAL JOURNEY”

Plentiful documents stored by St. Petersburg Branch of the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences also include small and obscure personal collections, which, nevertheless, relate to great personalities and might tell incredible stories. One such collection contains documents attributed to Genrikh Genrikhovich Manizer. Passed away under twenty-eight years of age, this talented and versatile man had shown himself as an ethnographer, anthropologist, linguist, traveler, as well as a musician and artist. His principal and most meaningful achievement in his short yet fulfilling life was his participation in the Second Russian Expedition to South America, which began several months before the First World War

Revisiting
the Second Russian
Expedition to South
America after
110 Years
(1914–1915)

Toco toucan (*Ramphastos toco*). Colored pencil. Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 39. L. 1

Genrikh G. Manizer after a journey through the Caucasus. 1907. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 65. L. 27

“Villa Kaingang” (Brazil). Pencil. October 30, 1914. Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 14. L. 1





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The Russians may have “discovered America” as early as the 17th century, a century and a half after Columbus’ famous expedition to the New World. As is known, in the autumn of 1648, Semen Dezhnev’s expedition *kochi* entered the strait separating Asia and North America. Subsequently, this geographical feature would be named Bering Strait in honor of Commander Vitus Bering, whose expedition in 1741 – a hundred years later – explored the Aleutian Islands and the shores of Alaska.

The Russian “discovery” of South America began later and unfolded on a smaller scale. These efforts did not involve colonization projects, keeping focus on diplomatic missions and scientific research expeditions, which made a noticeable contribution to the study of the nature, ethnography, and culture of the New World. Illustrating this would be the first Russian circumnavigation of the globe under the command of Ivan F. Krusenstern and Yuri F. Lisiansky in 1803–1806, whose route passed around Cape Horn, the southern tip of the continent.

The pioneer who opened South America to Russian science was Grigory Ivanovich Langsdorf (Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff), a Russian diplomat, naturalist, and traveler of German origin. The 1821–1829 expedition under his leadership, which is traditionally called the First Russian Expedition to South America, covered vast territories of Brazil, including the states of Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Mato Grosso, and other regions. Langsdorff’s expedition became one of the largest and most important scientific endeavors in South America in the 19th century; nevertheless, it did not receive wide publicity and its results remained in the shadows for almost a century.

The interest in this scientific journey was first reignited by a young St. Petersburg ethnographer Genrikh Manizer. When visiting Rio de Janeiro Museum, he discovered exhibits that were remarkably similar to those stored by the Ethnographic Museum of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg and carrying the mark *Langsdorff*. This way he found out that was the name of a traveler from Russia who collected materials about Amazonia.

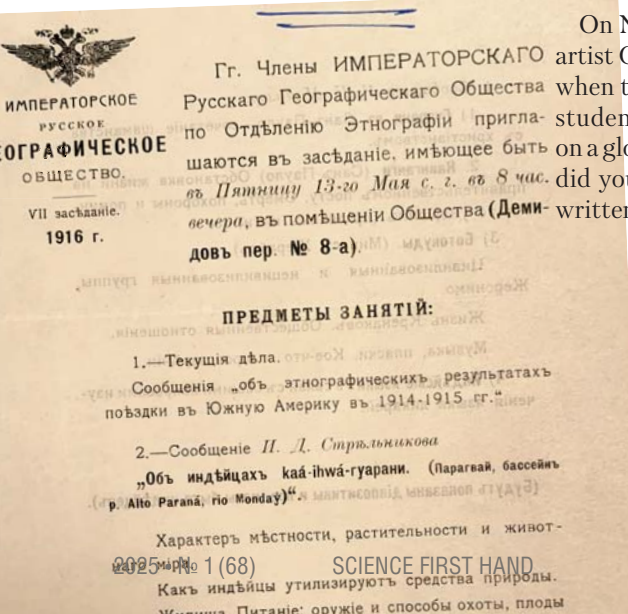
Manizer himself had come to South America not as a tourist but as a participant in a research mission known as the Second Russian Expedition to South America. Unfortunately, the history of this endeavor, carried out in the years dramatic for not only Russian science but the entire country, also remains little known. Today, 110 years later, it is time to recall this journey and its participants.

“Arts should only serve science!”

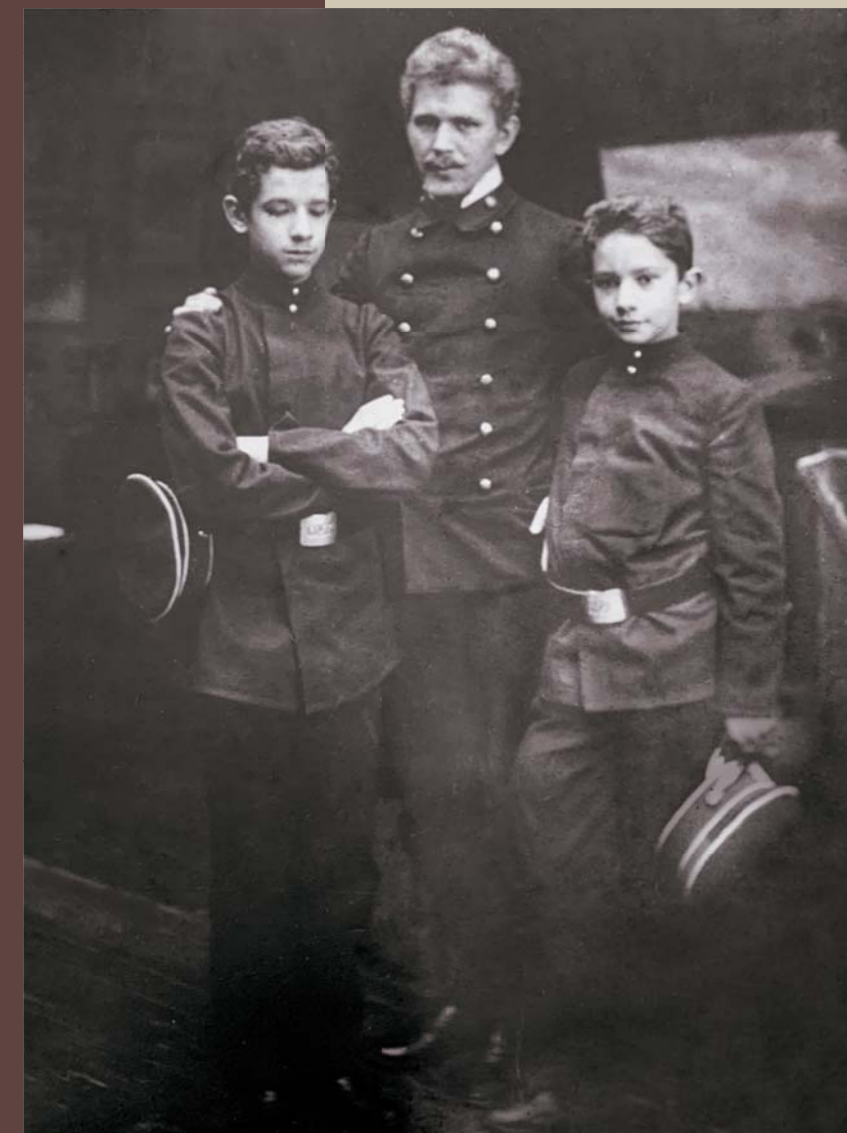
On New Year’s Eve 1914, the large and close-knit family of a St. Petersburg artist Genrikh Matveyevich Manizer gathered at the festive table. At midnight, when those present were making wishes, the eldest son Genrikh, a 24-year-old student, stood up and declared: “It’s decided! This year I am embarking on a global journey.’ The little ones bounced excitedly around him: ‘Why, oh why did you say that out loud, what if it doesn’t work?!’ ‘It definitely will. It’s all written down in the heavenly office!’” (Soboleva, 2018, p. 193).

Invitation to the meeting of the Russian Geographical Society on May 13, 1916, dedicated to the ethnographic results of the Second Russian Expedition to South America. SPBB ARAS. F. 46. Op. 1. D. 84. L. 17–17 rev.

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House No. 3 on Kalinkinskaya Square (now Repina Square) in St. Petersburg, where the Manizer family lived from 1896 to 1922. 2023. Photo by the author



The Manizer brothers – Genrikh (left) and Matvey (right) – with their teacher. 1900s. In the future, M. G. Manizer would become a monumental sculptor and member of the USSR Academy of Arts. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 67. L. 4

In the new year, the young man’s wish did come true: five young researchers, including Genrikh Manizer, set off on a scientific expedition to the other end of the world – to South America.

The Manizer family, which had eight children (the father was married for the second time), had lived since 1896 in an apartment that formerly belonged to the artist Ilya E. Repin on Kalinkinskaya Square in Kolomna, an old district of St. Petersburg. The couple paid great attention to the upbringing and education of their children. According to their only daughter, Gali, they had an “enriched and culturally stimulating childhood” (*Ibid.*, p. 189). In addition to general education, all the Manizer children attended classes at the evening drawing school with the Central School of Technical Drawing, founded by Baron Alexander von Stieglitz, where their father was teaching.



Genrikh Manizer upon admission to Imperial St. Petersburg University. 1908. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 65. L. 14

ones, including Polish, Spanish, and Portuguese.

During his university years, Genrikh often visited Peter F. Lesgaft's Biological Laboratory in St. Petersburg, within which there was the so-called Biological Circle. Its members, young progressive people, gathered together to debate on a wide range of questions related to science, arts, and politics; deep discussions were interspersed with humorous anecdotes and musical entertainment. Genrikh Manizer often brought his violin to these meetings and gave small concerts apart from participating in the discussions. It was here that he met his four fellows in the future expedition to South America.



Genrikh Manizer playing the violin. Ink. Self-portrait caricature. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 71. L. 1

They also took music lessons, and the eldest son Genrikh received especially serious training in playing the violin. However, despite his extraordinary musical and artistic abilities, he chose science as his main focus: "Arts should only serve science!" (*Ibid.*, p. 191). Subsequently, his musical ear as a violinist as well as his ability to draw would come in handy in his scientific research.

After graduating from the 5th St. Petersburg Gymnasium in 1907, he studied at Imperial St. Petersburg University, at two departments at once: the department of history and philology and that of physics and mathematics (natural sciences). Meanwhile, he also attended lectures at the Psychoneurological Institute. Of all the disciplines, the student was most fascinated by ethnography and linguistics. He also had considerable aptitude for foreign languages: he spoke several

Participants of the Second Russian Expedition to South America:
Ivan Dmitrievich STRELNIKOV, zoologist and assistant at the Lesgaft Biological Laboratory, 27 years old;
Nikolay Parfenevich TANASIYCHUK, zoologist and student at the Natural Sciences Division, Department of Physics and Mathematics, St. Petersburg University, 23 years old;
Sergey Veniaminovich GEIMAN, ethnographer, psychologist, lawyer, economist, and student at St. Petersburg Psychoneurological Institute, 26 years old;
Fedor Arturovich FIELSTRUP, ethnographer, linguist, and graduate of the History and Philology Department, St. Petersburg University, 25 years old;
Genrikh Genrikhovich MANIZER, graduate of the History and Philology Department and student at the Natural Sciences Division, Department of Physics and Mathematics, St. Petersburg University, 24 years old

"Money we lacked, but we had inspiration, a vision, and the will to turn our dreams into reality"

It is unknown whose original brainchild was this seemingly crazy idea of an expedition to South America. One of its participants, Ivan Strelnikov, would write much later, "in a circle of young biologists, at dawn on a long February night in 1914, after presentations, evening tea, music, and the ensuing talks, an idea came up to get to know life on planet Earth in all its wealth and richness. <...> We wanted to get an insight into the origins of human spiritual culture; to learn about the life, beliefs, and languages of the primitive native tribes of Brazil and Paraguay. Money we lacked, but we had inspiration, a vision, and the will to turn our dreams into reality" (Lukin, 1977, pp. 159–160).

The travelers themselves called their journey a "student excursion." After returning from the expedition, in an article entitled "Russian students in South America," published in the newspaper *Birzhevye Vedomosti* on May 23, 1916, Manizer wrote: "There were five of us. A more diverse community could have hardly come together in pursuit of a common goal. The oldest one of us, S. V. Geiman, a lawyer and a psychoneurology student, despite his utter disdain for foreign languages, was the most experienced traveler: he had seen India, Java, and Japan on a student excursion. He was brilliant at finding his way around in new conditions; moreover, he had close ties to journalism and commerce; all this made him a 'designated lecturer' and 'promoter' of the 'expedition', as he preferred to call our trip, and himself – nonchalantly – its 'secretary'.

"The next one, I. D. Strelnikov, as a person directly related to the microscope and physiology, proved to be the 'expedition' doctor and showed great care in putting together our first-aid kit, which, however, returned almost untouched.

"Twenty-four-year-old Genrikh Genrikhovich Manizer <...> Professors Shcherba and Baudouin de Courtenay consider him a brilliant linguist, and the leading ethnographer Lev Yakovlevich Sternberg calls him a rising luminary of ethnography. He draws beautifully, rides horses well, and swims like a fish; he is determined and assertive, sometimes hot-tempered and abrupt" (Tanasiychuk, 2003, p. 8)

FIVE EXPLORERS ON THE RIO PARAGUAY

In 2003, the KMK publishing house released a docufiction novel entitled *Five Explorers on the Rio Paraguay*, written by Vitaly Tanasiychuk, doctor of biological sciences, a famous entomologist and popularizer of science, and the son of zoologist Nikolay Tanasiychuk, one of the participants in the "student excursion" to South America.

The author himself told the story behind the writing of this book: "My imagination has been captivated since childhood by a large dark blue book lying on one of the shelves in the bookcase. Extraordinarily spacious pages with large printed lines, written in the old orthography. Next to it lay a stack of tattered magazines, with the text of the tsar's abdication and portraits of the Provisional Government's members immediately followed by "Essays on a journey through Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay" with photographs of tropical forests and a white foamy waterfall. <...> I listened to stories about travels in a distant country, where tiny, butterfly-like birds fluttered around flowers, and butterflies were so huge that they looked like birds... <...> 'Just you wait – I'll write a book, and you'll read about it there as well as many other exciting things...'" Nikolay Tanasiychuk never completed his book, but his diary, letters, and manuscripts remained extant. Even a few days before his death, he told his son funny stories that happened to him and his friends in their distant youth.

Forty years later, the son fulfilled his dad's promise. Thanks to his work on primary sources and considerable literary talent, we can now immerse ourselves in the unique atmosphere of South America in those distant prewar years, when five young and reckless explorers from a northern country set off for adventure in the little-known regions of the New World

For collecting ethnographic material:

from the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Imperial Academy of Sciences 800 rubles
 from Moscow Society of Enthusiasts of Natural Sciences, Anthropology, and Ethnography, Imperial Academy of Sciences 200 rubles
 from the Museum of the University of Buenos Aires 340 rubles

For collecting zoological material:

from the Zoological Museum, Imperial Academy of Sciences 200 rubles
 from the Lesgaft Biological Laboratory, St. Petersburg 200 rubles
 from the Zoological Cabinet of Imperial St. Petersburg University 50 rubles
Untied funds and the participants' contributions 1800 rubles

Total: 3690 rubles

“Small sums for the future collections came from the Zoological Museum of the Academy of Sciences and the Lesgaft Laboratory. The director of the Ethnographic Museum, Academician Radlov, and his deputy Sternberg not only gave money for the purchase of ethnographic material but also helped to obtain a subsidy from the famous oil industrialist Nobel. Professor Anuchin, an anthropologist from Moscow, also raised money for the expedition. And finally, Strelnikov wangled a good five hundred rubles from Meshkov, the owner of the Volga–Kama Shipping Company, who had repeatedly supported the Lesgaft Laboratory and once gave a very large sum to found Perm University. In total, together with the participants' personal “capital,” they raised a little more than three thousand rubles. With strict economy, this money should have sufficed to travel and live during six months and, most importantly, for obtaining the collections.

“However, this amount was not enough for an expedition to the wilderness of Orinoco, where they would have needed to buy boats and hire rowers and guides. The central regions of South America, which could have been reached by steamboat along the rivers, seemed more accessible. Especially attractive to both zoologists and ethnographers was the basin of the Pilcomayo River, which lies on the border between Paraguay and Argentina. So they decided to start the journey in Buenos Aires, where Radlov and Sternberg had many good friends since they corresponded and exchanged exhibits with many researchers in Argentine <...> Preparations were in full swing. They were packing instruments and equipment, as well as all sorts of little items for exchange with the natives: beads, small mirrors, and glittering buttons. Geiman brought his aunt's black dress decorated with glass beads. They laughed at him, but he calmly packed it in a box. Strelnikov, Tanasiychuk, and Manizer took training at the Zoological Museum to prepare bird and mammal skins” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, p. 9)

“The third one, F.A. Fielstrup, an admirer of fine literature and verse, had already been on research expeditions to the Caucasus and Mongolia and had a better command of all the civilized languages than anyone else of us, the benefit of which was obvious. He and I were the ‘expedition diplomats’ and its ‘linguistic wing’. Finally, N. P. Tanasiychuk magnificently completed the picture in the role of an absent-minded naturalist, the ‘Paganel of the expedition’, who was forever fiddling with test tubes and a gun that ‘didn’t fire’.

“We all knew from experience what it meant to travel student-style, so we decided to organize our trip exactly as a student excursion around Russia. Besides, we had simply no other option for obvious economic reasons. <...>

In a letter to Academician Radlov from Rio de Janeiro, dated February 20, 1915, Manizer made a “Brief preliminary report on the work of the student expedition in South America from February 21, 1914 to February 1, 1915,” where he listed the funds initially allocated for the expedition.

SPBB ARAS. F. 142. Op. 1 (until 1918). D. 70. L. 144–148

The trip was supposed to last seven to eight months, but who could have imagined in the spring of 1914 that in our absence Europe would suddenly go insane!”

Expedition funds were scraped together drop by drop. Contributions came from Petrograd and Moscow museums and institutions thanks to the support of such reputed scholars as Academician V.V. Radlov, director of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography; L. Ya. Sternberg, an ethnographer; and Academician D.N. Anuchin, an anthropologist, ethnographer, and archaeologist.

The total amount raised for the expedition (3690 rubles, roughly the annual salary of a university professor) turned out to be exceedingly modest for a five-person journey across the ocean. So the explorers set off with a solid weight of knowledge yet light in financial terms. What particularly attracted the young travelers was, apparently, the risk and peril associated with this bold enterprise.

A letter exists from Academician Radlov to “His Excellency Mr. St. Petersburg Mayor,” dated March 26, 1914, with a request to issue travel passports to the expedition members. The letter specified the status of each participant in relation to military service. It communicated that Genrikh Manizer had a deferment until June 15, 1916. In the future, this circumstance would play a fatal role in his life (*SPBB ARAS. F. 142. Op. 1 (until 1918). D. 66. L. 325*).

“Student excursion”

The tasks of the “student excursion” were more than serious and included studying the nature of the South American continent, researching the material and spiritual culture of the indigenous population, and collecting ethnographic and zoological materials for Russian museums and scientific institutions.

The five travelers set off on April 21, 1914; a long voyage lay ahead, from St. Petersburg across the ocean. From Libau (now the Latvian port of Liepaja) they sailed to London and then from Southampton to the shores of South America. On May 22, 1914, a month after their departure, they arrived in Buenos Aires.

They stayed there for three weeks, resolving organizational issues and refining the expedition route. As a result, the program planned in St. Petersburg underwent crucial changes – local scholars convinced the Russian travelers that they needed to go to the state of Mato Grosso in central Brazil.

On June 16, 1914, the explorers set off inland up the Paraná River and then along the Paraguay River to Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. Two weeks later they reached the town of Corumba on the border with Bolivia



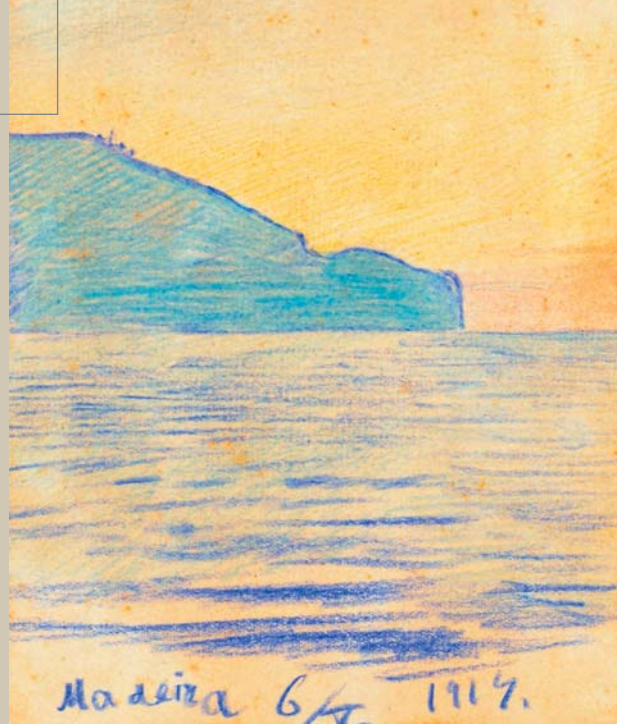
Expedition route from Europe to South America: St. Petersburg – Libau – Kiel Canal – German (North) Sea – London – Southampton – Lisbon – Madeira Island – “7 days of continuous ocean” – equator – Pernambuco (Brazil) – Rio de Janeiro – Santos – Montevideo (Uruguay) – La Plata Bay – Buenos Aires (Argentina)

Participants of the expedition to South America: G. G. Manizer, N. P. Tanasiychuk, F. A. Fielstrup, I. D. Strelnikov, and S. V. Geiman. 1914–1915. Pencil. Caricature by G. Manizer, fragment. *SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 50. L. 12*



and Paraguay. This “town is small, merely twenty streets and seven thousand residents <...> Europeans, Africans, Native Americans, Chinese, Brazilians, Paraguayans, people of every hue and shade, adventurers, gemstone buyers, rubber traders, heron feather hunters, timber merchants, plantation owners, shopkeepers <...> Despite the hellish heat, the civilized folk stroll about clad in dark European attire, starched collars prominent against their skin” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, p. 17).

Colored pencil drawings made by Manizer onboard the ship during the voyage to South America: “Madeira” (Madeira Island), May 6, 1914 (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 2. L. 1) and “Equator,” May 12, 1914 (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 3. L. 1)



“On May 1, after a short stop in London, they set out from Southampton Harbour on the snow-white Royal Mail transatlantic ship *Arlanza*. It is so large that even three thousand passengers feel spacious onboard. Our travelers have a small third-class cabin at the very stern. It is stuffy and cramped; the rumble of machinery disturbs them from sleep – but everything is redeemed by the windy expanse of the Atlantic and the expectation of tomorrow’s miracle. Harbingers of it, the grey cliffs of Portugal rise from the sea, followed by the green ones of Madeira. And again the ocean, which is growing increasingly blue, even though it feels like it couldn’t possibly become any bluer. Somewhere behind, beyond the rains and the horizon lies Russia, their home, their university. There the white nights will soon begin, but here, in the darkness, the wave crests shine with a cold green light, a glowing strip stretches behind the stern, and if you open the tap with sea water in the bathroom, sparks seem to pour out of it. These are the flashing sea fireflies, tiniest marine animals.

“During the day, dolphins play in the clear water near the side of the ship, schools of flying fish flutter with their fins shining, and Geiman, who has glued a hair to the lenses of his binoculars, coaxes his gullible female co-passengers into looking at the equator.

“So comes a rainy morning of May 17. Dark blocks of islands emerge from the fog to meet the ship, with clouds clinging to their peaks. This is already America. The mountains ahead close in; from beyond the horizon rise piers and moored ships, as huge as palaces, and behind them stand white palaces, looking like ships. And all together they merge into the unique landscape of Rio de Janeiro, known from the pictures seen in childhood” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, pp. 10–11)



In Corumba, as Manizer wrote in a letter to Radlov, “due to the difference in tasks and limited resources,” the participants split into two groups (SPBB ARAS. F. 142. Op. 1 (until 1918). D. 70. L. 145 rev.).

The zoologists (Strelnikov and Tanasiychuk) decided to stay in this part of Gran Chaco, a sparsely populated tropical region with a semidesert landscape in the Parana River basin, which partially covers the territories of Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil, including the state of Mato Grosso. The ethnographers (Manizer, Fielstrup, and Geiman) had to go further, to the south and east of Brazil, since there were no wild native tribes to be found in the vicinity of Corumba. Being an independent personality, Geiman soon separated from the group and followed his own route. Awaiting each of the five explorers lay their own trials and adventures.

On July 14, 1914, Nikolai Tanasiychuk wrote in his diary: “We set off at five o’clock and kissed our folks goodbye. It’s hard to part after three months of living together. When and where will we see each other again?” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, p. 21).



The route of the Russian expedition into the heartland of the continent: Parana River – Paraguay River – Asuncion (the capital of Paraguay) – Corumba (Mato Grosso State, Brazil), where the travelers arrived on July 1, 1914

INTO THE HEARTLAND OF THE CONTINENT

“A small white steamer is moving against the current, briskly splashing its paddles on the water. <...> It carries one hundred and fifty passengers: a motley crowd of gauchos from the pampas; gold and diamond seekers; *Indios civilizados*, civilized natives; emigrants from across all Europe. Almost all are armed, and the ship’s approach is heard from afar by the audacious gunfire at every yacare caiman they see. <...> Five young men stay on the stern, not paying attention to the noise. They all wear new, sturdy English boots with hard leather gaiters and canvas jackets and carry cases with binoculars and cameras over their shoulders. The captain treats them with great respect: they are not some kind of surveyors or traders, they are explorers, *exploradores*, and they have come from far away, from the icy Muscovy. They were written about in Asuncion newspapers; the captain even remembers the headline: “*Expedición de bravos estudiantes rusos*,” an expedition of brave Russian students.

“The bravos *estudiantes* make notes in their journals, play checkers, and send home very cheerful letters – they do not want to admit to each other they are feeling uneasy, as if prowling cats, whether local jaguars and pumas or not, are scratching at their hearts. The *estudiantes* are simply scared. Not of the forest dangers or poisoned arrows but of the fact that they may not cope and would have to return home without having done what they had planned. They have no training in expedition work; they have little money and little time. They keep thinking that it is June now and they need to be back by Christmas. The fact that it happens to be June of 1914, not just any random year, holds no significance for them. The world is peaceful; Archduke Franz Ferdinand has not yet arrived in Sarajevo” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, pp. 4–5)

“There are many more natives here than is commonly believed, even by Brazilians”

Manizer and Fielstrup studied the everyday life, customs, and traditions of the indigenous population of Brazil. Altogether, they visited seven native tribes: *Kadiweu*, *Terêna*, *Faya*, *Xavante*, *Kaingang*, *Guarani*, and *Botocudo*. The young researchers had an excellent academic background, so they worked very diligently and thoroughly.

Manizer collected linguistic materials, studied indigenous languages, and compiled glossaries; he also sought items to enrich ethnographic collections, including weapons, jewelry, as well as items of worship and daily life. As a musician, he took a keen interest in the musical traditions of the natives, and as an artist, he sketched what he saw throughout his journey. These drawings, which make a valuable illustrative addition to his research results, have survived to this day. Equally preserved are the photographs Manizer took during his stay among the indigenous tribes,



“Nalique” (Nalique village). August 4, 1914. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 13. L. 1



“Boy sitting on the roots of a giant tree” (left). July 14, 1915. Pencil. Drawings by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 29. L. 1 rev.

“July is the middle of winter in the southern hemisphere, and winter is a dry and hot season, when everything burns out on the endless plains. Trees here lose their leaves from lack of moisture rather than from cold. The sun threads through their naked branches; the shadows are transparent and the whole landscape is painted a soft gray, with the leafless flowering trees standing out like bright spots: pink, yellow, white. Everywhere there are thickets of caraguata, a herb from the bromeliad family, a relative of the pineapple. Its leaves sometimes reach human height; their edges are sharp and their surface bears a great many curved tiny thorns, bent in all directions. However, these are not the only thorny plants: cactus thorns dig into your body; spines of the kapok tree cling to your clothes; bamboo shoots cut your skin. One cannot walk around without a long and heavy machete knife. “But on the mountainside, by the cascading stream, you find shade and greenness. Palm trees with hanging epiphytic plants grow here; ficus trees and tree-like ferns reach out into the sky. Life is blooming; you only need to look close to see it. Manizer writes: “You sit motionless in silence; suddenly a hummingbird buzzes overhead among the leaves and sits down, wagging its tail, turning its head and chirping – it’s so small that you cannot but think that it is sitting far away, but it is right here, two steps away; or an awkward piaya cuckoo, with its beautiful long tail, dives in small jumps in the foliage; or, creaking its throat, a toucan flies up to a fruit tree and, shining with an orange chest and yellow nose; it begins to peel the fruits, and their seeds fly down to the ground, flapping on the leaves. We shot parrots ‘straight from home.’ The animals are so unaccustomed to their new enemy – man – that their paths passed right by our dwellings, and once on a moonlit night we were awakened by a tapir galloping right near our camp” (Tanasiyчук, 2003, p. 20)

depicting everyday scenes, village views, and the nature of Brazil.

During the first months of the journey, the ethnographers were working successfully in the territory of the *Kadiweu*, *Terêna*, and *Faya* tribes. Just when things seemed settled, fate threw a curveball.

On October 30, 1914, returning from a native settlement, the ethnographers decided to save money and time and bought two indigenous-made dugout canoes (single-log boats). Manizer wrote in a letter to his relatives: “We had to invent a new vessel, namely, tie two dugouts together. We ourselves got into the left boat and put the collections, as well as our luggage, into the right one <...> We left by moonlight” (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 7. L. 51).

Thus, having loaded into the tied boats their belongings as well as materials collected over the several months of work, Manizer and Fielstrup began to float down the quiet Paraguay River. On the second day, “heavy rain forced them to stop,” but soon the travelers continued on their way. Suddenly a squall hit, the canoes capsized, and almost all of their

“Jararacussu” (*Bothrops jararacussu*, a poisonous snake of the viper family, up to 2 m long). Pencil. 1914–1915. Drawing by G. G. Manizer with annotations by the artist. SPB RASA. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 50. L. 14



“Jacutinga” (black-fronted piping guan, *Pipile jacutinga*). Pencil. 1914–1915. Drawing by G. G. Manizer with annotations by the artist. SPB RASA. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 50. L. 15



St. Petersburg Branch of the RAS Archives contains typewritten copies of 27 letters from Genrikh G. Manizer to his relatives, which he sent during the expedition (F. 985. Op. 1. D. 70). Being a traveler’s journal, the letters are also notable because they were intended for the entire family, including the younger brothers and sister, and therefore were written in such a way as not to frighten the children but to fascinate them with stories about exotic places and the amazing adventures experienced by their elder brother.

Thus, in one of his letters, Genrikh describes in detail the events that happened on his birthday, September 21: “On the day of my 25th birthday, in the morning after breakfast, we set off for new places in Taruma [a district and town in Brazil, in the state of São Paulo]. We had two bulls with the natives and a black child. On the way, we ate excellent *churrasco* [similar to a grill or barbecue] made of fatty meat (during a midday stop in the vicinity of cacti, bromeliads, and umbrella-shaped acacias). For the first time, I saw a cicada in freedom – it flew by like an airplane and landed in front of me, turning its huge eyes, and with the same hum, it took off and disappeared into the green. ... on the road, we encountered fleeing ostriches and jumping deer (roe deer or fallow deer). One doe let us come very close, at about twenty steps, and came out itself onto the path and stood looking at us, its head raised in curiosity and its ears erect...” (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 70. L. 44–45)



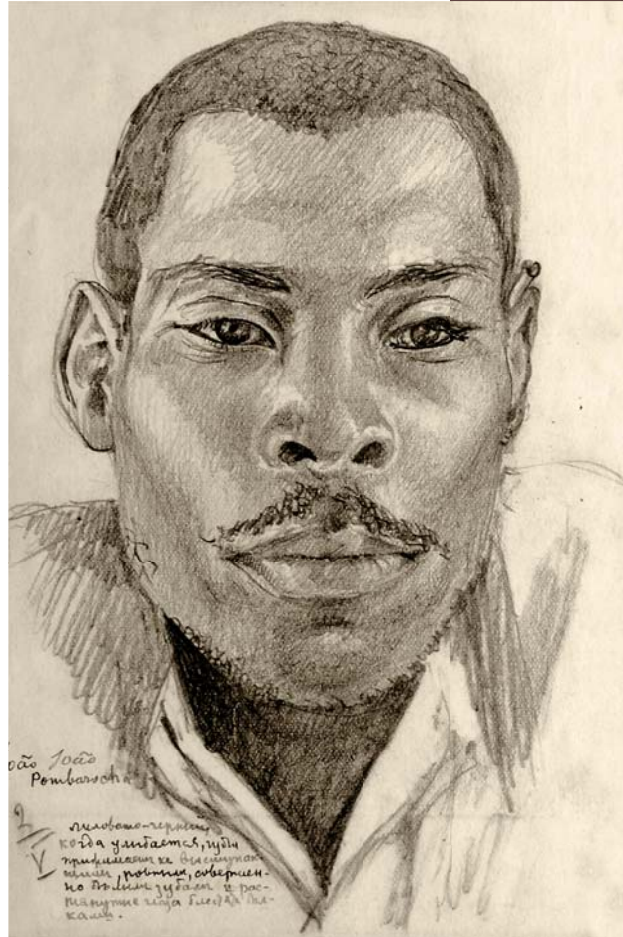
“Maracana Nandalia” (blue-winged macaw, *Ara maracana*, a talking parrot!). Drawing by G. G. Manizer with annotations by the artist. SPB RASA. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 50. L. 18



“Path in the forest.” Pencil. December 21, 1914. Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPB RASA. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 15. L. 1

“Maracuja (Passiflora)” (passion fruit; *Passiflora murucuja*). Pencil. 1914–1915. Drawing by G. G. Manizer with annotations by the artist. SPB RASA. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 50. L. 19



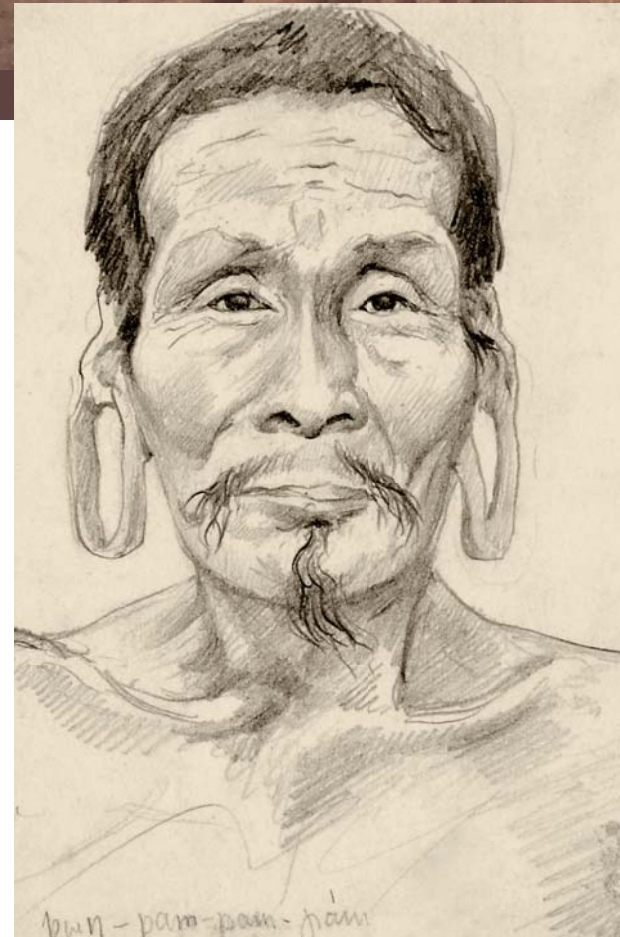
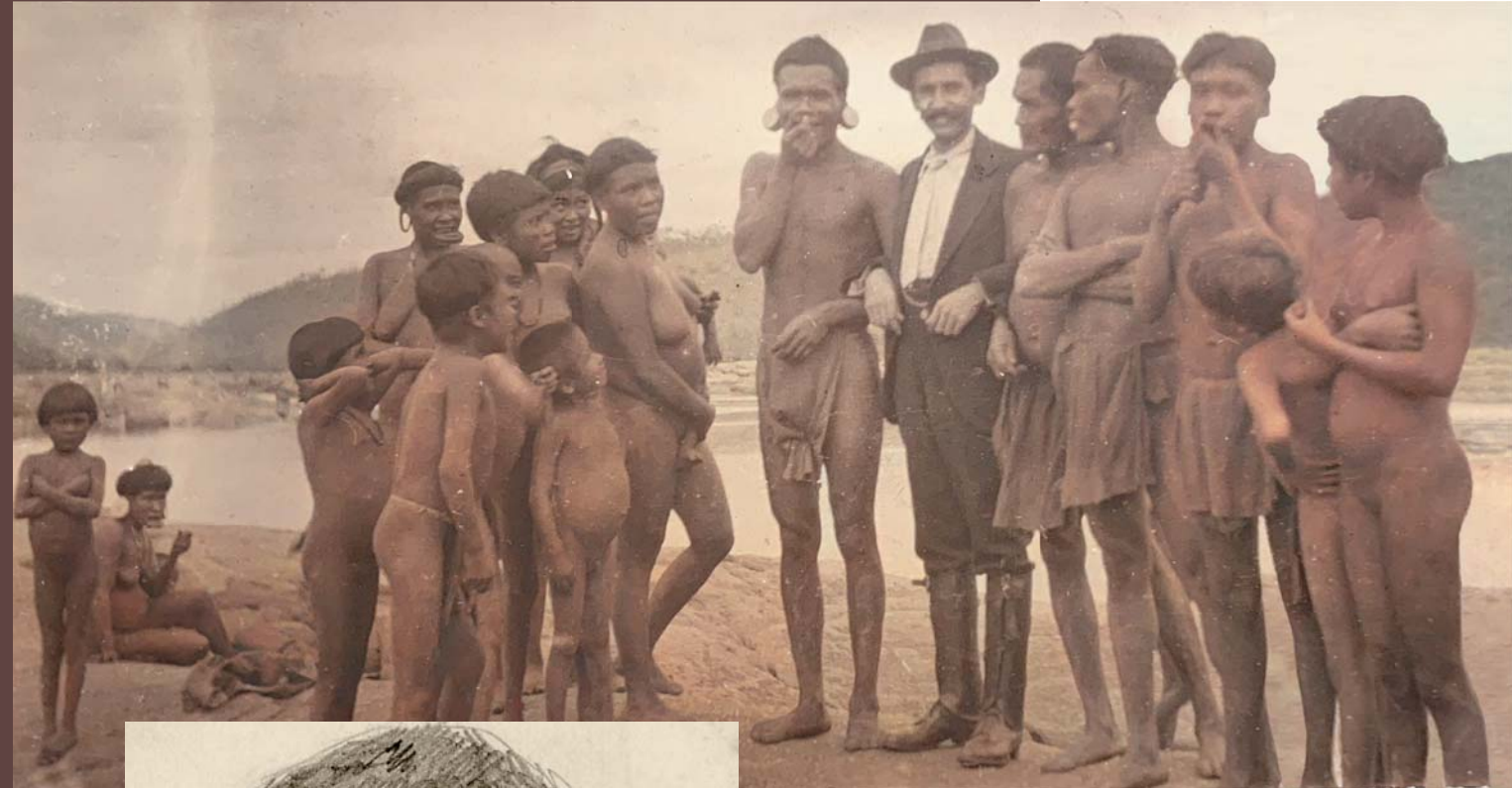


“João Pombarocha.” Pencil. May 2, 1915.
Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1.
D. 28 / L. 1

On the right are representatives of the indigenous *Botocudo* tribe (from the word *botoca*, meaning a ring/disk inserted into the ears or lip). Brazil. 1914–1915.
Photo by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1.
D. 59 / L. 6. Editorial color retouching

Bottom right: portrait of a Botocudo man. Pencil. 1915.
Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1.
D. 37 / L. 1

Kadiwéu people. Brazil. 1914–1915.
Photo by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1.
D. 55 / L. 6. Editorial color retouching



belongings sank: the camera, the gun, their clothes, as well as their collections and field diaries.

The losses were heavy, but they themselves were alive, which meant that the journey would continue. The researchers pulled out the boats, sold them in the nearest village, and used the money to get to the expedition base in the village of Barranco Branco near Corumba, where they left their passports.

Since the results of six months of work were lost, the ethnographers decided to go back and do it all over again. But the remaining money was not enough for two, so they cast a lot to see who would continue working with the native tribes. It fell to Manizer.

In a letter dated November 25, 1914, he cautiously informed his family about his delay in returning: “I really want to go home, but the roads are probably all closed, so we’ll see. Big kisses to you all – I’ll have to stay another two months without seeing you all – hadn’t expected to be gone for so long. I’m hurrying with the letter because Fielstrup is leaving now for *Buenos Ayres* to settle our affairs here – I’ll meet him on the way back to Europe. Kiss you all again. I’ve put on some healthy weight and am feeling good, and not a single time got sick with anything, as sound as a bell” (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 70. L. 56).

Genrikh G. Manizer’s personal collection at St. Petersburg Branch of the RAS Archives also contains more than 90 drawings made by him during the expedition (F. 985. Op. 1. D. 2–50). They fall into three groups: geographical drawings, i. e., views of cities, towns, and localities visited by the researcher; zoological and botanical illustrations, i. e., sketches of local animals and plants with numerous comments by the author; and ethnographic drawings, i. e., portraits of indigenous people of Brazil.

The portraits of local people, including children’s ones, made with great artistic skill, convey not only the external appearance but also personality traits. Almost all the portraits cite the names of the “sitters” and provide details about them. For example, the portrait of João Pombarocha was annotated by the artist as follows: “purple-black, when he smiles, he presses his lips onto his protruding, even, and completely white teeth, and his stretched eyes glitter with the flash of their whites” (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 28; see also: Fainshtein, 1977)

“STRANGE ADVENTURE”

In a letter home, Genrikh Manizer described what he himself called a “strange adventure,” in which the ethnographers lost not only their personal belongings but also the research materials they had collected:

“The weather was clear, although clouds were gathering. When the surface of the river became smooth, we rode out into its middle in order to use the current. A breeze arose; the river suddenly turned yellow and white combs started running. We tried to row towards the shore – it was far away, and the waves were getting ever stronger and higher, about to overwhelm our canoes.

“We’ve turned downwind, shouting to each other: We must get away from the waves but how? Growing ever higher and faster, the rumbling yellow waves are pouring in from the stern. The boat sways erratically between left and right; we have barely enough strength to keep along the river. But then F. shouts something – I turn back – a wave runs up, and immediately the boat is full of yellow water – it quickly begins to descend – we get into the other, but the whole structure turns upside down.

“So here we are – in the middle of the river, with the canoes upside down beneath us and the waves rolling over our heads so that we can barely catch our breath. All around us, swinging on the waves, float pots, hammocks, a bag with binoculars, bows, oars, my dictionary of the Terêna language, which fell out of my coat pocket; the baskets – made by the natives – with heavy things (like the camera, books, diaries, drawings in the briefcase), we couldn’t see, of course. Little by little, the distance between the objects is growing; the boats are creaking at the fastenings – one of them collapses, then another – now I am on one boat, and F. on the other. Each wave makes the canoes twist; we are trying to climb them up underwater. I try to swim without a boat – no way! – my boots are just dragging me down. <...>

“Finally we felt bone-chilling cold and decided to abandon our stuff and save our souls. After much effort the right bank got closer, and I finally saw F. treading, with a happy face, on the bottom and dragging the boats (one chain was still left between them).

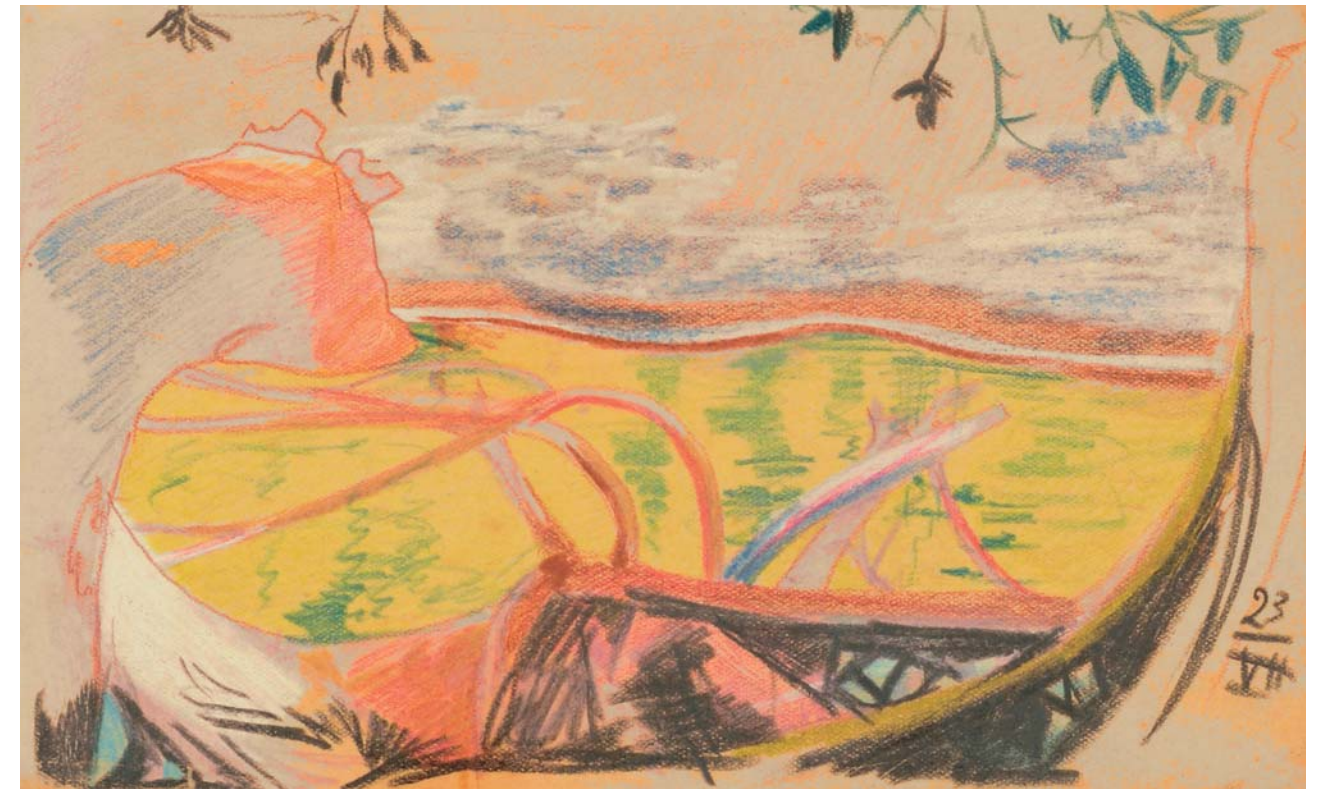
“When we pulled the boats ashore, we lay for a long time in the wet reeds in the wind and rain – we were shaking as if in a fever. Once I gathered my wits, I went to check on the boats – bits of the Xavante collections [Xavantes are one of the indigenous tribes of Brazil] had miraculously survived in one of them, but there was nothing else to be seen” (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 70. L. 52–53)

“Parrot.” Colored pencil. 1914.
Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 40. L. 1

After Fielstrup’s departure at the end of December 1914, Manizer remained alone in Brazil, and not for two months, as he wrote home, but for another eight!

He told Radlov about these circumstances in a letter dated February 2, 1915, “...I will be forced to stay with the natives until reinforcements arrive from Petersburg. Letters and replies take three months, so I’m certain to stay in the forest until May 1. Everything I’ve done so far, the mistakes I have acknowledged, and the losses and misfortunes that have befallen me (the wreck on the Paraguay River), they all have given me, I hope, sufficient experience, especially in terms of language and all sorts of mistranslations and interpretations.

“Frankly speaking, there are many more natives here than is commonly believed, even by Brazilians, who feel no concern for them unless they threaten with fires and deaths. The money I received ... I want to use it, if necessary, to expand the *Botocudo* collections and to travel to the *Kaingangs* in the state of Paraná [a state in



“Indian canoe on the Paraná River.” Colored pencil. July 23, 1914. Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 11. L. 1

the south of Brazil, bordering the state of Mato Grosso], and then I will think about returning. <...> I wish you all the best and would be very grateful if you or L. Ya. [Sternberg] remembered me and rewarded me with advice and instructions, which are more important than money” (SPBB ARAS. F. 142. Op. 1 (until 1918). D. 70. L. 148).

Left alone, Manizer studied three indigenous tribes: *Kaingang*, *Guarani*, and *Botocudo*, notably living with the latter for six months. His *Botocudo* diary would only be published a century later (Soboleva, 2016).

From Petersburg to Petrograd

Days went by. The collections were ready, so the question arose of returning home. It is known that the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography allocated funds and sent them to Manizer so that he could continue his research, but he could not receive the money.

During the one-and-a-half-year “student excursion” to South America, global events unfolded, namely, the First World War broke out.

We can find out what Manizer’s expedition fellows thought of this news from a conversation between Ivan

Strelnikov (‘Mitrich’) and Nikolai Tanasiychuk: “– What a disaster, Nikola! Europe’s mad... The Germans have invaded Belgium, and our troops are fighting them in East Prussia. And all the correspondence from Russia has a mark of some Serbian city, ‘Petrograd,’ have you ever heard of it? – But that’s Petersburg, Mitrich! Here – in small print – is a tag about the renaming. And that’s something important for us: ‘Communication with Europe, if not interrupted, is very difficult’” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, pp. 33–34).

So the expedition left from St. Petersburg yet returned to Petrograd; the explorers departed all together but everyone returned on their own, in whatever way they could. Of course, they received support from home, both from the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography and from individual contributors. As a result, four travelers – Strelnikov, Tanasiychuk, Fielstrup, and Manizer (Geiman stayed in America by his own choice) – had returned to Russia by the end of 1915. All the retrieved materials and collections were also successfully delivered to the Russian capital.

Manizer’s plan to get home via Vladivostok fell short of fruition. On October 2, 1915, he left La Plata for

Liverpool and on November 6 arrived in Petrograd; the city was renamed on August 31, 1914, by decree of Emperor Nicholas II due to the anti-German sentiment that reigned in society at the time.

“At the lectern a young man was telling some rather unusual things”

Thus, Manizer, a youthful yet experienced man, full of strength and aspirations, had just returned from South America, not knowing that he had only a year and a half left to live. Or, given his great productivity, it would be more correct to say: a whole year and a half.

What did he manage to do during this time? Upon returning home, he, like the other expedition members, took part in processing the materials, which replenished the collections of several museums in Petrograd and Moscow, including the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, the Zoological Museum of the Academy of Sciences, and the Museum of Moscow University.

On December 8, 1915, Genrikh Manizer made a report at the Russian Anthropological Society with his university, which was entitled “The Kaingangs of São Paulo from on-site observations in 1914–1915.” The text of his report with the accompanying illustrative material has survived. The images include a map depicting the settlement of indigenous tribes in the state of Mato Grosso, which was drawn by the researcher; his own sketches; and his drawings of native people (SPBB ARAS. F. 46. Op. 1. D. 84).

On May 13, 1916, the Russian Geographical Society (RGS) held a special meeting devoted to the ethnographic results of the expedition, at which Strelnikov, Fielstrup, and Manizer reported on their accomplishments (Tanasiychuk was unable to attend). Along with the other participants of the expedition, Manizer was awarded the RGS Silver Medal.

Two days later, the newspaper *Novoye Vremya* reported on the event: “Last Friday, the auditorium of the Imperial Geographical Society was crammed with spectators. <...> The screen showed a slide with some naked people, and at the lectern a young man was telling some rather unusual things. <...> Indeed it is fascinating that three young Russians – I. D. Strelnikov, F. A. Fielstrup, and G. G. Manizer, all looking like youths – decided to go to Paraguay and Brazil. <...> They not only ‘devised a plan’ to go to America but actually fulfilled this idea, which had

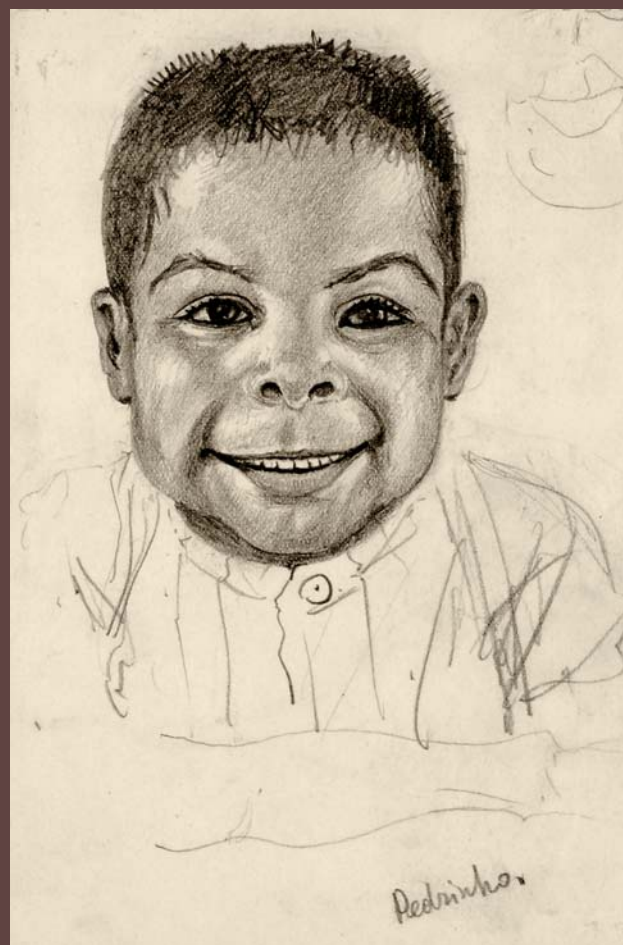
“The experts highly praised the results of the expedition: the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography alone received almost eight hundred items collected from the indigenous people and the Museum of Anthropology of Moscow University received more than two hundred. Notably, these objects were collected from little-known tribes, whose artifacts had exited neither in Russian nor in foreign, even South American, museums. <...> Also huge was the zoological material. Strelnikov and Tanasiychuk wrote to Sternberg: ‘In total, we brought 16 boxes of collections (43 poods) on zoology, ethnography, and botany’ <...> Manizer, too, brought some zoological material” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, pp. 229–230)

befuddled the minds of millions of Mayne Reid’s readers. They just set off on a journey. <...> that they are truly determined and courageous is proven by their solitary life in tropical forests for weeks and months among a population that still walks around naked, shoots bows, and spends the whole day hunting wild animals” (Men’shikov, 1916, p. 5).

Upon returning from the expedition, Manizer also wrote several articles, which were published in 1916–1917 in various sources: “The *Botokudos (Bororo)* from observations during a stay among them in 1915,” “Russian students in South

“Maria. Filha de Theophilo” (Maria, daughter of Theophilo) and “Arlindo.” Pencil. 1915. *Drawings by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 38 / L. 1 and F. 985. Op. 1. D. 30. L. 1*

Below is a map of the distribution of indigenous tribes in the state of Mato Grosso, Brazil. Attachment to Manizer’s report “The Kaingangs of São Paulo from on-site observations in 1914–1915.” *Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 85 / L. 48*



“Pedrinho.” Pencil. 1915. *Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 31. L. 1*



“Caduveo” (a Kadiwéu man). Pencil. July 1, 1914. Drawing by G. G. Manizer. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 25. L. 1

America,” “Amerindian impressions,” and “From a journey through South America in 1914–1915.”

Especially noteworthy is his article “Music and musical instruments of some tribes in Brazil,” in which he provides the notes of local melodies, observations of song and dance traditions, and his own drawings and photographs of musical instruments (Manizer, 1918; SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 1. L. 1–20).

Of particular credit to the researcher is the preparation of the monograph *Expedition of Academician G.I. Langsdorff to Brazil (1821–1828)*, where he thoroughly described the activities and results of his predecessor. In fact, it was Manizer who revealed the First Russian Expedition to South America for world science. His book, however, was published only in the mid-20th century (Manizer, 1948).

A year after returning home, Genrikh set out on a new and final “strange adventure,” which ended up tragically. At the end of 1916, he was called up to the active army,

“THE ACADEMY’S BELATED DEBT”

“It is Manizer for whom the last prerevolutionary year proves to be the most productive. He does not lose a single day; his pen bursts forth a cascade of brilliant texts. <...> This year he also makes his greatest discovery. He reveals the Langsdorff expedition.

“All the months he was living with the Botocudos, Manizer remembered his discovery at the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, namely, the mysterious Russian expedition that seemed to have disappeared without a trace. So now he is looking through display cases at the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, rummaging through its collections, leafing through the books of receipts... to discover a good hundred objects with the label Langsdorff. Moreover, in the neighboring building, which hosts the Zoological Museum, he sees this same label on stuffed animals.

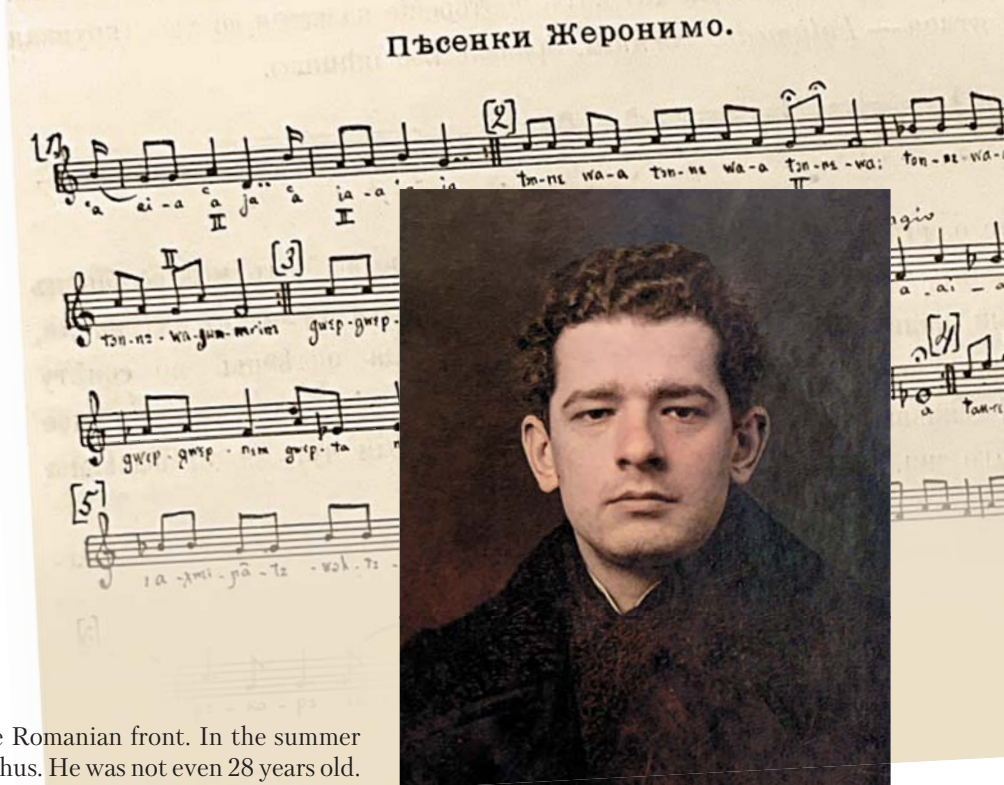
<...> Manizer works meticulously and patiently, trying not to give in to emotions. Yet the latter overwhelm him. The yellowed pages tell about difficult journeys through virgin forests and lands inhabited by bellicose Amerindians along rivers bristling with rapids, about illnesses and dangers, about the death of one of the expedition members and about the infinitely tragic end of Langsdorff himself. A man of enormous knowledge and indomitable energy, for many months he fought tropical fever, but eventually it triumphed over him, depriving him of memory. <...> He lived another twenty-six years, but he still remembered nothing of the greatest achievement of his life. “At last, Manizer puts the final period and writes a short preface describing how his book was written. He ends the preface with the words: ‘Its publication is the Academy’s belated debt to its forgotten member.’

“The Academy was slow to pay its debt; the printed book came out as late as in 1948. But even in manuscript, lying in the archive, it acted like a nuclear fuse causing a chain reaction. The first reports and articles, inspired by it, were published ... as early as in 1926–1929. More and more new materials came to light, with the number of publications growing like an avalanche. The Brazilian press wrote about a ‘new discovery of Brazil in Russian archives’; numerous newly published articles and books told about to the First Russian Scientific Expedition to South America – this was now its official scientific designation” (Tanasiychuk, 2003, pp. 232–234)

The author and editors thank the administration of the St. Petersburg Branch of the RAS Archive for permission to use the materials from its holdings

Sheet with musical text from Manizer’s article “Music and musical instruments of some tribes in Brazil” (1918). SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 1

Genrikh G. Manizer (1889–1917). January 1916. SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 65. L. 27



and in the spring he was sent to the Romanian front. In the summer of 1917, Genrikh Manizer died of typhus. He was not even 28 years old.

With the support of the Academy of Sciences, Matvey Manizer, a brother of the deceased, collected his body and buried it in the family plot at the Kazan Cemetery in Tsarskoye Selo.

On July 7, 1917, the newspaper Rech published an obituary: “Volunteer division-level meteorologist Genrikh Genrikhovich Manizer died on June 21 in Romania from typhus.’ So says a short telegram just received by the relatives of the deceased. For everyone who knew this young man, a person of many gifts and virtues, his death is an irreparable loss. <...> How sad it is to realize ... that a life that gave such great hope has ended and his creations, fostered by such propitious traits, will remain unfinished...” (SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 72. L. 1, 2).

Genrikh Manizer must have been one of those people whom Rudyard Kipling wrote about in his famous poem – those who measure distances in seconds:

*If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,
And – which is more – you’ll be a Man, my son!*

In a letter to his family on April 22, 1915, Manizer wrote, “I cannot but try to sum it all up and weigh whether it was worth going so far. <...> Be that as it may, I now don’t regret that I went, and when I return, I will certainly not regret it. True, none of my visions materialized successfully – I did not see what I wanted, but I saw a lot of what I did not even dream of. <...> When I’m back, I’ll settle down somewhere, I think I’ve had enough of traveling. Be healthy and cheerful, and now you can envy me a little.” *

* SPBB ARAS. F. 985. Op. 1. D. 70. L. 69.

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