

Rodonavtika, Rodorad or the Generic Power of the Forefathers

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(Summary)

This text was inspired by the growing popularity of the renovation of the relation with the forefathers and the respect to them. In Russia it takes the form of the *rodorad* practice, while in Bulgaria *rodonavtika*, combining elements from traditional rites and family constellations functions in a similar way. The Russian *rodorad* includes knitting of two yarn balls into a family tree with the names of the forefathers up to the seventh generation back. By contrast, the Bulgarian *rodonavtika* first builds a schematic form the genealogy of the family and then ritual acts with a particular aim are prescribed. The Russian rite of *rodorad* symbolizes the placenta and the human DNA structure; respectively, the knitting of the family tree reproduces the whole system of relations between the representatives of the family. The Bulgarian *rodonavtika* offers a possibility to pay honor to the forefathers by drawing a scheme with the names of the forefathers and to continue in this respect by prayers, composition of fairy plots and ritual acts. Both practices are aimed at solving difficult life problems. The aim of this research is to compare and analyze the two practices with the instruments of contemporary folklore studies.

Keywords: generic family therapy; honor; forefathers; family history; memory

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