

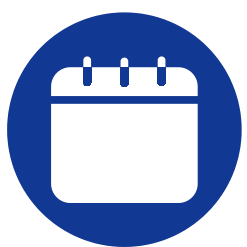
**DR. NESTOR MANICHKIN**

## **COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND THE TRADITION OF SACRED PILGRIMAGES IN THE SHAMANIC ENVIRONMENT OF MODERN KYRGYZSTAN**

This lecture will focus on the tradition of *ziyarat kaluu*—sacred pilgrimages to holy places known as *mazar*—as practiced in Kyrgyzstan among followers of syncretic shamanistic and neo-shamanistic movements, as well as among the general population. These practices blend elements of folk Islam, Sufism, and pre-Islamic traditions such as shamanism, animism, and magic. The introductory part of the lecture will be devoted to the core concepts of the *Kyrgyzchilik* tradition (the spiritual heritage of the Kyrgyz), including key terms and characteristics associated with the roles of male shamans (*bakshy*), female shamans (*byby*), and mystic wanderers (*dubana*). The speaker will then present photographs and video footage from his fieldwork, conducted since 2011, and will focus in particular on the Ata-Beyit memorial in the Chui region—the burial site of victims of Stalin’s repressions. In recent years, this site has become a space for neo-shamanic and spiritual practices. The lecture will explore the connections between ritual practice, the visions of mediums from the Talas region, historical memory, and current political realities. To analyze the pilgrimage tradition, the speaker draws on the concepts of liminality and collective memory, presenting *ziyarat kaluu* as a key mechanism for preserving oral history and transmitting knowledge through ritual performance.



Dr. Nestor Manichkin is an anthropologist and former senior researcher at the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He is currently an associate researcher at the French Institute for Central Asian Studies (*Institut Français d'Études sur l'Asie Centrale*) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. His research interests include the intersections of religion, syncretic cults, the anthropology of consciousness, alternative healing practices, historical and cultural memory, and postcolonial studies. His main areas of fieldwork are post-Soviet Central Asia, particularly Kyrgyzstan, and Latin America, particularly Cuba.



**Date:**  
**Tuesday - 11 November, 2025**



**Time:**  
**6.15 - 7.45 PM**

**Location: Big Seminar room,  
Hartmannstr. 14, Building D1, Erlangen**

Link for virtual attendance: <https://fau.zoom-x.de/j/62556506187>



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