

NEWS IN BRIEF

DOCTORAL THESIS ON THE SPATIAL SEMANTICS OF LOCATIVE CASES IN THE KOMI LANGUAGE

On December 27, 2012, Nikolay Kuznetsov defended his doctoral thesis *Prostranstvennaia semantika mestnykh padezhei komi iazyka (kognitivnyi analiz)* (Spatial Semantics of Locative Cases in the Komi Language (Cognitive Analysis)) at the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics of the University of Tartu (supervisor Docent Tõnu Seilenthal, opponent Cand. Phil. Galina Nekrasova from Syktyvkar).

Linguistic units expressing spatial relations are currently one of the most widely investigated objects in linguistics. A plethora of researches have been dedicated to the semantics of spatial markers in different languages, and a number of treatments have been presented from typological, contrastive and cognitive aspects. The semantics of the locative cases in the Komi language has also been repeatedly investigated (e.g. Evgenii Guliaev, Galina Nekrasova, Maria Usachova); yet, it is the first time that it has been treated from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics. This proves the topicality of the scientific problem formulated in the dissertation. This research subject is topical not only from the point of view of the linguistics of the Komi language, but also from the viewpoint of Permistics as a whole, as the grammatical system of the Permian languages has not yet been investigated from the aspect of cognitive linguistics.

The dissertation aims to describe and present a cognitive analysis of the spatial meanings of locative cases in the Komi language. Proceeding from this objective, the



Nikolay Kuznetsov. Photo by Andres Kuperjanov 2012.

dissertation groups the locative cases in the Komi language; presents the inner structure of the meaning system of locative cases as a matrix of cognitive domains; presents examples of the use of locative cases in different spatial functions; views spatial meanings from the aspect of centre and periphery and describes mutual relations between prototypical and peripheral usage cases; analyses more specific spatial meanings from the viewpoint of their categorical belonging.

In the subchapter “Case” the author explains the concept of the case, presents data about the category of case in different languages, including Finno-Ugric languages, and classifies cases. An important factor in the semantics of locative cases is the description of spatial situation elements presented in the dissertation: *localisation, orientation, the topological type of landmark*. The research history of locative cases has been described quite specifically, especially the earliest treatments. In the voluminous subchapter “Cognitive Approach in Linguistics” the author presents theoretical foundations of cognitive linguistics (its evolution, main principles and content), which proves that he has good knowledge of the relevant theoretical literature and is able to analyse the material and make conclusions. R. Langacker’s theory has been most persistent in following the main principles of cognitive linguistics in the treatment of natural language grammar, which accounts for the more detailed description of the main ideas of this theory in the dissertation. A significant subchapter here is also “Structure of Meaning. Polysemy”, as its content has a direct relation to the research object. It presents possibilities for describing polysemic linguistic units and explains the concepts of *semantic network, prototype, radial network* and *network model* on the example of lexical units.

The central part of the thesis is the second chapter entitled “Spatial Semantics of Locative Cases”, which starts with a general characterisation of the group of locative cases, which constitute the majority of the declension system in the Komi language. Traditionally, Komi linguistics differentiates between internal and external locative cases. This differentiation is based on the paradigmatic meanings of cases. The author also claims that “unlike internal locative cases, external locative cases do not involve in their main meanings relevance to the inner sphere of the landmark (excl. a number of peripheral usages), which expresses their exterior locativeness” (p. 89). The thesis claims that actually the case paradigm of the Permian languages does not feature the opposition between internal and external locative cases like Balto-Finnic languages do. The subchapter “Statistics” discusses the frequency of case forms; yet, the author could have added statistical data on their usage. An important part of this chapter is the description of the cognitive matrix of locative cases, which distinguishes physical, abstract, social, and event space, and the domains of time, state, scale and abstract relations. The author comes to the conclusion that physical space is in the centre of the cognitive matrix, and the other domains are connected and intersect with it.

The author has provided a thorough overview of spatial meanings of cases. While discussing the locative meanings of cases, the author takes into account the semantic-grammatical features of word forms, which is essential in describing case semantics not only in cognitive but also in traditional linguistics. The author introduces as an example the semantic structure of one of the cases (approximative), pointing out its meanings,

showing the relations between them and presenting them as a network model. Unfortunately, there is no similar network model for the meanings of other cases and their relations. The inner structure of the semantics has been described only as a matrix of cognitive domains. As concerns the other, i.e., non-spatial meanings of cases, they are not described in the thesis proceeding from the cognitive aspect. Also, the meanings mentioned in the thesis have already been treated in research literature (see Guliaev 1961; Nekrasova 2004, etc.). While interpreting the usage of cases, the author provides adequate examples, although these mainly originate from media texts and researches published earlier on.

The doctoral thesis draws on literary language material; yet, in the dialects of the Komi language differences occur in the elements of cases and their usage. The thesis discusses one of the most complex issues in Komi dialectology – the semantics of the case suffix *-ысьбӧдз*. The author gives his own interpretation of its semantics and claims that “it refers to movement from the point of departure [...] to the point of destination in the vicinity of the viewer” (p. 153). However, material from Udora dialect supports the common description of Komi dialectology (see Sorvacheva & Beznosikova 1990; Liashev 1975): different word forms are used if the destination is far from the point of departure and the length of distance is emphasised, and in case the point of departure is nearby (see Nekrasova 2012).

The subchapter “Functional Equivalents of Locative Cases” (pp. 175–182) is dedicated to the functional analogues of locative cases and the description of so-called split coding of topological zones. It also includes parts about postpositional constructions and postpositional formants. In the modern Komi language part of localisation types are expressed only by postpositions and are not marked by cases, whereas others can be expressed in parallel by case forms and postpositional constructions. However, the thesis does not discuss all the postpositions competitive with locative cases. I would suggest it would be interesting to find regularities in the distribution of case forms and postpositional constructions.

Under postpositional formants the author discusses units with *-ладор*-component: adverbs, postpositions, and nouns. Here he dwells on constructions that he conditionally calls *postpositional formants* (see also Itkin 2002: 167), which have analogues in the Vepsa language. However, constructions with the *-ладор*-segment considerably differ from postpositions and case forms formally, semantically and syntactically. They can be used with core case markers, or as subjects or direct objects. These features make them similar to relatives. The author could also have compared the semantics of the suffix *-ла-* and cofix *-лань-*. The similarity of the semantics of these linguistic units is also supported by Valter Tauli and Ago Künnap, who have claimed that a linguistic unit in the role of cofix has a word derivation function (Tauli 1956: 206–207; Künnap 1983: 52–59).

Nikolay Kuznetsov’s doctoral thesis is a complete scientific research on a topical subject. The author demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the basics of cognitive linguistics, understanding of the theoretical problems of the domain, and independent creative thinking in interpreting linguistic material. His work opens a new direction in the studies of the semantics of the grammatical units of the Komi language, making a

major contribution to Komi and Permic linguistics. Kuznetsov's statements provide a foundation for further studies in the sphere of cognitive linguistics. The practical side of the research is also important, as the material can be used in teaching the Komi language as well as in compiling material for basic and special courses at higher educational institutions.

Galina Nekrasova (Syktyvkar)
Institute of Language, Literature and History, Komi Scientific Centre,
Uralic Division, Russian Academy of Sciences

References

- Guliaev, Evgenii 1961. *s'-ovye padezhnye suffiksy v komi iazyke (v sravnitel'no-istoricheskoy osveshchenii)*. [Case Suffixes with S'-Element in the Komi Language (in Comparative-Historical Context).] Syktyvkar.
- Itkin, Il'ia 2002. Vyrashenie prostranstvenno-vremennykh otnoshenii v imennykh slovoformakh i problema "poslelozhnykh formantov" (na materiale Korval'skogo dialekta vepsskogo iazyka). [Expressing Spatial-Temporal Relations in Nouns and the Problem of "Postpositional Formants".] V. Plungian (ed.) *Issledovaniia po teorii grammatiki. 2: Grammatikalizatsiia prostranstvennykh znachenii v iazykakh mira*. Moskva: Russkie slovari, pp. 167–182.
- Künnap, Ago 1983. Uurali keelte kohakäänete päritolu probleemist. [On the Problem of the Origin of Locative Cases in Uralic Languages.] *Fenno-ugristica* 10. Tartu, pp. 52–59.
- Liashev, Vladimir 1975. *Fonetiko-morfologicheskie osobennosti vymskogo dialekta komi iazyka*. [Phonetic-Morphological Peculiarities of Vym Dialect of the Komi Language.] Dissertatsiia na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni kandidata filologicheskikh nauk. Syktyvkar.
- Nekrasova, Galina 2004. *Vezhlög perym kyv"iasyn: pertas, vezhörtas, artmannog: Velödchan nebög*. [Cases in Permian Languages: Form, Meaning, Ways of Formation: Textbook.] Syktyvkar.
- Nekrasova, Galina 2012. Semantika padezha: problemy interpretatsii na materiale komi dialektov. [Case Semantics: Problems of Interpretation on the Example of Komi Dialects.] *Voprosy kognitivnoi lingvistiki*, No. 4, pp. 125–129.
- Sorvacheva, Valentina & Beznosikova, Liutsiia 1990. *Udorskii dialekt komi iazyka*. [Udora Dialect of the Komi Language.] Moskva.
- Tauli, Valter 1956. The Origin of Affixes. *FUF* 32. Helsinki, pp. 170–225.

ESTONIAN FOLKLORISTS' 8TH WINTER CONFERENCE

On February 28 and March 1, 2013, the Centre for Landscape and Culture at the Estonian Institute of Humanities, the Centre of Excellence in Cultural Theory and the Academic Folklore Society organised a conference at Tallinn University, under the heading "Folklore in Town and about Town". The conference mainly focused on urban folklore, although some adjacent topics and folklore forms were also discussed, including the Internet, which has recently been used as an efficient source of folklore.

Ehte Järv and Pille Runnel (Estonian National Museum) in their presentation "Schoolchildren's Narratives about Urban Experience – Mapping of a Research Project" dwelt upon the results of a children's essay and drawing contest "Me in Town". On the one hand, the topic of "own places" described at the contest demonstrates children's possibilities to contribute to the usage of urban space; on the other, the places described by them are associated with place lore.

Piret Voolaid (Estonian Literary Museum) in her paper "Add it to Your Status and Learn What People Think about You! Age Group Identity Creation on the Example of Facebook Chain Posts" discussed the content and form of 10–12-year-old girls' chain posts, categorising them by topics (friendship, family and home, school, pets, social events, etc.). The genre similar to chain letters and personal poem collections known from earlier tradition supports the pre-teens' individual self-quests and evolution of social skills and provides the researcher with essential information about the era, environment, culture and young people's understanding of the world.

Eda Kalmre's (Estonian Literary Museum) presentation "Baby Carrots and Salad Rinsing – Commercial Legends and Rumours in Estonian Consumer Society" addressed the origin and evolution of two rumour cycles that recently spread in Estonia. In the autumn of 2009, a hearsay started to be disseminated both in social networks and later on also in the media about supermarkets selling stale salads, from which the old salad dressing had been rinsed out and replaced by fresh one. Although the concrete rumour is of Estonian origin, these stories are universal and are based on people's fears of novel or unfamiliar products, ignoring of cleanliness, domineering and conspiracies of large companies or ethnic groups.

Eli Vahtramäe (Estonian Agricultural Museum) in her presentation "Urban Agriculture on the Internet" discussed how Facebook reflects rural environment. The speaker was of the opinion that agricultural themes were not very popular and the posts mainly concerned general topics.

Jaanika Hunt (Estonian Literary Museum, Tallinn University) in her presentation "Grief Darned on the Body. Memorial Tattoos" spoke about immortalising grief on the body. Earlier on, people in North America and Polynesia believed that tattoos helped them to better orientate in the afterworld. Today, due to the Internet and cultural unification, this body marking method has acquired the function of mourning and commemorating. This kind of body decoration as well as virtual memorial places notify us about changes in mourning traditions.

Stereotypes in a wider and narrower sense were the topic of Elo-Hanna Seljamaa's (University of Tartu) paper "Why Not Study Lasnamäe?" This is a district in Tallinn that for many bears relation to Russians. In the course of her one and a half years of fieldwork, the speaker reached the conclusion that Lasnamäe is both an ordinary urban

district and also a figure of speech, an epithet and a metaphor, which different actors use to position themselves and others as well as to criticise the current circumstances.

Sille Kapper's (Tallinn University) presentation "Peasants' Dance Tradition in the 21st-Century City" discussed dance as a part of urban folklore, which varies both in primary and secondary contexts. Dance variations result from the dancers' different objectives, incompleteness of verbal dance descriptions, and also the era.

Tiiu Jaago (University of Tartu) in her paper "Town in Older Folksong (Historic Viewpoint)" described different attitudes towards town in runo songs. On the one hand, town in folksongs is associated with positivity: this is where trade and wealth are; on the other hand, town is seen as an immoral place inhabited by promiscuous women.

Aado Lintrop (Estonian Literary Museum) in his paper "Gate Games One Way or Another" talked about Old Town Days in Tallinn and cultural loans. No cultural loan emerges from an empty space; there is always some kind of background that enables to borrow. When initiating a new ritual, we often refer to "old Estonian tradition", which does not necessarily have associations with the former. For instance, in the case of the well-known gate game and the cultural undertaking with the same name, we can talk about conscious context creation.

Mall Hiiemäe (Estonian Literary Museum) in her paper "About the Public Christmas Tree as a Ritual Object" discussed the evolution of Christmas tree tradition. Already as early as in the 16th century, descriptions of Christmas and Shrovetide celebrations at the Blackheads Gild mention a tradition of setting up a conifer in the market square in Riga and Tallinn. The tradition of the Christian Christmas tree is associated with the city of Strasbourg, dating back to 1605. The custom became established in the 18th century, and in Estonian and German urban families Christmas celebration and gift-giving started in the 19th century. In Estonia, the tradition of setting up a public tree was revived in 1930.

A peculiar tradition in the Europe of medieval and early modern ages was the topic of Marju Kõivupuu's (Tallinn University) presentation "Magic of Early Modern Ages in Town: Cat as a Sacrificial Animal in Building". Decades ago, a cat mummy dating back to the 18th century was found in a house in Town Hall Square in Tallinn. The speaker explained the background of this weird finding. It was probably a case of protective magic, which had reached Estonia from Germany and was supposed to diminish the number of rats, which devoured grain and spread plague.

Mare Kõiva and Liisa Vesik (Estonian Literary Museum) in their joint presentation "Europe from Estonians' Viewpoint 2. Ethnic Stereotypes as YouTube Clips" dealt with the internet clip "YUROP According to Estonians!", which by its essence is a set of nations' visualised stereotypes.

Inge Annom

PRESIDENT'S FOLKLORE AWARD AND THE YEAR 2012 AT THE ESTONIAN FOLKLORE ARCHIVES

The past year at the folklore archives featured diversity and cooperation between the archives and folklore collectors was efficient.

Everyday life at the archives was also multifarious. A new extension with modern depository and studio facilities was completed at the Literary Museum. The folklore archives and hopefully also all our visitors enjoy the light and spaciousness of the renovated research hall, in which undigitised archival manuscripts can be scrutinised in old-fashioned dignified interior. Unfortunately, financing of the museum creates uncertainty among the staff, as it is project-based and inconsistent.

During the past year, the folklore collections were supplemented by materials from different regions of Estonia, in Estonian, Russian, and Votic languages, as well as Võru and Muhu dialects. The materials were collected by volunteers and professional lore collectors, schoolchildren and university students, and also participants of collection actions. In all, over 4000 pages of manuscript material, more than 4200 photographs, over 500 sound and 82 video recordings were added to the collections of the Estonian Folklore Archives (EFA) in 2012.



View of the renovated research hall at the EFA on January 21, 2013. Photo by Alar Madisson.

The President's Award for collecting folklore was given to real enthusiasts, whose primary aim is to record the lore of their native place. This time all the laureates focused on the life of fishermen, as their collection areas were situated by the sea or lakeside.

Rosaali (Roosi) Karjam received an award for long-term and consistent folklore collection. In addition to practising handicrafts, she has written down folklore. She has contributed to the archives since 1992, and the material she has collected amounts to 246 pages. She also earned a collection award in 1994. The materials donated to the museum by Rosaali Karjam are comprehensive and informative, including ethnographic descriptions of handicrafts and fishing on Kihnu Island, as well as folklore about signs of nature, birds, sowing dates, raising of children, food and funeral traditions, calendar customs and different beliefs. She has participated in the collection competitions organised by the folklore archives (incl. the years 2009 and 2012). Also, researchers from different fields have visited Roosi, filmed and recorded her, and been in correspondence with her.

Kaie Humal has continued the work she started in 2008, collecting material about village life as well as biographical lore (particularly, concerning fishermen) in her childhood neighbourhood on the northern shore of Lake Võrtsjärv. By today she has been accepted as local, which has opened more and more doors for her. Her activity has infected several generations of people in the region with a wish to ransack photo albums and their own memories. Reminiscences from the far past come side by side with those from the Soviet period as well as from the more recent life of fishermen. During 2011–2012, she donated to the EFA 50 hours of recorded interviews, 100 pages of notes and documents and 300 photographs, providing a deep insight into the life of one region throughout several decades.

Triin Äärismaa-Unt has collected lore on the opposite side of Estonia – at Jõelähtme, on the northern coast, leading a project concerned with oral heritage in the region. In the summer of 2011, a collection project was launched for the region's youth and culturally minded people, with a focus on place lore, and the material was arranged and handed over to the archives in 2011 and 2012. The recordings included 24 hours of interviews with 272 pages of audiotyped texts, as well as 45 photographs.

Photographer Olev Mihkelmaa donated to the archives 9663 digital photos taken in Kihnu. Jüri Roosmann's calligraphed collection of place lore, reminiscences and legends, as well as Ferdinand Mäe's reminiscences and place lore were mediated by Mari-Ann Remmel.

Twenty-two students from Tartu Kivilinna Gymnasium answered a questionnaire about school lore, which reached the museum through their teacher Pille Pärlin. In addition to schoolchildren's lore, kindergarten lore has also been studied on the initiative of Piret Voolaid. This time, 80 pages of materials from Russian-language kindergarten groups reached the archives.

Students of the University of Tartu under the supervision of Merili Metsvahi and Ergo-Hart Västriik collected lore in Põltsamaa. In the summer of 2012, students of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, supervised by Janika Oras and Ergo-Hart Västriik, carried out fieldwork in Votian and Izhorian villages in Ingermanland. They conducted interviews and participated in several village festivals.



President's Folklore Award ceremony and honouring of EFA 2012 contributors on March 14, 2013. Sitting: Kaie Humal and Rosaali Karjam, standing: Triin Äärismaa-Unt and President Toomas Hendrik Ilves. Photo by Alar Madisson.

Jaan Malin, a long-term contributor to the archives, handed over five song books from Muhu Island, as well as 72 pages of internet folklore; Valter Haamer donated two song books. Maria Parksepp handed over 100 pages of Setomaa lore material. Kadi Sarv and Kaido Kama recorded family reminiscences, Villu Talsi donated recordings of a musician from Miila village, and Kalev Järvela – video recordings with interviews on dance activities, conducted with representatives of the Estonian diaspora in Portland and Seattle.

Story writing contests were organised all over Estonia, which yielded 98 digital pages of contributions in Võro dialect; Kadri Tüür handed over to the archives materials of Muhu dialect contest.

We are grateful to all our contributors: Atilde Roosiväli, Kalev Järvela, Anni Oraveer, Ahto Raudoja, Kaleph Jõulu, Johannes Kuusk, Tiina Konsen, Age Esula, Fred Puss, Eva Sepping, Maimo Hõbessaar, Aado Lintrop, Pille Vahtmäe, Anu Korb, Andreas Kalkun, Ave Tupits-Goršič, Jüri Metssalu, Valdo Valper, Mari-Ann Rimmel, Taive Särg, Eda Kalmre, Helen Kõmmus, Jaanika Hunt, Mari Sarv, Janika Oras, etc.

Last summer, the *Pilkaja* (Mocker) magazine contacted the archives with a proposition to organise a joint contest of humorous stories. The contest was announced on September 24, the anniversary of the EFA, and it lasted until January 2013. The contest under the heading “Something Funny Happened to Me” was aimed at obtaining original comical stories from real life, which have also been passed on from one person to another, sometimes with smaller changes.

Altogether, 87 people participated in the collection contest, which yielded 791 pages of material. The participants came from different spheres of life and largely described working life and life in general during the Soviet period, revealing Estonians’ evaluation of the recent past through the prism of humour. However, there were also funny stories about the present day. Mall Hiimäe, a member of the jury, stated that on the basis of these stories we can observe how a unique case turns into folklore.

The authors were mainly elderly people; yet, there were also schoolchildren and youngsters among them. In addition to Estonian, the contributions were also in Russian, as well as in Võru dialect, with volumes from dozens of pages to messages sent by mobile phones. The materials included also stories heard from mothers or grandmothers about the preceding generations, which added a temporal dimension.

The past year proved that colourful language, good sense of humour and a skill to notice funny things around you and speak about them are values to be appreciated; especially when we lose the wish to work in the conditions of harsh everyday life and the sense of mission seems not enough to carry on. Hopefully in 2013, which is heritage year, the museum-, archive- and research workers’ mission and their need to survive will be recognised. This is necessary for the museum so that we could preserve our cultural heritage for the future generations.

Astrid Tuisk

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE: PHRASEOLOGY AND PAREMIOLOGY IN DICTIONARIES AND IN EVERYDAY USE

On April 18 and 19, 2013, an international scientific conference was held in Maribor and Ljubljana (Slovenia) under the heading *Two Heads are Better than One: Phraseology and Paremiology in Dictionaries and in Everyday Use*. It was organised by the Department of German Studies at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Maribor and the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, SRC SASA Ljubljana, upon the completion of two research projects supported by the Research Agency of the Republic of Slovenia during the period from 2010 to 2013. The theme of the event was linked to the research of phraseology and paremiology in the context of both research projects: *Phraseology of the German Language: Slovenian-German Comparative and Intercultural Perspectives*, which was carried out by the Department of German Studies of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Maribor, and *Slovene Proverbs as Cultural Heritage: Classification and Corpus Editing*, which is currently being implemented at the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, SRC SASA in Ljubljana. The conference was held in Slovenian, German and English languages.

The conference discussed the following issues: gathering of paremiological data in the field and methodological issues; editing of archival and collected material, semantic and pragmatic issues and perspectives; phraseology and mutual contact of the Slovenian and German languages (constructive, semantic, pragmatic, and textual issues); paremiology and phraseology in dictionaries: lexicographic, corpus, methodological issues; paremiology and phraseology in the learning and teaching of languages. Topics were discussed from folkloristic and phraseological (linguistic) viewpoints and, as part of the project presentations, computerised classifications were also examined.

The first day of the conference was in Maribor, at the Faculty of Arts. The opening session was dedicated to the presentations of the projects: Vida Jesenšek (Slovenia) talked about the project *Phraseology of the German Language: Slovenian-German Comparative and Intercultural Perspectives*, and Marjan Krašna (Slovenia) discussed the building of a phraseological database. This was followed by Marija Stanonik, Matej Veider and Simona Janež (Slovenia), who presented the project *Slovene Proverbs as Cultural Heritage: Classification and Corpus Editing*. They pointed out the problems of compiling a corpus of proverbs on the basis of materials from archives, old manuscripts, grammar books, literature, some field research results, etc. Drago Bokal and his students (Slovenia) had prepared a presentation of computerised proverb textual analysis. The following papers on the first day were more or less from the folkloristic field: Bogdan Dolenc (Slovenia) discussed proverbs in the Bible; Sibil Vilfan Gruntar (Slovenia) showed the influence of the grammar school on adopting Latin proverbs into the Slovenian language. Saša Babič (Slovenia) tried to show the integration of Slovenian proverbs into the international research area, Martina Piko-Rustia (Austria) provided an insight into the materials collected in Carinthia. Alja Lipavac Oštir's (Slovenia) presentation introduced her research into Slovenian schoolchildren's knowledge and usage of proverbs. Peter Grzybek (Austria) discussed macrostructural problems of paremiography. Peter Ďurčo and Matej Meterc dealt with the equivalency of Slovak and Slovene proverbs, trying to build a typology based on equivalency.



*Prof. Vida Jesenšek (University of Maribor) is introducing the project *Phraseology of the German Language: "Slovenian-German Comparative and Intercultural Perspectives"*. Photo by Piret Voolaid 2013.*

The second day of the conference was in Ljubljana at the Slovenian Research Centre SASA. It started with a folkloristic paper from Barbara Ivančič Kutin (Slovenia) about folklore patterns in the proverb corpus. The day continued with phraseological discussions: Anneli Baran (Estonia) presented phraseological expressions and semantic fixedness investigated within a group of schoolchildren. Melanija Fabčič and Elizabeta Bernjak (Slovenia) talked about (de)onimic components in Slovenian and German phrasemes. Erla Hallsteinsdóttir (Denmark) discussed phraseology in the process of learning German as a foreign language. Teodor Petrič, Saša Jazbec and Brigita Kacjan (Slovenia) discussed phraseological units as a speaking and reception model and tried to provide a didactic concept for learning a foreign language. Željka Matulina (Croatia) and Carmen Melado Blanco (Spain) checked bilingual dictionaries and presented some discussion points related to lexicography and phraseology. Vida Jesenšek and Natalija Ulčnik (Slovenia) exposed problems in editing material for a phraseological-paremiological portal. The closing paper was prepared by Piret Voolaid (Estonia), who presented an academic online database of paremic graffiti; she talked about collecting and presenting some newer paremiological forms.

Papers from Erika Kržišnik (*Vitality of Proverbs Today*) and Mateja Jemec Tomazin (*Emergence of Metaphorical Terminology and Terminological Guidance*) were unfortunately cancelled for medical reasons.

This conference in collaboration with two institutions, embracing two projects (dealing with related themes) was the first one in Slovenia. The main goal of this conference was to offer insights into new developments in selected areas and to create opportunities and directions for further research. The latter is possible only with groundbreaking and cross-sectoral networking and collaboration; for this reason, the search and formation of such possibilities were highlighted. We sincerely hope that there will be more collaboration conferences and more project opportunities to work and research together – in Slovenia and on the international paremiological field.

Saša Babič

INTERNATIONAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE *STILL POSTSOCIALISM? CULTURAL MEMORY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS*

Kazan, 19–20 April, 2013

In the second half of April, a two-day interdisciplinary conference on postsocialism was held in Kazan. The conference under the title, *Still Postsocialism? Cultural Memory and Social Transformations*, was organised by the Centre for Cultural Studies of Postsocialism and the Institute for Comparative Studies of Modernity, both associated with the Kazan Federal University and European University in St. Petersburg. It must be mentioned that Kazan is a perfect location for such meetings. It is located on the banks of the Volga River, it is the capital of one of the most rebellious Russian regions – the Republic of Tatarstan – and is a wealthy oil industry centre. At the same time, Kazan is a city where Soviet legacy, Russian Orthodox and Tatar Moslem culture along with the blooming and hedonistic inner city form a post-Soviet symbiosis.

The question whether we should and still could speak about postsocialism(s) is not a new one: it was the issue that was discussed at academic conferences at least ten years ago. The fully packed conference with several parallel panels, however, proves that there exists keen academic interest to debate the existence of postsocialism. Unfortunately, the first keynote speeches [Prof. Jan Kubik (Rutgers University, USA) and Prof. Alexander Etkind (University of Cambridge, UK)] were rather a discussion of case studies than addressing general and theoretical issues related to the understanding of postsocialism. The second day keynote speakers [Prof. Caroline Humphrey (University of Cambridge, UK) and Prof. Chris Hann (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany)]

used concrete case studies (Russian and Hungarian, respectively) to make substantial remarks about the nature of postsocialism. For example, Chris Hann's emphasis on historical continuities is relevant to all regions. He said: "It is not enough to look only at the Socialist era. We should go beyond postsocialism and look at pre-Socialist time for a full picture."

In general, the selection of presentations for the conference was brilliant, covering various spheres and topics. Geographically, the majority of presenters focused on Russia, but some papers discussed also Central Asia, Belarus or Ukraine. Interestingly, in various panels there were several presentations which aimed at merging postcolonial and postsocialist theories. It must be noted that due to different focus points, this is not an easy task, so these papers were theoretically not very sophisticated. Nevertheless, the impressive number of papers demonstrates growing interest in that segment of theorisation.

To name some individual papers, Sanna Turoma's (Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland) presentation "Grazhdanin Poet / Citizen Poet: Postmodern Poetry for the Postsocialist Masses?" was an interesting analysis of Josif Brodsky and other radical Russian poets. The presentation highlighted the multilayeredness of the socialist society and culture, which also affects their reception in the modern era. Rostislav Kononenko (Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia) gave an overview of the question of authenticity in modern Russian folk movement, which seems to suffer from fragmentation just like folk movements in other countries.

Yaroslav Hrytsak (Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv National University, Ukraine) focused on fluid identities in Ukraine, showing how different interpretations of ethnicity and citizenship exist in Lviv and Donetsk.

The final discussion at the conference became quite heated when some talkers raised the issue whether anthropologists should 'cause a volcano' or be engaged in social and political movements. Chris Hann summed the discussion up by arguing that anthropology as a discipline should be engaged with documentation and should analyse not initiate revolutions; if individuals want to be engaged in politics, they can always join a political party.

In retrospective, the conference was fruitful, demonstrating how strongly the socialist past affects lives, attitudes and cultures in all former socialist countries. I reckon that as long as we speak about the significance of socialism, we should also not hesitate to speak about postsocialism(s).

Aimar Ventsel