

NEWS IN BRIEF

PROFESSOR KAZYS GRIGAS: 90TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Kazys Grigas was born into a farmers' family in Pagiriai, Kaunas district, on March 1, 1924. He graduated from a gardening and floriculture school in Kaunas, and attended Vilkija Gymnasium. In 1944 he entered Kaunas Theological Seminary to avoid enlisting into the Soviet army. In 1945, after having taken the entrance examinations, he was admitted to the Faculty of History and Philology at Kaunas National Vytautas Magnus University. When ideological cleansing started at the university in 1948, K. Grigas was expelled with an entry in his personal file: "Expelled from Kaunas University for behaviour incompatible with a Soviet student's honour and duties".

Later on, K. Grigas studied at Kaunas Teachers Seminary, took librarianship equivalency examinations, taught at a gymnasium (Lithuanian and Latin languages), and worked at the bookbindery at the library of the History Institute of the Academy of Sciences in Vilnius. In 1951 he took equivalency examinations and graduated from Vilnius University. In 1954 K. Grigas started working at the Lithuanian Institute of Language and Literature (now Lithuanian Literature and Folklore Institute), where he became engaged in the field of folkloristics. K. Grigas spent the years from 1990 to 1998 teaching: he taught a course in paremiology at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, and later on a comparative folkloristics course at Vilnius University. K. Grigas translated various works of fiction, for instance, L. Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1957) and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass* (1991, in collaboration with J. Lapienytė), R. L. Stevenson's *The Master of Ballantrae* (1959), and R. L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island. The Master of Ballantrae* (1986) from English, B. Traven's *The Cotton Pickers* (1961) from German, and M. Selimovič's *Death and the Dervish* (1972) from Russian. In 2002 Kazys Grigas was awarded the Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas of the fourth class for his achievements for the good of the Lithuanian nation.

Kazys Grigas's most outstanding achievements in his folkloristic work are in the field of paremiology: thanks to his own ceaseless efforts and under his guidance, over 200,000 proverbs and proverbial phrases were systematised, and the fundamental edition of *Lithuanian Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases* was published (Vol. 1 in 2000; Vol. 2 in 2008). The authors were given a Lithuanian Scholar's award for the first volume of the book. It is worth mentioning that while working on the *Lithuanian Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*, K. Grigas simultaneously closely studied the scientific publication entitled *Eesti vanasõnad* (Estonian Proverbs) (1980–1988) written by Estonian paremiologists led by Arvo Krikmann, as he thought it to be one of the most exemplary national proverbs digests.

K. Grigas was the author of many significant works in comparative paremiology, including books like *Lithuanian Proverbs: Comparative Study* (1976) and *Parallels of Proverbs. Lithuanian Proverbs with Latvian, Belarussian, Russian, Polish, German, English, Latin, French, Spanish Equivalent*s (1987), as well as numerous studies and problem articles in Lithuanian. Many of his writings also appeared in international



From the left: Professor Leonardas Sauka, Minister of Education Algirdas Monkevičius and professor Kazys Grigas at the Department of Folk Narrative, Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, on August 5, 2001. Photo from the Archives of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore.

scholarly publications, such as *Proverbium* (1970–1974, 1998, 2002), *Nordic Yearbook of Folklore* (1995), and *Journal of the Baltic Institute of Folklore* (1996). He examined and published about other short forms of folklore as well, including riddles, onomatopoeias, tongue-twisters, jokes, etc. K. Grigas significantly contributed to Lithuanian folklore historiography, conducting research into the 19th century, especially the works authored by historian and folklorist Simonas Daukantas. K. Grigas was an active folklore collector, a devoted mentor for young folklorists and researchers, editor of various folklore publications, etc. His merits in Lithuanian folklore research and popularisation are truly magnificent.

K. Grigas's theoretical paremiological works and source publications have not only built a base for the research within the field of Lithuanian proverbs and adages, but have also significantly contributed to the international paremiological research in the late 20th century. It is no surprise that K. Grigas and other famous paremiologists from around the world, such as Arvo Krikmann, Wolfgang Mieder, Gyula Paczolay, Elza Kokare, and Alma Ancelāne, shared not just professional interests but also friendship.

After professor Kazys Grigas had passed in 2002, Wolfgang Mieder wrote: “There is no doubt that Kazys Grigas will be remembered in Lithuania by students, colleagues, friends and family members. But he was also known far beyond Lithuania to folklorists and paremiologists throughout the world. His work has influenced scholars in Northern Europe, in the United States and elsewhere. It is with admiration and appreciation that I see his books stand on my shelves, right next to the volumes of his peers Matti Kuusi, Grigorii Lvovich Permiakov, Archer Tylor, Demetrios Loukatos, Barlett Jere Whiting, Lutz Rörich, Gyula Paczolay, Alan Dundes, and many more. Kazys Grigas was one of the true giants in the field of proverbs, and I am thankful that I have been able to stand on his shoulders to do my work for international paremiology” (Mieder 2003: 439).

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SEMINAR ESTONIAN DIGITAL HUMANITIES ANNO 2013: IT-APPLICATIONS IN HUMANITIES

On October 25, 2013, the first seminar of digital humanities in Estonia took place at the Estonian Literary Museum. It stemmed from the idea that although the disciplinary developments in Estonian humanities were intertwined with the use of digital resources and research methods, no attempt had been made to bring together the humanities scholars who work with digital technologies. Even the term ‘digital humanities’, although widely used in North America and Western Europe, had not been used in Estonian. The number of participants and the extent of eager discussions throughout the day showed the need for experience exchange. The one-day seminar was surprisingly popular: it was filled with 20 papers and, additionally, two poster presentations. The framework was interdisciplinary; in this review, I will give a short overview of the main topics with somewhat longer notes on folkloristic presentations.

Linguists have a long tradition of collaboration with computer scientists. The four papers by linguists (Pille Eslon, Grethe Juhkason, Kadri Muischnek, Kadri Vider)

presented different language resources and databases and demonstrated the usage of such technologies for research purposes. Digital methods have long been used in archaeology as well. At the seminar, Mari-Liis Posti introduced the archaeological information systems of Tallinn University, Hembo Pagi's paper was dedicated to the usage of new visualisation technologies, and Allar Haav described the results of his research on settlement pattern analysis with the help of various software. Therefore, very different aspects of the use of digital technologies were covered – from databases and development to actual research. A similar pattern emerged in literary studies: while Marju Mikkel introduced the general possibilities of a literary historical web project *Kreutzwald's Century*, Elle-Mari Talivee had carried out research into Estonian literary classics, using the materials that had been digitised for the same particular project. The various cultural and mental changes that are the side-effect of digitalisation of literature were described and analysed by Vallo Kepp.

However, memory institutions are in the midst of many large-scale digitalisation projects, some of which were introduced at the seminar. The Estonian Pedagogical Archives-Museum had just started creating a web information system and repository for their collections, and Veronika Varik introduced the project. Jaanus Kõuts from the Estonian National Library spoke about the Estonian Web Archive and the plan to archive the whole Estonian (.ee) web domain. There were two presentations about the usage of open data in different institutions. Priit Laanoja had compiled an overview of the changes that had taken place in Estonian school network, and his application had links to photos or Google Maps street views on the locations of the schools. Vahur Puik introduced a webpage on which users can add metadata to historical photos. The photos are from archive collections, and geotagging is done by crowdsourcing.

For an institution in need of displaying a part of its collection, online exhibition web virtuaalmuuseum.ee, introduced by Andres Uueni, could be an opportunity. The current online exhibitions mainly display the collections of different memory institutions. Artists have used digital technologies in different ways. For instance, Hilka Hiiop and Meelis Pärjasaar introduced technologies for graphical documenting and archiving the information of a visual representation of a piece of art for restoration purposes. One of the highlights of the seminar was the introduction of an interactive database documentary, *The East*, by Raivo Kelomees and Hille Karm, a movie with an audience participation solution. The movie had not been screened yet.

Several Estonian folklorists participated in the seminar. Kaisa Kulasalu and Mari Sarv gave an overview of the digitalisation goals at the Estonian Folklore Archives. The archives, founded in 1927, have a system of different indexes. Already in the early 1990s, the new materials were not described on index cards; instead, there was a set of different files. Only in the past couple of years, all the archival data were gathered into one web-based archival information system *Kivike*. The transcriptions of folklore texts give numerous opportunities for the researcher. Andres Kuperjanov described the advantages of automatised bulk editing of large folk text corpora that are not presented in a database-format. Mare Kõiva gave an overview of sacred texts corpora and the possibilities of combining the collection with other similar folklore collections in Europe. The two poster presentations were also by folklorists. Piret Voolaid introduced a database of paremiological graffiti, which, with its search engines and statistical data processing, is a useful tool for a scholar. Liisi Laineste had participated in the creation

of a MediaWiki-based Eastern European jokelore database that contains jokes of three nations. MediaWiki combines the encyclopaedia format with the opportunities for collaboration, being a good tool for international projects.

The seminar ended with a discussion in which most of the participants expressed their hopes for a further collaboration and a common board for discussion. Most of the digital humanities projects in Estonia have been connected with the digitalisation of materials and creation of infrastructure – this is what most of the papers represented. But already now digital material could be used for answering different kinds of research questions and these were present in the papers as well. There are also projects that use open data and crowdsourcing, and in this vein applications could be created on the basis of very many digital collections. Digital humanities will therefore help to bring the humanities – among others, the usage of folklore materials and research conducted by folklorists – closer to the general public.

Kaisa Kulasalu

PAREMIOLOGISTS AT THE 7TH INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM ON PROVERBS IN TAVIRA, PORTUGAL

The Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs is an annual conference organised by the Associação Internacional de Paremiologia¹ (International Association of Paremiology – AIP–IAP). The conference is an important international event in the field of paremiology both for academics and people interested in proverbs. The home town of the colloquium as well as for the association is Tavira, a small town in southern Portugal. In 2013, the 7th colloquium took place from November 3rd to 10th. Once again Tavira welcomed the conference with various paremiological presentations. The conference does not have any special theme for each year. Yet, every year there is a person to be honoured at the conference; in 2013 it was Finnish paremiologist Outi Lauhakangas.

The programme consisted of plenary sessions, papers, book exhibitions, presentations of some projects and poster presentations. As is usual, the participants come from various academic and non-academic backgrounds, and their papers feature a wide range of perspectives. The motivation of papers might be based on research, practical activities focusing on proverbs, or purely interest in proverbs. The year 2013 was not an exception. The key themes at colloquiums have been and are the teaching of proverbs, educational functions of proverb usage, collections, dictionaries and databases of proverbs, and material from the media, including also novel sources like the Internet. The latter has been of special interest for Estonian and Finnish researchers.

The main speaker at the opening session was the regional director of the Culture of Algarve, Dália Paulo, who spoke about intangible heritage and its importance. The support of the cultural and regional office is important for the work of the association in Portugal. Tavira has named itself “the world capital of proverbs”.



Participants of the colloquium on an excursion. Photo by Liisa Granbom-Herranen 2013.

The invited speakers at the 7th colloquium in the order of appearance were the following: Ana Mineiro (Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Portugal) talked about the Portuguese nautical language, Ana Margarida Ramos (University of Aveiro, Portugal) presented publications of proverbs aimed at children, and changes in them from the time of Franco to nowadays, and Sandra Cazelote (Clinica de Fonoaudiologia, Brazil) focused on aphasic people and their ability to understand proverbs. Karel Kucera (Charles University, Czech Republic) talked about Jan Ámos Komenský, better known as John Amos Comenius, and his educational targets containing proverbs. Idalete Dias (University of Minho, Portugal) concentrated on linguistic handling of proverbs as metaphors, metonymy and synecdoche. Luís M Araújo (University of Lisboa, Portugal) presented his ideas of proverbs used in ancient Egypt. Valery Mokienko (St. Petersburg University, Russian

Federation) talked about the problems of constructing a paremiological thesaurus. These papers give quite a substantial overview of the topics handled at this colloquium, both from folkloristic and linguistic points of view: proverbs, teaching of proverbs, use of proverbs for some special tasks, as well as collecting and translating of proverbs. As some of the invited speakers were young researchers, the colloquium was also a possibility to have a glance at the future doctoral theses as well as to learn something about the contemporary interests of researchers. The programme of the colloquium can be found online at <http://www.colloquium-proverbs.org/icp/en/program>.

The variation of languages in which proverbs were tackled by researchers also tells something about the interest. Even if the official languages used in presentations are Portuguese and English, this year proverbs were heard in Afrikaans, Arabic, Czech, Chinese, Dari, English, Finnish, Italian, Latin, Russian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish as well as Mozambican Tsonga and Macua-Lomwe languages. Of course in the presentations we heard proverbs mainly as translated into English or Portuguese. During the breaks and free time, conversations in the groups of participants were held in various languages. Once again it was nice to notice that in a positive atmosphere the most important thing is to understand and to be understood. It does not matter what language you use and how good your knowledge of grammar is. Both papers, plenary sessions and breaks are fruitful components of a colloquium, and all of them are needed.

On the last day of the conference we received sad news. Bo Almqvist, a Swedish folklorist who had studied Irish folklore, had left the land of the living. He had participated in some former Tavira colloquiums and is remembered, in addition to his praiseworthy academic work, as a gentleman with a good sense of humour. During the excursion following the colloquium we visited an area with graves from ancient times; there, in the beautiful surroundings, Fionnuala Carson Williams gave a small speech to commemorate him.

The Portuguese organisers, especially Rui and Marinela Soares, as well as the active Tavira citizens had once again done everything for the participants to feel comfortable. The participants were treated to small surprises and given an opportunity to become acquainted with Portuguese history and folklore. This social intercourse is quite important both as a networking and entertaining function. All the cultural events and surprises were organised in concert with the organisers of the colloquium, the town officials, the regional cultural office of Algarve, and the sponsors and residents of Tavira. The next colloquium – the 8th Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs – will take place in Tavira on November 2–9, 2014.

Liisa Granbom-Herranen

Note

¹ About the International Association of Paremiology see <http://www.aip-iap.org/>.

SILLE KAPPER DEFENDED HER DOCTORAL THESIS ON TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCE

On December 12, 2013, Sille Kapper defended her doctoral thesis “Muutuv pärimustants: kontseptsioonid ja realiseerimised Eestis 2008–2013 / Changing Traditional Folk Dance: Concepts and Realizations in Estonia 2008–2013” at the Estonian Institute of Humanities at Tallinn University.

The research discusses the multiple meanings of the concept *rahvatants* (folk dance), which have evolved by the beginning of the 21st century. It becomes obvious that in public discourse the Estonian term *pärimustants* (traditional folk dance), which was coined only five to ten years ago, is understood differently by users with different backgrounds. The dissertation focuses on the meaning of the term *pärimustants* among its users in contemporary Estonia, highlighting the main codes – *historicism*, *community*, *participation* and *variability* – in the text coding schemes of both scientific and everyday discourses.

The author points out that the two approaches that emanated in the first decades of the 20th century – the ‘stylised folk dance’ and the ‘original folk dance’ – diverged in Estonia especially significantly during the period of the Soviet occupation. This fact inspired her to treat stage folk dance as a specific form of dance art within the framework related to Epp Annus’s concept of *Soviet colonialism*. The influence of the Soviet period in variations of dance texts as well as the modes of action required further investigation.



Sille Kapper in Warsaw in November 2013. Photo by Edite Husare.

The researcher has sought for dance realisations, which, while analysed, would reveal the dancer's knowledge and readiness to apply them, or unconscious yet culturally determined *habitués* and habits, or both simultaneously. This kind of dance texts were mainly provided by spontaneous participant dancing at festivals and concerts, dance clubs, traditional folk dance workshops, and classes for choreography students and folk dancers.

The qualitative content analysis of the research material mainly focuses on the codes that express the values of the members of different communities: what they think about different variants and ways of variation, to what they pay/do not pay attention, and who, why and in which situations speaks about these topics, for what reasons and in what ways. The author has endeavoured to find reflections that would indicate relationships between actual dance realisations and their interpretations and evaluations. Estonian traditional folk dance has never been explored like that.

The author also makes a mention of the fact that today the topic of nationalism is involved in the concept of traditional folk dance, especially in the texts of folk dancers and folk dance teachers.

While discussing the learning of traditional folk dances at the present time, the author recognises that a dialogue with dance texts becomes evident in the study process, in which the conception of the dance and its realisation are supplemented alternately. She maintains that such a dialogue with dance takes much time and folk dance groups rather learn traditional folk dances briefly and quickly, as a project. Yet, this does not exclude going into details. As an example, she mentions a young people's folk dance group who intently practised a basic dance move, and, as a result, their dance movements became practically void of the impacts of stage folk dance (p. 69).

The author holds that the newest phenomenon that influences the variations of traditional folk dance is the role of dance texts as a medium in the intrapersonal communication of the dancer or the audience. She also presents a widespread opinion that traditional folk dance is boring both for dancing and watching, and therefore it never initiates intrapersonal communication. As the dance teacher's interpretation of the situation is that if the text does not address the audience, it has failed, they add new elements to the traditional folk dance in order for it "to be more interesting". This coincides with the mentality of the modern lifestyle, which constantly requires something new; yet, the aesthetic values of stage folk dance and the dance style rooted in the memory of generations as correct and authentic are also based on the same way of thinking.

This approach is opposed by the subculture of those deeply interested in traditional folk dance. They try to detach themselves from stage folk dance aesthetics and restore economic body use, regarding it as an essential component and valuable asset of the peasant dance. The interpretations of historic and regional communities are characterised by a relatively distinct line between the "right" and the "wrong". Regional peculiarities and identities are emphasised by certain movement variants.

According to the author, traditional folk dance is often distinguished from stage(d) folk dance by the criteria of participant-centeredness and performativity. Different approaches can be distinguished in performing traditional folk dance to the external audiences: the dancers' manner of moving might be similar to the stage style, yet it can also be purposely opposed to. While discussing the intertwining of participant and performative functions today, the author remarks that dance simultaneously involves

both the dancer's personal enjoyment and performance to the audience, whereas the proportion of different factors depends on the group's inner culture, values, acting period or a concrete situation.

The dissertation states that traditional folk dancers and amateurs deeply interested in traditional folk dance have started to look for new alternative methods in order to adapt peasant dances to today's aesthetics and lifestyles, with no diminishing emphasis on the dancer's individuality, the absence of which in stage folk dance they criticise.

In conclusion, the author states that we lack a common conception of the nature of traditional folk dance. Everyone construes the concept of traditional folk dance on the basis of their own knowledge and experience. So, in some cases, the existence of movement elements originating in peasant culture or the sequence of motifs is regarded as a characteristic determinant, while in some other cases the decisive factor is the participant-centeredness of the dance as opposed to performativity, and in still other cases improvisation is emphasised, or, vice versa, local community rules, norms and peculiarities are brought to the fore. Today, the traditional folk dances of the peasantry and their elements have moved from the village community to the communities of different enthusiasts and hobbyists, and are continued as a modern tradition recreated over and over again at each realisation.

As an option to continue the research, the author considers the application of post-colonial approaches in studying, for instance, the relationship between Baltic-German and Estonian peasant dance culture. Another possibility would be the topic of relationships of Estonian traditional folk dances with those of neighbouring peoples, which has not sparked a wider interest until now. As dance has no language restrictions and is therefore international, it would be feasible, in the future, to compile a catalogue of European dances analogous to the international fairy-tale catalogues.

The value of this research cannot be disputed, yet there are a few arguments based on opinions unsubstantiated by facts. Such statements cannot be accepted in scientific literature as they might result in an undesirable snowball effect.

The author claims that Kristjan Torop's collection *Viron vakka* was first published in Finnish in Tampere, Finland, for "economic and political reasons". This argument is not grounded. When Kristjan Torop started work at the Institute of Language and Literature in 1979, he began to compile a collection of Estonian folk dances, which became his lifelong assignment. So, the publication of the folk dance collection was included in the state plan of the institute. Torop continued his work at the collection even when he left the institute and started work at the Folk Culture Training and Development Centre, as he was allowed to take all the materials with him. Nor were there any obstacles for publishing the completed manuscripts as institute publications, and no folkloric source materials remained unpublished "for economic and political reasons".

A *Viron vakka*-format publication was initially not planned at all. Torop received an order for such a book directly from Finland, from a society called Friends of Finnish Folk Dance, and started to execute it in Finnish. As preparatory work had been done in Estonian and he was good at Finnish, it did not take him long to complete the book. *Viron vakka*, a collection of Estonian folk dances, was published in Finland in 1991.

So, there was no Estonian manuscript to be published, and nor were there any political reasons for not publishing it. Books of folk dances were published in Estonia also in more unfavourable times (Toomi 1953, Tampere 1975), and when *Viron vakka*

was translated into Estonian, it did not remain unpublished either. It was great that our Finnish friends, who have always supported Estonian folklorists, had this idea and helped to realise it, but we do not need any groundless arguments in this regard.

Another argument based on ungrounded statements is that waltz and polka as independent dances were generally danced in a circle in Estonia. This postulate is derived from Heino Aassalu's citation. There are relevant data about the island of Kihnu, but Aassalu does not refer to any other concrete regions. Yet, the inhabitants of Kihnu distinguish their manner of dancing from that of mainland Estonians. Hiimäe's footnote that the author refers to does not mention waltz or polka. Many Estonian peasant dances were danced in a circle, but ordinary waltz and polka as independent dances were usually not. During my fieldwork, I have never encountered people dancing waltz and polka in a circle other than on the island of Kihnu. I would not insist that it never happened anywhere, but the citations referred to do not include any concrete data about it.

The source references on the materials of the Estonian Folklore Archives in the appendix would also need some specification. Incomplete references, which actually would not allow for identifying materials, could rather have been left out; instead, the author could have just noted that she had used older sources at the Estonian Folklore Archives as background materials.

However, the abovementioned minor shortcomings do not diminish the general value of the dissertation. It is methodologically novel and analytically thorough in its approach. The diversity of materials and the researcher's own experience as a dancer and dance teacher further enhance the credibility of the results. In conclusion I can say that Estonian ethnocoreology has been supplemented by a new efficient study.

Ingrid Rüütel

WINTER SCHOOL OF FOLKLORISTICS IN JHARKHAND, INDIA

On January 12–21, 2014, a winter school of folkloristics under the heading “Tradition, Creativity and Indigenous Knowledge: Winter School of International Folkloristics and Indigenous Culture” took place in Jharkhand, India. It was organised by the Centre for Tribal Folklore, Language and Literature at the Central University of Jharkhand, in cooperation with the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore at the University of Tartu. The participants included, besides folklorists, also historians, linguists and media researchers from Estonia, India, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, the United States and China. The majority of the presentations were dedicated to folk beliefs, and several researchers focused namely on Indian tribal folklore. Rabindranath Sarma offered an overview of the beliefs, customs and traditions of the Oraon people in Jharkhand, G. Badaiasuklang Nonglait introduced the jokes of the Khasi people in north-east India, and Li Ansiqi's presentation discussed the traditions of the Miao tribe in China. Stefano Beggiora provided an overview of the beliefs about the end of the world and end of a time cycle in the tribal cultures of India, raising a philosophical question about whether the ongoing modernisation and globalisation constitutes not only a mythological but also a real end to tribal worlds. To counterbalance these ideas, Madis Arukask offered, by



Temple of Sarna believers decorated with red-and-white flags at Murma. Photo by Reet Hiimäe 2014.

way of lectures and films, an overview of the life of some Finno-Ugric minority groups (the Veps and the Votes). Estonian researchers also discussed genre as a conceptual tool in folkloristics (Ülo Valk), the changing ways of collecting folklore (Merili Metsvahi), collection work in a transnational context (Pihla Maria Siim) and personal experience stories (Reet Hiimäe).

Besides verbal folklore, several researchers tackled the visual and auditory forms of folklore. Uwe Skoda's presentation explained the cultural and regional conditionality of fright phenomena; for instance, in the lore of many European regions with Christian background the dead are described as demonised and dangerous and contact with them is avoided, whereas in India and elsewhere in Asia there are regions that welcome such contacts; the deceased can be kept in the same room with the living for quite a while and they are also part of family photos. In addition to this, Skoda discussed the socio-cultural meaning of cockfight. Carlo A. Cubero spoke about *sono-truths* as a means to articulate the peculiar effect of using sound recordings as the main research methodology. Marje Ermel discussed, in light of fieldwork conducted in the community of Krishna devotees, sound recordings as social objects, which should be viewed in their immediate context. Nilly Lepcha Karthak introduced the traditional musical instruments and music of the Lepcha tribe. Lidia Guzy described, on the basis of fieldwork carried out in western Orissa, India, a paradox about the role of village musicians, who belong to the lowest caste in social stratification, and how their role changes in sacral contexts,

in which namely their untouchable status enables them to act as mediators between humans and the divine sphere. As the winter school combined both presentations and discussions in seminars, all topics could be debated and therefore different viewpoints were highlighted. For instance, Guzy's presentation sparked a dispute about the possible objectivity of the conclusions made by a researcher from European cultural space about Indian tribal religions. It was argued that belonging to the same cultural space may act as a filter and therefore researchers sometimes fail to notice some nuances that can be obvious to outsiders.

The winter school brought to the fore quite a few novel viewpoints. Claire Scheid's presentation about the depiction of the Yeti in folklore explained that, besides spontaneous mythologisation of fears, an opposite tendency – demythologisation – can also occur. Kishore Bhattacharjee pointed out that although it has found little attention, several widely known Christian saint legends have also parallels in Hindu tradition. Margaret Lyngdoh spoke about violence caused by supernatural factors, referring to the recent acts of violence related to a mysterious creature called Thlen in north-east India. Tollheishel Khaling noted that more often than not, the influence of colonists and missionaries on Indian tribal cultures has been treated as destructive, although in certain cases it could have even favoured the preservation of tribal culture (e.g., by way of increasing the self-awareness of the tribe). William Westerman placed the complicated dilemmas related to the survival of cultures into a global perspective, giving an overview of the causes of coerced migration across the world and pointing out that if there is no well-elaborated programme for helping immigrants, this could result in cultural genocide of the indigenous people in the host country.

Within the framework of the winter school, the participants were able to visit the villages of local Oraon tribes, get acquainted with the manifestations of their identity (e.g., tattoos, rituals), as well as listen to the lore related to their holy places (e.g., the cult of *sal*-trees, magic healings near the most important holy places, but also haunting phenomena). From the point of view of protective magic, it was interesting to see umbrellas with symbolic protective function in family and ancestral graveyards; also umbrella-like roofs could be encountered in tribal shrines (e.g., in Sarna-temple in Murma village), which according to locals symbolically protect tribal integrity. Side by side with the representatives of local religion worshipping goddess Sarna-Ma, Muslims, Hindus and Christians could be met in the villages. It was surprising that the differences between the *own* and the *other* were not very distinct, and hybridisation manifestations could rather be encountered (e.g., the Oraons who had been converted to Christianity or Islam, parallelly continued performing several tribal rituals). Yet, the opposition between the *own* and the *other* as well as the externalisation of dangers could be noted on a geographical basis: the majority of local inhabitants, with whom I conversed, maintained that in India the *other* states and regions were dangerous, rather than their own.

In conclusion I can say that participation in the winter school offered valuable experience, the presenters introduced novel viewpoints, and the perception of differences and similarities in the religion of India and Europe had a widening impact on the researcher's eye, which would definitely be an advantage in future work.

Reet Hiemäe

3RD ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF FOLKLORISTS IN MOSCOW

The 3rd All-Russian Congress of Folklorists took place on February 3–7, 2014, in Voronovo, Russia, about 40 kilometres from Moscow. The congress was organised by the State Republican Centre of Russian Folklore (see: <http://folkcentr.ru/>), founded in 1990 at the Russian Ministry of Culture. The centre mainly focuses on scientific research, folklore-related collection and preservation, teaching, promotion and publication of materials about the traditional cultural phenomena of the peoples of Russia. The centre also issues different publications, including a popular science journal *Zhivaia Starina* (Living Ancientry) and science journal *Traditsionnaia Kultura* (Traditional Culture). Main responsibility for the organisation of the congress was taken by Anatoli Kargin, director of the centre, and Varvara Dobrovolskaya, head of the Department of Folklore and Ethnography.

The congress that takes place every fourth year (the first one in 2006, the second one in 2010) has become a unique event in Russian folkloristics, assembling specialists from Russian academic institutes, research centres, and corresponding chairs of higher educational institutions, as well as, typically of Russia, leaders of creative groups and ensembles, educationalists and specialists in methodology. The number of participants has been increasing over the years, and this year there were 650 delegates from all over Russia, as well as from outside the Russian Federation, e.g., Italy, Poland, Ukraine, Belorussia, Azerbaijan, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

The range of topics in this science forum significant in the promotion of Russian folklore studies is extremely extensive. The year 2014 is officially proclaimed the year of culture in the Russian Federation, which adds weight to all cultural events. The congress of folklorists was also culturally weighty, featuring 31 sections and 483 presentations.

The opening speeches from the organisers and representatives of the Ministry of Culture highlighted the main objectives of the folklore forum: to strengthen scientific contacts between the former republics of the Soviet Union, diminish the gap between theoreticians and practicians, introduce work in this sphere of science, and enable exchange of experience and inspiration. The necessity of bringing the world of science and the Ministry of Culture closer to each other was emphasised and concrete priorities were highlighted, such as better financing of expeditions and material collection, facilitation of work in the archives by means of information technology equipment, and focusing on publication activities and youth forums.

Participation in the congress is also important for Estonian folklorists, as it enables us to keep in touch with the newest research trends in Russian folklore, introduce our own work in a big forum, and develop cooperation with colleagues from neighbouring countries. It is well known that after Estonia regained independence, Estonian folklorists have carried out cooperation projects mainly with scientists from the European Union and western researchers, and therefore English has become the main working language. However, it is important to learn about the research topics and viewpoints of our big neighbour, and to find out what the opportunities are for cooperation with the researchers from the countries whose socio-political recent past is quite similar to ours. Also, it is important to keep abreast of recent special literature in Russian.

Academic work at the congress was organised in parallel sections and round table discussions, which dealt with extremely different phenomena, topics and viewpoints.



A round table discussion dedicated to chain letters was held during the congress. In the front row Mare Kõiva (on the left) and Piret Voolaid. Photo by Kalle Voolaid 2014.

As it was nearly impossible to get a detailed overview of this extensive congress, the author participated mainly in the sections dedicated to modern folklore. On the first working day of the congress, Alexander Panchenko (St. Petersburg) and Daria Radchenko (Moscow) moderated round table discussions dedicated to chain letters, a widely spread phenomenon in modern folklore. Alexander Panchenko characterised the tradition of chain letters and their varied forms and ways of circulation by means of modern meme theories. Daniel W. Van Arsdale from the United States spoke about the origin of the “Send-a-Dime” chain letter launched by a mysterious Jane Doe in Denver, US, in 1935, at the time of the Great Depression. Daria Radchenko in her presentation highlighted the collectivity aspect of chain letters. Mare Kõiva and Piret Voolaid, senior researchers of the Estonian Literary Museum, both of whom have formerly been engaged in the topic, also gave presentations at the round table. Mare Kõiva spoke about more than a hundred years old chain letter tradition, its modern forms of manifestation and use of terminology in Estonia; Piret Voolaid highlighted the possibility of analysing, by way of folklore material, early teens’ value and identity expressions. As a result of the forum, an international working group dedicated to chain folklore is due to be organised.

Modern folklore section on February 5 and 6 featured fascinating and novel treatments. Bulgarian folklorist Ekaterina Anastasova compared Estonian and Bulgarian identities, by analysing ethnic heritage cultures under UNESCO protection, enquiring about the line between culture studies and folkloric tourism. Tatiana Dianova (Moscow) in her presentation focused on the elements of Russian national symbolism, beginning from the Firebird and the three bogatyrs to those used at Sochi Olympic Games.

Dionizjusz Czubala's (Poland) paper (read by his wife Galina Kutyrivova-Czubala) analysed the conspiracy stories that emerged as an aftermath of the plane crash, in which the President of Poland was killed in Smolensk in April 2010. The hearsays that spread in this highly emotional situation introduced highly different theories, including political conspiracies.

Natalia Efimova in her presentation answered questions about how folklore disseminated in the well-known Russian social network VKontakte (vk.com) refers to the main values in youth culture and which of these values stand in the foreground.

Anna Sokolova (Moscow) presented, with excellent examples, memorial sites that emerged spontaneously after the plane crash on September 7, 2011, in which the whole Yaroslavl hockey team was killed, focusing on the phenomenon more generally, and specifically on the texts that the mourners used at the memorial sites. Kalle Voolaid, Research Secretary of the Estonian Sports Museum, spoke about Georg Lurich, a legendary Estonian strongman, as a heroic prototype of folk tales, focusing on the narratives that have been passed on until today.

Natalia Urvantseva (Petrozavodsk) discussed the stereotypical image and influence of Lenin in children's folklore of the 1920s, for instance, in games (after Lenin's death in 1924, children played Lenin's funeral and other games related to him).

Albert Baiburin (St. Petersburg) delivered a paper on the etymology and folkloric developments of the expression "101th kilometre". This term was unofficially widely used in the former Soviet Union and meant that certain groups of people (mainly the politically repressed and criminals) were not allowed to live nearer than 100 kilometres from Moscow, Leningrad (now St. Petersburg), the capitals of union republics and closed towns. Olga Frolova (Moscow) focused, in her paper on humour, on abstract anecdotes, weighing their nature and characters in them.

Konstantin Shumov's (Perm) presentation highlighted the anthropology of death, memorial websites for pets and their naïve and sentimental poetry. He also discussed the naïve-mythological conception related to the death of a pet, and naïve art through which people who mourn their pets express their feelings.

In conclusion it could be said that in the section of modern folklore interdisciplinary and especially sociological approaches contributed to the analysis of many topics. It is understandable as contemporary material, which can be collected together with presentational situations and contextual environments, is much easier for the researcher to interpret in socio-cultural contexts and functions than, for instance, archival texts that are over a hundred years old.

The evenings were filled with a wide range of cultural events to be selected from. A festival of folkloric films took place within the framework of the congress, and several workshops (traditional handicraft, choreography, etc.) were organised. Every evening representatives of different institutions introduced their most recent publications, the majority of which were bulky academic volumes of folklore texts from different regions. A collection of articles dealing with general issues in folklore theory and topical problems of folklore was published specially for the congress.

A detailed programme of the 3rd All-Russian Congress of Folklorists can be found at <http://folkcentr.ru/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/3-конгресс.pdf>. Unfortunately, the organisers failed to publish the abstracts for the event; yet, articles written on the basis of the presentations are planned to be published in special collections.

Piret Voolaid