

the link between a lake's shape and its name, and between former and present-day location of the lake (according to place legends, lakes are travelling beings).

Aleksiej Dziermant (Minsk, Belarus) presented a mysterious group of sacred stones that are regarded as shoemakers (*шаўцы*) and tailors (*краўцы*). According to this motif, people used to bring material to the stone, asking it to make boots or sew clothes. The distribution of the natural holy places of this kind does correlate with the area of Striated Ware Culture on the territory of present-day Belarus and Lithuania from the 2nd millennium BC to the 3rd and 4th century AD. According to Dziermant, the abovementioned stones might be interpreted as cult places, and the use of the stones has continued even to the historical times.

Vykintas Vaitkevičius (Klaipėda, Lithuania) drew attention to the local peculiarities of the motifs of Lithuanian place legends: namely, 'to burn sacrifice (somewhere)' and 'to constantly burn holy fire (somewhere)'. The key distribution area of these motifs covers the Samogitia region in western Lithuania and overlaps with the area of prehistoric natural holy places called *Alkos kalnai* ('Alka Hill'). The second, more isolated area of the above motifs covers the Utena Land in East Lithuania and concerns hillforts that were sometimes used during the 1st millennium BC – 1st millennium AD.

The conference participants were also introduced to some natural holy places in the environs of Kernavė and Vilnius. The creative folklore group Sedula provided entertainment in the conference's cultural programme, and Ms Beatričė Laurinkutė presented a special art installation "Wells in the Baltic Culture".

In 2009, the conference on natural holy places in the Baltic Sea region will be held in Turaida and organized by the Latvian Academy of Culture.

Vykintas Vaitkevičius

THE SECOND SEMINAR OF ESTONIAN AND LITHUANIAN FOLKLORISTS: "TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY 2"

On the last days of September in 2008, the Department of Folkloristics at the Estonian Literary Museum welcomed colleagues from the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore. Two years before, the Estonian folklorists had visited the Institute in Vilnius where Lithuanian colleagues introduced their research activities and hosted the first joint seminar in the series "Traditions and Innovations in Contemporary Society".

While the first seminar had been based mainly on the papers of Estonian folklorists, on the second seminar seven out of ten papers were delivered by Lithuanian folklorists, who introduced the current situation in Lithuanian folkloristics and the main projects carried out at the institute. Estonian folklorists discussed the recent

trends in the study of minor forms of folklore, and described the situation of digitising archive materials in Estonia as well as the significance of this activity in contemporary folklore studies.

The opening paper “The Tradition of Lithuanian Verbal Charms” was delivered by Daiva Vaitkevičienė, head of the Department of Folk Narrative at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore. The paper explored the traditional Lithuanian charms and provided an overview of the main characteristics of Lithuanian charms, proceeding from the broader genre context of Lithuanian verbal magic.

Dalia Zaikauskienė, PhD student at the Department of Folk Narrative, analysed Lithuanian proverbs in her paper entitled “Development Tendencies of Lithuanian Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings”, touching upon anti-proverbs of more recent origin and their regional peculiarities. So far, anti-proverbs have received little attention among Estonian scholars.

The first session concluded with presentations by scholars of minor forms of folklore at the Department of Folkloristics, Estonian Literary Museum: Arvo Krikmann discussed the issues of the geographical distribution of Balto-Finnic proverbs and Anneli Baran spoke about phraseology in the language use of Estonian youth. Krikmann took a retrospective look at “Proverbia septentrionalia” (PS), the major project for publishing and studying common Balto-Finnic proverbs. The first volume of PS was published in 1985. The publication of the following volumes has been delayed; nevertheless, the manuscript includes all the necessary variants of Finnish, Karelian, Estonian, Votian, Veps, Livonian, Russian and Baltic (mostly Latvian), German and Scandinavian proverbs and is currently at the stage of technical editing. Compared to the first volume of PS, the quantitative and statistical data of the proverb corpus has significantly changed. Krikmann introduced in more detail the different aspects of the geographical distribution of common Balto-Finnic proverbs. Anneli Baran’s paper was based on the material collected during the most recent large-scale school lore collection from Estonian youth. The collection campaign resulted in anti-proverbs, newer quips and catchwords (derived mostly from commercials, films, and television shows), slang, etc. and the speaker analysed the developments, changes and tendencies of the material.

The second session opened with a paper by Lithuanian folklorist Povilas Krikščiūnas, who discussed chain letters, analysing the differences in what has been considered traditional folklore and contemporary folklore. Among other things, the paper posed a question about the systematization of traditional texts and the varying types of chain letters mediated in electronic channels under a single genre.

Relying on versatile source material, Dovilė Kulakauskienė observed children’s drawings as a part of children’s lore, emphasising the aspects, motifs and stereotypes that can be studied by folklore methods. Visual material is as good for analysis as verbal information and helps to follow the patterns of a child’s worldview which has been influenced by age, sociocultural factors, family values, peer relations, or phenomena of mass culture and media.

Aušra Žičkienė presented the commented edition of winter holiday songs (including folk songs about Christmas mumming and Christmas songs), which was recently published in the series *Lithuanian Folk Songs*. The book, which took five years to complete, forms a representative corpus of winter calendar songs with its unique features. The edition includes two academic articles which discuss the linguistic and musicological

aspects of the songs and provides an overview of the general character of the genre and the old and new development of the songs.

The paper “Current Folkloric Fieldwork in Lithuania: Individual Experiences” by Bronė Stundžienė explored the most recent fieldwork projects in Lithuania, especially in the regions of Samogitia in the northwestern and Dzūkija in the southern part of the country. The field research has expanded the material held in the local folklore archives and reflects the contemporary situation of folklore. This is manifest in the survival of traditional folklore, but also in the fact that contemporary cultural context exerts strong influence on folklore and this leads to a need for completely novel fieldwork theory and collection methods.

Rūta Žarskienė’s presentation “Collection of the Lithuanian Folklore Archives and their Digitization” offered a brief insight into the electronic ways of preserving folklore collections in Lithuanian Folklore Archives, an activity which enlivened in the second half of the 1990s. Žarskienė demonstrated the technical solutions of digitisation projects and used software (for instance, in 1998 the first digital database of audio-recordings was established).

The seminar day concluded with the joint paper “Dialogue between Digitisation and Contemporary Folklore Research” by Mare Kõiva, Liisa Vesik, and Piret Voolaid from Estonian Literary Museum, which focused on the beginning of folklore databases in Estonia. The aim of the paper was to give an overview of the set of problems encountered in the course of compiling folklore databases, which were established to serve different purposes and were targeted at different audiences. These problems are connected with archiving, recording material, the compatibility of databases, and achieving a user-friendly result. Several genre-typological, thematic and culturological databases, which have been recently completed at the Department of Folkloristics, Estonian Literary Museum, confirm that folklore archives are able to respond to new socio-cultural processes and challenges.

The seminar clearly revealed the emergence of a new generation of scholars in Lithuanian folkloristics, and addressed many exciting contemporary research topics.

Participants of the seminar were invited to a tour in Lääne-Viru County, North Estonia, where under the expert guidance of Tõnno Jonuks they visited the Emumägi observation tower, the churches of Väike-Maarja and Viru-Nigula, the sacred natural places in Tõrma and Kunda, the holy site of Tammealuse in the Samma village, the Toolse stronghold and Pada hillfort, and had a chance to admire the North-Estonian limestone cliffs on the coast, and the Valaste waterfall. The tour ended with a visit to the Old-Believers’ (Staroverets’) villages of Kolkja and Kasepää at Lake Peipsi. Lithuanian folklorists also visited the Department of Folkloristics, the Estonian Folklore Archives, and the Chair of Estonian and Comparative Folklore at the University of Tartu.

Participants of the seminar agreed that the friendly relations between the two Baltic countries would be conducive to a fruitful cooperation, which could be enhanced together with colleagues in Latvian Folklore Archives, and also that it is always a good idea to keep an eye on the achievements of colleagues in the neighboring countries.

The seminar was organised by the Department of Folkloristics at the Estonian Literary Museum. Further information about it is available at <http://www.folklore.ee/rl/fo/konve/2008/eelt/>.

Piret Voolaid