

Foreword

An unresearched question, a fresh theme, a new angle, an original methodological approach – these are the selection criteria according to which we try to shape the collection of articles presented in each issue. At the same time, themes that emerged in previous issues continue to be explored, most notably the reevaluation of Soviet era works and phenomena. In *Colloquia 30*, four out of seven articles are devoted to this question. This discussion is bracketed by two literary giants of the last century – the early twentieth century classic Vaižgantas, and Sigitas Parulskis, a classic of the early twenty-first century. The young scholar Aistė Kučinskienė offers an original analysis of the formation of legend about Vaižgantas as a writer and a person to explain his considerable influence on the literary context of that time. While most young scholars favor contextual methods of analysis, Virginija Cibarauskė succeeds in fusing sociocultural approaches with detailed poetic analysis. Drawing on Yuri Lotman’s cultural semiotics and the possibilities offered by intertextual theory, she presents a detailed analysis of Parulskis’s poem “Ode to a Furrier” and constructs a model of his poetic identity from a harmony of different formants: cultural memory, the poet’s own self-understanding, and the architectonics of the poem.

Because questions of ideological context are crucial to studies of the Soviet period, the historian Aurimas Švedas’s article “Justinas Marcinkevičius’s Drama *Mindaugas*: At the Intersections of Soviet Ideology, Political History, and Historiography” is especially valuable for its firm factual basis. The article clearly identifies the limitations that existed, during the Soviet period, on the exploration of historical themes in literature. New interpretative light is shed on the cult drama *Mindaugas*; in the future, the historiographic portion of the article will be useful to all those encountering overviews of historically themed works dating from that time. Švedas’s study is complemented by an interesting document presented by Elena Baliutyte under the rubric “Publications” – an abridged version of Lenin Prize laureate Eduardas Mieželaitis’s journal, which is currently held in the Lithuanian Literature and Art Archive, and in which Mieželaitis recorded speeches, statements, and remarks made by Nikita Krushchev and Communist Party leaders during meetings with representatives of the creative intelligentsia and the art community. These anti-artist outbursts

by Party leaders, which took place on 17 December 1962 and 7–8 March 1963, have gone down in history as manifestations of the regime's growing brutality, and as marking the end of the Soviet "thaw".

Drawing on a study by the German scholar Peter Sloterdijk, Rimantas Kmita's article "Anger as a Cultural Category: What Can the Ancient Greeks Contribute to the Understanding of Sigitas Geda's Poetry?" offers an original cultural and psychosocial prism through which to examine this Lithuanian poet's writing and attitude. Understood as an archaic creative force, anger was an innovative source of Geda's extraordinary creative and individual vitality, and helped him to productively break with Lithuanian poetic tradition. In contrast to the phenomenon of Geda's continued relevance (the poet would have celebrated his 70th birthday this year, and he receives steady critical attention), the poet Juozas Macevičius, who was well-known during Soviet times, is virtually forgotten today. In her empirically rich article "Juozas Macevičius: Loyalty to One's Generation and to Oneself" Donata Mitaitė examines this example of "erasure" and creates a portrait of a poet who dedicated himself to socialist ideals. The range of Soviet-era studies is expanded by Gintarė Bernotienė's interdisciplinary article "Artists' Poetry of the 1960s and 1970s: From the Antanas Martinaitis Archive", in which she examines unpublished poetry, letters, and puns by this well-known Lithuanian painter. Presenting other artist-poets who received recognition at that time, the author situates Martinaitis's poetry in that context and shows how he drew heavily on mystical experiences of nature, expressed adoration for folk culture, and was original in his use of small, four-line, forms.

This section of the journal ends with Neringa Mikalauskiene's psychoanalytic article "Dalia Staponkutė: Language as the Subject's Homeland", which deals with the most recent phenomenon in Lithuanian literature – the contemporary Lithuanian essay. Highlighting Jacques Lacan's foundational theses about correspondences between the structure of the unconscious and the structure of language, this scholar identifies the main concerns of this reflexive writer, who has long lived in Cyprus: the reflexivity of language and contemplation about the relation between maternity and language.

Algis Kalėda's conversation with Professor Tadeusz Bujnicki, a well-known polonist and scholar of Lithuanian literature, explores issues related to Lithuanian-Polish cultural ties and opens up the need for more comparative studies.

The reviews in *Colloquia 30* generate the critical, reflexive space so crucial for mature disciplinary growth. This time five books that are important for Lithuanian culture are reviewed. Marijus Šidlauskas's innovative review of Brigita Speičytė's monograph about the poet Maironis is lively and critically daring – instead of simple praise the reviewer focuses on the polemics of the work. Why, in Nijolė Kašelionienė's monograph about French literary representations of Lithuania and Lithuanians are the latter referred to as barbarians? The answer is in Genovaitė Dručutė's careful reading and review of the book. The reviews also discuss Professor Vanda Zaborskaitė's autobiography, a monograph about the late nineteenth/early twentieth century marginal author and important cultural actor Jonas Žilius, and Professor Viktorija Daujotytė's original (especially from the point of view of genre) book *Laisvojo mąstymo properšos* (Interstices of Free Thought), which the reviewer describes as elliptical, fragmented, and hazardous, concluding that “[i]n the humanities, thought shifts easily into metaphor”.

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