

Foreword

A comparativist scope and attention to canon-formation are the distinct thematic threads, and notably international components, running through this 33rd issue of *Colloquia*.

Purdue University professor Thomas F. Broden kindly agreed that the journal publish a chapter from his scholarly biography of Algirdas Julius Greimas; this text about Greimas' life up to the Second World War was proposed and translated by Professor Kęstutis Nastopka, a founding member of the A. J. Greimas Study Centre at Vilnius University. It would seem that some of the issues (especially political ones) discussed by this author are more familiar, and perhaps even better understood, in the master semiotician's homeland. While addressed to a broad foreign audience, this analysis of the Lithuanian, Slavic, Germanic, and French intellectual traditions that shaped Greimas will no doubt be of interest to Lithuanian humanities scholars.

In an article reviewing the relations between literary works recognized as classics and their screen adaptations, Natalija Arlauskaitė presents the classic as a break, or turning point category alongside which the common interests it shapes come into conflict. Reviewing inter-disciplinary approaches to this question, the author reminds us that the creation of classics and alternative canons is enmeshed with rivalries around hierarchies and cultural and political visibility, at the same time pointing out that the creation of any new canon is a field of battle which generates a new version of normative traditions and consolidates models of identity around cultural tradition.

Doctoral student Dalia Pauliukevičiūtė examines the Polish writer Maria Rodziewiczówna's works, published in Lithuanian periodicals at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, from a new angle: they become a window onto the developing consciousness of a new reader, the spread of positivist thinking, and the continuing force of Lithuanian romanticism during that period. An important thrust of the article – that the serialization of entertaining stories in which fictional and common heroes travel from one issue to another, visiting anonymous communities of readers and over time connecting them as they become a nation – resonates with the idea of how popular literature is rooted in the classics.

Reda Pabarčienė analyzes the playful structure of an intertextual double parody in Kostas Ostrauskas' play *Eloiza ir Abelardas* (Eloise and Abelard). She reconstructs Ostrauskas' textual strategies by drawing on medieval theology, the letters of real historical figures functioning as palimpsests in the work, famous theological disputes, and elements of hagiographic, courtly, and feminist discourse. The "cultural guide/parodist" Ostrauskas manoeuvres these intertexts, creating a postmodern drama of ambiguity, while the intertexts themselves, with their sophistic logic, are valuable for the insights they offer into contemporary Christian cultural references.

With their biographical projections and explorations of historical cataclysm, the novels compared in Imelda Vedrickaitė's article – by Lithuanian émigré writer Algirdas Landsbergis and American novelist Kurt Vonnegut – also deal with cultural themes and images. Vedrickaitė grounds these authors' different visions of survival in how they see the role of the miraculous, and ritual transformation, in the conquering of history. She bases her analysis of the Landsbergis archive in assumptions about the redemptive influence of language, consciousness, and moral choices in the author's literary and political life; Vonnegut's characters, on the other hand, are identified as taking the opposite stance of hopelessness and self-referential fantasy.

As a year celebrating the classic Lithuanian author Donelaitis draws to a close, Marijus Šidlauskas defends appreciation of the classics from aggressive vulgarization in the "Domino of Opinions" section of the journal. Šidlauskas, who is this year's recipient of the Vytautas Kubilius award for literary criticism, responds passionately to a challenge issued by Kristina Sabaliauskaitė in her novel *Danielius Dalba* and the self-deprecation of other "Dalbic" authors, proposing that the proliferation of clichés about national character can only be resisted through more challenging readings of the paradigmatic meanings inherent in classics, tradition, and continuity.

The "Reviews" section of this issue is strong. Jūratė Sprindytė reviews Vytautas Martinkus' extended study *Estezė ir vertinimai* (Esthesis and Evaluations), highlighting how appealing methods of creating values, spiritual powers, and meanings function in current Lithuanian literary scholarship. In his review of Tomas Venclova's substantial and wide-ranging collection of criticism *Pertrūkis tikrovėje* (A Break in Reality), Marijus Šidlauskas also touches on questions of Lithuanian consciousness, pointing out that this work merits both praise and

critique. Ilona Čiužauskaitė reviews Ramunė Bleizgienė's monograph *Privati tyla, vieši balsai: Moterų tapatybės kaita XIX . pabaigoje–XX a. pradžioje* (Private Silence, Public Voices: Shifts in Female Identity at the End of the Nineteenth and Beginning of the Twentieth Centuries). In her reading of Viktorija Daujotytė's *Boružė, ropojanti plentu: Prigimtinės kultūros kasinėjimai Marcelijaus Martinaičio kūryboje* (A Ladybug Crawling Across the Highway: Excavating Innate Culture in the Work of Marcelijus Martinaitis), Donata Mitaitė further problematizes that writer's relationship with "rural civilization".

In the discussion published here about doctoral studies, leisure time, and academic spaces it is noted that intellectual analysis permeates even free time that should not be subject to the pragmatism of academia. This tendency raises the hope that the controversial and changing perspectives of humanities scholars will allow criticism to explore ever wider waters.

GINTARĖ BERNOTIENĖ