

Foreword

A summery, colourful Volume 38 of *Colloquia* opens with two articles oriented toward Baltistics. Vigmantas Butkus presents an in-depth look at the phenomenon of literary Baltistics and its diverse range; he both discusses the traditional concept of Baltistics, based on ethnolinguistic commonality, and a broader, functional concept of the discipline incorporating geographic, historical, and political premises. This research is valuable for its attempt to comprehensibly describe and conceptualise literary Baltistics concepts that have existed to date, and for its daring in challenging some of them. A Baltistics substratum also exists in Dalia Čiočytė's article "The 'christening' of Ancient Baltic Religion in Kazys Bradūnas's Poetry," which applies literary theology, a method rarely used in Lithuanian literary studies. This author draws innovative connections between key aspects in Bradūnas's poetry (rural life, statehood) and elements of Christianity, most markedly in her original interpretation of the ancient mythological figure of the snake Žilvinas.

One of the most difficult, but also most interesting, challenges that literary scholars face is to make canonical authors – so-called classics – relevant, to discover aspects of their works that are interesting today or were previously neglected. In the course of the discussion about the East Prussian author Ieva Simonaitytė, who has traditionally been seen as a chronicler of the Klaipėda region, new directions for studying her work are formulated: the currency of its Germanic aspects, autobiographical elements, female experience, the rejuvenation of classic texts within the school curriculum.

Aistė Kučinskienė offers an unexpected comparison between Juozas Tumas-Vaižgantas and Spanish author Miguel de Unamuno – she not only highlights these authors' comparable weight but problematizes certain comparativist theoretical postulates (the complexes of "small" literatures, correlations between international and national literary fields). This comparativist study is especially appealing for its polemical stance – its hermeneutics of suspicion – and its non-categorical, questioning, doubting intonation. One of the most appealing aspects of this issue is that a portion of the articles are stylistically free from the dry formality of academic writing.

As we move further and further away from Soviet times, literary scholars continue to find new angles for examining questions of reception during that period. Vytautas Rubavičius draws on fundamental ethical hermeneutics to discuss issues related to adaptation during the Soviet period – how both ideological

and methodological constraints are replaced by personal engagement and the passion for teaching. His article can be seen as an attempt at a personal ethical hermeneutics. Aurelija Mykolaitytė's focus on the concept of cultural trauma is another meaningful expansion of the research into the Soviet period. The two authors she analyses symptomatically indicate the long-term effects of the cultural trauma wrought by the occupation.

Akvilė Šimėnienė surveys the development of feminist phenomenology and discusses application and adaptation of its ideas in the work of Lithuanian and Spanish literature scholar Birutė Ciplijauskaitė.

This issue's "Domino of Opinions" section contains a speech by Giedrė Kazlauskaitė (winner of the Lithuanian Literature and Folklore Institute's annual prize for the most creative book), in which she discusses reading as form of cultural participation and makes the heartening observation that "the Institute's community sees itself as being in solidarity with writers – as a single body of readers."

Four other articles contribute to the academic community's self-awareness by reflecting upon cultural phenomena and moving beyond national and linguistic boundaries. Marijus Šidlauskas appreciates Audinga Peluritytė's monograph *Ribos architektonika* (*The Architectonics of Boundaries*) for how it permeates the concept of boundaries and engages it at different levels, and for its localisation of Lithuanian literature within broader European contexts. *Colloquia* reprints one of the many responses to the publication of a German translation of Antanas Škėma's *Balta drobulė* (*The White Shroud*), by Claudia Sinning. Two publications reviewed in this issue significantly expand the field of cultural memory: Brigita Speičytė analyses the medical doctor and cultural activist Stanislovas Moravskis' volume of reminiscences about members of the minor nobility (translated from the Polish, with generous comments, by historian Reda Griškaitė). Speičytė qualifies Moravski's work as a still insufficiently considered nineteenth century phenomenon – "the birth of realism from the spirit of memoir"; the multiple contexts and rich factual foundation of this review render it close to the condition of an article. Viktorija Daujotytė presents Speičytė's own compilation of an impressive, two-volume anthology of literature and criticism (1795–1831). In the very title of the review – "Philology as a General and a Personal Area of Interest" – Daujotytė proposes a more general understanding of the mission of philology: "The anthology makes it possible to speak about ontology: about choices and decisions, positions and attitudes, about freedom for the world and responsibility to one's own people."

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