

The Voices of Maironis: His Oeuvre, Activities, Memory

Summary

This collective monograph systemises for the first time the work of literary historians and critics, historiography experts, and art researchers on Maironis as a seeker of new forms of creative self-expression, a founder of a tradition, and a nurturer of high intellectual culture. Maironis's place in the canon of Lithuanian literature was determined primarily by his poetic work, yet other aspects of his public activity were also important: the symbolic capital accumulated during his lifetime left significant traces in collective memory. Particular emphasis is placed on the problem of genre and new possibilities in the interpretation of the classic works.

It is suggested to read Maironis's poetry as a narrative of a coherent genre that is expressed in the form of a collection of lyrical poetry. In his poems one recognises intersections of lyrical and epic beginnings, a universal picture of the epoch and emotional development of individual personages, and psychological responses to historical changes. Analysis of his drama works reconstructs links with genre models of the drama of the earlier epochs, the classical tragedy, and even with philosophical existentialist polemics. Considerable attention is paid to Maironis's reputation as a creator of historical myths. Along with the literary texts that have become part of the canon of cultural memory, the field of research encompasses popularised historiographical studies, sermons, lectures on the topic of 'social question', and verbatim records of political meetings. Maironis arises as an innovator of poetical language and a target of attacks by decadent trends, a rational thinker and an emotional visionary, a talented administrator and a solitary erudite, who was partial to a constitutional

monarchy, remained faithful to the Catholic dogmas, and exerted a strong impact on modernising Lithuania.

Lithuania underwent significant cultural, political, and social changes during the span of his active involvement. It was the time when the standard language of ethnic Lithuanians was formed and orthography codified; the network of institutions providing tuition in the native language emerged and was developing; new literary genres and styles became established; the intellectuals who were expanding the field of their influence were daringly turning towards European culture. The social divide between the ruling elite and impoverished peasants was deepening, and a new force, that of politically organised urban proletariat, was taking shape. The idea of the autonomy of Lithuania, and, later, of a nation-state crystallised, and the clerical and patriarchal elite came to be opposed by the intelligentsia of positivist views and educated at secular universities. These changes had an impact on Maironis: to be heard, he had to find new forms of literary expression (although in many of his best-known works he expressed rhetoric regret about not being understood by his contemporaries).

In the chapter 'Maironio *Pavasario balsai*: lyrikos rinkinys' (Maironis's *Pavasario balsai*: A Collection of Lyrical Poetry'), Brigita Speičytė makes one remember that the poet had been working on one poetry collection all his life and regularly improved his earlier texts, and for this reason his editorial changes are of great interest to textologists: he consciously developed the concept of a poetry collection as an independent poetical genre. Maironis wanted the collection to stand out in a proper genre condition and to regulate the process of the creation of meaning. The conceptuality of the poetry collection resulted in the possibilities of the interpretation of individual poems: their interpretation demanded taking into account the context of the whole genre structure, the dotted line of the plot that emerges from the compositional plan. The author discusses cyclical trends that became obvious in the epoch of Romanticism along with the enhancement of the position of the author. *Pavasario balsai* (Voices of Spring) is the first poetry collection of modern (but not modernist) poetics, influenced by the cyclical trend, individually composed, and

one that acquired features of genre stability. That was how it was when it first appeared in 1895, and it preserved genre features up until 1920, when the last author-edited version was published. The recurring sequences of texts, sub-cycles revealing common semantic aspects, and stable opening and closing frames are singled out. The collection opens with the introduction of an emotional, sensitive, and enthusiastic 'new hero' who performs the role of a romantic genius; after that, historical reflections are replaced by poems inspired by individual experiences; a sub-cycle fusing the themes of nature and love is inserted, and a separate group consists of the texts varying the theme of an answer or response. Each new edition of *Pavasario balsai* was associated with a modification of the compositional model suggested by the genre form, and each time this modification changed and complicated the frame of the collection. The diachronic overview of editing, composing, and expansion of the 1895, 1905, 1913, and 1920 editions show that *Pavasario balsai* is a dynamic genre-defined whole that disintegrated during the preparation of the poetry volume of Maironis's *Raštai* (Works) in 1927, which became a collection of a mixed genre structure in which the value of the immanent independent poem was emphasised against the structure of the whole collection.

The problem of the genre definition is also addressed in the chapter 'Maironio poemų istorija' (The History of Maironis's Poems) by Ramunė Bleizgienė. How much of the lyrical dimension is left in a narrative poem? Is it possible that the narrative aspect and the desire to tell the story of the heroes of the national movement might overshadow poetic imagination and emotional discharge? The early narrative poem *Lietuva* (Lithuania, 1888) is interpreted as a poetic version of a travel guide around an idealised country: the reader's field of vision is expanded from a particular route to a universal picture of the homeland, the most significant places and regions of Lithuania are visited, and the cycles of natural time convey the intuitive relation between patriarchal society and history. The themes of the unfolding awakening ethnic identity is highlighted in the narrative poem *Tarp skausmų į garbę* (Through Pain to Glory, 1895): emphasis is placed

on the narrator's complicated relationship with the personages and on the collisions in the relations between groups of personages, and transformation of erotic discourse into a patriotic argument between men and women is revealed. In *Znad Biruty* (1904), a narrative poem intended to the Polish nobility, a woman of noble birth is shown as the narrator's equal partner who embodies positivist values. The figure of the poet of messianic intentions, who is forced to suppress his true feelings, is moved to the centre of the plot. The poem depicts the desirable and idealised situation of the harmony between the estates – what could be, and the author relates it with a lyrical strategy in an epic text. The narrative structure of *Jaunoji Lietuva* (Young Lithuania, 1908) resembles the plot of a novel, while the portraits of the characters representing the young generation of *litvomanai* (lovers of everything Lithuanian) are psychologically and socially motivated. The characters lose their idealistic aura and delve into prosaic concerns of the historical process. Maironis's late narrative poems *Raseinių Magdė* (Magdė of Raseiniai, 1909) and *Mūsų vargai* (Our Trials, 1920) create the impression of recurrence and sharpen social issues. In *Raseinių Magdė*, a story of 'a bad example' and moral decline told for didactic purposes, the poet attaches significance to the issue of public leaders, no longer hopes to integrate the nobility into the newly-designed Lithuanian public, although he still dreams of uniting patriotic forces and restoring the disrupted love of the public elite for the native land. Tradition-breaking characters are introduced as aliens and anti-heroes. Stronger story lines in later narrative poems are linked to the changed atmosphere of the early twentieth century when the figure of a spiritual genius and poet-prophet is no longer sufficient; all melodramatic personages must undergo an emotional shock, and the plot is directed by the tension between radical forces of good and evil. The poem *Mūsų vargai* is introduced as a historical chronicle with melodramatic elements in which the poet is incapable of dissociating himself from too familiar relation with the events depicted.

The chapter on Maironis's dramaturgy by Aušra Martišiūtė-Linartienė also addresses the problem of genre and links it with the

trends of moralisation. For a long time scholars have been puzzled by ambiguous genre definition of these works related to unfulfilled expectations. The author brings to mind the Faustian context that is important in the libretto *Kame išganymas* (Where Is Salvation, 1895), associations with models of mediaeval religious morality dramas and mysteries inclined to abstraction and symbolism. The libretto calls for the understanding of the order of the God-established world that cannot be ruined by fallible people. Zonis, the protagonist, is a sceptical yet open to ideas intellectual of the modern times; he is also affected by the Lithuanian context – Donelaitis, who in his turn points to biblical allegories. Maironis's drama trilogy – *Kęstučio mirtis* (Kęstutis's Death, 1921), *Vytautas pas kryžiuočius* (Vytautas at the Crusaders, 1925), *Didysis Vytautas – karalius* (King Vytautas the Great, 1930) – should be compared with Vydūnas's works of a similar scope. Vydūnas leads his characters through obstacles to mysterious metaphysical experiences, and in Maironis's dramas the aspirations of idealistic heroes are ridiculed by the rulers' favourites, who pave their paths with treachery and intrigues. The author reflects on the interpretation of Maironis's dramas proposed by Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas: he compared the development of the plot and the portraits of the characters with the context of Maironis's works in historiography and looked for the links in the plot that would connect the parts of the trilogy. The author recalls the tradition of the Christian *Trauerspiel* ('a drama of grief and mourning') and the Baroque vision of 'life – theatre' and 'life – dream' revealing the problem of free will and the choice of the role. In his dramas, Maironis prevents evil forces from winning: the wicked characters are scared of punishment, experience moral suffering over intrigues into which they are drawn against their will. Both in his dramas and historical works, Maironis canonises Vytautas, but Jogaila in this trilogy is treated more forgivingly than in *Apsakymai apie Lietuvos praeigą* (Stories about Lithuania's Past), as it is secondary characters that are involved in treachery and conspiracies. In the trilogy, Maironis raises the problem of moral politics, regrets the disappearing value-based milestones, and entrenched cynicism. Networks of aides and supporters rally around the centres

of power, which shrink with the ruler of Lithuania losing significant influence: Vytautas's tragedy consists in losing his allies. Maironis's historical dramas are bound by the ruler of firm backbone and moral foundations, who seeks healing the nation of the self-pity complex, who stresses the values of honour and dignity, and authoritatively speaks about 'preventing the humiliation of Lithuania'. The plot is developed at the margin of epochs: in the poet's view, the times of Vytautas were the end of the era of the chivalry code and courtliness and the beginning of the era of Machiavellian cynicism. Emotional grief over the degradation of the world links Maironis's last poem 'Vakaro mintys' (Evening thoughts) with the drama trilogy and is its poetical commentary. From a moralist's position, the world is seen as an arena of an amoral game dominated by brutal power. The libretto *Nelaimingos Dangutės vestuvės* (Dangutė's Unfortunate Wedding, 1930) is closest to the genre of historical melodrama. It depicts an extreme situation when a person is facing the brutal power of one's own kin and of strangers, and can only oppose it by adhering to one's traditional values and giving oneself up for them. In all dramas the focus is laid on the struggle between good and evil in which the central positive protagonists take a firm individual stand.

The field of works by Maironis as a builder of a historical narrative is covered in a number of chapters. In 'Maironio istoriko fenomenas' (The Phenomenon of Maironis as a Historian), Aurelijus Gieda records an important transition from 'history for us' to 'history as such' and the continuous process of the nurturing of the tradition of the objective historical narrative (although Maironis's historiography still belongs to the popular category of 'history for us', it is probably the most perfect example of the latter). The last quarter of the nineteenth century in Lithuania, the time of flourishing nationalism, is referred to as the era of 'historiography without historians', of enthusiastic interest in 'the golden age' of the enslaved land, and of the nurturing of ethnic self-esteem (meanwhile, in the West it was the time when professional historians in university departments were facing sociologists' ideas and updating them methodologically). An important role was played by the group of the associates of *Aušra*, which was engaged

in the creation of idealised historical narratives and established the romantic literary topos of grand dukes and pagan sages in the collective consciousness. Maironis's historical works are considered popularised syntheses and textbooks intended for the broadest circles of readers, which seek practical purposes. He outlined the political guidelines of the history of Lithuania, connecting the past with the present in a search for a future strategy. Maironis wrote his first variant of Lithuania's history *Vistorija, arba Apsakymai apie Lietuvos praeigą* (History, or Stories about Lithuania's Past, 1891, under the pseudonym of Stanislovas Znavykas) adapting it to the 'resources and understanding of ordinary people'. It was reprinted three times and in its public weight and methodology overtook similar studies by Simonas Daukantas, *Aušra* associates Jonas Basanavičius and Jonas Šliūpas (Daukantas left only a framework without a planned central concept, Basanavičius was focused on research into the ethnogenesis of the Lithuanians, while Šliūpas expanded too much on the theories of social reforms). Maironis's work distinguished itself among others because its author devoted attention to nineteenth-century problems and briefly outlined the context of Russian oppression. Seeking a popular format, Maironis shortened the text, presented events in a schematic way, and omitted more complex episodes. He distinctly singled out 'the golden age' – the epoch of Vytautas, but gave less attention to pagan times. Maironis's narrative of the history of Lithuania is a canonical paradigm of national history.

Eugenijus Žmuidas's chapter in this monograph is devoted to deliberations of historiosophical problems in Maironis's *Lietuvos istorija* (The History of Lithuania). An important reference point in this study is Hayden White's metacritical theory of historical imagination. The author observes that the early reviewers considered Maironis's history not so much an academic as a popular memory-refreshing book. The nationally-awakening peasantry and the broadening network of the advocates of the national movement demanded an enlightening work. Allegedly, Maironis was capable of writing an academic work but he intentionally addressed the masses. The attitude of Maironis-historian is presented as political: he implemented Daukantas's pro-

ject under new conditions, expressing, in modern language, political aspirations of the community inspired by the heroic past. A historian creating a national identity had to present oneself as a universal expert in all fields and disciplines. Maironis's history is seen in the context of the broadest historiographical tradition that encompasses those who spread the grand narrative of the grand Duchy of Lithuania in various languages (Maciej Strykowski, Teodor Narbutt, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski) as opposed to the imperial Russian historiographical tradition. Historiographically, Maironis's subjective reflection and trends of ideologisation can be recognised. He explains the regularities of progress by theological arguments and divine will. Based on White's classification of historiography types, Maironis's history is closest to the heroic novel of Jules Michelet, because, by personifying the nation as a hero of 'the golden age' touched by a tragedy, the poet imparted the hope of resurrection to it.

In the chapter on the works of literary historiography, Ramutė Dragenytė leaves no stone unturned in her search for attributes of originality and innovation of Maironis's concept. Maironis's *Trumpa lietuviškos rašliavos apžvalga* (A Short History of Lithuanian Writing, first published in 1906) should be compared with Jonas Šliūpas's *Lietuviškieji raštai ir raštininkai* (Lithuanian Writings and Writers, 1890). In both overviews, the boundaries of national literature are defined, they are limited to the ethnolinguistic criterion, Herderian arguments of the 'nation's spirit', and leave the texts in other languages outside the national canon. The overview of national literature points to the revival of the nation's cultural ambitions, calls back to mind the glorious times of Vytautas when the Lithuanian language had not yet been expelled from the ruler's milieu. It is the continuity of the philological history and the vitality of writing despite of administrative restrictions that became a stimulus for extending national history up to the living moment. A literary history was to provide foundations for the nation's existence and to contribute to the establishment of political discourse. Maironis realised he was working on the history of writing as such and not that of literature, and made a clear distinction between them. He did not look for aesthetic values in writings of a

religious or practical nature. His aesthetic views were conservative and classicist; he could not stand low style, rough language, and barbarisms. He could rebuke authors for their ideological 'fallacies', yet praise their language. The author emphasises that Maironis's literary history not only follows the traditional bio-bibliographical method (inherited from Liudvikas Adomas Jucevičius and Motiejus Valančius): Maironis-literary historian creates a plot of a coherent narrative and systemically breaks the literary process down into periods. When introducing Maironis's *Trumpa visuotinės literatūros istorija* (A Short History of World Literature, 1926), the author emphasises the context: the growing influence of comparative studies, increasingly dominating global look at world literatures, rejection of the Eurocentric perspective, and inclusion of global literature in the curriculum of the University of Lithuania (there appeared overview and compilation articles by Vladas Dubas and Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė before Maironis). His understanding of global literature was polycentric. He was loyal to the German tradition of teaching *Weltliteratur*, and, just like other romanticists, enthusiastically cited Oriental works, and recognised the imprints of different cultures in the traditions of national literatures. It is difficult to trace back the sources that Maironis followed in compiling his own canon of world literature: presumably, he created an original version of literary history. Placing emphasis on moderation, Maironis considered the natural quality of expression and clarity as the main feature of a work of art and criticised manifestations of naturalism. As a moderate defender of Catholicism, Maironis still demonstrated a tolerant attitude to different literary schools, even to those that opposed the Christian dogmas; he accentuated common human ethics and aesthetics, while the moralising trend in his work and sharper anti-modernist rhetoric can be justified by the fact that the textbook was primarily intended for the students of the Samogitian spiritual seminary.

An overview of Maironis's theological texts directly related to his activities as an educator and spiritual authority, and of his ideas in Christian sociology is given in the chapter 'Maironio moralinės teologijos apmatai' (An Outline of Maironis's Moral Theology) by

Gediminas Mikelaitis. The author discusses the part of Maironis's creative legacy that has hardly been published and exists mostly in manuscripts (lectures on moral theology, the dissertation, theological treatises, speeches, sermons). Maironis's largest theological work, his doctoral dissertation *De iustitia et iure* (On Law and Justice, 1903), addressed the themes of law, Christian social teaching, and moral theology. He followed the Statute of Lithuania and used Lithuanian proverbs in his text. Based on Pope Leo XIII encyclical *Rerum novarum* (1891), Maironis criticised socialism and unmasked its fatal consequences on the existence of nations. Maironis defined moral theology as a discipline of Christian morals based on speculative and scholastic methods, which analyses the relationship between what is perfect and imperfect in life. The author substantiated moral imperatives with practical reason, encouraged the audience to not only seek speculative knowledge but also to act practically and to nurture themselves. He also described the path of rational substantiation and ontological and metaphysical purposefulness as theological dramaticism. Rejecting autonomous morality, Maironis extolled the ethics of faith and based salvation on the inculcation of virtues. By highlighting the omnipotence of God, Maironis often resorted to the anthropological motivation of salvation. In his own teaching of moral theology, the professor combined Thomism, the teaching of Alphonso Liguori, and ideas of revisers of nineteenth-century theology. He related exhaustive theoretical argumentation based on deep and far-reaching knowledge with solutions of practical social problems.

The chapters on genre analysis are followed by contextual overviews and analysis of the impact of the poet's personality and creative work on the theatre, music, and politics, how it was seen in these fields, and how the process of his canonisation as an exemplary culture figure was progressing. Vida Bakutyté offers an overview of how Maironis's work was interpreted by theatre people and musicians. A hymn, a chant, a patriotic song, a historical drama, a national opera and their occasional productions in theatres comprised a significant source of inspiration for national movements. The author considers what the purpose of Maironis's libretto *Kame išganymas* might have been:

whether it was written for the stage of a musical or drama theatre, or not necessarily for the theatre. Comparison is drawn with some examples from the history of nineteenth-century Lithuanian theatre that in some aspects (genre evolution of dramaturgy, themes) correlate with Maironis's work. The author considers the possibilities of the realisation of *Kame išganymas* foreseen by the poet himself in Lithuania or St Petersburg. She also discusses the produced theatrical and musical variants of this libretto. Maironis's second libretto, *Nelaimingos Dangutės vestuvės*, was associated with an actual task, that of composing a national opera. The aim was not accomplished as the argument about the concepts of a national drama and opera took too much time, there was a confusion regarding the evaluation criteria, and a difference in opinions about the repertoire strategy of the State Theatre. The author singles out the examples of the pathos genres – mysteries, historical dramas – that were popular during Maironis's lifetime and affected reflections on the national opera and drama. Juozas Tallat-Kelpša, the composer who was planning the composition and production of the opera *Nelaimingos Dangutės vestuvės*, was searching for possibilities to merge the poetic rhetoric and folklore stylistics and to use the motifs of wedding rituals. Unfortunately, a national opera of this kind did not appear on the stage during Maironis's lifetime. Historical and political circumstances did not contribute to the success of productions of Maironis's drama trilogy about Vytautas at the State Theatre. These performances were treated as occasional and were expected to be solemn and pompous; however, when they were produced, public opinion was unfavourable both to the author and the theatre people.

Activities of Maironis as a public figure and a politician in the broad sense are discussed in the chapter 'Maironis ir politika: poetas, įsipareigojęs visuomenei' (Maironis and Politics: A Poet with Obligations to Society) by Manfredas Žvirgždas. The poet's personality was evolving under conditions of oppression by imperial Russia, with the rising wave of ethnolinguistic nationalism. When he was a student at Kiev University, he sent a note to a St. Petersburg newspaper in which he expressed his disapproval of the ban on the press in Latin charac-

ters. During the 'Aušra' period, he brought forward the issue of the prestige of the Lithuanian language. The propaganda of 'the spring of nations', which was associated with the ideas of pan-Slavism, was like an impulse stirring the Lithuanians' national self-awareness; a clearly defined Eurocentric ideology took root in Maironis's consciousness, and the compass of his values was directed towards the West. The attitude towards the social issue was formulated in the libretto *Kame išganymas* (1895): although he looked at the poor with Christian compassion, he condemned socialism as an ideology eroding the social order. When the ban on the press was lifted, Maironis collaborated with the first legal periodical publication, *Lietuvių laikraštis* (The Lithuanians' Newspaper). From 1904 to 1906, Maironis, Aleksandras Dambrauskas-Adomas Jakštis, and Pranciškus Petras Būčys wrote the programme of Lithuanian Christian Democrats. Since the party was not approved by Lithuanian bishops, it functioned as an unorganised 'spiritual union'. For the first time the programme attempted to define the ethnographic borders of future autonomous Lithuania and pointed out that Vilnius was the centre of the projected political formation. At the time of the 1905 revolution, when the public space was dominated by radicals, the politicians of clerical orientation acted as a moderate stabilising force. In the autumn of 1905, canon Maculevičius (Maironis) supported the declaration demanding 'a free university in Vilnius'. Although Maironis was sceptical of Basanavičius's initiatives, later he contributed to the creation of the 'nation's patriarch' myth. In January 1909, Mačiulis-Maironis attended a social course in Kaunas and introduced the doctrine of Pope Leo XIII to the audience. Compared with Jurgis Matulaitis, Maironis appeared more conservative and stricter towards reformist ideologies. During the First World War, Maironis was seen as a realistic candidate for the position of the bishop of Vilnius; in September 1917 he took part at the Conference of Lithuanians in Vilnius, and in November of the same year he attended Bern Conference in Switzerland. He adhered to monarchist views, supported the idea of neutrality, and insisted on delineating territorial borders of Lithuania and on constitutional guarantees of the rights and duties of ethnic minorities. After 1918, Maironis retired

from active political engagement, although he was concerned about too radical implementation of the land reform, the lack of 'national unity' and political leader (in this respect, he supported the nationalists' leader Antanas Smetona), the transformation of parliamentary democracy into caricature of parliamentarism, and rapidly arising corrupt ruling class, which became a target of his political satires.

In the closing chapter of the monograph, 'Maironio kanonizacija Lietuvos Respublikoje' (Canonisation of Maironis in the Republic of Lithuania), Viktorija Šeina discusses the circumstances that led to Maironis becoming a symbolic figure representing Lithuanian culture and national identity. Even before 1918, personal and nature lyrical poetry was considered of the greatest artistic value by literary criticism, but it was Maironis's patriotic poetry that made him popular with the public. Emotional persuasion and his gift for uniting ideologically divided national community were named as central among the qualities of Maironis's work. In the second decade of the twentieth century, when the critics supporting modernist movements were eliminating Maironis from the actual literary canon, it was thanks to older-generation critics, literary scholars, and designers of the school syllabus of Lithuanian literature that Maironis became established in the centre of the representative canon. In interwar school syllabuses of literature, the position of Maironis as the central classic of Lithuanian literature became obvious in as late as the end of the 1920s. The poetry collection *Pavasario balsai* and the narrative poem *Jaunoji Lietuva* (Young Lithuania) became mandatory in school reading lists from the mid-1920s. Presumably, *Jaunoji Lietuva* was included in the syllabus due to the role of this work in awakening the Lithuanians' national self-awareness at the turn of the twentieth century. Inclusion of *Raseinių Magdė* in the syllabus was very likely prompted by the aspiration of the architects of the 1936 educational reform to expand the teaching of national revival literature in school. The semantic axis of the school narrative of Maironis's biography was patriotism; less emphasis was placed on his vocation of the priest and the poet. When the poet died in 1932, the obituary articles that focused on Maironis's memory extolled him first of all as a herald of national re-

vival who with his poetry awakened the Lithuanians to the struggle for their language, culture, and statehood. The epoch of national rebirth during the period between the wars became the most important site in the collective memory, and Maironis's work was attributed the function of mobilisation and formation of national and civic identity, which was of vital importance for the survival of the community. Even during his lifetime, Maironis was immortalised in the place names of Kaunas and other places of Lithuania. Immediately after his funeral, reminiscences about him and his letters were published, later the histories of particular poems appeared in the press; Maironis's mausoleum was built at Kaunas Cathedral Basilica, his bust was unveiled in the garden of the War Museum, and Maironis's memorial museum was opened in the late 1930s. No other Lithuanian writer attracted as much official attention and financial resources during the period of the Republic of Lithuania as memorialisation of Maironis. Despite that, the cultural figures who opposed Smetona's regime were critical of the efforts of the political elite to immortalise the poet's memory. They found fault with the material chosen for the mausoleum that, in their opinion, was too cheap, with the epitaph that Maironis had chosen himself, and with the high-relief of the deceased by Bernardas Bučas. All that did not agree with the image of Maironis as a determined herald of revival. The establishment of Maironis's memorial museum also points to the fact that in the 1930s he had become a classic of national literature: his entire legacy and authentic living environment were seen as a cultural value that had to be preserved and passed on to future generations. When later the museum began to accumulate the legacy of both Maironis and the writers who were his contemporaries and was transformed into a museum of Lithuanian literature, Maironis's name became an emblem of entire Lithuanian literature.