

Martynas Liudvikas Rėza. *Raštai* (Collected Works).  
Volume 5: *Prūsijos lietuvių dainos* (Songs of Prussian Lithuanians)

*Summary*

This volume comprises studies in songs by Martynas Liudvikas Rėza (Martin Ludwig Rhesa, 1776–1840), a professor of theology at Königsberg University and a long-standing head of the Lithuanian language seminar. Rėza compiled the first collection of Lithuanian folk songs *Dainos oder Litthauische Volkslieder* (Dainos, or Lithuanian Folk Songs; Königsberg, 1825) with their translation into German and with the first ever study in Lithuanian folk songs, *Betrachtung über die litthauischen Volkslieder*. His songbook is a nineteenth-century work on Lithuanian studies that attracted the largest number of reviews. Such German intellectuals as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Jacob Grimm, and others wrote favourably about it. The song collection introduced the little-known Lithuanian language and nation to Europe. The book spread in the neighbouring countries and was highly valued in ethnic Lithuania. The Lithuanian songs were reprinted, translated into other languages (Czech, Polish) and artistically rearranged. Rėza's *Betrachtung* was quoted in later studies into Lithuanian songs. The present volume also includes Rėza's earlier studies: a short article on Lithuanian songs in his poetry collection *Prutena* (1809) and the article *Von der Litthauischen Volkspoesie* with a number of first ever publication of Lithuanian songs in the academic journal *Beiträge zur Kunde Preußens* (1818) published in Königsberg.

The first records of the texts of Lithuanian songs come from the seventeenth century yet due to favourable circumstances it was the songs of the Lithuanians of the Kingdom of Prussia that formed the first collection. The first Lithuanian songbook *Dainos oder Litthauische Volkslieder* is still an object of research. Like the previous volumes of Rėza's *Raštai*, this volume features articles by contemporary folklore scholars. They take a new look at Rėza's work in the field of folklore, at the movement of folk song collection in Lithuania Minor, and at the Lithuanian song collection in the international context of the nineteenth century (Liucija Citavičiūtė), examine contemporary reception of Rėza's song collection (Bronė Stundžienė), and analyse the Lithuanian and European context of the melodies of the songs in the collection (Živilė Ramoškaitė).

Rèza came from the Curonian Spit, a Lithuanian-speaking area close to Klaipėda (German *Memel*). In his young years he took an interest in Lithuanian folk songs and used some of them in his poetry collection *Prutena* (1809) that he wrote in German. In the initial stage of song collection, Rèza used sources in the periodicals and in books that mostly were translations into German. Around 1807, Rèza received first collected song texts from Prussian Lithuanian pastors Johann Gottfried Jordan and Christoph Hassenstein. In 1817, Rèza disseminated the public appeal *An die Freunde der lithauischen Literatur* (To the Friends of Lithuanian Literature) in which he asked for as many songs as possible to be sent to him in Königsberg. One of the first to respond to Rèza's appeal was Endrikis Budrius, a teacher from Pilupėnai (German *Pillupönen*; current Russian *Neuskoye*) who later also sent the melodies of the songs to him.

Rèza was an armchair scholar: he did not collect the songs himself but rallied song collectors, and in the course of several years this movement spread over the whole Prussian Lithuania, or Lithuania Minor, that is, the north-eastern part of Prussia. Over twenty song collectors have been identified so far. They were Rèza's fellow students, pastors, precentors, and cantors of Lithuanian parishes, public servants, business people, his relatives, and people from his native areas. He received the largest number of songs in 1819 when the preparation of the collection was nearing completion and about 90 songs had been sent to him after the songbook was ready to be published. The songs in the collection came from the Lithuanian provinces of Gumbinė (German *Gumbinnen*, current Russian *Gusev*), Ragainė (German *Ragnit*, current Russian *Neman*), Tilžė (German *Tilsit*, current Russian *Sovetsk*), Įsrutis (German *Insterburg*, current Russian *Tchernyakhovsk*), Klaipėda (German *Memel*) and others. Examination of Rèza's personal archive (currently kept at the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences) shows that he had collected about 200 Lithuanian songs some of which were unpublished. Rèza was also the first to collect the music of the songs. Seven melodies are included in the collection and many of them remained in his archive.

The collection *Dainos oder Littauische Volkslieder* comprises 85 songs of Prussian Lithuanians. Rèza referred to these songs as 'a love cycle'. They reflect the life of the Lithuanian woman: her first love, marriage,

and the life in the house of her parents-in-law. Along with these, there are also mythological, war, and humorous songs, lamentations, and songs-riddles. In the commentary section *Anmerkungen* Rêza explained specific Lithuanian daily and social realities, mythological images, and place names that occurred in the songs.

The collection also contains Rêza's 32-page-long study *Betrachtung über die litthauischen Volkslieder*, which was the most comprehensive study into Lithuanian songs of his time. In it, Rêza developed his thoughts on such essential features of Lithuanian songs as lyricism, tunefulness, and morality, which he had already mentioned in *Prutena* (1809) and in his article on Lithuanian folk poetry. He attempted a classification of folk songs and revealed lexical and grammatical peculiarities of the Lithuanian language: diminutives and the meanings ranging from affection to a playful hyperbole; characteristic Lithuanian diphthongs that extend unstressed syllables, and compact participial structures. In this article Rêza overviewed the history of the publication of Lithuanian songs starting from the first songs published by Pilypas Ruigys (Philipp Ruhig). Rêza highlighted not only the aesthetic value of the songs but also their significance to mythological, linguistic, historical, and ethnographical research, and to the understanding of a national character. Rêza's theoretical works have not lost their relevance. The exhaustive analysis of versification of Lithuanian folk songs included in *Dainos oder Littauische Volkslieder* is the first study of this kind in Lithuanian studies into songs.

In 1828, the Lithuanian songbook was included in the famous catalogue of literary and academic works *Allgemeines Bücher – Lexicon oder vollständiges Verzeichniß aller von 1700 bis zu Ende 1827 erschienenen Bücher*. The catalogue is a record of works published in Germany and in the countries where German is spoken and literature in German is written. This detailed bibliographic encyclopaedia is known as the *Kayser Catalogue*.

In its volume, the quality of preparation and translation, and exhaustive research the collection *Dainos oder Littauische Volkslieder* was in step with other songbooks of European nations of that time, and in some respects even surpassed them. It was used as a teaching aid for learning the Lithuanian language at the Lithuanian language seminar at Königsberg University (established in 1718). The second edition of the

song collection was prepared in 1843 by Professor Frydrichas Kuršaitis, Rėza's former student.

Some time later, Georg Heinrich Ferdinand Nesselmann, another professor at Königsberg University, levelled severe criticism at Rėza's collection referring to it as dilettante undertaking. According to him, Rėza published the songs he had received from the provinces uncritically, without correcting their grammar or versification, and without attempts to render texts suitable for singing from the large variety of variants. When Nesselmann published his own collection of Lithuanian songs, *Littauische Volkslieder* (Berlin, 1853), Rėza's collection *Dainos oder Littauische Volkslieder* was no longer reprinted in Prussia. Nesselmann's collection contains 410 songs (in Lithuanian and German) from the whole territory of Lithuania and from Samogitia, some of them with music. Rėza's songs that found their way to his collection are markedly edited. In Lithuania, Rėza's authentic collection was published in as late as the twentieth century, in 1935 and 1958, along with Lithuanian translations of the study and commentaries, but without German translations of the songs. It was in 1935 that first studies on Rėza's work appeared in Lithuania (studies by Mykolas Biržiška, and later by Ambraziejus Jonynas, Albinas Jovaišas, and others). This volume of *Raštai* with the facsimile of the song collection is regarded as its third edition in Lithuania published after sixty years.

Studies on Rėza's legacy are carried on by contemporary scholars. In her article 'Liudviko Rėzos dainynas ir jo šiuolaikinė recepcija' (Liudvikas Rėza's Songbook and Its Contemporary Reception), the folklore expert Bronė Stundžienė deliberates on the socio-cultural context of songs in Lithuania Minor, highlights the contrast between the negative attitude of Pietism and the favourable attitude of the Age of Enlightenment towards folklore with regard to the time of the appearance of the first Lithuanian songbook prepared and published by Liudvikas Rėza. The author discusses the historical significance of the songbook paying considerable attention to the history of its reprints. From a contemporary perspective, she looks at the peculiarities of the poetics of folk songs in this songbook, which are linked to the ideas of the pre-Romantic period. They have also been noted by other scholars and point to the exceptional place of this historical monument of sung poetry in the abundant legacy of Lithuanian songs. In Stundžienė's article, the contemporary interpretation of the reception of this historic songbook is based on rich heritage of the Lithuanian singing tradition.

Another study in this volume is the article ‘Liudviko Rėzos rinkinio melodijos: atsiradimo kontekstas ir ypatybės’ (The Melodies of Liudvikas Rėza’s Collection: Peculiarities and the Context of Their Appearance) by the musicologist Živilė Ramoškaitė. She analyses seven tunes first published in Rėza’s song collection. It is a very important fact in the cultural history that influenced further development of Lithuanian musical folklore. The author discusses the circumstances of the appearance of the song collection in the European and Lithuanian contexts, examines the features of the tunes, and the aspects of their origin. She also dwells on Rėza’s relationship with music. His folkloristic activities were influenced by the European ideas of pre-Romanticism that reached Königsberg and had a strong impact on the overall development of culture and scholarship. The strongest ideological shake-up was brought about by the *Sturm und Drang* movement and its most prominent leader Johann Gottfried Herder. It can be argued that published in 1825 and having spread beyond the borders of Prussia, Rėza’s song collection might have served as an example to Czech, Polish, Ukrainian, and Slovak folklore scholars because their collections of folk songs appeared later.

The facsimile of the first Lithuanian song collection *Dainos oder Litthauische Volkslieder* (Königsberg, 1825) in this volume was made from a copy that was kept in the libraries of professors of Königsberg University – first of Georg Heinrich Ferdinand Nesselmann and later of Adalbert Bezzenberger, who bestowed his library on Lithuania as a gift. The copy contains numerous manuscript notes attributed to Nesselmann. At present it is kept at the Neringa Museum. This is the first time it is introduced to the public and it has not been examined in depth yet.

New information about the circumstances of the preparation of the collection *Dainos oder Litthauische Volkslieder* (Königsberg, 1825) was obtained from the correspondence of Rėza and his contemporaries as well as from the reviews of the collection found in the archives of Lithuania and Germany (Berlin and Weimar). They contain valuable interpretations regarding the appreciation of the collection within the nineteenth-century scholarly community. Some of these sources have not been published. As the amount of the material has increased and exceeded the boundaries of the present volume of *Raštai*, research into the archival sources and their publication will be published in the sixth volume of Rėza’s *Raštai*.