

LITHUANIAN ETHNOLOGY: STUDIES IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

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Rimantas Sliužinskas

Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology, Klaipėda University, Lithuania

This survey continues presentation of periodical scientific journal ‘Lithuanian Ethnology’ (LE), Vol. 1–4, published in our *Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, Vol. 12, 13 (*Studia Anthropologica* 1–2, 2006) and LE, Vol. 5–6, published in *Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, Vol. 19 (*Studia Anthropologica* 3, 2009)¹.

Presented in this survey series ‘Lithuanian Ethnology’ (LE VII–VIII), as in previous volumes, are devoted to publish scientific articles, conference materials, book reviews on various themes of social anthropology and ethnology studies from Lithuania and Central/East Europe. Texts are published in Lithuanian and in English languages. Since the year 2001 eight volumes appeared, as Year-books². The Editorial board consists from outstanding Lithuanian and foreign anthropologists and ethnologists, such as Dr. Vytis Čiubrinskas³ (editor-in-chief, Centre for Social Anthropology at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas), Dr. Auksuolė Čepaitienė (Lithuanian Institute of History in Vilnius), Prof. Jonathan Friedman (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Lund University, Sweden), Prof. Orvar Löfgren (Lund University, Sweden), Dr. Jonas Mardosa (Vilnius Pedagogical University), Dr. Žilvytis Šaknys (Lithuanian Institute of History) and Dr. Danguolė Svidinskaitė (secretary, Lithuanian Institute of History).

¹ See: SLIUŽINSKAS, Rimantas. ‘Lithuanian Ethnology: Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology’ („Lietuvos etnologija. Socialinės antropologijos ir etnologijos studijos“), Vol. 1-2. Review. In: *Defining Region: Socio-Cultural Anthropology and Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Part 1. *Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, Vol. 12, *Studia Anthropologica* – 1. Ed. by V. Čiubrinskas & R. Sliužinskas, Klaipėda: Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology, Klaipėda University, 2006, p. 125–136; SLIUŽINSKAS, Rimantas. ‘Lithuanian Ethnology: Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology’ („Lietuvos etnologija. Socialinės antropologijos ir etnologijos studijos“), Vol. 3-4. Review. In: *Defining Region: Socio-Cultural Anthropology and Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Part 2. *Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, Vol. 13, *Studia Anthropologica* – 2. Ed. by V. Čiubrinskas & R. Sliužinskas, Klaipėda: Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology, Klaipėda University, 2006, p. 159–167; SLIUŽINSKAS, Rimantas. ‘Lithuanian Ethnology: Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology’ („Lietuvos etnologija. Socialinės antropologijos ir etnologijos studijos“), Vol. 5-6. Review. In: *Identity Politics: Histories, Regions and Borderlands*. *Acta Historica Universitatis Klaipedensis*, Vol. 19, *Studia Anthropologica* – 3. Ed. by V. Čiubrinskas & R. Sliužinskas, Klaipėda: Institute of Baltic Sea Region History and Archaeology, Klaipėda University, 2009, p. 197–209.

² Lietuvos etnologija / Lithuanian Ethnology. Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology. Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of History,
Vol. 1(10), 2001, 311 p. [abbreviation – LE I];
Vol. 2(11), 2002, 215 p. [LE II];
Vol. 3(12), 2003, 203 p. [LE III];
Vol. 4(13), 2004, 205 p. [LE IV];
Vol. 5(14), 2005, 249 p. [LE V];
Vol. 6(15), 2006, 258 p. [LE VI];
Vol. 7(16), 2007, 218 p. [LE VII];
Vol. 8(17), 2008, 193 p. [LE VIII].

³ Dr. Vytis Čiubrinskas recently was graduated as Professor at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas for his scientific and educational activities. Congratulations!

As it was pointed by this journal Editor-in-chief Dr. Vytis Čiubrinskas in the Preface of LE I, “[...] this annual journal of ethnological studies, appearing for the first time in Lithuania, seeks to provide its readers with current and important research in the fields of socio-cultural anthropology and ethnology done in Lithuania and abroad. [...] In this journal we are looking for interdisciplinary connections, seeking, in particular, to break the border between ethnology and socio-cultural anthropology. [...] We want to integrate studies that are clearly cognate in their methodology and aim. [...] We seek to encourage scholarly colloquy [...] analyzing differences and similarities between cultures and societies, between us and them, between majority and minority, dominant and marginal, local and immigrant” (LE I: 6–7).

Mentioned above attitudes are predominant in the presented hereby following LE VII and LE VIII volumes as well.

Lithuanian Ethnology, Vol. 7 (16)⁴

LE VII volume is edited by ethnologist Dr. Vida Savoniakaitė. It is devoted to discuss the well-known problems of changing identities and whole regions in space and time. As it is mentioned in the Foreword, “[...] regional identity studies should be linked to space and place which are changing in time. In most cases, cultural and social identity represents individuality of changing cultural regions. Identity concepts are closely related to cultural, geographical, economic, political and other regions in space and time. We are a unique, and, at the same time, culturally interrelated of individuality of cultural identity are differently revealed by various scientific schools” (LE VII: 6). As it is mentioned, all submitted papers show the unquestionable importance of understanding the identity of people and community as well as of others and oneself.

It is important to note, that in November 2005, the Department of Ethnology of the Lithuanian Institute of History organized a scientific international conference “Regions: Between Locality and Modernity”. Historians, folklorists and cultural scholars of other areas presented different opinions in their papers on current scientific research on contemporary cultural and social processes in different regions. Regional-cultural studies are known as interdisciplinary ones, as a rule. So, this volume comprises scientific articles of ethnologists, social anthropologists and other scholars researching very similar problems. Book reviews also are dedicated to discussion and presentation of new research of local culture. Most of the information covers studies of the Baltic region and current developments in changing European communities.

The 70th Anniversary of outstanding Lithuanian ethnologist Prof. Irena Regina Merkienė from Ethnology Department, Lithuanian Institute of History was celebrated on February 14, 2007. So, the special congratulatory article by Dr. Žilvytis Šaknys opens LE VII volume for this occasion. It is mentioned here, that Prof. I. R. Merkienė right now was elected as Academician of Lithuanian Catholic Academy. The same 2007 year she became a winner of Lithuanian National Science Award for the scientific work cycle ‘Typological Habitats of Lithuanian Ethnic Culture and Aspects of Regional Identity (the second half of the 16th – the 20th Centuries)’. Full biography and presentation of the most important scientific achievements by I. R. Merkienė are presented in this article. Shortly all it may be summarized in short, but very deep sentence: “Ethnography is all my life” (LE VII: 7). The young generation of Lithuanian ethnologists fondly remember her

⁴ Full title: *Lietuvos etnologija / Lithuanian Ethnology. Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology. Kasdienybė ir kultūra*. Ed. by Vida Savoniakaitė. Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of History, Vol. 7 (16), 2007, 219 p. [abbreviation – LE VII]

invigorating and innovative encouragement to search new areas of research objects and solutions to problems. Adopting advice of our teacher on how local cultural studies should be conducted and what research methods bring good results, editors of LE VII volume compiled here different scientific articles on identity and culture, defining cultural peculiarities of a region in space and time.

The first, introductory article by **Vida Savoniakaitė** 'Identity in Space and Time: the Changing Regions' (LE VII: 19–37) deals with mentioned above idea of this volume, which sets its specific interest in the studies on displaying different regional discourses. She points: "The object of our investigation is identity, common and individual. Identity is considered as a phenomenon affected by a variety of factors, such as space or local historical circumstances, cultural heritage, political situation, particular policy pursued by a state, multiple aspects of globalisation, an ecological context, and discourses on the changing region. We contend that inquiry into identity provides a vital focus for self-identification, ethnicity, and regional cultural heritage from the point of view of space and time. We sought to demonstrate multiple ways of exploring cultural heritage derived from different historical periods. In this way, we sought to show how the notion of an "ethnographic region" changes, and how diverse are the scientific approaches to the regional peculiarities of identity and cultural heritage in changing Europe. Different approaches used by different authors will show different regional discourses existing in ethnological and anthropological studies of West and East Europe. The economic processes of modern globalisation and glocalisation identify regions. Integral parts of studies of a particular space or place, they are related to numerous factors, such as historical economic processes, ethnographic regions, the national state, a definite part of national state, or a newly re-created feeling of human solidarity. We hope that this volume will contribute to the emergence of new questions" (LE VII: 35). Finally V. Savoniakaitė emphasizes, that "[...] investigation into identity is very largely featured by focusing on such issues as self-identification, other person's identification, ethnicity, and regional cultural heritage, viewed from the perspective of space and time. Modern humanitarian and social studies discourses on space, community, individual, society, place, and region closely intertwine. In ethnology and anthropology, they explain and supplement each other, facilitating in this way mutual understanding. On the one hand, region is an idea hard to define, on the other – region is identified with ethnic culture or ethnic representation, or even with a national state or borderlands. Today the term of region is used to denote the historical boundaries of an ethnic culture. It is largely connected with the national state's institutional policy and activities, and, understandably, with the changing Europe and the global economy" (LE VII: 37).

Irena Regina Merkienė presents her article on theme 'Local Culture in Historical and Geographical Context' (LE VII: 39–56). According to the author, this paper deals with the concept of local culture, trends and tasks of local research and applied aspects of natural and purposive formation of local cultural phenomena. Concrete characteristics of local culture open as forms and functions of cultural realities, habits and renovated experience, show influences of economy structure, politics of culture and individual culture creation in social everyday life. Local culture as a whole is connected with conventional territory and relations between research object and its interior-exterior geographical and historical context. Applied goals of local cultural studies are: 1 – to decrease social stress and opposition between ethnic groups formed on the basis of changed political administrative boundaries, migration and conflict with a new unknown culture, 2 – to apply traditions of local culture, especially cultural heritage, and natural resources as a basis for local economy (LE VII: 54). She points, that "[...] historical context is closely connected with historical

ethnic culture and interpretations of local anthropology studies. It is based on conceptual estimates of cultural realities in the permanent influence of social and political history action. The main questions are related to issues of stability and change of ethnic rural culture: housing and settlements, mode of family and community life, spirit of the epoch. History and geography are employed as an instrument to reveal distinctive local culture of separate periods. Diachronic analysis of interior and exterior geographical context lets us establish sources of expansion of cultural phenomena, centres of dispersion and spreading realities, tracks of changed contexts in macro and micro environments. [...] Analysis of one factor of Lithuanian historical context shows that local cultural activity was influenced by realization of new economic ideas irrespective of ethnic boundaries for development of economic cultural identity. In the change of social generations, historical cultural experience is disseminated by a trajectory of vertical and horizontal dispersal. [...] The powerful disorganized the settled stratum of culture and constructed new plan supported by theory and practice of its own or someone else's economic experience. The content of the plan was known only to a small part of society. There was always provision for land partitions and of integration to the agrarian culture, more modern and adapted to new needs; dwellings, settlements, forms and relations of family and community. Such cultural integration had to create a new local economic cultural identity and to guarantee the base for economic power of the social structure. An important factor for raising of the whole local ethnic cultural peculiarity was a mingling of forms of traditional culture with innovations carried out by agricultural reforms (LE VII: 55).

Ullrich Kockel, famous ethnologist and anthropologist from University of Ulster, Northern Ireland, published here his article 'Looking for Europe in the Frontier: Eco-Ethnological Reflections on Sense of Place and Historicity' (LE VII: 57–76). Following on from earlier explorations of the ethnic frontiers of European integration, and using the contrast of territory and trajectory, the author suggests that "[...] in the frontier, actors' trajectories are the key distinguishable structures, replacing boundaries to the extent that trajectories may constitute boundaries of a kind within the frontier. Whereas territory is about spatial identity, and territorial space is defined by boundaries, the frontier can be seen as an indeterminate, open space. Post-War European integration coincided with the time when European ethnology began to discover cultural anthropology. Subsequently, there has been a revival of the *Heimat* debate, especially in German-speaking lands, which had an international parallel of sorts in the heritage boom. The debate on the latter centred on the matter of heritage and its role in contemporary society. Like the *Heimat* debate, the heritage debate has been fuelled by and revolved around issues of belonging to, and alienation from, regionally grounded (in a semi-literal sense) culture contexts. Simultaneously, there has been a debate about the decline of the Nation State" (LE VII: 74–75). He follows, that "[...] the trajectories of actors become key structures of the frontier where they, in a sense, replace the boundaries that define Nation State territories. The essay highlights some issues arising in this context, with regard to regions, borders and cultural identities, by reference to two cases of migration. [...] A state is nothing without a populace – a Nation State is no State if it cannot call upon a Nation. European politicians of various persuasions have responded with the dual visions of a Europe of the Regions and a United States of Europe. If globalisation and migration contribute to a loss of regional and group cultural distinctiveness, then the resulting indifference may indeed engender a Europe of sorts, indistinct and motionless. The essay sets out to look for Europe in the frontier, considering sense of place and historicity. To the question: "Where is Europe?" the author responds by suggesting that Europe can only be found in the ethnic frontier. This is not the ethnically homogenous Europe of certain dicta-

tors who very nearly destroyed it, nor the blissfully indifferent Europe populated by narcissistic individuals, favoured by free-marketers and post-modernists. It is the Europe of cultural encounters structured by interweaving trajectories. We can track these trajectories. But in our concentrated efforts to discern the forces and directions of global flows, we also need to keep an eye on the actors without whom nothing would flow. Goods, money and ideas do not flow of their own accord. People at least may do so. In moving, staying, and mixing, people create memories, which become the foundation for trajectories and invest them with historical legitimacy and credibility. As ethno-anthropologists, we observe these patterns and processes. Whether as human beings at home in the frontier we should also take a hand in shaping them, whether that conjunctive implies an ethical imperative, and, if so, what form our interventions might take, are questions for another occasion” (LE VII: 75–76).

The chapter ‘Debates on Space, Community, and Locality in Anthropology, and their Usefulness for the Study of Region’ (LE VII: 77–90) by **Ingo W. Schröder** (Center of Social Anthropology, Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania; Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle/Saale, Germany) presents a survey of anthropological approaches to the study of space. Recent debates about the reproduction of locality and community under conditions of globalization have reinforced a scholarly tradition that views space primarily as a culturally constructed, multi-vocal realm of identification. On the other hand, a tradition focusing on the political economy of space stresses the constraints imposed upon people’s lives by spatial power relations. As the example of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands illustrates, an anthropological study of region needs to combine these two perspectives and complement them with a diachronic view (LE VII: 77). An author suggests, that “[...] in this chapter I will summarize some general characteristics of anthropological approaches to issues of space, place, and region. To date region has not played a significant role in the repertoire of anthropological keywords. Region has neither been defined as a concept nor has there developed a discourse on the specific analytical potential of region as a field of study. However, from the discussion of certain anthropological approaches to space and spatially defined social identities, valuable insights can be derived for the study of region from an anthropological perspective. [...] First I will focus my attention to the re-engagement with place that has occurred in anthropology in recent years in response to a general rethinking of local life worlds under conditions of globalization. At a time when anthropology has been focusing its attention to an increasing degree on global, transcontinental, transnational flows and imaginations, a general need of re-evaluating previously held notions of place as locality has become apparent during the 1990s. Interest in geographical areas that are obviously not global may be seen as representing a counter-current of interest that recognizes the importance of spaces and relations below, as it were, the level of global interconnections. A focus on place and region (as spaces on a smaller scale than globalism) reflects – and can be fruitfully compared with – anthropology’s reviving debate on community and locality” (LE VII: 77). Finally Ingo W. Schröder points the possibility of the most useful appearance “[...] to approach space in the same classical manner as introduced for class by Marx (and transferred to anthropology by Clifford Geertz), as something that exists both by itself and for itself. With regard to space, this means that a region exists at the same time as a physical and geopolitical entity and as a location of meaning to its inhabitants. The meaningful experience of such a locality, then, forms a specific kind of collective identity. Both of these aspects must be historicized, i.e., analyzed from a diachronic perspective: the political-economic circumscription of a region as well as the production of a regional identity develop in a historical process. Any syn-

chronic analysis of these dimensions is likely to fall short of grasping the full impact of historical forces that are at work in regional space. By providing an analysis of these three dimensions (i.e., political economy, identity, and history) based on grassroots ethnography in the study of spatial formations such as places and regions, anthropology can provide a fruitful, comprehensive approach to the study of place” (LE VII: 87).

Anete Karlsonē from Latvian Institute of History, Latvian University presents the article ‘Expression of Ethnic and Social Identity: Transition from Regional Clothing to Unified Fashion in Latvia’ (LE VII: 91–101). According to the author, “[...] clothing, especially the folk costume, is one of the features showing social and ethnic identity. The aim of the paper is to study issues of the expression of ethnic and social identity found in the press of the 19th century about the development of the Latvian festive dress at a time when this kind of dressing was adopted from the European fashion and started to dominate in the rural areas of Latvia; at a time when the first attempt was made to create a special Latvian-style clothing that might unite rural people and town-dwellers, the wealthy and the poor. [...] Transition from traditional clothing (folk costume) to a unified fashion was a process that differed slightly in time in various European countries. On the whole, it lasted approximately from the end of the 18th century until the beginning of the 20th century. The development of clothing in Europe was notably influenced by the French Revolution as it created changes in society. The boundary between the traditional and the modern clothing was marked in the 19th century in many countries including Latvia. With reference both to forming the nation and the spread of ideas of national romanticism in Europe beginning at the end of the 18th century, interest in folk cultural heritage and history of the nation grew considerably. These processes, common for all of Europe, found expression in the development of clothing in Latvia as well. As at present, dress with ethnic or national features continues to be one of the symbols of national culture, one of the ways to show national originality and identity” (LE VII: 91–92). She concludes, that “[...] rapid changes in the Latvian folk clothing took place in the second half of the 19th century. They were inspired by changes in the lifestyle and in the social status of Latvian people: a stratum of Latvian town dwellers was established and consisted of workers and wealthy town dwellers; Latvian intelligentsia formed both in the country and in towns; a stratum of Latvian landowners appeared, mainly consisting of two groups: landowners, and peasants without land property or servants. [...] The new town dwellers’ identity was reflected in clothing. Having settled in towns or received education in towns, Latvians ceased to wear traditional clothing of their region and started to dress according to the European fashion. The clothing of the rural people changed as well. [...] Communication between the towns and the countryside increased in the second half of the 19th century. However, common features of the dress of rural people still remained, ethnic and other regional differences tended to disappear. As a result of modern influences, the social aspect of identity, rural or town in this case, became a dominant feature of clothing. The rapid transition from traditional to modern dress may be regarded as an unconscious protest against long-endured ethnic and social oppression. [...] The Latvian-style dress created at the end of the 19th century reflected the ideas of the time regarding the appearance of the festive dress of previous generations, corresponding to the level of ethnographic research of the day. These ideas were influenced by the ethnic and socio-political ideals prevailing in society. The heritage of national culture was a significant basis for the further development of ethnic consciousness (LE VII: 98–99).

Rūta Žarskienė from Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore in Vilnius, Lithuania shares her rich and special experience in the article ‘Regional Peculiarities of Lithuanian Ethnic

Instrumental Music: Study of the Situation in the 1st half of the 20th C.’ (LE VII: 103–123). This article inquires into the tradition of Lithuanian ethnic instrumental music of the actual historical period from the perspective of regional studies. The purpose of this work is to examine essential qualities of instrumental music tradition practiced in the 1st half of the 20th c. by residents of the main ethnographic regions of Lithuania, namely Aukštaitija, Žemaitija (Samogitia), Suvalkija, and Dzūkija. Discussion of relevant issues, such as instruments, similarities/differences characterizing music performance or folk ensemble qualities, the special role of a musician, a person responsible for the preservation and even re-animation of ancient tradition, is based on old sound recordings, literature, and manuscripts. According to the author, “[...] in late 19th – early 20th Centuries different bellows and other musical instruments common to all Europe flooded Lithuania. Popular contemporary dances, such as polka, waltz, mazurka, etc. followed in the wake of these musical instruments. Data under study show that by the 1st half of the 20th C. ancient ethnic instruments played at wedding parties or on other family holidays had been almost replaced by the fiddle, the concertina and other instruments. Likewise, ancient syncretistic rites were substituted with polkas, waltzes or other dances coming from towns or manor houses” (LE VII: 121–123).

The article, titled ‘The Conventional, Classificatory, and Interpretative Aspects of Regional Identity, and their Relations with Folk-Art’ (LE VII: 125–156) is published here by **Vytautas Tumėnas** from Lithuanian Institute of History. Focusing on the instrumentality of ethnic regions’ conception, this article demonstrates its significance to the scientific and cultural life of Lithuania. It is composed of three sections. The first one outlines the formation of the notion of regional culture, the second one discusses the conception of ethnographic regions and ethnological studies, and the third one examines the relativity of the current notion of ethnic regions from the perspective of its applied character. The article inquires into the diversity, relativity, change, and significance of ethnographic land conceptions against the background of the development of Lithuanian ethnology and folk-art. It explores effects produced by these notions on different interpretations of folk-art and art history, illuminating their interaction with the living tradition. The paper provides an insight into the emergence of the notion of ethno-regional sub-ethnic culture, a phenomenon distinct from the national one, and its interaction with the phenomenon of folk-art. The author argues that the development of woven band (sash) tradition is determined by the changing level of the topicality of concepts of sub-ethnicity and ethnographic region. Additionally, these fluctuations are reflected in culture management practices and ethnological studies. The paper seeks to find out how folk-art, especially the genre of woven bands (sashes), is linked to the representation of national or ethno-regional identity, and how it is fixed by the actual domicile and background of folk artists, and, eventually, by their conscious decisions. The study draws upon former publications, accounts of cultural events, observation of folk-art process live, and materials collected during ethnographic expeditions. According to the author, “[...] vague contents, ambiguous definition and blurred boundaries of the conception of ethnographic region and sub-ethnic entities, coupled with the sensitivity and topicality of this issue in modern society, account for a thoroughly indistinct, different, inconsistent, chaotic, often strangely integral, and mixed notion of ethnic regionalism and its representation in modern folk-art. For example, a definite modern approach demanding highly stylised sashes of a “generalised” Lithuanian character has dominated band (sash) weaving for a long period of time. However, recently, owing to scientific achievements and increased levels of consciousness on the part of culture managers, a tendency towards stressing of area or regional peculiarities of ethnic culture and relevant traditions are becoming more prominent” (LE VII: 153–154).

Slovenia's experience in preservation of ethnic culture heritage is reflected in the article 'Architectural Heritage: an Important Element of Identity in the Karst Region of Slovenia' by **Jasna Fakin Bajec** from Institute of Philosophy in Nova Gorica, Slovenian Academy of Science (LE VII: 157–171). Author points, that "[...] due to changing socio-political conditions and, resultantly, a different valuing and interpretation of the heritage, as well as due to the encounter with European and global social movements (globalization and post-modern society), in Slovenia there has been a resurgence of interest in and representation of regional identity. In the case presented here I would not say that globalization and transnational integration have caused the merging together local Karst culture with mass culture, but rather the opposite" (LE VII: 157–1658). So, the collective memory and heritage are critically important for the preservation, reconstruction and foundation of regional/local identity, but its interpretation depends on the individual and, especially, on political discourse. Thus it is important for experts who research collective memory and heritage to be as objective as possible in their work, to be authentic and to alert people to the possibility of manipulation. For this reason, research on the role of heritage in local communities is welcome and legitimate. In the course of my research I realized that heritage has a key role in defining and creating a community's identity. In the conclusions she points, that "[...] after Slovenia's independence, people sought out their cultural roots and renewed their appreciation for traditional elements from the period before the Second World War. This has been reflected in and reinforced by the collection, organization, and display of documents, photographs and artefacts, the resurgence of old customs and habits, the construction and renovation of houses in keeping with local tradition, and so on. In my investigations I have often wondered why, despite the large number of development projects, media discussion, and educational programs, the level of interest among the population varies so widely: in some village communities the local inhabitants are actively engaged in researching, preserving, and incorporating heritage into their modern way of life, while in others people (with a few rare exceptions) remain passive and uninterested" (LE VII: 167–168).

There are also reviews on actual publications by Irena Regina Merkienė, Rasa Paukštytė-Šaknienė, Vida Savoniakaitė and Žilvytis Bernardas Šaknys (LE VII: 173–177), Inga Nėnienė (LE VII: 177–181), Laima Anglickienė (LE VII: 181–184), written by Romualdas Apanavičius, Irma Šidiškienė, and Žilvytis Šaknys, as well as information about important conferences (LE VII: 185–196), and research projects and programmes (LE VII: 197–214) and In Memoriam of outstanding Lithuanian ethnologist Juozas Kudirka (March 19, 1939 – July 21, 2007) in the last part of LE VII volume.

Lithuanian Ethnology, Vol. 8 (17)⁵

"The world today is faced with economic crises, a warming climate, ecological disasters, depleting natural resources, wars, and is in persistent need of stability and cohesion based on shared values. Such issues as social memory, cultural tradition and ethno-national identity are often put forward as critical for understanding these problems. They also appear on the permanent agenda of Lithuanian Ethnology and seem to be quite well explored", points editor of this volume Vytis Čiubrinskas in the Foreword (LE VIII: 8). So, this LE volume is so focused, and actual patterns of construction and reconstruction of memory, tradition, and identity are seen in comparative perspective and as trajectories of symbolic and political empowerment.

⁵ Full title: *Lietuvos etnologija / Lithuanian Ethnology. Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology*. Edited by Vytis Čiubrinskas. Vilnius: Lithuanian Institute of History, Vol. 8 (17), 2008, 194 p. [abbreviation – LE VIII]

The opening article 'Disputed Historical Memories in East Europe and Southeast Asia: Representations, Symbols and Social Practices' (LE VIII: 11–29) written by **Christian Giordano** (Department of Social Anthropology, University of Fribourg, Switzerland), deals with "disputed historical memories in East Europe and Southeast Asia". By comparing historical memory sites in the Balkans and the Baltics, on the one hand, and South-East Asia on the other, he explores the contested nature of historical territories as well as places and objects of memory (LE VIII: 8). An author ends his article with some suggestions for further thought that should broaden the horizons he has outlined. He points, that "[...] antagonistic memories are activated on specific occasions that, quite purposefully, coincide with festivities, ceremonies, and rituals. [...] The conflictual aspect of festivities, ceremonies, and rituals, regarded as considered destructive and thus unpleasant, has far too often been wiped out and deliberately concealed" (LE VIII: 24). Secondly he admits, that "[...] symbolic violence and politics of symbols appear clearly to emerge as the essential instruments of legitimacy in the exercise of domination and in power struggles, due also to the deliberate utilization of social or collective memory, especially through the targeted use of antagonistic historical memories" (LE VIII: 24). Thirdly, he emphasizes, that "[...] antagonistic historical memories especially are quite often dangerous weapons of discrimination, which kindle permanent and then hardly extinguishable flash points of conflict" (LE VIII: 24–25). Finally an author concludes that above mentioned "[...] antagonistic memories, instead, highlight the other side of the coin, the one of tensions and contentions, which is nearly systematically blotted out by this approach's perspective as if it were beside the point" (LE VIII: 26).

Irena Šutinienė (Social Research Institute in Vilnius) focused on the social memory from the perspective of national identity in the article 'Social Memory and Contemporary Lithuanian National Identity' (LE VIII: 31–55). She suggests the term "emotional glue" as a kind of national identity framework and argues that neither the collective memory of the past itself, nor the related myths produce it. Rather, in disregard of "what has to be memorized", individual symbols and images of the past are created from a common past that has been deconstructed and de-sacralised (LE VIII: 8–9). According to the author, the article concerns the question of connections between the changing narrative of Lithuanian National history and Lithuanian national identity. How does the erosion of the meta-narratives and other contemporary changes of social memory transform the role of national past in the constant reconstitution of Lithuanian national identity, undergoing challenges of globalization? Are the myths of national past, mediated through symbols and other representations still the powerful source of the national imagination that binds people together by creating the sense of belonging to a national community? She points, that "[...] the significance of symbolic cultural representations of national past for individuals and groups depends on the forms and the character of their representation. Great influence on the popularity of symbols of national past among members of all ethnic groups is exerted by their representation as elements of the landscape and their involvement in everyday interactions and social practices" (LE VIII: 54–55). She follows in the conclusions, that "[...] there are differences of popularity of representations of national history between ethnic groups. But there are integrating representations of national history as well, about a half of the representations examined. The symbolic representations of the myths of Lithuanian nationalism for Lithuanians are more important than for other ethnic groups. The importance of representations of Lithuanian national past for Poles, more than for other groups, is connected with their regional and religious identity" (LE VIII: 55).

The issue of identity, inscription, and its documentalization, is discussed by **Darius Daukšas** from Vytautas Magnus University (VMU). In his article 'Identity Inscribed in the Passport: the Trajectories of Ethnic/national Identity of Lithuanian Poles' (LE VIII: 57–72) he explores the case of the Polish minority in Eastern Lithuania. Identity politics of this minority rests on inscription of Polish ethnicity in the passport as well as in "belonging to the (Soviet) past". It is stressed that the politics of documentalization of the soviet and post-soviet institutions is enacted in everyday life and plays the role of "inherited ethnic identity". Politics of institutional "systematization" is also conspicuously expressed in the national censuses (LE VIII: 9). Following the author, "[...] the aspect of documentation of identity presented in this article uses data from fieldwork among Lithuanian Poles living in the Šalčininkai region in the South-Eastern part of Lithuania. The Lithuanian Polish community in this part of Lithuania presented the understanding of their identity using the category of inscription of ethnic/national belonging in their passports. The inscription in the passports has stimulated the understanding of ethnicity as a primordial category. Inscription itself was seen as a property of ethnicity which exists in people's understanding alongside the category of kinship which is passed from one generation to another" (LE VIII: 71). He concludes, that "[...] the inscription in the passport itself does not create the sense of collective or individual identity. The interpretation of data from fieldwork given in this article present a set of interrelated components such as territory, history, loyalty to the national state, genealogy, and language, which, put together, create a complex view of the identity process" (LE VIII: 72).

The article 'Lithuanian Karaims: Ethnic and Confessional Identity in the Late Twentieth – Early Twenty-First Century' (LE VIII: 73–96) by **Žilvytis Šaknys**, ethnologist at the Lithuanian Institute of History, and **Daiva Lapinskaitė** (VMU), also pay attention to ethnic minority identity, in this case the Lithuanian Karaites (Karaims). It is an account of a diasporic community during the last half century. Karaites' identity has altered through the soviet and post-soviet period, but only in terms of cultural repertoire change. Resources of minority "symbolic power" have been retained and kept for their national identity preservation in Trakai city as the definite their local and spiritual centre. The authors point, that "[...] answering the question whether Soviet atheistic ideology could affect the Karaims more significantly than those ethnic groups who would and could profess several faiths, a twofold answer can be formulated. The ethnic and demographic position of the present-day Karaims would allow a positive answer to the above question. However, the changing manifestation of the interaction between their ethnic and confessional identity and intensive cultural activities of the Karaims during the past two decades would deny this assumption" (LE VIII: 96). They also admit, that "[...] the Soviet occupation years have been painful to the Lithuanian Karaims. A number of them, especially those young Karaims who left Trakai or lived in other cities, did not have the possibility to practice their religion freely and observe traditional customs. In Vilnius and Panevėžys, possibilities to communicate with their Karaim peers diminished and a segment of the young people either raised ethnically mixed families or remained single. Although during the Soviet period the Lithuanian Karaim community significantly declined, irrespective of the brutal Soviet atheistic policy and modernization, some Karaims have preserved their ethnic and confessional identity" (LE VIII: 96).

The issue of new and modern Western traditions is addressed by Dutch ethnologist **John Helsloot** (Royal Academy of Art and Sciences in Amsterdam). In the article 'The Triumph of Valentine's Day in the Netherlands – after Fifty Years' (LE VIII: 97–116) the author provides a well documented overview and analysis of the vibrant path of the Dutch "invention of Valentine's Day".

Since its inception in the 1950s, the custom, “perceived as artificial and commercial”, is gaining recognition as a post-modern and individualist utilization of the past, as a way to “take a distance towards tradition and consider it a matter of personal choice or mood” (LE VIII: 9). On the basis of the evidence John Helsloot was able to collect on the history of Valentine’s Day in the Netherlands, and he argues that “[...] a paradigmatic change in the understanding of ritual occurred indeed. In the past, Valentine’s Day was rejected generally, because it did not fit people’s idea of what a real “tradition” should look like. To a high degree this evaluation still persists today and for a large proportion of the Dutch population it is a reason to continue to reject the custom. However, it is precisely this “negative” quality of Valentine’s Day that nowadays does motivate a sizeable minority of Dutchmen, young people but also older ones, to participate in the custom. Characteristically for the new paradigm, their attitude shows a remarkable ambivalence. Being well aware of the artificiality of Valentine’s Day, they can accept it simultaneously as “funny” and as not to be taken very seriously. To sum up: until roughly the 1990s Valentine’s Day was rejected in the Netherlands because it was considered nonsensical. For precisely the very same reason, at present it is accepted by many” (LE VIII: 116).

The article ‘A Search for New Ways of Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Inquiry Conducted by Two Persons’ (LE VIII: 117–138), written by **Rasa Paukštytė-Šaknienė** and **Irma Šidiškienė**, both from the Department of Ethnology, Lithuanian Institute of History, is focused on extensive method and it reflects their experiences at the ethnographic fieldwork. Both authors presented here updated information of providing ethnographic semi-structured interviews using the techniques of simultaneous interviewing by two researchers. According to them, analysis of the process of fieldwork indicated that the assumption concerning the three factors affecting the information received via fieldwork, namely a theme, a researcher and a respondent, proved correct. However, information will be reliable and objective provided that the researcher is impartial, the object is scientifically substantiated and that the respondent speaks openly. They pointed in the conclusions, that “[...] the specific nature of an intimate theme required a fieldwork setting with an appropriate atmosphere. That was achieved by matching themes of the ethnographic interview associated with aspects of family life: interviewing a respondent on weddings and baptisms provided more favourable conditions for disclosure of the birth control theme. When both researchers asked one respondent questions on several themes, the amount of information received increased and a narrow theme of the study did not limit us. This approach allowed us to expand the boundaries of the simultaneously received community-related information and the field of “vision” of the researchers, enabling us to go deeper into each of the three themes of our study and the analysis of the problems of contemporary culture” (LE VIII: 138).

Valdemaras Klumbys (Department of History at Vilnius University) in his contribution ‘Soviet Lithuanian Cultural Elite: between Resistance and Compliance’ (LE VIII: 139–161) reflects the public face of the Lithuanian intelligentsia who was placed in enormous situation between of resistance and conformity to the regime. Author points that some part of the Lithuanian elite, while acting in conformity with the regime, managed to create “informal discursive social space” which was used to construct an alternative to Soviet ideology (LE VIII: 9–10). He admits, that the most intriguing question is the following one: “[...] what mechanisms enabled the cultural elite to comply (i.e. the individual must go against his own standards of behaviour, values and norms when he is obeying demands of the regime) with soviet ideological reality and even gain some privileges from the regime, while considering themselves as members of a secret (silent, passive) resistance

movement and even viewed as such by other social groups?” And in his answer V. Klumbys emphasizes “[...] the importance of adapting the culture for survival in a subdued nation. The threat of extinction of Lithuania as a separate nation was paramount to its intellectuals. Such feelings facilitated their compliance; they assumed that open (armed or open non-violent dissent) resistance would do harm to the nation, leading to its extermination by the Soviets” (LE VIII: 161).

Reviews of actual publications by Kristina Šliavaitė (LE VIII: 163–167), Violeta Kelertas (LE VIII: 175–177), Torbjorn Friberg (LE VIII: 178), periodical scientific journals on socio-cultural anthropology, edited by Vytis Čiubrinskas and Rimantas Sliužinskas (LE VIII: 168–172), collection of scientific articles, edited by Mats Lindqvist (LE VIII: 173–175) are put in the last part of LE VIII. The authors of such reviews are Žilvytis Šaknys, Darius Daukšas, Gediminas Lankauskas and Vieda Skultans. The information about conferences (LE VIII: 179–186), recent research projects and programmes (LE VIII: 187–190) and In Memoriam for famous Lithuanian ethnologist Antanas Stravinskas (April 25, 1927 – August 31, 2007) are published here as well.

Scientific journal *Lithuanian Ethnology* volumes 7 and 8 continue to reflect the current actualities of Lithuanian, European and world-wide ethnology and socio-cultural anthropology research life.