

Foreward

Death is a simple matter, much greater art is required by life.

Balys Sruoga

Continuing the dialogue with the ethnic realities, and searching for answers to the questions raised by time, we find ourselves facing new challenges. Central and Eastern Europe, undergoing present integration and globalization, experiences a number of serious existential challenges while trying to preserve their freedom, identity and individuality. Lithuania has not yet sufficiently prepared for the intersection with present realities. Culture and Lithuaniness, as Viktoras Rubavičius says in his publication, are the necessary integral conditions for the nation to exist, as after its accession to the European Union, Lithuania operates in its environment, thus the culture and people of this country must assert the national identity, ensure and foster the dissemination of Lithuaniness, deploy and promote European values of democracy, develop and enhance civil society, as well as cultural, creative and artistic exchange. Rita Repšienė discusses the importance of the research of nationality, the possibilities of intercultural communication and the future of cultural sciences; she searches for the dialogue between traditions and the present, between us and the others, between identity and reality, because culture is not an one-day phenomenon, it includes a number of spheres and determines current possibilities; identity formation should be an ongoing process of winning the provincialism and helping to look at culture more deeply. Studying the problem of cultural identity in postmodernism, Odeta Žukauskienė reveals the complexity, contextuality and multidimensionality of cultural processes, trying to describe the social and cultural changes that has led to irrational beliefs, the advert of appearances and eros, as well as sketches multi imaginative structures in the contemporary works.

The relationship between imagination, life now and then, the past and the future, reality, experiences and opportunities is in its own way revealed in the study „About the Aesthetic and Anesthetic Reality“ by Balys Sruoga, written in Stutthof concentration camp during 1944–1945. It perfectly illustrates how important it is that the traumatic experiences would not become the overall basis of life, but would focus, help not to get lost, „trigger the creation of new forces, new determination, a desire to create“ and teach “to see the world with a smile of wisdom“.

Adaptation of East Asia arts and their relationship with the Lithuanian worldview and identity on the junction of the 20–21st century are analyzed by Loreta

Poškaitė; one of the major goals of her article is „to dispel such unfounded fears, having taken specific creators as an example in order to show that the integration of the alien culture and arts into Lithuanian cultural environment in any way presents a danger to the loss of national identity, on the contrary, it helps to understand and express it more deeply”. The author shows two significant artistic areas illustrating the influence of Far East Art and its integration into the Lithuanian culture – the creations of Dalia Dokšaitė painting in *sumi-e* (ink painting) and development of Japanese gardens in Lithuania.

“Imagined Communities, Psychology and Transformation“ are an integral part of our everyday culture. Stanislovas Juknevičius bases the article, devoted to demonstrate the culture psychology and the situation of imagined communities in post-communist Lithuania, on the ideas of Carl Gustav Jung, his teachings about the role of imagination in creating the culture and developing the world. What transformations does the modern society face? Can the virtual space become an alternative ‘place’ in the modern world, in which various forms of community would be set up and maintained? Do these communities preserve the essential elements – belonging, identity and interest? Aida Savicka attempts to answer these and other questions in her publication, using a wide context of recent research of virtual communities.

Naglis Kardelis sincerely and impressing presents the latest book by Vilnius University professor and the first professional Lithuanian scholar and orientalist, indologist Audrius Beinorius. *Indija ir Vakarai. Kultūrų sąveikos pjūviai* was released by Vilnius University Publishing House in 2012; the reviewer involves us in an extraordinary journey through the pages of a solid, interesting and intelligent book. Theatre historian and musicologist Vida Bakutytė detailedly and consistently describes the scientific monograph, the result of a number of research *Teatra grodzieńskie 1784–1864 [Grodno Theaters of 1784–1864]* by a well known Polish theatre historian Dr. Zbigniew Jędrychowski; the monograph was published by the publishing house of the University of Warsaw in 2012. The unique, comprehensive, precise, rich of facts monograph reveals a number of links with Vilnius theatre life of that time.

In the Review section Aida Savicka briefly presents the discussion on “Media Myths and Myths as the Media“ held in Vilnius Book Fair 2013, while Aurėja Stirbytė discusses the scientific conference “Ethnic Minorities in Lithuania: Transformations and Memories“, which took place on May 4, 2013 in Lithuanian Culture Research Institute.

For sure, it is important to expand the horizons of knowledge, attitudes, imagination and evaluation, so that we see the world as a system of communicating vessels and escape what is already known, as once Czesław Miłosz has wished.