

# ***Kommission für Volksdichtung (KfV)***

International Ballad Commission  
Commission internationale pour l'étude de la chanson populaire

(Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore, S.I.E.F.)

[www.KfVweb.org](http://www.KfVweb.org)

**Electronic Newsletter no. 10 (September 2009)**  
(editor: David Atkinson)

## **Minutes of the Business Meeting of the KfV, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Institute of Arts, Ethnography and Folklore, 18 July 2009, 12.30–14.00**

### **1. Present**

Sabine Wienker-Piepho (KfV President), Isabelle Peere (KfV Vice-President)  
Katherine Campbell, Anne Caufriez, Martine de Bruin, Adrienne Harris, J. J. Dias Marques, Louis Grijp, Sabina Ispas, Natalie Kononenko, Mikhail Mikhailets, F. Gülay Mirzaoglu, Alexander Morozov, Tatyana Morozova, Anna Permilovskaya, Gerald Porter, Gisela Probst-Effah, Ljubjanko Radenkovic, Inna Shved, Larysa Vakhnina, Erich Wimmer, Igor Yudkin

### **2. In Memoriam**

The passing of Zmaga Kumer and Bengt Jonsson was honoured with short tributes evoking their eminent contribution to ballad scholarship and to the KfV. A moment's silence was observed in commemoration of our distinguished fellow members.

Zmaga Kumer, who passed away on 27 December 2008, was a Slovenian ethnomusicologist and leading Slovenian folk song researcher, a folklorist and Slavic expert, research adviser at the ZRC SAZU Institute of Ethnomusicology in Ljubljana, and an outstanding scholar. Her research career was extremely productive, running to more than 450 publications in total, including thirty-seven independent book-length publications. She was a founding member of the KfV and served a number of terms as Vice President.

A short obituary of Bengt Jonsson was included in Newsletter no. 9.

### **3. Greetings from absent friends:**

Rolf Brednich, Tom Cheesman, Simona Delić, Jürgen and Ursula Dittmar, Eckhard John, Ildikó Kríza, Karin Kviedeland, Bill Nicolaisen, Stefaan Top, Natascha Würzbach, Larry Syndergaard.

### **4. Election and Nomination for the position of KfV President (2010-15)**

The term of Sabine Wienker-Piepho as KfV President (2004-09) came to an end at this meeting. She expressed her choice not to run for another presidential term. Members will be aware that the election procedure is currently under way.

### **5. SIEF**

The latest SIEF newsletter can be found at <http://www.siefhome.org/images/stories/sief-news%20mei%202009def.pdf> and members are encouraged to read about the new developments at SIEF. In particular, the next SIEF conference will take place in Lisbon in April 2011. Cooperation with SIEF was discussed and it was reported that SIEF has a new president, Ullrich Kockel. Isabelle Peere reported that, following clarification that SIEF membership remains optional for KfV

members, SIEF has reiterated a request for our members' list. After some discussion regarding the question of privacy, it was agreed that the best solution is that KfV members should respond to that request in their own right (knowing that the SIEF newsletter publishes the names, countries and email addresses of its new members).

## **6. Future Conferences**

**2010** The 40th KfV conference will be held in Terschelling, The Netherlands, 5–10 July 2010, hosted by the Meertens Instituut, Amsterdam. Organizers are Louis Grijp and Martine de Bruin. For further information, please visit [www.meertens.nl](http://www.meertens.nl) (Agenda)

Special thanks go to Louis for his invitation and slide-show presentation of the conference's location and programme.

**2011** In view of academic changes in South Africa it now seems regrettably unrealistic to plan for a conference there in 2011. In lieu Sabine Wienker-Piepho presented an invitation to Jena, in Germany.

**2012** Turkey.

## **7. Publications**

'Songs of People on the Move', selected papers from the 2007 conference in Balmacara, Scotland, will be out in 2010. Papers are currently with referees and will be edited by Thomas A. McKean.

## **8. International Congress on Medieval Studies**

Larry Syndergaard reports on the 2008 International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, with three sessions sponsored by the KfV:

### *The Ballad: Tradition, Texts, Treatments*

Oral Narrative Technique and the Remaking of a Ballad in Tradition (James Moreira)

A Girl in Trouble? Pregnancy in the Child Ballads (Lynn Wollstadt)

'If all the sky were parchment': An Elegiac Topos in Welsh Broadsides" (E. Wyn James)

### *The Ballad: Medieval and Modern*

Germanic and Hispanic Balladry: Genetic Relationships and Coincidental Analogies (Samuel Armistead)

Sir Eglamour of Artois and Old Bangum (Richard Firth Green)

'A remarkable bird is the Pelican': Reading an Elizabethan Buccaneering Ballad (Christine James)

### *The Nordic Ballad: New Approaches*

The Two Paths of the Ballad: Anguish and Aestheticized Anguish (Niels Ingwersen)

Text and the Oral Ballad: The Politics of the Ballad (Scott Mellor)

A Landscape of Conflict: Weather-Magic and Colonialism in the Narratives of the Faroe

Conversion (Sarah Harlan-Haughey)

The conference was dedicated to the memory of Ardis Syndergaard, and a brief tribute was read. Larry has maintained the long-established and much-enjoyed tradition of Ardis's 'ballad-mongers' dinners' at their house for friends of the ballad.

## **9. Newsletter and Website**

Special thanks are due to Barbara Boock and Michèle Simonsen for their work translating the newsletter, and to Tom McKean for his work on the KfV website. This is currently being completely redesigned. The new site will better represent our work and will feature downloadable PDFs of early KfV Arbeitstagungen, tables of contents of our later publications, a downloadable

publicity leaflet, and better servicing of our three languages. The website should be active in October.

### **10. Treasurer's Report**

Prior to the conference in Minsk the balance stood at €1454. €200 was collected in membership fees. After expenses the balance stood at €1634.

### **11. Resolution of Gratitude**

The meeting thanked the organizing committee (Alexander Morozov, Larysa Vakhnina, Mikhaïl Mikhailets, Elena Alfiorova, Olga Izotova, Kristina Lavysch, Evgenij Morozow, Galina Tsmyg, Galina Kharitonchik, Iryna Vasilyeva, Tatsiana Rabets and Ljubov Begun) for the success of yet another very impressive conference. Following gifts presented in the customary manner, Isabelle Peere, true to her Kiev promise, produced the Ukrainian *rushnyk* received there from Larysa Vakhnina as a renewed celebration of the KfV's tie to the East and of that binding all KfV members.

## **Conference report**

The 39th International Conference of the *Kommission für Volksdichtung* was held at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Institute of Arts, Ethnography and Folklore, in Minsk, 13–18 2009, under the title 'Folk Heritage of the World, From the Past Through the Present Into the Future'. Members attended from Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, England, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Wales.

If it had not been for Alexander and Tatyana's invitation to the KfV to come to Minsk, it is probably fair to say that most of us would not have had the opportunity to visit Belarus – and certainly not to be given VIP treatment at the airport on arrival. We were made extremely welcome in the city, with its wide, long boulevards, and beautiful sunshine, and the conference was hosted in the grand building of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. Numerous dignitaries, among them the President of the NASB, addressed us on the first morning of the conference, and we were shown around the Museum of the History of the National Academy of Sciences and the Museum of Archaeology. There followed an opening paper session, before an evening party at the Central Botanic Gardens, with a presentation of the newly published proceedings of the 2005 KfV conference in Kiev.

The following day was given over to the excursion, which took in the Museum of Ancient Belarusian Art and the Belarusian National Museum of History and Culture, where we learned much about the distinctive traditions of Belarusian culture, especially the country's religious culture. We then went on to the Museum of Belarusian Folk Architecture in Stročitsy where we were treated to a banquet of traditional Belarusian fare, with many speeches and toasts. Afterwards we were shown around the museum, with its traditional wooden buildings.

The serious work of the conference covered diverse themes, including, for example, ballads and literature, written and visual representations of ballads, studies of individual ballad types, ballads in contemporary culture. A high standard of research and presentation was maintained, as we have come to expect from KfV meetings.

Further visits included the National Art Museum, which houses a good selection of Belarusian and representative European art, and the immensely impressive National Library of Belarus on the outskirts of the city of Minsk. A huge statue in front of the library honours the first Belarusian printer Francisk Scorina, who began printing in the old Belarusian language, using the Cyrillic alphabet, in 1517. After these visits was the conference banquet, with traditional Belarusian food, plenty of vodka, and traditional singing from Natalia Matylitskaya.

The conference was a truly unforgettable experience, and this is a good opportunity to repeat our thanks to Alexander Morozov and Tatyana Morozova for this unique invitation. We can all now feel a bit better informed about their fascinating country and its deep-rooted traditions.

## NEWS

In July 2009 a new organization, the International Association of Inter-American Studies (IAS) was founded. The Association seeks to promote the interdisciplinary study of the Americas, focusing in particular on interconnections between North, Central, and South American culture, literature, media, language, history, society, politics and economics. Memberships in Euros is 10, 30 and 50 euros. A website is under construction: <http://www.interamericanstudies.net>. For now please contact the president: Dr. Professor [Josef.Raab@uni-due.de](mailto:Josef.Raab@uni-due.de).

Maria Herrera-Sobek is editor of the *Encyclopedia of Latino Folklore* and is looking for contributors to write essays for the volumes. Please write to [latino.encyclopedia@gmail.com](mailto:latino.encyclopedia@gmail.com) for folklore entries available, guidelines, sample copies of entries, and other information. Interested scholars can also write to Professor María Herrera-Sobek ([maria.sobek@evc.ucsb.edu](mailto:maria.sobek@evc.ucsb.edu)).

### Publications

Margaret Bennett, *Dileab Ailein: The Legacy of Allan MacArthur: Newfoundland Traditions across Four Generations* (Grace Note Publications, 2009), ISBN 978-0-9552326-8-8, 96 pp. + 2 CDs (on the same family as Margaret's Balmacara paper).

*The Merry Muses of Caledonia* by Robert Burns, edited by Valentina Bold, with a substantial new introduction, based on the edition by Sydney Goodsir Smith, J. De Lancey Ferguson and James Barke, including new illustrations by Bob Dewar and music for the pieces actually by Burns. Edinburgh: Luath Press, 2009. £15 [www.luath.co.uk](http://www.luath.co.uk)

Margaret Steiner and Ronald Labelle, are working on a collaborative book on Allan Kelly, a Francophone Canadian lumberman and singer who died at the age of 105, and who possessed a repertoire of some 500 songs in both French and English. The book will consist of a life history, plus selections from his repertoires, and will be bilingual.

Barbara Boock, 'Die Volksliedsammlung von Lotte Meyer im Prättigau 1913' in: *Regionalität in der musikalischen Popularkultur*. Tagungsbericht Hachenburg 2006 der Kommission zur Erforschung musikalischer Volkskulturen in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde e. V. Hrsg. von Gisela Probst-Effah. Aachen, Shaker-Verlag, 2009. pp. 255–269, Ill., mus.

Valea Gurghiului. Monografie etnologică. Coordonatori: Ion Muşlea, Dumitru Pop, Ion Taloş. Ediția a doua îngrijită de Ion Cuceu. Editura Fundației pentru Studii Europene. Cluj-Napoca 2008. 355 S., zahlreiche Illustrationen.

Übersetzung: Das Gurghiu-Tal. Ethnologische Monographie. Koordination: Ion Muşlea, Dumitru Pop, Ion Taloş. Cluj-Napoca 2008.

Luisa del Giudice, 'Ethnography and Spiritual Direction: Varieties of Listening', in *Rethinking the Sacred*, Proceedings of the Ninth SIEF Conference in Derry 2008, ed. by Ulrika Wolf-Knuts (Department of Comparative Religion, Åbo Akademi University, Religionsvetenskapliga skrifter, 2009), pp. 9–23.

'Speaking Memory: Oral History, Oral Culture and Italians in American', in *Oral History, Oral Culture and Italian Americans* (selected papers from the 38th AIHA annual meeting, Los Angeles, 2005), ed. Luisa Del Giudice (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

John D. Niles, 'Picture as Story: Arthur Rackham and the Ballads'. In *The Nordic Storyteller: Essays in Honour of Niels Ingwersen*. Ed. Susan Brantly and Thomas A. DuBois. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009. 211–44.

David Atkinson, 'Where is the ballad, and why do we want so many of them? An Essay in Ontology', *Lied und populäre Kultur/ Song and Popular Culture*, 54 (2009), 11–32.

Helga Stein has received copies of the Hildesheim conference proceedings from the publishing company. Members who are interested in this volume can order them from Barbara Boock ([barbara.boock@dva.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:barbara.boock@dva.uni-freiburg.de)) who will bring them to the conference in the Netherlands, which will save on postage costs.