

# ***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. 9 (September 2008)**

(editor: David Atkinson)

## **Minutes of the Business Meeting of the KfV, Cardiff University, 2 August 2008, 11.00–12.30**

### **1. Present**

Sabine Wienker-Piepho (KfV President), Marjetka Golež Kaučič (KfV Vice-President), Isabelle Peere (KfV Vice-President), Barbara Boock (KfV Secretary/Treasurer), David Atkinson (KfV Secretary/Editor)

Ingrid Åkesson, Matilda Burden, Katherine Campbell, J. J. Dias Marques, Frances Fischer, David Gregory, Rosaleen M. Gregory, Cozette Griffin-Kremer, Louis Grijp, Eva Guillorel, Lene Halskov Hansen, Sabina Ispas, E. Wyn James, Katalin Juhász, Jennifer Kewley Draskau, Marija Klobčar, Yaroslava Konieva, Hans Kuhn, Imola Küllös, F. Gülay Mirzaoğlu, Alexander Morozov, Tatyana Morozova, John Moulden, Marjeta Pisk, Sigrid Rieuwerts, Siwan Rosser, Helga Stein, Larysa Vakhnina, Erich Wimmer

### **2. In Memoriam**

The passing of Bill McCarthy, Hugh Shields, Ardis Syndergaard was honoured at a special session at the beginning of the conference, where short tributes were presented.

Prof. Bengt R. Jonsson, ballad scholar and former leader of Svenskt visarkiv (the Centre for Swedish Folk Music and Jazz Research) died on the 31 August 2008, at the age of 78. He played an important role in Scandinavian and international ballad scholarship, and his work constituted a great part of the foundation for the critical edition of the Swedish medieval ballads, completed in 2001. Bengt R. Jonsson suffered from cancer for a number of years but continued nonetheless his work and was a frequent visitor to the Centre until the last years. We miss one of our great scholars.

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

Greetings were read out from members unable to attend this year, including Val Bold, Rolf Brednich, Mary Ellen Brown, Tom Cheesman, Luisa Del Giudice, Simona Delić, Jürgen and Ursula Dittmar, Heda Jason, Eckhard John, Ildikó Kríza, Maria Herrera-Sobek, Tom McKean, Karin Kvideland, W. F. H. Nicolaisen, Ian Russell, Michèle Simonsen, Larry Syndergaard, Stefaan Top, Ulo Valk, Vaira Vike-Freiberga, Natascha Würzbach

### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Prior to the conference the balance stood at € 1470. € 410 was collected in membership fees. After expenses the balance stood at € 1569. € 500 is committed to the Riga publication and €500 to Kiev, subject to certain conditions. Sigrid Rieuwerts was to be reimbursed for her expenses in mailing BASIS volumes to authors and received € 250.

### **5. Subventions**

The subject of a subvention of €200 every two years to support a PhD student to attend a KfV conference was discussed and agreed in principle.

## **6. SIEF**

Marjetka Golež Kaučič reported on the SIEF congress in Derry in June 2008. KfV sponsored a panel of six papers on the European Heritage of Ballads. Details can be found on the SIEF website. The KfV remains affiliated as a working group of SIEF. The issue of SIEF membership remains a matter of choice for individual KfV members.

SIEF has elected a new president, Ullrich Kockel. The next SIEF congress will be held in Lisbon in 2011.

## **7. BASIS Publications**

BASIS volumes are now refereed publications, not conference proceedings.

The Festschrift for Emily Lyle was successfully launched at the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh.

The volume of papers from the Riga conference has now been published and was successfully launched in Riga.

Papers from Freiburg are in preparation for publication, possibly by the end of 2008; and those from Kyle of Lochalsh possibly in 2009.

The papers from Kiev are in preparation and may be published in the BASIS series, subject to the manuscript meeting the required standards.

Proposals are invited for the BASE series of monographs.

## **8. Future Conferences**

**2009** Minsk, Belarus, 13–18 July 2009.

Abstracts of up to 300 words should be sent to [morozoff@tut.by](mailto:morozoff@tut.by) by 28 February 2009. The author's address, affiliation and contact details should be stated, along with a brief account of the author's career and research interests.

Suggested topics include: 1. History of intercultural interaction in folk and ballad art; 2. National varieties of cultural values and contemporary transformations; 3. Common universal values of traditional folk cultures as a basis for cultural communication and cooperation; 4. Art of the ballad in the world folk heritage.

**2010** Amsterdam or elsewhere in the Netherlands.

**2011** South Africa (April or September).

**2012** Turkey.

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

Larry Syndergaard reports on the 2007 International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, with two sessions sponsored by the KfV.

Papers included: Slavica Rankovic, Center for Middelalderstudier, University of Bergen, "On Aesthetic Selection and Survival of the 'Fittest' Text: Tradition and the Individual Talent in Serbian Epic Ballads"; David Gregory, "Grubbing for Moderate Jewels and the Victorian Debate on Ballad Origins and the Value of Broadside Balladry"; Keith Kelly, Kutztown University (Pennsylvania), "The Early Outlaw Ballad as an Oral Resistance Movement"; Sarah Harlan-Haughey, Cornell University, "'To Bydde a Man to Dyner': Food and Feasting in *The Gest of Robin Hood*"; Tracey Sands, University of Colorado, "Views of the Convent in Early Danish and Swedish Ballads".

Three papers were read in other sessions. Bente Velle Hellang, Agder University College (Norway), “Bodies Crossing Borders: Humans and Non-Humans in the Scandinavian Medieval Ballad”; Valerie B. Johnson, University of Rochester, “Habitat for Humanity: Naming Wilderness in the Early Robin Hood Ballads”; Lynn Wollstadt, “Teaching Traditional Ballads in the Introductory Literature Classroom”.

Six papers were by colleagues who had recently completed their degrees or are now completing graduate school. A ballad-mongers’ dinner at the Syndergaard’s house for the participants in the ballad sessions and other friends of the ballad has become a tradition.

### **11. Newsletter**

Special thanks are due to Barbara Boock and Michèle Simonsen for their work translating the newsletter and obituary notices.

### **12. Resolution of gratitude**

The meeting thanked the organizing committee in Cardiff: E. Wyn James, Llinos Wyn Jones, Sioned Davies, Siwan Rosser. Gifts were presented in the customary manner.

## **Conference report**

The 38th International Conference of the *Kommission für Volksdichtung* was held at the University of Cardiff, Wales, 28 July–2 August 2008. Members attended from Wales, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Norway, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, USA, Wales.

The weather was not especially kind but certainly did not dampen our enthusiasm. On the evening of our arrival Owen John Thomas presented a lively introduction to the history and culture of Cardiff, followed by a short walk into the city and the finding of food for those who had not already eaten. The conference was officially opened by Professor Sioned Davies of the School of Welsh and by the Rt Hon. Rhodri Morgan, AM, First Minister in the National Assembly of Wales. It was very good of the First Minister to find time from a busy schedule to greet us, and to set the stage for his brother, Professor Prys Morgan, whose talk on the World of the Welsh Ballad provided an inspiring introduction to the history of Wales and its culture, and the place of ballads within it. Professor Morgan’s lecture can only be described as a model of its kind.

Following the first session of academic papers, we made time to remember our friends Ardis Syndergaard, Bill McCarthy and Hugh Shields: a sad moment in our meeting, but an extremely appropriate one.

The first evening saw a concert organized and sponsored by the Welsh Folk-Song Society, with beautiful individual and ensemble singing by our hosts, and an introduction to the traditional Mari Llwyd play. On another evening the Sain recording company hosted a concert by Dafydd Iwan, Welsh folk and protest singer and a leading figure in the Welsh cultural revival of the twentieth century, and harpist Gwennan Gibbard. The reception by the School of Welsh included dazzling performances of Welsh folk dances, with many of our members being drafted in to make their own (sometimes rather less dazzling but nonetheless hugely enjoyable) contributions. The conference dinner was a medieval Welsh banquet held in Cardiff Castle with entertainment by Welsh singers acting in character, and contributions by some of our own members.

The conference excursion took us to the South Wales valleys, starting with a visit of Llancaiach Fawr Manor and the suspicious days of civil war. Even our individual passes, beautifully penned on parchment paper in the hand of the Lord’s brother-in-law, barely got us in without having to wait patiently at the front door. Once inside, we had to watch our step and seventeenth-century English carefully, while being shown around and instructed in the ways of the house by a team of servants, all dressed in period costume (and never a bit impressed by ours). It took a lunch of Welsh seaweed and a delicious assortment of meats, cheeses and pastries at

Llechwen Hall to recover some confidence! From there, we plunged into the multimedia experience of the Rhondda Heritage Park and down a packed cage and into a real colliery pit we went!

In addition one afternoon was spent in a visit to St Fagans national history museum, a renowned open-air folk museum on an extensive site not far outside of Cardiff, which gave us a chance to wander around at leisure and enjoy buildings and cultural artefacts from many different periods of Welsh history, before being treated to a very welcome cup of tea courtesy of the museum.

The academic side of the conference was well up to the usual high standard and the large number of papers offered made some parallel sessions inevitable. Some papers were delivered in Welsh with simultaneous English translation of an impressively high quality. The conference was a distinctively Welsh cultural experience

## NEWS

### Publications

Emily B. Lyle, *Fairies and Folk: Approaches to the Scottish Ballad Tradition*, BASE 1 (Trier: WVT, 2008), the first volume in the KfV's BASE (Ballads and Songs – Engagements) series is now available. €19.50.

Heda Jason, 'Malki an Keema: A Panihari Song', *Indian Folklore Research Journal*, 4.7 (2007), 1–22.

Natalie Kononenko, 'Ukrainian Ballads in Canada: Adjusting to New Life in a New Land', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 50.1–2 (2008), 17–36.

Martin Graebe, 'Devon by Dog Cart and Bicycle: The Folk Song Collaboration of Sabine Baring-Gould and Cecil Sharp, 1904–17', *Folk Music Journal*, 9.3 (2008), 292–348.

E. David Gregory, 'Before the Folk-Song Society: Lucy Broadwood and English Folk Song, 1884–97', *Folk Music Journal*, 9.3 (2008), 372–414.

*Edige. A Karakalpak Oral Epic as Performed by Jumabay Bazarov*. Ed. and trans. Karl Reichl. FF Communications 293. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2007. (with CD-ROM containing audio files and video clip.)

*Bregat – moreto – Evropa [Littoral – Sea – Europe]*. Ed. Mila Santova, Iva Stanoeva, Miglena Ivanova. Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Folklore. Sofia, Akad. izd. "Prof. Marin Drinov", 2006. 303 pp.

*Balgarija – Italija: Debati, lokalni kulturi, tradicii*. Ed. Valentina Ganeva-Rajcheva et al. Bulgaria – Italia : Dibattiti, culture locali, tradizioni. A cura di Mila Santova, Mariano Pavanello; Com. di red. Valentina Ganeva-Raicheva et al. Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Sofia, Akad. izd. "Prof. Marin Drinov", 2006.

Nejkova, Ruzha, 'Imalo li e shamani na Balkanite?' ['Have there ever been shamans in the Balkans?']. Sofia, Akad. izd. "Prof. Marin Drinov", 2006. (*Studia Thracica*, 9).

Mihajlova, Katj, *Stranstvashtijat sljap pevec prosjak vav folklornata kultura na slavjanite [The Wandering Blind Singer-Beggar in Slavic Folk Culture]*. Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Folklore. Sofia, Ab Izdatelsko atelie, 2006. 528 pp.

Pejcheva, Lozanka, *Mezhdur Seloto i Vselenata: Starata folklorna muzika ot Balgarija v novite vremena: Between Village and Universe: Old Folk Music from Bulgaria in New Times*. Sofia, Akad. izd. "Prof. Marin Drinov", 2008. 584 pp.

*Narodni pesni ot Iztochnoto Staroplaninie [Folksongs from the East Balkan mountain]*. Compiled by Ruža Nejkova, Todor Todorov. Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Folklore. Sofia, Akad. izd. "Prof. Marin Drinov", 2007. SbNU (Sbornik za narodni umotvoreenija i narodopis), Vol. 63.

Ilieva, Anna, *Teorija i analiz na folklornija tanc. Principi na formoobrazuvaneto v balgarskija tancov folklore [Theory and analysis of the Folk Dance. Morphology Principles in Bulgarian Dance Folklore]*. Sofia, Akad. izd. "Prof. Marin Drinov", 2007.

### **Conferences**

'Sacred Singing and Musical Spirituality', 15 November 2008, Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, Scotland

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/events/sacred-singing-and-musical-spirituality.shtml>

International Society for Folk Narrative Research (ISFNR), Athens, 21–27 June 2009.

<http://www.isfnr-athens2009.gr>