

NEWS IN BRIEF

IUAES 16TH WORLD CONGRESS IN CHINA

The 16th World Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, *Humanity, Development and Cultural Diversity*, took place in Kunming, China, 24–31 July, 2009. The main organizers were IAUES and China Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (CUAES), Yunnan University and Yunnan Nationalities University. The large congress convened more than 6,000 researchers from all over Europe, America, Africa and Asia.

Different exhibitions were displayed, e.g. on the research history of ethnology and anthropology in China. A large exhibition showcased different academic publications, as well as arts and handicrafts. The organizers had also displayed old instruments, never previously seen in Europe, yet still played by Chinese people. The participants had a possibility to see some old videos about China or visit the special sessions of anthropological films. At the end of the congress days there were concerts of traditional music and dance. International exhibitions and posters of research projects provided a multi-faceted overview of the trends and events in the field. The delegates could take part in day trips to the Kunming ethnographic museum, other places of interest, local museums, temples, familiarize themselves with the everyday life, thus obtaining an understanding about China's past and future.

Panel 6, focusing on the transfer of knowledge and children agency: reconstructing the paradigms of socialization, was chaired by Marine Carrin, France. M. Carrin, aiming at examining global children's culture, stated that "culture changes from one generation to another and the classic paradigm of socialization – conceived as learning or assimilating one's culture has, rightly, been criticized as too simplistic. Cultural knowledge is not only transferred from one generation to another, it is also generated among children, giving rise to a children's culture which forms part of the base of the knowledge of the young."

Panelists Alexis Avdeeff, Olga Artemova, Dominique Blanc, Cécile Guillaume, Mare Kõiva, Hasnia-Sonia Messaoui, Harald Tambs-Lyche, Marine Garrin Tambs-Lyche, Gladys Chicharron Saito, Marine Carrine, Lidia Guzy, Véronique Bénei and Uwe Skoda observed mainly Indian, Australian and European children's culture. The discussion entailed etymological and metaphorical levels of *Dalkai* dance, concerning the adaptation of dance and music into the children's life, and the meaning of *Dalkai* (sisters worship their brothers who pay for dancing and singing), unfortunately the archaic tradition is quite rare. The presentation on ritual practices in a Saoro village paid attention to how children learn rituals (among the group of peers, adults, at school, at religious rituals and from ritual specialists). Children's games are an important tool: mimic and parody of adult activities is at the same time part of the learning process. Kim children, for example, do not want to obey their parents and are not interested in going to school. The members of the Australian aboriginal Aurukun society tend to look at education from two contradictory perspectives, from inside and outside. Children



*Congress participants with a folk art group of students.
Photo by Andres Kuperjanov 2009.*

often prefer dance and more traditional ways of life because of the negative implications from outside.

The presentation on Chinese youth language demonstrated different ways of writing Chinese on the computer. Actually, there is a special computer-language with shortened words, emoticons, Chinese and international abbreviations. The newest trend is to use some loans from Japanese *mangas*.

M. Kõiva's presentation (in cooperation with L. and R. L. Vesik) introduced computer-based communication and the learning processes in social networks Rate.ee, Orkut, etc.

The general discussion encompassed educational problems – school graduates experience a contradiction between economic and cultural knowledge obtained from school, and the local life and social networks. School-leavers tend to have insufficient knowledge of local languages, this bringing about cultural oppression and making it difficult to construct personal identity in the circumstances of global ideologies, political parties, churches, NGOs, schools and families. How to change and influence the choices: children whose parents are militants would often follow their path. Are there other possibilities, do the traditions help change the worldview and behavior? Oral transmission of knowledge and learning from other generations is still important in contemporary society. Formal learning is one part in the transmission process, but very important is the essential transmission of experience.

Andres Kuperjanov, another Estonian participant in the IAUES congress, gave a presentation in the folklore section on Moon-lore.

As the congress took place in the university, there were plenty of student volunteers, and although some of them could not speak perfect English they did their best to help the delegates. The volunteers were extremely nice and helpful, it was really fun to talk to them and they could tell a lot of things about China.

Rahel Laura Vesik

3RD INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM ON PROVERBS IN TAVIRA

The third international meeting of paremiologists, “Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs”, was organised in Tavira in the Algarve region in southern Portugal, from November 8 to 15, 2009. The aim of such a unique scientific event, organised by the International Association of Paremiology, AIP-IAP, was to convene the proverb researchers from different places of the world. The fact that the number of participants has been increasing on a yearly basis (2007 – 57, 2008 – 76, 2009 – 94) evidences the significance of the event (see <http://www.colloquium-proverbs.org/index.php?lang=en>).

The AIP-IAP was initiated by Rui Soares and Outi Lauhakangas. Mr. R. Soares, being a local person and the initiator of Tavira conventions, has completed a substantial and resultant work. The keynote speakers at annual conferences are the top researchers in the field. The number of participant countries (25) has expanded during the three years – most of the researchers come from Portugal, Spain, Finland, Nigeria, Germany, Brazil, Hungary, Japan, Libya, Romania, Israel and Poland. Representatives of Estonia were this time Arvo Krikmann and the undersigned. Spanish and Portuguese presentations are intrinsically prevalent during the colloquium, as the working languages are English and Portuguese, thus giving the local researchers an opportunity to present their outcomes in an international setting and become more aware of what is done elsewhere.

This year, the keynote speakers were Galit Hasan-Rokem from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; František Čermak from the Institute of the Czech National Corpus, Charles University in Prague; Hisashi Matsumura from Otsuma University, Japan; Bhuvaneswar Chilukuri from University of Sebha, India and Stanisław Prędoła from the University of Wrocław, Poland. The main subject matters of the conference were diverse, with special focus on the sources (e.g. juxtaposition of proverbs in two languages), the use of proverbs in fiction and problems related to the translation of proverbs as many of the presenters were foreign philologists and come across translation issues in their everyday work. Likewise, there are diverse ways for researching proverbs – from cognitive, lexical-semantic, pragmatic, gender-related, pedagogical and other aspects. Particular attention was paid to corpus and database research of proverbs and proverbial phrases. Discussions were instilled by the digitalisation of proverbs, headed by Outi Lauhakangas and Pavel Kats. Hanno Biber provided an overview of the AAC project, i.e. the Austrian academic corpus, Pavel Kats (Israel) talked about the pilot project of Wikiproverbs as an online-encyclopaedia, Julia Sevilla Muñoz focused on English proverbs in a multilingual paremiological database, Khadija Attaher Ali introduced the corpus of Arab proverbs, Peter Gryzbek dealt with the presentation of proverbs in a database, proceeding from the aspect of legibility. The use of proverbs was observed in different contextual surroundings, for example, in banking advertisements, bearing in mind the current economic crisis (Sabine Fiedler, Marinela Soares), as significant phenomena or symbols in different cultures, e.g., in Japan (Yumi Matsumura), and in female attire of an African tribe (Maria Joao Coutinho).

Several speakers dissected proverb parodies, or anti-proverbs, focusing primarily on the reasoning and need for differentiating them from traditional proverbs. The popularity of such anti-proverb sayings in the language of today's youth is a clear sign of the viability of this genre. Pursuant to the aim of this year's colloquium – to motivate young people to preserve their native culture and acknowledge the potential of the proverbs – the use of proverbs was dealt with as a didactic measure, underlying the need to switch the proverbs (non-understandable to young people today) in the study process in schools. Rui Soares, the organiser of the conference, proposed an idea to intensify the use of proverbs by, for instance, SMS communication.

The organisers and a number of presenters emphasised the need to enhance and extend worldwide cooperation in the field of paremiology. Last year's colloquium was special due to the celebration of the 70th birthday of Arvo Krikmann, an Estonian paremiologist and academician. In connection with this, the organisers had issued a selection of Estonian proverbs with Portuguese-English equivalents – *Proverbios Europeus/ European Proverbs/ Euroopa vanasõnad* – presented at the reception given by the mayor of Tavira. This is the first publication introducing Estonian proverbs in Portuguese. Plans have been made in Portugal to distribute this booklet primarily to university libraries so as to promote the proverbs in different European languages and demonstrate the common elements therein.

Anneli Baran

THE 2ND ALL-RUSSIAN CONFERENCE OF FOLKLORISTS IN MOSCOW

The State Republican Centre of Russian Folklore organised the 2nd All-Russian conference of folklorists in Moscow, February 1–5, 2010. The Centre, founded in 1990 (Anatoli Kargin as the director), operates under the Ministry of Culture and focuses on scientific research, folklore-related collection and preservation, teaching, promotion and publication, and issues elaborate publications, anthologies, article collections, and also scientific and popular science periodicals, including one of the oldest Russian folklore journals, *Zhivaia Starina*, earlier released in St. Petersburg.

The first conference organised by the Folklore Centre, which took place exactly four years ago (at the beginning of February 2006), was of significant importance in promoting folklore-related research in Russia, according to the participants. Conference presentations were issued in four voluminous collections of articles, two of them prior to the meeting in 2005 and 2006, and the 3rd and 4th volume after the conference, in 2006 and 2007, respectively. The articles of conference participants were also published in different journals, *Zhivaia Starina*, *Narodnoe Tvorchestvo*, etc.

Apart from the delegates from nearly all the regions of Russia, the conference in 2010 was attended by participants from other CIS countries: Byelorussia, Kazakhstan

and Azerbaijan, and representatives from Ukraine, Poland, Bulgaria, Serbia, Mongolia, Lithuania, Italy, France and Canada. Estonian participants comprised Risto Järv, Anu Korb and Aado Lintrop from the Estonian Folklore Archives, and Jonathan Roper from the University of Tartu.

Due to the large amount of presentations and last-minute budget cuts, the conference sessions had to take place within three days (from February 2 to 4), instead of the initially planned four working days, and it was quite complicated to organise the work of several sections and roundtables. Presentations were delivered in the morning and in the afternoon, distributed between 13 sections, 14 roundtables and two discussion clubs. Simultaneous work process also pre-necessitated many conference premises, and the smaller rooms were unfortunately overcrowded. The subject matters focused on complex textology and folklore theory, research history, folklore and ethnography, folklore and culture in written tradition, folkloric language, folklore and folk religion, modern folklore. Likewise, the themes also dealt with the presentation of folklore and popular choreography; problems regarding the teaching of folklore, and, intrinsically of Russia, the programme involved a section on how to teach applied art and popular handicraft.

Nearly half of the roundtables concentrated on different genres of folklore: fairytales, epic, games, incantations-soothsaying, ethnobotany, short forms of folklore, lamentations, and also Internet folklore, folklore (folk songs) as the method for interdisciplinary research, and inter-ethnicity issues.

Conference participants were also familiarised with different folklore-related periodicals and books published during the recent years. The majority of scientific journals are published exclusively in the Russian language, however, one issue of the three-volume journal published in St. Petersburg, *Antropologicheskii Forum*, is now released in English.

Anu Korb

PRESIDENT'S FOLKLORE AWARDS 2009

This year, the President's Folklore Awards were presented on the 25th of February by Urmas Kruuse, the mayor of Tartu. The event, organised in the period between the Estonian Day of Independence (24th of February) and the Day of Finnish Culture (28th of February) was to recognise and acknowledge the best contributors to the Estonian Folklore Archives and those writing for the contest "The Finland of My Memories". The speakers at the festive occasion comprised the mayor of Tartu, representatives of the Estonian Folklore Archives; Rutt Hinrikus, the head of the Estonian Life Stories Association, and Arja Korhonen, the press official to the Embassy of Finland. Musical interludes were performed by Mari Kalkun.

The presidential folklore prize was awarded to Kaie Humal and Hille Tarto. The most substantial part of Kaie Humal's contribution is the material collected in her quondam home area, from the old fishermen of the northern shore of Lake Võrtsjärv and other local people in 2008 and 2009. Particularly valuable among the 25 hours of recorded material is the data regarding the history of Valma and Tännassilma villages, ethnographic descriptions of fishermen's life and their heritage, and also the reminiscences of Tartu-based artists and those of the girls from Toome Street in Viljandi; Kaie Humal's own memories of her grandmother and grandfather, a musician and instrument-maker, and Tõnis Mooses, a smith and miller, and others.

Kaie Humal has also donated to the archives two photo albums from the beginning of the 20th century, one of them containing pictures of Viljandi and the villages in the vicinity of Lake Võrtsjärv, taken by a local photographer Aleksander Lepik (1898–1977). In addition, Kaie Humal has facilitated the transfer of Oskar Loorits' personal letters to the Estonian Cultural History Archives.

Hille Tarto, the long-term host of the *Prillitoos* (Spectacle Case) programme on Estonian television (1988–1996 and 2000–2008), was rewarded for devising and conducting a quiz on herbal plants during 2005–2007, and the recording of materials concerning the questionnaire on herbal plants. This material was given over to the Estonian Folklore Archives in March and September 2009. As an outcome of the quiz, initiated by Hille Tarto, and her personal communication with the participants, a lot of the respondents' memories have been recorded with regard to the use of medicinal plants in their childhood and today, thus providing a substantial addition to the currently collected ethnomedical subject matter. The fact that the respondents have shared their personal experience, not only the knowledge obtained from books, is particularly valuable. The results of the quiz are introduced in the book *Prillitoosi ravimtaimemäng*



Urmas Kruuse, the mayor of Tartu presenting the President's Folklore Award to Kaie Humal. Photo by Alar Madisson 2010.

(Herbal Quiz of the *Prillitoos* Programme) issued by the Maaleht Publishing House in 2008. Likewise, the letters sent to the theatre-related quiz of the *Prillitoos* programme have also been handed over to the Cultural History Archives of the Estonian Literary Museum, and this is thanks to Hille Tarto.

Last year, the archives also received contributions from school-aged children to pensioners, regarding the folklore of old stories on the origin of place names, today's christening and wedding celebrations, written memories of Estonians living abroad, and the drawings made by the Äksi witch. As usual in recent years, the collected material has been recorded on diverse media carriers.

The circle of people helping to record folkloric heritage has also been widening by way of collection contests – in 2009, the Finnish Institute and the Estonian Literary Museum conducted a contest “The Finland of My Memories”, with nearly a hundred diverse contributions sent to the organisers. The participants in the contest comprised writers, scientists and also schoolchildren. The majority of the contributors expressed their memories of their trips to Finland during the Soviet period, i.e. that most of them were born during 1940–1960. Nearly a dozen people wrote about their memories of pre-war times, and one of the Finnish Boys elaborated on the Continuation War, whereas only a few respondents narrated about their trips in the recent past. Approximately the same amount of contributions (ca 100) were sent to a simultaneous contest conducted in Finland by the Folklore Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, aiming at gathering Estonia-related memories.

After long and detailed discussion, the jury (comprising Risto Järv, Järvi Lipasti and Rutt Hinrikus) granted three main prizes, donated by the Viking Line company, to Maret Lehto, Maria Peep and Lembit Vahesaar. A special award was given to Harri Jõgisalu, for his thorough and clearly arranged written contribution. The contest was supported by Fazer Confectionary, Paulig, TEA Publishing House, Petrone Print, Finnish Embassy and the Cultural Endowment of Estonia.

Last year, the Estonian Folklore Archives received an additional 12,336 pages of manuscripts (8,762 pages of original writings and 3,574 pages of research materials), 102 sound recordings, 76 video cassettes and files, 1,391 digital and 755 black-and-white and colour photos – evidencing that the economic recession has not been detrimental on the collection of folklore.

Astrid Tuisk