

## EUROPHRAS CONFERENCE IN SPAIN

The bi-annual conference of Europhras, the European Society of Phraseology, took place in 2010, from June 30 to July 2, in Granada, southern Spain. The organiser was one of the oldest universities in Spain, the University of Granada (founded in 1531), and more precisely, the Department of Linguistics, headed by Professor Antonio Pamies Bertrán.

The conference title was “Intercultural and Cross-linguistic Perspectives on phraseology and paremiology”, with an emphasis on intercultural and linguistic differences/similarities with regard to phraseology and paremiology. The conference with nearly 200 participants was structured into five plenary sessions, five workshops and 7 sessions, grouped according to the following themes: General Theoretical Issues; Contrastive Phraseology/Paremiology and Translation; Cognitive, Cultural and Rhetorical Motivation of Idioms and/or Proverbs; Diachronic Variation of Idioms and Proverbs; Synchronic Variation of Idioms and Proverbs; Corpus Linguistics and Phraseo-Paremiology; Phraseography and Paremiography; Phraseo-paremiology in Language Acquisition and Teaching.

The working languages during the conference were, as in earlier meetings, German, English, Spanish and French, each on an equal basis. German, which used to be the only working language in the beginning, has given way to English and the others as the circle of researchers has widened – the meeting that was at first meant to convene German philologists-phraseologists has now grown and is becoming an event for those interested in phraseology, yet with different professional backgrounds.

This year, there were more keynote speakers than in earlier times, all of them acknowledged phraseologists: Natalia Filátkina (“Manifestation of culture in the historical phraseology of German”), Dmitrij Dobrovol’skij (“Cross-linguistic equivalence of idioms: does it really exist?”), Annelies Häcki-Buhofer (“Collocations – theoretical and lexicographical aspects”), Carmen Mellado (“Valores semánticos y pragmáticos de la fraseología de CALLAR en alemán y español”), Angel López García (“The neural basis of phraseological constructions”).

Dmitrij Dobrovol’skij as the most outstanding theoretician-phraseologist of recent years, underlined that it is necessary to be flexible in finding counterparts for the phraseologisms in different languages, and stated that complete translations are not sensible as the result would be the so-called phraseological false friends, misleading in the mediation of cultures. This is a highly significant issue as the majority of phraseologists are also foreign language specialists who come across translations in their daily work.

Workshops in the conference programme were conducted in different languages, I would like to highlight the following presenters: Salah Mejri and Jean-Pierre Coulson (“Linguistique de Corpus et Phraséologie Contrastive”), František Čermák and Elisabeth Piirainen and Joanna Szerszunowicz (“Motivation, Culture and Phraseology”), Harald Burger, Ane Kleine and Natalia Filátkina (“Historische Aspekte der Phraseologie und Phraseographie”).

This year, the topics of particular interest for phraseologists concerned the use of phraseologisms on the Internet, phraseology-related terminology, the use of old phraseological expressions in the contemporary language, the position of phraseologisms,



*A view to the Moorish Albazyn district in the city of Granada.  
Further in the distance the Sierra Nevada mountain range.*

idioms and collocations in foreign language studies, analysability or non-analysability of idiomatic units, phraseological variability and modifications, corpus-based empirical treatments, problems regarding idiomatic equivalents, reflexion of cultural specificities in phraseology. The abundance of subject matters is a continuous proof of diversity in phraseological research which is indeed characteristic of this domain – instead of one predominant theme there are many areas to focus on.

In comparison with earlier times, more attention was paid to the research of proverbs, however, this trend was already observable during the previous Europhras conference two years ago in Helsinki, when paremiology was discussed in a separate panel. Several presenters in Granada introduced the EC funded project, SprichWort, targeted at creating an Internet platform for language learning. The actual content of this international project is to reflect the use of proverbs in various languages and cultures. Another major project, introduced during the conference, is the multilingual phraseological dictionary ([www.colidiom.com](http://www.colidiom.com)) which is still in its initial phase.

In addition, the contributors to the project “Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond” had one of their regular meetings during the conference. As an outcome of the project, the first part of a voluminous publication “Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond: Toward a Lexicon of Common Figurative Units” will be issued in spring 2011, compiled by Elisabeth Piirainen, project coordinator and manager. The mentioned collection is to contain nearly 200 generally known and widespread idioms of literary

origin, selected in the process of joint work of phraseologists from different countries (incl. Estonia).

The European Society of Phraseology elected the new board and chairman for the next five years – this being Jarmo Korhonen, Professor at the University of Helsinki. The next Europhras conference will take place two years hence in Maribor University, Slovenia.

Anneli Baran

#### **FROM LANGUAGE TO MIND 4**

The international conference – From Language to Mind 4 – that took place in Elva on October 15–17, 2010, was dedicated to the occasion of the 110th anniversary of academician and renowned folklorist Oskar Loorits, a researcher who set a cornerstone for various research subjects in folkloristics, and simultaneously updated and developed the methodology. The conference also celebrated the 75th birthday of Pille Kippar whose research and publications about fairytales are widely known. The past conferences, held to acknowledge the anniversary of O. Loorits (in 1990 and 2000), have brought a number of new valuable contacts and enriched the Estonian field of folkloristics in many ways. In the same vein, the present conference was remarkable because of the extraordinarily wide expertise of those researchers present.

The conference consisted of thematic panels of presentations followed by discussions. In addition to that, two plenary sessions were held and round-table discussions took place on both evenings in a more informal setting but nevertheless were filled with vigorous academic exchange of thoughts. A number of posters were presented to the conference delegates dedicated to the re-structuring of the ritual year during the post-socialist period in Russia, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Hungary (I. Sedakova, A. Vaicekauskas, E. Anastasova, G. Barna) and to the theories of the Tunguska catastrophe (N. Dmitrieva).

Together with the academic event in Elva, an exhibition, “Tsässons and churches of Setomaa in the 17th to 21st century” was opened at the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu which includes 80 photos of all the 23 tsässons and 6 Orthodox churches located within the Estonian territory of Setomaa (Setoland). The central topics were humour, ancient mythologies, narratives and expressions of belief, and creating places and identities on the Internet.

Humour has a key role in media texts, first of all on the Internet. In online communication, television, personal communication and elsewhere, humour is used to tackle questions of identity that are especially topical in the post-socialist region. Playful and irreverent genres are equal to other, more serious-minded ones, and deconstruction of identity requires in addition to the study of economic and political aspects also the study of emotions and attitudes. From time to time, they provide the ground for politically incorrect (media) texts, analyzing of which leads us to the subjects of censorship,