

Papers from Erika Kržišnik (*Vitality of Proverbs Today*) and Mateja Jemec Tomazin (*Emergence of Metaphorical Terminology and Terminological Guidance*) were unfortunately cancelled for medical reasons.

This conference in collaboration with two institutions, embracing two projects (dealing with related themes) was the first one in Slovenia. The main goal of this conference was to offer insights into new developments in selected areas and to create opportunities and directions for further research. The latter is possible only with groundbreaking and cross-sectoral networking and collaboration; for this reason, the search and formation of such possibilities were highlighted. We sincerely hope that there will be more collaboration conferences and more project opportunities to work and research together – in Slovenia and on the international paremiological field.

Saša Babič

INTERNATIONAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE *STILL POSTSOCIALISM? CULTURAL MEMORY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS*

Kazan, 19–20 April, 2013

In the second half of April, a two-day interdisciplinary conference on postsocialism was held in Kazan. The conference under the title, *Still Postsocialism? Cultural Memory and Social Transformations*, was organised by the Centre for Cultural Studies of Postsocialism and the Institute for Comparative Studies of Modernity, both associated with the Kazan Federal University and European University in St. Petersburg. It must be mentioned that Kazan is a perfect location for such meetings. It is located on the banks of the Volga River, it is the capital of one of the most rebellious Russian regions – the Republic of Tatarstan – and is a wealthy oil industry centre. At the same time, Kazan is a city where Soviet legacy, Russian Orthodox and Tatar Moslem culture along with the blooming and hedonistic inner city form a post-Soviet symbiosis.

The question whether we should and still could speak about postsocialism(s) is not a new one: it was the issue that was discussed at academic conferences at least ten years ago. The fully packed conference with several parallel panels, however, proves that there exists keen academic interest to debate the existence of postsocialism. Unfortunately, the first keynote speeches [Prof. Jan Kubik (Rutgers University, USA) and Prof. Alexander Etkind (University of Cambridge, UK)] were rather a discussion of case studies than addressing general and theoretical issues related to the understanding of postsocialism. The second day keynote speakers [Prof. Caroline Humphrey (University of Cambridge, UK) and Prof. Chris Hann (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany)]

used concrete case studies (Russian and Hungarian, respectively) to make substantial remarks about the nature of postsocialism. For example, Chris Hann's emphasis on historical continuities is relevant to all regions. He said: "It is not enough to look only at the Socialist era. We should go beyond postsocialism and look at pre-Socialist time for a full picture."

In general, the selection of presentations for the conference was brilliant, covering various spheres and topics. Geographically, the majority of presenters focused on Russia, but some papers discussed also Central Asia, Belarus or Ukraine. Interestingly, in various panels there were several presentations which aimed at merging postcolonial and postsocialist theories. It must be noted that due to different focus points, this is not an easy task, so these papers were theoretically not very sophisticated. Nevertheless, the impressive number of papers demonstrates growing interest in that segment of theorisation.

To name some individual papers, Sanna Turoma's (Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland) presentation "Grazhdanin Poet / Citizen Poet: Postmodern Poetry for the Postsocialist Masses?" was an interesting analysis of Josif Brodsky and other radical Russian poets. The presentation highlighted the multilayeredness of the socialist society and culture, which also affects their reception in the modern era. Rostislav Kononenko (Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia) gave an overview of the question of authenticity in modern Russian folk movement, which seems to suffer from fragmentation just like folk movements in other countries.

Yaroslav Hrytsak (Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv National University, Ukraine) focused on fluid identities in Ukraine, showing how different interpretations of ethnicity and citizenship exist in Lviv and Donetsk.

The final discussion at the conference became quite heated when some talkers raised the issue whether anthropologists should 'cause a volcano' or be engaged in social and political movements. Chris Hann summed the discussion up by arguing that anthropology as a discipline should be engaged with documentation and should analyse not initiate revolutions; if individuals want to be engaged in politics, they can always join a political party.

In retrospective, the conference was fruitful, demonstrating how strongly the socialist past affects lives, attitudes and cultures in all former socialist countries. I reckon that as long as we speak about the significance of socialism, we should also not hesitate to speak about postsocialism(s).

Aimar Ventsel