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LITHUANIAN ETHNOLOGY

STUDIES IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

Lietuvos etnologija: socialinės antropologijos ir etnologijos studijos – etnologijos ir socialinės/kultūrinės antropologijos mokslo žurnalas, nuo 2001 m. leidžiamas vietoj tęstinio monografijų ir studijų leidinio „Lietuvos etnologija". Jame spausdinami moksliniai straipsniai, konferencijų pranešimai, knygų recenzijos ir apžvalgos, kurių temos pirmiausia apima Lietuvą ir Vidurio/Rytų Europą. Žurnalas siekia pristatyti mokslo aktualijas ir skatinti teorines bei metodines diskusijas. Tekstai skelbiami lietuvių arba anglų kalba.

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Foreword

A recurrent interest in the "building blocks" of socio-cultural cohesion and an abiding search for collective and group linkages are central research problems in social anthropology and European ethnology. *Tradition*, *identity* and socio-cultural interrelatedness in general are often put forward as critical analytical paradigms for understanding questions about how group solidarity reveals itself. They also appear on the permanent agenda of *Lithuanian Ethnology*, as is the case in this issue.

The present volume is focused on common grounds, including the "basic" ones of kinship and ethnicity, for the variety of group attachments and linkages. The grounds for group solidarity are seen as modes of conduct and shared past livelihoods, as "local intimacy", as "habitual" cultures, as belongingness to "ethnic homes". The ties and linkages of cohesion are portrayed in the processes of social change, in particular, post-communism, but principal attention is paid to the ways of how they are constructed, manipulated and symbolically, or even structurally, empowered.

The first article in the issue, "An Idea and a Picture of Kinship: Genealogical Thinking in Lithuania", perhaps best illustrates our theme. Written by Auksuolė Čepaitienė, it deals with the folk model of kinship as the matrix of genealogical thinking used for basic social order and classification needs of the community.

Irma Šidiškienė, in her paper, "Internet Texts as a Source for Marriage Research", provides an analysis of the "'internet users' knowledge" of the "basic" links of human interrelatedness, marriage and family. She convincingly introduces internet as a new source for ethnological research and a sphere for cultural production, and amply proves that among internet users' there prevails an individualist understanding of weddings – feast for myself – and a pragmatic understanding of marriage – family – as a public realization of entitlement for an adequate position in a society.

Thomas Wilson, an international specialist in political anthropology, in his "Elites, Networks and the Anthropologies of Policy and Borders: Some Suggestions from Ireland" provides an important framework for the understanding of power relations via "non spoken forms of data". Relying on full ethnography, rather than interviews, he argues for re-visiting the notions of *social networks* and *elites* and points group boundedness as a promising perspective for the understanding of politics and practices of public poli-

cies. He establishes that such boundedness is reflected in governmentality which tends to place emphasis on individuals and groups and their linkages, to be understood as "characterized by various forms of local intimacy and local limits".

The article by Ida Knudsen "Some Reflections on Age, Politics and Politicians in a Rural Community after Lithuania's EU-entrance" discusses how ageing politicians, who formerly enjoyed high positions in the Soviet system "make politics" by rhetorically abandoning the Soviet past, nevertheless continue to use strategies and practices of the past for achieving private goals through public means. Age as well as experience from the past is used as social capital to benefit from the flows of resources, including EU funds. Soviet past, apparently, is also used to maintain the pattern of group friendship ties and linkages of a type known as "group of friends". According to Knudsen, this is employed by the aged politicians "to unite people in a feeling of comradeship" and to make party politics despite the EU context.

Post-socialist social uncertainty is explored in Kristina Šliavaitė's article "De-industrialization, Social Insecurity and Strategies of Survival in the Post-Soviet Region: the Case of Visaginas". Relying on extended fieldwork data, she focuses on the strategies of resistance to unemployment, deployed by the local inhabitants after the closure of the nuclear power plant. The paper discusses how the people of Visaginas interpret de-industrialization and how they cope with their social and economic uncertainty. During the Soviet era, employees in critical industries such as the nuclear power plant were classed as the "social avant-garde" and the plant itself was referred to terms of a "patron". Thus the closure of the plant is seen as a moral devaluation of their work and loss of the "patron", a broken link for subsistence and livelihood.

The two remaining articles are focused on human mobility vis-à-vis territorially imbedded, "given" and "in-rooted" culture. Tea Golub in "Meanings of 'Home' and 'Homeland' in Slovene Diasporic Communities" examines Slovene emigration to Argentina, Germany and France, as well as return migration. By focusing on the concept of "home", which has recently become a central term in studies of transnationalism, she argues that Slovenian migrants, in their narratives, are constructing *home* in terms of primordial linkages to ethnic origins and the homeland, including efforts to retain their culture, heritage, language and national consciousness while living abroad.

Daiva Repečkaitė also deals with migrants' – Russian-speaking immigrants (repatriates) in Israel – construction of ties with the country left behind. In her "Everyday Definitions of Culture by Russian-speaking Israelis: from

Sophisticated Manners to Codes of Communication" she focuses on the *emic* definition of *culture* portrayed by the immigrants in their everyday life. Such particular pattern of *culture* is contrasted with the "high culture" model applied by mainstream Israeli society to the immigrants. Repečkaitė suggests that the immigrant definition of *culture* is "close to the concept of *habitus* – a set of dispositions that can be 'carried with oneself'", detached from their habitual context and applied in the new society.

We hope that the articles introduced here and additional materials in this volume of the *Lithuanian Ethnology* will be of interest to our readers and even provide occasions to engage in a discussion on how to trace particular, often hidden ties, linkages and attachments used as building blocks in the making and remaking of particular ways of social cohesion.

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