

Foreword

Volume 5 of *Lietuvos etnologija: socialinės antropologijos ir etnologijos studijos* [Lithuanian Ethnology: Studies of Social Anthropology and Ethnology] is devoted to everydayness. This topic does not seem new to Lithuanian ethnologists. Since the inter-war period, when research was centred around the Šiauliai Society of Regional Studies and the journal *Gimtasai kraštas* (*The Native Land*), the interest of the researchers and enthusiasts of ethnography has been focused on the rural daily cycle and lifestyle. The present publication, however, attempts to cast a different glance at everydayness. Instead of analyzing the everyday life of human beings, it investigates the daily social, recurrent condition and people's environment that can comprise the most varied and unrelated things. The return to the topic of everydayness was prompted by the ongoing fundamental social changes, bringing commonplace everyday issues to the fore as well.

These problems were discussed at the conference 'Everydayness and Culture', held at the Lithuanian Institute of History, Vilnius, on 13–14 November 2003. It was organized by the Institute's Department of Ethnology and the research group of the programme 'Dynamics of Cultural and Social Processes: Ethnographic and Ethnological Research (2002–2006)'. The conference was attended by ethnologists, sociologists, historians, folklore researchers, museum workers from the Lithuanian Institute of History, the Universities of Vilnius and Vytautas Magnus, the Institute of Social Research, the National Museum of Lithuania and the Open Air Museum. This publication contains articles prepared on the basis of the papers delivered at the conference within the framework of *Lithuanian Ethnology: Studies of Social Anthropology and Ethnology*. This issue comprises only a part of the conference papers; the rest will be published in other issues or in some other publications.

The articles vary with respect to the spheres they cover; nevertheless, they are united by the many-sidedness of the everyday life. The approach to treat everydayness as a space familiar to the human being and limited in time, opened the way for different analytical perspectives and a variety of ethnographic works. However, with the 'vanishing' of the boundaries of everyday reality, the conception of reality itself became too loose and difficult to define, and that was already noticed by some colleagues. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the recurrent everyday human life is not merely a monotonous daily life. Its essence can be revealed by ethnographic research. A different

attitude to everydayness is a search for new spaces, contributing dynamics and fresh air into its well-established academic conception. At the same time, that is a strong wish of the authors of these articles.

The articles are grouped according to themes, formulated by their authors, the fields of their research and the problems raised. It is to be hoped that the theme of everydayness becomes more concrete in the arguments of the researchers. On the other hand, the guidelines on further research also became clearer.

When this publication was going to press, Professor Vacys Milius died on 2 October 2005. He was a distinguished ethnographer, a long-time member and one-time head of the Department of Ethnology of the Lithuanian Institute of History, a member of the editorial board of *Lietuvos etnologija*, a professor of Vytautas Magnus University and a teacher of many of our colleagues. Professor Milius devoted his entire life to Lithuanian ethnology, which, at present, is virtually inconceivable without his works and activities. The concept of this issue – everydayness and culture – was a sphere of his studies. This fifth volume of *Lietuvos etnologija: socialinės antropologijos ir etnologijos studijos* is dedicated to the memory of Vacys Milius.

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