Foreword

Contemporary European societies are more and more open to and living in highly differentiated modes of life. Such a situation is a challenge to the social sciences. Anthropology and European ethnology are the most sensitive disciples to take the diversity of human lives and cultures. Anthropology does that on a global scale; European ethnology's scope is more regional and distinctive. Fortunately, Anthropology of Europe is a flexible, growing sub-discipline, so the European field can be shared by both disciplines and provides a perfect arena for collaboration.

Lithuanian Ethnology: Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology from its very beginning in 2001, as the title of the journal inscribes, stands for the cooperation of these two disciplines, at least methodologically. This volume includes a variety of articles two of which illustrate this point.

The first one, written by Chris Hann, one of the leading experts of post-communist anthropology, focuses on unifying the anthropological tradition and clearly proves that European ethnology and social anthropology are "two different styles of anthropology" and that they are "equally valid" and should compliment each other.

Thomas Schippers, the French anthropologist – Europeanist, deals with the changing perspectives in the study of material culture in Europe. He emphasizes that the material dimensions of human cultures could be approached as new, more "visualized and iconized worlds" of consumption and thus of central interest to the "cultural expertise" provided by both European and "general" ethnologists.

The other articles in this volume focus on the collective identity processes as well as the emotional-moral dimensions of post-socialist realities and use the 'anthropology at home' perspective.

Petras Kalnius, the ethnologist from the Lithuanian Institute of History, deals with the problem of delineation of regional borders as regional identity markers. The case of the border-zone of the two main regions in Lithuania: Aukštaitija and Žemaitija is used. The article explores the mental delineation of the border. It argues that, as the sources for local identity, the popularity of the spoken vernacular language, as well as the numbers of local population, born and raised in the border-zone decreases, so does the regional identity itself.

Aušra Simoniukštytė, from Vilnius University, presents an ethno-historic account of the history and memory of Roma population in Lithuania. Her

analysis, based on life histories, shows the centrality of the ethnic identity in the formation, sustaining and reinforcing of the collective memory of this ethnic minority.

Renatas Delis, from Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, in his study of the Neo-pagans in post-communist Lithuania, explores the processes of representation of the national identity. He suggests that the Neo-pagan movement, known as counter-establishmental during the Soviet regime, is still popular today because it gives an alternative and an attractive model of Lithuanian identity by means of sacralization, archaization and, eventually, ethnification of traditional Lithuanian folk culture.

Gediminas Lankauskas, the Lithuanian-Canadian anthropologist, in his article "On the Sensory Memory of Socialism" uses the case of the Museum of Soviet Sculptures in Grūtas Park, Lithuania, to exemplify how the exhibition of the statues and the taste of the "Soviet dishes" in the museum café, create a sensory memory of socialism. His conclusion is that the museum offers an alternative reality to capitalist commoditization and consumerism. It provides a "nostalgic longing" not for socialism as an oppressive totalitarian system but for the quotidian sociability centered on kin and friends that the system inadvertently produced and perpetuated.

Danguolė Svidinskaitė, from the Lithuanian Institute of History, in her article on everyday life religiosity in Lithuania today deals with a very sensitive issue: an encounter of the local population with the local clergy. The author provides the readers with a thorough analysis of how *local knowledge,* morals and ritual, if altered or omitted by the priests, will affect the faith of the believers.

The article by Vytis Čiubrinskas "Migrants of Nostalgia" discusses the moral imperative "to be of use for Lithuania", coined by the Lithuanian political émigrés of the Second World War, as a type of nostalgia. Encultured as Lithuanian patriots, Lithuanian-Americans as well as the other diaspora Lithuanians, on their way back to Lithuania, are challenged by the uncertainty of post-soviet Lithuanian society. Returnees are in need not only of social integration but also acculturation and re-identification with the new Lithuania's reality.

In sum, I hope that the articles included in this volume of *Lithuanian Ethnology* leave message with the reader that both anthropological and European ethnology perspectives, in Chris Hann's words, are "creatively cross-fertilized" by using of the same ethnographic methodology.

Vytis Čiubrinskas