

Kommission für Volksdichtung (KfV)

International Ballad Commission

Commission internationale pour l'étude de la chanson populaire

(Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore, S.I.E.F.)

www.KfVweb.org

Electronic Newsletter no. 5 (August 2004)

Minutes of the Business Meeting of the KfV, Riga, Latvia, 24 July 2004

1. Present

Luisa Del Giudice (President), Marjetka Golez Kaucic (Vice-President), Isabelle Peere (Vice-President), David Atkinson (Secretary/Editor), Barbara Boock (Secretary/Treasurer), Sigma Ankrava, Michael Bell, Mary Ellen Brown, Dace Bula, Matilda Burden, Mary-Ann Constantine, Stephanie Crouch, J. J. Dias Marques, Frances Fischer, Lene Halskov Hansen, Joseph Harris, Maria Herrera-Sobek, E. Wyn James, Kirstin Kearney, Hans Kuhn, Reimund Kvideland, Martin Lovelace, Emily Lyle, Tom McKeon, W. F. H. Nicolaisen, Gerald Porter, Sigrid Rieuwerts, Andy Rouse, Michele Simonsen, Helga Stein, Jaroslav Szurman, Larysa Vakhnina, Sabine Wienker-Piepho, Erich Wimmer.

The conference organizers, Imants Freibergs, Dace Bula, Valdis Muktupavels, Sigma Ankrava, Janina Kursite, Martins Boiko, Andris Kapusts, were heartily thanked for a splendidly organized conference and were presented with various gifts.

2. Greetings from absent friends

Greetings were read out from members unable to attend this year, including Simona Delic, Jurgen Dittmar, Cozette Griffin-Kremer, Sabina Ispas, Ildiko Kriza, Beatriz Mariscal Hay, Roger Renwick, and Lutz Rohrich. Barre Toelken is doing well following his stroke.

3. Committee

The committee was introduced for the benefit of new members. Members were encouraged to take the KfV brochure to meetings and conferences, and were reminded that the SIEF looks to the KfV as a particularly active working group. It was noted that Barbara Boock's email address requires updating on the KfV brochure; it should be barbara.boock@ub.uni-freiburg.de.

4. Newsletter

There was some discussion as to whether translations of the newsletter into French and German are of benefit to members, and the consensus was that these are useful.

5. Archive

Barbara Boock reminded members that the KfV Archive is held in Freiburg and encouraged members to send her anything pertinent that they would care to donate to the archive.

6. Publications

Sigrid Rieuwerts spoke about publications and the arrangement that the KfV now has with WVT publishers in Trier, Germany. WVT have published the first in the KfV series, B.A.S.I.S. 1, the proceedings of the Leuven conference (2002), as a handsome volume, which all members are encouraged to purchase (*Ballads and Diversity: Perspectives on Gender, Ethos, Power and Play*, eds. Isabelle Peere and Stefaan Top, B.A.S.I.S. 1, Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2004).

There may be, however, a need for the KfV to work towards some kind of formal incorporation as a legal body to facilitate relations with the publishers. The meeting was keen that the KfV be acknowledged on the title page of future volumes. The model appears to be that future volumes will not include all papers presented but a refereed selection which can be marketed as a coherent volume. It was stressed that it is essential to build up the subscription list for the BASIS series to ensure the success of this publishing venture.

The format leaves a number of questions concerning the selection of papers for publication and what happens to the remainder, as well as editorial control and matters of house style and editorial coherence, etc. Members are invited to consider these and to forward suggestions to Sigrid Rieuwerts: Ballads@RIEUWERTS.DE.

Members will already be aware of the publication of the proceedings of the Aberdeen conference (1999) (*The Flowering Thorn: International Ballad Studies*, ed. Thomas A. McKean, Logan: Utah State University Press, 2003). Proceedings of the Austin conference (2003) are being edited by Roger Renwick, although he has expressed concern about the quantity and quality of submissions. Members are urged to submit their papers to the KfV in the first instance wherever possible, and those who gave papers at Austin and have not submitted their papers are urged to reconsider and contact Roger Renwick as soon as possible: renwick@mail.utexas.edu.

7. KfV Website

Tom McKean reported that he has designed a new home page which should be up and running shortly. Stephanie Crouch is helping with the website.

8. SIEF

The KfV sponsored three panels at the SIEF meeting in Marseille in April. All were well attended, calling attention to our group and interesting potential new members. The theme was 'Song Cultures in Contact: Oppositions and Affinities. The panels considered song cultures in European and European diaspora contexts. Historic and contemporary case studies presented opportunities for examining cultural collision and opposition, as well as cultural alignment and synergy, through song texts and cultural contexts. The panels were chaired by Luisa Del Giudice (a summary will appear in the SIEF conference proceedings).

Those who presented were: Kati Szego (Canada), 'Constructing the Missionary Through Song: Native Hawaiian and Colonial Perspectives'; Marija Klobcar (**Slovenia**), 'A Slovene ballad about a killer of young women in France: A tale about a journey of exciting stories or a tale about a journey of people?'; Lada Buturovic (Bosnia), 'Travelling of the "Hasanaginica" Ballad through the Mediterranean'; Mari Sarv (Estonia), 'Tradition versus self-expression in older Estonian folksongs'; Marjetka Golez Kaucic (Slovenia), 'Slovene Folk Song at the Crossroads of Influences, Contacts and Oppositions of the East, West, North and South'; Susana Friedmann (Colombia), 'Parodying the Other in Times of Violence'; Gail Holst-Warhaft (USA), 'Orientations: Greek Urban Song and the Eastern Question'; John Moulden (Ireland) 'We named the place "King William's Bridge" and "Dolly's Brae" no more'. The following were not able to attend in person: Isabelle Peere (Belgium), 'Esquisse de l'esprit de résistance aux présences étrangères en Wallonie (1750-1950)'; Ian Biddle (UK), 'Canciones de ida y vuelta: new flamenco and the theatre of difference'; Goffredo Plastino (UK), 'Navigando: New Mediterranean Sounds in Italy'.

Luisa Del Giudice is on the executive committee of SIEF, where she mediates communication between the various SIEF working groups and the executive. Marjetka Golez Kaucic has also been recently elected and has taken on responsibility for liaison with eastern and other European countries, and will also look into the availability of European funds. Congratulations to Marjetka.

UNESCO and WIPO (the World Intellectual Property Organization) both gave presentations at the SIEF conference. Reports will be forwarded when available of matters of interest to the KfV. For the most recent SIEF newsletter contact: sief@meertens.knaw.nl. (SIEF strongly encourages

members of its working groups to become direct members of SIEF. Consult Web site: <http://www.meertens.nl/sief>, for membership information.)

9. Email addresses

Members are urged to keep the KfV up to date with their email addresses. There is no mechanism for the KfV to remain in contact with those whose email addresses have changed unless they let the executive know by emailing Isabelle Peere peere@hec.be and David Atkinson david@atkinson1724.freeserve.co.uk

10. Treasurer's report

Prior to the conference in Riga and after deduction of bank charges the bank balance stood at €910. After the payment of membership fees at the conference (€260), minus expenses for gifts and website, the current balance is €1075.

11. Logo

Three possible designs were briefly shown. Members are invited to submit any other projects for consideration.

12. International Congress on Medieval Studies

The session sponsored by the KfV at the 2004 International Congress on Medieval Studies was an interesting and successful one. Entitled 'The Ballad: Traditions, Texts, Treatments', the session included three papers: 'Judeo-Spanish Ballad Studies: Some Recent Discoveries' by Samuel Armistead, University of California-Davis; 'The Middle English "Judas" Ballad and the Price of Jesus: Ballad Tradition and the Legendary History of the Cross' by Thomas Hill, Cornell University; and 'Conservation and Innovation in an Exemplary [Faroese] Ballad Tradition' by Patricia Conroy, University of Washington. Sandra Straubhaar, University of Texas at Austin, presided. The papers represented an ideal range of traditions, historical periods, and scholarly approaches, and organizer Larry Syndergaard believes the KfV can feel well satisfied to be sponsor.

Abstracts of papers are invited for a session on the ballad to be sponsored by the KfV at the 2005 International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA., 5–8 May 2005. Entitled 'The Ballad, Medieval and Modern', the session will welcome a wide range of materials and approaches. To propose a paper, please submit an abstract of about 300 words to organizer Larry Syndergaard on or before 15 September 2004 (113 So. Prairie, Kalamazoo, MI 49006, USA, or larry.syndergaard@wmich.edu). Abstracts must indicate the thesis, methodology, and conclusions of the paper; accept a 20-minute time limit; and say whether audio-visual equipment will be needed. Papers must be read in person. Larry, as a long-time member of the Medieval Institute at Western Michigan University, is glad to answer your questions about the ICMS and about the ballad session.

13. Elections

Luisa Del Giudice's term as President ends in 2005. Nominations were taken from the floor at the meeting (Wyn James and Sabina Wienker-Piepho were nominated), and a Call for Nominations for President has already been circulated (emailed) to members. Please note the September 30 deadline for submission of further nominations.

14. Ethics/mission statement

This subject was discussed again, without any conclusive agreement being reached. It was pointed out that UNESCO is due to make a declaration on cultural diversity by 2006, and that it may prove appropriate for the KfV to adopt that declaration. Members are invited to continue to consider and discuss this issue and to inform the executive of their views.

15. Future meetings

2005: The conference in Kiev is fixed for 6–11 July. Larysa Vakhnina gave an introduction to Kiev and showed a video on the Ukraine. She announced that the KfV is being invited in the name of the Rylskie Institute, and also that there will be facilities for simultaneous translation from Ukrainian into English.

2006: The 2006 conference will take place in Freiburg-im-Breisgau, Germany, hosted by the Deutsche Volksliedarchiv. The year marks the bicentennial of the influential folk song collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano. The conference is fixed for 3–7 April. Abstracts are required (for reasons of funding) by 31 October 2004.

2008: The 2008 conference will take place in Cardiff and will celebrate the founding of the Welsh Folk-Song Society.

16. Call for translators

Members are requested to volunteer their services to ease the burden of translation for the newsletter, conference abstracts, and proceedings. Any assistance will be much appreciated. Forward your name to David Atkinson at: david@atkinson1724.freeserve.co.uk

17. Publication of papers from Riga

Papers from the 34th Conference of the Kommission für Volksdichtung will be published as BASIS 3. Please send papers for consideration in electronic form to the organizers in Riga (ballads@latnet.lv) and to Sigi Rieuwerts (ballads@rieuwerts.de) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Please try to format papers in the manner of BASIS 1 and provide an abstract, keywords and notes on contributors; however, once accepted the editors will inform contributors about matters of format, length, etc. If you have problems sending your paper, please let the organizers know if you would still like to have your paper considered for publication.

Conference report

The 34th International Ballad Conference in Riga was attended by more than fifty people. Perhaps most significantly, more than a third were taking part for the first time, including many new colleagues from Latvia and neighbouring Baltic states. The conference was hosted and organized by the Institute of Literature of Literature, Folklore and Art at the University of Latvia, and also supported by the University's Faculties of Philology and Modern Languages, the Culture Capital Foundation, Riga City Council, the Latvian Academy of Sciences, the Folk Art Centre, and the President's office. The event was longer than usual, an indication of the unusually rich nature of the meeting, since in addition our hosts included the State President herself, Vaira Vike-Freiberga. Vaira and her husband Imants Freibergs attended many of our conferences in the 1990s and presented their work on the Latvian *dainas*. We were invited to the presidential palace on the first day, where we were warmly welcomed by Vaira and treated to an elegant champagne reception with a display of traditional Latvian choral singing. We all enjoyed the chance to renew our friendship with Vaira and Imants. Both Vaira and Imants also attended the final banquet, on a terrace overlooking a city-square in Old Riga, shadowed impressively by their security staff.

The conference started with a welcome from Imants Freibergs and Luisa Del Giudice. The KfV's style, as befits a small and under-funded field of research, has always been egalitarian: there were no 'keynote addresses' and all the papers were presented in full session, giving a chance for ideas to grow, develop, and be debated over the course of the conference. In Riga about fifty papers were heard in eighteen sessions, punctuated by happily noisy lunch and coffee breaks.

One day's sessions were held in a handsome building set in the national park at Sigulda, the Romantic sweep of the landscape appropriately punctuated by a dramatic thunderstorm. We were also treated to a reception at the Latvian Academy of Sciences and Archives of Latvian Folklore, situated in an astonishing tall building which is said to be the only piece of genuinely Stalinist architecture in the Baltic region. Here we enjoyed displays of items illustrating Latvian folk song

since the days of the phonograph through to a demonstration of their impressive online catalogue to the collection of Latvian *dainas*. A bonus of this visit was the startling views over Riga and the Daugava river. Riga is an attractively small city, which enabled us to explore widely and to discover the remarkable markets enclosed within former zeppelin hangars. Given the timing of the Europeade, with it's 5000 plus performers and artists in the city, the streets were filled with song and dance throughout the second half of our week in Riga.

Therefore, music and dance played an important role and carried on late into the warm evenings. In particular we must mention the Danish chain dance which preceded the presentation of an amber bracelet to our outgoing President, Luisa Del Giudice, and above all the versatility and charm of the incomparable Valdis Muktupavels, whose musical presence came to define the conference. No one who has heard his mouth music will ever forget it. Fortunately it can also be heard by those who were not present on a double CD of Latvian psaltery music *Kokles* (UPE CD 043, available from www.upe.parks.lv). There was a proud moment when the IBC was asked to open the huge concert of the week-long Europeade music festival. Valdis Muktupavels performed on the pipes and kokles, while Lene Halskov Hansen and Tom McKean sang their 'spliced' version of 'The Two Sisters'.

There is no question that the success of the conference depended on the hard work of the organisers, Sigma Ankrava, Martins Boiko, Dace Bula, Imants Freibergs, Andris Kapusts, Janina Kursite, Valdis Muktupavels and their helpers, who did a superb job from the very first moment. We were especially grateful to Dace Bula, whose tireless and unflappable organisational skills had become evident long before we even arrived in Riga. Early arrivals for the conference were also treated to a day-long visit to the province of Latgale in eastern Latvia, culminating in a staggering performance of dance and song watched over by a bemused family of storks nesting on a pylon. The relaxed approach of the Riga team was all the more impressive as they had just been faced with the worst nightmare of conference organisers: the bankruptcy and closure of what was to have been the main venue.

On departure day, a dozen conference participants had the extra opportunity to take part in an excursion to the Latvian Open Air Ethnographic Museum.

(Report submitted by Gerald Porter and David Atkinson; minutes by David Atkinson)

A letter from the President, Luisa Del Giudice

August 28, 2004

Dear colleagues,

With memories of a splendid conference in Riga (by consensus, one of the best ever) still recent and vivid, I write to thank foremost, the organizers, and in particular Imants Freiberg, Dace Bula, and Valdis Muktupavels, for their impeccable coordination, their unfailing good cheer, and their warm friendship, but also our entire membership for their support during my rewarding five years as president of the Kommission fur Volksdichtung. In welcoming the group on the first day of the conference, I hoped it would be a fitting conclusion. Even as I accepted the beautiful green amber and silver bracelet, and chain danced to where I sat at the conference's end, I more and more appreciated the meaning of our phrase: *finire in bellezza*.* It was a beautiful closure. Whenever or wherever else would we be invited for caviar and champagne in a presidential palace...? I sincerely thank our steadfast friends, Vaira and Imants, for their generosity, warmth, and for honoring our group in such style and with such grace.

It truly has been a great honor to fill this responsibility. Besides, it has been lots of fun! I will always remain grateful for your friendship, encouragement, and loyalty. I was very touched by requests to continue for a second term, but resisted so firmly for several reasons: what I have to say to the membership has been said (and how many more times do you want to hear 'on behalf of the

KfV, I welcome/thank/invite...?); our society is on a good organizational footing (with momentum and wisdom of ‘institutional memory’ in our attentive and hard-working Executive) and with a good core of younger colleagues, assuring the KfV both continuity and renewal. Democratic renewal implies electing new leaders. It is time for any one of our many competent and energetic colleagues to take charge. Privately, I too, am ready for change. As some of you may know, I have been in professional transition for several years and am eager to begin exploring new passions and interests in greater depth. I’m excited, in part, because I’m not certain where these new paths will lead, but, in order to concentrate energies, I feel it wise to give up some of my past responsibilities.

During the 20 years I have been an active member of the KfV (since our Dublin meeting in 1985; my term ends in 2005), I have accumulated many wonderful memories—certainly some of the best of my professional life. I count among you many proven friends and I am proud of the ‘stamp’ that we together have given the KfV. As you may recall from my various addresses and letters, it has always been this more personal side of our association, its camaraderie, which I have most valued throughout these years. Thank you once again.

Exciting times lie ahead for the KfV as it embraces an expanding Europe and welcomes new members. It is an opportunity for renewal and growth. I toast you all and wish you well.

With continuing gratitude,

Luisa Del Giudice

**finire in bellezza*: to end something on an elegant upbeat.

NEWS

The following publications have recently appeared:

Susanne Spekat, *Politische Straßballaden im Zeitalter der Englischen Revolution (1640 - 1660). Eine kulturwissenschaftliche Untersuchung ihrer historisch-politischen, literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung*. Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2003. VII, 553 S. Köln, Univ-Diss. 2002 (ELCH Studies in English Literary and Cultural History, 12) [Political Streetballads in the time of the English Revolution (1640 - 1660) A study in cultural science about its historical, political, literary and mentality-historical impact] <http://www.wvtrier.de>

Eleanor Long-Wilgus, *Naomi Wise: Creation, Re-Creation, and Continuity in an American Ballad Tradition*. Chapel Hill Press. http://www.chapelhillpress.com/books/books_naomi.htm

Marjetka Golez Kaucic, *Ljudsko in umetno - dva obraza ustvarjalnosti/ Folk and Literary - Two Faces of Creativity*, in Slovene language with English summary. Založba ZRC, Ljubljana 2003, p. 330. ISBN 961-6358-76-6. http://www.zrc-sazu.si/www/pc/ang_Folkloristics.html

Also 2 CDs with Slovene and English:

1. *Slovenske ljudske plesne viže - Koroška/ Slovene Folk Dance Music - The Koroška Region*
2. *Od Ribnice do Rakitnice - Ljudska pesem in glasba v Ribniški dolini/ From Ribnica to Rakitnica - Folk Songs and Music of the Ribniška dolina Valley*
Založba ZRC, Ljubljana 2003

Mary-Ann Constantine and Gerald Porter, *Fragments and Meaning in Traditional Song*. With a Foreword by Barre Toelken. 257pp. (Oxford University Press, 2003). ISBN 0-19-726288-0.

<http://www.oup.co.uk/>

The book takes a radical approach to the study of narrative in traditional songs, working away from notions of coherence and 'completeness' towards an awareness of the collaborative and contested

nature of meaning. The book crosses and recrosses the perceived divide between the literary and the oral, looking for example at how fragments of song can trail subversive meanings in the works of James Joyce, Charles Dickens and Christina Stead. Songs dealt with at length include American prison blues, the Ossian fragments, travellers' songs and Breton gwerziou, but there are examples from many other traditions. All the songs discussed are given in full, and there are 12 additional, intercalary texts. In this way the volume itself forms an anthology of infinitely suggestive, hyper-condensed narratives.

Folk Song: Tradition, Revival, and Re-Creation, edited by Ian Russell and David Atkinson, Elphintone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 2004. ISBN 0-9545682-0-6.

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone/publications/index.shtml> Brings together 36 selected essays, which explore the revival movements, key men and women who made them happen, and some significant singers and songs. Subjects covered range from ballad studies to folk-rock, from the engravings of Hogarth to the Manchester Runway protest, with differing theoretical and critical perspectives, including features on several of the prime movers – Sabine Baring-Gould, Frank Kidson, Lucy Broadwood, Annie Gilchrist, Gavin Greig, Maud Karpeles, Ruth Herbert Lewis, Annabel Morris Buchanan, Ewan MacColl, Moses Asch, Louise Manny, and Peter Kennedy.

The Singer and the Scribe: European Ballad Traditions and European Ballad Cultures.

Philip E. Bennett and Richard Firth Green (Eds.)

Amsterdam/New York, NY, 2004, IV, 223 pp.

Pb: 90-420-1851-8 EUR 48 / US\$ 60

<http://www.rodopi.nl/ntalpha.asp?BookId=IFAVL+75&type=new&letter=S>

The Singer and the Scribe brings together studies of the European ballad from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century by major authorities in the field and is of interest to students of European literature, popular traditions and folk song. It offers an original view of the development of the ballad by focusing on the interplay and interdependence of written and oral transmission, including studies of modern singers and their repertoires, with contributions by Philip E. Bennett, Roderick Beaton, Huw Lewis, Ekaterina Rogatchevskaia, Tom McKean, Richard Firth Green, and Manuel Da Costa Fontes, Ad Putter, William Layher, Charles Duffin, Margaret Sleeman, and Roger Wright.

Forthcoming in 2004: *Performing Ecstasies: Music, Dance, and Ritual in the Mediterranean*, edited by Luisa Del Giudice and Nancy Van Deusen, Claremont Cultural Studies, Nancy Van Deusen, General Editor (Ottawa: Institute For Medieval Music, 2004). This publication represents conference proceedings from the eponymous conference/festival held in Los Angeles in 2000. Chapters include 'Performed Ecstasies and Trance in Antiquity', 'Trance and Healing', 'Africa and African Musical Crossroads', 'On Musicians, Singers and Dancers', 'Italian Rituals of Healing, Devotion and Magic', and 'Cultural Performance and Revival'. Authors include Ruth Webb, Nancy Van Deusen, Andromache Karanika, Karen Lutke, Placida Staro, Abderrahmane Moussaoui, Antonio Baldassare, Roberto Catalano, Judith Cohen, Luigi Chiriatti, Roberto Raheli, Augusto Ferraiuolo, Francesco Marano, Nicola Scaldaferri, Sabina Magliocco, Maria Cristina Assumma, and Luisa Del Giudice. Contact Mediaeval1@Rogers.Com.

David Atkinson