

# Turn of the Century, Turns in Literature

## Estonian and Latvian Literatures in European Context at the Beginning of the 20th Century

12. oktoobril 2006 Roosikrantsi 6, Tallinn, II korruse väike saal  
Seminar toimus ETF grandi nr 6816 toel  
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Vanad noored

Me istusime sagedasti üheskoos,  
kui noored olime tegude hämaras.  
Me tulime vihmavoogudes.  
Me läksime tuulehoogudes,  
säravas udus täis päikesesüsteeme -  
me otsijad, trotsijad katusekambritest,  
kui olime noored.

Meil oli siis tuld küllalt, tuult küllalt  
meil, katusekambritest tulijail,  
meil, elu uranguisse minejail:  
aateid, vaateid, ihasid, vihasid,  
käärimisi, vaidlemisi, nägemisi, tegemisi  
nende ärevate päevade sumeduses ...  
(Gustav Suits, *Tuulemaa*, 1913)

This poem, written by Gustav Suits and published in his collection *Tuulemaa (The Land of Winds)* in 1913, is looking back to the revolution of 1905 and the stormy events of the early 20th century social and political life and literature. At the same time the poem is about the time when the processes started by these turbulent events were continuing, perhaps not very stormily, but the more deeply: all these ideas, ideals, visions had not disappeared but were in the minds of poets and writers, manifesting themselves in their literary works. Something had changed after the revolutionary period.

Conferences and seminars on the topic – the turn of the 19th/ 20th century – have been abundant and we are familiar with the Estonian events and literary texts in this context, and know something about the influences of West European or Russian origin, but we know too little about our closest neighbours. Therefore, the purpose of this seminar is to parallel texts from Latvian and Estonian literatures from the period mentioned above.

Together with our Latvian colleagues we have selected nine literary texts or four matches from the period. All of them represent different styles and ideas of the period, and all together they represent the diversity of that time. These texts would be the key texts for the discussions of the seminar, and the eight speakers who present papers on them would be the key speakers (four from Latvia and four from Estonia).

## Programme

9.15 Opening the Seminar

### **I. Realism and young Blaumanis and Vilde**

Chair: **Jaan Undusk**

9.30 **Inguna Daukste-Silasproģe** (Latvian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art)

Money or Love. Some Crosspoints in Eduard Vilde's (*Paula's Wedding*) and Rūdolf Blaumanis' (*The Spring Frosts*) Short Stories

10.10 **Anneli Mihkelev** (Under and Tuglas Literature Centre)

Eduard Vilde, Rūdolf Blaumanis and European Realism at the Turn of the 19th/20th Centuries

10.50-11.10 Coffee

### **II. Rebellious and revolutionary ideas dominating at the beginning of the 20th century**

Chair: **Maija Burima**

11.10 **Eva Eglāja-Kristone** (Latvian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art)

Symbols as the Reflection of Rising Mood of Society in Jānis Rainis' *Ave sol!* and Gustav Suits' Poetry

11.50 **Aare Pilv** (Under and Tuglas Literature Centre, Tallinn)

The Idea of Homeland in the Poetry of Gustav Suits (and Jānis Rainis)

12.30-14.00 Lunch

### **III. The turns in drama**

Chair: **Piret Kruuspere**

14.00 **Luule Epner** (University of Tartu)

Ethnic Heritage and Modernity in the Turn-Of-The-Century Drama: *The Werewolf* and *Blow, Wind!*

14.40 **Benedikts Kalnačs** (Latvian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art)

The Native and the Foreign: Rainis' *Blow, Wind!* and Kitzberg's *The Werewolf*

15.20-15.40 Coffee

### **IV. Modernism**

Chair: **Benedikts Kalnačs**

15.40 **Maija Burima** (Daugavpils University)

The Semantics of Circle Architectonics in Jānis Akuraters' *Burning Island* and Friedebert Tuglas' *The Golden Hoop*

16.20 **Jaan Undusk** (Under and Tuglas Literature Centre, Tallinn)

The most "Kafkaesque" short story of Friedebert Tuglas (*The Golden Hoop*)

17.10-18.00 Discussions

### **Key texts**

- Rūdolf Blaumanis *Salna pavasarī* (*The Spring Frosts; Kevadised hallad*, 1898);
- Eduard Vilde *Kippari unerohi /Paula pulm* (*The Skipper's Sleeping-drug; Paula's Wedding*, 1893);

- Jānis Rainis *Ave sol* (1910);
- Gustav Suits *Elu tuli* (*The Fire of Life*, 1905)
- Jānis Rainis *Pūt, vējiņi!* (*Blow, Wind!*; *Puhu, tuul!*, 1913);
- August Kitzberg *Libahunt* (*The Werewolf*, 1911)
- Jānis Akuraters *Degoša sala* (*Burning Island*; *Põlev saar*, 1911)
- Friedebert Tuglas *Kuldne rōngas* (*The Golden Hoop*, 1916)

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