

## INTRODUCTION

This volume presents the proceedings of the Fifth International colloquium of the Learned Association *Societas Celto-Slavica* held between 26-29 July 2010 at the Business Academy, Příbram, Czech Republic. The previous conferences of the *Societas* were held in Coleraine (19-21 June 2005), Moscow (14-16 September 2006), Dubrovnik (18-19 September 2008) and Łódź (13-15 September 2009) and their proceedings have now all been published.<sup>1</sup>

The Fifth International colloquium of the *Societas* was opened by Josef Řihák, Mayor of Příbram, whose address was followed by a short talk by Josef Velfl regarding the Celtic antiquities of the area. The papers finally published in this volume fell into two distinct parts. The first one includes ten contributions originally presented at the colloquium,<sup>2</sup> whereas the second part contains three invited papers.

The focus of the volume is wide-ranging, including such matters as archaeological evidence of the Celtic presence in the Eastern Europe, Celtic and Balto-Slavic isoglosses, aspects of early Irish narrative and modern Celtic linguistic traditions with reference to areas of syntax, grammar and language change, creative writing in Wales as well as Celto-Slavic paremiology and folklore.

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<sup>1</sup> Mac Mathúna, S., & Fomin, M., eds., *Parallels between Celtic and Slavic. Proceedings of the First International Colloquium on Links and Parallels between Celtic and Slavic Traditions. Studia Celto-Slavica 1*, Coleraine: TSO Publishers, 2006; Mac Mathúna, S., Mikhailova, T., Fomin, M. & G. Bondarenko, eds., *Proceedings of the Second International Colloquium of Societas Celto-Slavica, Studia Celto-Slavica 2*, Moscow: Moscow State University Publishers, 2009; Brozović Rončević, D., Fomin, M., & R. Matasović, eds., *Celts and Slavs in Central and South-eastern Europe. Proceedings of the Third International Colloquium of Societas Celto-Slavica held at IUC, Dubrovnik, 18-19 September 2008. Studia Celto-Slavica 3*, Zagreb: Institute for Croatian Language and Linguistics, 2010; Stalmaszczyk, P., & M. Fomin, eds., *Dimensions and Categories of Celticity: Studies in Language. Proceedings of the Fourth International Colloquium of Societas Celto-Slavica. Part 1. Studia Celto-Slavica 4*, Łódź: Łódź University Press, 2010; Fomin, M., Jarniewicz, J., & P. Stalmaszczyk, *Dimensions and Categories of Celticity: Studies in Literature and Culture. Proceedings of the Fourth International Colloquium of Societas Celto-Slavica. Part 2. Studia Celto-Slavica 5*, Łódź: Łódź University Press, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> All in all, fifteen papers were presented at the colloquium, including papers by Hanka Blažková on 'Celtic Motifs in the Works of Julius Zeyer', Grigory Bondarenko on 'A Prose *Dindshenchas* of Irarus', Maxim Fomin on 'Character Identification Formula in Early Irish Narrative and Russian Folklore Traditions', Patricia Lewkow on 'Early Women's Writing in Wales and Poland' and Hildegard L. C. Tristram 'Éli Loga inso síis – Lug's Charm in the *Táin*'.

The opening address ‘Bohemia, Ireland and Pan-Celticism’ by Séamus Mac Mathúna, the President of the *Societas*, examines a range of issues dealing with the Celtic heritage of the Czech Republic, and of the Bohemian region in particular, the establishment of the Irish college in Prague and the role of the Irishmen in its activities, the interest to the Ossianic compositions by James Macpherson in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Czechia and the growth of Pan-Slavic and Pan-Celtic movements.

Václav Blažek, the Chair of the colloquium, presents an important paper ‘On Specific Zoological Isoglosses between Celtic and (Balto-) Slavic’. He convincingly argues that the words denoting ‘eagle’, ‘swan’ and ‘fox’ in Celtic, etymologically reconstructed as *\*orilo-*, *\*gulbio-*, *\*luxo-*, can be best explained by drawing on Balto-Slavic isoglosses as appropriate comparanda. The topic of Celto-Slavic etymological research is further carried on in the paper ‘A Celtic Gloss in the Hesychian Lexicon’ by Krzysztof Tomasz Witczak. He deals with the etymology and the semantics of the lexemes *mátan*, *matakos* and *matakon* that crop up in the lexicon by Hesychios of Alexandria, explaining its meaning by drawing on a range of examples from insular Celtic.

The etymological section of the first part is concluded with Tatyana Mikhailova’s contribution ‘How and why I-E ‘daughter’ was lost in Insular Celtic?’ In her view, the loss of IE kinship term represents a part of the so-called “linguistic revolution” that took place in the insular Celtic languages between the fourth and the sixth centuries AD and was provoked by some social changes, e.g. the growing importance of the institution of fosterage, causing shifts in the meanings of social terms. In this regard, the semantic transition between ‘girl – daughter – maidservant’ is a frequent if not a universal phenomenon.

The papers by Maria Shkapa and Anna Muradova are devoted to linguistic aspects of modern Celtic languages. In the contribution ‘Cleft as a Marker of a Thetic Sentence: Evidence from Russian and Irish’, Maria Shkapa outlines a set of pragmatic contexts in Modern Irish for the use of cleft, as well as provides examples of trivial prosodic patterns distinguishing focalising and non-focalising uses of cleft, proposing a comparison with the Russian *eto*-cleft construction. Anna Muradova deals with ‘The Breton Verb *endevout* and the French *avoir*: the Influence of Descriptive Grammars on Modern Breton Verbal System’. She draws reader’s attention to the influence of Latin and French grammatical framework on the creation of Breton descriptive grammars since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century with a specific reference to the way the verbs of being and existence as well as possessive constructions are expressed in the language.

The first part of the volume continues with two papers devoted to Welsh evidence. Katarzyna Jedrzejewska-Pyszczyk studies 'The Figurative Dimension of Welsh Nicknaming in the Light of the Great Chain of Being'. The author analyses her data in the context of the cognitive view of metaphor and metonymy as well as of a universal hierarchy of life forms and how it reflects in Welsh nickname formations. Elena Parina reviews 'A Welsh Award-Winning Novel on Russia: *Petrograd* by William Owen Roberts' published in 2008. In terms of his sources, Roberts was inspired by Mikhail Bulgakov's 'The White Guard', as well as by the works of Anton Chekhov, Maxim Gorky and Alexey Tolstoy. Further in her review, she juxtaposes the importance of the First World War and its consequences for Wales with those for Russia and discusses various features of the novel, including name-giving practices in pre-revolutionary Russia and their adoption by Roberts.

Finally, the first part is concluded with two papers dealing with comparative aspects of Celto-Slavic narrative and folklore traditions. Dean Miller in his 'Supernatural Beings and 'Song and Dance': Celtic and Slavic Exemplars' compares supernatural beings of Celtic (the Irish *sí*, the Welsh *Tylweth Teg*, the Breton *korrikanñed* and the Scottish *sithiche*) and Slavic (the Serbo-Croat *vila*) traditions with particular attention to their favourite occupations of dancing, playing music and singing. Dmitry Nikolaev's contribution 'Fír Flathemon in the Russian Primary Chronicle? The Legend of the Summoning of the Varangians and the Prefatory Matter to *Audacht Morainn*' emphasises the striking resemblance between the *Sóerchlanda Érenn uile* historical poem and the Varangian legend of the Russian Primary Chronicle from a structural morphological point of view. In this perspective, the main purpose of the Russian tale was not to provide an aetiological explanation of the Russian statehood, but to show the importance of having a ruler possessing the 'rightness' (*pravda*), in a way, similar to the Irish concept of the 'ruler's truth' (*fír flathemon*).

The second part of the volume contains three papers. Grigory Bondarenko in his contribution 'Fintan mac Bóchra: Irish Synthetic History Revisited' deals with a multi-faceted aspect of the figure of Fintan mac Bóchra who serves as a plot-making protagonist in a number of Irish texts. The earliest surviving variant of Fintan's story occurs in an Old Irish tale *Airne Fíngein* 'Fingen's Night-Watch'. The variant is edited and translated by the author along with a detailed commentary of other sources containing legends of Fintan. Maria Koroleva in her 'Migration through Gaelic and Russian Proverbs' discusses such problems as definitions of the migration concept in the proverbs, the binary opposition of native vs foreign land, approaches to migration (negative vs positive),

socially approved reasons for migration, human characteristics that help to migrate, personal feelings (e.g. homesickness), and various types of migration such as travel, pilgrimage, and seasonal work.

The contribution by Gennadiy Kazakevich ‘Celtic Military Equipment from the Territory of Ukraine: Towards a New Warrior Identity in the Pre-Roman Eastern Europe’ concludes the volume. In the author’s view, among the dozens of Middle and Late La Tène artifacts known from the territory of Ukraine, some of such artifacts come from the Upper Tisza area which was exposed to the colonization of the Central European Celts. According to the research carried out by the author, it was the autochthonous warrior élite that adopted the La Tène swords and helmets as symbolic objects reflecting the high social rank of their possessors. To this effect, the emergence of La Tène weaponry in the areas to the east of the Carpathian Mountains, the North Pontic steppes, the Dniester and Dnieper basins reflects a similar process of new warrior identity formation in the local cultural milieu.<sup>3</sup>

The editors wish to thank the organisers of the conference Mrs Marcela Blažková and Ms Hanka Blažková for their hard work. We are thankful to our reviewers and anonymous readers, and would also like to express our acknowledgement to, notably, all the guests and participants to the conference.

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*Maxim Fomin*  
*University of Ulster*

*Václav Blažek*  
*Mazaryk University*

*Piotr Stalmaszczyk*  
*University of Łódź*

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<sup>3</sup> The transliteration of Cyrillic titles and names throughout the volume follows the conventions applied by the authors.