

IN COMMEMORATION OF PROFESSOR DOMAS KAUNAS 70TH ANNIVERSARY

On April 21, 2019, Professor Domas Kaunas celebrated his 70th birthday. D. Kaunas is a habilitated Doctor of Science, book scientist and cultural historian of Lithuania Minor, a professor at Vilnius University, true member of the Lithuanian Academy of Science (since 2011), initiator of the academic department of book science at Vilnius University, long-time editorial board member and chief editor of the Vilnius University-published scholarly journal *Knygotyra*, the first representative of the scientific field of communication and information to become Vilnius University Senate Chairman (2010–2014) and Vice-President of the Lithuanian Academy of Science (2013–2018).

Born in Samogitia¹ and raised in Lithuania Minor, having finished the Eight-Year School of Agluonėnai and the Secondary School of Priekulė, the prospective professor came to Vilnius in 1970 to study librarianship and bibliography science in the Faculty of History of Vilnius University. During his first student years, D. Kaunas got involved in the activity of the Scientific Student Society headed by Prof. Vladas Žukas and became interested in the documentary heritage of Lithuania Minor. Having finished his studies with distinction, D. Kaunas shortly defended his doctorate of history thesis, which was written on the subject of the press of Lithuania Minor and supervised by Prof. Lev Vladimirov. D. Kaunas met the 400th anniversary of Vilnius University working as a lecturer in the Department of Scientific Information of the Faculty of History. Professor Kaunas has systemically and continually studied the history of writing and the press, the manuscriptorial, printed, and iconographical heritage as well as the culture of Lithuania Minor; throughout his academic career that spans almost 50 years, he wrote, prepared (either by himself or together with co-authors), compiled and published more than 20 books, authored around 800 papers in Lithuanian and foreign journals, and read his reports in 30 conferences held both in Lithuania and abroad. Some of his most important works are the books *lš lietuvių knygos istorijos: Klaipėdos krašto lietuvių knyga iki 1919 m.* (1986),

Mažosios Lietuvos spaustuvės 1524–1940 metais (1987), *Mažosios Lietuvos bibliotekos (iki 1940 metų)* (1987), *Mažosios Lietuvos knygynai* (1992), *Aušrininkas: tautinio atgimimo spaudos kūrėjas Jurgis Mikšas* (1996), *Mažosios Lietuvos knyga: lietuviškos knygos raida 1547–1940* (1996), *Knygos kultūros karininkas* (2004), *Bibliotheca Georgii comitis de Plater: Jurgio Platerio biblioteka – Lietuvos knygos kultūros ir mokslo paminklas* (2012), *Kristijono Donelaičio atminties paveldas* (2016), an iconography album *Mažosios Lietuvos veidai ir vaizdai* (2000), a collection of source research *Auszros archyvas: Martyno Jankaus rinkinys* (co-authored by A. Matijošienė, 2011), *Pirmieji Mažosios Lietuvos lietuviai Kanadoje: išėivio Jurgio Kavolio 1891–1940 metų dokumentinis paveldas* (co-authored by A. Matijošienė and V. Gerulaitienė, 2015), *Aš esu Etmės Evė. Ieva Simonaitytė amžininkų liudijimuose* (2017). The research of D. Kaunas and his science popularizing works have received recognition and awards; the results of his research are important for the social sciences, the humanities, and for educating the society, while his scientific findings are instrumental for the identification and political representation of the interests of the Republic of Lithuania in the former ethnic lands of Lithuania Minor.

Having worked in the Faculty of Communication for a quarter of a century, D. Kaunas was an active participant of the institutionalization of the communication and information sciences and the professionalization of studies in this field. In 1990, he re-established the academic department of book science² in 1990 and headed it for decades; he was also Vice-Dean of Scientific Affairs of the Faculty of Communication (1999–2002) and Dean of the Faculty of Communication (2002–2007). Professor Kaunas participated in developing new

1 D. Kaunas was born in the village of Šlepečiai of the Plungės District to a family of farmers Dominykas Kaunas and Joana Jurkaitytė-Kaunienė.

2 On September 1, 1940, the Faculty of the Humanities of Vilnius University saw the establishment of the Department of Bibliology, which was headed by Prof. Vaclovas Biržiška. This department was closed in 1943 by the occupying Nazi regime. In 1990, it was reopened as the Department of Book Science and Bibliography at the Faculty of History of Vilnius University; during 1991–2000, it operated as the Department of Book Science of the Faculty of Communication, during 2000–2003 – as the Department of Book Science at the Institute of Documentary

Communication of the Faculty of Communication, during 2003–2017 – as the Institute of Book Science and Documentary Research of the Faculty of Communication, while on May 23, 2017 it was finally established as the Department of Book Science and Publishing Research (see *Vilniaus universiteto Knygotyros ir dokumentotyros institutas: bibliografijos rodyklė: 1940–1943, 1990–2015 = Institute of Book Science and Documentation: Bibliography: 1940–1943, 1990–2015 / Vilniaus universitetas. Komunikacijos fakultetas, Knygotyros ir dokumentotyros institutas; Vilnius: Akademine leidyba, 2017. p. 208).*

communication science study programs (bachelor's degree: Publishing; Archivistics; master's degree: Book Science, Heritage Communication and Information) and held two tenures as head of the communication and information doctoral committee. In addition to that, the Professor was a popular lecturer and had many students. He supervised 12 successfully defended doctoral dissertations, and in such a way established the paradigm of communication and information sciences within the humanities and cultivated the Lithuanian school of book science.

The Professor's scientific work is closely related to another of his creative pursuits – the forming of his personal library and archive. Since 1970, D. Kaunas is gathering the manuscriptorial, printed, and iconographical heritage of Lithuania Minor and capturing the memories and accounts of the inhabitants of Lithuania Minor. Throughout the decades, these gathered sources became a valuable collection and an important scientific database.

In commemoration of the Professor's 70th anniversary, during the period of April 26 to May 15 of this year, the White Hall of Vilnius University Library is holding an exhibition titled "The Iconography of Lithuania Minor," which was prepared based on the iconographic collection of D. Kaunas. His collection encompasses postcards, photographs, printed paintings, maps, and artworks representing the individuals, organizations, events, historical places, happenings, various sights, and the natural and urban landscape of Lithuania Minor. During the opening of the exhibition, Professor Kaunas stated that documentary heritage is as important in communication and information science as it is in historical research, and may even sometimes be more important for the former than the latter. He emphasized that the textual narrative of old press publications is often based on imagery, such as photographs, postcards and works of art, as well as public monuments or the material artifacts of memorial heritage, and that in almost all cases a photograph, a postcard, a litograph, or a graphic drawing becomes a solid document and argument for the analysis of an issue. The event upheld the tradition, which is cultivated by the Professor himself, to use meaningful personal anniversaries as occasions for emphasizing the traditions of book culture and introduce the collected materials from his personal library to the academic community as well as the society at large.³

The published personal bibliographical index of Domas Kaunas was introduced during the exhibition commemorating his 70th anniversary. The bibliographers working in the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and the Manuscript Department of Vilnius University Library,

as well as the scientists from the the Department of Book Science and Publishing Research of the Faculty of Communication, chose pay their respect to Professor Kaunas and compile and publish a bibliographical index⁴ that encompasses publications from the period of 2009 to 2019 and serves as a continuation of a previous personal bibliographical index, which was published a decade ago. The index contains materials on the results of Domas Kaunas's scientific and societal endeavors from the last decade. It holds the descriptions of the author's books, papers, supervised dissertations, iconography, visual and auditory publications, and any literature about D. Kaunas. The index was published together with a supplement that was prepared by the experts at the Manuscript Department of Vilnius University Library and is titled *Akademinė mokslo epistolika: Domui Kaunui adresuotų laiškų rinkinio Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos Rankraščių skyriuje bibliografija*, which describes letters sent by 697 individuals, establishments, and organizations to Domas Kaunas on the topics of scientific studies, organizing conferences, cooperation, consulting partners and interested persons, the dissemination of scientific information, and regarding other various questions. According to the compilers, these letters uncover the informal field of scientific communication conducted by D. Kaunas; the comprehensive publication of this list creates a precedent for publishing such personological content, focusing both on the dwindling genre of epistolics and the funds of Vilnius University professors, which are kept in the University's library.

Another gift by the Professor's Lithuanian and foreign colleagues and his pupils are volumes of the journal *Knygotyra* of the year 2019, which are dedi-

3 In 2009, both the university community and society at large were introduced to the other part of the Professor's creative pursuits – publications from Lithuania Minor: books, all types of calendars, brochures, small prints, posters, placards, periodicals, and maps (see *Mažosios Lietuvos spaudos paveldas: parodos iš Domo Kauno rinkinio katalogas*. Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos Retų spaudinių skyrius, P. Smuglevičiaus salė, 2009 m. balandžio 21 d. – gegužės 7 d. / Sudarė Domas Kaunas. Vilnius: UAB Petro ofsetas, 2009. p. 105, [1]).

4 *Domas Kaunas*: bibliografijos rodyklė, 2009–2019 = *Domas Kaunas*: Bibliography, 2009–2019 / Sudarė Rasa Pukėnienė; Vilniaus universitetas. Komunikacijos fakultetas, Knygotyros ir leidy-

bos tyrimų katedra; Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka. Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2019. p. 206, [1] ISBN 978-609-07-0131-7. Supplement: *Akademinė mokslo epistolika: Domui Kaunui adresuotų laiškų rinkinio Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos Rankraščių skyriuje bibliografija* = *The Academic Epistolary Collection: The Bibliography of the Collection of Letters Addressed to Domas Kaunas and Held by the Vilnius University Library Department of Manuscripts* / sudarė Laura Molytė; Vilniaus universitetas. Komunikacijos fakultetas, Knygotyros ir leidybos tyrimų katedra; Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka. Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2019. p. 103, [1] ISBN 978-609-07-0131-7 (print). ISBN 978-609-07-0130-0 (digital PDF).

cated to Domas Kaunas. The 72nd volume contains papers written by Alma Braziūnienė, Rima Cicėnienė, Liucija Citavičiūtė, Ernesta Kazakėnaitė, Rolandas Kregždys, Ilja Lemeškina, Remigijus Misiūnas, Daiva Narbutienė, Arvydas Pacevičius, and Tomas Petreikis, while the 73rd volume is set to contain scientific papers written by Anna Sylwia Czyż, Pauls Daija, Larisa Dovnar, Ina Kažuro, Ilkka Mäkinen, Aile Möldre, Aušra Navickienė, Tiiu Reimo, Christiane Schiller, Kšištof Tolkačevski, and Viestur Zanders.

The editorial board of the Vilnius University's scholarly journal *Knygotyra* congratulates Professor Domas Kaunas on his 70th anniversary, express their gratitude for the decades that the Professor gave to this journal, and wishes the most of luck on his future endeavors.

Aušra Navickienė