

FOREWORD

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The 35th volume of Tautosakos darbai / Folklore Studies aims at discussing folklore manifestations in the nowadays society. The publications deal with changes in the traditional genres, their interrelationship with modern culture, the rise and spread of the new folklore forms, the phenomenon of folklorism, and problems occurring in collection and research of the modern folklore.

The volume starts with an article by Jurga Jonutytė, in which the author, employing combined methods of phenomenology and narratology, addresses a highly relevant issue of folklore studies, namely, the notion of tradition and its modern developments. Decay of the traditional folklore and the resulting need of re-thinking the understanding of folklore itself are perceived as the most important and urgent task for the modern folklore researchers, which is attempted to solve by relying upon the experience of the foreign colleagues. Thus, Bronė Stundžienė discusses the common features of the recently recorded folklore materials and the possible research directions with regards to the works by Russian folklorists, while Lina Būgienė introduces a sphere of interdisciplinary research, which is particularly actively developed in the Western countries, i.e. narratology and the possibilities that it provides. A number of hitherto unexamined or hardly sufficiently analyzed themes of modern folklore are also addressed here: e.g. Radvilė Racėnaitė investigates the contemporary (urban) legends by comparing them with traditional folk creativity, while Povilas Kriškčiūnas discusses variation in the chain-letters. Folklore functioning in the media also falls into the focus of scholarly attention: Dalia Zaikauskienė analyzes the antiproverbs – remakes of the traditional proverbs, while Jūratė Šlekonytė is interested in the April Fools' Day pranks published in the newspaper Kauno diena. The modern forms of magic and superstition prove to be inspiring subjects of research as well. Dovilė Kulakauskienė writes of the practice of invoking spirits in the subculture of the schoolchildren, and Eglė Savickaitė analyzes superstitions of the contemporary students, allegedly related with success or failure at the exams. Austė Nakienė in her turn introduces phenomenon of folklorism, namely, the Baltic music. This generalized term comprises both archaic and modern music, developed by the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian peoples after restoration of independence in 1990. Rasa Račiūnaitė-Paužuolienė describes a peculiar genre of religious folklore, namely, the folk narratives about Barbora Umiastauskaitė-Žagarietė (1628–1648), who is popularly regarded to have been a saint. Analysis of the traditional folklore genres also gets its due: their change, gradual modernization or inevitable decline is dealt with in a number of articles. Leonardas Sauka discusses

peculiarities of change manifesting in the character and place names found in the international variants of a popular Lithuanian tale “Eglė – the Queen of Serpents”. Bronislava Kerbelytė focuses her attention on the contemporary anecdotes, revealing their relations with the age-old tradition. Further, Jūratė Petrikaitė writes of the folkloric variants of songs, created using the poem “Birutė” by Silvestras Valiūnas. Aelita Kensminienė discusses morphologic and phonetic peculiarities of the Lithuanian riddles.

An article by Loreta Sungailienė, representing investigations of regional folklore, gives a detailed examination of certain peculiarities of speech and music (dialects and melodies) articulation in the musical dialect of Samogitians.

Under the heading of research in the Baltic mythology, Nijolė Laurinkienė discusses the ancient household deities Pagirniai, mentioned in the written historical sources, while Rimantas Balsys describes prayers to the ancient Lithuanian and Prussian gods in the 14th–17th centuries, and Rainer Eckert addresses the images of hoopoe and cuckoo in Latvian folksongs and folk belief.

Among the extracts from the history of folkloristics, an article by Ilya Lemeskin is published, elucidating in detail the relationship of Josef Zubatý with Lithuanian folklore.

The contemporary folklore is represented by samples from schoolchildren lore – the written love stories, edited by Gražina Skabeikytė-Kazlauskienė, and the humorous parodies and imitations of the chain-letters, supplied by Povilas Krikščiūnas.

Vykintas Vaitkevičius has in turn submitted a handful of unpublished archived materials, i.e. place legends from the description of deaneries of the Vilnius diocese in 1784.

In this volume, an outstanding folklorist Stasys Skrodenis is congratulated on his glorious 70th birthday. Also, the 150th birth anniversaries of the world-famous folklore researchers, namely, the Czech scholar Jiří Polívka and the German comparativist Johannes Bolte are commemorated by Ilya Lemeskin and Jūratė Šlekonytė.

Book reviews of the recent folklore-related publications are presented in this volume as well. Thus, Giedrė Buftenė introduces a monograph edited on the basis of interview with paremiologist Wolfgang Mieder, Vita Ivanauskaitė reviews a second enlarged edition of folklore and memoirs by the celebrated folklore performer Petras Zalanskas, Daiva Vaitkevičienė gives a critical evaluation of the monograph on Lithuanian and Belorussian charms by Maria Zavyalova. Jurga Sadauskienė introduces a recently published monograph by Gražina Skabeikytė-Kazlauskienė dealing with connections of folklore and the children literature, Aušra Žičkienė discusses the study by Lina Petrošienė on the subject of folksongs from Lithuania Minor, while Gražina Skabeikytė-Kazlauskienė analyses the volume of the “Children Songs” edited by Živilė Ramoškaitė. And last but not least, Nijolė Laurinkienė evaluates the attempts by Rimantas Balsys to present the entirety of the Lithuanian and Prussian gods in a single monograph.

The volume concludes with the chronicle of significant folklore-related events, taking place in the course of the last six months.