

FOREWORD

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One of the main themes discussed in the 37th volume of Tautosakos darbai / Folklore Studies, is influence of the folklore collectors on the processes of folk culture, their professional self-perception and ethics, their attitude towards the informants and the recorded material. The chapter “From the History of Folklore Sources” consists of three articles. Bronislava Kerbelytė investigates ways by which authentic folklore texts may be used to verify and critically evaluate the mythological data provided by the ancient written sources. Two other articles are dedicated to prominent personalities of the history of folkloristics. Jurgita Ūsaitytė presents an intriguing survey of the hitherto hardly investigated folkloric activities by Aukusti Robert Niemi in Dzūkija region, discussing the modern relevance of the bulky collection of the folksongs from this region that he had compiled and possibilities of its publication. Leonardas Sauka, delving into specifics of work by the grand figure of Lithuanian folkloristics Jurgis Dovydas, reveals deliberate transformations of folklore that used to frequently occur in the materials recorded by this collector and that are of utmost importance for the folklore scholarship.

Under the heading of “Folklore and Individual Self-Expression” several articles are published, dealing with various folklore genres and periods of its existence as forms of traditional cultural human self-expression. On the basis of recent fieldwork data from Dzūkija region, Bronė Stundžienė analyzes the modern developments of the folksong tradition in this region, with particular emphasis on the repertoire comprising the old and new folksongs that tend to be composed in writing, as part of the female cultural self-expression. Giedrė Šmitienė investigates the conception of an individual in traditional folklore research, particularly highlighting the integral link between the individual informant and the folklore recorded from him / her, which has been acutely grasped and repeatedly described by professor Norbertas Vėlius. Laments from Dzūkija region are in the focus of the article by Aušra Žičkienė. This author discusses the local features of laments from Valkininkai parish, also revealing their individual qualities. The article by Kostas Aleksynas focuses on the most recent layer of the military-historical folksongs, namely, the partisans’ songs. With reference to individual texts and memoirs, he describes the early phase in composing of these songs. Lilija Kudirkienė writes of the hardly hitherto investigated part of Lithuanian folklore, which she terms as situational expressions and goes on to analyze the peculiarities of this genre and its relationship with other short forms of folklore.

The “Recent Investigations of Folk Culture” is this time predominated by the images related to death. For the first time in Lithuanian folkloristics, Vilma Daugirdaitė surveys reflections of holocaust in oral tradition on the basis of folkloric experience. Audronė Daraškevičienė refers to personal narratives supplied by different generations of people from Samogitia region in her study of changes affecting popular images of the afterlife.

Under the heading of “Fieldwork Experiences”, the scholarly discussion of folklorists, ethnologists and historians taking place in the fall of 2008 at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore and entitled “What and How Do We Collect Today?” is published. Further, Venantas Mačiekus gives a detailed introduction of the activities of the Regional Studies’ Club Ramuva of Vilnius University, with particular emphasis on the complex fieldwork sessions taking place in the second half of the 20th century and their results.

Among folklore publications, Rita Balkutė presents folk narratives about the grass-snakes recorded in the course of two recent decades in various regions, while Povilas Krikščiūnas supplies a number of chain-letters of religious thematic, disseminated by e-mail.

In the “Anniversaries” chapter, Estonian folklorist Piret Voolaid congratulates prominent Estonian paremiologist Arvo Krikmann on his 70th birthday.

As many as two reviews by different authors, Jūratė Šlekonytė and Jonas Balčius, are dedicated to analyze publication The Folktale “Eglė – the Queen of Serpents” edited by Leonardas Sauka. While review by Aušra Žičkienė is this time aimed not at a separate publication, but at a research article, namely, the study by Rytis Ambrazevičius “Chromatisms” of Song and Rhythm in Lithuanian Folksongs”, published in the 9th volume of Lithuanian Musicology. Annotations of several publications are also published.

The chronicle of important folklore events taking place in the course of the first half of this year is presented as well.

The volume is concluded by solid bibliography of Lithuanian folklore of 2006, edited by Vitas Agurkis.