

The 49th volume of Tautosakos darbai / Folklore Studies starts with the article by Bronė Stundžienė dedicated to the Year of Ethnographic Regions – 2015. The author approaches the regional theme attempting to grasp manifestations of the folk memory characteristic to her native Pasvalys region in the literary fiction and memoirs written by writers born or raised in different time on this land. Thus, the philological trend of investigation, all too common in the Lithuanian humanities, is in a way turned upside down, since rather than looking for literary qualities in folklore, in this case folklore is sought in fiction.

Further, several articles are labeled as studies of the traditional worldview. Primarily, the most ancient data is revisited, as Ilja Lemeškin once again comes to grips with the Sovius theme, analyzing the origins of this mythonym and debating it with other researchers. He dedicates this article to his teacher, Professor Bronislava Kerbelytė. Rokas Sinkevičius also picks up a topic already repeatedly dealt with by other scholars, including Algirdas Julius Greimas, but, in his view, not yet fully solved – namely, the riddle of the birth of the divine colt. In this article, new ways of approaching the riddle are found, taking into consideration its variation, the traditional semantics of the weekdays, the biblical timing of the Moon's creation and the notion of the periodical rebirth of this celestial body. Dainius Razauskas analyzes mythical images used by the great Lithuanian classical poet Kristijonas Donelaitis in his poem "The Seasons". This time, researcher focuses his attention on the "mythology of the grass": from the metaphoric image of a man depicted as a flower (bud, or fruit), to a corresponding image of the personified death (the Reaper) with a scythe, to a parallel between haymaking and war, and finally, to the image of grass and meadow as a beard. Paremiologist Lilija Kudirkienė traces complicated pathways of the proverb "Where barley is kept, rye cannot fit in" in the ancient Lithuanian, Latvian and German sources, revealing curious written mode of this proverb's existence. She also tries to establish the reasons why such a simple, clear and handy proverb did not get into the oral tradition. Salomėja Bandoriūtė analyzes popular anecdotes from the end of the 19th – the first half of the 20th century, tackling the question: what did Lithuanians from this period find funny? According to her analysis, the most popular targets of humor included women, foreigners, and higher social classes; obscene anecdotes were also quite common. The chapter is concluded with a detailed historical survey of a hundred years of the Lithuanian folktale research, presented by Jūratė Šlekonytė.

Having noted that the nature and direction of the research is largely determined by the social and historical circumstances, the author reveals that comparative analysis and philological approach to the folktales are predominant tendencies in Lithuania; also, mythological insights are abundant.

Existence of folklore in the modern contexts is a uniting feature of the next two articles. Rūta Žarskienė analyzes the development of the music making during the Catholic Church feasts since the Christianization of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania until nowadays. She draws a convincing picture of the continuation of the Baroque musical tradition and the importance of the wind instruments in the folk piety of the 20th–21st century Samogitia. Austė Nakienė in turn surveys a wide panorama of the cultural shifts taking place in the 20th century. Her special focus is on the survival and transformations of the traditional musical culture in the modern city.

Further, folklore publication edited by Aistė Vasiliauskienė and Gražina Skabeikytė–Kazlauskienė is presented. It contains samples of reasoning by contemporary Lithuanian children – a specific newly emerging folklore genre, existing between anecdotes and small forms of folklore, between folkloric and individual creativity.

In this volume, experiences by Dr. Jonas Balys from his fieldwork trips across USA are published; this emotional text allows glimpsing Balys not only as a strict and rigorous scholar, but also as a sensitive person with a good sense of humor.

Presently, as many as three nice anniversaries are celebrated. The first one is the 80th birthday of the greatest Lithuanian folktale researcher Professor Bronisla-va Kerbelytė. On this occasion, she is interviewed by her former student professor Rimantas Balsys. The second one is the 75th birthday celebrated by the Hungarian folklorist, the long-time member of the editorial board of our journal and the faithful friend of the Lithuanian folklorists Professor Vilmos Voigt. Modesta Liugaitė–Černiauskienė has compiled a survey of his numerous works and achievements, and also translated from Hungarian his article regarding the settlement of Hungarians in the contemporary homeland and the Hungarian folklore. We also remember our late colleague, ethnomusicologist Zofija Puteikienė, who would have celebrated today her 80th anniversary. A touching text is dedicated to her by Živilė Ramoškaitė.

Sadly, May 16, 2015 was the day to say the last farewell to the long-time professor of the Vilnius University Donatas Sauka. The parting words to him are uttered here by Jurga Sadauskienė.

Two books are reviewed in this volume: Laima Anglickienė discusses the collection of articles edited by Vida Savoniakaitė and presenting contemporary perspectives on the notions of one's own and other, while Jūratė Šlekonytė celebrates the recent publication of the index of Slovenian animal tales and fables, compiled by Monika Kropelj Telban, who is also a member of our editorial board. Finally, Vita Ivanauskaitė–Šeibutienė presents the vol. 60 of the journal Lituanius, dedicated to various aspects of the Lithuanian identity.

The volume is concluded with a short chronicle of the relevant folkloristic events.