

*This volume of the journal Tautosakos darbai / Folklore Studies is already the 50th one (the first one appeared as early as 1935). On this occasion, a renowned Hungarian folklore professor Vilmos Voigt starts the volume with a critical survey of the journals on folklore and ethnology, published worldwide from the beginning of the 20th century until nowadays. Having referred to their historical developments, which rather put the situation of folklore research in perspective, he briefly discusses the contribution of this particular scientific journal published in Lithuania as well. The detailed bibliography of Tautosakos darbai / Folklore Studies (1935–2015, vols. 1–50) edited by Vilma Daugirdaitė and published at the end of the volume, is also designed for this occasion. This year is important to the Lithuanian folklore research also because of another significant anniversary: 80 years have passed since the establishment of the Lithuanian Folklore Archives. The editor of the above-mentioned detailed bibliography V. Daugirdaitė contributes another publication surveying the historical roots of the folklore research in Lithuania. Her survey is based on the historical documents, scattered throughout various archives, as well as on publications in the periodicals of the interwar period, allowing for getting the feeling of the time. In many cases, these publications had sparked off public discussions, the analysis of which helps the author to elucidate the tough start of the Lithuanian folkloristics, which at the time was but acquiring the shape of the independent discipline. The summarized view of the events and documents of the time enables us to form a more adequate perception of the ways in which the first centralized folklore research institutions were founded in the first half of the 20th century under rather complicated cultural and political circumstances. Among such institutions was as the Lithuanian Folklore Archives, which launched publication of the Tautosakos darbai journal.*

*Under the heading of “Folklore Expression: Language and Image” Wolfgang Mieder, who is professor at the University of Vermont (USA) and whose works in paremiology have been introduced to our readers a number of times previously, publishes his most recent study on the topic that is highly relevant in terms of the nowadays political situation. His analysis focuses on the use of proverbs in the political rhetoric of the famous American political leader Hillary Rodham Clinton. Having elaborately picked out the samples from her speeches and writings, the author of the article masterly reveals the expressive power of her sayings and their effects on the political discourse. The included comments on the origins of the individual*

paremias, the time span of their existence and their spread also significantly contribute to the scholarly value of the article. The Lithuanian paremiologist Giedrė Bufienė thoroughly analyzes the image of the still waters, applying the comparative approach that seems particularly relevant today and dealing with the origins and spread, semantics and development of the different connotations of the image in question. Proverbs in Lithuanian, Polish, Russian and Latin belonging to the global type reaching as far back as the antiquity (Still waters run deep) are investigated by means of the structural semantical analysis. The third article in the same chapter has been written by Aelita Kensminienė and deals with semantics, origins, typology and entrenchment in the folk culture of the two particularly popular riddles characterized by long and curious history ('White soil, black seed' and 'White pasture, black sheep'). This analysis is based both on the oldest sources of the Lithuanian and international folklore and the results of the recent research, and performed in connection to the issue of the phenomenon of writing: its integration in the Lithuanian environment and its relevance in folklore. The article presents a motivated, persuasive and creative study of the direct connections between the riddles in question and the Christian tradition determining the exceptional status of writing in the traditional Lithuanian community.

The chapter entitled "The Flow of Tradition" comprises research on the Lithuanian folksongs. Here, Vita Ivanauskaitė-Šeibutienė introduces the Lithuanian tradition of the drinking-songs, considering them as an integral and traditionally motivated means of expressing the communal solidarity. According to the author, the decline of the old purpose of these songs, directly resulting from changes taking place in the rituals of the communal solidarity and the occurring shift from the ancient offerings of drink to the contemporary toasting between the drinkers enabled the establishment of the drinking-songs in the subsequent tradition as forms of mere entertainment. Modesta Liugaitė-Černiauskienė continues in her article an interesting and intriguing search for the code enabling the interpretation of ballads. This time, the author focuses on the peculiar aspects of the Lithuanian version of the international ballads on husband drowning his wife, and uses the Belorussian and Ukrainian samples as well. Analyzing these ballads in her characteristic elegant style, the author interprets them solely on the level of the mythical discourse attempting to discern the hidden worldview that could be reflected in the Lithuanian ballads. Having considered the predominance of the water image and its symbolic meaning in the ballads, the author maintains that rather than merely describing the husband's cruelty, the song instead engages in creating a peculiar "family myth". She further proposes a surprising hypothesis on the meaning of the ballad: rather than being drowned, the wife is "renewed" in the water. This calls for appreciation of the wide spectrum of the possible ballad interpretations in terms of the mythic reception and the scope of change that it may bring into the sphere of the song's semantics. Aušra Žičkienė in her turn presents a survey of the student songs that so far have not been considered by the Lithuanian

*folklorists. Although the scope of her analysis is limited to investigation of merely two songs, including their history, international dissemination, their chief topics (drinking and youthful gaiety) and variation in their motives and melodies, this allows the author to reveal the folkloric aspects in the existence of these compositions.*

*Under a separate heading, research articles by two authors are published, dealing with sources of history and folklore. Bronislava Kerbelytė is engaged in a discussion with other researchers writing on the allegedly false oath described in the Dubno Chronicle in 1351 as given by the Lithuanian duke Kęstutis in relation to his pact made earlier with the Louis I of Hungary. Doubting if this could have indeed been an oath, the author raises a substantiated assumption that the historical document presents instead a description of the sacrifice of an ox, which could have been mistakenly interpreted by the compiler as an oath. The author supports her ideas with historical data regarding the oldest and the subsequent rites of making an oath, finding their reflections in the Lithuanian and particularly in the Slavic folklore. The subject researched by Jurgita Ūsaiytė consists of the personal songbooks, which have so far been neither consistently collected nor investigated, although folklorists had been aware of this tradition for over a century. The author views this article as an introduction to her further research related to this source of folksongs, presently concentrating on the pattern of these notes. The songbooks are reasonably paralleled to the other kindred forms of the written culture; their numerous connections with the earlier tradition of the personal writings is also noted.*

*In the Pro memoria Kostas Aleksynas informs of Vanda Stankienė (Stankus) passing away on August 29 in Chicago. This active member of the Lithuanian community in America had celebrated her 90th birthday only a month ago. In Lithuania, she is more frequently referred to in her maiden name as Vanda Panavaitė – the author of a popular song *Aš verkiau parimus tarpvartėj darželio* [‘I cried over the garden gate’], while the Lithuanians abroad know her as a famous singer of the 1960s and as an active figure of their cultural life, leader of the folk dance groups and spiritus movens of various festivals.*

*As usual, the volume concludes with chronicle of the important folklore-related events and publications taking place in the second half of the year 2015.*