

The first three chapters of the 54th volume of Tautosakos darbai / Folklore Studies are comprised of the research articles, written by both renowned scholars and doctoral students. All of them introduce their recent research results achieved by applying different modern approaches. The first chapter of the volume is entitled “Horizons of Folklore Research – from Myth to Demotivational Posters” and starts with the article by Nijolė Laurinkienė. Continuing to elaborate on the interpretation of sky in the Baltic mythology and folklore, she discusses mythical poetics of the Sun, presently focusing on the images of solar carriage and ship symbolizing the Sun’s movement in the course of an astronomical day. In order to elucidate the meaning and origins of these images, the author uses sources of the Baltic religion and mythology, Lithuanian and Latvian folklore, and linguistic data. An experienced researcher of riddles Aelita Kensminienė not only presents an exhaustive survey of the traditional usage of riddles, but also investigates peculiarities of their modern application. Drawing on her several-years-long observation of employing riddles in the contemporary environment, the social media (Facebook) and internet, she concludes that although classical riddles appear quite rarely in modern usage, their transformed shapes still preserve most of their typical functions. The chapter concludes with a relevant research article by Povilas Kriškščiūnas dealing with a hitherto neglected topic of internet communication, which, however, exhibits both direct and indirect links with folklore. The subject of the article comprises texts and polycode internet pieces (consisting of both verbal and non-verbal elements) related to basketball players and appearing on the Lithuanian sites of sports and entertainment. The author also engages with humorous folkloristic responses by fans regarding the individual players, basketball clubs and sports events of the 2011–2016.

The chapter “Reflecting on Tradition: Meanings, Expressions, Practices” starts with an article by a doctoral student Asta Skujytė-Razmienė. This author attempts establishing possible connections grounded in mythology and relating the common cold (sloga in Lithuanian) as an infective disease with slogutis (a kind of incubus) – a mythical being pestering humans at night, which could have been named sloga as well. Having studied the relevant data of folk legends and beliefs, the author goes on to inquire if people could have perceived sloga and slogutis as two different manifestations of the same disease. The article by Milda Norkaitienė focuses on the ethnolinguistic analysis of the sheep’s names. The author employs the linguistic data on

sheep from the *Lithuanian Language Dictionary* and the *Lithuanian Language Atlas*; she also uses folklore. While discussing the motivation of naming the animals and traditional usage of the sheep' names the author attempts to grasp their ethnological background possibly reflecting the relics of the national worldview. The next author in this chapter is also a doctoral student Šarūnė Valotkienė, describing the ritual placing of ring as a grave good known in Samogitia from the 1st to the 16th century. Her investigation of this ritual rests mainly on the archeological material supplemented with historical data on customs, folklore and other significant sources on the Baltic culture. The ethnoarcheological approach enables her to define the essential symbolic meaning invested with the ring as a grave good. Giedrė Šmitienė, the author of the next article, stands out among others both in terms of the nature of her research object and the employed methodology. She focuses on nearly 1500 letters written by or addressed to the Lithuanian poet Janina Degutytė in 1972–1989. Among other things, these letters reveal experiences that the poet herself considered rather novel: having changed her residence place she moved from the city to the countryside and found herself very close to the ground. This aspect of the letters particularly interests the author of the article, who employs her favorite phenomenological approach for its analysis. Having noted that the poet recognizes the countryside farmhouse as a place particularly suitable for living and providing her with peace and security, the author relates this feeling with reminiscence of the farm as the center of the traditional peasant culture, going on to rhetorically consider whether the poet's genuine experience of earth could echo the agricultural tradition.

Under the heading "From History of Folklore Research", we publish an article by Liucija Citavičiūtė, a renowned researcher of Liudvikas Rėza and editor of his collection of writings. She discusses the documented historical responses to the publication of the first collection of Lithuanian folksongs edited and published by Rėza in 1825, and targeting primarily the German audience. These responses are hitherto as good as unknown in Lithuania. The author presents three annotations of the folksong book that she has discovered in the German archives, and five unknown reviews, discussing in detail the circumstances of their publication, contents, questions of authorship, reactions from the cultural community of the time, and other things. Along with the article, the publication includes texts of the annotations and reviews in question, translated from German and Polish.

In memory of ethnologist Rolandas Petkevičius, the journal publishes his uncompleted article, edited and prepared for publication after its author passed away in 2016. The article focuses on its author's favorite sphere – ethnobotany, discussing the history of hemp (*Cannabis sativa*). A separate text written by Daiva Vaitkevičienė, the former scientific adviser of Petkevičius, surveys his research activities as an investigator of the Lithuanian ethnopsychiatry, also explaining why publication of this article was deemed significant.

In Lithuania, the year 2017 was dedicated to commemorate Algirdas Julius Greimas; therefore, this volume, just as the previous one, includes two publications. The first one is an unpublished review by Greimas (currently preserved at the Manuscript Department of the Vilnius University Library), edited by Jūratė Levina and dealing with the Lithuanian Folklore Collection by Jonas Balys. The second one includes the paper on “Mythological Biographies according to Greimas” by a globally renowned scholar in semiotics Tatyana Ciovan, which was presented at the conference in Moscow dedicated to Greimas (the text is published in Russian).

The volume also contains a review by Rūta Žarskienė, discussing the publication of the fieldwork materials collected by the folk music group Linago of the Vytautas Magnus University, and expertly edited by the longtime leader of the group Laima Proškutė.

The chronicle refers to the scholarly and cultural events taking place in the second half of the 2017 both in Lithuania and abroad, publishes information regarding the important events in the academic life of the Institute with particular emphasis on some especially valuable materials recently supplementing the collections of the photo archive.