

Lituanistika Lietuvos akivaizdoje
(Lithuanian Studies in the Presence
of Lithuania)

Summary

Monuments of language and writing are part of the roots of Europe's identity. The deeper and more universal creative activity, the more effort is needed to define it. Philological interests rise from more general stimuli of thinking; they move on to examination of life and of the *lived-in world*.

The place of Lithuanian studies is among the concepts that define the most general connection between the nation (or closely related nations) and linguistic manifestations of culture: Latvian, Prussian, Polish, Slavic, German, Romance studies, and others. Lithuanian studies begin from the earliest research into the Lithuanian language and literature, or at least into their rudiments.

The object of Lithuanian studies – research into the language, folklore, literature, and history – evolved in the nineteenth century. The role of the universities of Vilnius and Karaliaučius was important: *the university civilization of Lithuanian studies* emphasizes the beginnings of their organization, system, and the academic aspect. The interests of Lithuanian studies gained impetus in the early twentieth century, when the 1863 ban on the press in Latin characters was lifted. Lithuanian studies became a priority

and gained significance in the system of education in the state of Lithuania re-established in 1918. The Lithuanian spirit, its creative and reflective forms were explained more intensively. There emerged opportunities for research into Lithuanian studies and methodological trends, which were being developed at the Humanities Faculty of Kaunas University. The faculty, which was moved to Vilnius, matured the forces, both academic and creative, that asserted their strength in emigration.

After 1990, when Lithuania recovered its independence, the discussions on Lithuanians and Lithuanian culture intensified, Lithuanian studies gained priorities, yet the extensive development left some gaps. The university aspect of Lithuanian studies has weakened.

In the present book, the outlook of Lithuanian studies encompasses Lithuanian literature that is linked through the large circle to the Lithuanian nation, its state, language, and history, and through the smaller circles to language, philosophy, the forms of culture and art, and with the common human existential concerns.

The plot line of the study commences with general *outlooks of Lithuanian studies*, moves on to discuss the associations between *philology and Lithuanian studies*, *Lithuanian studies and identities*, and lingers on *the essential names and questions*. Outstanding figures in Lithuanian studies, both scholars and teachers, are discussed separately.

The study adheres to the narrative principle parallel to the history of humanities; it is enriched with phenomenological interests related to the past.

This is a generalizing study that takes a look at the descriptions of Lithuanian studies and history, and at the same time addresses the issues of the present.