

FOREWORD

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Main theme of the articles comprising volume XX (XXVII) of Tautosakos darbai / Folklore Studies is “Folklore Text and Context”. Investigations of folklore, directly related to its determining, surrounding and influencing context, received special attention at the 12th Folklore Conference, taking place at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore on October 16–17, 2003. Materials of this conference are published in the first part of the present volume.

While comparing archived recordings of proverbs and folk belief legends, in the ongoing discussion of these genres Lina Būgienė seeks to reveal the common communicative system. Povilas Krikščiūnas describes popular modern phenomenon, namely, dissemination of various folklore via internet, and compares it to materials published in periodicals, SMS messages and traditional folklore: jokes, orations, proverbs, etc. Bronė Stundžienė examines the image of wine, its origin and semantics in different folk song genres, also covering a very broad context, including history of wine making, wine-related rituals and its common consumption. Aelita Kensminienė describes the card catalogue of riddles that she is compiling and problems inherent in systematization of the material. Gražina Kadžytė analyzes the popular proverb “The first is the best”, placing it in the context of ancient common law and comparing to other related texts. Aušra Žičkienė, having described the musical culture of contemporary funerals, makes a conclusion that music of different styles and layers, played during funerals, still has the same unifying purpose – properly honoring the deceased. Articles by Živilė Ramoškaitė, Rimantas Sliužinskas, Jūratė Petrikaitė and Austė Nakienė also deal with various issues of musicology, covering period from the second half of the 17th century till the turn of the 20th and the 21st centuries. R. Sliužinskas systematizes the early ethnomusicological terminology; Ž. Ramoškaitė analyzes various aspects of developing folkloristics by Oskar Kolberg; J. Petrikaitė examines the folklorized songs and romances by Lithuanian composers, also establishing origins of some poetical song texts and melodies; and A. Nakienė discusses manifestations of minimalism in the work of contemporary Lithuanian composers, also pointing out certain ways of absorbing tradition by Lithuanian composers’ school. Articles by two other ethnomusicologists deal with perception of harmony in the ethnic music: Rūta Žarskienė investigates peculiarities of harmony perception in traditional music-making by multi-pipe whistle type instruments, while Rytis Ambrazevičius describes and demonstrates different modes of harmony reconstruction in vocal and instrumental music.

Among the new investigations, there are two articles published. Nijolė Laurinkienė seeks to reveal the meaning and functions of the rainbow image in both the pre-Christian and Christian layers of oral tradition, while Jurga Sadauskienė examines expressions of normative character in the late folk songs of literary origin.

Under the heading of “Scientific Heritage” one finds an extract from a comparative study on a Finnish war message folk song type by Finnish folklorist Yrjö Penttinen, first published in Finland in 1947 (translated from Finnish by Julija Kundrotaitė). The song in question is compared by the author not only to similar folk songs of related peoples, e.g. Ingrians, Karelians, Estonians, but also to those of ones living much further, like Latvians, Lithuanians and Ukrainians.

This time folklore of Lithuanian ethnic minorities is represented by Polish folk songs from South-Eastern Lithuania. A handful of songs (both texts and melodies) belonging to calendar ritual, work, youth and love, family folk songs and children rhymes, recorded in districts of Trakai, Kaišiadorys, Šalčininkai and Ėrvinčios, are published here for the first time (edited by Rimantas Sliužinskas).

The correspondence between Jurgis Dovydas and Eleonora Balčiūnienė, preserved at the archives of Lithuanian folklore, also receives its first publication in this volume (edited by Irena Žilienė). Letters by a famous folklore collector and his informant not only reveal their personal characters, attitudes towards folklore collection, difficulties of securing daily living means, but also bring us back to the eagerly awaited beginning of Lithuanian national Revival.

This year, an important anniversary for the Lithuanian culture is celebrated – the 100th anniversary of regaining Lithuanian publication in Latin alphabet. For this occasion, we publish in this volume an account by Russian scholar Aleksandr Pogodin of his travel into Kaunas Gubernia (edited by Rasa Kašėtienė). It was published in 1894 in St. Petersburg, in the magazine of Russian Geographic Society Живая старина. Its facsimile includes folk tales, songs, and proverbs, recorded in regions of Telšiai, Raseiniai and Šiauliai.

The 100th anniversaries of several people, closely related to folklore, are also celebrated this year: that of a literary scholar, folklorist, journalist and political figure of the prewar period and the exile, Juozas Brazaitis-Ambrazevičius; a famous Lithuanian composer, pianist and conductor Balys Dvarionas; and a folklore collector, teacher Petras Lapienė.

At the end of the volume, besides the traditional reviews and annotations, presenting detailed evaluations of scholarly publications, one finds a new chapter – “News in Brief”, where recent folklore and ethnological publications from abroad get introduced. In the chronicle, information on topical folklore issues, activities of folklore archives, conferences and seminars is presented, as usual.