

Transformations of the Lithuanian God Perkūnas

Nijolė Laurinkienė

In the article, later substitutions for the god Perkūnas are analysed. Most frequently appear the names of the prophet Elijah (Alijošius) and St. George (Jurgis) as the Christian replacements diffused from the Lithuanian region, which borders on Belarus where converting to Christianity began earlier.

With the fall of the old culture a great many traditions indicated the god of thunder as undergoing a complete transformation into new characters, mostly those of modern religion. Lithuanian mythology also gives evidence of similar processes. The article aims at an analysis of further equivalents of Perkūnas, which reflect the mentioned process, as well as an attempt to delineate the possible reasons for these substitutes obtained by the god of thunder and their prevalence in Lithuania.

The most common substitutes of Perkūnas are the prophet Elijah (*Alijošius*, *Alijošius*) and St George (*Jurgis*). These Christian characters as equivalents to the god of thunder are also known among eastern Slavs. Therefore, a logical question follows on the nature of such a peculiar concurrence, which will receive due attention in the article.

Lithuanian folklore often observes Elijah mentioned together with Enoch (both, as the Bible suggests, having been so close to God that they were brought to dwell in heaven when still alive). Legends about Elijah and Enoch feature them being related to the motifs of old religion and those of Christianity (LPK 3459). From the latter, associations of the mentioned characters with the god of thunder can be obviously defined: when Elijah or Enoch rides in the heaven, it thunders and lightning is flashing:

Seniai, labai seniai, kada dar Adomo ir Ievos nebuvo, Dievas sutvėrė Alijošių ir Anoką. Jie niekuomet nemirs Dievas juos įsodinęs į ugninį vežimą, kuris buvo pilnas ugnies (žaibo). Juodu įsėdę į vežimą ir važinėję dangumi. Tada, kada jie važiuoja, žmonės sako, kad griaudžia. Žiemą ir rudenį Alijošius ir Anokas ilsisi ir taiso ratus, kurie bevažinėjant per vasarą sudilo. Vadelės taip pat raudonos ir ugninės. Kada juodu važiuoja, tai Alijošius laiko vadeles, o Anokas pilia iš ratų žaibą. Rūbai nedegami raudoni, ilgi. Šeimos neturi. Abudu per visą laiką bus nevedę. Gyvulių turi tik arklius, o avių, karvių neturi.

Griaudžiant reikia melstis, kad Alijošiui ir Anokui įtikti. Norint nuo jų apsisaugoti, reikia deginti ugnis. Kada negriaudžiama, sakoma, kad Alijošius ir Anokas miega arba taiso savo vežimą (LTR 739/1/; Once upon a time, long before Adam and Eve, God created Alijošius and Anokas, who would never die. It is said that seated by God in a fire cart full of flames (lightning), they ride in the skies. When they do this, people say - it thunders. In winter and autumn they rest or fix their cart, which due to their summer activity requires repairing. The reins are also red and flamy. On riding, Alijošius holds the reins, while

Anokas pours the lightning out of the cart. Their clothes are fire proof - red and long. They are single and will have no families. They have neither sheep nor cows, but only horses).

When it thunders, in order to please Alijošius and Anokas, one should pray. To escape their anger, fire should be burnt. When the skies are silent, it is said that Alijošius and Anokas are having a rest or are fixing their cart).

Concise folk beliefs also reflect Elijah's function of thunder and lightning adopted from Perkūnas: *Perkūnų vaizdavosi važiuojantį Alijošių po padangę* (LTR 940/2/; Alijošius, riding in the skies, was imagined as Perkūnas). *Žaibas yra šv. Alijošiaus pliaukštelėjimas botagu* (LTR 1580/816/; A lightning bolt is a whip crack performed by St Alijošius). *Perkūnas - tai Alijošius važiuoja per akmenis* (LTR 832/671/; Perkūnas is Alijošius riding along a stone drive). *Perkūnui griaudžiant sako: "Dievulis užpykęs barasi" O kiti sako, kad tai Elijošius su savo ratais važiuoja per dangų* (LMD 1 613/45/; When Perkūnas thunders, some people say that God, being angry, is scolding. The others claim that it is Elijošius who rides in his cart in the skies).

Another function of Elijah gained from Perkūnas is his fight with Velnias (the devil), a mythic being of the underworld. Lithuanian legends tell that riding in the skies, Alijošius strikes matches and looks for Velnias hiding somewhere. He shoots an arrow (LMD 1 474/539/). Or it is said that when it thunders, Alijošius rides a cart pulled by a pair of horses and hunts devils (*velnius*; LTR 4480/86/).

The prophet Ilya of Slav narrative folklore, who is in accord with Elijah, is also closely related to thunder, while the devil is regarded as his main enemy. V. Ivanov and V. Toporov, having investigated Ilya as one of Perun's transformations, evidently exemplify their concept. Byelorussian beliefs relate thunder with an archangel Michael or St Ilya hunting devils, hiding in a cottage, under a tree or somewhere else (Ivanov, Toporov 1974, p. 165). Ilya, who is said to express himself in thunder, fights and hunts devils with Perun's arrows (Ivanov, Toporov 1974, p. 165). Even Russian *bylinas* witness the struggle of Ilya with the destructive creature, where he is depicted as a fighter with Solovej, the robber (Ivanov, Toporov 1974, p. 216). An epic hero of *bylinas* Ilya is supposed to be a character of the same type as a prophet Ilya, a substitute of Perun. There are also Lithuanian folk tales about a hero depicted similarly to Ilya in the epic works of eastern Slavs: born armless and legless, he starts walking only when grown-up, travels the world and, on meeting a dragon or Solovej, the robber, slays them (AT 300; LTR 1191/627/; 2812/116/; 3235/155/). Only in one variant of the subject type does the hero carry the name of Alijošius, in the others he is called Jonas (LTR 2441/409/), Pilypas (LTR 2838/82a/) or simply a farm-hand (LTR 2442/440/). It is clear that although the hero is called differently, he is identical to Ilya, the epic hero of eastern Slav epic works.

The eastern part of Lithuania still preserves beliefs which reflect Elijah being closely related to rain. If rain falls on Elijah Day (July 20), it is regarded as a significant sign. It meant torrential rain for the next 12 or 14 days (Vyšniauskaitė 1993, p. 102). The Russians explain the sign similarly. It is said that Ilya Day is followed by rain (Kerbelytė, Novikov 1993, p. 9). The link with rain is a peculiarity of the biblical Elijah. As the Old Testament recounts, when God smites the earth with drought, Elijah performs a certain ritual on Mount Carmel (places a calf on the altar, pours some water on it, and burns the sacrifice), which puts an end to the drought. Above Mount Carmel the sky lowered and a heavy rain began to fall (The Bible 1973, 3 Book of Kings 17, 18, 19, 21). Thus, in the Bible Elijah is

one of the heroes predestining the emergence of rain, while pre-Christian religion regarded the god of thunder to be the rescuer from drought.

Another distinct analogy between the biblical Elijah and the Lithuanian god of thunder is that the former, similarly to the ruler of thunder, is described riding in the skies in a fire cart drawn by harnessed fire horses (The Bible 1973, 4th Book of Kings 2 1, 1 1). Perkūnas quite often possesses some fire attributes, e.g. goes in a fire cart (LTR 832/18/), rides a fire horse (Buračas 1934, p. 474), holds a fire sword (LTR 832/5/, /10/), wears a flamy robe (LTR 832/29/) or he is all of flames (LTR 758/1, 2/). This significant similarity between the god of thunder and Elijah could possibly encourage their identification. It should also be of interest that Lithuanian legends make frequent mention of religious pictures which feature Elijah's link with fire. The features reflected in these pictures condition a possible statement that Elijah or Perkūnas are, without any doubt, the characters portrayed in them: *Buvo paveikslas: Alijošius su baltais arkliais važiuoja ir pjautuvu debesis skiria. Ir iš po ratių lakia ugnys. Matai, o dabar išaiškino, kad tinai griautinis, visai kas kita* (LTR 3715/54/; There was a picture - Alijošius goes with white horses and parts clouds with the help of a sickle. The cart wheels strike flames. You see, they now claim that it is the thunder there, which is quite a different thing). - *Alijošius važiuoja... Dar buvo irpaveikslas, kap, gal matėt paveikslą švento Alijošiaus? - tai atsakė pasakotojas, paklausus, ką seniau žmonės pasakojo apie Perkūną* (LTR 4152/19/; - Alijošius rides... There even was a picture of him, perhaps, you've seen a picture of St Alijošius? - these were the words uttered by an informant when asked what people used to tell about Perkūnas). It is quite natural to associate the old god of thunder with the hero riding in the fire cart in the skies.

A close link between the Lithuanian Elijah and the Slav Ilya has been noted: their common features, similar functions. Therefore, the logical question arises whether the folklore of neighbouring Slavs might not have influenced the prevalence of this character in Lithuania. The location of records of legends and beliefs about Elijah signify that the majority of them were recorded in the eastern part of Lithuania, in the contact zone with the Byelorussians. The folklore about Elijah is concentrated in the area of Švenčionys, Zarasai and Rokiškis. Solitary variants were recorded in some other regions of Lithuania, in the northern, western, middle and southern parts of the country (though eight variants were recorded in Raseiniai region, in Samogitia, most of them being from one folklore collection compiled by schoolchildren, presented as answers to the questionnaire). Such a proliferation of the legends about Elijah suggests the idea that they may probably have reached us from the eastern Slav territory bordering with Lithuania. A prophet Ilya, Elijah's analogue as was mentioned before - a common character of the folklore of the eastern Slavs - could have made a certain impact on the world outlook of the Lithuanian country folk by penetrating into it. It was in the Slavonic rather than the Baltic area that Christianity and its written sources (the latter being the original provenance of the expansion of the prophet Elijah) had achieved an earlier dominion. Spreading from the Roman empire throughout western and eastern Europe as early as the 10th century, Christianity reached the Russians, the neighbours of Lithuania. However, only at the turn of the 15th century did it find acceptance in Lithuania. Consequently, having formerly adopted himself to the traditional culture of the eastern Slavs, the prophet Elijah must have probably, through folk beliefs, found his way to Lithuania. On the other hand, the Catholic

Church could also have fostered a further expansion of the character in Lithuanian folklore. Both the biblical story of Elijah and the church art, depicting his celestial journey in the fire cart drawn by fire horses, had substantively augmented the noted association.

As mentioned before, Perkūnas is also linked with St George (*Jurgis*). In beliefs they are sometimes simply identified: *Griaustinio trenksmas kyla dėl ratų dundėjimo, kuris susidaro Perkūnui važinėjant po dangų. Vaikams sako, kad važinėjęs šventas Jurgis po dangų* (LTR 832/146/; Thunderclap is caused by the noise of the wheels made by Perkūnas' drive in the skies. Children are told that St Jurgis is riding in the sky). *Perkūnas yra šv. Jurgio važinėjimas po dangų, kibirkštys iš po ratų - žaibas* (LTR 1144/1/; Thunder is the result of the drive of St Jurgis in his cart, while lightning is the product of the sparking from under the cart wheels). In the context of such beliefs, St George's link with fire and flint producing sparks when struck with steel seems to be absolutely logical: *Šv. Jurgis jojo, ir po arklio kojomis žybtelėjo ugnis. Žmonės rado titnagą* (LTR 3874/6/; St Jurgis rode, flashes of fire appeared from under the horse-shoes. People found a piece of flint afterwards). When Perkūnas rides in the sky, flames also emerge from under the horse-shoes or cart wheels (LTR 284/713/; 832/98/; 2567/228/).

St George is very popular in Lithuania. He was proclaimed the second (following St Casimir) guardian of Lithuania. Roadside poles with wooden statuettes of St George are very common. Folk art features St George on horseback, slaying a dragon. Such an image of St George, the fighter with the destructive creature, could have served as one of the reasons for identifying him with Perkūnas.

Another condition which might have also had some influence on St George's and Perkūnas' affiliation was the fact that St George's Feast Day usually coincided with the first spring thunder, which always implied a specific occasion, as it was supposed to signify the beginning of spring: *Kai pirmą kartą išgirsta griaudžiant, sako, kad dabar būsiąs tikrasis pavasaris. Mat Perkūnas pavasarį laikomas kaip pavasario pranašas ir gamtos atgaivintojas* (LTR 832/413/; When one hears the first spring thunder it means that a true spring is approaching. The spring thunder is regarded as a prophet of spring and the reviver of nature). With the first thunder the period of a new year cycle usually started both in people's life and in farm activities. Farm work was never started before the first thunder, neither was the pasture of cattle (Buračas 1934, p. 474). It was believed that during winter the dark period of the year - the powers malevolent to man foregathered inside the earth. It was thought to be dangerous even to touch such filthy earth or its objects until the first stroke of thunder: it was prohibited to sit on the ground, stone, walk bare-foot, burn fire, bathe in a river or lake (LTR 757/79/; 828/334/; 1032/85/). The first spring thunder forced malevolent powers, the hiding devil (*Velnias*), first of all, to leave these objects. Thus the first spring thunder functioned as a reviver and purifier of nature and man. In its general sense, this happening was similar to a symbolic repetition of primal cosmogony at the turn of the year as an act of the world recreation.

St George's Feast Day, as well as the first thunder, meant the beginning of spring and an opening of the farming season. Beliefs indicate the fact that cattle pasturing always started on St George's Day (Balys 1986, p. 573; Buračas 1993, p. 238). This feast was regarded as the New Year of the farmers. It used to be the time for making contracts on land lease, hiring of new farm-hands and dismissing the last ones. It is said that on that day the roads used to be full of carts loaded with belongings of those people who, having not a patch of their own land, worked for hire and thus had to change their lodgings almost

seasonally (Buračas 1993, p.172, 239). Lithuanian folk beliefs evidently reveal the link between St George's Feast Day's and a new farming season.

It was supposed that both Perkūnas and St George prepared the soil for the flourishing of a new life. As folk beliefs claim, the first thunder shakes, and moves the earth, which consequently encourages the growth of grass and fosters a plant life in general (LTR 761/5/; 763/50/; 1032/124/; Buračas 1934, p. 474). St George performs a similar function. St George's Feast songs portray him as unlocking and warming the earth to let out grass and dew:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Jurja, geras vakaras,</i> | <i>Jurja, išlaidz žalať,</i> |
| <i>Jurja, geras vakaras!</i> | <i>Jurja, išlaidz žalať.</i> |
| <i>Jurja, paimk raktus,</i> | <i>Jurja, žalať šilkinį,</i> |
| <i>Jurja, paimk raktus,</i> | <i>Jurja, rasať meduotų, -</i> |
| <i>Jurja, atrakin žemį,</i> | <i>Žalala bus dėl arklalių,</i> |
| <i>Jurja, atrakin žemį,</i> | <i>Rasala - dėl veršalių.</i> |

(LTR 2920/58/; Good evening, Jurja!.. Take the keys..., unlock the earth.... free the grass..., silken grass, honey dew, - the grass for horses, the dew for calves.)

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Jurgi, šildai žemį,</i> | <i>I ta darži auga,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, gildai žemį,</i> | <i>Ir ta darži auga,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, paleidz rasu,</i> | <i>Tuinu aptuinyta,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, paleidz rasu,</i> | <i>Tuinu aptuinyta,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, paleidz žalį.</i> | <i>Undeniu apleista,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, paleidz žalį.</i> | <i>Undeniu apleista,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, neženyta,</i> | <i>Rūtam apszadinta,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, neženyta,</i> | <i>Rūtam apszadinta.</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, apsiženyk,</i> | <i>Tuinų palaužysiu,</i> |
| <i>Jurgi, apsiženyk!</i> | <i>Tuinų palaužysiu,</i> |
| <i>- Nėra pa man' mergų,</i> | <i>Undenį išleisiu,</i> |
| <i>Nėra pa man' mergų,</i> | <i>Undenį išleisiu,</i> |
| <i>Cik tai viena raže,</i> | <i>Rūteles išrausiu,</i> |
| <i>Cik tai viena raže.</i> | <i>Rūteles išrausiu.</i> |

Ražį sau paimsiu,
Ražį sau paimsiu.

(LTR 1924/14/; Jurgis, you warm the earth..., (you) free dew.... (you) free grass..., not yet married.... Jurgis, get married! - There's no girl to marry, only one rose... But it also grows in a flowerbed, fenced and flooded with water, planted all around with rues... I'll break the fence, let the water pour out, root the rues out ..., and pluck the rose for myself).

Some songs mention that he not only unlocks the earth but also opens the skies for the rain to fall:

*Tu Jurgeli, tu mielasai gi,
Atrakinkie dangų gi tu
Ir pajudinkie kmorela,
Kad palytų šiltas lietus,
Kad pažaliuotų gi žolela
Ir prištų mūs jauteliai.*

(LTR 2929/78/; ref. also to LTR 2919/75, 77/; You, dear Jurgelis, unlock the skies, stir the clouds for the warm rain to fall, green grass to come on, for our cattle to feed on well.)

As beliefs and different prayers witness, Perkūnas held dominion over rain (David 1812, p. 89-90, Mannhardt 1936; p. 247, 458). Thus in this aspect, George, opening the sky for the rain to fall, fulfills the function of Perkūnas. The songs which address Jurij as the opener of the skies and the earth are traced in a wide area of eastern and western Slavs (Ivanov, Toporov 1974, p. 194-196).

A mythical character with even a longer history than that of St George's, who was also closely linked with Perkūnas and whose feast also noted spring, was Pergrubrius. As stated by J. Lasickis and J. Malecius, Pergrubrius' feast used to be celebrated on St George's Day (Lasickis 1969, p. 28; Mannhardt 1936, p. 204). "The book of Sūduviai" pictures one of the first spring feasts, called the sacrificing of Pergrubrius. It was feasted "earlier than farmers started ploughing the soil" (Mannhardt 1936, p. 247). The ritual of the sacrifice was performed with all people gathered at some farm house. Beer of a special sort was made for the occasion. One of the members of the ceremony would address the "mighty and all-powerful" god Pergrubrius (*Pargrubrius*), him who drives away winter, fosters crops and chokes weeds. Afterwards Perkūnas' (*Parkuns*) name would be mentioned. The latter would be asked for an early rain, to get rid of Pikulas (*Peckollum*) and his subjects. In the later course of the ritual, they were addressed as separate gods. This means they were not identified but regarded as gods close to each other.

V. Ivanov and V. Toporov consider that Pergrubrius might be regarded as an epithet of a spring deity of the same type as the Slav Jarila. According to these authors, a theonym Pergrubrius has originated from the words *grublas*, *grublus*, *grubus*, the semantics of which is related to the notion of unevenness, roughness, coarseness (Toporov 1.982, p. 302). These very features are also traced in Jarila, the god of spring and fertility, that of sexuality being revealed especially distinctly (his feast was usually held on 27 April). V. Ivanov and V. Toporov associate Jarila with the Slav St Jurij - Georgij. Besides, they claim Jarila's identification with Perun because of some common traits. The Slav god of thunder also possesses the function of fertility, but Jarila's image underlines it as essential (Ivanov, Toporov 1974, p. 180). During Jarila's feast a song about Jarila, wandering the world and providing life to fields and people, was sung:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Валачыўся Ярыло</i> | <i>А гдзе ж јон нагою,</i> |
| <i>Па усету свету.</i> | <i>Там жито капою,</i> |
| <i>Полю жито радзів,</i> | <i>А гдзе же јон ни зырне,</i> |
| <i>Людрым дзеци пладзів.</i> | <i>Тат колас зацьвице...</i> |

(Ivanov, Toporov 1974, p. 181; Jarila was wandering the world, fertilizing the rye harvest, the offspring of people... In the place he had set his foot a ryeshock appeared, where he had glanced, ears of crops blossomed.)

*Святы Юрий по полям ходзиў
Да жито радзиў.
Где гора, там жита копа,
Где лужок, там сена стожок,
Где долінка, там жита скирда.*

(Ivanov, Toporov 1974, p. 187; St Jurij walked through the fields fertilizing the rye harvest: on a hill he placed a ryeshock, on a meadow - a haystack, on a valley - a ryerick.)

No Lithuanian songs of the same subject matter have been recorded, either about George or Pergrubrius. St George and St George's Feast was closely linked with fertility, but this feature is reflected only in rites and different customs. The custom of walking a naked George during the feast is recorded in Lithuania. Jurgis Banaitis from Paskalviai of Klaipėda region gives evidence of the fact that a child, born on St George's Day and called Jurgis or Juras, would normally receive a special honour on this day. In some homes such a child would be treated to sweet stuff, undressed, and after the sunset walked naked round the village (Balys 1993, p. 172). St George's Feast generally had the custom of walking round the crop fields, in an attempt to increase their harvest (Balys 1986, p. 134). In the vicinity of Leipalingis, on walking round the fields, several eggs and a roll of bread were normally taken along. Prayers were said in all four corners of the field (cf. rites to Perkūnas, performed in the four corners of a house or a field). Having returned home, the performers of the rite would eat the bread and the eggs (Balys 1986 2138, p. 134). In the neighbourhood of Alsėdžiai the fields were walked round, carrying a flitch of bacon (Balys 1986 2136, p. 134). The Gervėčiai people on St George's Day used to bake two loaves of bread with five eggs inside every loaf, and afterwards carried them around the fields even twelve times. One loaf would be buried in the soil, the other one - eaten (LMD 1 474/ 1043). A majority of places in Lithuania witness that egg shells were painted on St George's Day, as it was normally practiced at Easter. With the aim of fostering fertility, different rites were performed with these eggs: they were not only carried round the crop fields, but also the cattle driven to the pasture for the first time had to pass a threshold with a couple of eggs planted beneath it (Balys 1993, p. 175). For better livestock reproduction, a housewife would give painted and white eggs to herdsboys (Buračas 1993, p. 236). A rite that women would chant sitting on the fences surrounding ryefields, recorded in the vicinity of Adutiškis, could also be related to the encouragement of fertility. Men would express their disapproval by saying: "Don't chant or it might get cold!" When women started chanting, men or lads would be given whips and sent to punish and disperse them. Such St George's Feast chants would normally continue for even twelve days (Balys 1993, p. 164). Therefore, George - similar to the Slav Jurij and Jarila - functioned as an incentive to

fertility. The only difference is that his function finds a much wider reflection in rites. Except for folk beliefs, no other narrative texts on the topic have been recorded.

In summary, it could be stated that St George, similar to the prophet Elijah, both by their nature being directly related to Christianity, in the later course of the establishment of the official religion became part of folk beliefs, in which they preserved the obvious impact of the earlier religion. St George was endowed with the features of pre-Christian mythical beings in the folklore of both Lithuanian and eastern Slav people: the god of thunder (Lithuanian Perkūnas, Slav Perun) and the deity (Lithuanian Pergrubrius, Slav Jarila), related to fertility and spring. Quite likely, the process of St George's adjustment in the folk world outlook of - varying yet interacting - traditions must have taken a similar trend; however, this character must have probably reached Lithuanian folk beliefs with the help of the Slavs rather than due to the advent of Christianity. This idea finds proof in oral texts and in the proliferation of certain rites pertinent to St George. For instance, the ritual of women's chanting during St George's Feast sitting on the fence at the ryefield is more common to eastern Lithuania. Oral works, relating to St George's Feast Day, happen to be songs of specific content (eight types and thirty six variants of them have been recorded; Misevičienė 1972, p. 291) with evident concentration in the eastern and southeastern parts of Lithuania, those bordering with Byelorussia (i.e. in Švenčionys region, especially in Adutiškis, in Šalčininkai region (Dieveniškės). Several variants were also recorded in Marcinkonys and Merkinė of Varėna region, as well as in Gervėčiai of Astravas region, Breslavas, Pastoviai, Varenavas territory, now belonging to Byelorussia. Some of these variants were recorded from Lithuanian informants in the Byelorussian language (LTR 3164/572/; 4417/ III/; 4477/1281/; 4495/16/). Such prevalence of St George's Feast songs, as well as their common nature, indicates them to be a result of long-lasting contacts between the Balts and the Slavs. An ethnologist A. Vyšniauskaitė claims the name of George to have come to Lithuania, from the eastern part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, long before the official baptism of the state (Vyšniauskaitė 1993, p. 72). It is certainly quite a reliable statement, not only in terms of the name of George but also with reference to St George's image, which was fitted to the folk world outlook. Similarly, Elijah could also have reached us from the eastern part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. This territory, which in the 13th century embraced some of the Byelorussian area, and in the 14th century expanded to the major part of the Ukrainian and Russian lands, could have provided favourable milieu for the processes of the blending of both nations and religions. With the establishment of Christianity in Lithuania in 1387, the diffusion processes of old and modern religions became much more intensified. Therefore, the images of the prophet Elijah and St George in Lithuanian folklore could be regarded as vivid examples of the syncretism of different religions and conjoint national traditions.

Bibliography

- Balys 1986 - J. Balys, *Lietuvių žemdirbystės papročiai ir tikėjimai*. - *Lietuvių tautosakos lobynas*, 10, Silver Spring, Md, 1986.
- Balys 1993 - J. Balys, *Lietuvių kalendorinės šventės*, Vilnius, 1993.
- Biblija 1973 - *Библия: Книги священного писания Ветхого и Нового Завета*, Брюсель, 1973.

- Buračas 1934 - B. Buračas, *Perkūnas : Burtai ir pietarai*. - Naujoji Romuva, 1934, Nr. 180-1.
Buračas 1993 - B. Buračas, *Lietuvos kaimo papročiai*, Vilnius, 1993.
David 1812 - L. David, *Preussische Chronik*, hrsg. von E. Hennig, Königsberg 1812, Bd. 1.
Ivanov, Toporov 1974 - В.В. Иванов, В. Н. Топоров, *Исследования в области славянских древностей*, Москва, 1974.
Kerbelytė, Novikov 1993 - Б. Кербелите, Ю. Новиков, *Русский народный календарь и его литовские соответствия*, Вильнюс, 1993.
Lasickis 1969 - J. Lasickis, *Apie Žemaičių, kitų Sarmatų bei netikrų krikščionių dievus*, Vilnius, 1969.
Mannhardt 1936 - W. Mannhardt, *Letto-Preussische Götterlehre, Magazin der Lettisch-Literarischen Ges.*, Riga, 1936.
Misevičienė 1972 - V. Misevičienė, *Darbo dainos. Kalendorinių apeigų dainos*, Vilnius, 1972.
Toporov 1982 - В. Н. Топоров, *Ярила. - Мифологический словарь*, Москва, 1991, т. 2
Vyšniauskaitė 1993 - A. Vyšniauskaitė, *Mūsų metai ir šventės*, Kaunas, 1993

Abbreviations

- AT - *The Types of the Folklore : A Classification and Bibliography. Antti Aarne's Verzeichnis der Märchentypen* (FFC No. 3). Translated and enlarged by Stith Thompson. - *FF Communications*, Helsinki 1961, Nr. 184.
LMD - Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institute Lietuvių mokslo draugijos tautosakiniai fondai [Manuscript of the Lithuanian Scientific Society at the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore; reference of manuscript].
LPK - J. Balys, *Lietuvių pasakojamosios tautosakos motyvų katalogas* [The motif catalogue of Lithuanian narrative folklore]. - *Tautosakos darbai*, Kaunas 1936, 2.
LTR - Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos instituto Lietuvių tautosakos rankraštynas [Manuscript of Lithuanian Folklore in the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore; reference of manuscript].

Transformationen litauischen Perkūnas

Nijolė Laurinkienė

In dem Artikel werden spätere Substituten litauischen Donnergottes Perkūnas analysiert. Charakteristische Ersätze Perkūnas sind christliche Personen der Prophet Elias (Alijošius) und hl. Georg (Jurgis). Der Prophet Elias und hl. Georg stimmen mit Perkūnas funktionell überein. Die Sagen, Glauben über Elias und Georg sind am meisten im Ostlitauen, im Teritorium, wo Litauen mit Belorußland grenzt, verbreitet. Die Idee identifizieren Perkūnas mit christlichen Personen ist von Nachbarn Ostslaven gekommen, wo das Christentum früher eingeführt wurde und der Prozess der Diffusion der Religionen schon begonnen war.