

Abstract

This thesis compares selected beings of Baltic folklore within a nearer Balto-Slavic areal after analysing them. It defines the term “chthonic” in accord with the current traditions and supplements it with additional traits, which it verifies afterwards. Using these traits the thesis consequently determines the chthonic properties of the beings. The comparisons begin with velnias/velns, a being with assumed chthonic character, which is confirmed. The core of the thesis is dedicated to aivataras, whose mythopersonyma and appearance are examined first, followed by its functionality i.e. the plots it figures in. According to the plots aitvaras and its Baltic variants are compared with East- and West Slavic beings with focus at the plots of Czech demonologic fables. This establishes aitvaras and its equivalents possess strong serpentine traits and a relation to the revered spirits of dead ancestors. The results of this comparison are compared to previous research and some differing conclusions are presented, among them a proposal of a possible etymology of the mythopersonymum “aitvaras”. No significant difference on the functional level has been discovered between the terms “aitvaras” and “kaukas”. The last chapter concerns itself with the being called “laumė” and to her similar female deities and mythological beings. Although not all of them have been classified completely chthonic, all of them share some chthonic traits. The results of this thesis present further areas of research both in verification of presented solutions and comparisons within a broader (Indo-European) area.