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In this issue:

Anna-Leena Siikala
The many faces of contemporary folklore studies
2

Aili Nenola
On power and violence in patriarchal households
3–6

Sinikka Vakimo
Gender in Finnish folkloristics – outlines of broadening fields
7–11, 14–19

Recent publications of the Finnish Literature Society
12–13

Reviews by
Outi Lehtipuro
Karl Reichl
19–23

FF Communications in print
23

A new volume in the FF Communications
24

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The tale of Ivan the Tsar's Son, the Firebird and the Crey Wolf. Painter: Ivan Bilibin (1899). From a Russian picture book. (Bildarchiv Uther, Göttingen.)

The many faces of contemporary folklore studies

by *Anna-Leena Siikala*, Professor
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The last few decades have finally divorced European folkloristics from national state projects by focusing attention on individuals and small communities which produce tradition in their own lives, instead of on Tradition as a suitable common denominator of national culture. It is in fact a question of a deep and broadly derived direction in cultural and social research, whose representative uniting trends Sherry B. Ortner has called the orientations of history and practice. A history which in the first place examined state structures and wielders of power, and which was felt to be ossified, was thoroughly renewed in the 1980s and 1990s. The history trend in cultural research has had an effect on many fronts: *time, process, duration, reproduction, change, development, transformation* have been key concepts. Statistical, synchronistic analyses have changed over to the observation of processes, diachronic development paths and changes occurring in the course of the moment. In Nordic folkloristics this is evident in the form of discussions over, for example, folklore processes or transformations of tradition. Even more central has been the examination of oral history, the consciousness of people's own history.

Instead of cultural structures and forms of tradition, concern with glimpsing the action that produces and maintains it, and that also brings about the historical processes of culture on both a micro- and macro-level, has been essential. In folklore research the important concepts from the point of view of *practice* are *praxis, experience* and *performance* and the closely related terms *self, emotion* and *subject* which point to the individual at work and his or her mental activity.

Most research methods which examine the performance, experiences and activity of a person creating and producing tradition represent, broadly speaking, the concept of *practice*. An individual without history or community as the only subject of folklore research is however as one-sided a starting point as a narrow state project. Investigation of individual phenomena of tradition and the activity of preserving them attains significance only when related to wider social and historical processes. From the point of view of settling the task of folkloristics it is important that many *practice*-theories setting out from people's functionality have viewed culture / community or their institutions as an entity in which the most important forms of activity and exchange are asymmetrical, of unequal value and subject to power relationships.

The trends outlined here have signified an emphasis upon the emancipatory aspect. The right to cultural existence is sought primarily by peripheralised groups. The gender question, represented in Finland by Aili Nenola, Satu Apo and Senni Timonen among others, has, in this connection, been in the position of a forerunner and motor. In recent times age-specific viewpoints have risen to the fore more powerfully than ever. Today's Finnish folkloristics seeks its object from behind and beyond the structures of public society, from orally mediated thoughts and experiences. It asks what people's values and beliefs, the communally shared experiences and emotions, are like. Together with other sciences which examine cultures and society, folkloristics interprets and lends meaning to the historical stages of culture and practices of life of the present moment. The gender aspect has opened a channel for a reappraisal of the gathering, recording and interpretation of tradition. The image of the earlier folk culture has moreover undergone complete revision in recent years. This issue of *FF Network* is devoted to women's studies. It should be mentioned that in 2004 two theses investigating Kalevalaic poetry from a gender perspective have been examined and published.

On power and violence in patriarchal households

by *Aili Nenola*, Professor of Women's Studies
University of Helsinki

Prof. Aili Nenola is a specialist on laments and a pioneer in gender research in Finnish folkloristics. She was head of the many-faceted Christina Institute for Women's Studies in 1995–2003. At present she is full-time dean of the Humanities Faculty of Helsinki University. The faculty has 9000 students, and is a site of higher research larger than many Finnish universities.

Aili Nenola was recently elected member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters and of the Folklore Fellows' Network executive committee. Amongst her works are Studies in Ingrian Laments *(FFC 234, Helsinki 1982, 303 pp.) and* Inkerin itkuvirret / Ingrian Laments, *discussed in this issue of FF Network. The theme of her most recent research project is violence and folklore.*

The existence of patriarchy or male dominance is not admitted by many today in Finland – or other Nordic countries. We live in an illusory equality paradise for women and every problem we raise is met with "but think how good your situation is compared to other parts of the world" and "you are complaining over such small matters". And, of course, that is how it looks if we compare our situation with countries or societies where women are still the property of men and treated as such (but let us not forget that remnants of this thinking can be detected here, too), or if we compare the present situation with Finnish or Nordic society in so-called pre- or early modern times when patriarchy and male dominance in family and society were openly recognised as natural or God-ordained. However, one of the big problems Finnish society (along with other societies) faces even today is men's violence towards women. In a statistical survey called "Faith, Hope and Battering" published in 1998 (in English 2001, Statistics Finland) the authors Markku Heiskanen and Minna Piispa state that 40 per cent of Finnish women have at some point of their adult lives been victims of male physical or sexual violence or threats – and the violence experienced by women is concentrated in families and couple relationships. A similar survey done in Sweden a couple of years later showed the same kind of results.

As a student of culture I cannot be content with the explanations of gendered violence given by sociologists or psychologists alone. I think that the present situation of and attitudes towards violence against women must have some roots in the past, and I know I am not alone in my belief. In other words, at least some features of present-day couple relations and family traditions which seem to reproduce violence in gender relationships can be proved to be a cultural lag from earlier times. By cultural lag I refer to mentalities, notions, attitudes, habits and ways of behaviour which have lived on and been transmitted from generation to generation in spite of the changes in official thinking or laws. In trying to find out how matters were in earlier times I want to first look at how people talked about power in relations between woman and man, husband and wife or other family relations, and especially whether and how they talked about conflicts and violence within the family. My material consists of both oral and literary sources and what I do in this paper is just to point out some issues connected with the violence in families or couple relationships.

My first point is that research into family laws, family history and the history of violence in Finland and Europe so far seems to say that in Finland as elsewhere in Europe the public or official thinking and attitudes about the use of direct force and violence in human relations, esp. in families, have changed from acceptance towards non-acceptance since the sixteenth century, i.e. during the modern era, and – under certain conditions – made a crime to be punished by the state (meaning also that the state appropriated the use of violence and made it its privilege only). On the other hand, the outspoken and strict male dominance of the Western (esp. Protestant) family seems to be a product of the same period.

This has meant that (at least) in Protestant Europe there were two processes going on at the same time: on the one hand men were given the status as the head of the patriarchal (nuclear) family under whose power both wife, children and servants were subjected (as in Luther's House Rules). On the other, direct force and violence as discipline or punishment in family or other personal relations were no more recommended. According to religious and later also secular authorities, men were supposed to subjugate their wives by the power of their mental superiority and authority only and without resorting to the use of direct force. A man's right to physically punish his erring wife (right to house discipline, *kotikuri*) existed, however, in the law since the Middle Ages, and was mentioned indirectly again in the 1734 Swedish (which was also Finnish) law. This right – in spite of the good aims of the religious and other teachings –

was considered "natural" into late nineteenth century and even later among the common folk, which can be seen for instance in some proverbs or sayings like "she's mine said Emil of his wife, and hit again" (*se om mun, sanos Eemeli akkaansa, ja taas löi*), which I remember I heard in my childhood in the 1950s and later – it was supposed to be very funny. Remnants of this thinking now can perhaps be detected in the explanations some men give for their wife-beating or battering – and in the late awakening of our society to the frequency of violence against women in marriage or other couple relationships.

The features, consequences and problems connected with this double process can be seen in different religious, secular or popular cultural products, advisory sermons, booklets, stories, songs, visual presentations and plays where the God-given status of male dominance is discussed. According to Jonas Liliequist, the discussion started with religious authorities' admonitions to men and husbands to affirm their authority, but to show their power leniently and to guide their subordinates with loving words and patience – but as I mentioned earlier, the reality was different from the admonitions of the pious religious leaders. Wife-beating was considered a natural and just way of keeping a wife in her place and as punishment for different sorts of offences against the household or husband's or in-law's authority.

The same authorities warned against letting a wife take the power that belonged to the husband and master – that would ruin the household, and what was even more dangerous it would endanger the God-ordained order of the whole society. The authorities were following their teacher and master Martin Luther, who was of the opinion that a woman should stay at home and be guided by her husband – who according to Christian teaching (still alive among the so-called charismatic Christians) was her head as Christ is the head of the congregation.

Women, of course, were not happy at this development; in earlier times they had their share of the power in the extended family household, based on their inherited property and status as the matron of the house. Earlier (in Europe) women could also work as artisans and entrepreneurs on the side of their husbands, and even become members of some guilds, but that was made impossible or near impossible (as widows they could take over their husband's business) at the same time as they were defined as mere wives and mothers. Both the unhappiness of women, but even more the fear and ridicule of weak men losing their power to their wives, are seen in many popular stories, plays or visual presentations from those times.

Historian Jonas Liliequist has studied Swedish literary sources that tell us about the discussions on male authority in the family and its subversions. His analysis shows that in Sweden, the development was from the moral and ethical discourses in the form of advisory literature, pamphlets and plays where the use of violence by husband was condemned towards presentations of "subversive discipline of wife" where a wife had taken the power and kept her weak husband under her foot. At first, according to Liliequist, the emphasis was on the ridicule of the weak husband but during the eighteenth century the emphasis was more and more on the ill-tempered wife and the stories became clearly misogynist and lost the rest of their educational or moral quality. These kind of presentations, stories and plays developed in the nineteenth century into the motif of the "hen-pecked husband" and became mere pieces of light entertainment. The whole theme of violence in marriage, between husband and wife, became gradually rare in popular or literary products towards the end of 1800s – at the same time as it became silenced on the level of laws and was made a private phenomenon (in Sweden 1864 and in Finland 1889, in the new criminal law, wife-battering was left outside the area of public prosecution, which helped the development of the double-standard morality around this phenomenon – until late in the twentieth century in both countries). (See Liliequist 2001.)

The motif of the woman with a will of her own is recognised already in the Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* (on other English materials, see Korhonen 2000), where the feminine protagonist is tamed in the end by the hero. According to Liliequist, however, in England the beating of a woman or wife was not condemned before the beginning of the seventeenth century and quite brutal scenes of the treatment of women were common in popular literature. In England as in other societies in Europe (for instance France, see Segalen 1983) there were even special traditions of collectively punishing a wilful wife (*charivari*, "scolding") – such traditions are not known in Nordic countries.

The theme of subversive household order is recognized also in the Finnish literary tradition since the nineteenth century: Martta, the wife in Aleksis Kivi's play *Nummisuutarit* ("The Heath Cobblers") and some of the women figures in his novel *Seitsemän veljestä* ("Seven Brothers"); Justiina in *Pekka Puupää* (a popular Finnish comic and film series in the 1950s), and the theme of the hen-pecked husband in the comic series "Vihtori and Klaara" (not of Finnish origin, but very popular), to mention just a few. Woman's power or powerful woman is a negation, a monster, even in the *Kalevala* (Louhi) and can be seen as such also in the Niskavuori-plays and films by Hella Vuolijoki, and some other Finnish films (*Riihalan valtias*, "The ruler of Riihala", *Sillankorvan emäntä*, "The mistress of Sillankorva") as Anu Koivunen has

Finnish folklorists at the 10th Anniversary of the Christina Institute for Women's Studies, University of Helsinki, 2001. From left Outi Lehtipuro, Aili Nenola, Senni Timonen, Anneli Asplund. Photo by Hanna Hentinen.

stated in her study of Finnish films (Koivunen 2003). As a matter of fact, parts of Anu Koivunen's discussion on the Monument Woman can be read as a comment on the tradition of subversive household power that began as a consequence of the process of strengthening the patriarchal nature of family and household after the Reformation.

The power of women and the subversion of the male order is presented humorously in plays and stories where the emphasis is on ridiculous male weakness, even for example in some parts of the *Kalevala* or Kalevalaic poetry, e.g. Väinämöinen weeping and saved by Louhi from the sea. It is more dangerous or dramatic in those presentations where, very seldom and mostly on the level of magic, a powerful woman is recognized as a real and equal adversary of a man – as Louhi in the Theft of the Sampo story in the *Kalevala*.

These funny – or serious – stories about marital or household relations where the dominant partner is the wife who also uses violence against her husband or children are in stark contrast to the court documents where the cases – such as they are – are almost always about a husband beating or hurting his wife (cf. Liliequist 2001). Beating your wife does not make a very funny story – or a heroic legend or song either. Heroic violence takes place between men – and even then between equals: beating somebody who is below you in the pecking order of society does not make the stuff of male heroic traditions. A wife beating her husband (proverbs, anecdotes), a clever servant defeating his master (master–servant anecdotes) or a male servant sexually shaming a princess or a priest's wife in folk tales were the stuff of humorous discourses – and at least part of them can be defined as contestant traditions.

Some of the plays and stories in Jonas Liliequist's sources can be described as complaints – complaints by men in the hands of an ill-tempered wife. Such complaints exist also in old Kalevala-metre non-epic songs. The most popular of these songs were compiled and reworked by Elias Lönnrot in his *Kanteletar* (1844).

In men's songs there is a complaint over "A Man's Three Evils" (308): "There are three evils for a man, three deaths for a man: one is a leaking boat, another a bad horse and the third an ill-tempered wife." The song continues by explaining how you can get rid of a leaking boat by burning it, of a bad horse by feeding it to the wolves, but: "Save me, Lord, keep me, great Creator, of an angry woman, of a bad-mannered wife! One cannot get rid of that evil without God's help, without support from the great Creator. One cannot push it in the fire, nor feed to the wolves; if death does not do its work, God's disease does not kill her (one cannot get rid of her)." Another male complaint (311) begins: "Alas, me poor boy, oh me, I am a boy in trouble, because I married an angry wife, married an angry, brought a quarrelling one..."

There are also other male complaints in these songs, and most of them concern marriage: in addition to the theme of a bad wife there are complaints about not finding a wife or finding her too late and all good and nice girls were already married... Other male complaints are about finding or getting something to drink; and quite a few complain about their poor fate (not having a home, not enough to eat or drink, being scolded for being dirty etc.).

One of the husband's complaints included in Lönnrot's *Kanteletar* (307), however, talks very clearly about how to make one's wife obey. The song begins with a complaint that whatever the subject did to please his wife did not help: not buying bread or meat, not bringing all kinds of fish or other things to eat "For all that I got nothing nice, not half of it: she kicked me out of her bed". But in the end the man beats his wife with branches of three different trees, and so the wife accepts his advances. This song is meant as advice for young men "not married, not yet used to spirits and not yet proposed to marry".

Beating one's wife to compel her to sexual advances is not mentioned in the songs of advice for the bridegroom that were sung during the wedding in Ingria and in Karelia. Lönnrot has published some of them also in *Kanteletar* (132–134). The main theme in these songs (that were sung by the women who were from the bride's side) was that a husband should be patient in teaching his wife and it should be done for the first year by words, for the second year by looking disapprovingly and the third by stamping one's foot. And only if nothing helps and the wife still does not obey, the husband can take a whip to his wife – but it should be done inside, not in the yard or field so that other people should not hear her weeping.

And the husband should not hit her face so that people could see what has happened. In other versions the advice is that "you should not beat her for one cause only and even then only first with a thread".

Whatever the contents of these advice songs, what they all have in common is that at the same time that the songs urge the husband to treat his wife well and even protect her from his family, his right to demand his wife's obedience and his right to beat her is seen as natural and acceptable. This reflects the reality, which was the same in Eastern Europe as in the West – the husband had the legal right to beat his wife. Some sources are of the opinion that the situation of wives was even worse in the East, especially in rural Russia. The treatment of young wives or daughter-in-laws also in Ingrian households has been described in similar terms: "The situation of the daughter-in-law is wretched, her worth is low, almost that of an animal", as the folklore collector J. Länkelä writes in the middle of the nineteenth century. The bad treatment by the husband or his family was also a common theme of the so-called daughter-in-law-songs, which tell another story of the power relations in patriarchal households. These show that although women seemingly accepted the patriarchal power they did not do so without reservations. Laws and traditions were against them and subordinated them to men and to patriarchal family order, but in their songs they not only complained about the situation but also contested patriarchal privileges and demanded to be treated better. These songs were sung in public, in collective gatherings, which means that these women were not silenced as in later times and societies, where very few women have made their voices heard and where it has not been considered suitable to talk about what is going on within the walls of the family home: hence the oppressive silence even in our "equal" societies about men's violence against women and at home, which was broken only a couple of decades ago by feminists.

I have in this short paper made only a few references to Finnish or Nordic folklore genres and materials relevant for the study of gendered power and violence, especially in families and couple relationships. There are not yet very many studies on the matter (see, however, Gröndahl 1999, which analyses some Ingrian folk poems) and we need more, I need more, in order to be able to discuss more thoroughly the question of cultural lag in the present situation of violence against women. There is also the problem of defining what we mean by violence and how we find the traces and discussions of violence in, for example, folklore texts or customs. I think that it is not only a question of paying attention to texts which openly mention or refer to violence, violent acts or aims, although in this paper I have only used this kind of material. The feminist understanding of violence against women is that violence is a central part of the oppressive gender systems and societies and that violence is not only about physical violence but also about control, the silencing and limiting of the freedom of movement or development of women, and especially about limiting their access to and possibilities of using material or immaterial resources – even when these resources are produced by themselves. This definition and understanding opens new perspectives also for studying folklore from the point of view of gendered violence.

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Gender in Finnish folkloristics – outlines of broadening fields

by *Sinikka Vakimo,* Post-doctoral researcher
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This article aims to outline some of the main trends in gender perspective in Finnish folkloristics. Even though the male bias has been obvious in Finnish folkloristics until recent decades, women have always played a visible role, at least as bearers of culture and performers of tradition, in our discipline (Apo *et al.* 1998b: 22). This role is the focus here, while three contexts of interpretation are examined: first, the history of folklore studies, second, the social status of women and the development of feminist thought, and third, the impact of the international theoretical stimulus on women's studies. Thus I see the scholarship of gender studies as having a long history within this field, but at the same time I consider the impact of theoretical and substantial achievements of gender studies as important too (see Farrer 1975: xiv; Hollis *et al*. 1993: x–xi). As for the terminology used, I mean by "gender studies" and "women's studies" large and loosely defined viewpoints or fields of study, which highlight, question and discuss the meanings of gender in a culture and in cultural productions, as well as all the mechanisms and structures of culture as gendered.

I try to take into account recently published studies and the themes they have raised, not to paint a complete picture of the history of gender perspective in folkloristics. Nevertheless, as an introduction to this examination some milestones in the development of gender perspective in Finnish folkloristics are mentioned. In order to structure my examination I divide the history of gender perspective in Finnish folklore studies into three phases. These phases do not represent any unified ideology or methodology, but rather serve as a practical tool to assist in locating aspects of gender in a broader timeframe within folkloristics. These phases are: 1) the phase of searching for gender, when the gender difference – femaleness and maleness – was considered as given and natural (up to 1977); 2) the phase of building up the field of gender studies in folkloristics, when women's culture and point of view was addressed (1977 onwards); and 3) the phase of questioning of gender meanings, when the objects and questions explored are continuously deconstructed (1995 onwards) (see Buikema and Smelik 1995: xi). The methodology applied here is purely practical. All disciplines in fact evolve in a more complicated way: theoretical discussions overlap each other. Moreover, if the horizontal aspect is considered, it may be observed that Finnish gender-specific study of folklore does not represent any uniform type of applied methodology, point of view or interests of research. On the contrary, there are many ways of carrying out gender studies even within the relatively small field of folklore studies in Finland (see Apo *et al.* 1998a).

The emphasis in this preliminary review is on the last phase, of contemporary research, while the first two phases are only briefly outlined since three Finnish scholars, Satu Apo, Aili Nenola and Laura Stark-Arola, have already published in English a review of the history of gender studies in Finnish folkloristics in an introduction to an anthology entitled *Gender and Folklore* (Apo *et al*. 1998a). This compilation and review offer valuable insight into the achievements and directions of gender in folklore studies in Finland. Thus I concentrate here on the more contemporary research and try to continue where *Gender and Folklore* leaves off. (See also Nenola 1993; Nenola 1999; Heikkinen 2003; Apo *et al*. 1999.)

In addition, the special nature of contemporary cultural disciplines is worth bearing in mind. Many scholars have described our disciplines as being in a phase of "blurred genres", meaning that their boundaries are in part breaking down and being reconstructed elsewhere, and that interdisciplinary interaction is an everyday practice (see for example Geertz 1973; Denzin and Lincoln 1998). Contemporary popular thinking structures, methodologies and theoretical innovations can be traced back to old research traditions as well as to modern discussions within and between disciplines. In sum, the "contemporary" here forms only one aspect for examination, which is subjectively constructed here.

The phase of searching for gender

As pointed out earlier, women were not wholly invisible in folklore studies. The early collectors and classifiers of folklore, as well as ethnographers who described folk life, made the first cautious observations of women vis-à-vis tradition. They noted that women were sometimes the maintainers of habits and traditions which men seldom performed, like for example ritual laments, lyric songs, and wedding songs. Unfortunately, these observations did not greatly influence the analysis and interpretation of

folklore, and in any case masculine traditions dominated the field of study: it was taken for granted that these represented the legitimate focus of interest and should be collected and studied. (Apo *et al*. 1998b: 23; see also Nenola 1993.)

Women's folklore and its study were often marginalised, a process which is analysed by Senni Timonen in an interesting manner in her dissertation on Kalevala-metre folk lyric (2004). She points out that all early researchers from Elias Lönnrot and H. G. Porthan on considered Kalevala-metre lyric as a female genre, even though it was also performed by men. According to Timonen, the link between lyric and femaleness was constructed on the basis of the subjective and poetic expression of emotions characteristic of folk lyric, especially when the poem depicted emotions of suffering and sorrow. Having come to be regarded as essentially feminine, poetry which manifested feelings was marginalised as an object of collection and study. (Timonen 2004: 22; see also Gröndahl 1997: 73–75.)

The tendency to marginalise traditions considered feminine emerges clearly when we consider the general attitudes toward gendered traditions as manifested in their social use. For instance, the *Kalevala*, compiled by Elias Lönnrot from epic folk poetry (see Kuusi *et al.* 1977) which was regarded as masculine, was raised to the status of national epic in Finland and was put to use as a symbol of a young nation trying to gain its independence. In contrast, the second important compilation by Lönnrot, the *Kanteletar*, which is a collection of lyric folk poetry considered as feminine, almost fell into oblivion in a society given over to the masculine ideology of nationalism. (See Apo *et al.* 1998b: 15–17; Fox 1993.)

Subsequently, the female characters represented in folklore and especially in the *Kalevala* were examined and interpreted at the turn of the twentieth century in a nationalist light (see Wilson 1976). The new nation was in its early stages and sought to create for itself a heroic past, and at the same time to produce good models of citizenship for the future. For this the female characters of the *Kalevala* were esteemed, for example as mothers fulfilling their reproductive duties and raising new generations for the newborn nation state. Also, many women's civil societies were founded, some of them aimed at female emancipation and the improvement of women's status in society, while others emphasised the value of educating agrarian women as competent citizens for the new state. (See Jallinoja 1983; Pylkkänen 1999.) An association aiming to discuss female characters in "the spirit of Kalevala", Kalevalaisten naisten liitto (the Kalevala Women's Association) was founded later, in 1935. The organisers of the association were upper-class women who took part in public discussions about women's roles and status in society (Mäkelä 1984).

Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio (1901–51) acted as a chairperson of the Kalevala Women's Association for a short period, but she is principally remembered as the first woman in Finland to attain a doctoral degree in folkloristics, in 1932. In addition she was appointed as docent in the University of Helsinki in 1947, and is thus regarded as a pioneer in gender studies in folkloristics. In fact she was important not only as a female academic who functioned in the then male sphere of the university, but also because of her achievements in the field of folklore research, for she was the first to take women's folklore seriously. Although her research methodology reflected the then prevalent "historic geographical method" (or "the Finnish method"; see Hautala 1968), the themes and subjects she brought into her field of research were radically new in folkloristics: the study of children's games, various ways of performing folklore and folk poetry, lyrical folk poetry and the legend songs sung by women. On the other hand her topics come close to those studied by early American female scholars, defined by Claire Farrer (1975: xvi) as "subjects limited to natural phenomena, games, or things associated with home", but on the other hand they addressed women's public spheres and culture as well.

It is thus evident that Enäjärvi-Haavio would have gone on to greater achievements as a pioneer in women's studies if cancer had not cut short her life and career. After her, the field of gender studies in folkloristics remained relatively quiet for more than twenty years.

Constructions of gender perspective

The 1960s is considered in Western countries an age of social and political transition which included the inauguration of the women's movement and the vivid discussion of sex-roles in Nordic countries. It was likewise a critical period for Finnish folklore studies, because the old text-centred paradigm of "the Finnish method" reached its end, and scholars started to search for new theoretical stimulus elsewhere, principally from anthropology, sociology and linguistics. Researchers started to collect their materials not from archives but from various fields, and the focus of studies shifted from texts to persons, groups and societies and to the culture and traditions they constructed. In consequence scholars were also compelled to redefine and ponder upon the main concept of the discipline: folklore. (See Lehtipuro 1974; Honko 1983; Abrahams 1992; cf. Hollis *et al.* 1993: x–xi.)

Despite these new winds blowing in folkloristics and the women's movement, the first folkloristic studies making women and their culture visible appeared much later, at the turn of the 1980s, after the

so-called second wave of feminism (see Jallinoja 1983; LeGates 2001: 327–367). Three research articles marked the beginning of the new period: Senni Timonen's essay exploring the image of women as drawn by male collectors of folk poetry (1977), Aili Nenola-Kallio's analyses of death in women's world view (1981) and Leea Virtanen's work on the singing tradition of Setu women in Estonia (1981, see also Virtanen 1994; Nenola 1994: 219). The most outstanding works were the dissertation by Aili Nenola-Kallio, *Studies in Ingrian Laments* (1982) and her anthology *Miessydäminen nainen* (1986, Woman with a man's heart. Female perspectives of culture). The first analysed lament tradition as an expression of peculiarly women's culture and as a tradition carrying special meaning for women – a viewpoint presented for the first time in our discipline. Nenola's second book aimed to explore the basic assumptions of women's studies in cultural research and the male bias in the study of culture. Both studies gained a great popularity and influence among students of folkloristics in Finnish universities as study books and as a source of inspiration for discussing aspects of gender. As a result – and owing too to the spreading ideas of social construction, I suggest – women came to be viewed as active generators and interpreters of their own way of life, culture and traditions. Thus the female experience and interpretations of the world and life became an important aspect of research on folklore. (Timonen 2004: 6; see Nenola 1993.)

The aspect of gender studies in folkloristics was, particularly in the beginning, emancipationist and it aimed to criticise the male bias in all disciplines studying culture by making women's way of constructing and interpreting everyday life visible (Heikkinen 2003: 150). Understandably this project was mostly conducted by women researchers studying women's culture, but other ways of analysing gender aspects of collective materials – for example folklore performed by women and men – from a gender perspective existed as well (cf. Jordan and Kalčik 1985). An imposing example of this phase is a compilation edited by Aili Nenola and Senni Timonen, entitled *Louhen sanat* (1991, The words of Louhi. Essays on women in folklore), where the name Louhi refers to the Mistress of Pohjola (Northland) in the *Kalevala*. *Louhen sanat* ran the gamut of gender studies in folkloristics, analysing for example symbolic meanings of gender and womanhood as a point of research, traditions used by women, the images of good and evil women in folklore and, finally, images of women in folk poetry. The theoretical frameworks were grounded on a broad spectrum of concepts, such as gender regime, folklore as a tool for contest, female experience, the other, and cultural models for gender and sex roles. In order to analyse mental models of gender meanings most researchers now committed themselves to the social construction perspective in their investigations.

After *Louhen sanat* Finnish female scholars began to plan the first research project exploiting gender-perspective from a broad, multidisciplinary point of view. This project was named "Culture, Tradition and Gender System" (1992–96) and it was funded by the Academy of Finland and directed by Aili Nenola, a folklorist and a professor of women's studies at the University of Helsinki. Thirteen female researchers participated in this project and the compilation of articles published in the aforementioned *Gender and Folklore* originated in the context of this group (Apo *et al.* 1998b: 23). In addition to the project and its achievements another compilation had a great impact on the development of gender perspective in Finnish folkloristics, namely Satu Apo's publication entitled *Naisen väki* (1995, Female väki-force. Studies in Finnish folk thought and culture, see also Apo 1998), where she considered archaic sexual discourses and gender relations of agrarian Finnish culture. Her analysis is based on materials of folk poetry and literature, and examines various constructions of gender relations in the *Kalevala* and *Kanteletar*, and in the experience of women in other text materials. Apo's texts paved the way for new interpretations of old folklore materials from the perspective of body and sexuality, an approach applied among others in the works of Laura Stark-Arola (1998). (See Heikkinen 2003: 148.)

Diversification and reconstruction

At the start of the new millennium, perspectives of gender studies in folkloristics are continuously broadening and diversifying, while engaging in intensive dialogue – even argument – with old research traditions and theoretical standpoints of the discipline. Gender perspective is today, in comparison with earlier phases, increasingly informed and enriched by theoretical ideas and discussions of international feminist theory, feminist philosophy, postmodern theorising and finally, postcolonial critique in order to question not only the basic assumptions of its mother discipline – folkloristics – but to critically examine itself, the basis of gender studies. Thus the main concepts of sex, gender and gender regime/orders are problematised, disentangled and reconstructed from a cultural point of view in research practices. The influence of, say, postcolonial critique, aspects of men's studies, lesbian and queer studies as well as ethnic and age critiques has compelled scholars to take new positions and to search for new tools for conceptualising "difference" and mechanisms of constructing "the other". (Heikkinen 2003: 141–142; Buikema 1995: 7–13; see Tong 1998.)

Typical concepts characterising contemporary folkloristics could be mentioned, such as context, reflexivity, narrative, ethnography, interpretation, discourse, construction and articulation – most of them vividly discussed in cultural studies and anthropology. Furthermore, multiple methods and methodology of exploiting various research materials in a single study as well as aspects of multidisciplinarity are considered as popular means of doing research, and occasionally even old discussion of folklore genres comes up.

These very same issues and theoretical discussions overlap gender studies in so far as they are applied to gender-specific perspectives. In order to reinterpret these materials, the gender studies aim to construct new questions and ways of seeing them from a gender perspective, while the experience of women, their ways of constructing everyday life and their world view are continuously kept in mind (see Greenhill and Tye 2001: 194–5), but now with the help of partly new means of interpretation such as the analysis of emotions, narratives of dreams or other personal documents. What is also new is critical reflexivity: women researchers regard themselves as persons and subjects to be analysed critically in the frame of the process of research. Multiple research methods and research materials are deployed and the "texts" examined embrace various cultural materials, such as, in addition to folk poetry and folk narratives, media messages, visual materials and texts mediated by computers and the culture surrounding them. Next I will present some major themes of gender aspect in contemporary folkloristics by reviewing briefly the most important recent research.

Gendered understandings of folk poetry and folk narratives

The traditional study of Kalevala-metre folk poetry (or folk songs, or *runes*) is vividly re-envisioned in contemporary research from a gender perspective. New directions for study in particular are presented by Senni Timonen in her pathblazing dissertation *Minä, tila ja tunne* (2004, Self, space, emotion. Aspects of Kalevala-metre folk lyric), where, in approaching the world constructed by folk lyrics, she pays particular attention to the "real" time of the lives and social conditions of the singers. She applies perspectives on emotions and theoretical standpoints from anthropology and from gender studies, while the focus is on understanding and explaining the world of those women who produced folk lyrics and discovered them to be a way of expressing emotion. The levels or contexts of her approach are in three parts. First, the meanings of *space* are examined, by which she means both time and space in folk lyrics, then folk lyrics as a genre, and finally Ingrian women's indigenous culture. The second aspect is *self*, by which she means primarily the collective "I" of the lyric songs, and third, *emotion*, which permeates the whole study and is analysed through universal feelings of sorrow and joy. (See also Timonen 1998; Knuuttila and Timonen 2002.)

Another position is taken by Tarja Kupiainen, whose dissertation entitled *Kertovan kansanrunouden nuori nainen ja nuori mies* (2004, The young woman and young man of narrative folk poetry) attemps to reveal the construction of womanhood and manhood in folk poems as well as in the study of them. She exposes the masculine hegemonic interpretation and deconstructs the dimensions of the gender concept and female subjectivity in folk poetry. Thus Kupiainen examines among other things the taboo of incest, family and gender relations and the sexuality of young women and young men in folk poetry, applying theoretical viewpoints derived mainly from the works of Judith Butler and Luce Irigaray. (See also Kupiainen 2001, 2002.)

A third perspective of the contemporary study of gendered folk poetry is generated by Lotte Tarkka, who approaches the ancient world created by folk poetry from the anthropological and interpretative perspective. She has earlier interpreted the images of nature and forest as linked to gender and to gendered division of labour in the world of folk poetry (1998) and analysed the symbolic meanings of gender in oral poetry (1994).

The distance between the world of folk poetry and old folk narratives is in some respects relatively small, and folk poetry and folk narratives depict to some extent the same world. The ethical world produced by old folk narratives forms the main research theme for Irma-Riitta Järvinen, who has explored Karelian Orthodox religious legends in her dissertation (2004). She considered the narrative structures of these legends, and analysed folk beliefs and ethics evidenced by religious legends and their changing developments. The focus was, in the latter part of her study, on one Karelian female narrator of sacred legends and her world view, whence Järvinen broadens her perspective to contemporary narrating and constructing of world views by women in a small Karelian village, and to religious and ethical themes which are found in their collective narrating of dreams and other stories. (See also Järvinen 1998.)

Remembering and narrating comprise an important research topic in modern folkloristics. Ulla-Maija Peltonen has comprehensively explored the various ways of remembering – and forgetting as well – of the Finnish Civil War in 1918 and of the "black times" that followed after the war. One of her aims has been to investigate the memorising of war widows on the side who lost the war, the "reds", and

their means of surviving in and after wartime (Peltonen 1996, 2000). Telling the past by women is also tackled by Taina Ukkonen (2000a) in her dissertation, where she focused on the ways women workers in a dockyard collectively remembered and narrated their past (see also Ukkonen 2000b). Contemporary narration from the perspective of humour and gender is pondered by Eeva-Liisa Kinnunen (1998), and also Lena Marander-Eklund (2000) specialised on narratives by women (see below).

Body, sexuality and rituals

The second theme group, body and cultural aspects of sexuality, comprises an important topic. It is partly prompted by Satu Apo's influential book about female magic power (1995) as well as discussion about the body by feminist philosophers and theoreticians. Up to now this direction of study has mostly been conducted by reinterpreting ethnographic and folkloristic materials describing the everyday private rituals of women's life as well as more public collective ritual occasions, with the studies focusing on the cultural signification of the (female) body. This is on the one hand due to the rich folklore and ethnographical materials referring to archaic traditions and rituals we have in our folklore archives. On the other hand, depictions of ritual acts and customs, incantations and magic features make cultural attitudes and values clearly visible: the basic conceptions and mental structures of a specific culture may be interpreted through descriptions of rituals.

Rituals and the cultural meanings of the female body are the focus of Laura Stark-Arola's dissertation *Magic, Body and Social Order* (1998) in which she examines women's magic and sexual themes linked to it. By "women's magic" she refers to magic rites performed by women and for women in traditional agrarian Finland and Karelia. Reinterpreting archived folk belief materials, mainly incantations and ethnographic descriptions, she examines the gender concepts and gender systems expressed. The themes analysed in her study cover sexuality, pairing, marriage and pollution of the female body, which are explained and interpreted in the frame of historical time, social context and the agrarian household. Stark-Arola offers an interesting description of the ritual preparation of a woman for marriage, and how her sexuality is raised in a bathing ritual to help her to become a partner in a socially sanctioned heterosexual relationship.

Another type of contemporary female rituality is analysed in the Russian ethnic context by Kaija Heikkinen in her study of women's marginality and the manifestation of everyday life (1992), and in her examination of religious rituals of Vepsian women, and the changing image of old women in Russia (2000, see also Heikkinen 2002). These studies, based on a gender-sensitive approach, refer to aspects of sexuality and meanings of gender orders (see also Keinänen 2000).

Aspects of sexuality expressed in rituals have previously been studied within the framework of childbirth, a subject neglected in early research; if examined by male ethnographers, these archaic practices were judged as women's secret realm and often superstitious by their nature. A comprehensive picture of the childbirth practices in Karelia at the turn of the twentieth century is given by Marja-Liisa Keinänen in her dissertation entitled *Creating Bodies. Childbirth Practices in Pre-modern Karelia* (2003). Her research material consists of archived folklore materials, ethnographic descriptions and interviews. In addition to childbirth practices and the role of the traditional midwife, she investigated the ideas and practices pertaining to female bodily states, and how women perceived the restrictions and other norms of their behaviour. Her study is closely linked to Hilkka Helsti's dissertation about the practice of domestic childbirth and maternity education in the early-twentieth-century Finnish culture (2000). Helsti's aim was to examine cultural conflicts between motherhood and maternity education through three different themes: fertility, the public and the private, and purity and impurity, with reference mostly to Mary Douglas's works. The main material studied comprises archived remembrances of agrarian women and midwives, and the midwives' magazine of the time. The picture formed by agrarian women did not have much connection to the high-class ideals of motherhood. (See Helsti 1995.)

The third noteworthy study focusing on pregnancy and women's concepts of childbirth – this time in contemporary culture – is Lena Marander-Eklund's dissertation (2000). She analysed personal narratives of women's bodily experiences in the context of modern (birth) technology. The women interviewed, expectant mothers, were actually in need of recounting their emotions and sharing their experiences in order to reach a better understanding of them in this critical phase of life. Marander-Eklund analysed women's narratives and ways of narrating as well, and pondered their change over time. (See also Marander-Eklund 2001, 2004.)

Bodily meanings and gender orders in visual "texts" and their performance are analysed in Inka Välipakka's dissertation (2003) concerning contemporary choreography, body and women's dance. Her analysis is based on phenomenological philosophy and dance semiotics and she tackles the information gleaned from each dance performance (four actual dance performances and one photographic repre-

continued on p. 14

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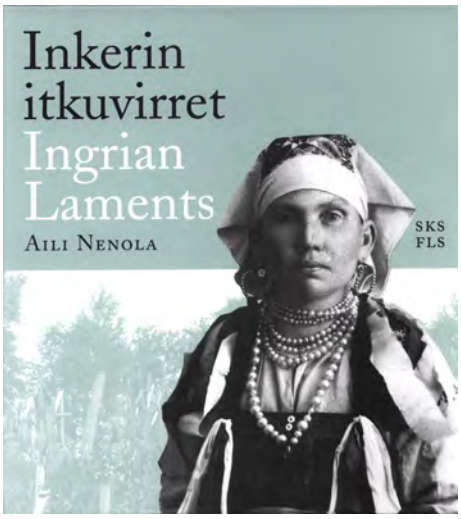

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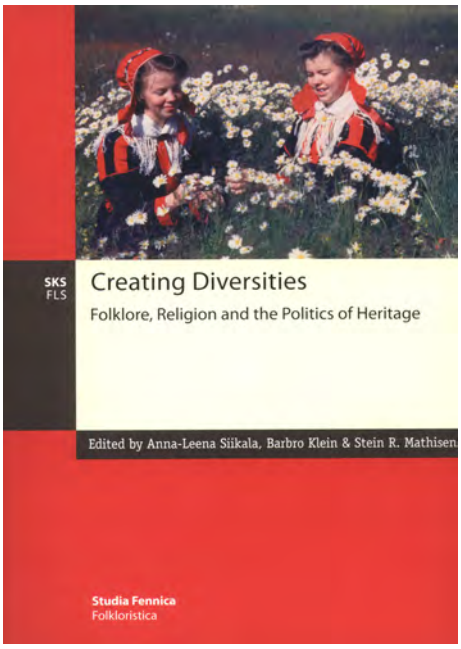
Aili Nenola,
Inkerin itkuvirret – Ingrian Laments
Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2002. 906 pp.
ISBN 951-746-058-9

The lament, that song of sorrow improvised from traditional language and melody, is an ancient folklore genre known as a ritual form of grieving throughout the world. The laments of Ingria represent a Baltic-Finnish women's tradition whose other branches include the laments of the Karelian, Vepsian and Setu peoples. Women have composed and performed laments particularly in connection with death rites, but in Ingria the wedding laments performed by the bride and her mother were just as common as funerary laments. Laments were also used to bid farewell to boys conscripted into the army during the Czarist era, for their departure was often just as final as that of the bride or deceased. Using the richly metaphorical language of laments and their emotionally-charged mode of performance women expressed their suffering in situations outside of ritual occasions as well.

This volume contains nearly 700 lament texts recorded mostly in writing between 1841 and 1975, here presented in their original language with English translations and commentary. The book also includes samples of lament melodies.



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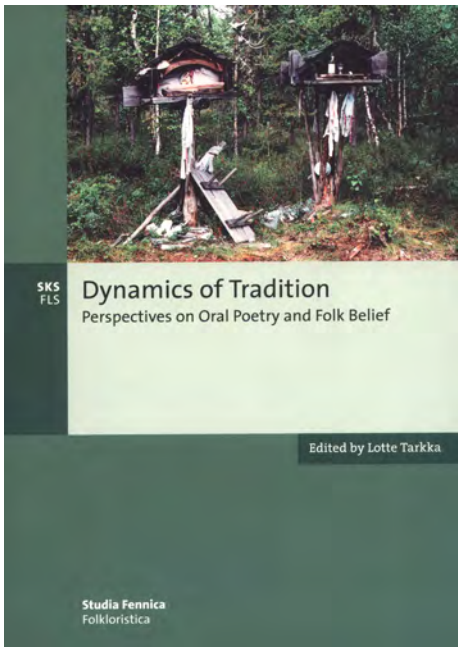
Creating Diversities – Folklore, Religion and the Politics of Heritage
Edited by Anna-Leena Siikala, Barbro Klein & Stein R. Mathisen.
Studia Fennica Folkloristica 14. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2004. 307 pp. ISBN 951-746-631-5

The effects of globalisation and the momentous changes to the political map of Europe have led to a world in which multiculturalism and ethnic differences have become issues of increasing importance. In Nordic countries, relationships between new immigrants, local ethnic groups and majorities are created in ongoing and sometimes heated discussions. In transforming multicultural societies, folklore has taken on new manifestations and meanings. How can folklore studies illuminate the present cultural, political and historical changes?

Creating Diversities seeks answers to this question. It emphasises two important factors in the cultural and political exchanges among historical minorities, recent immigrants, and the majority of groups dictating the conditions of these exchanges. The first factor is religion, which is a powerful tool in the construction of ethnic selves and in the establishment of boundaries between groups. The second factor is the role of national and regional folklore archives and ethnographic and cultural historical museums which create ideas and images of minorities. These representations, created in different political climates, affect the general understanding of the people depicted.

Fifteen well-known folklorists and ethnographers from Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia and the United States offer insights and background material on these problems.

Dynamics of Tradition – Perspectives on Oral Poetry and Folk Belief
Edited by Lotte Tarkka.
Studia Fennica Folkloristica 13. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2003. 390 pp. ISBN 951-746-429-0



Dynamics of Tradition is a festschrift dedicated to the Finnish folklorist, Academy Professor Anna-Leena Siikala. Contributors include distinguished folklorists from around the world. All the writers have collaborated with her in various projects, and the range of their topics reflects her multifaceted research interests: mythology, tradition processes in ethnic and national contexts, epic studies, shamanism and the study of narration to name a few.

Dynamics of Tradition shows clearly the reflexive nature of the study of folklore. The dynamics of creating histories, nations, ideologies and identities are treated in various cultural arenas and historical contexts, ranging from academic, national and literate cultures to oral traditions. The reader is invited to witness the very creation of ethnographic data in topical studies based on fieldwork. From the ethnographic encounter with folk religion, the focus shifts to mythological traditions and the study of mythology. The section dedicated to epic studies offers a comparative view on epic poetry in various cultural settings. The genre of oral or oral-derived epic is a textual arena in which various cultural and historical agents, ideologies and traditions meet in dialogue or in conflict. The volume concludes with four texts inspired by Siikala's studies in the cognitive and affective processes involved in narration and systems of belief. Although historically and socially conditioned, the dynamics of tradition is the dynamics of the human mind in all of its faculties.

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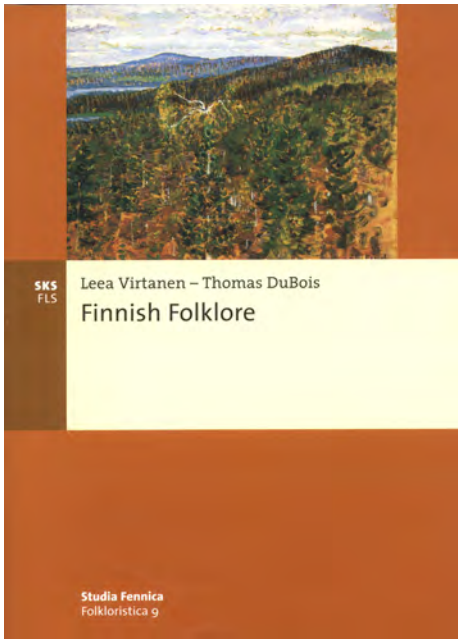
Leea Virtanen and Thomas DuBois,
Finnish Folklore
Studia Fennica Folkloristica 9. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2000. 297 pp. ISBN 951-717-938-3



Finnish Folklore presents a survey and examples of Finnish folklore from the nineteenth century to the present. The Nordic country of Finland has received influences from both east and west and serves as an excellent showcase of European folklore in general.

Guided by *Finnish Folklore*, readers may learn about how folklore has been collected and researched in Finland, what regional distinctions exist in the country's traditions, and how traditions have changed in the process of modernisation. An extensive anthology section features ancient alliterative poetry, such as formed the basis of the Finnish national epic Kalevala. Readers unskilled in Finnish can also find translated examples of rhymed folk songs, folktales, legends, and other narratives, proverbs, riddles, jokes, and contemporary genres like children's folklore, urban legends, and anecdotes.

Tradition continues to live on in communications from person to person, sometimes traveling thousands of miles and over many national borders in the process. The same item of folklore may acquire new meanings in new contexts. What is the linking thread of tradition? Is it our eternal longing for happiness or just the endless need of human beings to pass the time with each other?

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continued from p. 11

sentation). In order to analyse choreographical, ethnic and bodily meanings of performative dance she uses cultural analysis omitted from the sociology of art and anthropological ethnography and ponders various topics such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty's notion of the lived body, and Luce Irigaray's "ethics of sexual difference". In addition Anu Laukkanen's ongoing study of performing ethnicity and gender in oriental belly-dancing in Finland has resemblances of Välipakka's work (see Laukkanen 2003).

For the time being gender studies in Finnish folkloristics is mainly conducted by female researchers focusing on women's ways of seeing the world. Although the basic arguments posed by men's study are generally known in Finland, we do not have studies disclaiming or criticising the history of folkloristics or the gender aspect in it from that perspective, in fact only a few researchers have payed attention to these issues. At any rate there are two important studies pointing the way by pondering cultural ways of considering masculinity and sexuality, and criticising hegemonic cultural masculinity, both published in the 1990s. First, the masculine way of constructing culture was pointed out by Jyrki Pöysä in his dissertation (1997), in which he analysed and interpreted the male-dominant culture of forest workers and the folklore produced by them. He deconstructed the image of the masculine, independent, hard-working and happy fellow – the popular image of a lumberjack – by revealing the formation of social categories through historical situations. Later Pöysä has taken into consideration aspects of forming a masculine identity by eating (2004a), and connected gender perspective to the discussion about the construction of national identity (2004b), both fresh and pioneer approaches in a study of cultural gender meanings in folkloristics (see also Uotinen 2003). A second important study takes into consideration sexual and homosexual discourses of Finnish agrarian culture by Jan Löfström (1999, see also 1998), who interpreted various cultural texts and examined the popular concepts of gender differences by means of themes such as gendered division of labour and concepts of body and sexuality. He suggests that the polarisation of genders was not strict or useful, and that modern homophobic concepts were rare in early modern Finland.

A critique of age perspective

The postmodern critique points not only to the process making of black people "the other", but directs researchers to analyse sensitively the making of the marginalised "other" through various processes (see Heikkinen 2003). Similarly, there are critics of age perspective as well; in particular Sinikka Vakimo has criticised especially "the age paradigm" in the study of culture in her dissertation (2001), where she examined the cultural concepts of old women and their everyday practices. By "age paradigm" she refers to conventions of research practices according to which old people and especially old women are continuously considered as the other: they are regarded as deteriorating and living in the past. Moreover our disciplines construct old people as mechanical containers or carriers of old folklore that goes back to their childhood or, if we are lucky, even further back in history, rather than as people producing their own, independent and creative culture and traditions.

Thus old women are objects of the double standard of ageing, viz., a multiple marginalisation and being ignored both on the level of everyday life and in the world of research. Vakimo argues, after interpreting various cultural texts (such as the *Kalevala*, sexual anecdotes, newspapers, TV-adverts) that modern cultural representations tend to "grannify" (*mummotella*) old women in order to create a humourous climate of expression by depicting old women as ridiculous, useless, good-for-nothing persons, who are old-fashioned and unable to use modern technology. (See also Vakimo 1998; forthcoming). Such views approach those associated with the old woman, the traditional midwife and granny, in Russia and Russian Karelian culture (see Keinänen 2003: 159–181; Heikkinen 2000), suggesting that cultural attitudes linked to the otherness of the character are about the same.

In part the critique of the age paradigm promulgated by Vakimo fits with gender studies in general, because it has so far ignored the meanings of age when theorising and studying aspects of gender and gender orders, even though it has recently been sensitive to other aspects of "difference" like sexuality, class, ethnicity etc. On the other hand, age- and gender-sensitive research has a relatively long tradition in Finnish folkloristics, but only when discussing youth culture. Often this gender-specific youth research has adopted anthropological field methods and approaches and observed the "unknown" culture and interpreted it from the perspective of girls, and in the context of gender orders of (post)modern consumer culture. The examination of the practice of calling a girl a whore in contemporary school culture by Helena Saarikoski (2001) well illustrates this direction. It achieved great publicity in Finland as the first analysis of social and cultural conditions where girls are compelled to grow up as women. Young girls have to learn to fulfil the demands of womanhood, and hence to fight against the reputation of the archetypical "bad woman". The ways of controlling girls' behaviour were various: verbal bullying, gossipping, stamping of special clothes or ways of dan-

cing as a mark of the whore etc. As research material Saarikoski collected descriptions and letters written by schoolgirls or adult women who had experienced bullying in their youth, and interviews of mainly contemporary girls. The stories told to her were impressive, not to say shocking (Saarikoski 2001, see forthcoming).

Postmodern consumer culture is also the frame of interpretation of Anna Anttila's exploration (2004) of the public sexualisation of girls' bodies and its impact on girls' experiences and attitudes towards sexuality. She has in addition investigated the dating culture of young girls and their plays of foretelling the future (see e.g. Anttila 1998). Furthermore, changing children's traditions and the meanings of girls' clapping games are analysed by Ulla Lipponen (1998). The themes of collective youth culture, of dating and courting and constructing gender identity, are tackled by Kirsti Salmi-Niklander in her dissertation (2004). She explored the working-class youth in a small industrial community and focused on the interplay between orality and literacy through analysis of handwritten newspapers produced by local youth. (See also Salmi-Niklander 1999.)

Aspects of the whole course of life and ethnicity is the focus of Airi Markkanen's (2003) dissertation, where she analyses the construction of the life course of gypsy women in eastern Finland in the nineteenth century. The women discussed and interviewed lived in a patriarchal minority culture and as a marginalised group in Finland, yet Markkanen interpreted the women's narratives as illustrating a sense of strength and self-esteem rather than feelings of being subordinated. Women interviewed felt that the everyday life in a Romany family and the caring of children and other family members and relatives was managed by adult women, and for this reason they felt a sense of continuity and safety (see Markkanen 2000).

Research projects: reorganising gender orders in a postmodern frame

Postmodern theorising and postcolonial critique set basically new conditions and demands even on the study of traditional culture and folklore. With the aim of tackling the diversity of cultural and gender issues, of new technology and of aspects of consumer culture, multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity have become a common denominator for research projects in the field of cultural study.

For instance, aspects of modernisation are touched upon in the research project "Modernisation and Popular Experience in Finland 1860–1960" (2002–04), led by docent Laura Stark (University of Helsinki). This multidisciplinary project discusses modernisation processes from the viewpoint of ordinary people focusing on transformations at the level of household, individual and community. Gender and generation among others form a basic viewpoint in this project. (See: http://www.helsinki.fi/hum/folkloristiikka/moderniz.html.) In addition the modern information and communication technology and its local impacts on everyday life and on construction of gender identity has been tackled in recent research projects in the university of Joensuu under the leadership of Professor Seppo Knuuttila. Gender-specific folkloristical aspects are represented in these projects by Sari Tuuva, who is conducting research into computing ethnographies from a gender perspective, and Johanna Uotinen, who is polishing her dissertation on narratives of gendered experiences and signification processes connected with computers (Tuuva 2003; Uotinen 2002, 2003; see: http://www.joensuu.fi/tietoyhteiskunta/backgEng.htm).

Another type of multidisciplinarity linking gender, the body and postmodern culture is carried out in a research project "Gender Narrated in Speech and Deed" (2004–06) led by docent Helena Saarikoski (University of Helsinki). The project belongs to the fields of folkloristics and musicology, youth studies, disability studies and dance studies. The project aims to analyse how gender is realised in everyday activities and accounts of those activities. Gender is studied here as intertwined with other factors of identity, like sexuality, age and phase of life, disability, physical appearance and acting in a professional capacity. The materials of the studies are multitype qualitative ethnographic materials interpreted in the frame of respective cultural and historical contexts. (See http://www.helsinki.fi/folkloristiikka/saarikoski.htm.) In addition to research projects, two national graduate schools must be mentioned here as important trainers of postgraduate students for specialisation in gender in the study of culture. The first is the multidisciplinary Graduate School of Gender System led by Professor Aili Nenola (Univeristy of Helsinki) and the other links the fields of folkloristics and comparative religion, namely the Graduate School of Cultural Interpretations: Nationality, Locality, Textuality, led by Professor Seppo Knuuttila (University of Joensuu).

Conclusions

The gender aspect in contemporary Finnish folkloristics is important and inseparable from other directions of study. Here I have only been able to outline a preliminary introduction to the issue. On the one hand, gender-sensitive folkloristics still considers themes derived from the history of the field, such as the making of women's worlds, folk-

lore and culture visible, and constructs a female perspective in the interpretation of all the materials explored in our fields. On the other hand, research in this field is diversifying from a base of questions raised by old folklore scholars as well as by modern theoreticians of gender: discussion of deconstruction of the subject, otherness, the diverse meanings of sexuality, hegemonic masculinity, bodily signification, emotions, experience, ethnicity, nationality, age etc. – such a list of popular research topics is in a continuous process of change, which is a sign of fruitful development in the field.

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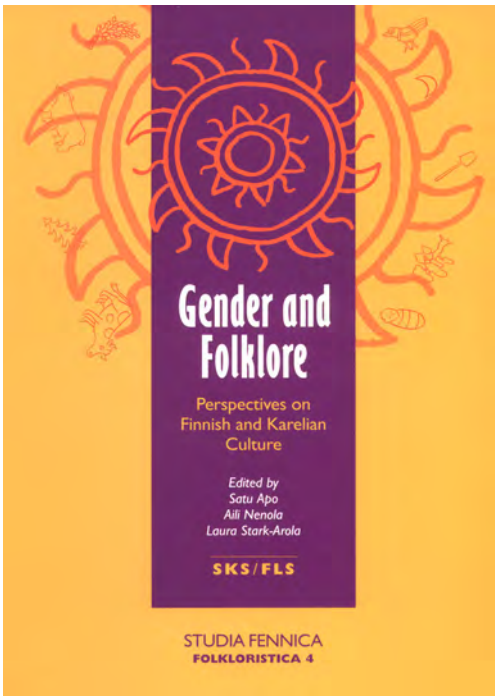

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Articles on

Gender and Traditional World View
Dialogues between Old and New Gender Systems
Modern Experiences
Sense of Self and Narrated Mothers in Women's Autobiographies

Contributors

Satu Apo, Kaija Heikkinen, Henni Ilomäki, Irma-Riitta Järvinen, Eeva-Liisa Kinnunen, Ulla Lipponen, Jan Löfström, Kirsti Määttänen, Aili Nenola, Laura Stark-Arola, Lotte Tarkka, Senni Timonen, Terhi Utriainen, and Sinikka Vakimo

Reviews

A major leap in European folklore studies

Aili Nenola, *Inkerin itkuvirret – Ingrian Laments*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2002. 906 pp.

Ingrian Laments is an important book at the divide between "old" and "new" Finnish folkloristics, reaching back to the textual ideals of classic Finnish folkloristics as well as to contemporary ways of understanding "the other" as people like us. As the research, editing and publishing process has spanned over three decades, it is tempting to read the book looking for changes in our ways of thinking and writing about folklore; it must have been agony for the author to let it go in the final phase, not to rewrite everything to suit the new spirit of our discipline, which she herself has been active in creating.

The project to publish all Ingrian laments is our last scientific material publication in the folkloristic practice which – unlike anthropology – insists that carefully recorded research materials from the field should be public and available, both to the readers of scholarly works based on them and to other users. Traces of this cultural and scientific practice can be followed back to the nineteenth century: it was a priority to rescue, publish and store folklore. Research can wait, sometimes for a long time, as has been the case with the "incomprehensible" lament tradition.

The timing of the now completed project was optimal. When research of poetry in the Kalevala-metre had come to a standstill, there was a demand for grasping in a proper scholarly fashion the other and more enigmatic genre which belonged to the "kalevalaic" world. In the contextual spirit of the time there was a genuine interest to learn more of an ancient genre with a clearly defined place in social life, in the rituals of death and marriage. And better still: the genre was not totally extinct, there were living lamenters to interview, tape-record and film as well. It would be interesting to know to what extent this source of information has been helpful in understanding the old manuscripts in the Folklore Archives. For *understanding*, making sense of very strange lore, was what the project was all about.

Now, when the long and winding road has come to an end, one can easily say that the publication is as perfect in its kind as can be. Never before has it been possible to publish as originals and in English translation the entire body of texts of a folklore genre of any Finnic ethnic group. It will be exciting to see what kind of responses and uses this unique scholarly investment is going to invite.

For me – as a student of contemporary Finnish folklore research – *Ingrian Laments* is a lot more than a publication containing (almost) all Ingrian laments. The gradual and slow process of understanding the lament as women's cultural expression which is embedded in the whole process offers a microcosm of the change that has happened in Finnish folkloristics over the last 40 years. Here a good companion reader is *Studies in Ingrian Laments* (FFC 234, 1982) by Aili Nenola-Kallio.

A crucial thing for the success of the Ingrian lament project was that from the very beginning it has been in the hands of a committed researcher, Aili Nenola, who in a major way made it her mission to understand the Ingrian lament. The progress of the whole enterprise, which grew to what is little less than a life work, is also a brilliant example of how research really proceeds to a new level of understanding, and how the student does not instantly see where her findings are taking her. There was a lot of interest in "tradition areas" in the aftermath of the historic-geographic method, and in the beginning Nenola's own line of research was concerned with the tradition areas of Ingria as they appeared in the light of the rich and puzzling array of "lament names" – i.e. substitutes for kinship terms, used in laments. This interest in cultural areas still shows in the arrangement of the laments in the book.

Along the way something happened, though, a surprise that no one, I believe, anticipated. Defining Ingrian tradition areas was the object of research. The names – the most characteristic and most difficult trait of lament language – were only used as a kind of indicator. Nevertheless it was the names that proved to be fruitful in leading the understanding to a new level. What happened? Lament is essentially a dialogic genre, and dialogue – a sign of which the naming formulae are – is about human relations. In the world of Ingrian laments people are parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, in wedding laments above all mothers and daughters. The hub is the mother: basically people are somebody's children.

What would have happened if Nenola had chosen as research material some other linguistic trait is impossible to know. The choice she made – was it female intuition? – led her into seeing the lament

essentially as women's culture – which now seems self-evident. The lament is not – as was generally thought – beautiful but incomprehensible ancient poetry which women happened to have preserved because they had less contacts with the modern world than men did. Instead the whole lament genre in Ingria was very much the women's own way of managing their lives and even a forum of exercising cultural power in society at large.

From this basic insight the leap to women's studies was not long, making Aili Nenola one of the Finnish pioneers in the humanities. But – what is important here – feministic theory came along later, and the crucial insight was induced by a profound familiarity with the lament corpus and careful reading of the texts – an experience which we can all now share: 674 texts, dirges, wedding laments, laments for the conscript and occasional laments, all accompanied by a commentary on the individual texts as well as an introduction to the area, to the culture and to earlier collecting and research. It sounds basic and simple but contains a wealth of insight and information. Another expert – Jarkko Niemi – has contributed a short article on the musical structures of the laments.

Editing and publishing folklore material is not always considered a major scholarly achievement. In this case I feel tempted to say that for the kind of deep understanding of the lament genre which Aili Nenola has achieved it was probably very important to start from scratch, from translating. You cannot translate something you do not understand in the first place, and to get a firm grip of a fringe language it was necessary to mobilise all available philological competence in Baltic-Finnish dialects, and after that to figure out how to say it in English – I was there and saw it happen. The truth is that even a Finn understands laments better in English, which does not diminish the importance of the Ingrian originals: in them we have the aesthetic whole, the rhythm, the alliteration, although the intensive physical experience and the voice – "piercing, deeply moving and jarring to the ears" – is lacking.

In the seventies I thought that the essential change in Finnish folkloristics had already taken place when the philological and literary frame of reference was replaced by a behavioural one, so that, for example, laments were brought out of the realm of poetry into that of ritual. After thirty years I have to admit that I was wrong: a real change both in theory and in scholarly practice – including ways of writing – is a much slower and more complicated process, a road full of extra turns and surprises. Just one insight is not enough.

Ingrian Laments and a few other books of the new millennium seem to suggest that the real advancement of folkloristics still demands above all the ability to read and listen carefully, philologically, ethnographically, between the lines, mobilising even one's own life experience, male or female, in the interpretation. There are now many more possible theories and ways of reading than in the past – offered by the whole range of human and social sciences – if we choose to see folklore not as *tradition*, with its own "laws" (Fi. *perinteen lait*) but as human thought and expression in changing circumstances. And maybe it is not a coincidence that folkloristics as a discipline was developed in Europe, in countries like Finland, as research of the students' own culture by men and women who both studied the language and were deeply attached to it; interpreting texts in your own language is likely to lead to a deeper – or at least different – understanding from working on foreign material.

The ethnographic Ingria – a Finnic area at the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland, which was split by the founding of St Petersburg in 1703 – has been, along with Karelia, a mythical country, the Trobriand Islands of Finnish folklore research. Folklorists of many generations have built important parts of their careers and created cultural monuments – starting from the final edition of the *Kalevala* (1849) – by interviewing and interpreting talented Ingrian singers, lamenters and storytellers. In the interpretation of historians Ingria is a far bleaker place, full of serfdom, war, famine, lack of control, always in the way of the pursuits of others, Swedes, Russians and Germans. After the turmoils of the last century most Ingrians live away from their homes in old *Ingermanland*. Many have lost their language. The bilingual *Inkerin itkuvirret – Ingrian Laments* is – in addition to being a major scholarly work – in a global context an impressive cultural showcase to be proud of, a rich and eloquent proof of managing in times of loss and sorrow in a world gone by.

Outi Lehtipuro
Joensuu, Finland

A new publication from the Parry Collection of Oral Literature

The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey as performed by Halil Bajgorić. Edited and translated by John Miles Foley. (FF Communications 283.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2004. 286 pp.

Ever since the American Homerist Milman Parry set out to collect oral epics among the South Slavs, in particular among the Moslem population of Bosnia and Hercegovina, in the 1930s, their epic songs have been considered models for comparative analysis. Albert Lord, who had accompanied Parry as his student on his field-trips, made the epic tradition of the South Slavs known to a wider readership through his by now classic study of the "singer of tales" (Lord 1960). Lord underlined the potential of this epic tradition for comparative studies, not only for the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but also for a range of medieval traditional epics. While the "oral-formulaic theory", as Parry's and Lord's comparative analysis has been popularly termed, has been discussed intensively by both Classicists and medievalists, the poetry that gave rise to this theory has fared less well. Despite the availability of various translation volumes in the series "Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs", of which the first volume appeared in 1954, the literature on Ancient Greek or medieval traditional epics confines its references to South Slavic oral epic poetry generally to the examples quoted in Lord's study. A notable exception is John Miles Foley, who has written extensively not only on Homeric and Old English epic poetry, but also, within a comparative framework, on the epics of the South Slavs. The singer Halil Bajgorić and his repertory figure prominently in Foley's *Traditional Oral Epic* (1990) and *Immanent Art* (1991), in the latter case with the heroic song here edited and translated.

Milman Parry stayed in Stolac for four short periods of only a few days each in the years 1933, 1934, and 1935. During these stays he recorded a number of epic songs from Halil Bajgorić (Lord 1954: 25; Kay 1995: 231), of which one (*Marko Kraljević and Nina of Koštun*) was later, in 1950, recorded again by Albert Lord. Lord discusses the differences in his *Singer of Tales* (1960: 60ff.), and stresses the importance of his findings for comparative studies: "The importance of these observations for the comparatist lies in their possible application to divergent manuscripts of the same song which we may be fortunate enough to have from medieval or ancient times. The answer to the question of how the divergences arose may possibly be found in some cases in the fact that one is dealing with two oral texts rather than with a text modified by a scribe or by a second poet working from an already written text." (Lord 1960: 63.) Another of Bajgorić's epic songs is the poem here edited and translated, recorded by Parry in 1935 from the singer, who at the time was thirty-nine years old. The recording is preserved on aluminum records in the Parry Collection of Oral Literature at Harvard University (No. 6699), together with a transcription by Nikola Vujnović, Parry's native assistant.

The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey conforms to a story-pattern widely diffused in South Slavic heroic song: the hero, who takes part in the escort to bring the bride to her new home, has to fight against a powerful enemy and to defend and rescue the bride. The hero is Djerdelez Alija, a well-known Moslem warrior, who is joined in his exploits by Bećirbey, the bridegroom, and his companions; the enemy is Baturić ban, whose tricks, cannons and powerful army are in the end of no avail. The heroic song consists of a number of "themes", as discussed in Lord's *Singer of Tales* (chapter 4), such as the arming of the hero or the gathering of an assembly. Despite its comparative shortness – 1030 verse lines, whose performance lasted for one and a quarter hour –, the poem exhibits in general content, thematic and motific patterning, as well as diction and style many of the characteristics of the tradition recorded by Parry and is therefore a good text to study. Although in many ways (not only length) inferior to the justly famous *Wedding of Smailagić Meho* by Avdo Medjedović, which runs to over 12,000 verse lines, Halil Bajgorić's epic poem deserves to be better known to folklorists and epic scholars, and its manageable size will doubtless contribute to this.

Foley has to be thanked for publishing and translating this epic. He has decided to give a literal rather than a literary translation of the text, a decision for which most if not all of his readers will be grateful. Scholars interested in the original language, in problems of metrics or more generally of textualization, will welcome the inclusion of "non-standard" additional syllables/sounds ("performatives") in the text edition. Both text and translation are printed in parallel columns, which allows for easy comparison between the two, even for the non-specialist in Serbian and Croatian. While text and translation obviously form the core of the book, they comprise only a small portion of it. There are a number of helpful preliminary chapters: a general introduction, a chapter on the Halil Bajgorić ("Portrait of the Singer"), and a detailed summary of the story. Foley enlivens his presentation of the singer's personality and art by the inclusion of some of the interviews Nikola Vujnović conducted with the singer when the poem was first recorded. In the "Synopsis of the Story" Foley introduces the reader, in particular the reader as yet unfamiliar with South Slavic heroic poetry, to the story of the epic, its basic pattern and motifs.

Where Foley, at first sight at least, departs from the usual edition and translation is in the three commentary chapters, "Performance-based Commentary", "Nikola Vujnović's Resinging" and "Apparatus Fabulosus". His performance-based commentary is basically a philological account of the text of the poem, its metre and what seem to be on first sight its metrical irregularities. Foley explains his transcription and, where apposite, why he differs from the transcription of the text made earlier by Vujnović. His commentary is "performance-based" insofar as the sounds as heard are taken into consideration; but actually it differs little from the philological commentary of a manuscript text, where the readings of the manuscript text would be commented upon, explained, and defended against the readings proposed by different transcribers or editors. Vujnović's transcription is the subject again of the following chapter, now in a systematic way and with a list of differing readings. Foley is certainly correct in seeing Vujnović's transcription as a resinging, since the transcriber did not strictly write down what he heard but of what he, as an experienced field-worker and singer, thought he heard or perhaps even wanted to hear. Still, the term "resinging" is, though correct in the sense Foley understands it, perhaps slightly misleading. A proper resinging would, of course, be another version of the epic, either by the same singer or another singer. What Foley means by "apparatus fabulosus" is equivalent to the second critical apparatus in an edition of a Classical or medieval text, i.e. a listing of intertextual references, allusions, parallels, and sources for particular words, expressions or ideas. In this chapter, Foley places the *Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey* into the wider context of South Slavic epic poetry based on a similar story pattern, the winning and "home-bringing" of a bride. It is a most informative chapter, offering, in the form of a running commentry, a detailed and stimulating interpretation and appreciation of the edited text.

Foley has included a discussion of Halil Bajgorić and the epic here edited in his 2002 book *How to Read an Oral Poem*. He has also made text and translation, together with the audio-recording, available on his website (www.oraltradition.org). This is a departure from established editorial costum, making full use of the possibilities of the Internet. It also underlines the fact that we are dealing with a performed epic, a poem sung and recorded live. Readers will appreciate this opportunity of easy access to the sound of the epic. A forerunner is the re-edition of Lord's seminal book in 2000, which is issued with a CD that contains all the extracts discussed in the book as audio-files as well as a short video of Avdo Medjedović in performance.

The book is rounded off by two chapters, one on the music by H. Wakefield Foster, and one on the "performatives" and their relationship to metre by R. Scott Garner. It is certainly a gain to have a chapter on music. Although concerned with a special aspect of the epic, it is written for the general reader; the transcriptions offered are helpful, as are the comments on the relationship between text and music. The discussion could, however, have profited by a less restricted consideration of the literature on the subject (see Stevens 1986: 199ff., and the essays in Reichl 2000).

When Lauri Honko published his monumental *Textualising the Siri Epic* in 1998 he started a new direction for FF Communications. Although epic poetry as represented by the Finnish *runos* and the *Kalevala* had from early on been within the scope of the series, for good historical reasons the emphasis of the many distinguished volumes of the series has always been on folktales. Scholars in the fields of folklore, comparative literature, but also Classics and medieval philology, will be grateful for the inclusion of oral epics in the series. Foley's book is a welcome addition to the epic volumes of the series; Foley's meticulous scholarship and insightful comments have shaped a book that significantly enriches our knowledge of the South Slavic epic tradition.

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University of Bonn

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FF Communications in print

Hans-Jörg Uther,
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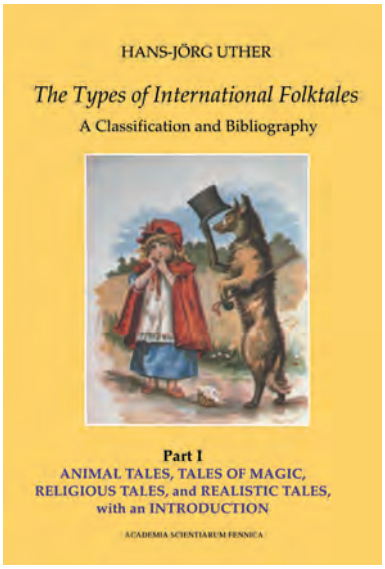

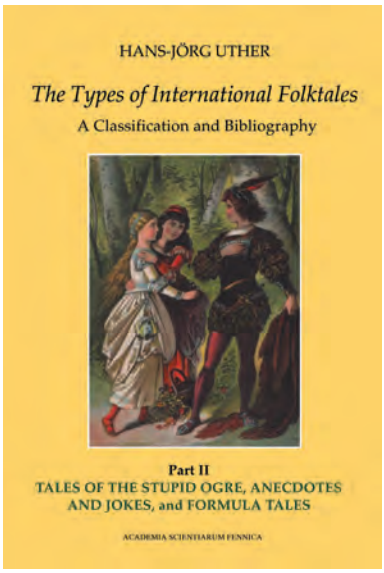

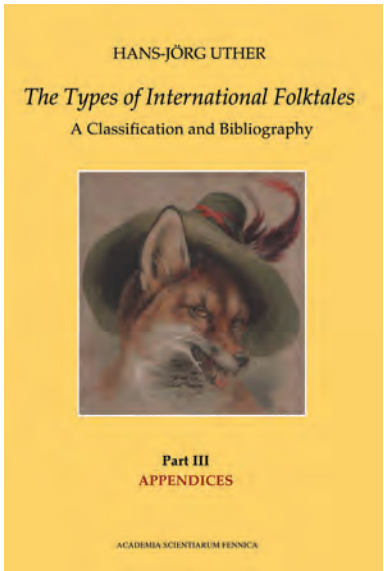

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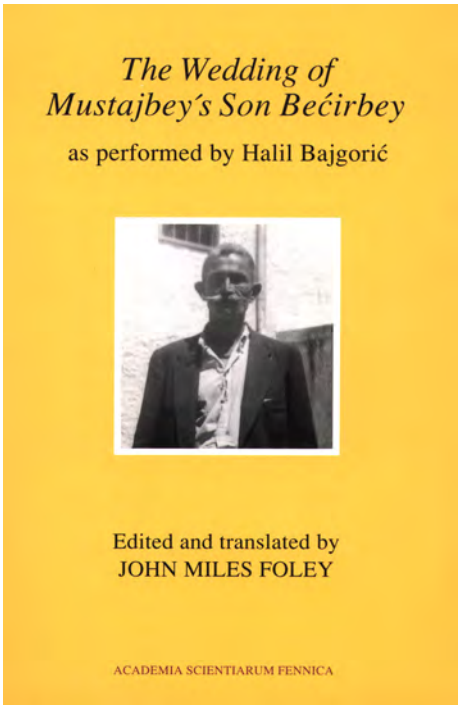

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FFC 283. **The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey as performed by Halil Bajgorić.**
Edited and translated by John Miles Foley.
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Hard, € 30 *Soft, € 27*

On June 13, 1935, Halil Bajgorić, a 37-year-old farm laborer and epic bard (*guslar*), performed a 1030-line version of a South Slavic oral epic poem to which its collectors, Milman Parry and Albert Lord, assigned the title *The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey*. This experimental edition of Bajgorić's traditional tale includes an original-language transcription, an English translation, and a performance-based commentary; it also features a portrait of the singer, a glossary of idiomatic phrases and narrative units, a study of Nikola Vujnović's role as on-site interviewer and latter-day transcriber (and *guslar* himself), and chapters on the role of music and performatives. The volume is supplemented by a web companion at www. oraltradition.org/performances/zbm/, where readers can listen to the entire song in streaming audio.

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