

FF

NETWORK

FOR THE FOLKLORE FELLOWS

No. 26

May 2004

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Publisher:
The Folklore Fellows
by courtesy of
**the Finnish Academy of
Science and Letters**

www.folklorefellows.fi

ISSN 0789-0249



The performer of oral funeral poetry Mama Sulumena Nyamanga (91), Emmuli Enmaloba village, Vihaga District, Kenya. Photo by Lauri Harvilahti, 2000.

Folkloristics moves into the digital age

by *Anna-Leena Siikala*, Academy Professor
Folklore Fellows Network, Chair

Many folklore archives have already begun making use of automatic data-processing in creating indexes. In the 1990s there was a move towards plans of a more ambitious nature than hitherto: the recording of materials in digital form. The extensive folk-poetry materials of the archive of the Finnish Literature Society is now in the process of being made available to internet users – material which previously could only be approached via the 34-part series *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (Ancient Poems of the Finnish People). The series contains a large part of the Kalevala-metre poetry gathered together in the Folklore Archives from Finland, Karelia and Ingria: altogether over 100,000 texts. The collection contains epic, charms, lyrical poems, ritual poetry and children's songs.

The digitisation of the poems has been carried out by a working group at the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu, Estonia, under the direction of Prof. Arvo Krikmann. The preparation of the texts in electronic format has taken place in the Folklore Archives. At present the song recordings are being notated and transcribed. Part of the corpus has already been made available for use by researchers on the internet. There is still work to be done on refining the indexing capabilities into something adequate for researchers to use. The newly appointed director of the Folklore Archives, Prof. Lauri Harvilahti, who is a specialist in epic folk poetry and who familiarised himself with problems of digitisation already in the 1980s, has promised to put the development of the corpus on a more active footing.

The Kalevala Institute has also invested in the digitisation of research materials. Elias Lönnrot worked on the *Kalevala* in five stages from 1833 to 1862. The total number of verses is over 5,000. This material has been digitised and organised in a way designed to facilitate searching. The database allows the user to produce listings of words and verses. All

the research results are given with links to the original text, divided into chapters.

What does the digitisation of the extensive folklore materials signify from the researcher's point of view? I have personally discovered surprising phenomena arising out of the poetic material, such as could not be expected from merely reading the texts. Someone investigating material such as *Kalevala*-like epic texts cannot however rely merely on word-searches or other similar procedures. There is a need to become familiar with the materials as entire entities, be it a question of the poetry of an individual singer, of a small community or of a broader area. Digitisation is useful especially for comparative research, which after a gap of decades has returned to the fold of folklore (and of many other academic fields).

In addition to texts, recordings also lie hidden in the archives. These can be published with the use of the new technology. A significant step along this path is the appearance this year in the FFC series of a work of John Miles Foley. An "e-companion" accompanies the book on South Slavic singers' epic songs with commentary, so that it is possible to listen to Halil Bajgorić's song of over a thousand lines as a sound file. Since nowadays many fieldworkers use video and other modern means of recording in their work, performance-research of the future may bring audiovisual material within the reach of the reader as web-publications.

The digitisation of archive materials brings with it many ethical and economic questions, such as have been deliberated upon within the circles of UNESCO. It would be worth discussing these either in a special seminar or in connection with a large congress, for example at the ISFNR congress in Tartu in July 2005. Initiatives in this field are important: otherwise the technology will take the reins and lead us in a direction we cannot control.

Textualising an oral epic – a mission impossible?

by Lauri Harvilahti, Professor
Dept. of Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki

The title of the present article refers to the first sentence of Lauri Honko's book *Textualization of oral epics*: "The task of textualizing oral epics in writing is a mission impossible" (Honko 2000: vii). In December 1990 Lauri Honko recorded with his Finnish-Indian team on video and audiotape an epic that was subsequently called the Siri epic of the Tulu people of southern Karnataka. The epic was performed by the singer and possession priest Gopala Naika, and it consists of a total of 15,683 poetic verses. The erudite singer used to perform the epic in ritual occasions or in the work-song context. Gopala Naika performed the epic in 1990 for the first time in his life as a long epic, detached from the normal performance contexts (Honko 1998: 15, Foley 2002: 172). In 1998 this epic, only five lines shorter than the Iliad, was published in Tulu and English in two volumes (FFC 265 and 266). A third volume, entitled *Textualising the Siri Epic* (FFC 264), is an introduction to the methodology of the textualisation process of oral epics. Lauri Honko predicted a new paradigm in epic research with an emphasis on multimedia documentation on video, audio and still-camera. Additionally, Honko saw in multiple documentation a potential "to satisfy the interest in the verbal text of the epic, the details of its performance, and the integration of the epic singing into a wider ritual process". His prediction was as follows:

The performance paradigm will one day give way to another paradigm, probably emergent in present-day research. Judging by the weaknesses of the performance approach and by the general pattern of paradigm shift, it should be possible to cast a prediction. Just as "performance" relativized "text", the next paradigm may relativize "performance". (Honko 1998: 50–51.)

This far-sighted prediction has recently received new backing. In his latest work, *The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey as performed by Halil Bajgorić* (forthcoming in FFC), John Miles Foley examines one epic performance of 1,030 lines using an unprecedented number of analytic tools. The South Slavic singer of tales (*guslar*) Halil Bajgorić sang a version of the epic in 1935 to Milman Parry and Albert Lord in the village of Dabrica in Hercegovina. The performance was recorded on aluminium records with the aid of the native *guslar* and co-field-worker Nikola Vujnović. The volume includes the original text as an accurate transcription of the acoustic recording, and the translation of the text into English. The translation gives an understanding

of the recurrent phrases and scenes of the text, instead of trying to attain to a poetical quality.

After the translation the volume continues with a performance-based commentary, which provides the reader with information about poetical and ethnocultural peculiarities of the performance and, more especially, information about the singer's personal idiolect. Foley also describes the checking process of the transcription made in Cambridge by Nikola Vujnović. Foley notes that being himself a singer, Nikola had made eliminations, substitutions and additions, or "hearings", for what Halil had originally sung. Nikola's own idiolect influenced him while making the transcription. The volume is also provided with an analytical idiomatic lexicon of the local tradition, based on performances by several singers from the Stolac region. The book further includes an ethnomusicological analysis of the *guslar's* music by H. Wakefield Foster. The book can be used together with an "e-companion", available at <http://www.oraltradition.org>. The reader may listen to the sound-file and read the texts.

Whether or not we are willing to use the term "paradigm", Foley's work signals a shift towards a hypermedia era in epic studies.

Tool-kit for textualisation of epics

In Lauri Honko's Opus Magnum of 1998 the term "multiform" is used in order to solve the dilemmas of epic composition in Gopala Naika's versions of the Siri epic. The multiform is defined as "repeatable and artistic expressions of variable length, which are constitutive for narration and function as generic markers" (Honko & Honko 1998: 35, Honko 1998: 100). The result of the process of creating the epic texts depends on such guiding factors as situational context, mode of performance and performative style. Another term introduced in Honko's study is the concept of "mental text". I quote in the following the definition of this term by Lauri Honko:

To be able to understand the production of text in actual performance, it seems necessary to postulate a kind of "prenarrative", a pre-textual frame, i.e., an organized structure of relevant conscious and unconscious material present in the singer's mind. This pre-existent module seems to consist of 1) storylines, 2) textual elements, i.e. episodic patterns, images of epic situations, multiforms, etc., and 3) their generic rules of reproduction as well as 4) contextual frames



Performers of Mongolian Dzhangar epics Dzhüün and Yarimpel. Har Us, Xinjiang, China. Photo by Lauri Harvilahti, 1988.

such as remembrances of earlier performances, yet not as a haphazard collection of traditional knowledge but, in the case of distinct epics of the active repertoire, a prearranged set of elements internalized by the individual singer. We may call this variable template a “mental text” (Honko 1996: 4–5), an emergent entity, able to be cut to different sizes and adapted to various modes of performance yet preserving its textual identity. It is not as fixed as all its documented manifestations tend to be. Yet it is only through its fixed manifestations that we can try to construct components of a particular mental text. Therefore it must be stressed that mental texts do *not* refer to fixed wordings of expressions kept in the memory and reproduced in performance. We may speak of a text’s “fixity” only after its phase of emergence in performance is over and the text has attained its form, regardless of how temporary or stable that form may prove to be. (Honko 1998: 94.)

One prerequisite for the fluency of the traditional process of performance is the use of pre-existing groups of words, formulas, episodes and substitution possibilities, which rely on primary poetic features such as Honko mentions above – “pre-textual frame”, “pre-existing modules” or a “pre-arranged set of elements”.

According to Foley, traditional oral phraseology functions in oral texts as a *register*, i.e. as a storage of idiomatic means of communication. The register plays an important role for the singer in producing oral epics, but it is equally important for the audience, for the process of reception. Traditional registers may survive in the post-oral (semi-literary and literary) texts – in this case the reader, as an equivalent of the listener of the oral performances, has to be aware of these idiomatic devices in order to be able to decode the meanings of the narrative patterns (Foley 1995: 50, *passim*; Foley 2002: 109–124). The

basic challenge “is to ask not only what the poems mean, but also, and more fundamentally how they mean”. In this respect he has paid a lot of attention to the singer’s own cognitive units of utterance, as Foley calls them, the “words” (in Serbo-Croatian *reč*) of the idiomatic storytelling language, and network of inherent meanings (Foley 2003: 252).

The use of ethnocultural (idiomatic) strategies and registers explains the technique utilised in performing long epics. Skilled singers are able to form suppositions and expectations (hypotheses) concerning the songs’ subject matter on the basis of clues provided by the traditional network of meanings. They are also able to condense the songs’ subject matter, form (macro)proposi-

tions and situate this knowledge in relation to the traditional overall structures with which they are familiar. This is naturally only possible if the singer and listener share in common a sufficient amount of knowledge associated with the traditional genres to be performed. A similar process takes place in the reproduction of the poem. During the performance the singer activates traditional verbalisation processes, both generally encountered within that tradition and as microstructural elements, lines and line clusters typical of that particular singer (Honko 1998: 62–65; Foley 1995: 51–52; cf. Siikala 1990: 14–35). Verses activated in the working memory, verbalised ideas, reactivate in turn new metonymic integers, or macropropositions, which for their part are verbalised at the level of the metrical line. Wallace Chafe (1986: 143–45) introduces the hypothesis that the limited length of the intonation entity and the working memory’s restricted capacity are commensurate. The conclusion one can draw from this is that the speaker can retain in his/her memory only one idea or intonation entity activated from a dormant state at a time. These research results are useful from the standpoint of research on epics. The intonation entity that can be found in an analysis of narrative production corresponds to the poetic line. In any given line of metre there is a single idea (“word”), which either refers to an object or describes a situation/event. The length of the line and supporting melodic phrase does not exceed the limits of the working memory.

The more often the singer performs the same epic theme, the more fixed become not only the links between the superstructure, core subject matter and microlevel elements, but also the features characteristic of the singer’s idiolect. This explains why singers develop their own idiosyncratic styles of singing despite the idiomatic registers of oral poetry (Harvilahti 1992a: 147).

An examination of the process by which oral poems are created indicates that the process of performance is not founded on word for word memorisation but on reproduction, which results in vari-

ation among individual words, formulas, lines and line clusters (Miller 1987: 374; Harvilahti 1992b). One meets several accounts of singers who could repeat songs after a single hearing, and compose new songs on a given subject. At the request of the Russian Altaist B. J. Vladimircov, the Oirat (Mongolian) singer Parchen created an oral epic poem concerning a battle of 1913 in the vicinity of Kobdo, a battle in which the singer himself had taken part. Vladimircov writes: "After having thought for some time, and after drinking more than usual, he came to me ready to sing. He performed the song before a large audience and dictated it to me on the following day. A couple of months later he reported having completely forgotten the work." The poem, according to Vladimircov, was rather short, only 800 lines in length, but strikingly resembled in its poetic form certain normal episodes of Oirat heroic poetry (Vladimircov 1923: 41; Kondrat'ev 1970: 12). What about the "plot-structure", "idiomatic register", "chain of macropropositions" or "mental text" of this forgotten epic? The explanation is that the singer had used his knowledge of cognitive units of the tale-singing language in order to create and to perform the epic requested by Vladimircov. Since Parchen mastered this specific language (including his own idiolect), he was able to perform the song in front of an audience and even to dictate it to the researcher.

Many researchers use the term "structure of expectation" (Siikala 1990; van Dijk 1980; cf. with the term *horizons of expectation*: Foley 1995: 49; Harvilahti 2003: 95, 102), which refers to the fact that the mnemonic processes of assimilation, information storage and reproduction are founded on prototypical knowledge concerning what sorts of things, objects, narratives and epic songs typically exist in one's own culture. The processes of performing, understanding, assimilating and interpreting are culture-specific (Siikala 1987: 106–107; 2000: 216; Harvilahti 2003: 95). Assimilation is easier if the information to be assimilated corresponds closely to pre-existing structures, and more difficult, if the information is strange. Oral tradition is a culture-bound system of communication, a matrix of prototypical knowledge structures suited to the expression of different sorts of meanings (Siikala 1987: 106; 1990: 14–21; Harvilahti 1992: 88–89; 2000; cf. Honko 1998: 94–99). The basic elements of cognition, which underlie the performance processes of oral tradition, rely on both the collective knowledge of the community, that is, on congruent features of the semantic knowledge structure, and on interpretation and reproduction, which is limited by what the individual can produce with the aid of memory.

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African-American folktales: Where do they come from? Why does it matter?

by Christine Goldberg
Los Angeles

The question about the source of African-American folktales goes back to the beginning of the serious, scientific study of American folklore, and is thus something over a century old. Florence Baer gives a brief account, with bibliography, of the history of this question within American folklore scholarship from 1880 to about 1976, in her introduction to *Sources and Analogues of the Uncle Remus Tales* (1980: 7–12; see also Dundes in Bascom 1992: vii–xx; Zumwalt 1988: 130–35). Leaving aside any relatively new folktales that developed in the New World, Europe and Africa are the two chief possibilities, and Native American tradition is another possible factor. As Baer wrote (p. 7), “[O]pinion based on impression (usually with a dozen or so stories examined) has marked most of the pronouncements about the probable source of the tales from that day to this.”

Folklorists will recognize in this situation elements of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century folktale scholarship, when the so-called Indianists wrote about tales that (according to the available evidence) came to Europe from Asia, and other scholars were happy to discover tales that, according to historic-geographic analysis, could be shown to have originated in Europe. Research like this is still going on, but nowadays there is a general agreement that truth exists on both sides. The heat in the debate about Indian *vs.* western origin of European folktales has dissipated; we accept that each tale has its own history, and also that, in many cases, we will never have enough evidence to be certain what that history is. One big difference between then and now is that classic historic-geographic studies sought to determine where the tale was originally composed, while the discussion of where African-American tales come from is interested only in the immediate source of the New World traditions.

At about the time that Baer’s account ends, a new contestant, William Bascom, entered the debate. Bascom was an anthropologist who had studied African cultures and the African-American diaspora. He was incensed at a comment made by Richard Dorson, “who says in his own collection of over one thousand Negro narratives, primarily from Michigan and Arkansas, there is only one motif that surely came from Africa. Not even one tale type or one folktale!” (Bascom 1992: xxiii). In fact, what Dorson wrote in his introduction to his book *American Negro Folktales* (1967: 16) was that he found only one motif (K1162, Dupe tricked into reporting speaking skull, is executed for lying) in his material that had been documented in Africa and not in Europe. Earlier in the same paragraph, he allowed that about ten per

cent of his material was confirmed in Kenneth W. Clark’s motif index of west African folktales.

Dorson’s collection of folktales is valuable to readers and scholars alike. Nevertheless, it was irresponsible of him to base an important conclusion on motif and tale type indexes that were inadequate for his purpose, which was to assess the history of the tales. Brief comparative notes cannot be expected to carry the authority that the answer to such a complex question requires. One of the reassuring things about scholarship is that when one person says something wrong, others often jump in with corrections. In this case, Bascom’s project was an admirable response. Knowing that indexes of African folktales were inadequate, he located his own material for the tale types in the studies reprinted in *African Folktales in the New World*. More such evidence lies in his unpublished work which is now in the Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley.

Readers of this newsletter are familiar with the format that Dorson used: full texts with brief comparative notes. These notes convey varying amounts of information. Some, supported by comparative studies, specify a European origin, while many others, particularly those that list only New World analogs, do not comment on origin at all. Many of the notes to legends refer to other examples of the folk beliefs that they embody and thus provide some information about the legend’s cultural context.

Bascom developed his own method of presentation, which turned out to be a rudimentary form of the historic-geographic method. For each tale type, he gave detailed summaries of all the versions he found, arranged geographically. His point is that all versions are so similar that they must be assumed to belong to a common tradition, but careful readers will notice similarities and differences for themselves. In particular, variants from the different regions (Africa, the West Indies, South America, Central America, and North America) often have characteristics peculiar to their region. This method of presentation works well for simple tales, but complex tales (of which he analyzed only one) would be better served with more attention paid to their details (Goldberg 1998).

The projects of Dorson and Bascom involved large numbers of tale types. Intensive monographs are another method through which folktale origins can be determined. The most-thoroughly-studied tale in African-American tradition is that of the Tar Baby (AT 175, often followed immediately by AT 1310A, Briar-patch Punishment for Rabbit). The tar

baby is a sticky doll set up to trap an unsuspecting character. In a series of six articles, the Indianist W. Norman Brown and the Spanish-American folklorist Aurelio M. Espinosa (1930, 1943) debated its diffusion. Brown (and also Baer 1980: 169) thought American versions generally came from Africa, but Espinosa (who had collected a version in Spain in 1920) thought most of them were Hispanic (although European tradition is sparse, an episode in a Lithuanian tale predates the Uncle Remus text). An alternative possibility is that the Spanish tradition is very recent, and came either from Africa or from Joel Chandler Harris's popular Uncle Remus version. Espinosa quoted Harris's daughter, who wrote,

Father received letters about this story from every quarter of the civilized world. Missionaries have translated it into Bengali and African dialects; learned professors in France, England, Austria, and Germany have written, suggesting clues as to its source; it has been used to illustrate points in Parliamentary debates, and has been quoted from pulpits and in the halls of Congress. (Espinosa 1930: 129.)

Harris found this particular tale useful in his fieldwork as an example to induce informants to tell him more stories (Baer 1980: 17). In any case, regardless of the tale's paths of diffusion, Espinosa's analysis is valuable for its attention to detail motifs (see also Baer 1980: 29–33, 99–101; Dorson 1967: 75–76).

Two monographs by John Minton in the FF Communications series address the background of African-American folktales, but neither of them argues for an African origin. The more straightforward of study is *"The Coon in the Box"*, for which Minton was joined by a co-author, David Evans (Minton and Evans 2001). They show that *The Coon in the Box* is an African-American form of AT 1641, Dr. Know-All. Minton and Evans trace the American tale to the British Isles, but also comment extensively on its unique American characteristics and how these relate to the culture of ex-slaves and their descendants. Minton's study of *Big 'Fraid and Little 'Fraid* (1993), AT 1676A, is complicated by this tale's dubious relationship to AT 1676: are these two separate types, or is one a subtype of the other? AT 1676 is so geographically scattered and variable in form that it is not clear whether or not all its own variants are genetically related. Minton shows that AT 1676A is an American type. He traces the monkey to African narrative tradition, attributes some of the other traits to Europe, and argues that the target of the tale's humor is "night riders", white people who set out to frighten slaves or ex-slaves. Both of these folktale studies reveal an interest in the mechanics and artistry of folktale construction, and in the relationship of the tales' key motifs to the culture in which the tale is maintained.

Baer's purpose in her study of the Uncle Remus corpus was to give it a modern "folkloristic view", (1980: 25–27), which included determining the source of the tales. These are 184 stories written down by

Joel Chandler Harris beginning in 1880 (and even after Harris's death in 1908, new tales taken from his notes continued to be published). Baer traced 122 tales to Africa, 28 to Europe, and 17 to the New World. Her discussions show what other scholars have also maintained (e.g. Dundes 1976), that merely finding references listed under motif or tale type numbers is insufficient; instead, it is important to look at the texts to see firsthand how they are related to each other. Baer's results are radically different from Dorson's, partly because she tried harder to find African analogs and partly because the Uncle Remus corpus is significantly different from Dorson's collection. Harris purposely chose tales that appeared to be characteristically African-American, and 89 per cent of them are animal tales. Dorson seems to have enjoyed tales that were especially well-delivered, and only about 14 per cent of those in his book are animal tales.

Bascom and Dorson used different criteria, so their results are not directly comparable. Dorson collected the tales he was referring to himself, and his collection may well have been affected by his narrators' holding back certain stories. Bascom searched through a great number of previously published texts and purposely chose tales with clear African antecedents. Of the eighteen tale types for which Bascom published his material (omitting the Yoruba myth), six include texts that Dorson had collected (Bascom 1992: 28, 30, 92, 121, 180, 216).

American society at large – liberal, conservative, black, white, educated, prejudiced, and all the rest – is an invisible contestant in this debate. Individual contenders argue against what they believe to be a generally accepted but wrongheaded opinion. Melville J. Herskovits's book *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1958, orig. pub. 1941) relates, almost like a legend-telling session, many of the beliefs and arguments on all sides. This discussion has progressed since then and continues even now (Holloway 1990; Turner 1996). Herskovits argued strongly for the recognition of African elements in black American culture, and against the then-popular idea that the circumstances of slavery had obliterated the possibility of such cultural transmission. He also explained why the answer matters to so many people.

It is apparent that research into the problem of African survivals in the United States, when set in its proper context, carries the student into areas of importance for an understanding of the nature and processes of human civilization (Herskovits 1958: 18).

Most obviously, African origin was considered by many to be inferior to European origin, a position which Herskovits demonstrated with a variety of quotations. Then he summed up as follows:

It is not strange that the extremes to which the statements quoted above go should have brought the conviction that, since the African past constituted a serious handicap, the best thing to do

was to disregard it wherever possible; from which the rationalization that nothing of this handicap remains was but a short step (Herskovits 1958: 27).

Herskovits advocated the opposite approach:

To give the Negro an appreciation of his past is to endow him with the confidence in his own position in this country and in the world which he must have, and which he can best attain when he has available a foundation of scientific fact concerning the ancestral cultures of Africa and the survivals of Africanisms in the New World (Herskovits 1958: 32).

And this attitude has in fact been generally accepted. Herskovits was trained at Columbia University by Franz Boas, whose students dominated the American Folklore Society for decades. Bascom was, as far as American folklore is concerned, Herskovits's star pupil (Zumwalt 1988: 68–98, esp. 84–86). Dorson visited them both at Northwestern University in 1952 (the same year he collected some of his Negro folktales), but commented afterwards (1975) that he was too old to master a new academic discipline.

Dorson's rhetoric was powerful and sometimes unrestrained. In addition to his inconsistent and exaggerated statements about how little African ancestry there was in the folktales he collected, he also clouded his argument with extraneous and distracting themes, for example the notion that anthropologists did not even know what folklore was (Dorson 1975, cf. Bascom 1973). Nevertheless he was often eloquent, and a master of the apt anecdote:

On one occasion I played a tape recording of Suggs [his best informant] to Melville Herskovits, who exclaimed, – "Those are some remarkable African tales!" Shortly after, I played the same tape to Stith Thompson, who exclaimed, "Those are some remarkable European tales!" But the question of origins is susceptible of proof... (Dorson 1967: 16.)

At present, for many or even most of the tales he collected, the jury is still out. We must hope that the proof will be discovered dispassionately at some future time by other investigators. Dorson and Bascom both died on the same day in September, 1981.

The subject of African and American folktales may seem peripheral to the study of European folktales, but it is by no means irrelevant. One of the important discoveries has been that perhaps not a great number, but certainly some, of the tale types that are popular in Europe have a significant African component. For some of these, there is a strong possibility that the tale originated in Africa. For example, Dundes (1965, 1976) nominated the following types: 4, Carrying the Sham-Sick Trickster and its subtype; 72, Rabbit Rides Fox A-Courting; 5, Biting the Foot; 37, Fox as Nursemaid for Bear; 73, Blinding the Guard; 122D, Let Me Catch You Better

Game; 126, The Sheep Chases the Wolf; 175, The Tarbaby and the Rabbit; 291, Deceptive Tug-of-war; 1074, Race Won by Deception: Relative Helpers; 1530, Holding Up the Rock. All of these are corroborated by Baer, who in addition identified distinctive African forms of dozens of other tales that have been assigned to Aarne-Thompson numbers (Baer 1980: esp. 165–76). Many other tale types have significant numbers of African variants that are not easily dismissed as recent retellings of European printed tales (e.g. see Schmidt 1999). As folklorists develop better means of access to African folktales, the number of known correspondences between African and European tales will surely increase. Likewise, the number of New World tales that, as far as we can see, could have come either from Europe or from Africa – or both – will very probably also increase.

The stated goals of the historic-geographic method were to establish the original form and the original home (time and place) of each folktale. In retrospect, the home aspect seems to have been more important than the form aspect. Surely this is in part because it is easier to remember a time and a place than to remember every supposedly-original motif in a tale. In any case, the more recent debate about the origins of folktales told by Americans of African ancestry has deliberately been framed in terms of place rather than of form. Personally, it is much easier for me to understand why it matters whether "Brer Rabbit and the Tar-Baby" came to America from Africa or from Spain, than it is to sympathize with why it matters whether some European tale (Faithful John [AT 516, KHM 22], for example) was composed in Europe or in India. So do cultural and personal experience affect one's perception of scholarly subjects. But whether any individual feels a personal interest in where a particular tale comes from, or has a more scientific, dispassionate attitude, a detailed comparative study is still the best way to answer that question.

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Reviews

Towards the fourth stage of mentality research

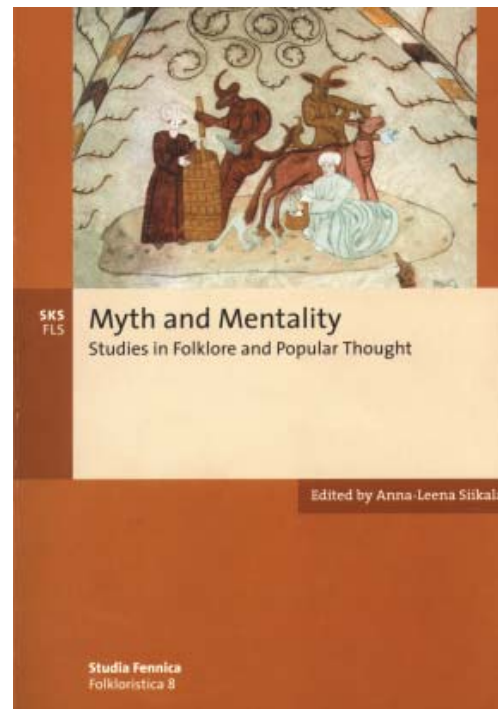
Myth and Mentality: Studies in Folklore and Popular Thought. Edited by Anna-Leena Siikala. (Studia Fennica Folkloristica 8.) Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2002. 317 pp.

Delivery: kirjamynti@finlit.fi

In his review on the XIIth Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research that was organised in Göttingen in 1998, Seppo Knuuttila pointed out to the multitude and dominance of mentality-related papers presented at the conference. He outlined the customarily described three generations of the French influenced school of mentality history (the cultural-historical, demographic-geographical and anthropological stages) and assumed that the next shift has begun "to the fourth, folkloristic stage of mentality research".* We can admit that the 8th volume in the series Studia Fennica Folkloristica has followed and cemented convincingly this development. The reader has in front of him or her collection of 16 articles that concern in different ways the keywords "mentality" and "popular thought". Without doubt this book has its important contribution to the discussion on these subjects within folkloristics.

The aim of the series SFF has been above all to introduce the novel achievements of Finnish folkloristics to the wider international community of researchers. This is probably the reason why 3/4 of the articles come from the Finnish scholars, both of

* Knuuttila, Seppo 1998: From the shadow of mentalities to the fourth stage. *FF Network* 16: 10–11.



younger and elderly generations, whose works have been put into dialogue with the voices of well-established researchers from Hungary and Estonia. The articles are divided into four subsections that are titled "Myth, Belief and World View", "Witches and Devils", "Values and Collective Emotions" and "Expressions of Love and Sexuality". As we can see, quite different areas and multitude of aspects of popular thought are represented. The folklore genres under consideration include myths, mythological and historical legends, epics and folk songs of both newer and older layer, incantations and folk beliefs,

proverbs and riddles as well as cosmographical maps on stars. As a matter of fact, the methodological and theoretical premises of the authors are quite heterogeneous too.

The novelty of Finns in the mentality research is stressed by the editor of the book who states that “Finnish folkloristics has in fact developed a more cogent methodology for the study of mentalities by exploiting the theory borrowed from cognitive research regarding the storage and processing of observations and data. Mentalities can thus be conceived of as cognitive, emotional and action-determining models for viewing the world” (p. 8). The most enjoyable articles were thus obviously those where the authors’ methodological framework was clearly presented and new concepts, theoretical questions as well as visions for further research addressed loudly.

It is evident that the history of mentalities has its fruitful impact on folklore research and even certain parallel developments have emerged in these disciplines. In the first article of the book Anna-Leena Siikala examines the various definitions of the term “mentality” and outlines the basic characteristics attached to this concept (e.g., supra-individual nature, slow rate of change). She finds the scope of mentality studies to approach that of mythology studies and in this light she asks for the basic mythic models of thought among “the early Finno-Ugric or Uralic peoples”. In separate subsections the common cosmological concepts, directions of death and soul-concepts, direction of life and bird mythology, beings that regulate human life, animal ceremonialism and astral mythology as well as shamanism are considered. Siikala attains attention also to the transformations of myth tradition in which cultural change and new cultural contacts offer new concepts to replace the old ones. Adoption of these new elements occurs but on the terms dictated by existing mental models and cognitive frameworks inherited from the past. In her vision for the further research Siikala mentions the need to explore the processes of recontextualisation of the mythic tradition in contemporary societies.

Lauri Harvilahti’s contribution concentrates on the study of the Altai heroic epic of Očy Bala, a mythical heroine, performed by the master singer Aleksej Kalkin. In more detail Harvilahti analyses a small chapter of the two performances recorded by the author in 1996. He discusses some of the statements of S. Nekljudov on Turkish-Mongolian epics and asserts that particularly heroic courtship and battles against mythical monsters as well as against antagonistic tribes are general Eurasian epic poetic traditional narrative models, not only folktales elements.

Astronomical and cosmographical maps of the 16th and 17th centuries comprise the source materials of the article by Vilmos Voigt who makes attempt to interpret the maps within the framework of semiotics. Voigt gives a good overview of the cosmographical maps on stars and constellations

and in more detail he describes and analyses the star map by Dutch mathematician and geographer Andreas Cellarius. He shows how in the maps of Cellarius we come across with three interpretations of the same star distributions: an ancient (pagan, Greco-Roman), a modern (Christian) and a secular (geographic). Voigt describes these different semantic interpretations to be translations of the same message in three different languages that partly conflict and coincide with each other. He outlines the importance of a Peircian astronomical semiotics and points out that also astronomical maps represent a “secondary modelling system”.

Mihály Hoppál who highlights in his article the linguistic and mental models of Hungarian folk beliefs follows the same line of Tartu–Moscow semiotic school. Hoppál combines the working tools of semiotics with the equipment of American cultural anthropology and focuses on the topic of how the belief system functions. Throughout his article Hoppál stresses the close interdependence between the belief system and the language system. For example, he shows how rarely used linguistic forms preserve beliefs, and the belief contents of certain words help to preserve linguistic formulas. The second pair explored more profoundly by the author includes relationships between belief and action. According to the source material presented by Hoppál, belief is invariably attached to some kind of action sequences; it functions as a program that orders and regulates individual behaviour.

The last article of this chapter is by Laura Stark who examines archaic concepts of dynamistic body represented in the 19th century Finnish-Karelian folk thought. The author demonstrates that many of them offer perspectives on corporeality, which differ radically from modern Western view of body. She distinguishes a number of prototypical schemata that concern dynamistic forces affecting the human body (*väki, luonto, vihat, nenä*) and explains how they are related to each other. In a quite novel manner, Stark suggests that the concepts of hardness, softness, anger and fear are “key concepts needed to access meaning in beliefs and practices linked to dynamistic forces and the human body” (p. 93). She draws attention to the close interconnection between the body concepts and illness concepts and outlines the methodologically appropriate blueprint for the investigations into mind, body, self and illness in traditional Finnish-Karelian thought to proceed.

Four of the articles in the book are focused on mental models manifested in folk demonology. Grand old lady of Hungarian folklore research, Éva Pócs studies the confessions containing traditional narratives made in Sopron County witchcraft trials from 16th to 18th century. She presents different combinations of textually recurring elements and taxonomy of witches based on these differences (defrauded, learned, supernatural and accused witch). Pócs discusses the process that emerges in confessions, often articulated as a result of torture, describing how during the witchcraft trials models of “po-

pular witchcraft” and that of “elite demonology” approached and influenced each other. As an example, the author analyses the motif of witches’ flight to the Sabbath: the archaic notion of the symbolic journey of the soul has been interpreted as a physical flight of the witch by the examiners and thus certain shifts towards concretisation and demythologisations are apparent.

Three other contributions of the chapter are dealing directly with the figure of Devil in Estonian, Finnish-Karelian and Finnish-Swedish folk traditions. Ülo Valk discusses the problem of Devil’s pre-Christian prototype in Estonian mythology. He presents several appellations of Devil, narrative motifs and beliefs occurring in folklore texts that obviously point to the demonic beings of pagan origin, which were later combined to form the Christian Devil. Pasi Klemettinen explores the various manifestations of the Devil within the context of Christian concept of demons, witches and traditional beliefs of unruly poltergeist. Finnish-Karelian Devil shares both anthropomorphic, zoomorphic and various supernatural traits but vital feature is that Evil never shows its true face: “it always assumes a disguise or a mystical veil of invisibility” (p. 145). Analysing the Finnish-Swedish material from one of the Ostrobothnian communities Ulrika Wolf-Knuts contrasts two discourses about the Devil: the theological discourse conveyed by the Bible, hymn books and additional religious literature, and that of folklore formed through the various genres of oral tradition. It is evident that people have been forced to combine these two streams of belief to form a whole and thus, as concluded by the author, they do not oppose to each other.

The next chapter of the book turns away from popular religion to values, attitudes and emotions. In her article that is based on recent in-depth study on Finnish alcohol culture (*Viinan voima*, 2001), Satu Apo debates the meanings and collective cultural emotions attached to the alcohol in agrarian folk thought and the concepts upon which the national alcohol policy was founded during the strict alcohol legislation in 1917–68. Apo uses an innovative methodological model for the research on cultural models, schemata and scripts as well as on emotional attitudes based on variety of folklore genres. Apo outlines the sacral aspect of the alcohol in the archaic layer of beliefs, the social value of intoxication and the function of the alcohol as an instrument of social communication. She also shows in which social and economical circumstances the strict alcohol control was established in Finland and what kind of ambivalent consequences (humiliation, antipathy towards restrictions) this experience has provided for the Finnish alcohol culture. Apo concludes that the alcohol appears in Finnish folk thought as a cultural product that is entangled in an “exceptionally dense web of mixed emotions and attitudes” (p. 196).

The topic of history and folk concepts of ethnicity are discussed in the article by Henni Ilomäki. She analyses the Finnish-Karelian war legends, which

have been mostly collected from the Finnish-Russian borderland area. Ilomäki notes that the ethnic identity of the borderland inhabitants was liable to change because of the political and historical circumstances. As a result of repeated wars between Sweden and Russia, the eastern border of Finland was drawn a number of times, which is reflected in the fact that Karelians could identify themselves both as Swedes and Russians. Also the ethnicity of an enemy, the Other, in Karelian war legend could vary: the odious motifs of war atrocities and negative qualities ascribed to the antagonist could apply to any given enemy group.

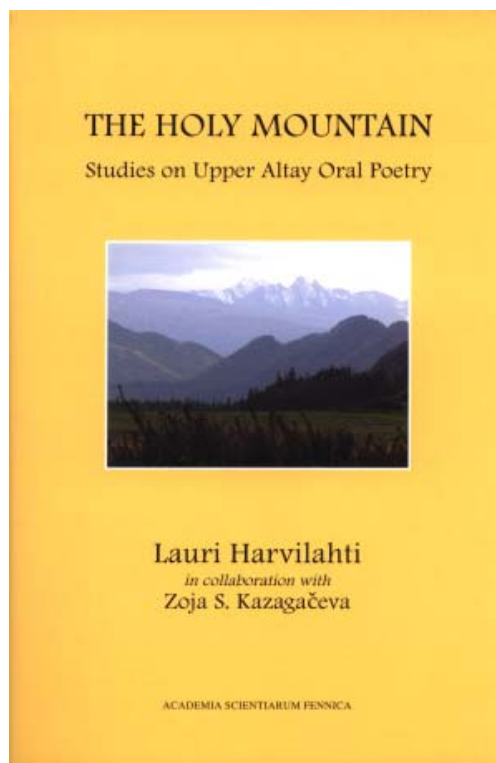
Pekka Hakamies explores the possibility to use the concept of mentality in the context of paremiological research. He poses a number of questions and reaches the conclusion that proverbs can be regarded to reflect mentality if the notions they convey are empirically validated in other folklore genres. If proverbs are used as a source material for the research on values and norms, the analysis of the content and meaning is necessary as the figurative nature of proverbs can hide their real meanings. Hakamies presents to the reader also his own experiment on the Finnish and Russian proverbs on the gendered organisation of the household, the economy and the society, and the relations between the sexes.

The final chapter of the book is dedicated to the expressions of love and sexuality. Anneli Asplund’s article deals with the changing attitudes to love and sexuality in Finnish folk songs. The archaic tradition of Kalevala-metre folk songs and newer end-rhymed folk songs represent totally different aesthetics and attitude towards love. Therefore, the author poses several questions concerning the extent and features of these changes in tradition comparing the epic poetry from western and eastern Finland as well as from Karelia. As a result, for example, a fundamental difference in the attitudes towards sexuality can be seen in the songs of older and newer layer. Kalevala-metre songs value sexual purity while during the age of rhyming songs the attitudes to sexuality become more relaxed.

From the methodological point of view, one of the most intriguing articles of the book has joint authorship by Seppo Knuutila and Senni Timonen. Authors make an in-depth study on the lyrical song in Kalevala-metre “If the One I Know Came Now” and its various interpretations throughout two centuries. The song portrays the passionate love and therefore it has been regarded as unique example of Baltic-Finnish lyric poetry in this metre. (The song is well known also for its translations into 467 languages.) The question that has fascinated various interpretators is evidently the authorship of the song: both earlier male researchers and more recent female researchers have considered the song as an expression of female ego longing for passionate love. Authors show that the folklore texts and emic explanations from the folklore archives of the Finnish

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New volumes of the FF Communications



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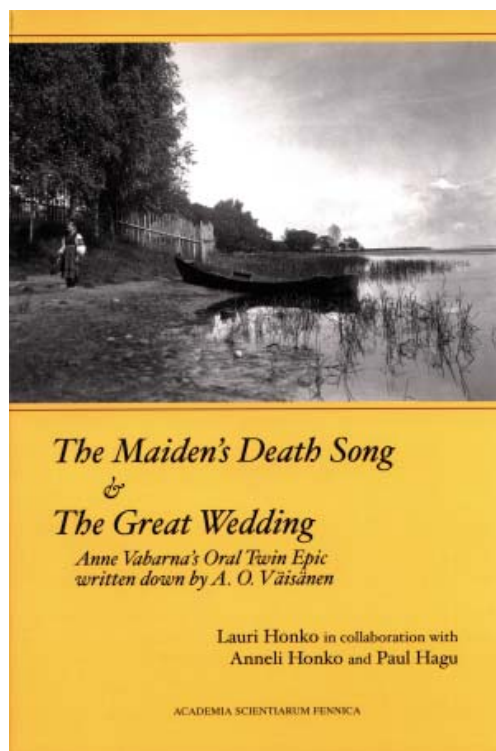
FFC 282. Lauri Harvilahti in collaboration with Zoja S. Kazagačeva, **The Holy Mountain. Studies on Upper Altay Oral Poetry.** Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2003. 166 pp. ISBN (hard) 951-41-0951-1 / (soft) 951-41-0952-X

Hard, € 17 / Soft, € 13

The Holy Mountain is based on cooperation between the Institute for Altaistics of the Altay Republic, the Institute of World Literature at the Russian Academy of Science, and the University of Helsinki, Department of Folklore Studies.

In the course of a joint project financed by the Academy of Finland the research team conducted a survey of the state of archaic genres of tradition (epic poetry, shamanism, Burhanism) in the Altay Republic, a member of the Russian Federation. During the expedition carried out in autumn 1996 and 1997 the Altay–Finnish–Russian research team worked with Aleksej Kalkin, the best-known performer of shamanistic epics in a peculiar overtone singing style, and Tabar Čačijakov, a performer of epics in recited prose.

The aim of this study is to achieve a synthesis in forming a new overall view of the stylistic-poetic and structural devices used to produce the archaic mythical and epic cultural tradition of the Upper Altay region. Attention is also being paid to the inherent ethnic nature of the Altaian ethnic groups, to cultural influences and to some extent their present cultural identity.



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FFC 281. Lauri Honko in collaboration with Anneli Honko and Paul Hagu,

The Maiden's Death Song & The Great Wedding. Anne Vabarna's Oral Twin Epic written down by A. O. Väisänen. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2003. 529 pp. ISBN (hard) 951-41-0903-1 / (soft) 951-41-0904-X

Hard, € 42 / Soft, € 38

For centuries, the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea have nourished poetic cultures developing oral epic traditions that mostly survived in lays of a few hundred lines but that eventually gave rise to much longer traditional epics. Epic traditions existed in several languages and dialects of the region, but it was Finnish, Karelian, Setu, Estonian and Latvian that took the step toward a truly long epic. Far from being identical as to their oral materials or history of composition, these epics reflect a quest for a literary manifestation of oral tradition epitomised in talented and ambitious individuals wishing to make an impact on the cultural identity of a nation or ethnic group.

The twin epic *The Maiden's Death Song & The Great Wedding* composed by the Setu "song mother" Anne Vabarna and written down by Armas Otto Väisänen, a Finn, is a manifestation of a long epic format rare in Baltic-Finnish folk poetry and of two alternative storylines. It is also a masterpiece that serves as a reminder of the poetry of a gifted minority culture that tends to be forgotten.

FFC 280. *Anna-Leena Siikala*,
Mythic Images and Shamanism. A Perspective on Kalevala Poetry.

Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2002. 423 pp.
ISBN (hard) 951-41-0901-5 / (soft) 951-41-0902-3

Hard, € 37 / Soft, € 32

The mythic, shamanistic nature of the Kalevala has been emphasised ever since the epic was first published. The epic poetry and incantations on which it is founded afford a vista of a captivating world of archaic thought patterns and mythic images.

This work by Anna-Leena Siikala analyses the shamanistic images and metaphors encountered in the oral poetry of the Baltic Finns and at the same time examines the action of the ecstatic *tietäjäs* and the seers who fell into a trance. It thus reveals the images and metaphors and their variations associated with the shaman's skills, the topography and inhabitants of the other world and the shaman's journey there. Siikala traces mythic images in the light of Old Norse poetry and sagas, the myths of Antiquity and the Middle East, medieval visions, Siberian and Sami shamanism, archaeology and linguistic developments.

Mythic Images and Shamanism delves to the very roots of Northern European thought. The numerous incantations quoted, so far unknown to the English-speaking world, illustrate the visual nature of the poetry on which the Kalevala is based and the close relationship between incantations and epic as manifestations of mythic thinking.

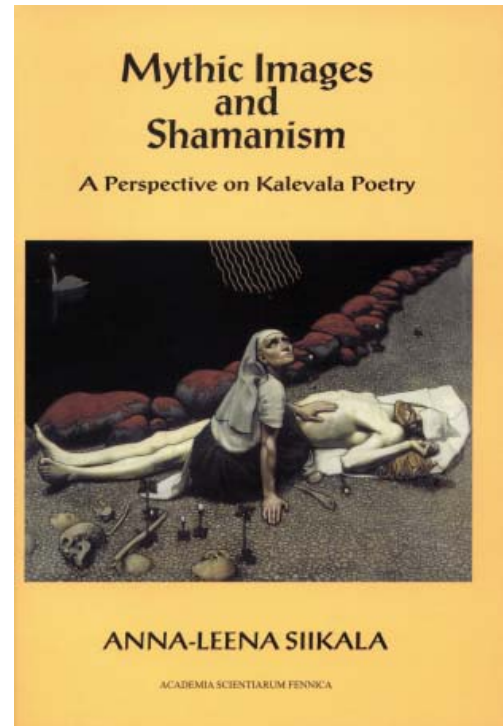
FFC 279. *Marilena Papachristophorou*,

Sommeils et veilles dans le conte merveilleux grec.

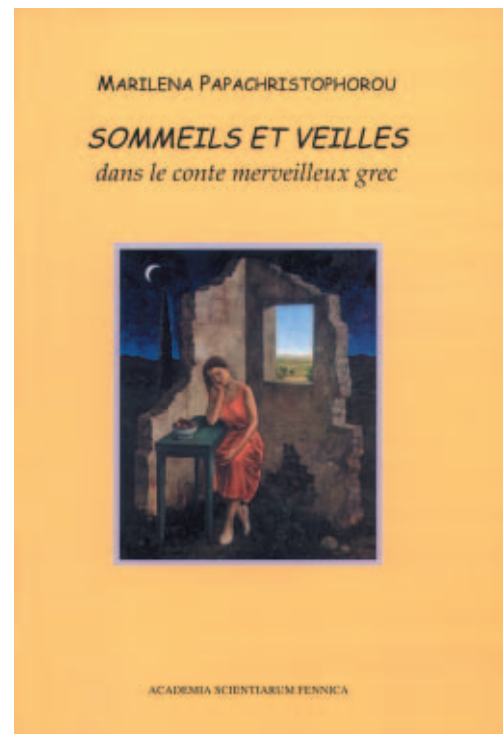
Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2002. 337 pp.
ISBN (hard) 951-41-0899-X / (soft) 951-41-0900-7

Hard, € 33 / Soft, € 29

Cette étude a proposé une lecture anthropologique de représentations du sommeil et de la veille dans le conte merveilleux grec. Le corpus étudié correspond à cinq cents variantes réparties entre cinq contes types plus un écotype complexe: AT 709 (Blanche Neige), AT 410 (La Belle au bois dormant), le sous types B et G du conte AT 425 (La recherche de l'époux disparu), AT 400 (L'homme à la recherche de son épouse disparue), AT 306 (Les souliers usés à la danse) et l'écotype *514C (Le Roi Sommeil). Une comparaison constante avec diverses formes de l'imaginaire populaire grec révèle que ces représentations suivent une symbolique commune et en accord avec les règles sociales de la formation des identités de sexe.



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Literature Society provide but “polyphony” of different understandings, many of which stress the corporeal nature of the emotion expressed in the poem. Knuuttila and Timonen propose several other alternative interpretations: the poem’s speaker is male; the song has been inspired by religious literature and iconography, conveying, thus, the idea of religious love and utopia, etc. The reliability of many earlier scholarly constructions are questioned in this way by the authors and they point out that, as a matter of fact, origins of the piece are no longer accessible for the researchers.

Kalevala-metre folk songs are discussed also in the article of Tarja Kupiainen that concentrates on the theme of incest in Archangel Karelian tradition. Kupiainen presents an overview of anthropological theories on incest and handles in more detail the topic of incest taboo between siblings. She localises the Karelian material into the wider theoretical context and shows that in these songs incest appears as a relationship between sister and brother or mother and son. In further analysis, the author concentrates on the song type “Ruined Sister” and the fate of victimised girl.

The final article of the chapter and the entire book is written by Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj who has chosen the topic of sexual riddles – one of the most outspoken expressions of folk eroticism. Kaivola-Bregenhøj studies the way how sexual riddles “work” and what kind of contexts and by whom they have been used in folk tradition. The author dedicates separate subchapters to the contemporary use of riddles as well as sexual picture puzzles and spoonerisms. As the time span of the presented riddles covers almost a hundred years, the questions of change and stability are posed in the conclusion. Although attitudes towards sexuality have changed during this period, sexual riddles still occupy a certain place in the culture of today.

Ergo-Hart Västriik
Estonian Folklore Archives,
Estonian Literary Museum

Sleep and wakefulness in Greek folktales

Marilena Papachristophorou, *Sommeils et veilles dans le conte merveilleux grec*. (FF Communications 279.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2002. 337 pp.

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Sommeils et veilles dans le conte merveilleux grec (Sleep and Wakefulness in the Greek Wonder Tale) is the revised version of a doctoral thesis supervised by Nicole Belmont and defended at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (Paris) in July 1997.

In the short introduction (pp. 19–32) Marilena Papachristophorou reviews the theories of sleep and dream in Western thought from Aristotle to the 20th century, taking in the works of Freud and Jung and the discoveries of neurophysiology. The second chapter (pp. 33–52) describes the book and gives an overview of the study of folktales.

The description of the book reviews: 1) Its purpose, which was to study the relationship of sleep, wakefulness and initiation (defined as the elaboration of social and sexual identities) in tales of traditional Greece. 2) Its core: the “long sleeps” as opposed to “wakefulnesses” (enforced, supernatural, idle or tiresome) in six tale types and an ecotype. The account omits dreams that correspond to prophetic revelations in tales and are not narratively associated with sleep. 3) Its corpus, mostly files from the catalogue of G. A. Mégas compiled from 1910 to 1976, supplemented by fieldwork conducted at Ilioskepasti (a declining village in the isolated mountains of Zaghori, one of the most depopulated areas of Greece with six or seven inhabitants per square kilometre, in the region of Epirus) where Papachristophorou stayed for eight weeks in September and November–December 1995 and August 1996. 4) Its methods: to define each tale type through pairs of oppositions, to locate the ethnographic context, to analyse the tale type following its narrative sequences and characteristic motifs and reveal its symbolic associations with the functions of sleep or wakefulness, and to establish analogies between tale and myth. 5) Its outline, first tales linked to women’s sleep (AT 709 and 410) and men’s (subtypes 425B and G), later tales linked to wakefulness, idle (AT 400 and 306) or laborious (Mégas *514C).

The overview of the study of folktales begins with 19th century Europe (Max Müller, the Grimms, Andrew Lang, Emmanuel Cosquin, Paul Sébillot), continues with the Greek collections (marked by the search for a Classical past through the study of folklore, though its main researcher, G. A. Mégas, applied the Finnish historical-geographical method) and ends with a description of the Aarne–Thompson tale types, their followers in France (Delarue, Tenèze) and Greece (Mégas and his successors Angélopoulou and Brouskou) and the catalogues thus published. Papachristophorou explores the links between

the wonder folktale and the “initiation scenario” and ends this important chapter with the theories of Eliade, Lüthi and Propp.

The third chapter (pp. 57–79) discusses AT 709, Snow White. The full version, quoted here, was collected by Papachristophorou during her fieldwork and is titled “All Beautiful and the forty ogres”. Seven other full versions are presented in the annex (pp. 269–83). Different aspects of this tale type are analysed: the heroine Chionati, her relationship with her evil stepmother who tries to destroy her, the tempting false promise of marriage, and the link with the mythological character of Electra.

The fourth chapter (pp. 80–97) discusses AT 410, Sleeping Beauty. The full version was also collected by Papachristophorou during her fieldwork and is titled “The dead princess”. Two other full versions are presented in the annex (pp. 283–86). The analysis covers the heroine’s fate, the taboos she faces, her sleep and attempts by the prince to tamper with it, and the character of the prince, who is very weak in the Greek versions, as in the Grimm tale.

A synthesis of these two chapters (pp. 98–99) discusses the link between the princesses’ lethargic sleep and initiation: both heroines awake profoundly altered.

The next two chapters present subtypes of AT 425, The Search for the Lost Husband. The fifth chapter (pp. 103–24) discusses subtype AT 425B, The Disenchanted Husband. A full version of this was collected in Thrace and published in 1941. Three other full versions are presented in the annex (pp. 286–92). The analysis discusses the elements that enter the hero’s fabrication, the difficulties encountered in waking him, his theft by a rival princess, the ambivalent gender identities and finally the links between this bizarre story and the vegetation myth of Attis.

The sixth chapter (pp. 125–43) discusses subtype AT 425G, False Bride Takes Heroine’s Place. A full version was collected in Asia (Bythynie) and published in 1889. Five other full versions are presented in the annex (pp. 293–97). The analysis discusses the heroine’s presentation, the delivery of the ominous message, the access to the deserted castle, the ritual forty-day wake that will enable her to make the dead prince her husband, her loss of the hero because the taboos of silence and wakefulness are transgressed, and her re-conquest through the renewed observance of these taboos.

Chapters 7 and 8 (pp. 151–73 and 174–94) discuss tale types AT 400, The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife and AT 306, The Danced Out Shoes. A full version of AT 400 was collected in the Peloponese, and of AT 306 in Epire, both by students of G. A. Mégas (the annex gives three and two full versions, pp. 298–303 and 303–07). The analysis of AT 400 stresses the wife’s supernatural character, the changing character of the searching husband, the importance of the fairy’s veil, and her link with the Moires that hold the threads of Fate. The aspects of AT 306 analysed are the heroine’s dancing nights, the personalities

of the two main characters, the heroine as a model of counter womanhood entirely dedicated to unbridled sexuality, the role of dance and shoes, and the taming of womanhood. These supernatural female characters who refuse sleep and remain awake for their pleasures are then discussed.

The tale discussed in chapter 9 (pp. 201–24) is an ecotype and one of four introduced by G. A. Mégas as specific Greek variants of AT 514, The Shift of Sex. It is The King Sleep (Le Roi Sommeil), the full version of which (published here) was collected in Mykonos. Five other versions (pp. 307–13) are given in the annex. The heroine, a destitute young orphan, lives by threading wool and each night fights sleep by singing a personalised song that promises “King Sleep” she will lie in his arms when she has finished her work. Neighbours denounce her as the King’s lover, and the Queen Mother requests the care of the baby, the fruit of this imaginary relationship. The heroine makes a mock baby with a linen beater. The sight of this strange object makes old woman (a weakened form of one of the three Moires) laugh and she gratefully transforms it into a real baby. She thus marries the prince. The analysis discusses the heroine, the old woman, the character of King Sleep (Papachristophorou notes that sleep is personified in Greek lullabies and expressions), the heroine’s purity, the links between sleep and death and the lullaby. A transformation of this tale into an anecdote spreading as rumour is later discussed (pp. 220–23) and interviews are reproduced pp. 319–31). The anecdote – consistently presented as authentic but told at the safe distance of a Friend-of-a-Friend story – talks of a lonely contemporary wife whose husband is working far away. She sings to “King Sleep” to pass away the tiresome nights and is denounced by her neighbours. Luckily, her innocence is nevertheless recognised.

In the conclusion (pp. 225–34) Papachristophorou reflects on the fieldwork and points out that stories of war (World War II and the later Civil War) are now more often told by men than folktales, whereas women tend to talk more about TV series and the news. She also draws some conclusions on the book’s main subjects: initiation, sleep and wakefulness. Associated themes of imprisonment, the direction of the gaze that hinders communication, death and forgetfulness are presented later. Papachristophorou finally stresses the closeness of sleep and wakefulness in Greek folktales and in the social behaviour models. A bibliography (pp. 237–46), a list of the Greek versions indicating their regions (pp. 253–68), and interviews relating to AT 400 and to the rumour form of Mégas’ *514C (pp. 315–31) conclude this significant, well-written study.

Veronique Champion-Vincent
CNRS/MSH, Paris

Mythic images and shamanism in the North

Anna-Leena Siikala, *Mythic Images and Shamanism. A Perspective on Kalevala Poetry*. (FF Communications 280.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2002. 423 pp.

Delivery: tiedekirja@utu.fi

Anyone who has read Kalevala poetry, whether in Elias Lönnrot's recreated epic or in the shorter versions collected from oral tradition, knows that the tradition is rich in images of shamanism. Most readers, too, will accept that the tradition as a whole encompasses a kind of mythology, in which characters such as Väinämöinen participate in events apparently set in some distant or even primal past where shape-changing, magic journeys, supernatural adversaries, and other mythical motifs occur without comment. In this magisterial work, an edited translation of her 1992 *Suomalainen šamanismi. Mielikuvien historiaa* (Finnish shamanism. A history of mental images), Anna-Leena Siikala anchors the role of mythic and shamanic images in Kalevala poetry specifically in the incantation poetry of the *tietäjä*, which she examines ritually in connection with the so-called *tietäjä*-institution. She is able to show on the one hand how the *tietäjä* institution relates to and derives from shamanism and on the other how it looked and functioned specifically in the various Finnish cultural areas. Beyond that, however, she is concerned with a very ambitious history of ideas in Finland in a broad and exciting northern European and Eurasian context. To this endeavor she brings not only her considerable expertise on Siberian shamanism but also a renewed (in the context of Kalevala scholarship) interest in Scandinavian mythology.

An endeavor of this magnitude requires a theoretical framework, and setting it occupies the first two chapters, "Messages from the past" and "Mythic images and shamanic knowledge". Together these comprise Part II, "The legacy of shamanism" (Part I, "Shamanism and Finnishness", is a short introduction). Siikala's notions of mental image and oral tradition initially struck this reader as surprisingly taken up with issues of historical layers, as though to identify layers in a text as deriving from specific chronological eras is to explain the text. This is, however, not at all what she has in mind, and she stresses throughout, and especially in the concluding chapters, that even if mental structures evolve slowly, they are not just artifacts frozen in time. She inclines more to the notion of *bricolage*, in which the *bricoleur* has access to mental structures that entered tradition at various points in time. Later in the book she shows brilliantly how social conditions in different parts of Finland and Karelia led tradition participants to differing kinds of selections, which in turn present differing motifs in oral tradition.

Shamanism is of course long gone from Finland and Karelia. If, as seems likely, it was at home in the original hunting and fishing culture, it will have been displaced with the shift to agriculture millennia ago. And yet it seems tantalizingly close in Kalevala poetry. The reason for this closeness, Siikala shows, lies in the *tietäjä* institution, which is documented from the eighteenth down into the early twentieth century but may be presumed to be considerably older. The vast series *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (Ancient poems of the Finnish people), the repository of published Kalevala poetry, has about 2,200 incantations generally known as "Words of the *tietäjä*", and there are not a few historical accounts of the rituals in which a wise person used these incantations. Siikala gathers her presentation of the *tietäjä* into Part II, which she tellingly calls "The power of the word", and which contains two chapters, one devoted to incantation and one to "The Words of the *tietäjä*", in which she brings out the mythic elements. The foundation of the argument is further laid in parts IV and V, which deal with two vital aspects of shamanism, "The other world" and "Denizens of the other world". Part VI treats "The art of shamanism". The ten chapters in these three parts, all of which depart from the *tietäjä* but range far and wide, comprise the heart of the book.

The term *tietäjä* is difficult to translate, and Siikala does not try to do so. Formally it is an agent noun from the verb *tietää* "to know", and in English it is often rendered "seer" or "sage" (so Martti Haavio in his important *Väinämöinen, Eternal Sage*, 1952; the appositional phrase is a rendering of the formula *tietäjä iän-ikuinen*). Broadly speaking, the *tietäjä* of the sources was a healer, diviner, and community problem-solver not unlike a shaman. Like a shaman, the historically-attested *tietäjä* was familiar with the spirits and called on powerful gods and spirits for strength and help. The *tietäjä* had special clothing and called up various forms of defense against enemies. The use of techniques of ecstasy is documented. The *tietäjä* knew the structure of the universe and its other worlds and was familiar with the dangerous pathways connecting and going through them. Unlike the shaman, however, the *tietäjä* did not need to travel to the world of the spirits to cure a patient or succeed in a ritual:

For the *tietäjä* who was familiar with the fundamental essence of things in the world through sacred words and formulas, there was no need to journey in all cases to the other world in order to clarify matters. Mastery of the "origins" (*syn-ty*) of things differentiated the singer-*tietäjä* from the shamanistic *noita* who was dependent on the spirits in all he did (p. 345). -- The singer-*tietäjä* was himself the possessor of mythical knowledge, and had no need to fall back on spirit helpers in every case (p. 349).

In other words, unlike a shaman, a *tietäjä* carried out his work on behalf of the community, first and foremost, through singing incantations for ritual pur-

poses. Although the *tietäjä* as known from historical sources might recite or mumble his incantations, Siikala shows convincingly (pp. 264–80) that historically the *tietäjä* sang the incantations. Since the reasoning in these pages is typical of much of the bigger argument, I will rehearse it briefly. First, there is in the historical record evidence of incantations being sung. Second, the texts themselves indicate that incantations were sung: “The *tietäjä* depicted in epic poems and incantations is a ‘singer’ who defeats his opponents through his incantation songs” (p. 269). Indeed, in the epic tradition, contests of song incantations resemble closely duels between shamans. Such contests are to be found outside of Finnish/Karelian epic, as in the encounter between Odin and Vafþrúðnir in the Icelandic Edda poem Vafþrúðnismál, and the parallel between that poem and, especially, the epic poems detailing the song contest between Joukahainen and Väinämöinen, is quite close. Explicitly at issue in the Finnish tradition is a sung incantation, which Siikala relates to Old Scandinavian *galdr*, magic verse that would seem on the basis of its etymology to have been sung or chanted loudly; Odin had a special connection with *galdr*. Moreover, music was one of the tools used by shamans in various culture areas to achieve ecstasy.

In this instance the Scandinavian material appears to function as an instructive parallel (Siikala also brings in the Kolt Sami *levt* here, which ultimately adds joiking to the mix). In the larger picture, however, what Siikala has in mind is a Northern European culture area of which both Old Scandinavian myth/religion and Finnish/Karelian epic reflect images, to use her terminology. These can occur at the macro level, as in the texts depicting dueling shamans, or at the level of a grouping of motifs. For example, Siikala adduces one part of the story of Odin’s acquisition of the mead of poetry as a reflection of an old image of a snake drinking ale inside a rock; that is, when Odin transforms himself into a snake, slithers through Hnitbjörg, seduces Gunnlög, and thus steals the mead of poetry. What appear to be parallels are therefore, in Siikala’s view, shared images. Some go back to a time when there were only hunters (and shamans) in northern Europe. Others reflect sharing that took place later. She is quite clear on when and how later sharing can have occurred: possibly as early as the Germanic period and definitely during the Viking Age and Crusades, in various areas where the cultures met, such as Staraja Ladoga in the Viking Age. The images with which the *tietäjä* worked, then, have long and varied histories. The most archaic derived from the shamanism that presumably was practiced before agriculture reached northern Europe and the most recent derived from various cultural streams identifiable in medieval and early modern history.

All this is set forth very clearly in the final chapters, gathered into part VII, “Conclusions”. These bring together the theory of the opening chapters and the vast amount of data of the following chapters and show clearly and cogently how the various

layers, historical and geographical, may have found their way into the extant tradition. This book will attract and reward both those with an interest in the older cultures of the North, from Iceland to Siberia, and those interested in a detailed case study of mental images in a long-term chronological perspective.

John Lindow
University of California
at Berkeley

New epics

Lauri Honko in collaboration with Anneli Honko and Paul Hagu, *The Maiden’s Death Song & The Great Wedding. Anne Vabarna’s Oral Twin Epic written down by A. O. Väisänen*. (FF Communications 281.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2003. 529 pp.

Delivery: tiedekirja@tsv.fi

The double epic *The Maiden’s Death Song* and *The Great Wedding* belongs amongst the jewels of folkloristics. These epics, recorded by the Finnish folk-music researcher and folklorist Armas Otto Väisänen in 1923, were sung by the Setu poet Anne Vabarna (1877–1964). She may be counted the most productive singer amongst the Finno-Ugric peoples, as over 142,000 lines of her songs have been recorded. She represented a small Estonian folk group called the Setu after their homeland, Setumaa (or Setomaa). In their own language the term *seto* ~ *setto* means both the language and an individual person, and the plural *setokkõzõ*? indicates the Setu as a group. Much of Setumaa, including the religious centre of Pechory along with its monastery, is now in the Pskov oblast of Russia. The present number of Setu is not known precisely. According to Estonian researchers, there are noticeably fewer of them on the Russian side of the border in the area of Pechory than there are on the Estonian side, perhaps 500, and they are predominantly aged (Jääts 1998: 117). In Setumaa on the Estonian side there are at most 3,000 (Jääts 1998: 80). The origin of this population, Orthodox by religion, is unclear. Their language belongs to the South Estonian Võru group of dialects. The dialects of neighbouring Setumaa and Võrumaa may be considered one linguistic entity, in which there are but minor local differences; the modern Võru–Setu written language may be considered as a continuation of the old South Estonian (Tartu dialect) language tradition (p. 24). As the Setu are Orthodox and the Võru Lutheran (like the rest of Estonia), it is religion rather than language that divides them. It should be mentioned that one of the authors of the work, Paul Hagu, is himself a Setu folklorist.

The work begins with a Preface, a Prologue by A. O. Väisänen, and a very extensive Introduction (162 pages). Väisänen’s Prologue contains his article

published on 12.11.1923 in an Estonian newspaper. This, the collector's own presentation of the events of collection and his views on the content of the epic, is very illuminating. Having recorded *The Great Wedding* and *The Death Song*, Väisänen was ready to affirm that Vabarna "has proven that she is a great folk-singer with her perfect memory and creative mind".

The identity of the Setu is treated broadly and creditably in the light of history and tradition, and attention is paid also to present-day questions of identity (pp. 26–36). Ingrin Jääts's researches (1997–99) are central to this section. Mention is also made of how, in order to publicise the interests of the Setu and to protect their own language and culture, educated Setu, especially arts graduates, have created a Setu movement (p. 33). It is a completely modern popular movement, with a political stamp owing to the border problems, and characterised by some degree of local folk-cultural idealism. In this connection the term "ethnofuturism" may be mentioned as being precisely the ideology of this movement, and indeed is of widespread significance amongst small peoples more generally. Amongst this movement's chief influences is the Võru writer Kauksi Ülle, who writes in the local language. It may also be mentioned that the state-supported Võru Institute is pursuing official status for the Võru–Setu written language. Amongst Anne Vabarna's own list of symbols of identity belong at least the Setu spiritual tradition and tradition of customs, the language, the traditional dress, the home district and its beautiful countryside (pp. 33–36).

The section on Setu oral tradition (pp. 37–59) gives a concise general picture of the history of this tradition, of the genres of Setu poetry and the circumstances of the singers' performances. The origin and content of Jakob Hurt's three-volume *Setukeste laulud* collection is also covered precisely (pp. 47–53). This valuable collection is linguistically rather heterogenous, as appears from the article by well-known Estonian dialectologist Hella Keem (p. 58).

The section "Anne Vabarna and the collectors" (pp. 60–70) illuminates the work of the Finnish collector, as well as of other collectors, and of Vabarna herself. The work was an interesting and extended act of collaboration between Väisänen and the singer, particularly for the *Twin Epic*. Here too Väisänen's great significance as a recorder of other parts of the Setu tradition is brought out. During his six collection journeys of 1912–23 he gathered around 1,100 melodies. On his last trip in the summer of 1923 he had the good fortune to discover Anne Vabarna. Some of this illiterate singer's most significant creations were written down by her children, including the *Peko* epic. As a folk epic this work is unique in being a commission from a researcher, Paulo-Priit Voolaine, formed in the main on the basis of themes he had drawn up. Similarly, a plot presented by Voolaine is also found in the extensive (10,042-line) verse novel, *Ale*.

The section "The epic works of Anna Vabarna" (pp. 71–77) outlines the contents of all sixteen of Vabarna's long epics, whose number of lines (c. 47,300) exceeds around two-fold the entire *oeuvre* of the other great Baltic singer, Larin Paraske. The greater part (around two-thirds) of these epics of Vabarna arose as a result of collaboration with someone else; the epics in the present book (c. 15.5 % of all Vabarna's epic work) arose from direct partnership with the competent adviser Väisänen. There may also be a question of a plot suggested by someone else (38 %) or a commission (13 %). The remaining portion of the epics (a third) arose without any external prompting.

In the section "A few basic concepts" (pp. 78–109) boundaries are demarcated: collective *vs.* individual tradition, master texts *vs.* mental texts, sung texts *vs.* dictated texts. Wedding songs (pp. 87–93) and laments (pp. 93–109) are thoroughly examined. The fundamental concepts of Setu poetry and Estonian folk poetry in general form the focus of attention here. There is a well-grounded emphasis upon the significance of Vabarna's epic idiolect.

In the extensive section of the Introduction entitled "Textualisation analysis" (pp. 110–151) the editors' deep knowledge of folklore and their experience gained in recording the Siri epic are clearly perceptible. The section presents Väisänen's textualisation process in detail. It offers many points of comparison with other Estonian folk poetry.

In probing the essence of the long epic (pp. 152–162) the editors have identified the following factors as determinative in the creation of a long epic:

- 1) an individual who wants such a long format,
- 2) a felicitous poetic culture,
- 3) a direct model,
- 4) an adequate mode of performance,
- 5) the availability of multiforms,
- 6) a suitable context of performance,
- 7) a plot strategy, and
- 8) an interesting story.

All of these factors are realised in one way or another in the epics published in this volume and in Vabarna's other epics.

An Epilogue concludes the work (pp. 527–29), where, in a long farewell she sang to Väisänen on 27 July 1923, Anne Vabarna ponders the fate that would await her twin epic.

In the section that presents the actual epic, the original Setu text appears on the left of the opening and on the right an English translation. Amongst the achievements of the editorial work belong the manifold additions and explanations in the margins. In the left-hand margin appear Väisänen's own comments and additional information presented by the editors. The right-hand margin shows the division of the epic texts into segments carried out by Lauri Honko, and the headings he gave them. The segments are divided into those spoken by the narrator (including indirect speech), and direct speech.

Brief descriptions are given of the contents of both the narrator's and the direct-speech sections. The short presentations of content in fact form a summary of the whole epic.

The Maiden's Death begins with one of the village maidens singing an invitation to the midsummer bonfire. There follows a dance, the maidens' departure for home, the collection of sauna whisks by boat and the return to mother and the report of the midsummer night and the whisk-gathering. After food, the daughter asks her mother for permission to go berrying with the other girls.

On the way there, the girls meet some traders, who wish to woo one of them, but she gives them short shrift. On the return journey a devil approaches the girls and tips their full baskets up onto the ground. At home the mother comforts the girls and advises them to try again the following Sunday and to proceed quietly, without singing. The berrying trip then succeeds. The mother urges the daughter to offer sweet jam and fruit fool along with spirits to the suitors. The daughter, however, answers that she isn't leaving home to go anywhere. She then sees Jesus and Mary in a vision. Jesus is at first concerned that she will dishonour herself. But when he sees how she drives the boys from her bed, he cheers up and sends Mary and the angels to advise the daughter to keep her honour, even if the village should laugh. God does not love nor Jesus tolerate a girl who is too keen with young men.

The Great Wedding is also an ethnographically valuable representation of the traditional Setu wedding. It demonstrates what an incredible number of acts this drama involved.

1) The epic begins on a calm Sunday morning, as a girl, driving cattle to the forest, meets a boy, who delights in her singing and woos her. The mother approves the boy's courting.

2) The boy prepares to leave on a courting trip.

3) At home the girl recounts her own falling in love, and asserts that she must now forget her maiden days, as the time of marriage is beginning.

4) The boy courts the girl at her home. The girl asks her family to approve the courtship, for it is the will of Jesus and Mary that the maiden should forget her former life. The father and mother request the future son-in-law to ask his mother to treat her daughter-in-law well, and the suitor likewise asks the girl's parents to receive their new kinsfolk well. The suitor promises to come to fetch the girl after six days.

5) Having arrived home, the suitor hands his mother the mittens he had acquired at the girl's home as a sign of the approval of his match.

6) The boy leaves with two horses on the betrothal journey with his nearest relatives and godparents. The suitor's mother hands gifts to the girl and her mother. The girl's mother in turn gives gifts to the close kin of the suitor. The mother urges the girl to make the bed, and the betrothed pair sleep together on the night of their betrothal.

7) Having returned home, the bridegroom soon sets out to invite his kinsfolk to the wedding and says he needs a broker. On his return journey he buys strong spirits from a tavern and wine for the women, but does not touch a drop himself.

8) Preparations for the wedding at the bride's home are under way. The bride invites the village girls and her mother's close kin to the wedding. The girls arrive, singing, to sew new garments for the bride. On the Saturday morning begins the dressing of the bride, who has previously sent the bridegroom back to his home.

9) After the wedding lament of the bride and the maidens, and after the bride has wept on her grandmother's grave, there follows a long depiction of the journey of the maidens and the bride to her godmother. The depiction includes several of the bride's laments to her godmother.

10) Once the bride has returned home from her godmother the wedding meal is partaken, and the bride's father's brother becomes the broker. The village maidens sing. The close relatives dress the bride's hair, as she laments the loss of her maiden hair. The bride is presented with gifts. Music and dancing follow.

11) A week later wedding pasties are baked at the home of the bridegroom, where the family gathers for the wedding. The bridegroom is placed on the seat of honour. The wedding singers present a farewell song and praise the bridegroom. The bridegroom is dressed in an outhouse. He asks his father to harness a horse, and he takes spirits with him on the journey.

12) The bridegroom journeys to the bride, shooting off his pistol to drive away the devil. The bridegroom buys his way in by offering spirits. The bride's female relatives advise the bridegroom's party in song how to behave in the house, and they also advise the bride. Having entered the house, the bridegroom places money on a plate as compensation for the mother-in-law's trouble. The meal begins only once the bride has left the room and the door is closed as a sign that the girl is leaving her home for good. The bridegroom eats alone in an outhouse, waited on by the mother-in-law.

13) Once the bridegroom's party leaves the bride's home there follows the farewell lament of the bride to her mother, father and bridesmaids. The wedding singers counsel the bridegroom. The bride's party presents a farewell song to the wedding couple, and the rituals of departure follow. The wedding singers invite the bride's family on a visit. The mother gives farewell advice to her daughter and gives her a truss of socks and mittens. The village maidens present a farewell song.

14) The bridegroom makes his journey, firing off his pistol. The wedding procession is observable from afar and they are received in the bridegroom's courtyard. The procession steps into the bridegroom's home.

15) The conclusion of the wedding: the wedding basket is carried from the bride's home and the

bridegroom's kinsfolk take it, and the gifts are shared out. The women counsel and praise the bride. Her mother shares out a last round of gifts to the bridegroom's family.

The male wedding guests joke around and are aggressive in their play. The last meal is served to the bride's party in the bridegroom's house. The bridegroom's family is invited on a visit to the bride's home in a week.

There follows a day for the kinsfolk at the home of the bridegroom, with a sauna for the men and the young women of the village. Preparations are made for the arrival of guests at the concluding feast at the bride's home.

As the *Twin Epic* and *Peko* are amongst Vabarna's most extensive song creations, many common features may naturally be discerned between the epics. There follow some examples, based on the section "Textualisation analysis".

Multiforms

For example, in the farewell song (p. 121) sung by Vabarna to Väisänen there appears the metaphor "locomotive" or "train" for "horse".

Nakkaš vakoñ valamahe,
Maŕa maššiin tulõmahe,
leiks tulda tuima? tsõõri?
kõik õks ravva? rabišivva?
telehvoni? tirisivvã?
šis õks ti muŕri mustal ruunal,
tulliks tulihõbõzõl,
taha-as rokka tuu ruun,
kaaro tuu kall'is hopõñ,
šeiks ta tulda tullõnañni,
meeli hüüt'ši minnenãñni.

The wagon started going,
the berry machine coming.
Stern wheels were striking fire,
all irons were rattling,
telephones were tinkling.
Then you drove with the dark gelding,
came with the fire-horse.
That gelding did not want feed
nor oats that precious horse,
it ate fire when coming,
wanted charcoal when going.

A comparable passage is found in *Peko* (6521–6530):

Must læts hopõn muudsaha,
tuu ruun tulitsõhõ,
kõik tãl ravva? rabisiva?
telefoni? tilisivã?
Hopõn ol' hũtsiga hoiel,
ol' tossuga toidõd,
taha-s rokka tuu ruun,
kaaru tuu kall'is hopõn,
sei tã tuld tullõnõni,
meele hũtsi minneneni.

A black horse went snorting,
a gelding, fiercely;
all its iron trappings rattled,
its telephones jingled.

The horse was catered for with coal,
with steam it was fed,
that gelding did not want pea soup,
nor oats, that expensive horse;
it ate fire as it came,
preferred charcoal as it left.

When the passages are compared from the examples given *rabišivva?* – *rabisiva?*, *telehvoni?* *tirisivvã?* – *telefoni?* *tilisivã?*, *kaaro* – *kaaru*, *tulda tullõnañni* – *tuld tullõnõni*, *meeli hüüt'ši minnenãñni* – *meele hũtsi minneneni*, it is not possible to talk of multiforms internal to the song, but rather to the singer.

Various common formulaic expressions are plentiful. The introductory formula is commonly *laus'i meelestã'n'i* "uttered thus". It appears in *Peko* in the following connections (*laus'i meele poolestani* "spoke its/his/her mind"):

– X (õks ~ sis ~ jal ~ mulle) lausi meelestãni, Y meele poolõstani [13/36]
– X (õks ~ sis) lausi meelestãni, meelest, meele poolõstani [13/36]
– X (õks ~ sis ~ jal) lausi meelestãni, uma meele poolõstani [9/36]
– Ime lausi meelestãni, kosti sõna kuupal suul (1/36).

Parallelisms

Parallelism is amongst the central stylistic devices of Vabarna, as of Estonian folk poetry in general. Characteristic of the *Twin Epic* is, amongst other things, consecutive repetition, in which the concluding half of one line is repeated as the beginning of the second line within two-line verse pairs, e.g. (*Twin Epic* 126):

Miiks vellõ mereruugu,
merekse ruugu, Rood'zi lilli

Our brother, sea reed,
sea reed, flower of Sweden

Comparable repetitions are found in *Peko*, e.g. 281–82:

Peko sai pikk kui pilliruug, pilliruug kui roosalill
Peko grew as tall as a reed, a reed like a rosebloom

Characteristic of Vabarna is also line repetition, in which the parallel line completes the first line, or is parallel to only part of the first line, e.g. (*Twin Epic* 287–88):

keãks ta laul ilozaha,
laškeks villu veerüšãhe

the one who sings beautifully,
makes the whistle resound!

From *Peko* may be taken a comparable passage (2215–16):

*esi peśś tä pää piida külge, lei tuimast tuŕo poolõ,
she herself struck her head on the doorpost, struck her shoul-
der numb*

Parallelism can also be presented negatively, e.g. (*Twin Epic* 42–45):

*ega lüü-üs õks nä? pilli pelätteh,
ega mäŋgi-is õks nä? kannõlt kah'ittõh,
kõõ leivä? nä? pilli pillõldõh,
kago mäŋge? nä? kannõlt karõldõh*

And they pluck the instrument shyly
did not play the kannõl *reluctantly*:
they always plucked the instrument *playfully*,
look, they played the kannõl *dancing!*

The following is an example from *Peko* (1033–36):

*õga õks kuio-i soo kott, õga sata-i soo salkun,
soo lätt kott korgõpast, leevä-andõ? armapast.*

that sack *will not dry up*, that bag *will not shrink*,
that sack will grow bigger, the gifts of bread dearer

In the multiforms of each source there is also syntactical repetition. In the last example the subject clauses of the three first lines are in a parallel relationship to each other (*kuio-i soo – sata-i soo – soo lätt*), as in the preceding example *lüü-üs nä? – mäŋgi-is nä? – leivä? nä? – mäŋge? nä?*. (On parallelism in *Peko* see further Suhonen 2002: 466–70.)

One syntactical-morphological method employed by Vabarna is the *insert*, where words are added between the elements of a compound word or other linguistic structures which belong to each other, e.g. (*Twin Epic* 1737–38):

*küll veezeks är? ikk ilo'ost,
šilmä- veezeks är? -veži šinitsest*

Indeed, the lament makes you ugly,
the tears make you blue (“eye- makes -water blue”)

Such structures are frequently encountered in *Peko*, e.g. (145):

*Tarõ- tälle -naane naaraskõlli
the house at him hostess laughed (the hostess of the house
laughed at him)*

An insert can also be added between the stem and endings of a word, e.g. (*Twin Epic* 3106):

*N'eijoks sa -kõnõ, noorõkkõnõ
You maiden youthful (“Maiden-ks you -small, youthful”)*

In *Peko* the sort of endings separated in this way are the diminutives *-kene* and *-lane*, e.g. (615):

*“Peko- õks sa -kõnõ, pikk miis,
 (“Peko-ks you -small, you tall man”)*

The task of translating the epics appears to have been carried out with care and precision. The principles of translation are explained on pp. 149–51.

Seppo Suhonen
University of Helsinki

Literature

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Myth and epic in the Centre of Asia

Lauri Harvilahti in collaboration with Zoja S. Kazagačeva, *The Holy Mountain. Studies on Upper Altay Oral Poetry*. (FF Communications 282.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2003. 166 pp.

Delivery: tiedekirja@tsv.fi

Lauri Harvilahti (University of Helsinki) is a leading theoretician of epic folklore. His doctoral dissertation (Harvilahti 1992) is a structural analysis of Western Ingrian epic poetry, with special emphasis on the processes of performing and recreating the poetic formulae. Harvilahti has also worked on the folklore traditions of Russia, Mongolia, India, and China. Fluent in Russian and trained in several Asian languages, he is without doubt the proper person to take up the important topic of Upper Altai epic poetry, as still performed in the Altai Republic (*Respublika Altai*) of the Russian Federation.

Altai as a homeland and refuge

Altai is a region studied by Finnish fieldworkers since the times of Erik Laxman (1737–96), M. A. Castrén (1813–52), and J. G. Granö (1882–1956). Castrén considered Altai to be the original “homeland” of the Uralic (Finno-Ugrian) language family. Another Finnish scholar of international renown, G. J. Ramstedt (1873–1950), established the name of Altai

as the technical term for the group of languages now known as “Altaic”. Although later research has shown that the “Altaic” languages (unlike the Uralic languages) are not a language family in the linguistic sense, the term deserves to be kept in reference to the many areal and typological features that link the “Altaic” languages with each other.

In historical times, Altai has been inhabited by a population speaking Turkic languages (one of the subdivisions of “Altaic”), though the earlier presence of other language families (Mongolic, Uralic, Yeniseic, Indo-European) is an established fact. The Turkic inhabitants of the Altai region are known as the Altai Turks, or also, with reference to their largest tribal group, as the “Altai people” (*Altai kizhi*). Ethnohistorically, they are a complex conglomeration of distinct entities, each speaking its own tribal idiom, all of which are today collectively classified as “Altai Turkic”. Compared with the other branches of Siberian Turkic (Yenisei Turkic, Sayan Turkic, Lena Turkic), the dialects of the Altai Turks are relatively close to the Turkic languages of Central Asia, including Kazakh and Kirghiz.

Culturally, the Altai Turks are intermediate between the boreal hunter-gatherers of the Siberian forest belt (*taiga*) and the pastoral nomads of the Central Asian steppes. Innovations have always reached Altai late, and even in Russian colonial times, some conservative cultural groups, including the Mennonites and the Russian Old Believers, have found a shelter in the region. Like the Altai Turks, these newcomers have been able to preserve their traditions in the isolated valleys of the many rivers flowing in various directions from the Altai central massif. In view of this, it is probably more suitable to view Altai as a refuge of archaic traditions, rather than as a “homeland” of ethnic and linguistic expansions.

There is, however, one important cultural innovation that originated in the Altai region. This innovation is Burkhanism, a millenarianist movement and a new syncretic religion that was formed on the basis of Southern Siberian “White” Shamanism, Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism, and Russian Orthodox Christianity as late as the early 20th century. Suppressed by both the Tsarist regime and the Proletarian terror, Burkhanism was long thought to be dead, but after the liberalization of Russia it has re-appeared and may today perhaps be regarded as the most “native” religion of the Altai region.

From the geopolitical point of view, it should be recalled that Altai is also a natural borderland, today divided between four independent political states: Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and China. Most of the linguistic, ethnographic, and folkloristic fieldwork carried out in the Altai region has been focused on the Russian side. All of Altai was closed to foreign scholars in the decades between the October Revolution (1917) and the recent opening of China and Russia. Western archaeologists have already successfully started working in the region, but Harvilahti was the first to launch a project of cooperation on folklore.

Understanding an epic tradition

Working together with V. M. Gacak and Z. S. Kazagacheva (as well as other local scholars), Harvilahti spent two field periods (1996–97) in the Altai region, recording some of the last authentic performers of the Altai Turkic epic traditions. Certainly, this was the last moment to carry out this research, for the two most important performers recorded by Harvilahti – Tabar Chachiiakov (1923–97) and Aleksei Kalkin (1925–98) – are now dead. Although both had been recorded before, Harvilahti worked with new technology (digital video) and aimed at a comprehensive understanding of the performing situation and its background.

The resulting book is probably best regarded as a preliminary summary of a large project, which still has the potential of yielding other valuable results. After briefly introducing the objectives of the project (chapters 1–2), Harvilahti discusses the general characteristics and history of research of Central Asian epics (chapters 3–4), the biographies of selected Altai Turkic epic singers (chapter 5), the most important epic songs and their poetic properties (chapters 6–7), the ethnocultural aspects of epic poetry (chapters 8), as well as (with Reijo Aulanko) the phonetic properties and global expansion of overtone singing (chapters 9–10). The volume concludes with a selection of high-quality photographic illustrations.

As with other epic traditions, a practical problem about the Altai Turkic epics is their physical size. Huge amounts of epic material from the Altai Turks were already written down and published by Wilhelm Radloff (1837–1918) in his series of Turkic folklore (Radloff 1866–1907), and even the Soviet-period publication of Aleksei Kalkin’s version of the *Maadai Kara*, the most famous Altai Turkic epic, contains close to 8,000 lines (Surazakov 1973). Rather than attempting to assemble another corpus of comparable size, Harvilahti followed the concept of his doctoral dissertation and focused his fieldwork on the very processes of performance.

Relevant questions studied by Harvilahti include the following: How can the singer memorize and perform such incredible amounts of text? How does the size of the corpus influence the stability of the poetic form? How much freedom of recreation does the singer have when performing again and again the “same” epic song? The answer is simple: the epic is actually never the same, for it is recreated every time it is sung, with considerable variation in the details. What remains constant are the thematic structure of the song and the rules that govern the poetic expression.

For the transcription and translation (from Altai Turkic into Russian) of the original texts, Harvilahti has relied on the native speaker’s competence of Z. S. Kazagacheva. Although some of the decisions made concerning the phonemic notation and dialectal normalization of the material could be disputed, the general result is more than satisfactory. It is, in fact, fortunate, that Altai Turkic is among the best investi-

gated of the Turkic languages of Siberia, a circumstance largely resulting from the lifelong efforts of the late Russian Turkologist N. A. Baskakov (1905–96), who published both a basic description of the language (Baskakov 1958) and a whole series of adjoining dialect monographs.

Cultural continuity and ethnic identity

The tradition of Altai Turkic epic folklore is today continued by a generation of younger singers, among whom an important position is taken by Elbek (Albert) Kalkin, the son of Aleksei Kalkin. Harvilahti made direct interviews with both the father and the son and thus gained valuable insights into the inner world of the epic singer. The general conclusion from his results is that the freedom of the singer seems to be decreasing. In response to the expectations of the audience, there is a growing tendency to normalize the language and style of epic singing.

Although Altai Turks are still far away from the real dangers of artificial folklorization and commercialization, it is a fact that even epic songs are today mainly distributed by means of printed publications and electronic recordings. The true audience of epic stories – families gathered to spend a long winter night in a lonely hut or yurt – does not exist any more in a world with noisy television sets and mobile phones. To some extent, epic songs survive as a form of entertainment in important social events, but increasingly often they are performed in the context of folklore festivals organized for political or commercial purposes.

The development has, however, a positive side, in that epic songs, together with other genres of traditional folklore and mythology, have become a factor of ethnic identity for the modern Altai Turks. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the various South Siberian Turkic peoples have made efforts to raise their social, political, and economic status, and these efforts are naturally anchored in their traditional cultural heritage (Janhunen 1990). In very much the same way as the *Kalevala* for the Finns, the epic songs of the Altai Turks can stimulate a national awakening that may promote the preservation of the native language and culture.

Interestingly, of all the specifically South Siberian cultural phenomena it is overtone singing (“throat singing”) that has experienced the most spectacular revival and expansion. Although most intimately connected with the ethnic heritage of the Tuvinians (Tuva Republic), Harvilahti (with Reijo Aulanko) discusses relevant material (the *kai* style of singing) also from the Altai Turkic epic performers. Harvilahti himself was among the first to do fieldwork on overtone singing in Mongolia (Harvilahti 1983). Today the tradition has active practitioners all over the world, including Finland, where the local association of “throat singers” (*Suomen Kurkkulaajat r.y.*) publishes a well-edited regular journal (*Höömei*).

Unfortunately, the ethnic future of the South Siberian Turks cannot rely solely on the sympathy of foreign “throat singers” and eccentric Neoshamanist enthusiasts. The most serious problem for the Altai Turks today is the decline of their native language. Even if shamanism and Burkhanism can refill the ideological vacuum left by the Communist rule, authentic oral literature can never survive the process of linguistic assimilation. If anything is to be done about this problem, folklorists and linguists should work together with ethnic activists and help create political conditions under which local languages and cultures can resist the pressure of colonization and globalization.

Juha Janhunen
University of Helsinki

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Forthcoming in the FF Communications

FFC 283. *The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey as performed by Halil Bajgorić*. Edited and translated by John Miles Foley. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica. Forthcoming in summer 2004.

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.

FFC 284–285. Hans-Jörg Uther, *The Types of International Folktales. A Classification and Bibliography Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson*. Editorial staff: Sabine Dinslage, Sigrid Fährmann, Christine Goldberg, Gudrun Schwibbe. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica. Forthcoming in autumn 2004.

The system of European tale types designed by Antti Aarne was twice revised by Stith Thompson. The new catalog of international tale types (ATU, for Aarne–Thompson–Uther) in two volumes constitutes a fundamentally new edition with extensive additions and innovations. It attempts to meet the objections of previous critics of the Aarne–Thompson catalog (AT) without forsaking the traditional principles of how the tale types are presented.

The descriptions of the tale types have been completely rewritten and made more precise. The essential research cited for each type includes extensive documentation of its international distribution as well as monographic works on that type or on the cycle of types to which it belongs. The list of catalogs and variants used for reference has been enlarged considerably. More than two hundred and fifty new types have been added. Note has been made of the many types scattered throughout the AT catalog whose internal properties or structural similarities and affinities with other types had been overlooked. Types with a very limited distribution have been omitted. Important combinations and narrative cycles are listed. A detailed subject index includes the most important subjects, plots, and motifs, including actors and settings.

FOLKLORE FELLOWS' NETWORK

Publisher: The Folklore Fellows by courtesy of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters
Editor: Anna-Leena Siikala (Anna-Leena.Siikala@helsinki.fi)
Editorial assistant: Maria Vasenkari (marvas@utu.fi)
Editorial Office: P. O. Box 14, 20501 Turku, Finland

FOLKLORE FELLOWS' COMMUNICATIONS (ISSN 0014-5815)

has been published for the Folklore Fellows since 1910 by the Academia Scientiarum Fennica (Finnish Academy of Science and Letters) in Helsinki.
Editor: Anna-Leena Siikala (Anna-Leena.Siikala@helsinki.fi)
Address: FF Communications, Dept. of Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki,
P.O.Box 19, 00014 Helsinki, Finland
Editorial secretary: Maria Vasenkari (marvas@utu.fi)
<http://www.folklorefellows.fi>

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