

folklife, an important association. However, he damages his thesis and the strength of his examples by providing an insufficient accompanying folklife contextual study. Had he integrated his epilogue ("Study of Material Folk Culture Study") into the text of his work, had he elaborated on the important theoretical and contextual aspects of his study that were simply glossed over, had he worked harder on the index and bibliography, this work would have stood as a major statement integrating folklife and material culture study with occupational and organizational folklore. As it stands, it presents a good starting point for further research.

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**Studies in Finnic Folklore: Homage to the Kalevala.** By Felix J. Oinas. Bloomington: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies; and Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran, 1985. Indiana University Uralic and Altaic Series 147 and Finnish Literature Society 387. Pp. 218, table of contents, foreword, acknowledgments, biographical essay (by Matti Kuusi), list of books by author. \$12.00. Paper.

**Essays on Russian Folklore and Mythology.** By Felix J. Oinas. Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1985. Pp. 183, table of contents, acknowledgments, index, list of books by author. \$12.95. Paper.

Reviewed by Egle Victoria Žygas

**Studies in Finnic Folklore: Homage to the Kalevala and Essays on Russian Folklore and Mythology** are two anthologies of essays by Felix J. Oinas. Although printed by different publishers, they are intended to be considered a set. Each is a collection of fourteen papers--most of them previously printed elsewhere--which bring the perspective of a variety of scholarly disciplines to bear on the issues of Finnic and Russian folklore, respectively.

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**Studies in Finnic Folklore** honors the 150th anniversary of the Kalevala, the Finnish national epic; the Kalevala and Finnish folk literature are the book's underlying theme, supplemented with Estonian and Karelian data. In **Studies in Finnic Folklore**, Oinas' approaches include those of comparative religion (when dealing primarily with shamanism and lower mythology) and ethnography, philology, and literature.

The book begins with two two-part survey articles, one on folkloristics, the other on epics. The initial essay, "Finnic Folklore," introduces the reader to the history of the study of folklore in Finland and Estonia and broadly surveys folksong (including epic, charms [for Finland], ballads and lyric songs) and prose genres (folktales and legends, proverbs and riddles, charms [for Estonia] and incantations). The second article, "The Finnic Epics," deals with the compilation of traditional materials for the Finnish Kalevala and its Estonian counterpart, Kalevipoeg. Oinas

synopsizes the plots and explains characteristics of each epic: for the Finnish, these include Elias Lönnrot's techniques of compiling the epic from runes, the Sampo epic, the Kalevala as shamanistic epic, the contribution of West Finland and Karelia in the Kalevala songs, and composition and form; for the Estonian, the topics are the hero, the compilers' modifications of traditional narrative, and the significance of the epic.

Next come two articles dealing with structural issues. "On the Structure of the Epic Kalevipoeg" is about one Kalevipoeg episode which had previously been considered a foreign element. Oinas argues for its authenticity by showing how the removal of the initial segment of this micro-epic caused what remained to be misunderstood; he restores the missing section, reestablishing the epic's integrity. The following article, "Negative Parallelism in Karelian-Finnish Folklore," compares the stylistic feature known as negative parallelism or negative comparison (among other terms), found in the Kalevala, Kalevipoeg, and Karelian-Finnish folksongs, with its Russian counterpart to determine a place of origin.

The third grouping of essays makes use of some of the techniques of the historic-geographic school as well as of comparative mythology. In "Gestures and Ballads" Oinas takes the area of distribution of a single motif (striking oneself in desperation), which appears in Estonian, Finnish-Karelian-Ingrian, and Mordvin ballads, as indication of a probable southerly origin. The title of the next article, "The Sower (Sämpsä Pellervoinen's Song)" refers to a Karelian-Finnish song which accompanied the performance of an annual rite to a fertility deity; Oinas relates it to Near Eastern (Anatolian and Hittite) and Homeric traditions. In "Lemminkäinen and Vavilo," Oinas expands on Martti Haavio's argument that

the Lemminkäinen cycle is related to the Russian epic song "Vavilo and the Skomoroxi," by indicating that certain elements of the Finnish song came into the Balto-Finnic territory from the east. The shaman visited by Väinämöinen in the *Kalevala* gives his name to the next article, "Antero Vipunen," in which Oinas points out similarities between Turkic, Russian, and Finnic versions of AT 725 (The Prophetic Dream), and suggests that the theme of the monster swallowing the hero stems from Turco-Tartar tradition, later coming to Russia and from there to Karelia, where finally it entered regional tradition. "The Gigantic Bird of Finnish Folklore" depicted in the *Kalevala* in the episode of the fight for the Sampo is related to Asian examples of monstrous animals. Oinas suggests that the formulaic description of a fantastic creature, whose one wing/horn/lip/tusk touches the earth and the other the sky, is a case of parallel development, not one of borrowing.

In the essay on "Väinämöinen's Straw Stallion," Oinas relates the straw or peastalk steed mentioned in the *Kalevala* to the fictive mount of shamanic ritual. The following article, "F. R. Faehlmann's Myth 'Dawn and Dusk,'" concerns a narrative long suspected of being a literary fabrication; Oinas traces it back to Indo-European analogues in the Rig-Veda, Old Roman rites of the Matralia, and Lithuanian mythic songs, and differentiates between the folkloric core and Faehlmann's literary additions.

The problems of lower mythology are addressed in the final grouping of three essays. "Jumi--A Fertility Divinity," deals with the name and the word Jumi; ethnographic data, place-names, folk expressions, and folk beliefs in Latvia lead Oinas to postulate that Jumi was originally a Baltic agricultural divinity, eventually adopted by Finnish-Karelian-Estonian folk religion. The

article entitled "Finnish-Karelian **Akräs**" describes magic manipulations of game animals, double vegetables, or double eared grain as a means of ensuring future gain. The "Ingrian Kirlouks 'Water Spirit'" shows how the misunderstood phrase Kyrie Eleison came to be personified as a minor deity named Kirlouks.

"Finnic Folklore," "Lemminkäinen and Vavilo," "Antero Vipunen," "The Gigantic Bird of Finnish Folklore," and "Ingrian Kirlouks, 'Water Spirit'" are the only essays not previously published elsewhere. Many of the remaining articles are now in their second or third incarnation, having seen print, been read at a conference (sometimes both), and been used in Dr. Oinas' graduate folklore classes and seminars on Finnic, Baltic, and Slavic folklore and religion at Indiana University.

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The second book, **Essays on Russian Folklore**, follows a structure similar to that of the Finnic volume. The introductory survey chapter on "Russian Byliny" is followed by an essay on **byliny** (Russian heroic epic) scholarship dealing with "The Aristocratic Origin of Russian Byliny."

The next organizing theme, comparative mythology/comparative literature and folklore, is represented by four articles: "The Tale about the Origin of Moscow" relates literary versions of the tale to cosmogonic myths in Germanic, Indian, Greek, Babylonian, and Chinese traditions; "M. D. Culkov's 'A Bitter Lot'" (a late 18th-century literary work considered to be one of the earliest European examples of a detective story) is taken back through its successive appearances as a Sicilian folk ballad, German tale, and broadsides to isolate literary examples from the traditional core; "Akakij Akakievic's Ghost" explores plot similarities between an episode from Gogol's "The Overcoat" and the clothing-stealing ghost

in Aristophanes' *The Birds*; "An Alpine Idyll in Russia" relates Ernest Hemingway's "An Alpine Idyll" to funerary games and customary practices in Russia, the Ukraine, as well as the mountainous areas of Southern Europe, and also to folk narratives from Estonia, Finland, Austria, Bavaria, Swabia, and a section of Slovenia.

Oinas takes a philological approach to Russian lower mythology in the next section. In "Russian Golubec 'Grave Marker' and Some Notions of the Soul," he establishes a relationship between the Russian word for grave marker and the word for pigeon or dove, echoing the bond between the place of burial and folk beliefs about the soul-bird of the deceased. The essay on "Historical Reality and Russian Supernatural Beings" discusses the investiture of house, forest, and water spirits with characteristics of Russian peasant society and social structure. In "The Devil in Russian Folklore" Oinas provides a brief overview of the various Russian words used to name the devil and a summary of popular Russian beliefs concerning the devil's appearance, his character traits, his interactions with God and man, and the means by which he may be controlled. For "Russian Poludnica 'Midday Spirit,'" Oinas used ethnographic materials to relate beliefs evolving around this female mythic being with human concern about periods of liminality. Vampire-centered beliefs, predominantly among the Slavs and neighboring peoples, as well as the history of the Dracula story, are discussed in the article on "East European Vampires." The vampire theme is developed further in "Heretics as Vampires and Demons in Russia," where Oinas suggests why the concept of the heretic was confused with that of the vampire in northern Russia and Siberia.

Two essays on the history of the field of folklore complete this volume. "Folklore

Activities and Scholarship in Russia" is a summary article on Russian folkloristics from the early 17th century to the present, focusing primarily in activities in Soviet Russia. "The Problem of the Notion of Soviet Folklore" is an important article, revealing the influence that changes in Soviet politics had on major developments in the interpretation of Soviet folklore. Topics touched on are folklore and literature, folklore and ethnography, the nature of folklore, orality versus literacy, collectivity versus individuality, the meaning of the term "folk," what qualifies as "Soviet" folklore, and the relationship between folklore and amateur activity.

All the essays in the Russian volume have appeared in print elsewhere before; many have been read at conferences or in Dr. Oinas' classes in Russian and Slavic folklore, mythology, and religion.

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By bringing together thematically related articles printed over a number of years in diverse journals, Dr. Oinas has given us much-needed English-language sources on Finnic and Russian folk culture. Whether taken together or separately these two books definitely fill a need: they are tailor-made for use as primary texts for upper-level courses on Finnic or Slavic folklore, literature, or religion. Additionally, because of Oinas' clear writing style, these volumes could easily be used as supplementary readings either in folklore survey courses or in seminars on the epic, folklore and history, and the like. Furthermore, their utilization of the methodology of the Finnish school brings to life an approach which is often discussed in history of folklore classes, but of which examples are seldom available.

The books' editors, however, in adaptively reusing Oinas' articles, might have considered the differing needs of the new readership:

these pieces were originally intended for specialists, but their new audience is likely to be a more generalist one. Thus, alterations beyond mere consecutive pagination and similar cosmetic touches should have been made: maps of the areas discussed and, for the Russian language, a transliteration and pronunciation guide would have been helpful. (The spelling of the place-name Olonec, for instance, suggests to the reader a number of possible pronunciations other than the correct Ah-LO-niets.) A further quibble, albeit a minor one, especially since the two books were published by different houses, is their dissimilar appearance in cover treatment and in physical dimensions. Intended as companion pieces, these two volumes should have looked more alike.

Nonetheless, *Studies in Finnic Folklore: Homage to the Kalevala and Essays on Russian Folklore and Mythology* are worthy additions to the folklorist's bookshelf. The East Europeanist will be pleased to find previously dispersed articles brought together in these volumes; scholars, students, and laypersons who are less than familiar with Baltic, Finnic, and Slavic folk culture will find here much that is fresh, interesting, and memorable.