

it; and it has set a new standard for comparative paremiology. Above all it is a crowning work for a great man and a scholar who has tilled the field of proverbs so successfully for many years. There is a well-known international proverb "The workman is known by his work" (see no. 106 of this collection) which describes Matti Kuusi perfectly. We all know him and his work to be characterized by perfection, integrity and dedication to superb scholarship.

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KRIKMANN, ARVO

1985 *Some statistics on Baltico-Finnic proverbs*. Tallinn: Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, Division of Social Sciences.

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SMITH, PAUL, editor. *Perspectives on Contemporary Legend*. Proceedings of the Conference on Contemporary Legend, Sheffield, July 1982. CECTAL Conference Papers Series No. 4. Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1984. XI+233 pages. Paper £8.00 ISBN 0261-314X.

The Conference picked up a very popular theme: since the sixties the legend surfaced as the most belabored genre among folklorists. At the Bergen Congress (1984), 48% of the papers¹ dealt with various aspects of legends of many sorts, among them several of the "contemporary" variety. The volume of conference papers under review contains fifteen papers and four abstracts of papers not submitted in full; these latter will not be considered here.

Usually, books should be read from the beginning towards the end. The reader of the reviewed collection of papers is, however, advised to follow R. Barthes and start his reading, on the contrary, with the last paper: N. Williams' "Problems in Defining Contemporary Legend." After considering this paper the rest of the papers will fall into place, i.e., into the proper perspective, historical and otherwise. Thus, it will be clear from the start "that what we may regard as a distinct genre is actually not distinct from traditional legend, except by virtue of our own attitudes" (228) and that the tales are "contemporary not because they were recently invented, but simply because they were recently collected" (217). Let us add our humble opinion that a text's genre classification can be easily and unequivocally determined, given proper criteria of distinction, and that many of the texts quoted in the volume belong to genres other than the legend (see below, list of texts).

Armed with these insights, the other fourteen papers can be ordered into four groups: (a) surveys of materials (L. M. Ballard: North Ireland; J. R. Reaver: Florida); (b) monographs on a single tale-type (G. Bennett, J. Brunvand, D. Buchan, M. Glazer, G. McCulloch); (c) socio-psychological case studies on the community context of a single tale, or tale-type (E. Beck, G. Boyes, S. Grifer, B. af Klintberg, P. Smith); and (d) theoretical considerations (W.F.H. Nicolaisen, S. Robe).

a) The two surveys are—unfortunately—based only on casual personal knowledge and not on systematic collection and well organized archives (oh, again these old-fashioned institutions with their dead papers!). Neither the range of the repertoire of a community (rural, urban, county, or whichever else) nor its composition can be worked

out on such a chance sampling, and the survey boils down to a retelling of tale summaries.

b) The five mini-monographs offer a first nucleus for a more serious monographic treatment of these tale-types—to be done on a much larger corpus of texts, of course. The results so far point towards each of the tales being a normal traditional one, known since time immemorial and following all the ethno poetic composition rules used since time immemorial (even if our authors do not always display the necessary command of the sources which the discipline of folklore belabors, of its tools, methods and practices).

c) Five papers move on the very fringe of folkloristics: they would be socio-psychological studies, but for their authors being trained in neither sociology nor psychology. As a result, the studies lack professionalism. They use oral folk materials, stories and beliefs, to study social behavior. Here, the reviewer wonders, where and when, for instance, did “we” (the folklorists?) consider rumor and gossip *not* to be traditional (213). And, further, if folklorists as a group are equivalent to laymen as a group (“the Smiths and their parent company” . . . “everyone else in the world”—p. (212) in regard to defining folk literature, its genres and boundaries, are “we”—i.e., folklorists—not wasting our time and public money (from which our salaries and the printing of our writings are paid) when busying ourselves with discussing folk literature and its genres? Would it then not be more useful to humanity if we grew chickens instead?

d) W. Nicolaisen considered the genre “legend” in general and the approaches to it, and argues for more attention to be paid to its literary qualities, an aspect sadly missing from the conferences’ papers. S. Robes discussed problems for the life of folk literature in general in the ethnically mixed population of the Southwestern USA—problems which necessarily exist in any ethnically mixed area, and to which much more attention will have to be paid, as such areas form one of the more important foci of dissemination of folk literature from one culture to the next.

Let us now try to classify the tales quoted and summarized in the papers; tales only mentioned could not be classified. The system of genres used follows Jason 1975, 1977; where appropriate, tale-types are given. The tales have been numbered as they appear in the book; for lack of space they had to be referred to here only by this running number and the page number of the book, and the reader will have to consult the book itself.

List of tales, classified by genres and tale-types:

(4.2.2.1) Sacred Legend: Simonsuuri B 101–200: no. 83, p. 181; Simonsuuri E 241, Balys 3251: no. 49, p. 120; no. 50, p. 121; no. 6, pp. 8–9; no. 84, p. 181; no. 95, p. 187.

(4.2.2.4) Etiological legend: no. 36, p. 100; no. 39, p. 105; no. 97, pp. 189–190.

(4.2.2.6) Demonic legend: AaTh 470*: no. 96, p. 189; Simonsuuri A 201–300: no. 10, pp. 11–12; Simonsuuri A 301–400: no. 11, pp. 12–13; Simonsuuri B 101–200: no. 9, p. 11; no. 46, p. 116; no. 48, p. 116; Simonsuuri B 201–300: no. 7, pp. 9–10; no. 8, p. 10; Simonsuuri L 235: no. 47, p. 116; Burde-Schneidewind & Greverus A 1, Balys 3425: no. 41, p. 111; Burde-Schneidewind & Greverus A 2: no. 40, p. 110; no. 43, p. 113; no. 45, p. 115; Burde-Schneidewind & Greverus A 2, Balys 3425: no. 42, p. 112; no. 44, p. 114; Burde-Schneidewind & Greverus G 29, 30: no. 3, pp. 4–5; no. 14, p. 18; no. 15, p. 19; no. 16, p. 19; no. 17, p. 21; no. 18, p. 26; no. 19, p. 45; no. 20, p. 57; no. 21, p. 58; no. 22, p. 59.

(4.2.2.6.1) Animal demonic legend: AaTh 178A: no. 29, p. 90.

- (4.2.2.6.2) Robber legend: AaTh 956B: no. 31, p. 92.
 (4.2.2.7) Legend of magic: no. 85, p. 181.
 (4.3.1.1) Wisdom novella: no. 91, p. 185 (clever answer).
 (4.3.1.2) Fool's novella: AaTh group of 1319* ff. & 1539**, 1542**, 1543*, 1547*: nos. 57–68, pp. 157–165; AaTh group 1405–1429: no. 55, p. 145; no. 56, pp. 145–146; no. 79, pp. 179–180; AaTh group 1430–1439: no. 12, p. 13; AaTh 1951: no. 92, pp. 185–186.
 (4.3.1.3) Swindler novella: AaTh group 1405–1429: no. 54, p. 145; AaTh 1525 N+: no. 93, p. 186; no. 4, pp. 6–8; no. 5, p. 8.
 (4.3.1.4) Horror novella: no. 23, p. 79; no. 24, p. 83; no. 25, p. 84; no. 26, p. 86; no. 27, p. 87; no. 28, p. 88; no. 30, p. 91; no. 32, p. 94; no. 33, p. 95; no. 34, p. 96; no. 52, p. 143; no. 53, p. 144; no. 78, p. 179; no. 80, p. 180; no. 86, p. 182; no. 87, p. 182; no. 88, pp. 183–184; no. 89, p. 184.
 (4.3.1.7) Rumor: no. 98, p. 197.
 (4.3.4) Song: no. 1, pp. 1–2, no. 13, pp. 14–15.
 (4.4.2.1) Tale of lying: AaTh 1889, 1889E+: no. 94, p. 186; AaTh 1960+: no. 35, p. 99; no. 37, p. 102; no. 38, p. 105.
 (4.4.7) Joke: no. 2, p. 4; nos. 67–75, pp. 165–166 (“Boby-jokes”); no. 81, p. 180; no. 82, pp. 180–181 (“Children’s mouth”—jokes); no. 90, p. 185.
 No. 49, pp. 141–142: An Eskimo tale; it comes from a culture for which no genre system has yet been developed, and thus nothing can be said about this tale.

Lastly, the reviewer warmly recommends the volume to the professional audience for critical reading, and hopes that the 1984 and 1985 meeting will also produce interesting volumes.

NOTE:

1. A total of 163 papers was distributed; 42 of the first 88 published and examined papers deal with legends, rumor (1) and personal narrative (6).

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 1967 *Deutscher Sagenkatalog*. Vorbericht. X. Der Tod und die Toten. *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*, 13: 339–397.
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 1961 *Typen- und Motivverzeichnis der finnischen mythischen Sagen*. FFCommunications 182. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

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