Annotated Bibliography of Recent Publications on Russian Folklore
M. V. Reili. Institute of Russian Literature


Russian folklore is the subject examined in the course. Theoretical questions are illuminated systematically and with required completeness. The course contains sixteen lectures devoted to questions of folklore tradition, variation, contamination, genre formation, improvisation, time and space, composition, and plot.


The publication continues a series of books devoted to a new direction in Russian folkloristics -- study of the lexicography of folklore texts. The collection contains articles about the lexicography of epics, lyric songs, and wedding lamentations.

Articles written by the well known Russian scholar A. N. Afanasev in the 1850s and 1860s, and not reprinted in the twentieth century, have been included in the volume. An article in an appendix traces the establishment of Afanasev's scholarly conceptions and brings out the basic sources of "The Slavs' Poetic Views of Nature" and the place of this work in the Russian scholarly and cultural tradition. The book provides a list of sources which the author used, a full bibliography of Afanasev's works, commentary, and indexes.


In the next volume of the series "Russkaia pataennaia literatura" for the first time has been published in full part of the folklore collection of the outstanding Russian collector Nikolai Evgenevich Onchukov (1872-1942). The collection contains frivolous and obscene tales, and entertaining anecdotes.


This book publishes for the first time more than 400 mythological stories recorded in the Russian North during expeditions. An extensive commentary and list of little used words are given in the book and Old Russian texts having folklore-mythological parallels are included in an appendix. A typological connection has been established with contemporary evidence about paranormal phenomena.


The collection offers readers and investigators a group of works oriented toward the delineation of points of contact with sexual or other "low" areas of human life and art that are connected with them.


A textbook devoted to analysis of epic plot in regard to historical poetics. Special attention is devoted to the problems of the preservation and development of tradition based on materials from the epic school of the Riabinin-Andreev family. A classification of several epic plots is given according to their motifs.


This book offers specialists in folklore and ethnography, as well as lovers of the folk word a new edition of the collection of tales by the well known Russian researcher D. K. Zelenin (1878-1954). The first edition came out in 1914 and has not been reprinted since.

This volume contains the texts of cradle songs, tales, teasers, counting songs, game songs, and riddles. An appendix provides descriptions of the sources, and a glossary of dialectisms, archaic words, and turns of speech. A theoretical survey and analysis of the genres in children's folklore are presented in an introductory article.

[Translated by James Bailey]

---

Book Review


During the last quarter of a century developments in Russian scholarship about traditional culture, folklore, and music of the oral tradition have been marked by an ever increasing attention to the study of their dialectal diversity and by the expansion of so-called distributive investigations of local styles, including the cartography of these or other components of local traditions. "All-Russian" super-generalizations -- the so-called all-Russian genres, types, styles, plots, songs, and melodies -- that are typical for the past, have been subjected to more and more doubt.

Frontal field research of selected territories has shown the striking diversity of individual traditions and up to now has been marked by discoveries of hitherto unknown facts, forms, and even genres.

The book of essays and studies by the Petersburg ethnomusicologist V. A. Lapin represents the most important theoretical work of this trend. According to the author, "Russian musical folklore as a whole appears as a system of local traditions having various scales and historical depths, and having various levels of local features and national community. The intention of the book is to elucidate the historical factors and mechanisms for the formation and development of local traditions -- the actual phenomena for the realization of folk spiritual culture" (p. 3). Russian musical folklore (and this thesis is especially important) "has not been unified in any respect. In various parts of Russian ethnic territory local traditions have existed and..."