

zheny"), along with the articles on "The Serb Epos and History" and "The Slavic Folk Ballad," are distinguished by a common-sense approach all too rare in Slavic folklore study. Thus Kravtsov easily demonstrates the falsity of the too-often-repeated definition of the ballad as a "lyrico-epic" genre. The terms "lyric" and "epic," he properly insists, refer to types of subject development and not to emotional atmosphere. Viewed in this light, the ballad is purely epic. (In English we would probably say "narrative.") He also rejects as uneconomical any view of epos as derived from older traditions or legends (not to mention textual sources): there is no reason to suppose that epic songs, in an epic age, could not have arisen directly from the events they describe. But the fact that the epos is basically "historical" should not lead us to insist that it should be "history." It is not history, but song—in other words, art.

A few of the essays are spoiled by triviality or excessive devotion to Marxist shibboleths. The second essay, which has a promising beginning, breaks down because of the lack of a suitable theory of characterization. But on the whole the collection can be recommended.

WILLIAM E. HARKINS
Columbia University

LANGUAGE AND PROSODY OF THE RUSSIAN FOLK EPIC. By Roy G. Jones. Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 275. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972. 105 pp. 32 Dglds.

The problem of Russian folk versification has been under study since Vostokov's pioneering work in 1817. In the United States, significant contributions have been made by Roman Jakobson, Kiril Taranovsky, William Harkins, and James Bailey. Roy G. Jones's book is an ambitious attempt to give an in-depth analysis of the major problems of prosody and language in the Russian epic. The study is based on the *byliny* of Trofim Riabinin (one of the finest Russian singers) as recorded by Gilferding in 1871. Instead of the fourth edition of this collection (1949–51) which has been used, the first edition would have been more suitable, since (as Bailey has shown) the texts in it are more accurate in syllabification and stressing.

Jones discusses meter and rhythm, rhythmic units, repetition of prepositions, morphological variants within the line, epic formulas, and the development of the epic line in Russian. He defines the meter in terms of the obligatory stresses and demonstrates that the thirteen and eleven-syllable lines dominate. The repetition of prepositions is shown to have acquired metrical function; likewise, the choice between the long and short endings of adjectives is demonstrated to be determined by the meter. The author proposes that the development of the verse line in Russian evolved from the Proto-Slavic type reconstructed by Jakobson, and that the establishment of the dactylic ending of the line caused a rhythmic conflict in the originally trochaic line, which led to the elimination of the break and expansion of line length.

The line length as applied by Jones is not the actual length. He has added two unstressed syllables to those as counted from the first obligatory stress, whether or not there were any unstressed syllables in the anacrusis. This makes it hard to compare his findings with those in other works giving the actual number of syllables or feet.

FELIX J. OINAS
Indiana University