In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to the field of folk legends, past and present, and the information that they provide about the people who told them, the societies in which the storytellers lived, the world view that they had, and the spaces they inhabited. This book, based on the plenary papers of the 5th Celtic-Nordic-Baltic Folklore Symposium, held in Reykjavík in 2005, provides a valuable insight into the various ways in which scholars are approaching this material today. Containing papers by some of the foremost scholars in the field in Ireland, Great Britain, the Nordic countries, Estonia and the United States (Jacqueline Simpson, Anna-Leena Siikala, Arne Bugge Amundsen, Séamas Ó Catháin, Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, John Shaw, Bengt af Klintberg, John Lindow, Ulf Palmenfelt, Timothy R. Tangherlini, Úlo Valk, and Bo Almqvist), the book touches on a wide range of material concerning the study of legends, from theory and function, to historical and social analysis, traditional case studies and analysis of the way in which some of the earliest legends were collected, recorded and published as a form of national heritage.

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