

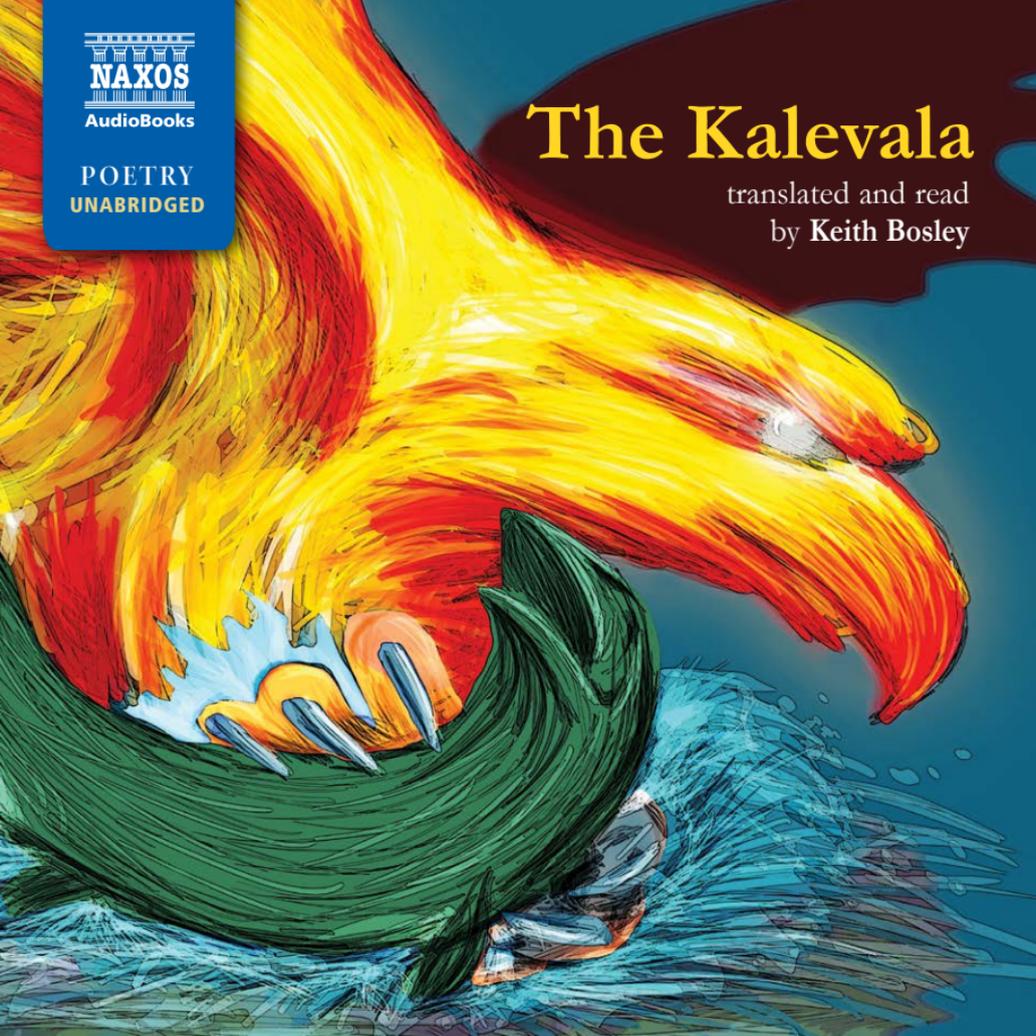


NAXOS
AudioBooks

POETRY
UNABRIDGED

The Kalevala

translated and read
by Keith Bosley



CD 1

1	Canto 1: In the Beginning	12:13
2	Canto 2: Felling and Sowing	13:15
3	Canto 3: The Singing Match	18:55
4	Canto 4: The Drowned Maid	17:57
5	Canto 5: The Mermaid	8:15

Total time on CD 1: 70:35

CD 2

1	Canto 6: A Brother's Revenge	8:12
2	Canto 7: The Castaway	12:47
3	Canto 8: The Wound	9:58
4	Canto 9: Iron and Blood	21:01
5	Canto 10: Forging the Sampo	17:46

Total time on CD 2: 69:44

CD 3

1	Canto 11: A Bond Made	13:55
2	Canto 12: A Bond Broken	17:32
3	Canto 13: The Demon's Elk	9:59
4	Canto 14: Elk, Horse, Swan	16:41

Total time on CD 3: 58:07

CD 4

1	Canto 15: Resurrection	22:42
2	Canto 16: To Build a Boat	14:43
3	Canto 17: Inside the Giant	22:00

Total time on CD 4: 59:25

CD 5

1	Canto 18: The Rivals	24:27
2	Canto 19: Vipers, Beasts, Pikes	17:41
3	Canto 20: Slaughtering and Brewing	20:40
4	Canto 21: The Wedding	14:39

Total time on CD 5: 77:27

CD 6

1	Canto 22: Laments	18:41
2	Canto 23: Instructions and a Warning	29:41
3	Canto 24: Departure	18:16

Total time on CD 6: 66:38

CD 7

1	Canto 25: Homecoming	26:14
2	Canto 26: A Perilous Journey	27:31
3	Canto 27: Magic and Mayhem	14:42
4	Canto 28: Into Hiding	10:02

Total time on CD 7: 78:29

CD 8

1	Canto 29: Conquests	21:03
2	Canto 30: Jack Frost	16:53
3	Canto 31: Feud and Serfdom	13:15
4	Canto 32: To Guard a Herd	19:29

Total time on CD 8: 70:40

CD 9

1	Canto 33: The Broken Knife	11:12
2	Canto 34: Father and Mother	8:47
3	Canto 35: Brother and Sister	13:24
4	Canto 36: The Cowbone Whistle	12:54
5	Canto 37: The Golden Bride	9:03
6	Canto 38: Girl into Gull	11:42

Total time on CD 9: 67:02

CD 10

1	Canto 39: Sailing to Northland	15:30
2	Canto 40: The Pike	12:36
3	Canto 41: The Pikebone Kantele	9:32
4	Canto 42: Stealing the Sampo	20:10
5	Canto 43: Battle at Sea	15:23

Total time on CD 10: 73:11

CD 11

1	Canto 44: The Birch Kantele	11:37
2	Canto 45: Death's Daughter Gives Birth	13:21
3	Canto 46: The Bear	23:15
4	Canto 47: Fire from Heaven	13:20
5	Canto 48: Fishing for Fire	12:59

Total time on CD 11: 74:32

CD 12

1	Canto 49: Moon and Sun	14:59
2	Canto 50: The Newborn King	22:15

Total time on CD 12: 37:14

Total time on CDs 1–12: 13:23:04

Elias Lönnrot

The Kalevala

translated by **Keith Bosley**

'Kalevala' is a place name – the abode of Kaleva, a mythical ancestor: compare with Ainola, the composer Jean Sibelius's house named after his wife, Aino. In English, the name of the epic has acquired an article (which Finnish lacks), just as have the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Kalevala is the home of our principal heroes: the shaman Väinämöinen ('the man of calm waters', these being the river Väinä, the Finnish version of the West Dvina, which flows into the Baltic Sea at the Latvian capital, Riga); the smith Ilmarinen, who forged the heavens (related to the Finnish word *ilma*, meaning 'sky' or 'weather'); and the rogue Lemminkäinen (related to *lempi* – 'favourite' or 'lover'). The principal heroine has no name: she is known only as the Maid of the North. Opposite Kalevala is Pohjola ('Northland'), sometimes identified with Lapland. The main cause

of disagreement is the *sampo*, an object never identified: the only clues are that it is made by Ilmarinen for Pohjola and that it brings prosperity to its owner.

In the world of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Johann Gottfried von Herder, nationhood was increasingly defined in terms of language and folklore: this was especially important for small nations that were ruled by empires – British, Swedish, Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman. Finland, a Swedish province until 1809, became a Russian Grand Duchy prior to independence, which was finally achieved in 1917 with the Russian Revolution. The Finns' long dreams of independence had centred on its non-Indo-European peasant language and its folklore, and prominent among collectors was Elias Lönnrot, a country doctor who believed that the poems his illiterate patients

sang had the quality of literature. Some poems had already attracted scholarly attention: one, printed in a travel book, had been translated by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1810 as his *Finnisches Lied*. Lönnrot had grander plans: modelling himself on the *Iliad*, he published the first edition of an epic in 1835. Such was the interest of his fellow collectors that he published a second edition – over twice the length of the first – in 1849, which now has classic status. For many Finns, the *Kalevala* is their national epic; but anyone reading the 50-odd translations will recognise its worldwide power.

‘How are your sagas, dear?’ The question of a former colleague of the present translator speaks volumes. The *Kalevala*, with its huge tradition of oral poetry, has little in common with the culture of its Nordic neighbours: it is cast in a totally unrelated language, it is primarily poetic, it is mythical rather than historic, and its heroes solve their problems with magic more often than with violence. And we must not forget the one other Finnish gift to the world: the sauna.

The present translation, first published

in 1989, is as literal as may be. Because Finnish has far fewer sounds than does English, alliteration is easy but cannot be reproduced in English: for example, towards the end of canto 4, ten lines have words beginning with the letter K. It is a pity that English (and Swedish and German and Latvian) translators took upon themselves the unnecessary restriction of reproducing what they perceived as the original metre, turning the trochaic tetrameter with its dancing Finnish irregularities into a deadly regular plod. English translators have no excuse: we have Gavin Douglas (the sixteenth-century Scottish bishop and translator of Virgil’s *Aeneid*), Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (Douglas’s contemporary) and George Chapman (the seventeenth-century English dramatist and translator) to show that in translating poetry the first feature to be lost is the metre. That is why the present translation is based on syllables. For more information, see the Introduction and Notes in the Oxford University Press edition.

Notes by Keith Bosley



Keith Bosley read French at the University of Reading; he also attended the Universities of Paris and Caen. For 30 years he worked for the BBC, mainly as an announcer on the World Service. He has published about 27 books: three are collections of his own poems; the rest are translations of poetry, including a Penguin Mallarmé, Pessoa and an anthology of German love poetry. Much of his translation work has been from Finnish, including the *Kalevala*, the *Kanteletar* (folk lyrics and ballads) and anthologies of Finnish and Finno-Ugrian language poetry. He is a Knight First Class of the Order of the White Rose of Finland.

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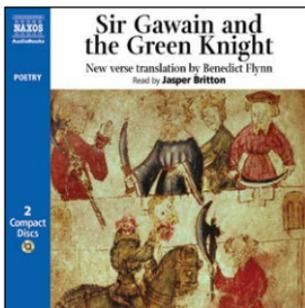
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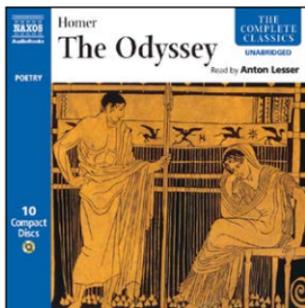
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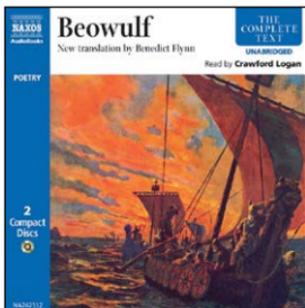
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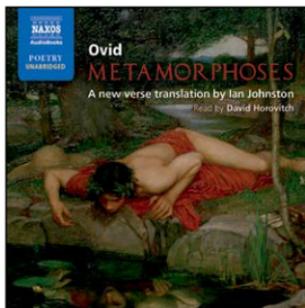
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