

PEER REVIEW OF THE SCIENTIFIC SERIES OF THE FINNISH LITERATURE SOCIETY



Publications for the scientific series of the Finnish Literature Society (SKS) are reviewed by referees after an internal assessment by the SKS Publishing Department. Promising manuscripts submitted for the SKS scientific series will be sent for review by at least two external, anonymous experts.

The publishing coordinator of the SKS Publishing Department will manage the review system in such a way that information is not disclosed to authors or third parties.

When an author submits his or her manuscript to the SKS for review, he or she assigns the exclusive right to publish the manuscript as a book for the duration of the review process. In the event the publisher decides to publish, a publishing agreement will be sent to the author. An author who receives a refusal to publish is free to offer the manuscript for publication to other publishers.

The peer reviewed scientific series of the SKS are the following:

*Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia*¹ (SKS editorial board)

Tietolipas (SKS editorial board)

*Suomi*² (SKS editorial board)

Studia Fennica (Studia Fennica editorial committee)

*Historiallisia Tutkimuksia*³ (Finnish Historical Society editorial board)

*Historiallinen Arkisto*⁴ (Finnish Historical Society editorial board)

Studia Historica (Finnish Historical Society editorial board)

Studia Biographica (editorial committee of the publication in question)

*Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja*⁵ (board of the Kalevala Society⁶)

The institution that nominates the referees has been entered in parenthesis after each publication.

ANONYMITY

Peer review is usually carried out anonymously: both the author and the referees remain anonymous to each other. For this purpose, the publisher requests that authors send their manuscript as a single file, with the

¹ Eng: Finnish Literature Society's Publications

² Eng: Finland

³ Eng: Historical Research

⁴ Eng: Historical Archives

⁵ Eng: Yearbook of the Kalevala Society

⁶ The 2013 Yearbook of the Kalevala Society, *Kirjailijoiden Kalevala* (Eng: The Writers' Kalevala), deviated from this model in that the scientific articles submitted for the book were peer reviewed by a single referee.

personal information of the authors removed. In the event the manuscript has several authors, they should be identified using the aliases Author 1, Author 2, Editor 1, Editor 2 etc.

In order for the manuscript to be brought before the editorial board, the publisher requires an alternative version of the table of contents that contains the personal information of the authors.

CONTENTS, STRUCTURE AND ASSESSMENT SCALE OF PEER REVIEW

A review should be started with **general remarks** concerning the proposed book. For each remark, the referee **should indicate which chapter of the manuscript the remark pertains to**. We recommend that reviews are structured according to the chapters of the manuscript being reviewed, in such a way that the referee indicates for each chapter where it would fall on the assessment scale and any proposed changes to the chapter. This is particularly important when reviewing edited volumes, which may include writers of varying quality. In addition, the referee needs to include an **overall assessment of the manuscript** at the end of the review.

The expert must present a reasoned opinion on the merits and flaws of the manuscript with regard to its contents, structure, illustrations if any, and other relevant matters. Experts are requested to use the following scale in assessing manuscripts:

- 1) Manuscript is ready for publication as it is.
- 2) Manuscript can be accepted if some changes and amendments are carried out.
- 3) Manuscript is not ready for publication, but is worth developing. A new manuscript will require a new round of reviews.
- 4) Manuscript is not up to the level of the scientific series of the Finnish Literature Society, and should be rejected.

A typical review should be 2–6 pages. The more detailed and reasoned the review, the more useful it will be for the SKS in deciding on the manuscript and for the author in improving the manuscript. Reviews that include concrete suggestions for improving the manuscript are of great help to authors. Copies of the anonymous reviews shall be sent to the author.

In the event a manuscript or article is assessed as a 2 or a 3 on the above scale, the authors shall be asked to attach a report of amendments to their amended manuscript, explaining in detail how the authors have taken into account the critical feedback in drafting their new manuscript. It is customary to then send the manuscript for a new round of reviews.

No fees will be paid for reviews, but expert review is considered an academic merit. Referees may mention in their CV or similar record that they have acted as a referee for the scientific series of the SKS.

By accepting the task of referee, the expert in question thereby confirms that he or she has understood the following principles and agrees to comply with them.

SUPPORT FOR PUBLISHING DECISIONS AND AUTHORS

The purpose of a review is to help the SKS editorial board in deciding whether an offered manuscript can be published and whether it is suitable for the scientific series of the SKS.

For example, the following questions can be considered when carrying out an assessment of the manuscript:

- Is the manuscript suitable for the scientific series of the SKS?
- Is the manuscript mainly comprehensible for readers with an understanding of the relevant field of science or for a wider academic audience?
- What are the merits of the manuscript for example from the perspective of producing new information or developing the expertise of professionals of the relevant field?
- Is the author well acquainted with the sources and the literature relating to his or her topic, and does the author make good use of them?
- Is the author's theoretical, methodological or conceptual framework properly connected with his or her empirical examples?
- Does the author present the data and methods in a way that is comprehensible and sufficiently detailed?
- Does the author provide support for his or her claims?
- Does the manuscript show what it claims in the introduction to show?
- Does the material presented in the body of the book support the conclusions?
- Is the manuscript clearly structured and easy to follow?
- How are the illustrations, if any, and the text connected?
- Are the illustrations informative and necessary?
- Does the manuscript have a balanced structure?
- Does the monograph form a well-grounded, coherent whole, where the thematic structure works from start to finish?
- Does the edited volume form a whole, the parts of which (introduction and individual chapters) support each other and form a coherent whole? A properly edited volume includes an extensive introduction that contextualises the research and the contents of the volume and presents its aims to the reader. At its best, the individual chapters in an edited volume are as cohesive as chapters of a book with different writers. The referee should mention the merits and possible flaws of individual chapters.

PRESENTATION OF SOURCES

In the event the referee feels that the sources of the manuscript or the use thereof are flawed, he or she should help the author by indicating the relevant literature. What are the key sources that the referee feels are missing from the manuscript?

If the manuscript is to a great degree the same as previously published material, this fact should be brought to the publisher's attention. Material that has already been published will not be republished. Any suspicions of plagiarism or improper use of citations or references should be mentioned.

SCHEDULE

The SKS publishing coordinator and the referee will agree on a due date for the review, by which time the review should be completed. The review period is generally eight weeks.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Peer review of the scientific series of the SKS is carried out anonymously both from the perspective of authors and of referees. If a referee receives an anonymous manuscript and recognises who the author is, he or she should inform the SKS publishing coordinator. The identity of referees must not be disclosed to the author.

All manuscripts submitted for peer review are confidential material. They may not be discussed or shown to third parties, unless there is a valid reason that has been agreed upon with the SKS publishing coordinator. The contents of an unpublished manuscript may not be exploited for personal gain.

If a referee has an evident conflict of interest with the contents of a manuscript or with its author or if he or she is otherwise involved with the matter, the referee must notify the SKS and reject the assignment. In selecting referees, the SKS seeks to avoid conflicts of interest. A person cannot be selected as a referee, if he or she is a close relative, work supervisor, employee or research supervisor of the author, or if he or she has jointly published material with the author/authors within the last three years.

HOW TO PRESENT FEEDBACK AND THE PUBLISHING DECISION

What kind of feedback is of most use to the author? A review should be written constructively, encouragingly, and with as many supporting arguments as possible, with a view to the fact that different writers have different styles, and diversity is a part of scientific research. Different interpretations are not flaws or errors. The feedback given to authors can be direct, but it must also be professional and based on facts.

When making a decision, the publisher will consider the manuscript as well as the reviews thereof. The expert body that nominated the referee may in its own assessment reach different conclusions than the referee. In such a case, the author will receive not only the review of his or her manuscript, but also the appended, differing opinion of the publisher. A positive review is not by itself a publishing decision. All publishing decisions relating to the scientific series of the SKS are made by the editorial board of the SKS.

ARCHIVING OF MATERIALS

The SKS archives the manuscripts sent for review and the reviews along with information on the authors. When submitting this material, the author gives consent to archiving. The material will remain confidential for 25 years, during which period they can only be accessed with special permission from the publisher. Said permission may be given for example to representatives of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity or the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies.

These instructions are based on the instructions on peer review, confidentiality and conflicts of interest of the Association of Finnish Science Publishers (Fin: Suomen tiedekustantajien liitto) and the Academy of Finland (Fin: Suomen Akatemia). We are committed to complying with the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity's guide Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland. http://www.tenk.fi/sites/tenk.fi/files/HTK_ohje_verkkoversio040413.pdf.pdf#overlay-context=fi/ohjeet-ja-julkaisut

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