FF NETWORK

FOR THE FOLKLORE FELLOWS

No. 29 **December 2005**

In this issue:

Publisher:
The Folklore Fellows by courtesy of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters

www.folklorefellows.fi
ISSN 0789-0249

An international group of folklorists gathers at the conference of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research in Tartu, July 2005, to look into survival strategies in the field of folkloristics

Front row (from the left): Prof. Dorothy Noyes (U.S.A.), Prof. Ezekiel Alembi (Kenya), Prof. Charles Briggs (U.S.A.), Prof. Galit Hasan-Rokem (Israel), Prof. Anna-Leena Siikala (Finland), Prof. Ilana Rosen (Israel); middle row (from the left): Prof. Dan Ben-Amos (U.S.A.), Prof. Ülo Valk (Estonia), Prof. Margaret Mills (U.S.A.), Prof. Regina Bendix (Germany), Prof. Carl Lindahl (U.S.A.), Prof. Barbro Klein (Sweden), Prof. Sadhana Naithani (India); back row (from the left): Prof. Pertti Anttonen (Finland) and Prof. Ulf Palmenfelt (Sweden). Photo by Elo-Hanna Seljamaa.

Research, teaching and quality assurance

by *Anna-Leena Siikala,* Professor
Folklore Fellows Network, Chair

There has been increasing talk in Western universities of quality assurance. This is a matter of importing into universities patterns of management based on the notion of New Public Management. The imposition on universities of methods of measuring quality developed for the management of the processing industry and large organisations is particularly problematic. The basic idea is that only that which can be measured can be improved. Measurement, however, is difficult when it involves examining scientific knowledge. Quality assurance and its methods of measurement focus on the outer framework of research and processes of learning. In quality assurance attention is directed primarily at the learning environment and scientific networks. The secondary object of investigation is administrative arrangements and learning processes. The third level, which attracts little attention, is presented as a hard-to-attain area of silent knowledge, which is in the control of specialists. Precisely this silent knowledge is the focal point of research. Here is where academic traditions are concealed, their methods brought forth through knowledge and scholars' special skills.

The academic world has its own methods of quality assurance in research and teaching developed over a long period. Continual evaluations, from approval of study projects to reviews of books and carrying out official duties, represent this work, apart from evaluation by one's peer group. But for example the methods of testing quality widespread in European Union university departments smack more of an attempt at a tighter management of universities and the search for savings to be made than about a true effort to improve the quality of research and teaching.

In an administratively and economically tightening situation it is nonetheless worth taking the realities of the academic world into account. In July 2005 in Tartu at the conference arranged by ISFNR a group of leading folklorists from around the world, inaugurated by Prof. Charles Briggs and Prof. Galit Hasan-Rokem, gathered to look into survival strategies for our field. Folkloristics is usually taught either in small specialist departments or as part of the programme of some other faculty, often literature or linguistics. Thus the increase of collaboration with folklorists of one's own country and with those interested in folkloristics in allied fields brings greater strength to research and teaching. The strengthening of international cooperation among folkloristics departments will be an important means of survival in the future.

The external objectives of quality assurance measurement mentioned above may also be seen as developmental challenges affording extra resources. In Finland there are five folkloristics departments. However, they are small, and cannot respond to all the demands on research and teaching. Collaboration in the field of postgraduate education was already beginning in the 1980s; at present this takes place very much at a national level in the departments' common doctoral programmes. In the 1990s the collaboration broadened, on the initiative of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters' Folklore Fellows' Network, into an international research school in the form of the Folklore Fellows' Summer School courses.

Research and learning enviroments can be extended by uniting the specialisms of different nations. As well as exchanges of researchers and teachers, doctoral supervision could be developed as a joint effort. It is easy to reach the best specialist supervisor nowadays through electronic media even from abroad. Networking takes place naturally in connection with research projects. Nowadays research grants are sought more and more often from international sources, which require the collaboration of a research team representing a number of different countries. Networking also suits postgraduate work, as for example the Scandinavian-Baltic research training network funded by NorFan has recently shown. Networking demands the recognition of shared themes and the establishing of interactive groups with common interests. As a forum for seeking out companions the Folklore Fellows' Network can be used, with its 600 members throughout the world.

Increasing collaboration presupposes knowledge of the present situation of departments undertaking teaching and research in folkloristics. Folklore Fellows' Network readily gives column space to writers who want to present a picture of their own department and a profile of present research and teaching.

Homo narrans – people making narratives

by *Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj,* Professor of Folkloristics
University of Turku

Narration is a cultural activity, which we learn along with our mother tongue as we grow up in our particular life circle. By means of narration we create common ground, we amuse each other, we present opinions about the world situation and we evoke approval or veiled criticism. Narration is such a natural everyday event that we are not even always aware of it; still less do we notice that we are ourselves narrators. Narration can be communicated through many different channels – for example, by means of a novel, a play, a film or a dance – but here I limit myself to dealing with the process through which people present integral verbal communications to their hearers.

Narration in its many facets

Narratives differ from each other in content, structure and function. Long fantasy narratives, such as fairy-tales, call for a different context from short reports of ephemeral matters, which we recount to each other every day. The field of fairy-tales in Finland has been centrally concerned with questions of two-person relationships and the everyday life of families, among other things. At the same time, it has been possible to find in their disposition of characters a clear anchor in the underlying culture where the fairy tales are recounted. It was easy for listeners to identify with the hero of the tales, as he was depicted most often as a young, poor boy, whilst the heroine was a stepdaughter or orphan. The rural community of the late nineteenth century shows itself, in Satu Apo's research (1995), as stern and harsh: it was marked by social aggression and pushiness. The dreams of fairy-tale characters for the future were material wish-fulfilment hopes and related to the world of both narrator and audience. In this sense fairy-tales function as an interpretation of the present.

On the other hand, even the most everyday micro-narrative has its place in the life of the community, but it has to be counted worth telling in order to be heard. It has to be somehow startling in its content (such as urban legends of daring or terror), to hit the mark with its comedy (such as a political joke or a cultural anecdote), to be credible in its turn of events (such as a local legend about a healer) or interesting or pertinent in its detail (such as an autobiographical reminiscence). In addition, the tale has to be adapted to the setting where it is told. If a narrative does not relate to our cultural expectations, it will not find a sympathetic listener. As listeners we react with an "And then what?", and we are disappointed if the narrator can't get off the starting-post with the yarn.

In researching narratives folklorists have over many years recognised and named a group of genres and their characteristics. There was intensive discussion about the fundaments, theories and expectations of genre analysis, especially in the 1960s to 1980s; the best-known names in the discussion were Roger D. Abrahams, Lauri Honko and Dan Ben-Amos. Anna-Leena Siikala summarises the main line of the discussion thus: "The main interest has been in the ontological definitions of genre, its position as maintaining or developing cultural form, and the classification criteria of genre systems" (Siikala and Siikala 2005: 87). The naming of genres has resulted in the use of already existing words (folktale, legend, anecdote, joke, rumour, gossip) and novelties born out of research needs (memorate, chronicate). Generally the use of a word as a term is more specific than in ordinary language (e.g. myth), or else it seeks out the limits of the area of use in its novelty. Some of the most established genres of the narrative tradition have already faded from our field: for example, one has to travel far to hear spontaneously told fairy-tales. Legends of local personages (such as priests, people in charge, healers, village fools) or supernatural turns of events (such as hauntings by the dead), which belong within the tradition of oral narratives, were still in the 1970s a much-resorted-to oral tradition in Finland. Now the telling of these local or belief legends has fallen into desuetude. An interest in tradition may, however, lend these genres a new life, if people begin to consciously hone their narrative skills, just as some now teach the composition of *Kalevala*-metre poetry or the presentation of laments. The "new life" will focus upon specially created opportunities for the

presentation of tradition, known for example from Sweden, and in its function it will be different from the spontaneous use of narratives.

Genres vary, but narration does not disappear. Around us have always been those who recount for example their own life or relieve their curiosity, their ill-will or their other pressures through rumours and gossip. Now rumour and gossip are, like any form of narrative, suitable objects of study. But it is only in recent times that researchers have become interested in the so-called "life story". People's biographical discourse is now approached by representatives of many disciplines. A common terminology between different fields is still in the process of formation. But at the heart of research are everyday life and a person's "own history", and researchers are interested in what people relate about their lives, to whom they relate it, and how they emphasise the experiences and memories of their own life. Amongst other things, the concepts of "reminiscence" and "oral history" may be used in relation to spoken as well as written recollections. The experiences of families and of individual people have got researchers talking, and the core of their interest is in wars, the toil of evacuation, family history or women's work experiences (Peltonen 1996 and 2003; Raninen-Siiskonen 1999; Ukkonen 2000; Latvala 2005).

The narrator produces far more than mere so-called stories in his or her speech. For example, in the course of an interview which maps the stages of a person's life the knowledge mediated may contain surprisingly few of the narrative genres recognised of old by the folklorist. Taina Ukkonen emphasises that many factors affect the construction of reminiscences, such as for example the number of people reminiscing, the division of dialogue over the course of the interview, the researcher's way of forming questions, the nature of the dialogue, the experiences and the personal characteristics of those reminiscing, and moreover how they have recalled the matters they recount. Side by side with the stories arise various descriptions. (Ukkonen 2000: 111–117.) In the following example the woman named Meeri remembers what a cleaner's work was like in the Valmet engine room at Pansio:

> *Taina*: You became a cleaner in the engine room. Can you tell us a bit about that work?
> *Meeri*: Well, it was really boring, really boring and hard, I only did it for the money. I used to drag one of those long-handled brushes behind me there and sometimes I pushed it in front of me. The engine-room floor there was laid with those sort of small wooden blocks, so it was really hard work to push that brush, sometimes I laughed to think there was no sense in this work at all, my thoughts were always whirring round somewhere else, then sometimes I would say that I was counting out as many long days as those pieces of wood glued to the floor . . . [the description continues with Meeri's recollections of her relationships with the male workforce]. (Ukkonen 2000: 115–116.)

Meeri convincingly depicts the everyday monotony and drudgery of the work. She so to speak paints a set piece of it, into which, in another connection, an event can be fitted, from the recollection of which a narrative is formulated. The description is multifaceted in its type and contains in addition to reports of varying lengths also the narrator's opinions and explanations, as well as analysis and comparison (Ukkonen 2000: 116).

Someone's usual everyday life does not include many true stories, asserts linguist Matti Suojanen on the basis of his fieldwork, during which he recorded all the dialogues presented over the course of a twenty-four-hour period by one informant. Merely being together does not produce stories, since "narrativity demands situations in which verbal communication is foremost and in which there is a suitable fuse: material, community, purpose and story-tellers" (Suojanen 1996: 122). Suojanen followed his subject, a south-western Finnish farmer, with a tape-recorder on his shoulder, to his sister, to the tractor repair shop, to the store, to discussions about inheritance. Discourses defined as stories consisted of only around 3 per cent of the daytime recordings (Suojanen 1996: 115).

When researchers pay attention to the position of so-called good narrators *vis-à-vis* ordinary people and their everyday concerns, the identification of narrative genres demands a new perspective. If the defining characteristics are sought primarily not in the content of the genres but also in their form, the division as formulated by R. E. Longacre (1976: 197–231) into narrative and expository discourse appears effective, since the characteristics of these genres are clearly distinguished. Narrative always has a narrator, who appears in the first or third person. Narrative takes place in past time, and events are linked to each other in a chronological framework. Expository discourse for its part does not necessarily contain indications of a narrator, but is directed to the matter in hand. "Time is not focal and the linkage between ideas is a logical not a temporal one." If we start from such a division, many traditional genres, such as folktale and legend, as well as many first-person presentations by a narrator may be classified within the narrative category.

The structure of narrative

A person living in their own cultural surroundings distinguishes narrative from other spoken communications. In general, a narrative begins with such clear distinguishing marks relating to structure, content and oral-type phrasing that these indicate when the unfolding discourse changes into a narrative (Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1996: 159–162). The narrative may be analysed for example on the so-called Labovian, or narrative scheme, model (Labov and Waletzky 1967), the phases of which are exposition, complication, resolution, moral and coda (Kintsch 1977: 38). In the narrative's exposition the background to the events, along with the time and place, is explained to the audience. In the beginning the characters of the narrative are also presented. The complication offers the audience something surprising or at least interesting, and the events presented there are resolved in the resolution phase, where the narrative threads are tied up. In the moral the narrator's own opinions come out. They may be verbal expressions at the start or conclusion of the narrative, or may become clear in the course of unravelling the plot in the narrator's choice of words or use of voice. The coda is where the narrator returns matters to the present day. At the beginning of the narrative may be placed a so-called abstract, where the narrator already indicates the point of the tale and gives a short summary of the events to come.

Many variables affect how the structure of the narrative is adapted in different circumstances. In what follows I compare two passages from the Sysmä verger Juho Oksanen, interviewed by me on many occasions, which differ markedly in their realisation. The point of discussion is the legend of a local minister, "Dean Renqvist on his way to visit the sick", which I taped in the course of the years in four different interview settings (Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1996: 123–137). The passages to be considered here are variants 2 and 3; there was around a year between their recordings:

Variant 2

0 . . . it's all fiction, isn't it, but about Renqvist, lots of things have been put down to him.
4 A fir tree
2 the horse stopped short, refused to budge.
3 But when he looked through his ring
4 and then he saw.
3 So there was the priest (– –) or may it have been the bridle ring he looked through
4 and then he saw what was stopping the horse from going on.
1 There was one case (– –) a priest was being taken to see a sick person
2 but the horse stopped short in the mid (– –)
4 A fir tree was being dragged across
5 and the Dean said, "We're too late now." The person was gone.
6 Anecdotes like this.

Variant 3

0 By the way, you once asked me if there was anything, well.
1 He was fetched to visit a sick person.
2 But the horse suddenly stopped short, nothing would make it go on. What could it be?
3 The Dean takes off his ring and looks through it.
4 A fir tree was being dragged across the road, right in front of the horse's nose.
5 "We are late now," says the Dean, "the sick person's dead."(3 sec)
6 Legends they are, just legends I don't believe them.

The numbers at the beginning of each line indicate the ideal schematic order of the narrative, which indeed occurs in variant 3. The points and commas indicate pauses in the speech, but dashes show hesitations. The narrative plot appears clearly as an integral unit in variant 3, and does so badly in variant 2, where Oksanen returns repeatedly to the same points and then leaves them unfinished. Only in the concluding section of the passage does he relate point 1, the exposition, which belongs to the narrative's beginning.

To understand the narrative it is important to know that its protagonist was Henrik Renqvist, who worked as minister in Sysmä from 1865 to 1895. Renqvist was known as a good and active pastor – even his horse knew to pause when a parishioner approached.

In the short narrative appears the folk-belief motif of unseen supernatural forces which stop the horse. A human can only see them if he looks at the road through some round object like a ring. Thus the minister gains the knowledge that the sick person who he was visiting is already dead. The fir tree which appears in the narrative is a tree symbolic of death, which spirit beings drag across the road as a sign that a death has occurred.

Juho Oksanen was known in Sysmä as a good narrator. It is necessary to consider why he failed in the second variant. In terms of memory technique it is clear that when the narrator gets to begin his presentation spontaneously (variant 3), the result is usually good. The subject matter of the narrative is then in his head, and he has time to recall the series of events and perhaps parts of its standard verbal expression. If the tension of the interview situation is completely different from what a new narrative requires, then the narrator undergoes a so-called

"change of world" (Chafe 1980: 46–47), in connection with which hesitation and stammering are common. This is what happened in variant 2. Oksanen had to respond to a question posed out of the blue, which took him into supranormal subject matter, and his presentation suffered (Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1996: 123–137).

The comparison of narrative presentations as literate texts emphasises, albeit relatively, the differences between them, their being "better" or "worse". When heard, even a bad version does not remain a torso, since the narrator can emphasise the climax of the narrative by the use of his voice (for example, by the regulation of pitch and volume, or imitation). In performance far more can be made clear than the text itself actually relates (Siikala 1980: 381). The reception of the narrative in its place of presentation is made easier also by the fact that within the audience's cultural competence belongs command over the narrative scheme. The listener fills in those gaps remaining in the narrative, and moulds a logical whole out of it. But the difference between a comprehensible and an enjoyable presentation is nonetheless an essential one.

The Labovian model offers a useful aid when so-called micro-narratives, which most oral narratives are, are compared. It has been noted that if a reputedly good narrator departs from the "standard model", there will be a particular reason for it. Gillian Bennett (1986: 413–434) analysed why in the stories she had taped parts of the narrative structure were emphasised contrary to expectations. I select from Bennett's interesting material and its precise analysis one where Edie relates her strange experience (capitals indicate a raising of the voice):

> Edie: Shall I tell you why I have this belief as well, which sounds really . . . I mean, you'll think "Did she see it, or didn't she?" It's the one thing that happened in my life when my father died.
>
> We went to the funeral and it was in town. We went to the funeral – Mother lives at Brighton on the south coast – and the funeral was over and everything and we were sort of coming back, and Aunty's staying with Mother – you know how you do all these arrangements? And I went in to look at my father's bedroom before I came away. I just went and had a look, both the bedrooms. I just wanted to look, you know.
>
> And I just stood there looking and I SAW three whiffs of smoke. D'you KNOW that? You know. Like a CIGARETTE! Well, I smoke, but I wasn't smoking then. I'm sure I DID! You know what I MEAN? And my father was a very heavy smoker, you know.
>
> It sounds crazy, this.
>
> Now, all right. I could be wrong about that. Somebody else could have looked in the bedroom and had a cigarette before I went in. But I honestly DID! About three RINGS, something like THAT [demonstrates].
>
> Isn't it ODD, that?
>
> Now the only thing I've sort of satisfied myself was, "Oh yes. Somebody else has been upstairs and they've been in there and had a cigarette."
>
> But they were THERE!

Bennett emphasises that the open ending of the narrative has a clear problem-solving function. Edie does not finish the story with the expected sort of conclusion, for example: "I thought the smoke must have been my father's spirit." This would seem comic and make her unbelievable. By showing her own doubt over how the tobacco smoke had got into her father's room, she in fact encourages the listener to specify the point of the narrative. Around 90 per cent of Edie's story is stage-setting for the events and evaluation of what she has told. Yet in the model developed by Labov and Waletzky the orientation section of is at most about one third of the whole, but usually shorter. By breaking the standard structural balance, Edie indicates that the focus of the narrative is not upon the events themselves, but on affirming their truthfulness.

Bennett's material also reveals that the storytellers she interviewed emphasise the time of their stories' opening more precisely than normal. The events are said to have occurred, for example, "in January 1971", "two years last Christmas", "in the summer of '47", "the second week of August". When events are also localised specifically, the narrators assure their listeners that supernatural events were true and experienced. (Bennett 1986: 430.) In traditional tales the definition of time is usually very vague (for example, "once", or "then") (Kaivola-Bregenhøj 2001), or else a special time may be created for the narrative, or, as Alessandro Portelli (1991: 59) states, "a time outside time, a time without time". When someone speaks of their own supernatural experiences, they may feel a need to specify the time of the occurrence. Bennett remarks that her interviewees spoke as if it were a question of making a witness statement.

Researchers' interest has been roused by the question of whether the narrator is conscious of the existence of structural patterns. Differing from most scholars (such as Vladimir Propp 1968: 112), Alan Dundes (1976: 78–80) believes that narrators to some extent "know" what structural patterns exist in the background of their tales. To my mind it is also clear that habitual narrators hone their presentations in the mind, and are then conscious of the structural divisions of their narratives. For ex-

ample, the American story-teller Ed Bell specified to his interviewer Richard Bauman how a narrator who has held the stage for too long brings his presentation to a successful conclusion:

> You know, when we used to tell these stories, we was out around a campfire, and uh, you know, you don't have long to tell a story. The other fella's just waitin' there, right now, he . . . he wants to tell *his* story. You got to make it just as short as you can, so you can cut off every limb that's in the way – just go right down the center. (Bauman 1986: 102.)

Ed Bell's metaphor of tree limbs lying in the way of progressing the narrative shows that he was familiar with the structure of his tales and was capable of making swift changes.

The structure of tales works like a narrator's backbone, but it also gives listeners the weapons to understand the narrative. Narrative schemes have been called "structures of expectation" (Tannen 1984) for a reason, which narrator and audience share as their cultural capital. Walter Kintsch (1977), who is one of many scholars who have dealt with the analysis and recollection of the narrative, emphasises how the understanding of a narrative depends on whether we have a scheme available by which to organise the narrative. It is difficult for us to understand Indian myths, for example, because they differ in their four-fold repetition from the scheme we are used to. Children's story chains may be upset by tales which are exceptional, but the scheme returns the story to a form corresponding to the norm.

The presentation setting of narratives

The variants cited earlier of Juho Oksanen's legend of the minister on a journey to meet a sick person perhaps did not fully open themselves up to the reader. There may be many reasons for this, for example, that a narrative presented orally is never the same when transcribed into writing as when told. The reader does not enter the atmosphere of the performance setting, or have any knowledge of the cultural context of Sysmä, for example the legends told there and their characters. Only when a number of local legends of minister Renqvist's and other Sysmä ministers' undertakings have been heard does the micro-narrative about the minister assume its place in the Sysmä jigsaw. And finally: since in this article we cannot place the narrative in its textual context, nor can we hear the narrator's vocal emphasis (for example the stress in the sentence "A fir tree was being dragged across the road"), as a written version the micro-narrative I cited remains more limited than the forms originally presented.

"Performance situation" as a concept is polysemous. Long prose narratives, such as folktales, demand a setting with a concentrated audience. Linda Dégh, who in her research has brought Hungarian fairy-tale tellers to the world's notice, has analysed performance situations. She asserts that the listeners' enthusiastic comments, arguments and even doubting or sneering observations appeared to encourage the narrator. These were signs to her of the audience's active participation. Often even the smallest gesture by listeners could influence the narrator and how he moulded his presentation. It either helped or disturbed him in the production of his narrative. "The tale becomes more beautiful and colorful when the narrator feels that his listeners are with him, living each moment along with him; the more complete the audience cooperation, the more perfect becomes the tale" (Dégh 1969: 113–119).

The researcher who analyses old archive material, or new material gathered by another interviewer, does not perceive the tension of the performance situation (the mental state of the narrator at that moment, the other listeners, external impulses, etc.), and is not able to check its effect on the narration. But in one's own interviews a researcher is both a participant and a recorder, who has reason to distinguish his or her presence and its effect. The dialogic research position has been emphasised in recent years in Finnish research. (Vasenkari and Pekkala 1999.) The researcher distinguishes his or her part, and that of the interviewee, in presenting the research material and formulating conclusions. He or she is conscious of and publicises his or her own premises and even questions them (Aro 1996: 28). At its best this perspective brings a new depth and many-sidedness to research. At its worst the researcher publishes a diary-like opening statement, but does not make use of it in the analysis.

In my own interviews I have noticed a clear distinction between two-person interviews and those between several people. In repeated interview settings the narrator's presentations begin to expand, and the subject matters of the narratives link together in long thematic clusters. The narrator begins to fulfil the expectations he or she believes the interviewer to have. In communal situations those present take turns to speak and the tales are shorter than in interviews. The subject matters may vary markedly from each other. The atmosphere of

trust which arises during an interview dissipates, pauses are abandoned, the narrator's comments lessen, the speech tempo gathers pace and laughter grows stronger. Cultural differences of course are great, since for example the Finnish speech tempo is noticeably slower than the American, for example, and allows pauses to take place in the gaps of the narrative.

Matti Suojanen (1996: 122) spoke of "fuses" needed to set a process of narration off. This "fuse" is a fitting concept needed when attempting to explain why in certain settings narration takes place, and in others it does not. Jennifer Coates describes in her research work *Women Talk* a group of British female friends who meet regularly. Between meetings many months might pass, but when they came face to face again, they each recounted the latest episode in their life story. (Coates 1996: 94.) Being together was marked by a noisy buzz of chat, but as soon as one of them began her narrative the others quietened down to listen. The subject matter might be any everyday thing, as is shown by what Coates regarded as a typical tale, "Sundresses" (the line division and ellipses follow Coates's presentation):

> Well I saw those [dresses] um on Wednesday when
> I was up there,
> And then my mother phoned me up and said,
> 'Oh I want to get a couple of these lengths which I've seen in Watford',
> cos she is going to America in a couple of weeks' time,
> [. . .]
> And she said, 'I want a couple of sundresses
> and can you just run them up for me'.
> So I said, 'Yeah, I saw them myself',
> and I said, 'Before you go and get them in John Lewis
> go in St Albans market,
> cos I've seen dress lengths ready cut,
> the lot for four ninety-nine'.
> And she said, 'Oh I haven't got time to go in St Albans.
> I've seen the ones I want anyway in John Lewis's
> and I don't think there were much difference in price.'
> So I – and she was talking to me about them
> and saying how nice they were,
> and I said, 'Yeah well I nearly bought myself one'.
> And then my Dad phoned up last night,
> And he said, 'Go and get yourself one,
> We'll give you the money'.
> [. . .]
> Didn't need asking twice.
> But when I went up there
> I was glad really,
> cos in – where they had the finished lengths they only had the prints
> and I was going to get one of those.
> [. . .]
> God I've wanted a plain black sundress for twenty years.
> Now I've got one.

Coates gathers many interesting details from this narrative, such as the richness of repartee, which she considers a characteristic feature of narratives presented by women. Women wish to bring the narrators to the fore by mentioning them by name, whereas men's narrative world is calmer and its characters nameless (Coates 1996: 98). A setting of friends talking together is normally marked by dialogue: the listeners already know from experience that they too will have their turn to speak and the interest of the listening group is guaranteed. They come together precisely because they want to speak and exchange experiences.

Spontaneous narration latched onto daily conversation differs clearly from the presentations of so-called good narrators. The setting is not specially arranged, and the listening group's interest is not guaranteed, but has to be regained from one round of speaking to the next. In these situations the talker often opens his own turn by taking the listening along with him, by saying for example "You know one thing . . .", or with the repartee "I remember", by which he marks out his memory as important and personal. Thus he ensures a way into the matter being dealt with. (Tainio 1997: 291–292.) This sort of expression is found also in some of Juho Oksanen's very personal memories, out of which a crystalised narrative entity managed to form (Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1996: 102). Significantly, speakers could also open their part with an "I don't remember" phrase, which has been seen as a minimising of one's own position of authority or as overturning the expectations concerning the event under discussion (Tainio 1997: 293).

The functions and meanings of narration

The amusement and instruction of listeners most often emerge when the functions of narration begin to be specified. It is indeed clear that by means of an amusing story it is very easy and safe to reserve the opening slot for oneself. In most narrative settings – be it a question of an interview or a spontaneous conversation – a diverse mesh of meanings is interwoven, which a listener can sometimes investigate afterwards: what the narrator really wished to say. The anthropologist Fredric Roberts (1978: 77), who researched a small Häme village's story-telling, has well grasped one of the central functions of

narration when he writes: "the narrator, by means of his story-telling, takes into his control subjectively – though retroactively – situations and other people; he can change a perhaps originally tedious and tasteless situation into a matter of amusement to others and thus gain for himself additional respect and satisfaction". From the narrator's point of view it is a question of his controlling his own or his close circle's past.

Of the functions of a narrative, the listener grasps first that or those which harmonise best with his own situation. The plot of the narrative has to join the current of the discussion of that moment, either sympathetically, carrying it forward, or else differing from it, if the narrator wishes to give a different opinion. Turns in the plot are first discerned, but if the narrator has time for comments, these are usually presented. The comments, the narrator's own interpretation of what is recounted, are often found in the narrative's opening or closing sentences. Juho Oksanen fitted in a clear interpretation in variant 3 of the micro-narrative cited above: "Legends they are, just legends, I don't believe them" (Kaivola-Bregenhøj 1996: 124). Sometimes the choice of words and the narrator's vocal emphases and gestures tell even more than straight verbal comments. Anna-Leena Siikala (1990: 92) has identified ten different characteristics by which a narrator's viewpoints may be recognised in the presentation.

People relating narratives hide many such signals in their tales, which do not reveal themselves on a first hearing. I take as an example a narrative which I taped in 1992 when I interviewed an Ingrian Finnish woman, whom I call Anna. Anna was 64 when we met. She dwelt in a village, to the south-west of St Petersburg, where I interviewed other women that same summer. The narrative is found right at the beginning of the recording, nor did it particularly attract my attention while still in the interview situation. I had had time to hear several similar narratives, and in the situation itself my whole attention was taken up in ensuring the interview passed off all right and in making contact with the interviewee I was meeting. This narrative, to which I give the name "Evacuated to Finland", began to open itself to me only after several hearings and readings:

> Well, when I was a child, we lived over there at Virkkilä, with my mother and father. My sister was sent to Germany. The Germans came here. They gave us a whole twelve hours in which to empty the village. Everyone had to leave. After eight o'clock in the evening no one was allowed to go anywhere. And by six o'clock in the morning everything had to be ready to be taken to Estonia. We were given one horse and the children . . . we had to put all our belongings in bags. All the cattle had to be left behind, and everything else we possessed. And so we came to Hatsina (– –) the Nazis had brought us there. And so we waited. Then we were given a wagon and we were brought here to the Baltic coast. (– –) First we were taken (– –) they were enormous soldiers' barracks. Well, the military mansions, the military mansions where we were billeted. The Jews were in one. We were in the other one. We were in the soldiers' mansions. Reckon we spent a week there, and then we were taken to the coast, to the Baltic Sea coast. And then I remember, it was a German boat, the boat was called the Siilas, and there were sixteen villages on the boat, we were all put on board. They're calling out Virkkilä village, all the children and all the adults from Kousunkylä, we all got on the boat and we were brought to Rauma, to Rauma we were brought, Rauma harbour.

In the text, commas and points show pauses in the speech, while dashes indicate small fumblings.

Anna's story depicts the first of those swift forced moves which the Ingrians were subjected to during the Second World War and several times after it. A good fifty years had passed since the events by the time the story was told to me, and in the course of the years it had shrunk to something rather short. The narration began very calmly, but then quickly moved on without pausing for any details. It was by no means the most tragic of the narrator's experiences, since the sojourn in Finland was one of the best in Anna's life story, and this journey marked the beginning of that period.

For me the drama of the story and some of its meanings emerge from the details. The second sentence, "My sister was sent to Germany" (in Finnish just two words: "Sisko Saksaan"), is perhaps the shortest description a narrator could give about the life of a close relative. It is not clarified to us whether Anna's sister had already fled to Germany before the war, or whether she was separated from the rest of the family and sent there to a labour camp. The sister is not, however, the main subject of this story, so Anna passes quickly over her as she begins the avalanche of reminiscences.

The expressions in the narrative reveal more of the drama, which does not necessary come out in a gestureless narrative or in the turns of a rapidly progressing plot. The compulsory move and its effects on people's everyday lives are evident in the choice of verbs and their forms. When the journey from home to Estonia begins, the verbs used by the narrator are in the passive, for example: "no one was allowed", "we were taken to Estonia" , "we were given one horse", "we were given a wagon",

”we were brought”, ”we were taken”. The passive indicates in most instances that the decision-making and direction of activities were not in the hands of the narrator or her family. They were the objects of the activity directed by the German army, which lay behind the compulsory moves. Sometimes, however, the sentences indicate that the actors, the “we”, were many, for example: “we had to put all our belongings in bags”. The “we” form in fact emerges forcefully in the narrative: “we” (in its various forms) is repeated twenty times in the story. Only once, at the end of the narrative, does Anna produce a sentence which relates to her personal memory: ”And then I remember . . .”. In speaking about herself she mainly talks about “us”, that is her family, relations, village, us Ingrian Finns.

In her short narrative Anna mentions many place names (Virkkilä, Estonia, Hatsina, the Baltic, Kousunkylä and Rauma). The listener or reader receives the impression that Anna is drawing in her mind a map, which becomes more detailed in step with the progress of the journey. By means of repetition she seems to pause at certain places (the thrice-mentioned “Baltic Sea coast” and four-times mentioned “soldiers’ mansions”), which are important both as sites of dislocation, and, to be sure, as mental landscapes. The destination in the narrative is Rauma, which is repeated three times. In such a micro-narrative, which does not, like the narratives with a supranormal element presented by Bennett, resemble a witness statement, the time of the events does not appear as so important a part that it need be mentioned. Certainly, the story begins in childhood, but the succeeding evacuation, taking place after some years, takes the listener to a time when the Germans were advancing during the Second World War on Anna’s home area. The precise localisation, or the fixed spatial points of memory, goes hand in hand with the chronological advance.

I may never know if the meanings I have uncovered are precisely those which Anna wished to communicate to me in beginning the interview with this story. In part the details I have investigated are concerned with narrative techniques (for example, the intersection of time and place), in part they relate to the viewpoints stressed by Anna as a woman and representative of the Ingrian Finnish minority (the emphasis upon the “we” viewpoint). Living at the mercy of fate and the viewpoint of “us” are repeated in her other narratives. But their power to communicate has revealed itself to me only after repeated listening and many readings.

Narratives do not lose their meaning by being listened to once. The listener or reader gains something from them, but not perhaps everything that is uppermost in the mind of the narrator. Usually a narrative has several functions at the same time, for in addition to amusement and instruction one can, through a narrative, publicise one’s own history, let people’s voices be heard, strengthen an atmosphere of debate or general understanding. A number of functions can co-exist, and the goals and meanings of the same narrative can vary from one situation to another.

Narration is social dialogue, by means of which we create connections with other people and maintain them. We have a natural right and an ability developed through knowledge of our mother tongue to recount narratives. We are not all of us the evening’s star attraction, but we are all narrators in some arena. Narrators also need an audience. Alternating in the roles of narrator and listener we maintain that sense of community which is an vitally important reserve of strength to us.

Translated by Clive Tolley

Sources

The interview materials used are in the stores of the Finnish Literature Society Recordings Archive.

References

Apo, Satu 1995: *The Narrative World of Finnish Fairy Tales. Structure, Agency, and Evaluation in Southwest Finnish Folktales.* (FF Communications 256.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

Aro, Laura 1996: *Minä kylässä. Identiteettikertomus haastattelututkimuksen folklorena.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Bauman, Richard 1986: *Story, Performance, and Event. Contextual Studies of Oral Narrative.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bennett, Gillian 1986: Narrative as Expository Discourse. *Journal of American Folklore* 99 (394): 415–434.

Chafe, Walter 1980: The Deployment of Consciousness in the Production of a Narrative. Walter Chafe (ed.), *The Pear Stories. Cognitive, Cultural, and Linguistic Aspects of Narrative Production*, 9–50. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Coates, Jennifer 1996: *Women Talk. Conversation between Women Friends.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Dégh, Linda 1969: *Folktales and Society. Story-Telling in a Hungarian Peasant Community.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Dundes, Alan 1976: Structuralism and Folklore. Tuula Juurikka and Juha Pentikäinen (eds.), *Folk Narrative Research*, 75–93. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society.

Kaivola-Bregenhøj, Annikki 1996: *Narrative and Narrating. Variation in Juho Oksanen’s Storytelling.* (FF Communications 261.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

— 2001: Kertojan aika. Eeva-Liisa Haanpää, Ulla-Maija Peltonen and Hilpi Saure (eds.), *Ajan taju. Kirjoituksia kansanperinteestä ja kirjallisuudesta*, 33–47. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
Kintsch, Walter 1977: On Comprehending Stories. Marcel Adam Just and Patricia C. Carpenter (eds.), *Cognitive Processes in Comprehension*, 33–62. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Labov, William, and Joshua Waletzky 1967: Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experience. June Helms (ed.), *Essays on the Verbal and Visual Arts*, 12–44. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
Latvala, Pauliina 2005: *Katse menneisyyteen. Folkloristinen tutkimus suvun muistitiedosta.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
Longacre, R. E. 1976: *An Anatomy of Speech Notions.* Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press.
Peltonen, Ulla-Maija 1996: *Punakapinan muistot. Tutkimus työväen muistelukerronnan muotoutumisesta vuoden 1918 jälkeen.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
— 2003: *Muistin paikat. Vuoden 1918 sisällissodan muistamisesta ja unohtamisesta.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
Portelli, Alessandro 1991: *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories. Form and Meaning in Oral History.* New York: State University of New York Press.
Propp, Vladimir 1968 (1928): *Morphology of the Folktale.* Second edition. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Raninen-Siiskonen, Tarja 1999: *Vieraana omalla maalla. Tutkimus karjalaisen siirtoväen muistelukerronnasta.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
Roberts, Fredric M. 1978: Kenttätutkimus hämäläisestä kylästä. *Suomen antropologi* 2: 65–79.
Siikala, Anna-Leena 1980: Personal and Social Meaning of Storytelling. Osmo Ikola (ed.), *Congressus Quintus Internationalis Fenno-Ugristarum. Turku 20.–27.VIII 1980. Pars IV*, 373–388. Turku: Suomen Kielen Seura.
— 1990: *Interpreting Oral Narrative.* (FF Communications 245.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.
Siikala, Anna-Leena, and Jukka Siikala 2005: *Return to Culture. Oral tradition and Society in the Southern Cook Islands.* (FF Communications 287.) Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.
Suojanen, Matti 1996: Kertomukset päivittäisviestinnassä. *Sananjalka* 38: 109–124.
Tainio, Liisa 1997: MÄ MUISTAN . . . MÄ EN MUISTA. Muisteluvuoroista arkikeskustelussa. Katarina Eskola and Eeva Peltonen (eds.), *Aina uusi muisto,* 289–317. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopisto.
Tannen, Deborah 1984: *Conversational Style: Analyzing Talk among Friends.* (Language and Learning for Human Service Professions.) Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
Ukkonen, Taina 2000: *Menneisyyden tulkinta kertomalla. Muistelupuhe oman historian ja kokemuskertomusten tuottamisprosessina.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
Vasenkari, Maria, and Armi Pekkala 1999: A Path to an Understanding. Markku Teinonen and Timo J. Virtanen (eds.), *Ingrians and Neighbours. Focus on the Eastern Baltic Sea Region*, 61–82. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society.

Folk narrative theories and contemporary practices – echoes of the 14th congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research

by *Tarja Kupiainen,* Dr.Phil.
University of Joensuu

The most important periodic conference for folklorists took place last summer in Tartu, Estonia, with the attendance of more than 200 participants. Highly topical issues were discussed from 26 to 31 July in various sessions and plenary lectures that highlighted aspects which will inspire further consideration. The organisers had arranged a cultural programme for the evenings, and one-day excursions focused upon Estonian folk traditions and history. In addition, all participants were privileged to receive a recent publication illuminating the evolution of the academic disciplines of folklore and ethnology in Estonia. Entitled Studies in Estonian Folkloristics and Ethnology (Tartu University Press 2005) and edited by Kristin Kuutma and Tiiu Jaago, the volume was a pleasant surprise that we found in our conference briefcases. Another delightful event was the opportunity to visit the Estonian Folklore Archives.

The charming city of Tartu welcomed us with sunshine and friendly faces. Regardless of the weather (although it was marvellous most of the time), the conference assistants, "angels in yellow t-shirts" made the conference atmosphere comfortable. They were always ready to help any confused conference guest: for example, if you had difficulties in finding a session room they were ready to lead you by hand, always with smiling faces.

The plenary sessions were in the Assembly Hall of Tartu University, which provided a dignified and prestigious environment for the conference and the plenary lectures. However, the hall's acoustics were not really designed for lecturing, and the echoes absorbed much of the contents, almost regardless of the speaker or the listener's position. The sessions took place in three different buildings that provided physical exercise for participants if we wanted to attend every presentation. Nonetheless, quite often you were obliged to make a choice between three or four equally interesting papers and skip the others. It was unfortunate but normal in significant international conferences, and on the other hand, variety and diversity in presentations are also a great advantage. I shall here concentrate mostly on the plenums and will introduce them in their order of presentation.

Narratives, Space, Post-Colonial, Power, Gender

The plenary lectures were given by distinguished scholars from across the world. Associate professor Terry Gunnell from the University of Iceland had the honour of the opening keynote speech. His lively and enthusiastic performance aimed to emphasise the significance of the concept of space in folkloristics by examining a variety of different spatial aspects connected with various types of folk narrative. We were once again reminded that both temporal and geographical space should be considered as important factors in folklore studies.

Professor Dan Ben-Amos (Philadelphia, USA) has been working for the last fifteen years on an anthology of selected tales from the Israel Folktale Archives. The effort is enormous. More than 20,000 texts are included, and the research has raised once again the central question of narratives: what are they good for and why do we keep on telling them? According to Ben-Amos, the answers seem to be discovered beyond structural, functional, symbolic and biological explanations or models. Have we lost something essential while concentrating on models? Ben-Amos was followed by Dr Emily Lyle (Edinburgh, UK) who discussed narrative themes and the structure of myths. She considered the Celtic archaic cosmology and made comparisons between her own and Dumézil's views. Interestingly, she argued that a certain expression of Dumézil's trifunctionalism also has hints of matrilineal succession to kingship while considering the old Irish story "Lugaid of the Red Stripes". I would have liked her to elaborate on that truly interesting topic.

Sadhana Naithani, assistant professor from Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi, India) took up an important issue, post-colonial challenges to folklore studies. Unfortunately we had difficulties in following her undoubtedly weighty paper because of the acoustics. Naithani brought up the highly topical problem of unprecedented relationships between folk and lore that have been created by wars, migration, and multinational trade. Modernisation and globalisation signify different things in different contexts, and folkloristics cannot ignore the post-modern and post-colonial expression of folklore. The following lecture gave us even more challenges to consider.

Professor Charles L. Briggs (Berkeley, USA) explored complex dimensions of the power of hegemonic ideologies producing and constituting various subjectivities and organising them hierarchically. He illustrated the situation in Venezuela where political and information elites constructed "modern" narratives that blamed a disease epidemic on an indigenous culture, characterising indigenous stories as organised by ignorance, superstition and irrationality. The strategy silenced alternative narratives that drew attention to social evils such as institutional racism and environmental degradation. Hence, folklorists cannot remain innocent any longer but have to be conscious of diverse aspects of ideological powers. Soon after Briggs had finished his lecture I heard someone whispering behind me: "Oh, what a relief! What I'm doing is folkloristics after all!"

Arvo Krikmann (professor extraordinary, Tartu) considered contemporary linguistic theories of humour in the light of figurative expression "digging one's own grave". According to him, the theory of humour is a mixture of various theoretical standpoints, such as psychoanalytic theories. After his presentation professor Carl Lindahl (Houston, USA) exposed us with aspects of Appalachian folk culture. He elaborated family narratives that combine fairytales (*Märchen*), legends and local histories to produce a commentary on their daily lives. Lindahl's presentation took up one of the reasons why we do keep on telling stories: we can organise our lives and cope with painful experiences by means of narratives.

The final plenum was given by professor Satu Apo (Helsinki, Finland). She had an interesting and important topic, the interaction between orality and literacy. Apo considered the issue through widespread fairytales that can be regarded as feminine – Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, and particularly Beauty and the Beast. She presented us with an outline of early publications of fairytales. They were mostly published as booklets and leaflets, but also in newspapers. Apo elaborated three exemplary extracts of the well-known fairytale Beauty and the Beast. In nineteenth-century Finland and Karelia the fairytale belonged to both oral and literary traditions, and the interplay between them was obvious, as Apo argued. It was truly interesting and inspiring to perceive the significance of the narrator's gender to the storyline.

Conclusion

The plenums raised a lot of comments and questions. However, once again the most inspiring and valuable discussions came up during unofficial environments, such as the breakfast, coffee and lunch breaks, or in the cafes (there are plenty in Tartu!). In our informal sessions we discussed for example prospects of folkloristics as a discipline. What is folkloristics as a discipline? What belongs to the era of folkloristics? Should we or should we not define folkloristics narrowly? I thought I heard some people hinting that we should even strictly demarcate our discipline, clean folkloristics from "foreign" elements, and discover what is substantial in folkloristics. The mission might prove difficult or even impossible while interdisciplinary efforts have proven advantageous.

Personally, I wondered the almost total absence of feminist studies and theorising in the conference. Of course, the concept of gender was raised in several lectures and sessions, although only one session was dedicated to gender, i.e. "Narrated Gender", with five papers during the first conference day. This is interesting because the era of feminist folklore studies is rather new and still developing. Actually, it was only less than twenty years ago when Rosan A. Jordan and F. A. de Caro asserted that "there has been little folkloristic work directly addressing feminist theoretical issues" (Jordan and de Caro 1986: 502). Since, however, this lack has been corrected (see for example Hollis *et al.* 1993; Radner 1993). For example in Finnish folklore studies, the female point of view and gender have been discussed since the 1980s, and the first volume presenting them was published in 1990 (Nenola 1986; Nenola and Timonen 1990; Vakimo 2004), but still direct applications of feminist theoretical issues or theories are rare.

The programme of the conference and the abstracts of the papers are to be found in the conference website: http://www.folklore.ee/isfnr/. The keynote and the plenary lectures are available as videos there. The whole conference programme, including the sessions, cultural events and abstracts have also been published.

References

Hollis, Susan Tower, Linda Pershing, and M. Jane Young (eds.) 1993: *Feminist Theory and the Study of Folklore.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Jordan, Rosan A., and F. A. Caro 1986: Women and the Study of Folklore. *Signs* 11 (3): 500–518.

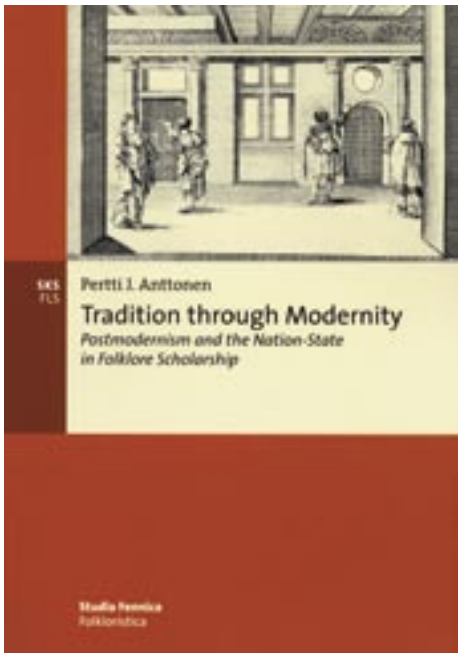
Nenola, Aili 1986: *Miessydäminen nainen. Naisnäkökulmia kulttuuriin.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Nenola, Aili, and Senni Timonen (eds.) 1990: *Louhen sanat. Kirjoituksia kansanperinteen naisista.* Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Radner, Joanna Newlon (ed.) 1993: *Feminist Messages. Coding in Women's Folk Culture.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Vakimo, Sinikka 2004: Gender in Finnish Folkloristics – Outlines of Broadening Fields. *FF Network* 27: 7–11, 14–19.

Recent publications of the Finnish Literature Society

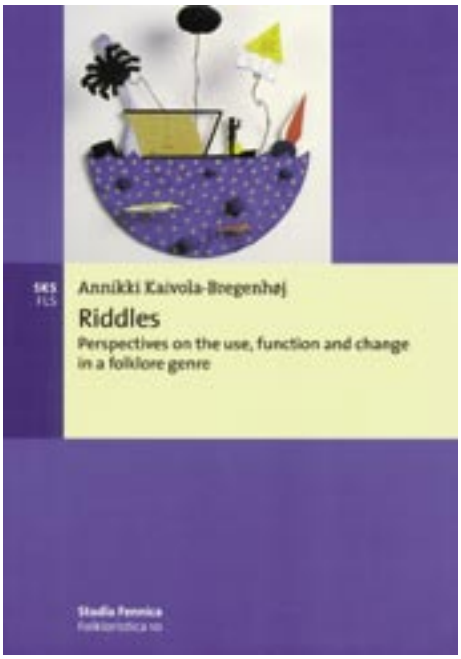


Delivery: books@finlit.fi

Pertti J. Anttonen,
Tradition through Modernity. Postmodernism and the Nation-State in Folklore Scholarship.
Studia Fennica Folkloristica 15. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2005. 215 pp. ISBN 951-746-665-X

In their study of social practices deemed traditional, scholars tend to use the concept and idea of tradition as an element of meaning in the practices under investigation. But just whose meaning is it? Is it a meaning generated by those who study tradition or those whose traditions are being studied? In both cases, particular criteria for traditionality are employed, whether these are explicated or not. Individuals and groups will no doubt continue to uphold their traditional practices or refer to their practices as traditional. While they are in no way obliged to explicate in analytical terms their criteria for traditionality, the same cannot be said for those who make the study of traditions their profession. In scholarly analysis, traditions need to be explained instead of used as explanations for apparent repetitions and replications or symbolic linking in social practice, values, history, and heritage politics.

This book takes a closer look at 'tradition' and 'folklore' in order to conceptualize them within discourses on modernity and modernism. The first section discusses 'modern' and 'traditional' as modern concepts and the study of folklore as a modern trajectory. The underlying tenet here is that non-modernity cannot be represented without modern mediation, which therefore makes the representations of non-modernity epistemologically modern. The second section focuses on the nation-state of Finland and the nationalistic use of folk traditions in the discursive production of Finnish modernity and its Others.



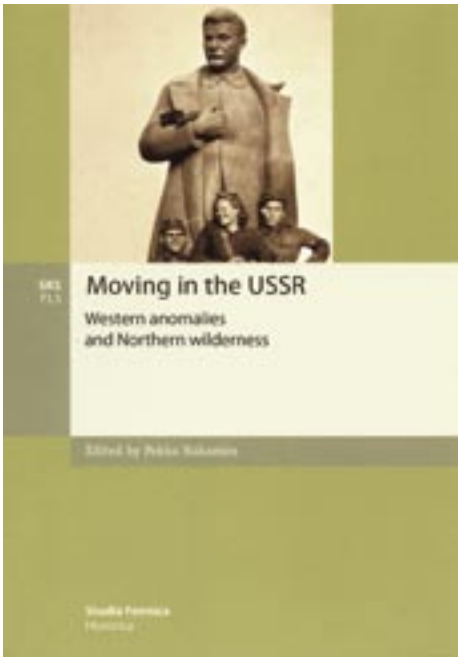
Delivery: books@finlit.fi

Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj,
Riddles. Perspectives on the use, function and change in a folklore genre.
Studia Fennica Folkloristica 10. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2001. 186 pp. ISBN 951-746-019-8

Riddles are a journey into a fascinating world rich in delightful metaphors and ambiguity. The riddle confuses and amuses, it is a means of embarrassing anyone who does not know the answer or of winning the battle between life and death; of teaching norms or of commenting, with a twinkle in the eye, on a serious matter.

This book is based on material drawn from all over the world and analyses both traditional true riddles and contemporary joking questions. It introduces the reader to different riddling situations and the many functions of riddles, which vary from education to teasing, and from defusing a heated situation to entertainment. In addition to providing a survey of international riddle scholarship, the book has a comprehensive bibliography with suggestions for further reading.

Moving in the USSR. Western anomalies and Northern Wilderness.
Edited by Pekka Hakamies. Studia Fennica Historica 10. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2005. 161 pp.
ISBN 951-746-695-1



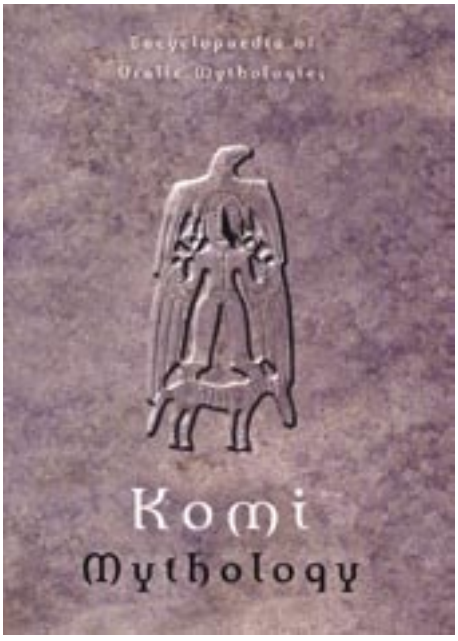
Delivery: books@finlit.fi

This book deals with 20th century resettlements in the western areas of the former USSR, in particular with the territory of Karelia that was ceded by Finland in the WWII, Podolia in the Ukraine, and the North-West periphery of Russia in the Kola peninsula. Finns from Karelia emigrated to Finland, most of the Jews of Podolia were exterminated by Nazi Germany but the survivors later emigrated to Israel, and the sparsely populated territory beyond the Polar circle received the Soviet conquerors of nature which they began to exploit. The empty areas were usually settled by planned state recruitment of relocated Soviet citizens, but in some cases also by spontaneous movement. Thus, a Ukranian took over a Jewish house, a Chuvash kolkhos was dispersed along Finnish khutor houses, and youth in the town of Apatity began to prefer their home town in relation to the cities of Russia.

Everywhere the settlers met new and strange surroundings, and they had to construct places and meanings for themselves in their new home and restructure their local identity in relation to their places of origin and current abodes. They also had to create images of the former inhabitants and explanations for various strange details they perceived around themselves.

All articles within this volume are based on extensive field or archive work. This research project was funded by the Academy of Finland.

Komi Mythology
Edited by Vladimir Napolskikh, Anna-Leena Siikala, and Mihály Hoppál. Encyclopaedia of Uralic Mythologies. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó & Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2003. 436 pp. ISBN 963-05-7885-9



Delivery: books@finlit.fi

The Encyclopaedia of Uralic Mythologies is a descriptive an analytic compendium of the mythologies of the peoples speaking Uralic languages – from the Lapps in Northern Europe and up to the Selkups and Nganasans in Siberia. The peoples of the Uralic linguistic family being the aborigines of the Eurasiatic North survived a long and complicated history and preserved their original religious and mythological traditions, where traces of primitive beliefs and archaich religious systems (e.g. shamanism) merge into ancient influences (e.g. the Indo-Iranian and Ancient Germanic) and into the later impacts of modern religions.

Mythology – is understood in broad sense, as the world view, the language of the traditional culture, in all aspects: the history of study, the separate ethnic mythological systems in their origin and historical processes, the reconstruction of the proto-Uralic sources of the modern Uralic mythologies. The central part of the books is to be the explanatory and etymological dictionary of mythological terms of Uralic traditions. The books will have an index of mythological terms, a glossary, a list of literature and an introduction devoted to the history of the given Uralian nations.

Komi Mythology is the first volume of the series, which sets a good example in the summary of other peoples' mythology. The forthcoming *Ostyak* and *Vogul* volumes have already been completed in Russian.

Folk legend researchers met in Iceland – The 5th Celtic-Nordic-Baltic Folklore Symposium on Folk Legends in Reykjavík, Iceland, 15–18 June 2005

by *Merja Leppälahti,* Lic.Phil.
University of Turku

A symposium on the topic of Folk Legends was organised in Reykjavík, Iceland, in June 2005. The main organiser was Dr Terry Gunnell, Professor in Folkloristics at the the University of Iceland, who is well known as a specialist in Icelandic tradition and folk drama.

The roots of the symposium lie in the meeting held in Dublin in 1998 on "The Supernatural in Irish and Scottish Migratory Legends". This was succeeded by "The Nordic-Celtic Legend Symposium" in 1991. In the symposium held two years later in Copenhagen Baltic folklore was also discussed, and the same area was covered in Dublin in 1996.

The symposium held in June 2005 was therefore the fifth in the series. Over fifty scholars from around the world took part, from doctoral students to seasoned specialists.

The symposium began in festive fashion on 14 June with a reception by the president of Iceland, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson. The same evening there was also an opportunity to hear poems in four languages, Gaelic, Swedish, Icelandic and English. The presenters were Daíthí Ó hÓgáin from Dublin, Bengt af Klintberg from Stockholm and Sigurður Pálsson from Iceland.

The history of research and supernatural phenomena

The actual work of the symposium began on Wednesday morning and continued at a rapid pace until Saturday evening. The programme included plenary lectures for all, between which participants divided into working groups to hear and discuss presentations. Among many other renowned scholars the specialists in Icelandic tradition Bo Almqvist and Jacqueline Simpson were also present; the whole conference was dedicated to them.

During the symposium, plenary lectures were given by Bo Almqvist, Bengt af Klintberg, Jacqueline Simpson, John Lindow, Timothy Tangherlini, Anna-Leena Siikala, Séamas Ó Catháin, Ulf Palmenfelt, John Shaw, Arne Bugge Amundsen, Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Ulo Valk, Eyðun Andreasen, Michael Chesnutt and Terry Gunnell. Their contributions are being gathered into a publication, which should appear soon.

The presentations illuminated both the different research traditions in various countries and experienced researchers' own fields of investigation. In many presentations new interpretations and ways of approaching familiar materials were offered. For example, Eyðun Andreasen considered tales of female witches specifically through one event. It was claimed that the woman had killed many men through witchcraft, including her own husband. She was said in the tales to have been bad in her ways and difficult since childhood, but on the basis of documentary sources she appeared to have been good-natured and a comparatively good student at school. She lived on her own, spun wool and lived on the sale of items she knitted. As an independent and free woman, however, she aroused feelings of unrest in the men folk of the community. The researcher also asserted that in fact the worst tales were told by men, whereas women were fairly positive about her. The new type of approach therefore gave a different picture of the female witch.

Many lecturers considered tales of various supernatural beings or events. Tales of fairy midwives, haunted houses, shape-shifting, witchcraft, the living dead and changelings may have had entertainment functions, but most often they were used as warnings and guides for action. It is also possible to draw conclusions about the events and personal relationships in the tales from the community which told them, as Professor Timothy Tangherlini showed in his presentation dealing with Danish local narratives. Traditional narratives are bound to a historical time, place and social milieu and they may present the social, political and economic changes affecting people's everyday lives. Interpretations of this sort however demand a great familiarity with the material, since an inexperienced researcher may "find" just about anything in a text divorced from its original context.

In an agrarian society, people long lived at the mercy of natural circumstances, and to keep going required hard work by all the members of the community. The topic of Professor Ulf Palmenfelt's presentation was changes of form in nineteenth-century Gotlandic stories. The notion of a herring turning into a silver spoon offered the image of becoming rich, but the change of form could also take place for example as a punishment for greed. It is a common factor in these tales that the change of form is always witnessed by a person, but the object changed can be anything at all. Palmenfelt does not,

however, consider all these tales as demonstrating actual superstitions, but rather people's imagination.

Professor John Lindow considered the changeling theme in the light of folk beliefs and tales. In a situation where everyone was required to do work, the changeling had to be fed and cared for by the community without any expectation of his or her becoming a useful member of society. A person of this sort could therefore be excluded from society by thinking of them as a changeling.

National day excursion. Árni Björnsson (back to camera) tells of a secret stone. Photo by Merja Leppälahti.

Between worlds

In addition to all the plenary lectures, working-group sessions were held every day. A good side to this is that it gave the opportunity to the maximum number of people to present their work, which for graduate students is particularly important. For the listener, however, it presents difficult choices, and many interesting presentations necessarily had to be left unheard.

Many papers dealt with the drawing of boundaries between the human and supernatural worlds. Camilla Asplund Ingemark examined the contacts between humans and trolls. She showed how in these meetings the human often falls under the power of a spell and loses free will and the capacity to control their actions. Time and place may be mistaken. Asplund Ingemark showed how narratives of encounters with a supernatural being present what it is to be a human being in terms of the Christian definitions.

Coppélie Cocq considered marriage between a supranormal being (*stállu*) and a Sami girl. Such an exceptional situation disturbs the balance of the community, and the normal situation returns when the girl is saved and returned to the community, with the supernatural being killed or evicted. According to Cocq such tales warn against outsiders and delineate the community's boundaries.

Kaarina Koski's subject was the boundaries between the human community and the world of the departed, which are usually located both in time and space. The same place can be sometimes safe, but at the wrong time also dangerous. Warning tales about contacts between people and the supernatural world served to guide the community and preserve the social system.

Old legends and superstitions do not live only in the archives, however, as Blanka Henriksson showed in a presentation on friendship verses relating to the sea. The new life of traditional material also came over in Jenny Butler's discussion of the use of Celtic superstitions in neopaganism.

Cheerful company

Although the symposium concentrated on the analysis of academic experiences, entertainment was not forgotten. On Thursday evening a story-telling session was organised, where story-tellers Essie Stewart and Laurence Tullock delighted listeners. Informal socialising was offered in the form of a wine reception by the embassies of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, as well as a more formal social event in the form of the reception by the embassy of Great Britain. The programme also included a visit to the Culture House, where we were able to look at an exhibition of ancient Icelandic manuscripts.

During the symposium the Icelandic national day took place on 17 June, when we moved from lecture hall to bus and made an excursion outside Reykjavík. We visited Oddi, which legend recounts Sæmundur won by cheating a devil. We also saw fiery lava floes, hot springs, geysirs and the mighty Gullfoss waterfall, as well as the national park of Þingvellir, where the assembly of ancient Iceland gathered. Árni Björnsson acted as guide on the expedition, and he doled out both fact and fiction during the journey.

The symposium concluded with a banquet, held on the isle of Viðey near Reykjavík. The cheerful atmosphere of the closing banquet inspired displays of spontaneous singing and playing. Although we were moved off the island in the middle of the night, the closing evening continued for some much longer.

Over all the symposium was a magnificent experience. The practical arrangements also worked very well, thanks to the friendly and efficient assistants. Even though thanks were offered at the banquet to the organisers and participants, there is good reason to say once again *Takk fyrir!* – thanks to everyone for a wonderful symposium.

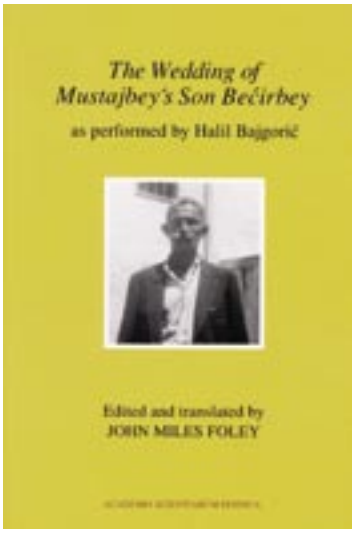
MLA awards Prize for a Distinguished Scholarly Edition to John Miles Foley's edition of The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey as performed by Halil Bajgorić *(FFC 283)*

On Novermber 30, 2005, the Modern Language Association of America announced the winner of the sixth Modern Language Association Prize for a Distinguished Scholarly Edition. The prize will be presented to John Miles Foley, of the University of Missouri, Columbia, for his edition of *The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey as performed by Halil Bajgorić*, published by the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters and the Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters. Foley will receive a $1,000 check and a certificate containing the text of the selection committee's citation.

The MLA Prize for a Distinguished Scholarly Edition was established by the MLA Executive Council in 1994 in response to a proposal from the association's Committee on Scholarly Editions. Awarded each odd-numbered year since 1995, the prize is one of eighteen awards that will be presented on 28 December 2005 during the association's annual convention, held this year in Washington, DC. The members of the selection committee were Timothy Brennan (Univ. of Minnesota); Arthur Marotti (Wayne State Univ.); and Susan Wolfson (Princeton Univ.), chair. The committee's citation for the winning book reads:

> This edition of a 1935 recorded performance of a Yugoslavian oral epic takes an innovative approach to the editorial task, focusing less on the text on the page than on the particular performance and the conventions of such "singings" – including the creative "resinging" of the piece by the original transcriber. Building on the groundbreaking work of Albert Lord and Milman Parry, the editor John Miles Foley rethinks some of their assumptions as he judiciously exercises the skills of the linguist, the ethnographer, the musicologist, the translator, the textual editor, and the literary critic. The result is an edition that not only makes available to readers in many different disciplines an unfamiliar text and style of performance but also clearly presents an exemplary cultural analysis.

John Miles Foley is a specialist in the world's oral traditions, particularly the ancient Greek, medieval English, and contemporary South Slavic traditions. He serves as W. H. Byler Distinguished Chair in the Humanities, as Curators' Professor of Classical Studies and English, and as the founding director of the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition and the Center for eResearch at the University of Missouri, Columbia, where he edits the journal *Oral Tradition* and two series of books. His major publications include *How to Read an Oral Poem* and *Homer's Traditional Art*, which have both been named Outstanding Academic Title by *Choice* magazine. Foley has received grants and fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Fulbright Program, the Mellon Foundation, and other institutions and is a member of the Advisory Committee of the Folklore Fellows' Network and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.



FFC 283. **The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey as performed by Halil Bajgorić.**
Edited and translated by John Miles Foley.
Helsinki: Adacemia Scientiarum Fennica, 2004. 286 pp.
ISBN 951-41-0953-8 (hard), 0954-6 (soft).

Hard, € 30 *Soft, € 27* Delivery: tiedekirja@tsv.fi

On June 13, 1935, Halil Bajgorić, a 37-year-old farm laborer and epic bard (guslar), performed a 1030-line version of a South Slavic oral epic poem to which its collectors, Milman Parry and Albert Lord, assigned the title *The Wedding of Mustajbey's Son Bećirbey*. This experimental edition of Bajgorić's traditional tale includes an original-language transcription, and English translation, and a performance-based commentary; it also features a portrait of the singer, a glossary of idiomatic phrases and narrative units, a study of Nikola Vujnović's role as on-site interviewer and latter-day transcriber (and *guslar* himself), and chapters on the role of music and performatives. The volume is supplemented by a web companion at www.oraltradition.org/performances/zbm, where readers can listen to the entire song in streaming audio.

Reviews

Tradition through modernity through tradition

Pertti J. Anttonen, *Tradition through Modernity. Postmodernism and the Nation-State in Folklore Scholarship.* Studia Fennica Folkloristica 15. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2005. 215 pp. ISBN 951-746-665-X

Over the past decade, Pertti J. Anttonen has emerged as an important scholar in the field of folklore. *Tradition through Modernity* gathers together (in revised form) some of his major publications to date. It demonstrates why Anttonen's writings have garnered attention well outside his native Finland, even though they tend to be published in edited volumes with limited circulation outside the Nordic countries.

The book is at once thoughtful and provocative. It reflects on folklore and its study in the broad terms of social and cultural theory; its chapters are very much concerned with the politics of folklore, rather than, say, its poetics. As the title suggests, Anttonen contends that tradition is in fact an aspect of modernity, unthinkable outside its framework, and that the study of folklore has always been complicit in the modern project. Not only is tradition a product of modernity, it is also an instrument in the production of modernity, defining its contours through the representation of an Other.

Modernity, in other words, contains tradition, in the sense that tradition is one of its ingredients, but traditionality also contains the modern, in the sense that it demarcates it, draws its boundaries. As the author suggests, "modernity is a perpetual process of comparison"; the modern is thus produced by means of its constitutive others (p. 32). One is left wondering whether the current crisis in the field of folklore is not, in fact, directly related to the fall from grace of modernisation theory and the malaise surrounding notions of progress. Could it be that folklore is so enmeshed in the metanarratives of modernity that its fate and theirs are intertwined?

The book begins with a theoretical overview tying developments in folklore and related disciplines to broader debates on modernity and the postmodern. Actually, the author pegs postmodernism as a fad from the late twentieth century and declares his "antiquarian interest in things postmodern" (p. 7). Its principal contributions are evident in the way that representation and reflexivity have taken centre stage in contemporary studies of folklore, equally apparent in the performance paradigm that still dominates the field in the United States as it is in the concern with textualisation so prevalent in Finland. So while the word itself carries the unmistakable clang of outdated rhetoric, it is easy to agree with the author that perspectives associated with postmodernism still orient our ways of thinking about folk tradition and its politics.

Considering the relations between folklore and modernism, Anttonen offers a brilliant analysis of the "paradigm of loss", full of sharp insights into the grief and mourning that appears to be inseparable from tradition. "It is part of being modern to lament the loss of an imagined traditional order, a 'lost community' and 'true values', and then project this onto sites or times that are made representations and ruins of such an order" (p. 45). Taking his cue from the works of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Susan Stewart, Roger Abrahams, Richard Bauman, Diarmuid Ó Giolláin and others, Anttonen presents a compelling account of the position of the folklorist relative to the texts and communities s/he studies. He suggests that, within the discourse on modernity, the sociologist and the folklorist both stand on a threshold of sorts; however, while the "sociologist mainly looks towards modernity as a landscape of novelties, the folklorist looks towards tradition as a landscape that appears to be closing in on the very spot where the researcher is standing" (p. 48).

Though Anttonen does not draw this comparison, one is reminded here of Walter Benjamin's angel of history, whose face is turned towards the past, where he sees wreckage upon wreckage piling up at his feet. Like the folklorist, the angel "would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress." (*Illuminations: Essays and Reflections.* New York: Schocken Books, 1969, 257–258). The folklorist, too, is propelled by the forces of modernity, and under their spell tradition appears to be a constant process of bereavement. Accordingly, the study of folklore in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries amounted, in the words of Pertti Anttonen, to a "continuous near-death experience" (p. 49).

Oddly enough, this sense of loss and bereavement has animated the discourse on tradition and rendered folklore an effective instrument for radical, if nostalgic, social critique. Anttonen demonstrates that, as an icon of the moral force of community, the valorisation of folklore contains an implicit critique of modernity, its discontents and disintegration of moral bonds. The attraction of folklore lies in part in its promise to restore a lost community that is local, intimate and moral, one that stands opposed to the technocratic and detached character of social relations in the modern state.

Anttonen carries this idea onwards in his analysis of "folklore as nationalized antiquities". Cross-fertilising writings on "the paradigm of loss" with the literature on folklore and nation-building, he argues that the folklorist – as an enlightened participant in the processes of nation-building and emancipation – does not, in actual fact, contribute to the salvation and preservation of traditions among the communities and in the locations where these are found. On the contrary, s/he records the traditions, archives them, compares, analyses and publishes: "Documentation, the act of representation, overrides preservation, the act of political partnership" (p. 92). Anttonen dubs such acts of representation "the archive strategy"; this strategy contributes to nation-building through its laments of loss and disappearance. In the words of the author, "death to the tradition means life to the nation" (p. 93). In order to legitimate the establishment of new collectivities, such as nations, that are forward-looking and progressive, folklore is represented as the ruins of a lost community whose moral force helps to nourish the nation. Despite the vigour it lends to the national project, however, this folklore is itself of necessity in decay; its continued flourishing would indicate a lack of ability to move forward, incapacity to break with the past and to embrace the future.

Several chapters are devoted to the production of locality and identity, in the nation-state, in the European community and in global affairs. Particularly valuable is the discussion, on the one hand, of homogeneity and differences, and, on the other, of centre–periphery relations in national culture. In the one as well as the other, the empirical materials are drawn from Finnish history and scholarship, though their implications stretch well beyond Finland.

The former explores "homogeneism" in Finnish history. Flying in the face of actual differences of ethnicity, class and culture, official accounts have long celebrated the great homogeneity of Finland's population. Anttonen examines the historical articulation of homogeny to hegemony and asks what sort of difference has actually made a difference in the cultural politics of Finnishness. He goes on to juxtapose the primitivisation of Saamis with that of Karelians, as a people without history. According to Anttonen, both groups of people have been assigned a life in nature and tradition, in sharp contrast to the cultural life of modern Finns. As he remarks, "Karelia's landscape is that of Finnish national nostalgia" (p. 142).

In the final chapter, the author gives us a glimpse into that landscape and analyses the optics that have shaped it. His analysis reveals a major means of production for a centralising Finland, what Anttonen dubs "the scientific conquest" of Russia and Siberia. This conquest – a colonisation of the margins – projects political childhood onto people in the peripheries; in comparison, the people at the centre – from whom the image is projected – look advanced and on the move, in progress. It is an optical illusion, not unlike what one experiences while sitting in a train at a standstill when the train on the adjacent track takes off. Effectively, these colonial optics trap the marginal folk in history, while the people of Finland move on. Finns have a history; Ingrians and Karelians are that history. Their own history concealed from view, these marginal groups are left to serve as repositories of Finnish history.

As Anttonen makes clear, these optics are not peculiar to Finland. Countless instances of external and internal colonialism will illustrate that the possession of a non-modern periphery, along with the power to define it, mark the possessor as modern, advanced, developed and progressive (p. 172). The centre of the world is where you are standing – so long as you can impose that definition on those around you. One is left to wonder what part such colonial optics play in the transdisciplinary doctrines of peripheral conservatism and marginal survival.

It should be evident by now that this book is both rich and rewarding. Nevertheless, I must confess that I was disappointed by two of its nine chapters. Chapters four ("Postmodernization in the making") and seven ("Globalization and nationalism") are not just brief but underdeveloped. That is a shame because the issues they treat are both intriguing and important: commercialism, commodification, and the ways in which commodities are customised in vernacular culture; relays between tradition and political fundamentalism; and the modes in which cultural identities are locally experienced but translocally constituted. Taken together, these two chapters gesture towards new lines of thinking about the politics of tradition under neoliberalism and the folklore of displacement and disenchantment in the new world order. Perhaps this is the subject of the author's next monograph. There is certainly no lack of empirical materials crying out for theoretical engagement, not only in Bush's America but across the world, wherever the World Bank and International Monetary Fund advocate the instrumentalisation of

culture and heritage for development and growth. Somebody needs to write that book.

Tradition through Modernity is the result of Pertti Anttonen's sustained engagement over the past fifteen or so years with the relationship between folklore and modernity. The long period of gestation accounts for many of its merits but also for some shortcomings. Most chapters have been published previously, though all are revised, some quite substantially. While the author claims that the book is not an anthology, he has not been entirely successful in his efforts to craft a monograph from his articles. There is, to be sure, a thread that runs throughout and an argument that develops chapter by chapter, but there is also a measure of disjuncture as well as redundancy between the chapters. Naturally, I recognise that it is no mean task for an author to streamline his or her previously published articles in a way that effectively wards off this criticism. In fact, I would suggest that is what editors are for; in this case, the series editors.

But that is a minor quibble. It detracts not at all from the wide-ranging, erudite and thoughtful treatment of an important topic. *Tradition through Modernity* is a major contribution to folklore theory. It will meet with great interest and attention from scholars and students for years to come. With its publication, Pertti J. Anttonen has made a place for himself in the major league.

Finally, as a service to readers pressed for time, I would like to offer the following suggestion: read chapters three, five and nine. Then read them again. Each of these can stand on its own and each will serve very well as a text for classes. All three are truly outstanding. They deserve to be read by everyone interested in the study of folklore.

Valdimar Tr. Hafstein
University of Iceland

Migration and *rodina* in former territories of the USSR

Moving in the USSR. Western anomalies and Northern wilderness. Edited by Pekka Hakamies. Studia Fennica Historica 10. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2005. 161 pp. ISBN 951-746-695-1

This book is a result of a research project "Conditions for Constructing a New Russia: Interactions of Tradition and Europeanness in the Development of Twentieth-Century Russia". The project has been financed by the Academy of Finland during the years 2000–2003 and the leader is senior research fellow Antti Laine at the Karelian Institute. The writers are ethnologists, folklorists and historians from Finland and Russia and they are all members of the project.

The aim of the project is to concentrate on the changes in Russia's relationship and interaction with Europe from a Russian perspective during the twentieth century. Development in Russia has led in particular towards European-type modernisation. At the same time modernisation has continued in its own Russian way. "Resettlement", "migration" and "local identities" on the western borders of the former Soviet Union are the key words of the book. Pekka Hakamies emphasises that different "migrational identities" "occurred not only as a result of mass resettlement of a population from one region to another, but also as a result of the accelerated transformation of countrymen into townspeople".

All seven articles in the book share some common theoretical viewpoints and types of materials. In the first place, the articles are based on intensive field or archive work, have a common historical context, and share some common attitudes of folklore studies, ethnology and oral history. Secondly, the concepts of "experience" and "place" are discussed in all the articles, and they are seen through social constructionism, although the authors do not engage extensively in epistemological arguments. Thirdly, historical truth as such is not the focus, but rather the subjective narratives, memories and images people have constructed during their life in connection with certain places of the former USSR. The existence of subjective experiences is an objective, historical fact for the authors.

Past, present and *rodina*

The first article in the book is by the historian Antti Laine. He draws a picture of Soviet modernisation, the occupation and the process of incorporation of the former Finnish Karelia in the 1940s and 1950s – the area was annexed from Finland on 13 March 1940. The article is based on literature and the fascinating archive sources that were opened to researchers during the 1990s in Russia.

The following articles, by Marina Hakkarainen and Ekaterina Melnikova (both of them ethnologists at the European University of St Petersburg), are empirical case-study examples of processes Antti Laine describes on a general level. Marina Hakkarainen shows that Russians with whom she spoke in migrant communities in Lagoda Karelia and the Karelian Isthmus had different notions about history. Ekaterina Melnikova is interested in settlers' identity markers and experiences. Russian migrants came to the territories just after the Second World War and were closely connected to the material

world and living conditions of the previous Finnish inhabitants. Impressions of the Finnish past were something they wished to recount to researchers. Hakkarainen believes that this is how migrants tried to construct their territorial continuity between the Finnish past and the Russian present. Narrativisation and historicisation of the Finnish cultural landscape were important tools in the representation of local history for Russian migrant communities in Karelia.

On the other hand, Ekaterina Melnikova stresses the importance of the past-before-Karelia in narratives and memories. *Rodina*, "homeland", is both a knowledge in narrative form of the migrants' own past and a marker of particularity. The processes of constructing an identity for self and others are ongoing and changes create new experiences of *rodina* and migration. Oksana Filicheva also concentrates on the concept of "homelands" by migrants in Lagoda Karelia. She discovers which places the migrants are inclined to call their "homelands", and what are the categories used by the informants talking about Karelia as their *rodina*.

In an article "New culture on new territories", Pekka Hakamies discusses the steps leading up to the present day from the perspective of Russian emigrants who had to acquire the territory without any participation from the earlier inhabitants. There were material details of Finnish culture and "empty" place names on maps and signs when the newcomers arrived in the territory. They therefore had to create their own space by using various details in their new surroundings. It is interesting to notice that, until the nostalgia tourism from Finland to Karelia began, practically none of the Russian emigrants had seen any Finns. They therefore constructed images of Finns based on different analogies. Some local people have even become amateur historians who interpret archaeological, historical and narrative "traces" of Finns.

In the final two articles the reader moves from Karelia to the Kola Peninsula and the Ukraine. The settlers of those regions have experienced new and even alien territory – like immigrants in Karelia. Firstly, chief research worker Irina Razumova at the Academy of Science, Kola Research Centre, explores the different questions regarding the interpretation of ethnic, local and family stereotypes, and their influence upon the perception of place, migration strategies and the construction of local identities in the northwestern regions of Russia. The last article of the book, by research fellow Alla Sokolova at the Jewish Heritage Centre "Petersburg Judaica", is based on field work in the Podolia in the Ukraine. She explains the process of urbanisation in Podolia, which was directly connected with the formation and growth of Jewish communities during different historical periods.

The last two articles are interesting statements on the impact of various phenomena on people living in economically heterogeneous milieux in territories of the former USSR. Unfortunately, despite being well-informed articles, their subject matter divorces them somewhat from the rest of the book, which is so strongly connected with migration and local identities in Karelia.

Positive academic expertise

Pekka Hakamies is owed praise for his diligent collaboration with the Russian colleagues. It has always been interesting to read the results of the various cooperative projects, and they have greatly increased our knowledge of cultural and societal development, peripheral place, memory and boundaries of the Karelians and Russians, just to mention a few major themes of the research. The work in hand once again offers a significant addition to cultural studies. It can be justifiably stated that Pekka Hakamies is one of Finland's leading researchers in the fields of Karelian and Russian studies, and he also produces interesting theoretical discussion concerning, for example, themes such as ethnicity, identities, nationalism and changing cultural positions.

Hakamies's research has gathered an exceptional amount of attention outside the academic community in Finland. Immediately after the book was released, there were several articles in the papers and even the main Finnish broadcasting company, Yleisradio Oy, gave the book some notice in the primetime news broadcast. This phenomenon is interesting and naturally also acts as a great advertisement for cultural studies. At the moment, Karelia is a very popular theme in Finland, and it can even be stated that we are living an era of neo-Karelianism. Thus, this research is very topical and offers refreshing new angles for popular discussions about Karelian memory and history.

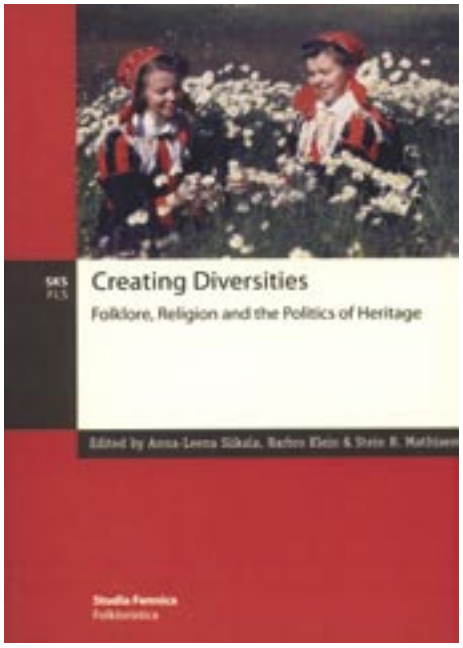
The book, presented from the point of view of the new settlers, offers the opportunity to glance at the native places whence the Karelian evacuees originated, in a controlled manner.

The project has also produced an anthology in Russian based on interview material. The anthology, "Granica i ljudi", is published by the European University of St Petersburg. A book in Finnish, meant for the wider public, is under way.

Outi Fingerroos
University of Turku

A folklorist examines the stream of thoughts and images

Creating Diversities. Folklore, Religion and the Politics of Heritage. Edited by Anna-Leena Siikala, Barbro Klein and Stein Mathisen. Studia Fennica Folkloristica 14. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2004. 307 pp. ISBN 951-746-631-5



The words "colourful" and "multivocal" give a good picture of the anthology of articles entitled *Creating Diversities*, in which fifteen cultural researchers cast a glance at both their own and a foreign culture in an attempt to conceptualise the multiplicity born of the interaction between them. The writers are folklorists, ethnologists and anthropologists from Estonia, Finland, Norway, Sweden and the United States. The articles are based on texts produced during the Nordic project (1998–2001). The project posed two central questions: What status does folklore have in the processes of change in multicultural societies? To what extent can folkloristic research illuminate cultural, political and historical patterns in the process of formation?

The writers' approaches vary. A point of interest has been the position of the individual at cultural cross-roads or a peculiarity of a particular culture and the local and global discussions on it. The articles are divided into four subject areas: ethnicity and the search for religious multiplicity, religion in a multiethnic environment, sites of contestation and reshaping tradition. The aim of the anthology is to bring out the significance on the one hand of religion, and on the other of ethnographic and cultural-historical museums and archives in the processes of cultural-political change.

The definition of identity

The first theme of the anthology focuses on questions of definition of ethnic identity, and how the images created fit in local and global discussions. Central to all the articles is the relationship between the definer of identity and the defined group or community. Two articles examine Sami culture and hence engage in the discussion of questions of autochthonous peoples' identities. Stein R. Mathisen deals with the hegemonic ways in which the Sami culture has been presented through the centuries. How have tales about the Sami as "noble savages" ended up in present-day discussions of the ecological Sami? One link between modern discussions and tales and images presented in earlier days is that in both instances the definer has been from outside the culture. Although Mathisen sees the image of the ecological Sami as enabling northern people to get their voice heard, on the other hand he sees as dangerous the fact that the image of the ecological Sami is usually founded on the myth of peoples of nature created by the majority populace. Given such concepts and images, there remains for the representative of the ethnic minority only limited space to work within modern society. The article's excursus into the history of images in the case of the Norwegian Sami helps the reader understand Mathisen's critique of cultural researchers, who usually emphasise the exotic and peculiar features of the cultures they study and conceal their power relationships.

The examination of the dialogue within institutionlised and local debate is at the centre of Kjell Olsen's article. The focus of the analysis is one ethnic symbol: Sami joik singing. The analysis of the internal and external symbolic value of joiking is clearly illuminated when the relationship of the Norwegian church to joiking is examined. The church's earlier negative stance has changed to a positive one, and the church can nowadays act as a venue for joik performances. The Sami community's views on the social environment and aesthetic principles of joiking do not, however, always coincide with the new meanings and functions ascribed to joiking. In its adoption as part of the institutionalised debates joiking gains new meanings, but also loses something of its potential for communicating meaning within the local community. In his interpretation, Olsen employs Roy Wagner's concepts of the genealogical and organic sense of history, with which he directs attention on the one hand to the general values of joiking in institutional contexts and on the other to those meanings which originate in the experiences

of the individual and are bound up with local debates.

The last two articles move on to the examination of questions of nationalism through the definitions of Finnishness and Russianness. Pekka Hakamies in his article on the Ingrian Finns delves into questions of identity. He uses the concept of hidden identity in his presentation of the position of Ingrians within Russia/the Soviet Union. The short history of Ingrian Finns, who moved from Finland to Russia some three centuries ago, tells in bare words how the Ingrians have over the course of time several times had to change their ethnic identity and its foundation. Lutheranism, however, has been one of the continuing facts of their ethnic identity. When in the 1990s the Ingrians acquired the right to move to Finland as returning migrants, the definition of identity became topical in a new way. The Ingrians, who had adopted Russian ways of life and language, noticed they were labelled Russians once they had moved to Finland. But the Ingrians for their part distinguished themselves from Finland's Russian communities because of their Lutheranism. The Ingrian question is closely linked to the debate about the definition of Finnishness and the drawing of borders between us and others.

Jyrki Pöysä also approaches questions of nationalism through discussions of Finnishness and Russianness. His interest lies in the everyday basis of nationalism and its various manifestations. The concept of banal nationalism he examines in sports journalism's relationship to questions of nationalism and gender. What are the criteria of Finnishness for sports journalism? Who can represent Finns? What is Finnishness? The examination of the relationship between Russian sportsmen who have moved to Finland and the media brings out the question of language and Finns' stereotypes of Russian women. The analysis of the relations between ice hockey, beer and geopolitics also highlights the everyday basis of banal nationalism. Pöysä's article is moreover interesting as a contribution to the debate on the construction of national identity.

The politics of rituals

The relationship of indigenous and foreign religions to the state and state church takes central place in the theme of rituals, the analyses of which also focus on the question of what happens to cultural heritage when people move from one land or district to another. One of the articles deals with Sweden, three with Russia. Barbro Klein examines the meaning of cultural heritage for migrants by looking at the religious customs and institutions of Sweden's Assyrian/Syrian community. She goes back to the early 1990s and to the events known in Sweden as the Södertälje miracle. At that time a Syrian migrant girl recounted that she had seen Jesus and a saint of the Syrian Orthodox in a vision. The miracles which followed the vision got tens of thousands of people on the move. The event also received widespread media coverage, through which it became part of Swedes' collective memory. Klein analyses the methods used by the media to treat the events and the associated tales and images. One central feature was the visual techniques used by the media to create and confirm images of other cultures. Klein's analysis emphasises the role of the media in the definining the way boundaries are drawn between us and others.

The first of the articles dealing with Russian religious movements and institutions leads the reader into the presence of a Moscow voodoo priestess. In her article, Galina Lindquist gives a picture of post-communist Russia in a globalising world. Lindquist uses Jonathan Friedman's concepts of weak and strong globalisation as analytical tools, along with the concept of the cultural ecumene as pointing to the habitat of meaning. The Russian voodoo priestess, whose first experience of voodoo took place in the back room of a Disneyland shop, is an almost unbelievable example of how different cultural features and phenomena move to new environments and receive new meanings through globalisation. Voodoo represents a foreign magic in the marketplace of modern Russian magic and folk-medicine; newspaper advertisements are one means of discovering this world. The Moscow voodoo priestess's divorce from the viewpoints of the Russian Orthodox church and from the models of traditional folk-medicine and magic is seen by Lindquist as an example of strong globalisation.

Art Leete and Jelena Porsanger (previously Sergejeva) consider the Finno-Ugric minorities of Russia. At the centre of Leete's article are the images of minority peoples which Western and Russian writers have communicated over the centuries. He analyses one such image, the nineteenth-century stereotypical concept of the quiet and peaceful Ob-Ugrians and Samoyeds. Through his examples, he highlights the conflicts which the image can create. How does this image influence the interaction between representatives of the minority populations and even local authorities and oil companies today? For example, the active and manipulative practice of modern Nenets leaders does not always fit this stereotypical picture. Leete also investigates the status of traditional sacrificial events in the political field: ethnopolitical leaders take part in these rituals, whereas other local authorities excuse themselves from them. He poses the question of what kind of changes the new type of context causes in the traditional ritual. What is allowed, and what is not?

Jelena Porsanger initiates the reader in the interactive relatioships between indigenous religion, the state and the church. The article is a journey through the historical developments of the eastern Sami and the present-day religious movement on the Kola Peninsula. The activity of the church and state is examined from a local viewpoint. The centuries-old politics of russification and the missionary work of the Russian Orthodox church have left their mark on the eastern Sami communities, their life and culture. Porsanger's look at the region's religious and political developments lays a foundation for the analysis of the tradition of St Trifon. The cult of St Trifon, who lived in the sixteenth century and is celebrated as a church saint, has strongly influenced especially the Skolt Sami tradition. The legends and tales associated with the saint along with their local interpretations tell not only of the relationship to the state and church but also the differences of point of view within the eastern Sami groups.

Sites of contestation and key symbols

The relationships between religion, space and place are the focus of the third part of the anthology. The central questions concern key symbols, the reinterpretation of sacred places, and who controls public space. One important factor is the narratives of place, which are often discussed in ethnopolitics. What sort of position do such narratives have in national and global debates? What sort of relationship does local interpretation have to these discussions?

The critical article by JoAnn Conrad, an adept in the everyday geography of ethnopolitics, seizes upon the problematics of place and space through the questions of identity of Norway's Sami. She investigates maps and local tales through the concept of narrativised space. By directing her attention to how identity is tied, in the global debate, to well-known, usually sacred, places, she analyses the factors connected with the construction of Sami identity in the ethnopolitical debate. One such factor is the sacred places of the tales, for example sieidi places, and their interpretation. By means of tales, identity is linked to the past and to the land. A powerful emphasis upon the past leaves the phenomena associated with the everyday use of space in the present beyond notice. However, ethnic identity is also part of the modern enterprise, which is directed to the future. Conrad sees the one-sided and time- and place-bound pictures of native lifestyle as confirming the dominant networks of power and weakening the opportunities of locals to have their voice heard. She directs her criticism at the standardising image of the north and Sápme, the land of the Sami, held by ethnopoliticians at the local level as well as state officials and cultural researchers.

Whereas Conrad highlights how the local and hidden is raised to the level of the national and global, Anna-Leena Siikala in her article takes the reader from outside into a hidden space or place. She analyses how to an outsider "empty" natural forest changes into a cultural landscape when it is viewed by a member of the community. The sacrificial groves of the Udmurts, one of Russia's minority Finno-Ugric peoples, are an example of such a cultural landscape. Siikala sees the significance of sacred places like sacrificial groves as lying in their ability to unite the group both with the supernatural world and with the collective past. Analysed in this way, the historical experience works as a basis of identity. Siikala emphasises, however, how important it is to separate the social memory formed through the oral tradition of, for example, the hunter from the reconstructed history based on the revival of rituals in sacred groves. The strong interest of Russia's minorities in holy places and their restoration Siikala sees as part of the ethnic revival.

Pertti Anttonen examines contested place and history through the crusade made by Bishop Henry to Finland. Behind the historically contested events set in the twelfth century lies, according to the interpretion, the strengthening of Finland's bonds to Sweden. The dramatic events in which the Finnish peasant Lalli murders Bishop Henry were the subject not only of church legend but also of oral tradition. The analysis of the encounter of a Catholic martyr with Protestant tradition leads the reader from the twelfth century to present-day Finland, where Lalli has become a symbol of national independence and the right to self-determination. The martyred bishop on the other hand is a focus of interest not only to the Catholic church but also to the Lutheran. In addition to the recent revival of Catholic pilgrimages, since 1983 ecumenical pilgrimages have been made. Pilgrimages, with their links to local historical themes, can be interpreted as part of the construction of a nationally significant tradition.

Pia Karlsson Minganti sets out, through the use of material produced by the media, to examine the different meanings mosques have in Swedish society. Mosques are viewed as symbols of identity and control of space. Minarets in particular have powerful symbolic force. The building of mosques has aroused opposition in Sweden as elsewhere in the nordic lands. Protests have made use of old plans, cultural heritage, local history and folklore. The focus of the conflict has been the right to use public space. An interesting event was the adoption as a mosque in Stockholm in the 1990s of a building designed as a power station: the building, planned by the eastern-influenced Swedish architect Ferdinand Boberg in the early twentieth century, was part of Stockholm's townscape, but also fitted the

requirements of a mosque. Solutions are not always so straightforward, and the symbolic value of the mosque hangs in the balance. Whereas amongst the indigenous Swedish population opinions are from time to time aired that mosques foster the isolation of muslim communities, muslims themselves are of the opinion that as places of religious activity, with social, educational, cultural and informational functions, mosques can be a symbol of integration.

The re-presentation of tradition

The section dealing with museums, archives and tourism raises the question, often asked in ethnographic and ethnopolitical discussions, of whose voice is represented when cultural heritage is presented. Zoë-hateehc Durrah Scheffy analyses the ways adopted by three museums in Sweden of presenting Sami materials. The different relationships of the museums to the state, to funders and to the Sami culture are observable in their exhibitions. A focus for particular attention in the analysis is the shamanic drum and its display. The Nordic Museum's exhibition history relates how the drum was placed in different contexts at different times: in the early twentieth century it was presented as an ethnographic object, as an example of handicraft, in the 1950s the drum's graphic and artistic aspects were emphasised, and in the exhibition constructed in the 1980s the drum is placed within the spiritual and artistic tradition. In all the displays, however, the place of the drum has been determined by external authority. Whereas in the modern exhibition of the Nordic Museum the drum is placed within a framework of Western artistic concepts, in the Swedish Mountain and Sámi Museum at Ajtte in northern Sweden the starting point for the fixed exhibition is the insider's viewpoint. The drum as a symbol of traditional spirituality is presented in its cultural context and with the emphasis of a subjective voice. In the exhibition texts the relationships between the Swedish state, the church and the Sami are presented critically. One of the objects presenting the arctic cultures in the exhibition dealing with traditional art in the third museum, the National Museum of Ethnography, is the drum of the Sami artistic craftsman Helge Sunna, in which unites tradition and ideas and symbols of the present day. Sunna does not, however, see his drum as a political statement – like the article's writer – but as a depiction of Sami life. By examining the drum as an exhibit Scheffy emphasises its communicative potential and symbolic value to the Sami communities of today.

Questions about the authority of the presentation of cultural heritage are also central to Tuulikki Kurki's article, which deals with the debate on the principles of ethnographic writing. The debate on the poetical and political links of cultural research and presentation, kindled in the 1970s, has affected museums and archives too. Kurki analyses the methods of archiving and writing in the Finnish Literature Society's folklore archive. One of the ethnographers who added to the archive's collections was the self-taught farmer Heikki Meriläinen (1847–1939), who both collected and interpreted traditions and also wrote literary texts. Through his collections Kurki investigates the principles of the archive methodology, which reveal not only the aesthetic criteria applied to writing and the collection of tradition at the end of the nineteenth century, but also the processes of negotiation used in matters of tradition. Meriläinen came into conflict with researchers, who wanted to keep ethnographic interpretation and the authoritativeness of writing to themselves. Kurki shows how in ethnographic research a move from a positivist to a narrative epistemology opens for the researcher new opportunities to interpret the past.

The two last articles of the anthology deal with the meaning of cultural artefacts and forms in the communication of values. Lizette Gradén analyses the symbols of Swedishness using the example of the town of Lindsborg, Kansas, known as "Little Sweden". Scale models of buildings relating to the history of the town's Swedish community are, apart from being symbols of Swedishness, also economically important products. The unchanging and simplified world of the scale models is represented by the expression "frozen past". Gradén analyses the contexts which make the interpretation of the scale models possible. Important contexts are well-known historical epochs, seasons and traditions of celebration, which contain a plethora of symbols. Gradén sees the models as a cultural exhibit and more generally as a way to communicate values. They are one example of the ways American small towns use to negotiate themselves, through ethnicity, onto the political and economic map.

The anthology concludes with an article by Kjell Olsen, whose theme is the use of old forms of culture for economic purposes. The aesthetic and exotic value of exploiting the Sami culture of northern Norway in the tourist industry is great, and the sale of products is a significant source of profit for locals. Olsen gives a picture of the ways in which invisible Saminess is made visible to the eyes of tourists. Tourism is not, however, without problems from the point of view of the local communities, and especially of the indigenous population. Olsen links the tourism and "productification" of Saminess to the wider debate on ethnic and cultural standardisation. In northern Norway's multiethnic communities, where many people have a so-called "hybrid identity", the idea of traditional elements of a pro-

ductified and standardised Saminess is difficult. A visually striking Saminess directed at the tourist does not always fit with everyday reality. A brand developed for tourism purposes can then turn into a burden. In the construction of ethnic and cultural images and identities, and their adaptation and presentation, Olsen sees the tourist industry as having a significant role in the modern world. Ethnopoliticians and representatives of minorities need all the more to be conscious of the forms of ethnic consumption represented by the tourist industry.

Conclusion

In the picture on the book's jacket two young women sit in a flowery meadow, dressed in Sami attire. The photograph, taken in the 1920s in the Sami village of Nuorgam, lends new meanings to the cover. The anthology ties the picture down as part of the local and global debate on tradition, religion, identity, symbols and ethnopolitics: the colourfulness of culture is the object of the researcher's gaze. The reader would have wanted to see more, for in many of the articles the visual is highlighted. In three of the articles photographs are used. The reader would have been interested not only in reading, but also in seeing pictures in the other articles of the places, objects, events and symbols discussed.

The linking threads of the articles are the themes of defining ethnic and national identity and the building of multicultural communities. These themes are interpreted through the subjects of religion, use and control of space and key symbols. The viewpoints may be from inside or outside the culture. The articles receive many interesting points of confirmation from each other, both within and across subject areas. They also raise many questions. The reader will find many answers to how topics relating to religion, museums and archives intersect with folkloristic perspectives and materials. The analyses of our globalising world open up new perspectives on the debates about who is a specialist, and when our societies display national, ethnic and linguistic traditions. In addition to cultural researchers, one would hope the volume will be read by decision-makers, on a local as well as global level.

Marjut Huuskonen
University of Turku

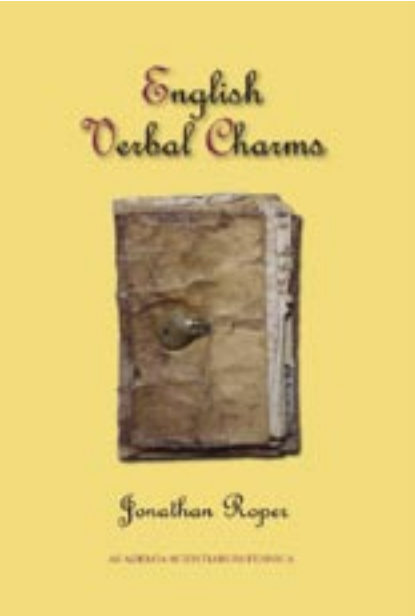
FFC 287. *Anna-Leena Siikala and Jukka Siikala,*
Return to Culture. Oral Tradition and Society in the Southern Cook Islands.
Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2005. 327 pp.
ISBN 951-41-0965-1 (hard), 951-41-0966-X (soft)

Hard, 34 € *Soft, 29€*

Theoretical discussions on culture and folklore have bifurcated into two major directions. Individualistic interpretations have emphasised performance and culture as being a product of individual strategic choices. Put in a wider social context culture has been reduced to hegemonic tradition in service of the interests of the elites. The analysis of Polynesian cultural practices in this volume reassesses the importance of theoretical understanding of culture which enables an analytic understanding of social action, political structure, narrative practices and thus the culturally constituted life-world of the people.

Pacific oral tradition is not a free-floating and easily circulating "folklore", but an integral part of social life with direct political consequences. It has not been detached from social life and therefore it is not easily interpretable without a thorough knowledge of the whole cultural system. By analysing a wide range of cultural materials this volume argues strongly for the notion of culture as ordering order which systematically determines the significance of differences.

A new volume in the FF Communications



Delivery: tiedekirja@tsv.fi

FFC 288. *Jonathan Roper,*
English Verbal Charms
Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2005. 242 pp.
ISBN 951-41-0967-8 (hard), 951-41-0968-6 (soft)

Hard, 28 € *Soft, 25 €*

Some of the earliest English writings that now survive are records of verbal charms. They mark the beginning of a millennium-long semi-continuous record of traditional verbal charms, which runs until almost the present day. This represents a remarkable set of data for a vernacular language, and yet when charms have been studied in the past, Anglo-Saxonists, later medievalists, antiquarians and Victorian folklorists have each focussed on their particular period, and the full span of the material has not been addressed. *English Verbal Charms* aims to provide a description of the genre of charms and the practice of charming by drawing on the surviving data from the entire period. It also presents a discussion of charm-types found in England, mentioning wherever possible their European analogues.

For the Complete Catalogue of the FF Communications visit our website www.folklorefellows.fi

FOLKLORE FELLOWS' NETWORK

Publisher: The Folklore Fellows by courtesy of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters
Editor: Anna-Leena Siikala (Anna-Leena.Siikala@helsinki.fi)
Editorial assistant: Maria Vasenkari (marvas@utu.fi)
Editorial Office: P. O. Box 14, 20501 Turku, Finland

FOLKLORE FELLOWS' COMMUNICATIONS (ISSN 0014-5815)

has been published for the Folklore Fellows since 1910 by the Academia Scientiarum Fennica (Finnish Academy of Science and Letters) in Helsinki.
Editor: Anna-Leena Siikala (Anna-Leena.Siikala@helsinki.fi)
Address: FF Communications, Dept. of Folklore Studies, University of Helsinki, P.O.Box 19, 00014 Helsinki, Finland
Editorial secretary: Maria Vasenkari (marvas@utu.fi)
http://www.folklorefellows.fi

To avoid additional costs and to receive FF membership discount address your order to:

Bookstore **TIEDEKIRJA**
Address: Kirkkokatu 14, 00170 Helsinki, Finland
Tel. +358 9 635 177 Fax: +358 9 635 017 E-mail: tiedekirja@tsv.fi
http://www.tsv.fi

Painola – Kaarina 2005