



The Awe Before Constant Change

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Dear all, it is a pleasure to meet you! While the former editor-in-chief of this bulletin, Dr. Frog continues his necessary and demanding task of taking care of the Folklore Fellows' Communications publication, I will step into his big shoes and start to lead this already over 30 years old information channel of Folklore Fellows. I am a Helsinki-based folklorist and a non-tenured associate professor who passionately tries to understand the complex relationships between this 'post-post-modern' world and concepts such as tradition and cultural heritage. As you all know, this topic will not come to an end very soon and will probably surprise even us folklorists many times, as traditions and heritages are constantly in a process of change, re-formation and re-imagining in this open-ended world.

For instance, I have encountered myself analyzing how Karelian-Finnish sexual traditional poetry has been used in Finland lately in post-national progressive contexts in which #MeToo and transnational body politics play a significant role. Had someone told me about this topic approximately 24 years ago when I was in high school singing rather virtuous traditional songs dressed in a national costume, I might have been interested, but a certain amount of disbelief would probably have colored the discussion. However, the awe before constant change and the endless possibilities of cultural processes is one of the reasons why the field of folklore studies still intrigues and always feels relevant.

Speaking of change has belonged to the metacultural discourses of folklorists since the beginning of the discipline. Symptomatically, the titles of the editorials of this bulletin have mentioned the words 'change', 'new life', 'renewal', and 'new era' at least five times during the 21st century, and, as you probably noticed, the title of this editorial will add its contribution to this chain. Even the first editorial of the FFNB by the professor Lauri Honko in year 1991 embraced the ideas of change and renewal:

The science of folklore itself has undergone a shift of paradigms, too. The possibility of reconstructing archetypes or original forms for various products of folklore hardly exists anymore, the ideas of "folk" as well as "lore" have altered, the basic concepts of variation and reproduction of folklore differ from the thinking of the classical historical-geographical method and the premises of comparative research have been questioned and redefined" (Honko 1991, 1–2).



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I dare not begin to count the questionings and redefinitions that have taken place after Honko's statement – I would sooner wrap myself in the sometimes exciting but oddly comforting idea that nothing unchangeable has ever existed. Thus, I will not write about a new era, even if it would be tempting in the time of large language models and AI. As JoAnn Conrad (2014) puts it, time, change, and temporality are interwoven and intrinsic in the paradigm, as well as in the concept of folklore, as the disciplinary narrative has been somewhat dependent on the idea of loss, and 'narrative' itself is a concept in which temporality plays a significant role. Let us thus embrace the multi- and trans-temporalities of folklore, memory, and life itself!

Even though time and especially the experience on temporality often sets limits for mundane work such as writing, I urge you to send us texts that are interesting for the community of folklorists. Conference reports, book reviews, and short articles are all welcome! Written texts may be, after all, one of the few semi-permanent things that survive to the future, as for instance this text will be archived in many national and local databases. Contribute to the change!

Conrad, JoAnn. 2014. "The Storied Time of Folklore". *Western Folklore* 73 (2–3): 323–52.

Honko, Lauri. 1991. Introduction. *Folklore Fellows Network Bulletin* 1: 1–2.