

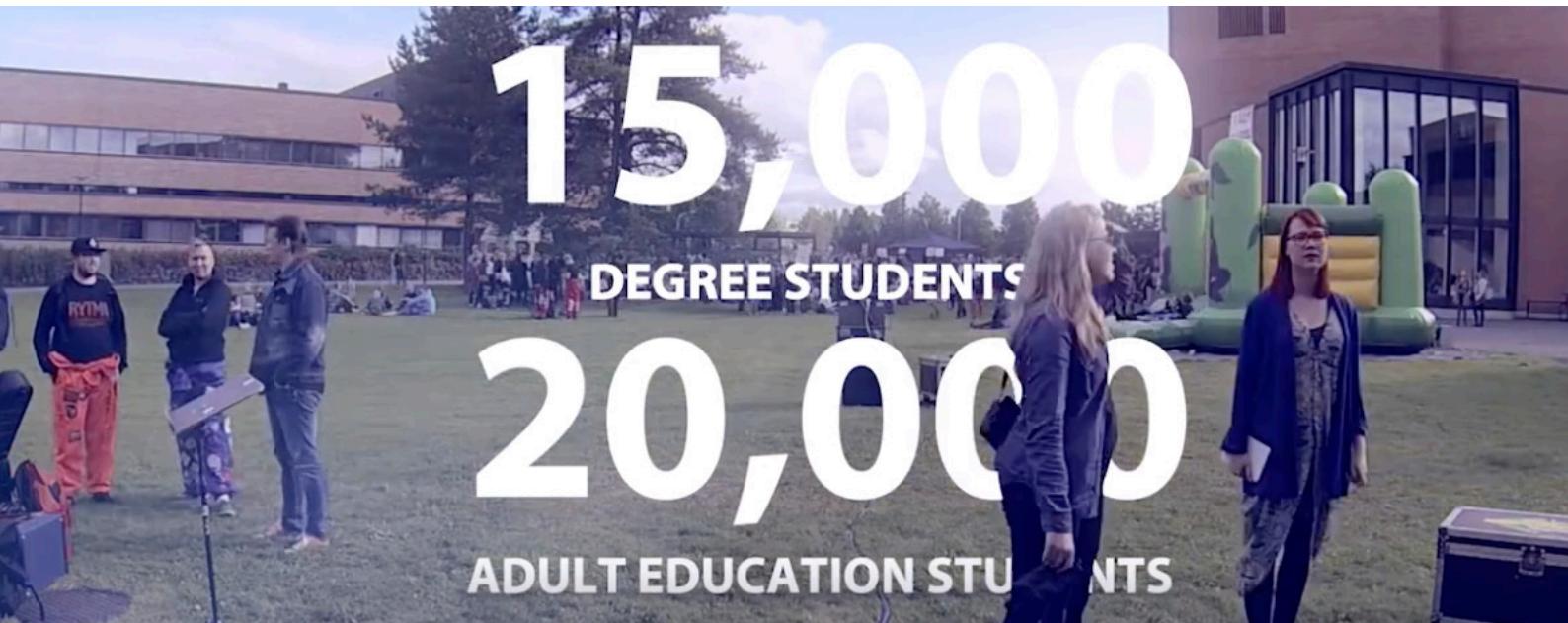
## **Violence of Traditions and Traditions of Violence**

### **Towards Folklore Fellows' Summer School 2020**

Pertti Anttonen

**P**lanning for the next (10<sup>th</sup>) Folklore Fellows' Summer School (FFSS2020) is well under way. The one-week event will take place at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF) in Joensuu, North Karelia, Finland, on August 17 through 23, in 2020. We will open the application process in Spring 2019 and announce it in the next issue of FF Network.

The site of the 2020 FF Summer School, the University of Eastern Finland, is a young university that celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. It was established in 2010 by merging two previously independent universities, the University of Joensuu and the University of Kuopio. There are approximately 15,500 degree students and 2,500 members of staff. With reference to its intellectual prominence in a rather remote location, the university advertises itself as being situated "In the Middle of Nowhere" (click below to watch the promotional video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4v7jeSkFrgA>).



The University of Joensuu hosted the Folklore Fellows' Summer School in 1995. Back then, the site of the summer school was the Mekrijärvi Research Station in Ilosantsi, the easternmost municipality in Finland, which is also the easternmost continental point in the European Union. During the 2020 Summer School, we will have our lectures and workshops in the premises of UEF's Joensuu Campus, but we will also make a day's visit to Ilosantsi.

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Thematically, FFSS2020 will align with one of the four key profile areas at the University of Eastern Finland: Cultural Encounters, Mobilities and Borders (see: <https://www.uef.fi/en/cultchange>). More specifically, we will focus on what we consider an essentially important field of research in folklore study: the violence of traditions and the traditions of violence. Obviously, violence has long been a topic and an object of research in folklore studies. Just think of, for example, ethnocentric folklore, racist and sexist jokes, the brutality of many folktales, the verbal lore of street gangs, heroic narratives and commemorations of war, and victim stories of domestic and other forms of abuse. Some of the most controversial traditions today are honor killings and other forms of honor violence, female genital mutilations, theatrical and/or ritual blackface presentations, (often cruel) sports involving animals, cultural appropriation and neo-colonialism in general, and cultural ideas concerning sexual harassment and other forms of gendered violence.

The Swedish sociologist Sanja Magdalenić points out in her survey article entitled Folklore in the *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, & Conflict* (Elsevier 2008) that “peace, conflict, and violence are an inherent part of human existence, and that folklore can be as much a mechanism of social cohesion and identity affirmation as of conflict and violence.” (p. 828.) It is for this reason that we think Folklore Fellows’ Summer School deserves to take up this topic for theoretical and methodological discussion. With reference to the current interest in studying and promoting intangible cultural heritage, we feel that it is of great importance to pay scholarly attention also to those forms of cultural heritage that may not be worth celebrating, which may even be harmful or dangerous, or which seem to continue without being intentionally upheld or propagated. In fact, the continuation of such traditions is theoretically and methodologically more challenging for research than those traditions that are put on display as symbolically significant and empowering.

## The FF Summer School: a venue for learning and critical discussion

It must be emphasized that the FF Summer School is not a thematic conference but an event of doctoral school teaching that provides the participants with an inspirational forum for learning and critical discussion. The teachers are leading scholars internationally and we will announce their names in the next issue of *FF Network*. The participants are selected from applications, with

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preference for doctoral students and younger scholars in folklore studies and closely related fields. The 450 Euros participation fee covers tuition, room and board, but not travel to and from Joensuu. The teachers will give open lectures, but workshops and other activities will be reserved for FF Summer School participants only. The students are expected to write a draft article on the basis of their individual ethnographic work and give an oral presentations in a workshop. We will provide a list of essential readings in advance for those selected to participate. After the event, a selection of articles by both teachers and student participants will potentially be published in the [Folklore Fellows' Communications](#) series.

Since its inception in 1991, Folklore Fellows' Summer School has been a joint project between folklorists in the Finnish Academy of Sciences, folklore departments at Finnish universities, and the Folklore Archive of the Finnish Literature Society. Since the Folklore Archive is no longer an independent unit in the Finnish Literature Society, the Society's Secretary General represents the Society in the Summer School's organization committee. In addition to the folklore departments, which amount to four (Helsinki, Turku, Åbo and Joensuu), the organization committee has representation from the Kalevala Society in Helsinki, the Department of History and Ethnology at the University of Jyväskylä, and the Department of Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Turku in Pori. We have also established a local organizing group in Joensuu, comprised of folklorists at the University of Eastern Finland and a course secretary. The 2020 FF Summer School will be partially coordinated with the annual UEF Summer School (<http://summerschool.uef.fi/>), and it will also cooperate with the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF, <https://www.siefhome.org/>), who nowadays organize summer schools, too. FFSS2020 will have a "SIEF lecturer", to be sponsored by SIEF.