

was translated into Estonian, it did not remain unpublished either. It was great that our Finnish friends, who have always supported Estonian folklorists, had this idea and helped to realise it, but we do not need any groundless arguments in this regard.

Another argument based on ungrounded statements is that waltz and polka as independent dances were generally danced in a circle in Estonia. This postulate is derived from Heino Aassalu's citation. There are relevant data about the island of Kihnu, but Aassalu does not refer to any other concrete regions. Yet, the inhabitants of Kihnu distinguish their manner of dancing from that of mainland Estonians. Hiimäe's footnote that the author refers to does not mention waltz or polka. Many Estonian peasant dances were danced in a circle, but ordinary waltz and polka as independent dances were usually not. During my fieldwork, I have never encountered people dancing waltz and polka in a circle other than on the island of Kihnu. I would not insist that it never happened anywhere, but the citations referred to do not include any concrete data about it.

The source references on the materials of the Estonian Folklore Archives in the appendix would also need some specification. Incomplete references, which actually would not allow for identifying materials, could rather have been left out; instead, the author could have just noted that she had used older sources at the Estonian Folklore Archives as background materials.

However, the abovementioned minor shortcomings do not diminish the general value of the dissertation. It is methodologically novel and analytically thorough in its approach. The diversity of materials and the researcher's own experience as a dancer and dance teacher further enhance the credibility of the results. In conclusion I can say that Estonian ethnocoreology has been supplemented by a new efficient study.

Ingrid Rüütel

## **WINTER SCHOOL OF FOLKLORISTICS IN JHARKHAND, INDIA**

On January 12–21, 2014, a winter school of folkloristics under the heading “Tradition, Creativity and Indigenous Knowledge: Winter School of International Folkloristics and Indigenous Culture” took place in Jharkhand, India. It was organised by the Centre for Tribal Folklore, Language and Literature at the Central University of Jharkhand, in cooperation with the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore at the University of Tartu. The participants included, besides folklorists, also historians, linguists and media researchers from Estonia, India, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, the United States and China. The majority of the presentations were dedicated to folk beliefs, and several researchers focused namely on Indian tribal folklore. Rabindranath Sarma offered an overview of the beliefs, customs and traditions of the Oraon people in Jharkhand, G. Badaiasuklang Nonglait introduced the jokes of the Khasi people in north-east India, and Li Ansiqi's presentation discussed the traditions of the Miao tribe in China. Stefano Beggiora provided an overview of the beliefs about the end of the world and end of a time cycle in the tribal cultures of India, raising a philosophical question about whether the ongoing modernisation and globalisation constitutes not only a mythological but also a real end to tribal worlds. To counterbalance these ideas, Madis Arukask offered, by



*Temple of Sarna believers decorated with red-and-white flags at Murma. Photo by Reet Hiimäe 2014.*

way of lectures and films, an overview of the life of some Finno-Ugric minority groups (the Veps and the Votes). Estonian researchers also discussed genre as a conceptual tool in folkloristics (Ülo Valk), the changing ways of collecting folklore (Merili Metsvahi), collection work in a transnational context (Pihla Maria Siim) and personal experience stories (Reet Hiimäe).

Besides verbal folklore, several researchers tackled the visual and auditory forms of folklore. Uwe Skoda's presentation explained the cultural and regional conditionality of fright phenomena; for instance, in the lore of many European regions with Christian background the dead are described as demonised and dangerous and contact with them is avoided, whereas in India and elsewhere in Asia there are regions that welcome such contacts; the deceased can be kept in the same room with the living for quite a while and they are also part of family photos. In addition to this, Skoda discussed the socio-cultural meaning of cockfight. Carlo A. Cubero spoke about sono-truths as a means to articulate the peculiar effect of using sound recordings as the main research methodology. Marje Ermel discussed, in light of fieldwork conducted in the community of Krishna devotees, sound recordings as social objects, which should be viewed in their immediate context. Nilly Lepcha Karthak introduced the traditional musical instruments and music of the Lepcha tribe. Lidia Guzy described, on the basis of fieldwork carried out in western Orissa, India, a paradox about the role of village musicians, who belong to the lowest caste in social stratification, and how their role changes in sacral contexts,

in which namely their untouchable status enables them to act as mediators between humans and the divine sphere. As the winter school combined both presentations and discussions in seminars, all topics could be debated and therefore different viewpoints were highlighted. For instance, Guzy's presentation sparked a dispute about the possible objectivity of the conclusions made by a researcher from European cultural space about Indian tribal religions. It was argued that belonging to the same cultural space may act as a filter and therefore researchers sometimes fail to notice some nuances that can be obvious to outsiders.

The winter school brought to the fore quite a few novel viewpoints. Claire Scheid's presentation about the depiction of the Yeti in folklore explained that, besides spontaneous mythologisation of fears, an opposite tendency – demythologisation – can also occur. Kishore Bhattacharjee pointed out that although it has found little attention, several widely known Christian saint legends have also parallels in Hindu tradition. Margaret Lyngdoh spoke about violence caused by supernatural factors, referring to the recent acts of violence related to a mysterious creature called Thlen in north-east India. Tollheishel Khaling noted that more often than not, the influence of colonists and missionaries on Indian tribal cultures has been treated as destructive, although in certain cases it could have even favoured the preservation of tribal culture (e.g., by way of increasing the self-awareness of the tribe). William Westerman placed the complicated dilemmas related to the survival of cultures into a global perspective, giving an overview of the causes of coerced migration across the world and pointing out that if there is no well-elaborated programme for helping immigrants, this could result in cultural genocide of the indigenous people in the host country.

Within the framework of the winter school, the participants were able to visit the villages of local Oraon tribes, get acquainted with the manifestations of their identity (e.g., tattoos, rituals), as well as listen to the lore related to their holy places (e.g., the cult of *sal*-trees, magic healings near the most important holy places, but also haunting phenomena). From the point of view of protective magic, it was interesting to see umbrellas with symbolic protective function in family and ancestral graveyards; also umbrella-like roofs could be encountered in tribal shrines (e.g., in Sarna-temple in Murma village), which according to locals symbolically protect tribal integrity. Side by side with the representatives of local religion worshipping goddess Sarna-Ma, Muslims, Hindus and Christians could be met in the villages. It was surprising that the differences between the *own* and the *other* were not very distinct, and hybridisation manifestations could rather be encountered (e.g., the Oraons who had been converted to Christianity or Islam, parallelly continued performing several tribal rituals). Yet, the opposition between the *own* and the *other* as well as the externalisation of dangers could be noted on a geographical basis: the majority of local inhabitants, with whom I conversed, maintained that in India the *other* states and regions were dangerous, rather than their own.

In conclusion I can say that participation in the winter school offered valuable experience, the presenters introduced novel viewpoints, and the perception of differences and similarities in the religion of India and Europe had a widening impact on the researcher's eye, which would definitely be an advantage in future work.

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