

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORK PRAISES THE ONE WHO HAS DONE IT

Bibliography Prize to Karin Maria Rooleid

On February 17, the 3rd Bibliography Day “From the Files to the Data Base” was held at the Academic Library of the Tallinn Pedagogical University.

At the event, initiated by the Estonian Academic Library and the Estonian Librarian Association (ELA), and held every other year, the prize was awarded to the best bibliographic list published during the past two years. Judging committee, which by statutory is formed of the representatives of the ELA, the Academic Library, the National Library of Estonia, the Tartu University Library and the Archival Library of the Estonian Literary Museum, chose between 9 submitted works and awarded the prize to Karin Ribenis ‘Eesti rahvaluule bibliograafia (1993–2000)’ [The Bibliography of Estonian Folklore (1993–2000)]; compiled by

Karin Ribens, Estonian Literary Museum. Tartu: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2002, 611 pp.] and ‘Eesti noolid 1918–1944. I–II’ [Estonian Sheet Music 1918–1944]; compiled by Ülle Tamm, Valve Jürisson, Anu Mälgand National Library of Estonia. Tallinn: Eesti Rahvusraamatukogu, 2001–2003, 454+206 pp.]. The committee also acknowledged Maie Lõvi-Kalnin’s bibliography “Viktor Kalnin. Bibliography 1957–2000” as the best personal bibliography and as being accurate and user-friendly. K. M. Rooleid’s bibliography was nominated for the



Photo 1. Karin Maria Rooleid in Karepa. Photo by Aado Lintrop 2002.

prize by Krõõt Liivak and Tiina Ritson at the National Library of Estonia.

Topics discussed at the following seminar covered traditional bibliographic methods as well as future opportunities. Presentations were delivered by Aurika Kruus, Dimitri Kaljo, Toomas Schvak, Merike Kiiopus, Halliki Jürma and Jüri Järs from various libraries and institutions. Karin Maria Rooleid's presentation was entitled "On the *Internationale Volkskundliche Bibliographie*".

K. M. Rooleid's prize-winning work is a major bibliography, which helps to preserve ethnic culture. The author has made efforts to collect data on academic folklore publications, released in print during 1993–2000. The bibliography contains the total of 4,500 entries, excluding newspaper articles and including selected material from popular-scientific journals. The major advantage of the bibliography is that the compiler has checked most of the entries *de visu*, i.e. she has been acquainted with the published text. Such traditional compilation, which unfortunately appears to be replaced by the superficial and less time- and work-consuming collection of ready-made entries, guarantees the accurateness and truthfulness of information, thus saving time of the bibliography users. K. M. Rooleid's work is well-structured, which is a prerequisite of such a copious bibliography. For an ordinary user the system might be somewhat confusing, but perhaps not so much for a folklorist. The bibliography includes the index of authors, persons, editors, compilers, toponyms, countries, nationalities, a subject index, and in addition the Estonian equivalents of specialised terms in English and Russian, facilitating the use of subject index for a search in non-Estonian language.

The committee assessed the cultural value, the orderliness and thoroughness of the work. The bibliography, together with the two-volume work "Eesti rahvaluule bibliograafia (1918–1992)" ('Bibliography of Estonian Folklore. 1918–1992') by the same author, published in 1997–1998, is a thorough and reliable reference source for scholars of folklore and culture in general.

Although the bibliography includes only printed publications, it is also available in the electronic version (<http://haldjas.folklore.ee/rl/pubte/ee/erbibl/>).

Kalju Tammaru, head of the committee

PRESIDENT'S FOLKLORE PRIZE AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ESTONIAN FOLKLORE ARCHIVES IN 2003

The aim of the folklore archives is to preserve collective memory. It is not very common in the world to have a folklore archives with such large percentage of entries contributed by people. Following Jakob Hurt's collection tradition, the Estonian Folklore Archives has conducted collection work through local correspondents from the very beginning. Next to the geographically wider popularisation of folklore, the material collected by this method informs us of what people have considered important.

The monetary President's Folklore Prize (formerly the Head of State Award), established in 1935 by Oskar Loo, the founder of the



***Photo 1.** Arnold Rüütel, President of the Republic of Estonia, presents the folklore collection prize to Anu Soon. Photo by Alar Madisson, 2004.*

Estonian Folklore Archives, which is attributed to the best contributors-collectors, was reinstated in 1994. On February 24, 2004, Anu Soon from Lääne-Viru County and Kail Sarv from Tallinn were rewarded the President's Folklore Prize.

Anu Soon has contributed material to the folklore archives since 1995. In 2003 she submitted more than 327 pages of folklore materials from her home parish Viru-Jaagupi, Viru County, and her birth place Iisaku, Ida-Viru County. Housewife Anu Soon recorded material from her personal recollections, but also inquired local people. She has also written on modern folk music in Võhu village and on the formation and repertoire of the local village ensemble "Karukell" ('Pasqueflower').

The work contributed by Kail Sarv, folklore teacher in Tallinn, "Viljandi Kultuurikolledži folkloor 2000.–2003. aastal" ('Viljandi Culture College Folklore 2000–2003') and "Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli folkloor 2002.–2003. aastal" ('Folklore in Tallinn University of Technology in 2002–2003') provides an overview of modern folklore (jokes, web-humour) as well as of group lore among the students of the Viljandi Culture College. Kail Sarv's materials reflect topical social issues through pictorial-jesting narrative tradition in a humorous manner; the topics include, for example, European Union and concerns over the independence of Estonia, power and gender relations of men and women in Estonia, as well as the seamy side of modern consumerism in television commercials, etc.

This year's prizes were handed over by Arnold Rüütel, President of Estonia. Ingrid Rüütel, the First Lady, also participated in the event, and entertainment was provided by the Võhu village ensemble. In the recent years, people's interest in local heritage has grown, probably due to searching one's identity, or that of one's home place or region, but possibly also due to Estonia's acceptance into the European Union and progress in regional tourism. Larger corpora of material contributed to the Estonian Folklore Archives in the past two years have been collected on the initiative of local municipalities, local history museums and societies.

In 2003 the Järva County Museum and the County Municipality initiated a collection competition of local legends for local people, professional folklorists and students of the University of Tartu.



Photo 2. Kail Sarv and Enrik Visla playing at the event. Photo by Alar Madisson, 2004.

The Chair of Estonian and Comparative Folklore of the University of Tartu and the Karula National Park conducted a joint recording session. The Karula collection expedition was supervised by Merili Metsvahi, lecturer at the University of Tartu; field work in the Järva County was supervised by Risto Järv. Students who participated in the event were Elo-Hanna Seljamaa, Kärg Kama, Katre Kikas, Ott Heinapuu, Karoliina Kagovere, Kristiina Ehin, Siiri Erm, Triin Ploom, Reeli Reinaus, Maili Vabrit-Pilt, Kristina Veidenbaum, Ülle Niin, Katrin Ruus, Helen Kästik, Mirjam Somelar, Katrina Kink, Merit Vaks, Marion Selgall, Valdo Valper, Pille Vahtmäe and Eda Pomozi.

The Estonian Ingerian-Finnish Union, with supporting consulting from the Folklore Archives, initiated the collection of oral history among the Ingerian-Finnish population in Estonia. Kaja Schultz has been the main manager of this project from the very beginning. Biographies, narrative legends and folk songs of the Ingerian-Finnish, collected by her, preserve the past and present of this small ethnic group in Estonia.

Another sign of the increasing interest in the local heritage and folklore were the 112 works contributed to the national folklore

contest for secondary school students. Research works, which included collected material on the manifestations of group oral heritage, family and local heritage and modern folklore phenomena, will be preserved in the folklore archives.

Eda Kalmre

**100 YEARS YOUNG. RICHARD VIIDALEPP
(JAN. 23, 1904 – JUNE 3, 1986)**

If to God 1,000 years is like one day, then what would 100 years be? A fraction of the day. This applies to Estonia, to folklore studies in general (which is hardly a new discipline compared to, say, chemistry or economy, not to mention geometry and philosophy), and in particular, to the Estonian folklore studies. The end of the 19th century, in some sense also the early 20th century, undoubtedly forms the “prehistoric period” of the Estonian folklore studies. By this time local folklore collectors had already worked for decades, but this point marked the sending out of expert scholars and the new beginning of the stagnated collection of folk



Photo 1. Estonian folklorist Richard Viidalepp (1904–1986). Photo from the family collection.

tunes. At the beginning of the new century, in 1901, Oskar Kallas defended his prestructural doctoral dissertation in folklore, which was thought to be ahead of his time. In 1904–1906 Jakob Hurt edited and published the anthology “The Songs of the Setu” vols 1–3, which was, no doubt, a professional publication. This level of professionalism, however, had been achieved by amateurs – J. Hurt was a Lutheran minister, O. Kallas a gymnasium teacher and editor.

During these first years of the 20th century the girls and boys who became the first professional – not only by their level of expertise but also by occupation – folklorists of the Republic of Estonia were born. This led to the major international conference in honour of the 100th anniversary of O. Loorits’, the founder and long-term head of the Estonian Folklore Archives, in 2000. A little more than three years later, Richard Viidalepp’s 100th anniversary followed. In the

following years the anniversaries of other scholars (E. Normann, P. Ariste, H. Tampere, S. Lätt, R. Põldmäe, etc.), who started out in the Estonian Folklore Archives under young Oskar Loorits, and who were some years his junior, will arrive.

Richard Viidalepp's 100th anniversary was held in January 2004 with a festive seminar of the Academic Folklore Society. The seminar lectures bordered on topics pertinent to a narrative researcher from Central Estonia.

Mall Hiimäe was an excellent choice for the speaker of the opening lecture of the seminar. Although she was born in Alutaguse, North-East Estonia, and was shaped into a folklorist by other scholars, she considers R. Viidalepp as her predecessor and model of studying narrative tradition. M. Hiimäe's lecture "Richard Viidalepp in search for his topic" suggests that for Viidalepp the search for the central research topic, i.e. folk tales and narrative tradition, was anything but easy. I have also encountered some Viidalepp's articles on popular tradition and other topics, but I have always considered these as digressions from his main research theme; some of his later articles were indeed digressions, such as the gatherings of the village youth on the Island of Kihnu. But these early years were definitely a period of search. In addition to interesting findings, either heard of during the field work or accidentally found in the archives, that needed to be commented on, R. Viidalepp was also a responsible folklorist who always completed his tasks. His personal encounter with the blind narrator Kaarel Jürjenson, was a landmark in folklorist Viidalepp's professional life.

The next lecturer at the seminar was Mari-Ann Rimmel, whose lecture was entitled "Following the Footsteps of Viidalepp in the Järva County". The presentation, embellished with numerous examples, focused on regional narrative tradition. M.-A. Rimmel compared the material collected by R. Viidalepp in his home county with the material collected during the expedition of the Estonian Folklore Archives in summer 2003. It was an emotional experience to look at Viidalepp's black-and-white photograph and the same vista photographed in colour 70 years later, many times in a row. Such dual photographs of one object inspired thoughts about the Järva County, Viidalepp himself, the ties between the scholar and his home county, the perishable and imperishable. Most of the Estonians tend

to view the Järva County as a plain and dull place, but the visual additions to the presentation convinced everyone that this may be true only at a superficial glance.

Kärri Toomeos-Orglaan, a member of the research group of *Märchen*, focused on an eccentric figure from the past, a prolific 19th century writer Martin Sohberg, whose main occupation was smallpox vaccination. Though it was a successful occupation, M. Sohberg wished to be an author of wild field of publication. He has published a number of best-selling and profitable books, which included both authentic folklore and his own verse and prose pieces (often of folkloric nature). M. Sohberg's song creation has been studied at length by Ü. Tedre. This seminar provided rather detailed information on Sohberg's narrative collections and their level of folkloric authenticity.

The seminar concluded with the presentation by Urve Buschmann, Richard Viidalepp's niece. Her presentation, consisting of her personal childhood memories, excerpts from archival texts found during studying R. Viidalepp's genealogy and from other different sources.

Is a 100 years a long period in the Estonian folklore studies? A few years ago, Piret Õunapuu summed up her article on the history of Estonian ethnology, that it is still young, if judged by her surprising encounter with Ilmari Manninen's, the founder of Estonian National Museum, elderly, but living brother. The past is not so distant, if it has a living witness! The audience of this January seminar included many people who had known R. Viidalepp personally and had memories of him.

As long as we think of ourselves as young, the Estonian folklore studies must be young by every human standard...

Kristi Salve

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ‘ESTONIAN SKY’

On March 1, 2004, interdisciplinary conference ‘Estonian Sky’ was held in Tartu.

Astrophysicist Jaak Jaaniste’s presentation introduced the sky in March. The seven planets visible in the March sky have introduced the names of weekdays in the Indo-European languages and have inspired numerous myths and legends.

Theologian Tarmo Kulmar presented an overview of the mythical Estonian sky gods and the formation of God’s conception compared to analogous processes and conceptions in different cultures. Many conceptions are shared by the Chinese, Polynesian, Mongolian, Mayan, Inca, etc. cultures, enabling thus to be sufficiently confident in interpreting the scanty Estonian material. The image of the sky god may date back 5,000 years.

Psychologist Eve Kikas introduced children’s perception of the sky. While interpreting natural phenomena, the reasoning of children follows an altogether different logic than that of adults. Children



Photo 1. Folklorist Mare Kõiva and philosopher Enn Kasak on the conference “Estonian Sky”. Photo by Alar Madisson 2004.

try to overcome the contradiction of truths told by adults and what they see themselves (The Earth does not appear round or does not seem to rotate). According to a hypothesis the development of child coincides with the historical development of mankind. According to this argument children should perceive the world as rectangular – instead, they rather imagine it as being disc-shaped, which is achieved by combining their own understanding of a flat earth and the acquired knowledge of a round earth. Abstract knowledge is acquired through terminology, without actually understanding their meaning. Thus children have two conceptions of the Earth: the place inhabited by people, and planet Earth, etc.



Photo 2. Starlore researcher Andres Kuperjanov. Photo by Alar Madison.

Jaan Einasto's presentation 'Future of the observing astronomy' discussed the up-to-date observation techniques, results and centres of astronomy, predicting that the focus is shifting on data obtained in perfect observation conditions, which are analysed in the symbiosis of the best technical equipment and universities or research institutions with the best human resources. Recent achievements in astronomy have introduced the theory of multiverse, as well as other findings which enable to predict the fate of stars and universes more accurately.

Philosopher Enn Kasak's presentation 'Everywhere and nowhere' approached mythology and myths by applying theoretical principles used in quantum physics.

Folklorist Mare Kõiva introduced different spatial models used to represent the sky, also the mythological creatures and their behaviour attributed to sky.

Philosopher Roomet Jakapi's presentation 'William Whiston, the Deluge and the Great Catastrophe' provided an overview of the scientific views on comets in the lifetime of William Whiston (1667–1752) and Whiston's treatment of comets, combining his filigree science with religion. Presuming that the Earth was approximately 7,000 years old, he described the Great Deluge in 2346 BC, caused by the Halley comet. In his line of argumentation Whiston concluded that on this comet there must be Hell, where the Devil and its adherents will hide on final Judgement Day.

Folk belief and starlore researcher Andres Kuperjanov's presentation 'Pseudo-mythological stellar maps' introduced a stellar map based on the Estonian pseudo-mythology created by Aado Grenzstein, and compared the map with analogous maps and the principles of creation (Jesuit J. Schiller's Christian sky atlas, the elaboration of K. G. Müller's classical stellar map, and B. Jonsson's pseudo-stellar map of the Vikings).

The conference's audience represented a wide range of occupations. It was, perhaps, the first time in the history of events held in the Estonian Literary Museum, when most of the audience was formed of men. Presentations attracted interest and inspired lively discussion. The conference was organised by three NGOs: Estonian Institute of Folklore, Institutum Mauritanum, and the Astronomy Club of the Tartu Old Observatory, in cooperation with the group of folk belief of the Department of Folkloristics at the Estonian Literary Museum.

The conference concluded with the presentation of Andres Kuperjanov's new book "Estonian Sky. Beliefs and Interpretations". The book provides an overview of our forefathers' conceptions and beliefs about space and its origin. The discussed topics include astral mythology, the history of its study in Estonia, beliefs associated with the Sun, the Moon, planets, comets, meteorites and stars. A thorough overview of star and constellation names throughout years has been provided at the end of the book, and a complementary Estonian stellar map is attached.

Maris Kuperjanov
Liisa Vesik

TIIA RISTOLAINEN DEFENDED HER DOCTORAL THESIS

Tiia Ristolainen, *Aspekte surmakultuuri muutustest Eestis* [Aspects of Changes in Estonian Death Culture]. Dissertationes folkloristicae Universitatis Tartuensis 4. Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2004. Supervisor Ülo Valk, opponents Paul Hagu and Juha Pentikäinen.

On March 5, 2004 Tiia Ristolainen was awarded PhD. in folkloristics after defending her thesis *Aspects of Changes in Estonian Death Culture*.

The subtopics of the study – omens, funeral customs, functions of the public and the private, and the phenomenon in its diachronic dimensions has been viewed in social context and structured accordingly. Inspired by Juha Pentikäinen's definition of death culture (1990), Tiia Ristolainen has defined death culture as a synthesis of death-related beliefs and ways of behaviour, grounded on social agreements, or in other words, a system of death-related social agreements, which is also expressed in beliefs and customs. Juha Pentikäinen (University of Helsinki) and Paul Hagu (University of Tartu) acknowledged the definition as effectual in principle and deserving further study.



Photo 1. *Tiia Ristolainen on March 5, 2004. Photo by Andres Tennus (University of Tartu).*

The opening article of the dissertation was a study of death omens in Estonia (*Surmakultuuri suundumused Eestis: surmaended*, 'Trends in death culture in Estonia: death omens', will be published in journal

Mäetagused N^o 25), categorising and naming omens predicting death. The author has pointed out the functions of omens and has categorised them under active and passive categories. In T. Ristolainen's treatment the passive prediction is limited to observation and active prediction to certain manipulations.

The second article *Trends in death culture in Estonia: view on the changes in funeral customs* (published in English in journal *Nord Nytt* no 86, Vyborg 2003, pp. 27–62) focuses on the observation of several stages in funeral customs. Parallels, based on T. Ristolainen's recent fieldwork results, have been drawn with earlier customs and modern trends.

The third article *Surmakultuuri suundumused tänapäeval: avalik ja privaatne* ('Contemporary trends in death culture: the public and the private', published in Estonian in the annals of the Learned Estonian Society. *Õpetatud Eesti Seltsi aastaraamat*. 2002, Tartu 2004, pp. 244–266) is dedicated to the manifestations of these aspects in these areas of death culture that were discussed in two previous articles – namely, death omens and funeral customs. In studying contemporary community it appears to be an effective exposition of problems. T. Ristolainen has addressed the issue of the public and the private in an intriguing manner, and has concluded that the public and the private sphere are intertwined in manifestations of death culture, folkloric knowledge seems to become professional and the border between the public and the private is unstable.

Although written before the other articles, the fourth article of the dissertation seems to combine the previous ones together. The fourth article is entitled *Inimese lahkumine. Surmakultuuri muutumisest Eestis 20. sajandi lõpul* ('Departing from this life. Changes in Death Culture in Estonia at the end of the 20th Century', published in Estonian in collection *Pärimuslik ajalugu*, Tartu 2001, pp. 202–220, and in English in *Lives, Histories and Identities*, vol. 3, Tartu 2002, pp 305–329) and focuses on death culture, the closed and open social space, the past and present attitudes to death, the turning points of life, old age today, changes and survival. T. Ristolainen has reflected on the issue of the instability of human relationships in cases of death in modern society and the reasons behind it, but also on the

changed individual attitudes towards death and the reasons behind that. Further in-depth study into the topic would be relatively problematic.

In the list of references T. Ristolainen has mentioned the names of 16 Estonian scholars (p. 205 of article 4; pp. 12–13 of the introduction), but the most significant contribution has come from the meticulous study of Juha Pentikäinen's work, especially his "Finnisch departure" (1990). During the thesis discussion opponent Juha Pentikäinen pointed it out and predicted the forthcoming publication of the book "*Estonian departure*" by the thesis defender (T. Ristolainen's fourth article was entitled "Departing from this life").

Mare Kalda

MA THESIS ON SONGS AND WOMEN'S ISSUE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Kristiina Ehin, Interpretations of the older and newer folk songs from the aspect of women's studies.

On June 15, 2004, Kristiina Ehin defended her master's thesis in folklore studies at the University of Tartu, with Leena Kurvet-Käosaar, scholar of world literature, as the opponent.

Kristiina Ehin's thesis consists of four articles published during 2001-2004:

1. *Müüdnud neiu. Regilaul kui aja lugu* [Sold Maiden. Folksong as a Story of Time]. Published in the Estonian collection *Regilaul – keel, muusika, poeetika* [Folksong – Language, Music, Poetics]. 2001;
2. *Mehed teevad naist: regilaulu “Kuldnaime” tähenduskontuure* [The Making of a Woman by Men: On the Example of Folksong “Kuldnaime” [“Golden Woman”]]. Published in the Estonian journal of women's and gender issues *Ariadne lõng. Nais- ja meesuuringute ajakiri* [Adriane's Clew], No. 1-2, 2002.
3. *Naise identiteedi muutus pärast Esimest maailmasõda – rahvalaul kõneleb* [Changes in Women's Identity after World War I as Reflected in Folklore]. Published in the collection *Pärimus ja tõlgendus* [Narrative History and Interpretation, 2003]
4. *Karksi lauliku Kadri Kuke pärand feministliku uurimise valguses: oma sugupoole valu ja voli* [The Legacy of Kadri Kukk, the Karksi Singer, in the Light of Feminist Studies: Her Gender's Pain and Free Will]. To be published shortly in *Studies in Folk Culture*, vol. 2, 2004.

The articles are bound by an extensive introduction of theoretical generalisations.

The methodological backbone of Ehin's thesis is women's issues from the viewpoint of the older and newer Estonian folksong. She has characterised the dynamics of her work as follows: the first article centres on the relationship between history and women's



Photo 1. Estonian folklorist Kristiina Ehin in Obinitsa (Setu region). Photo from Internet (<http://www.estpak.ee/~setomaa/93/tegijad.htm>).

issues, the second article on the aspect of gender studies, the third article focuses on women's studies in the context of narrative history and the fourth article is an attempt of applying feminist methods to folk songs.

Kristiina Ehin's study is a unique synthesis of the coherence of the different sides of the phenomenon. Her work, on the one hand, is the probing of the possibilities of women's studies in interpreting folksongs, and the opportunity to study theoretical women's issues through the means of Estonian folksongs.

In her language usage, she seems to seek balance between creative poetry and academic writing. In characterising the relationships of social gender roles, for example, she uses the expression "*naise voli*", or "woman's free will", a notion borrowed from Kadri Kukk's vocabulary. At the same time she uses terms from feminist theories, such as 'low theory' and 'high theory', thus characterising her

attitudes towards the reading style and theoretical constructions of the source. Kristiina Ehin claims that during her coincidental encounter with folk songs, she felt as if “the songs spoke to her personally”. She also respects the work of earlier scholars of folk songs, sometimes even contradicting their views (especially in the article where she analyses Kadri Kukk’s songs, and points out the viewpoint of former folklore collectors not to ask the singer about his or her feelings and thoughts regarding the performance). In her work, Kristiina Ehin has used these addressings of singers and scholars, but also those expressed in women’s issues in other languages: “My method of interpretation in folklore research has been balancing between different theories and certain immediate approach” (Introduction: p.5).

Ehin’s relationship with women’s issues becomes evident in the glossary of terms in the introduction, and also in her articles. In her earlier articles the emphasis on women’s issues is quite unconscious, secondary even, compared to her most recent article, where she has deliberately assumed the role of a representative of feminist thought and methods. In the earlier articles the context necessary for interpretation has been created through the use of other means – for example, works on juridical history in the analysis of the “Sold Maiden”; narrative history as an area of study in *Enne ja nüüd* [Now and Before]. In the former case the juridical historical context enables to understand former marriage traditions and loosely attach them to certain dates. In the latter case the context of narrative history enables to observe conflicts from the viewpoint of the contemporaries of the singer, associating individual ideas and perceptions based on personal experience and collective stereotypes. The opponent raised several intriguing questions about the articles (being a scholar of literature and women’s studies, not a folklorist), such as: To which extent is it possible to understand the meaning of folk songs in terms of the feelings and emotions of singers and their contemporaries. It is impossible to obtain such information on old lyro-epic songs (“Sold Maiden”, for example). Though it sounds intriguing, we cannot answer the question about the influence of the maiden’s curse on her destiny or the meaning of the curse for the singer, because all the answers inevitably depend on modern context (and will be the respondent’s views of himself or herself and the singer). We may, however, be able to find answers to the ques-

tions about emotions and feelings in the newer song “Now and Before”. There are still people who remember the first half of the 20th century, who sensed the conflict between the lifestyles and morals of women in rural regions and women in towns. The additional information which builds up the context will probably facilitate a folklorist’s understanding of a specific folksong and the stereotype of a woman presented there, or, more precisely, of the opposition of the stereotypes of women from different environments from the viewpoint of a rural woman. Ehin relates these stereotypes with modern stereotypes of the roles of women, challenges them, forms consistencies and interruptions.

One of the first student papers of Kristiina Ehin was about what her family heritage meant to herself, how to be the agent of her own heritage. This pro-seminar paper was the first step on her way, and the current thesis is one of the next ones to answer the question how to be the agent of one’s own heritage. The very question firmly positions Kristiina Ehin’s thesis in the folklore studies – all folklore scholars have searched for and expressed their answers to this question long before her, and will continue to do so in the future.

Tiiu Jaago