

The Changing Face of Ethnology

Kulttuurin muuttuvat kasvot. Johdatusta etnologiatieteisiin. Bo Lönnqvist, Elina Kiuru, Eeva Uusitalo (eds.). Tietolipas 155, Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 1999. 287 pp. ISBN 951-746-065-1.

■ Ethnology is not an easy subject to teach and study. Not only because we have to amalgamate theory and praxis, switch between the role of

fieldworker and the academic, being one day deep in the jungle of everyday life and interpreting life from a scientific point of view on the next. Ethnology is so diverse and in the middle of continuous change that it is not easy to find a general guiding line, that is necessary to master to be authorised as researcher. Not easy, but not impossible. The beginners course-book, *Kulttuurin muuttuvat kasvot* (The changing face of culture), written by twelve scholars associated with the Department of Ethnology, University of Jyväskylä, is a recent try. The book is edited by Professor Bo Lönnqvist, head of the department and researchers Elina Kiuru and Eeva Uusitalo.

According to the editors the book is written to help the future students of ethnology to prepare to their university studies. This compilation serves as a course book for the students at the beginning of their studies. That is why the authors tried to help the future users in better understanding. At the same time, *Kulttuurin muuttuvat kasvot* is suitable for those outsiders who are interested in ethnology. The book contains three main parts: Cultural analysis, Profiles and Research aspects. The first three papers written by the three professors of the department cover roughly the half of the book. In his starting article Lönnqvist analyses ethnology ("What is Ethnology?"). The author not only writes about ethnology, but he provides a useful framework for continental ethnology defining the science of ethnology (shortly ethnology) with its three different, but strongly related branches: European ethnology, folkloristics and cultural anthropology. After giving an overview of the development of research on culture in the continent, he shortly introduces the history of Finnish ethnology. He sharply points out the dual roots of continental ethnology. Shortly surveying the history of ethnology in the last two centuries, he provides a better understanding of the recent self-reflective, self-critical changes in ethnology. Concluding his part with analysing the definitions of culture, Lönnqvist is able to introduce ethnology as an interpretative and deeply human science, deconstructing the authoritative voice of our past and still providing an encouraging role model for future researchers.

Päivikki Suojanen in her article entitled "What is Folkloristics?" covers a vast range of questions.

Fortunately, the author has an extended knowledge not only on the field of folkloristics, but also on communication anthropology and comparative religion. This guarantees that the oldest field of Finnish cultural research, folkloristics will appear and be analysed in a wide scientific context, ranging from mythology to text folkloristics, from symbolic anthropology to the ethnography of speaking. After a short historical summary, the author introduces the classical folklore genres in the life of a community, defining at the same time basic terms such as variation, reduction, community and tradition. Suojanen smoothly guides the reader further to the recent phenomena of popular culture, poplore, worldlore, world music, soapoperas ready for folkloristic research. The paper ends with a detailed overview of recent folklore methods and theories.

Ilmari Vesterinen guides the reader through the field of cultural anthropology, "What is Cultural Anthropology?". After describing the nature and branches of anthropology, he points out ethnographic fieldwork, holistic view and comparative approach as pillars of cultural anthropology. The author not only defines applied anthropology, but speaks about the role of the science in the wide field of cultural discourse as well. He is as well able to bring closer the academic science to the readers by meditating on the fallibility of the anthropologist. He uses the allegory of hedgehog and fox to introduce different types of scholars.

The second part of the book, Profiles is about some central concepts and methods of ethnology. In her starting essay "From folk culture to the meaning of everyday life" Nina Säaskilahti points out that in the present diverse ethnology the definition of culture used by a researcher casts light upon their general approach. Following her introduction about the boundness of ethnological discourse on folk, she draws attention to the topic of everyday life in future ethnological research. Pirjo Korkiakangas turns her attention to the relationship between "Memory, remembrance and tradition". She defines memory as a fundament of human culture, and analyses the collective and individual nature of memory and remembrance. Considering, that one of the most important source material of ethnology are the interviews reflecting personal interpretations of the past, it is no

doubt, that she touches an extremely important question speaking about memory, forgetting and nostalgia. As well as Laura Aro, who undertakes the analysis of "Identity and tradition". Following the introduction of the trends in the research of identity and tradition she speaks about roots and belonging. Through interviews of Karelians evacuated to Finland during World War II, she provides us the understanding of the problematic nature of authenticity of tradition and ethical problems raising from that. The concluding essay in this part is from Pekka Junkala, "Fieldwork as a profile of ethnology". In his paper he shortly introduces the nature of fieldwork, one of the most important characteristics of our science. Following a survey of the variety of fieldwork methods, Junkala extends ethnology to the future pointing out the borderless research field in which we are living.

In the third part, Research aspects, six papers are published to illustrate how ethnology chooses and analyses a question. The introductory article is from Eeva Uusitalo with the title "On the border of experience and theory: what is ethnology all about". The author after shortly introducing the logical peculiarities of ethnology points out the importance of continuous communication between practical experiences and theoretical considerations. Uusitalo deals with the ethnological analysis of unemployment presenting it through a personal diary. The next contribution is from Elina Kiuru, "Objects in ethnology". After pointing out the starting points of ethnological object analysis the author shortly introduces this branch of research in Finland. In her next short essay Kiuru speaks about the use of ethnological qualification, "Big man, small house - ethnology in theory and praxis". She presents a doll's house exhibition arranged by ethnology students in the Museum of Central Finland. In the next paper Tiina-Riitta Lappi takes "A look on the city". She provides information on the anthropological and Finnish ethnological urban research. Jan Löfström analyses the question of gender in European culture "'Male', 'female' and other 'sexes'". He speaks about sexes as performance and style, and about the definition of the different sexes in culture. The contribution continues with the most important fields of presentation of sexuality in

everyday life. The compilation ends with Tom Selänniemi's article with the title "The modern tourist and classical rite theory". After summing up the anthropological research on tourism, he approaches to the Mediterranean trips of Finns from the point of view of rite theory.

The main idea to write course-books is to teach the students the core of a science. To define that core is probably the most important mental activity of a university professor. By analysing the content and structure of *Kulttuurin muuttuvat kasvot* we can have some assumptions how ethnology is defined and taught in Jyväskylä. Hopefully that human, self-reflective, intellectual science, the investigation of *culture*, that of researchers' *cognition* and *interpretation* after critically reconsidering its own past can be engaging for the internet generation. At least, the authors of this book tried their best to achieve the purpose, to provide a key to understand the *kulttuurin muuttuvat kasvot*, *the changing face of culture*.

Bertalan Pusztai, Szeged

A Museum Looks Back at 125 Years

Nordiska museet under 125 år. Hans Medelius, Bengt Nyström & Elisabet Stavenow-Hidemark (eds.). Nordiska museets förlag, Stockholm 1998. 504 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 91-7108-442-8.

■ On 24 October 1873, Artur Hazelius was able to open the doors to his Scandinavian Ethnographic Collection (later known as Nordiska Museet or the Nordic Museum), which was to be a watershed in the history of museums. This applies in even greater measure to the open-air museum that was opened at Skansen in Stockholm, a new type of museum that has since been spread triumphantly over the globe. When the Nordiska Museet celebrated its centennial in 1973, for various reasons no commemorative book was published. In 1991, on the other hand, Skansen received its own major publication, and now the 125th anniversary has been used as an occasion to publish a large work on Hazelius's two innovations, which until 1963 were one museum unit.

This is a mammoth volume of some 500 pages, with a wealth of fascinating illustrations in black-and-white and colour. A total of 29 authors,

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