



ABSTRACTS IN ENGLISH

MAARIT VIILJAKAINEN

Virgin Mary in Birth Incantations

In the present paper, I am analysing Virgin Mary in birth incantations. The source material consists of 94 birth incantations collected in North Karelia, Ladoga Karelia, South Karelia, Archangel Karelia, Savo and North Ostrobothnia. These incantations have been published in the volumes of Ancient Poems of the Finnish People (Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot).

There are a mixed group of both non-Christian and Christian supernatural helpers and saints in the birth incantations, for example Virgin Mary, Ukko God on high, Jesus, Kave, Saunatar, and different kinds of mythical animal helpers. Supernatural helpers are mainly called upon to facilitate the delivery and ease the child bearer's pain. Themes and motifs dealing with these helpers are central and distinctive in the birth incantations. In this paper, I am interested in Virgin Mary who is most commonly called for help. I am examining first and foremost those incantation texts and motifs in which Virgin Mary is present. What kind of divine birth assistant is Mary? Why is she so important? How is Mary called for help? How is Mary able to help both mother and child? I am examining Mary's essential nature, her appearance, and her skills to ease a woman's pain.

KATJA HYRY

The Women of Dvina Karelia – in Search of Border and Tradition

The article is based on the fieldwork made in Kemi (Finland) and Kiestinki (Dvina Karelia) in 1989. The topic of the research is the biographic tradition of the Karelian refugees. The article opens the experiences of the fieldwork, the experiences of two generations in the fieldwork together, and the ethical dilemmas which arose during the fieldwork. One topic of the article is the problem related to the cult of the rune singers which had a strong effect on the informants as well as on the fieldwork.

KARINA LUKIN

Politics of the Absent. History and Traditional Culture as Ingredients of Nenets Ethnicity

The article deals with Nenets ethnicity and its connections with history and tradition, and it is based on the ethnographic fieldwork made in Nenets autonomous *okrug* in periods of varying length in 2000, 2003, 2004 and 2005. Besides participant observation and interviews, the material consists of archive and news paper material and literature describing Nenets history. I use the terms ethnicity, heritage, and politics of history as key concepts with which I define how Nenets ethnicity is constructed and articulated around the discussion about the fortification of Pustozersk and its 500th anniversary in 1999. The Nenets opened their own monument, Hèbidja Ten, during the anniversary celebrations and thus brought out a differing memory of the past. This evoked many debates over the right way of telling the history. Describing discussions about history, the opening ceremony, and also other activities of Nenets intelligentsia, this article argues that Nenets ethnicity is constructed on two absents, namely the traditional way of life and the glorious history. Still, in the current post-Soviet context, these two are made meaningful parts of Nenets ethnicity.

JUKKA TALVE

Humour – a Text or an Experience? Second Order Cybernetic Approach to the Process of Amusement

Humour, as a concept, comprises a broad range of human everyday experience. Barely a day passes without a humorous situation. Still, it has been amazingly hard to pinpoint the identity of the phenomenon in question. Humour seems to escape any attempts of scientific definition. In this article, humour is approached from the second order cybernetic viewpoint, which has not been widely known in the contemporary cultural sciences. The objective of the article is not to define humour, but to consider how humour relates to general concepts of text and experience on the one hand, and to the process of amusement on the other. It is argued that humour cannot be understood only in terms of text. Humour is seen as an emergent property of cultural experience that cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts. Second order cybernetics is treated as a vehicle for understanding humour and amusement as immanent processes that are brought forth by the cultural subject himself.

KARI SALO, KAJ ZIMMERBAUER, TIMO SUUTARI

Construction of South Ostrobothnia in Socio-emotional e-mail Communication

A starting point for the study was on the one hand interest in regional identity and on the other hand certain astonishment towards the number of e-mails related to South Ostrobothnia received by the researchers. Thus the focus of this study is to examine how regional identity might be constructed by e-mails related to the region in question. E-mails (28) connected with South Ostrobothnia were outlined as objects for the study both because the authors have South Ostrobothnian background and because the South Ostrobothnians are said to have very strong regional identity. Theoretical frame of reference in the article is in the studies of socio-emotional e-mail communication and e-mail debate. In addition, also regional identity theory is used. The study is motivated by interest in the nature of modern tradition in digital setting. Therefore, one aim is to study what elements of South Ostrobothnia are present in the e-mail messages and how these elements adjust to the typical socio-emotional e-mail communication contents and different media elements. E-mail messages are hypothesised to be part of both e-mail humour and A4 (copy) humour and to produce impressions of South Ostrobothnia in a new form. A more comprehensive intention is to bring out new kind of machinery of regional identity and especially the meaning of socio-emotional e-mail communication to regional identity. In this case, it is supposed that regional identity is born and maintained through institutionalized mechanism, but also through Internet, electronic media, and computer mediated communication.