Abstracts

Heidi Haapoja

"The Perpetual Motion of Our Kalevalaic Heritage": The New Rune Singing in the Finnish Media

This article examines the discussions that concern the new Kalevalaic rune singing in Finland, and analyses the way that this phenomenon is described in public channels. The dataset consists of over 100 media texts, such as newspaper articles, TV documentaries and Internet videos and writings.

Based on the old mythical, metric, poetical system, folkloristic collections and extensive archives of these poems and songs, the new Kalevalaic rune singing has turned out to be one of the most vital and salient parts of the Finnish contemporary professional folk music field, and therefore it is often present in public discourse. The article aims to analyse how the relation between the past and the present is seen in the dataset and how language is used in this context. The discussions that concern this phenomenon refer to many layers: among other things, they reflect nationalistic ideologies, methodological nationalism and the ways that the role of tradition and heritage in the western neo-liberal world is seen. Furthermore, the creativity of an individual musician, the fields of Finnish art, and irredentist relations between Finland and Russian Karelia are touched upon.
Anna Kinnunen

Encounters in narrative space. Construction of oral history about mental hospital patients

This article studies the construction of oral history about mental hospital patients. As research material, four interviews concerning the patients of a former mental hospital in eastern Finland are analysed. The interviewees' relationships to the hospital vary from a decades-long working relationship to a relatively distant contact of a local inhabitant. The aim is to explore the ways that the interviewees are using when talking about the unclear dimensions of normality, abnormality, and otherness.

The narration is analysed by means of the concepts of master narrative and counter narrative. The concept of master narrative is used in the meaning of a dominant cultural interpretation, which is activated in the interviews and is guiding the narration. Its essence is reflected in counter narratives, by which the interviewees are trying to challenge dominant interpretations concerning mental hospital patients.

The social and dynamic nature of narratives is underlined by approaching oral history as narrative space which is formed in the cultural and social encounters of the narration. The article discusses how oral history is constructed as a space in which the interviewees position themselves, and the way that the interviewee and the persons in their narrations are commensurate to the master narrative.