



# Confessions and Confidences

*Academic and Cultural History Revisited  
in Letters and Other Documents of Life*

Edited by

Leila Virtanen, Tiina Seppä and Jyrki Pöysä

**Studia Fennica**  
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**Studia Fennica**  
Folkloristica 28

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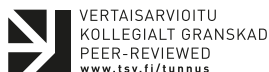
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Letters and Other Documents of Life

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The publication has undergone a peer review.



The collection of archived publications of the Finnish Literature Society is included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

## STUDIA FENNICA FOLKLORISTICA 28

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Cover: Eija Hukka | Series Cover Design: Timo Numminen  
Layout: Jaana Tarsa | Series Layout Design: Markus Itkonen  
EPUB: Tero Salmén

ISBN 978-952-427-015-1 (Print)  
ISBN 978-952-427-016-8 (EPUB)  
ISBN 978-952-427-017-5 (PDF)

ISSN 0085-6835 (Studia Fennica. Print)  
ISSN 2669-9605 (Studia Fennica. Online)  
ISSN 1235-1946 (Studia Fennica Folkloristica. Print)  
ISSN 2669-9583 (Studia Fennica Folkloristica. Online)

DOI <https://doi.org/10.21435/sff.28>

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PunaMusta Oy, Turenki 2026

*To the memory of  
Academician Anna-Leena Siikala*

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# Acknowledgements

The initial impetus for this anthology can be traced to the project ‘Russia as a Field and an Archive – Constructing Finnishness among Ethnographers of 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Finland’ (funded by the Research Council of Finland 2017–2022(3)). This book is the result of a process beginning with two traditional academic meetings: first, the two-day seminar ‘Researchers / Letters / Emotions’ hosted at the University of Eastern Finland in April 2019 and then a follow-up workshop held in Helsinki that autumn. All the contributors to this anthology were motivated by an interest in the intersections between private and public lives and how history, especially academic history, could be looked at in new ways through consideration of correspondences and other documents of life.

Admittedly, this book has been long in the making. When the Covid-19 restrictions were put in place in 2020, fears of infection, the reality of closed borders, the need for masks and the mantra of social distancing curtailed our travels and meetings. So, we did what everyone else was doing, we stayed home and gathered remotely for discussions via Zoom from our respective locations in Joensuu, Helsinki, Tartu, London and Springfield, VA. As we tinkered with translations, deliberated over terminological questions, emailed back and forth over matters of meaning while also attending to various other tasks and commitments, life – in all its messiness – kept on unfolding. For those of us with personal and scholarly interests in the Baltic region, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine has undeniably cast a shadow over us and our own personal joys, sorrows and transitions.

We would like to thank everyone involved for their patience and support. In addition to the contributors, we are also grateful to those who presented their work in the original seminar (Teo Kurki, Johanna Laakso, Päivi Laine, Karina Lukin) and those, especially Pertti Anttonen, who kindly offered helpful commentary in the seminar and beyond. We would like to extend our gratitude to Leena Käosaar for generously sharing her knowledge on all matters epistolary. Lisa Svanfeldt-Winter’s work on the concept of *scholarly persona* in the context of the history of Finnish folklore scholarship proved inspiring. Special thanks are due to Editor Anne Heimo for her gracious support, attentive reading and keen interest in making this manuscript into a book. We are also indebted to the anonymous peer reviewers for their penetrating and helpful commentary. Senni Timonen and Hilary Thompson deserve thanks for their kind words and encouragement along the way. And, last but not least, Sergio Ocampo merits much appreciation for allowing us to take advantage of his technical savvy and for providing Leila with a steady supply of strong coffee.

Joensuu and Helsinki, February 2026

Leila Virtanen, Tiina Seppä and Jyrki Pöysä

# Introduction

## Deconstructing Histories in Folkloristics, Linguistics and Literature

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In the 1960s Jacques Derrida, a young French philosopher, challenged the very foundations of structuralist thought, that is, the study of binary oppositions (man/woman, culture/nature, day/night, etc.) to unlock the mysteries of seemingly opaque cultural practices and narratives and thereby offer interpretations of culture. By critiquing the theory formulated by Claude Lévi-Strauss, the leading thinker in structural anthropology, Derrida began a culture war in France. The allusion in our introduction's title to deconstructionism – a conceptually frightening and revisionist ‘-ism’ in the philosophy of science – is justified by our deconstructive endeavour to re-evaluate established truths in science, which in our case means the historical interpretations of the ethnographic sciences and the characteristic qualities, goals and products of the actors in the national culture close to them.<sup>1</sup>

As the work of earlier researchers recedes further into the past and new actors join the field, previous studies must be subjected to constant re-evaluation. In this project the deconstructive approach has been used to unpack the narrative dimension of scholarly history through the examination of personal documents, especially letters. The aim of this anthology has been to probe the experiential realities and emotions often ignored or left out of scholarly historiographies to reveal the realm of feeling obscured or wholly invisible in the standard image of rational science and scholarly publications. In other words, we also have sought to acknowledge the ‘situated’ nature of the knowledge produced by our letter-writers (see Haraway 1988). Important examples of materials that enable such re-evaluation include Bronisław Malinowski's field diary (1967/1989) and the published correspondence between Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger (1998/2004). While the former undermined the idealized and heroic image of the European anthropologist in the field, the latter offered readers a chance to reconsider and deepen their comprehension of Heidegger's political agency during the Nazi era and later. One of the goals of this anthology has been to re-evaluate the history of Finnish ethnography, a field that has included the study of folk poetry and belief, linguistics and ethnology. Viewed within a wider scholarly context, Finnish ethnography, for example, has a remarkable history, not only because of the pioneering

contributions it has brought to linguistic fieldwork (Hovdhaugen 2000: 170–174) but also how it has impacted both the perception and study of culture on a broader scale.

One explanation for the narrative character of disciplinary histories is that historical surveys of this area of research have tended to be repetitive, that is, constructed around previous interpretations of prominent actors or scholarly figures. Even up to our present day, historiographies have also been inclined to highlight the nationalistic roles of ethnographers rather than exploring their individual life worlds – realities fraught with conflicting forces, contingencies and sheer luck. This, in part, is due to the way in which histories of scholarly research tend to narrow in on disciplines and all-encompassing frameworks such as evolutionism or romanticism (e.g., Hautala 1969; Honko 1980; Harvilahti 2012). Moreover, earlier histories of the field have often produced narratives highlighting the excellence of a leading scholar and his (or her) disciples and their outstanding contributions to scientific knowledge. Academic backstories remain largely untold in the national histories of academic disciplines (see Karlsson 2006; Lahtinen 2006; Pöysä 2006; Pöysä & Seppä 2021).

Historians of academic fields, perhaps inhibited by a concern that their work would lose its gravitas if drawn too deeply into personal lives and ‘gossipy’ rumours, may have gone too far in the opposite direction, thus missing out on the chance to discover individuals, creatures of flesh and blood as the sources of paradigms and ideological movements. Only the more recently published works in the history of science demonstrate a renewed and holistic interest in the possibly flawed human beings behind the academic and theoretical works (see, e.g., Svanfeldt-Winter 2019; Niskanen & Barany 2021; Lee 2022).<sup>2</sup> The subject of study also matters. As Väinö Salminen states in his letters to his future bride, folklorists are no strangers to gossip (Pöysä & Seppä, in this anthology).

### *The Personal and Emotional Space of Letters – Magnifying the Image of the Researcher and the Academic Field*

As research material, letters have always been viewed with ambivalence. On the one hand, the letters of prominent scientists and politicians have been preserved and published for at least the last 200 to 300 years. For example, the correspondence of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) continues to be published in carefully edited and translated volumes (Kant 2007). For those interested in the history of Western philosophy, these documents are enduring and crucial keys to understanding Kant’s thought. Furthermore, many of the earliest testaments to written communication originally served the same purpose as letters: messages etched into clay tablets from person A to person B (e.g., Mesopotamia 3000 BCE). On the other hand, letters have often been dismissed as secondary research material. For example, in sociological studies, letters for a long time were perceived to represent one of the least interesting classes of ‘documents of life’ (Plummer 1985; Stanley 2004: 202). Stanley pinpoints the lack of ‘useful facts’ as one of the greatest flaws of letters for Plummer and other researchers (Stanley 2004: 202). Often dismissed for being excessively personal, letters were generally either used to offer additional background information or to serve as mere illustration within a methodologically more rigorous examination of the history of one or more actors.

The early 20th century saw the publication of a pioneering work in cross-Atlantic correspondences by Florian Znaniecki and William Thomas (*The Polish Peasant in*

*Europe and America 1918–1920*). However effectively this magisterial work of qualitative sociological research on Polish immigrants in America and their loved ones in the old country set the precedent for similar research, only in recent decades have researchers in the social sciences and humanities begun to see the potential of letters and correspondences as research objects (especially Stanley 2004; in Finland, Leskelä-Kärki et al. 2011; Pehkonen 2013; Hagelstam 2014). These and other recent endeavours have retrieved letters and correspondences from the margins and given them increased validity as research materials.

For letters to be taken seriously as data in the history of academic disciplines and research has also required a sea change in the perception of what makes knowledge scientific. In the objectivist comprehension of knowledge, the subjectivity of letters as research data has posed a problem for two reasons: expressions of emotions and discontinuities in communication (correspondences, depending on the life circumstances of the letter-writers, may include both long stretches of silence as well as periods of frequent and intense communication).<sup>3</sup>

However important a role letters and other documents of life, for example, diaries, assume in our research, the goal of this anthology has not been to make new contributions to the study of these kinds of personal documents. Significant progress has already been made, for example, in the study of wartime letters (e.g., Tikka et al. 2015; Taskinen 2024). Rather, our use of letters and other personal documents has been made with a particular objective: to study the human dimension of knowledge making (see, e.g. Shapin). The inclusion of emotions in the sociology of science, for example, is a relatively new approach. Letters and diaries offer an alternative to capturing human beings in narrativized assumptions (i.e., X and Y were rivals, envied each other, etc.). While two of the chapters are thematically related to research on wartime correspondences (see Seppä's chapter on Paulaharju & Niiranen's chapter on Virtaranta), the correspondences between couples in our collection (Chapters 2, 4 & 7) have more in common with relational biographies (see Eiranen 2015, 2021; Leskelä-Kärki 2020:29). The field of academic correspondences ranges from private letters to semi-public letters written with a view to publication, for example, travelogues written for the sake of family, friends and colleagues by Sjögren (Pöysä 2023) and Castrén (Lukin 2025; for more on travelogues, see Piela 2023).

### *Approaches to Interpreting Letters and Correspondences*

The framework for our publication and research project can be best understood via a brief review of three examples of different approaches to studying correspondences, two of which have been pursued by other research projects and the third practiced in our own project. First, by tracing epistolary exchanges and connections, it is possible to sketch an entire social field, for example, the upper-class communities of Helsinki in the 1890s and the reciprocal social relations that sustained them. With the help of vast collections of letters, researchers can study wider networks of social interaction or focus on one individual's field of relations. In *Constellations of Correspondence: Relational Study of Large and Small Networks of Epistolary Exchange in the Grand Duchy of Finland (CoCo)*,<sup>4</sup> a joint project of the Finnish Literature Society and Aalto University, artificial intelligence is being used in the analysis of voluminous corpora

of letters. Another project working with extensive collections of correspondence worth mentioning is The Olive Schreiner Letters Online, a British virtual archive dedicated to the correspondence of the famous South-African writer, feminist and socialist Olive Schreiner.<sup>5</sup> The archive contains all the known letters, written by and to Olive Schreiner, in other words, all the letters that have been saved in various archives. The creation of a virtual archive made possible by the digitization of the archival materials together with the global information networks offers an unprecedented opportunity to study the life and relationships of this significant writer (e.g., Stanley 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Stanley et al. 2012).

While the first two approaches to correspondences are predicated on abundance and quantity, that is, extensive bodies of texts covering all attainable correspondences either of a community or an individual, our treatment of our letter-writers and their correspondences is distinguished by a qualitative approach, especially close reading (more about this method later in this introduction). Though the researchers and cultural personages cover a time period spanning some 200 years, the articles in this anthology discuss relatively short passages in the lives of these individuals. Listed chronologically according to year of birth, the most vocal of the epistolary voices gathered in this anthology are as follows: Danish linguist Rasmus Rask (1787–1832), Finnish ethnographer, teacher and writer Samuli Paulaharju (1875–1944), Estonian poet Marie Under (1883–1980), Finnish folklorist Väinö Salminen (1880–1947), Finnish folklorist and poet Martti Haavio (1899–1973) and folklorist Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio (1901–1951), Finnish linguist Pertti Virtaranta (1918–1997) and Finnish-born folklorist Elli Kögäs Maranda (1932–1982).

Although the time span in the history of letters is not exceptional (cf. Kenyon 2009), in the history of an area of research such a stretch could be considered excessive. Readers familiar with Finnish ethnography may be dismayed about the numerous lacunae in this collection, not to mention, the absence of numerous researchers known as prolific letter-writers and diarists. Moreover, since ‘letters do things’ (Stanley et al. 2012: 266), to offer alternative examples of the range of epistolary efficacy, our collection has included letter-writers who were not firmly situated in university life, but who were nonetheless deeply embedded in the zeitgeist of their times and distilled it in their correspondence.

Instead of providing a comprehensive overview, this anthology, through close readings of letters and other personal documents, offers rich and detailed perusals of the inner lives of each historical actor at pivotal moments in their professional and personal lives. Combined with other source materials, personal letters offer a perspective on the thought world of a historical individual, the expectations, hopes and fears that he or she occasionally felt compelled to share with trusted individuals. Even a single letter – especially the stand-alone letter without any other correspondence – can prove rewarding to analyse. Indeed, we only need to look to the past to see how a single letter can set the course of history in motion, or as private individuals, we may recall a single letter or postcard (sent or received) that marked the beginning or end of a relationship. Even missing letters can carry weight when considered within the larger context of a correspondence or when they suddenly surface to determine the fates of careers or lives (Jolly 2008; Pöysä & Seppä 2021).

Even though the basic set-up of letters sets preconditions on their interpretation as text, it is also important to retain a sense of their ‘letterness’ or epistolary quality

(Stanley et al. 2012). To give our readers more interpretive space to draw their own conclusions, we have chosen also to incorporate longer passages from the letters – and other documents – into our chapters rather than simply offering summaries of their contents.<sup>6</sup> Like a diary, a letter communicates the fleeting emotions of its writer, acting as a snapshot of the sentient presence of the individual being-there (Heidegger's *Dasein*) in the time and place of writing. At least in this way, letters and diaries resemble each other, standing apart from other documents of life (Stanley 2013), namely, autobiographies and memoirs that tend to look back and construct a plot, a retrospective narrative, making 'sense' of a life. The impression of the writer's 'being here', which from the point of view of linguistics can also be interpreted as the writer's temporal and spatial deixis (Levinson 1983) or perspective (Foucault et al. 1998; Stanley 2004), confirms the dialogical nature of letter writing (Bakhtin 1989). Letters 'are not one person writing or speaking about their life, but a communication between one person and another or others' (Stanley 2004: 202). And it is by writing that the letter-writer reaches out to the other. Moreover, as Maria Tamboukou insists, it is from this 'entanglement' that the individual or self emerges (2011: 2). In this way, the writer's idea of the recipient's status and the latter's ability and desire to understand the writer's messages is also reflected in the text. Correspondences underscore relationality, the state of being in between (Ceder 2019).<sup>7</sup> The fundamental positionality of letters also offers the researcher an opportunity to pursue a more in-depth positioning analysis of the situational identities of letter-writers and recipients (Pöysä 2009; McVee et al. 2024).

As a research strategy, close reading can typically be initiated early in the research process, when one is forming hypotheses about the material by searching for themes and categories, whose relationships and relevance can later be assessed by comparative or quantitative analysis. It is often the case that a meticulous close reading of a few samples from the material can suffice for forming a theoretical perspective relevant for the research. This is also the case when the sample turns out to be one of a kind, a narrative or passage with no other available 'variant' that stands out from the rest of the material.<sup>8</sup>

As a methodology, close reading (see Bal 2002; Pöysä 2010, 2015) appears as a form of Husserlian phenomenological reduction, whereby the reader or interpreter suspends or brackets all previous notions or judgements in order to apprehend the text as it is.<sup>9</sup> The aim of close reading here is nonetheless bound by the interpretative situation itself, in which the researcher, while reading the texts (letters) immediately begins to form interpretive hypotheses of the texts and the historical actors (author, addressee, and groups and individuals described in the text) and the wider contexts of the letters' interpretations (e.g., see Geertz 1973; Seppä 2015). After these initial interpretations, it is a good idea to take a break (sleep on it) and return to the texts later to reflect on and question once again interpretations made during the first reading. In this way, close reading turns into a process containing ingredients for self-correction, but also those leading to new readings of the texts. It may well be that such a process of close reading offers no closure whatsoever, since, for example, the researcher of letters (as seemingly straightforward as they appear as textual forms) or other cultural phenomena can keep finding ever-new meanings while continuing the interpretive process and then returning to their earlier interpretive hypotheses once again enriched with new insights (e.g., see especially Seppä 2015; but also Geertz 1973; Glassie 1982; Honko 1985; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Anttonen 2000; Knuuttila & Timonen 2002; Järvinen 2004; Timonen 2004).<sup>10</sup>

If we consider the grander narratives of disciplinary history, private letters with their personal contents have the greatest potential to disrupt or undermine established truths about the field and academic life. After all, the realm of the personal, so often associated with gossip or rumour, has traditionally been left on the margins of narratives of scholarly history. But just how does the personal or private life impact and shape academic life and knowledge production? We have sought to show how our understandings of the history of research and the individuals involved in its making can be altered by the opening of researchers' personal archives, the digitization of such materials and new readings of personal documents.

### *Scholars, Cultural Figures and Historical Moments: An Expanding Gendered Space*

For the first hundred years of its existence, Finnish ethnography constituted a masculine endeavour practiced by lone explorers, fieldworkers and collectors of folk poetry. Academic roles for women were limited at best. The most fitting role for a woman in academe was at her scholar husband's side; as an 'ideal academic wife', she could support her husband's career in multiple ways (see, e.g., Gottlieb 1995; Creamer 2001; Eiranen 2015, 2021; Meens & Sintobin 2018; Svanfeldt-Winter 2019). Anders Johan Sjögren (1794–1855) Elias Lönnrot (1802–1884), Mattias Alexander Castrén (1813–1852), D.E.D. Europaeus (1820–1884), August Ahlqvist (1826–1889), Otto Donner (1835–1909), Kustaa F. Karjalainen (1871–1919) and Uno T. Sirelius (1872–1929) all contributed to the field of ethnography primarily as solitary and heroic figures who travelled in the Finnish hinterlands, borderlands and further into Russia on expeditions to obtain linguistic, poetic and ethnographic data to learn about the prehistory of the Finns. Both worlds – the academy and the sites of fieldwork – were largely off-limits to women until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio was the first female folklorist to conduct fieldwork and complete a doctoral dissertation in 1932. Even so, it took another fifty years or so for women to enter the field as full-fledged members. While the study of gender, women and femininity has raised awareness of the exclusion and marginalization of women in academic life, another objective, which is equally important, requires the critical study of men and masculinity in the academy. This is especially crucial because of the way in which the scientific world had presented itself as objective, neutral and ungendered (Keller 1985).

Attention to gender in scholarly life also requires investigating men and women in context as social beings in relation to one another. Yet gender, which today is no longer understood as simply binary (male/female), is only one way of categorising human beings (Crenshaw 1989). Lisa Svanfeldt-Winter, for example, in her study of the academically formative years of Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi, identifies the significance of 'the scholarly household' (2019). The domestic sphere and the vital importance of companionship also feature in Väinö Salminen's letters, from the point of view of the husband. The dialogical nature of letters – a letter is usually written with a particular recipient or audience in mind – makes their study especially fruitful in consideration not of isolated individuals but of social creatures constructing identities in relation to others: an 'I' writing to a 'you' (e.g., see Hagelstam 2011; see footnote 8).<sup>11</sup> As noted earlier, in seeking to understand how relationality manifests in the interpretation of

textual identities, we have drawn also upon theories of positionality (Davies & Harre 1989; Bamberg 1997; Pöysä 2009; Hyvärinen et al. 2021; McVee et al. 2024). Positioning theory draws attention to how identities are formed locally in discursive situations, or conversations. Instead of fixed identities, it is more useful for us to consider the roles of participants, which – in our case – are produced in letters. Besides the writer and the recipient, letters also textually define third parties or readers, relevant acquaintances or unknown strangers, factual or fictional figures. Each letter contains these three participant roles; in traditional literary theory, those in the third category are often referred to as implied readers.

On the face of it, the epistolary voices we hear most loudly in this anthology constitute a masculine majority. Yet the reader will find, on closer consideration, that many of these male voices were also in conversation with female counterparts – daughters, sweethearts, wives. These female voices remain largely silent, partly due to the tendency of letters to get lost, thrown away, burned or simply be held back from the inquisitive gaze of researchers. No matter how ‘silent’ these female interlocutors happen to be in the correspondences discussed in this anthology, they still play a striking role in the shaping of the biographies of their male interlocutors. For example, the linguist Pertti Virtaranta’s wartime sweetheart Aune Katara opts out of marriage with the ambitious linguist but saves his letters for decades before donating them to the Tape Archive of the Finnish Language at the Institute for the Languages of Finland. Her letters to Virtaranta, presumably lost or destroyed, possibly by Virtaranta himself, are not available to us. Yet in the face of his insistent demands on her with regard to the future that they never had, her silence leaves the researcher with plenty of room for interpretation, something which Leskelä-Kärki refers to as an ethical challenge with regard to ‘our position as interpreters’ (2020: 30). The correspondence between Väinö Salminen and his fiancée and later wife, Kaarina Salminen, represents a similar case. While her side of the correspondence is inaccessible (except one letter, see Pöysä & Seppä, this anthology), she emerges as the curator of his scholarly image. Even though the letters primarily convey the voice of the male, their final composition is shaped by the female who salvaged, preserved and donated the correspondence. These biographical sources contain many gendered configurations that emerge across different time periods and socio-economic contexts.

### *Letters and Academic Cultures*

Letters and correspondences have played a crucial role in academic culture for at least 200 years. Historian Päivi Laine’s study of Academician A.J. Sjögren’s correspondence presents a distinct view onto the intricacies of early 19th-century social life in the circles of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences (Laine 2020). Letters served as a means of complementing the formal visits (courtesy calls) on which Russian *société* was built; social success in that world required a command of numerous European languages. Knowledge of any language meant both the ability to read and a facility with written expression. Born in Finland into humble circumstances, Sjögren’s way into the scientific community in St. Petersburg was no doubt smoothed by his facility with languages and flair for writing. For example, when the eminent linguist Rasmus Rask was staying in St. Petersburg, Sjögren approached him via letter, asking for concrete advice about

funding and finding work in the metropolis. Through letters, influential people were also able to assist the young scholar, thus furthering his career from behind the scenes (Branch 1973; Laine 2020; cf. Goffman 1959). Rask also received a glowing letter of recommendation about Sjögren from the Finnish linguist Gustav Renvall; in the letter, Renvall stresses Sjögren's potential as a native speaker of Finnish to study the Finno-Ugric peoples.

Although paper and ink have been replaced by the computer, present-day academic correspondences still have much in common, at least in terms of function, to those of Sjögren's day. For example, for a timid young researcher, writing an e-mail to a senior scholar at the other end of the corridor can serve as a viable alternative to approaching him or her in person with a request for help. Through letters, moreover, academics have been able to maintain the long-distance relationships with colleagues from neighbouring countries and further away in Europe. By writing letters, Sjögren could also maintain contact with his academic community on his long research expedition during the years 1824–1829; newspapers published the explorer's letters as reports from the journey, often translated into various languages. Throughout his travels, the signed letters of recommendation by officials served a crucial function, giving the traveller entry into closed archives throughout Russia (Branch 1973).<sup>12</sup>

The endeavour to build a scientific community is even more apparent in the correspondence of the pioneering linguist Rasmus Rask, whose extensive correspondence with Finnish researchers has been compiled by Esko Häkli into the bibliography of the National Library (Häkli 2017; see Chekin, this volume). While it is true that not all of the academic correspondence has been salvaged, the vast number of archived letters does tell us something about the significance and value attached to letters. As mentioned earlier, published letter collections have already formed a part of academic culture for centuries (Klinge 2017; e.g., Hjelmself 1932; Kant 2007).

It is not surprising that the range of content and emotion in letters serving as official communication or written with publication in mind in the academic community is limited. After all, letter-writers well-versed in epistolary communication have a wealth of polite forms of address and cordial expressions to draw from no matter how warm or strained the professional relationship with their intended recipient may be. Nonetheless, if we think of letters and correspondences to be on a spectrum with regard to privacy, it is also possible to discern emotions – and attempts to suppress them – in letters originally addressed to a single recipient yet composed with an eye to a wider audience.<sup>13</sup>

### *Sanctuaries and Safe Spaces*

Most of the letter-writers featured in this collection find themselves in extraordinary circumstances, on unfamiliar ground. Either compelled or willingly, they have taken risks, they have gone out on a limb – intellectually, emotionally, socially, even physically. Their situations are varied: uncertain journeys, the frontlines of war, emotional upheaval, the challenges and exhilaration of student life abroad or, on a less positive note, vexed by academic intrigues, to name a few. However exceptional or unexceptional the circumstance, a linguist on an ethnographic expedition or a folklore professor apart from his wife and children for the summer, each instance of separation

prompted our letter-writers to put pen to paper and reach out to another; they describe their environs and its inhabitants, vent and complain, seek solace and affirmation, and also share moments of delight and discovery (e.g., Lebow 2019). In this way, they have found an ‘epistolary space’ (How 2003) in which to communicate with trusted readers. Of all the modes of life writing, it is the letter, and by extension the correspondence, that most strikingly foregrounds the human being as a social creature dependent on the care, attention, acknowledgement, respect, etc. of his or her fellow human beings (see Fullbrook & Rublack 2010; Kurvet-Käosaar 2015). The materiality of the letter, with the recipient’s name spelled out on the sealed envelope, fosters a feeling of safety and privacy, the possibility of conveying one’s message to the desired recipient(s).

While it is true that the writing and sending of a letter also involves risks<sup>14</sup> – the letter may be lost or intercepted; its message may be misunderstood or used against the writer – these risks seem to be outweighed by the intellectual and emotional gains of this form of communication. The space of the letter can be regarded as one transcending the temporal constraints and requirements of face-to-face interaction. The letter places both writer and recipient in the same room, as it were, with no distractions. However illusory, the letter-writer can feel that he or she has the undivided attention of the letter’s recipient. One of the figures in this anthology, Marie Under, for example, finds the epistolary format better than a meeting in person for justifying her life choices to a friend living in the same city. A doctoral student abroad, Elli Kõngäs, uses letter-writing to develop an intellectual rapport with her professor, a feat that would have been harder to accomplish had they been in the same city. Here it is distance that fosters closeness, or at least the fantasy of it (Stanley & Jolly 2005: 93; Kurvet-Käosaar 2015, 2019). This privilege of attention fosters a kind of intimacy between writer and reader. For instance, the young soldier at the front feels uninhibited about revealing his longings for family life to a woman he barely knows. The sense of safety provided by letters, which is often occasioned by the physical distance between the correspondents, opens up a space for vulnerability. We regard the discursive space established by letters as an in-between and emergent space (Stanley 2004: 203).

In our project, we have noted that although the degrees of intimacy between correspondents vary and evolve over time, for each writer, the space of the letter is ultimately a safe place or a sanctuary for articulating a range of thoughts, opinions and emotions. In addition to self-scrutiny and the contemplation of one’s own identity (Seppä, in this anthology), letters can also be a medium for articulating socially unacceptable feelings, such as professional disenchantment and bitterness (Pöysä & Seppä, in this anthology). The feelings and veiled expectations conveyed in letters can attain even greater poignancy considered in retrospect (e.g., Virtanen, in this anthology). Finally, the study of letters reveals just how academic research can be a source of joy and inspiration, a matter of shared delight in letters to close confidantes (Svanfeldt-Winter, in this anthology).

### *The Ethics of Reading Archived Letters*

The use of documents of ‘personal’ life in research inevitably involves ethical questions. In our case, the letters, diaries and other documents of life were never specifically meant for our eyes – or more precisely, written with our particular projects in mind.

Yet it cannot be denied that all of these documents were preserved from destruction by either the authors themselves, their recipients (in the case of letters) or family members, friends or colleagues. From the point of view of research ethics, it is crucial to remember that the original 'owners' of these documents, in the case of letters, their recipients, have chosen to pass them on to an archive. This act in itself acknowledges the value of such firsthand witnessing of history. Archives can be and often are construed as kinds of popular courts or tribunals. For people it is important that the truth about past events through archived memories and other documentation are brought to light, even if only through the research and writing of the researcher, sometimes construed as a 'final judge' (Pöysä 1997). On the other hand, archived letters – or for that matter all archived materials – are subject to the requirement of ethically sustainable use of the accounts they give of people's lives (e.g., see Sax 2018). With this in mind, we have sought to maintain our ethical sensitivity and dignity in all our endeavours to portray these individuals in their historical settings. While conducting archival work, each researcher, before viewing and using personal documents, is reminded of the archival commitment to safeguard personal documents from unethical use. For example, at the Finnish Literature Society Archives, prior to gaining permission to use the requested materials, researchers must fill out a form stating the purpose of their use and agree to do no harm to the individuals concerned in the texts. This sense of ethical responsibility has already been a given in anthropology for decades. The increased awareness regarding archival texts especially concerns historical research, where the ethical questions related to the use of archival materials have become a topic of discussion much later than, for example, in anthropological fieldwork (see, however, Lidman et al. 2017).

Nonetheless, for all of us, reusing archival materials now appears more ethically challenging than it was several decades ago (Yardly et al. 2014). Although archives played a fundamental role in the Finnish ethnographical tradition, the ethical dimensions of the *reuse* of archival materials have not been widely discussed (discussions have mostly dealt with fieldwork practices). So far, in the social sciences, field materials have been destroyed after use as a rule. This situation, however, is changing in both the humanities and in the social sciences (Bishop 2009; Bishop & Kuula-Luumi 2017). With regard to research materials in particular, it has been considered whether archived materials can be used to investigate other questions besides the ones for which they were originally produced (Bornat 2003). Although letters make up a slightly different category of archival materials, the following ethical questions about their reuse still apply. In the humanities, the methodological and ethical questions related to the use of these kinds of materials are now being discussed more extensively. The documents used in social sciences are being archived for later use more often and new archival practices to protect the anonymity of participants are being established. In Finland the new Data Protection Act further distinguishes between anonymization and pseudonymization: only the materials that make it impossible to identify individuals can be considered truly anonymized (See Pseudonymised and anonymised data). Both approaches are seeking to ensure that it is possible to conduct this kind of research while maintaining high ethical standards.

From the standpoint of ethics, letters, diaries and other documents of life constitute the most intimate class of research materials. Yet it is not simply a matter of the material used and published, but rather the manner in which they are read, studied

and interpreted (see Kuula 2010/2011; Lahtinen et al. 2011; Stanley 2013; Lidman et al. 2017; Leskelä-Kärki 2020). Our goal, through thoughtful and thorough close reading of the materials, has been to make fair portrayals of the lives and aspirations of these figures, all the while keeping in mind the historical and cultural contexts and constraints in which they lived.

### *The Contents*

In our introductory chapter, we present the central concepts and perspectives providing the framework for this project. By reading the personal documents left by researchers and other actors in the cultural realm, the writers have sought to unravel established narratives forming a fundamental part of our knowledge of disciplinary history. Letters, especially letters written in a confidential tone, either to intimates or to otherwise significant people, figure prominently among these personal documents. These kinds of personal letters differ fundamentally from letters originally written with a mind to publication, for example, accounts of scientific expeditions written in the letter format. In the 19th century this kind of letter-writing constituted a routine part of scientific communications (see Pöysä 2025). Detailed readings of letters to unpack their contents (also known as close reading) can expand our image and understanding of not only the researcher writing the letters but also about scientific knowledge and academic disciplines. Though close inspection of letters and documents can reveal hidden feelings of bitterness and disappointment, present-day researchers can also discover the joyful experiences related to doing scientific work (see Svanfeldt-Winter, in this anthology).

In the first chapter of Part One, Public Careers and Hidden Lives, Jyrki Pöysä and Tiina Seppä conduct a close reading of Väinö Salminen's letters to his sweetheart and later wife. Their contribution also serves as an example of what can be accomplished using the approach pursued in the research project, with all its advantages and disadvantages (see also Pöysä & Seppä 2021). Theirs is also the most capacious, offering the reader extensive extracts from the letters in its attempt to convey the messiness of day-to-day life, domesticity and epistolary communications of love. Salminen is remembered as something of a contentious figure in Finnish folklore circles; his letters to Kaarina Salminen, née Lindfors, show another side of this scholar who has been somewhat overlooked in the discipline's history. The article paints an intimate portrait of a marriage and an academic partnership in the first half of the 20th century. Prior to his official appointment as professor in 1933, Salminen struggled to support his family by doing unsteady work at the Finnish Literature Society, teaching Finnish at various schools, writing journalistic articles, etc. As Salminen strove to pursue his life's work and build a career, his wife provided him with unswerving loyalty and support. In his letters to Kaarina Salminen, Salminen found a safe space to vent his frustrations with an academic community which appeared to be at odds with him.

Despite Kaarina Salminen's lack of any formal training in folklore studies, Pöysä and Seppä observe ample proof of the couple's intellectual collaboration in the letters. Not only does Salminen consistently address his wife as a knowledgeable ally in the field but, after his death, she – and one of their daughters – finished his work of preparing manuscripts of folk poetry for publication. Kaarina Salminen, as the authors

point out, then also assumed the role of archivist and curator of Salminen's documents of life. The writers show how an academic wife, one largely invisible in the discipline's historiography, through her intellectual collaboration, emotional support and selective donation to the archives worked to place her husband in the history of the discipline.

The next chapter draws the reader into the affective and private realm of a prominent Estonian woman of letters, Marie Under. Leena Käosaar demonstrates how the study of only a few private letters in context can illuminate wider social, political and cultural currents of the era in which the letters were written. Käosaar focuses on two long letters written in 1916 by Marie Under, the renowned Estonian poet, to her close friend, the painter Ants Laikmaa. In the letters, Under outlines to her friend her rationale for filing for a divorce from her husband, Karl Hacker, to start a new life with her lover, Artur Adson. Käosaar also makes note of a letter written by Adson to Laikmaa, and one from her father, urging her to abandon all thought of divorce. In this configuration of social relationships, Marie Under appears as a lone female figure beset by the weight of societal pressures and the significant men in her life. These two letters emerge as impassioned pleas for understanding, as the letter-writer seeks to salvage her friendship with Laikmaa and articulate her carefully thought out and deeply felt desire to live her life on her own terms.

Letters tend to be predicated on physical separation and distance, as many of the examples in this collection demonstrate. Significantly, Marie Under's letters to Laikmaa were not written to bridge a physical distance, for the letter-writer and her addressee could have easily met in person. Instead, as Käosaar underlines, Under opted for the epistolary format to establish the distance she needed to openly and honestly express herself and elaborate on matters of vital importance to her as a woman and a poet. Well-acquainted with a number of early 20th-century critiques of bourgeois marriage and its concomitant subordination of women, Under was able to justify her need for personal and artistic self-determination in her letters. The longings articulated by Under in these two intensely personal letters resonate with broader societal discussions about marriage, gender equality and women's desires for creative self-realization at the time.

Part Two, *War and Longing*, opens with Tiina Seppä's chapter on letters written by Samuli Paulaharju, a well-known folklore collector and writer. These letters were written to bridge another kind of distance, namely the kind experienced by a soldier seeking convey his reality at the front primarily to his family back home but also to his peers and colleagues. The early years of Finnish independence were marked by upheaval, political division and civil war. An offshoot of the Finnish Civil War, the Kinship Wars were waged to free Finno-Ugric areas from Soviet Rule or include them in a Greater Finland. Paulaharju took part in the Kinship Wars in 1918. At the time, Paulaharju was already a middle-aged man and a widower. Seppä's close reading of the letters, which were written mostly to family members, his adult daughters, their spouses, and the woman he would eventually marry, show how correspondents tend to present various versions of the self, depending on the recipient of the letters. Seppä also looks into the matter of gender, for Paulaharju, an educator and a man of letters, appears to have trouble finding his own place among the other soldiers. According to the letters and his war diary, the military setting appears to have stirred his anxieties about his own masculinity, making Paulaharju dwell on the matter of how to be a real man and a fearless soldier.

Paulaharju's private wartime correspondence, besides exposing the writer's own acts of brutality and his articulations of savage emotions, also show how the prevailing political climate and the narrative of White Finland shaped and validated the collective hatred of those aligned with the Reds. It also raises pointed questions about the way that this dominant narrative influenced the national sciences in Finland, even to this day (see Knuuttila 1993; Anttonen 2005).

Traditionally speaking, the soldier's letters to his sweetheart back home occupy a special place in the popular imagination. Indeed, wartime correspondence between lovers constitutes a genre unto itself, one with ample material on love, longing, violence, fear, duty and masculinity, to name a few. While Elina Niiranen's study of the letters written, sometimes from the front, during World War II by linguist Pertti Virtaranta to his sweetheart, a young woman studying dentistry, touch upon all these matters, her study most poignantly demonstrates how a writer of letters can attempt to write a new persona and future into being. In other words, Virtaranta's letters, though ostensibly in dialogue with their recipient, emerge as an elaboration of Virtaranta's scholarly identity and future life as an academic family man.

Like the majority of articles in this collection, Niiranen's contribution also focuses on only one half of a correspondence: a total of 255 letters written by Virtaranta during the three-and-a-half-year period he served in Finland's Continuation War against the Soviet Union. Although Virtaranta and Aune Katara, the recipient of Virtaranta's letters, parted ways by the time the Continuation War came to an end in 1944, Katara held on to the letters for over fifty years before donating them to the Tape Archive of the Finnish Language (residing today at the Institute for the Languages of Finland) in Helsinki.

Part Three, *Travels and Transformation*, begins with Leonid S. Chekin's study of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Danish linguist Rasmus Rask. Drawing on diaries, letters and other archival materials, Chekin offers alternative perspectives on Rask, a brilliant scholar, but often misunderstood by both his contemporaries and present-day scholars. Rask, after having completed a ground-breaking study called *Investigation of the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Language* in 1814, still needed to do additional research on the ancient languages of Persia and India. With the backing of one of his teachers in Copenhagen, Rask was funded by the Danish king to embark on a journey to South Asia to study Sanskrit and other languages of Persia and India. This harrowing journey – and its ensuing paper trail – is the focus of Chekin's article.

Rask never accomplished the journey's original objective, namely, to publish something on his learnings of Sanskrit. In fact, there were many who regarded the trip to India an utter failure. Rask fell ill in Persia and in India suffered a mental breakdown. Upon his return, to the astonishment of his benefactors, the first book he produced was on Spanish grammar. Besides failing to carry out what he had been sent to Persia and India to do, Rask failed socially by refusing to entertain members of polite society back in Denmark with his adventures in exotic lands. Nonetheless, Chekin's close attention to Rask's prolific writings – that is, his diary, travelogue, and letters – show him to have been a scholar with an infectious passion for his work, an ability to network and collaborate with other scholars, but also able to mix with diverse people. He also had a keen eye for detail, providing many insights into social and academic life in Åbo, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Astrachan and Tiflis. The author's attention to Rask's diverse writings – published, unpublished, semi-public and private – reveal the emotional

and intellectual complexity of a man sometimes regarded as a socially maladjusted academic and other times as a nationally celebrated hero scholar.

Lisa Svanfeldt-Winter's contribution urges the reader to look at academic communities in a new way. We tend to think of academic researchers as belonging – or seeking to belong – to intellectual communities. Svanfeldt-Winter's focus on the letters exchanged between aspiring Finnish folklorists Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi and their peers offers another perspective on how scholarly communities can be defined and how young scholars seek to gain membership. Through a careful reading of the correspondence, which also includes letters written to their friends in related disciplines, Svanfeldt-Winter explores the matter of emotional belonging and how the letter-writers sought to achieve that state through shared articulations of positive emotions.

Svanfeldt-Winter looks at the emotions – for example, joy, exhilaration, passion – conveyed in the correspondence through the theoretical lens of emotional communities in three distinct contexts: relationships with senior scholars and professors, the topic of study itself and celebratory occasions. While professors and senior scholars not only offered academic instruction and assistance as educators, they also subtly passed on attitudes and norms of behaviour to students and junior scholars. These informal lessons in emotional belonging, often described as instances of kindness and help from senior scholars, are recounted in the letters of the young scholars. When travel abroad or fieldwork trips took the young researchers away from their own academic community, they reinforced their sense of community by sharing joyful and enthusiastic accounts of their engagement with folklore materials. Writing about moments of celebration, for example, passed exams and graduations, also furthered the feeling of solidarity among peers. The study of these expressions of positive emotions both sheds new light on the formation of community in academic life and exposes some of its exclusionary practices, especially in relation to female scholars.

In the last chapter of Part Three, Leila Virtanen examines letters written in the late 1950s and early 1960s by Elli Köngäs (Maranda), a Finnish PhD student in the United States, to the then professor of folklore, Matti Kuusi, in Helsinki. Like many of the other letters under consideration in the anthology, here we have only one side of the epistolary conversation. While pursuing her doctoral studies on the folklore of Finnish-Americans, Köngäs wrote a total of 26 letters to Kuusi starting with her first day on campus and ending with the completion of her doctorate. This set of letters emerges as a junior scholar's narrative of development. On the one hand, these letters recount her experiences as a graduate student adapting to studies in a foreign language, basking in the glow of praise from her American instructors, and sharing anecdotes about well-known folklorists, etc. On the other hand, she also meditates upon her place in the world as a female scholar and a Finnish national.

Using research on *scholarly personae* and life writing, in particular the concept of autobiographical acts, Virtanen considers passages in Köngäs's letters as both forays into self-knowledge and efforts to shape her scholarly identity or persona as a Finnish folklorist in an American context. This shaping of the scholarly persona, however, is done with a specific reader in mind: the professor at her home university. The letters show how Köngäs's American experience, however jarring its occasional cultural shocks, represents a kind of rebirth or reinvention: it is there where she comes into her own and finds a new approach to analysing folklore materials. Yet however much

validation she receives in her American setting, Kögäs consistently articulates to Kuusi her longing for Finland and her allegiance to Finnish folklore research.

This anthology brings together and seeks to interpret letters and other writings, many unpublished and private, by agents operating in the academic and literary spheres in the Baltic region. All of the letter-writers were articulate individuals keen to put their experiences and feelings into words. We have sought to offer some new perspectives on their professional lives by delving into the personal and social settings in which they have unfolded to allow us to reconsider and reimagine oft-repeated narratives of academic and cultural history. In the histories of academic disciplines, for example, such narratives have tended to highlight the brilliance, competence and industry of leading figures at the expense of lesser-known figures or even intellectual collaborations. These intimate close-ups of relatively short segments of the lives our letter-writers, however, often describing formative moments in their careers, reveal them in all of their humanity – vulnerable, anxious, fierce and petty, but also joyful and passionate. These letters highlight the precarious and contingent nature of the lives of these individuals as they sought to pursue their respective careers, take care of loved ones and earn their living. The deeply personal tone and content of these letters, for example, in the correspondence between sweethearts or lovers, may prompt some readers to question the relevance of such documents to the history of academic disciplinary history. It is our hope that this collection dispels any such notions, for the letters show the inextricable bonds between the personal, the professional and the political.

## Notes

1. The personal background for the deconstructive approach comes from Jyrki Pöysä's participation in the Research Council of Finland's Centre of Excellence programme History of Society (Yhteiskunnan historia) in 2012–2016 headed by Pertti Haapala. In the project, the idea of deconstruction or re-reading was applied largely to sources used in historical research. Revisiting and revising one's own previous earlier interpretations, returning to the 'sources' of a folklorist's archival sources, was both fruitful and eye-opening (see, e.g., Pöysä 2014). The idea for this book was first conceived within the context of the Research Council project; the idea was further discussed with students at the University of Jyväskylä participating in a lecture series in ethnology called *Venäjä kenttänä* / [Russia as a field] (ETNS226 Etnografiaa lähellä ja kaukana [Ethnography near and far] Autumn 2016). For more on deconstructionism in philosophy and literary studies, see, e.g., Critchley 2014 & Atkins 1983.
2. Though it has much to offer with respect to understanding the performative and embodied aspect of academic life and work, scholarly persona studies have tended to overlook the existing contributions of biographers and other research focused on individual actors (see, e.g., Daston & Sibum 2003; Lee 2022; Niskanen & Barany 2021; Svanfeldt-Winter 2019).
3. Greater interest in qualitative methods and the hermeneutic interpretation of texts has also raised the status of letters as a research topic and material. From the neopositivist point of view, disguised as a qualitative methodology (cf. St. Pierre 2011, 2013), letters still constitute a questionable research topic because they fail to form, unlike interviews, a controllable collection of testimonies. Indeed, as Stanley points out, this feature makes letters both challenging and intriguing as a research material: they are 'found', and not generated through fieldwork or interviews, and thus 'represent their own internal concerns rather than responding to "external" researcher expectations and requirements' (2013: 69).

4. <https://coco.rahtiapp.fi/> (4.8.2024)
5. <https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/olive-schreiner> (4.8.2024)
6. The contributors have also included passages from the letters or other documents of life in their original languages, primarily in the endnotes, for the benefit of readers versed in those languages.
7. Diaries, letters and other autobiographical writings comprise the major forms of documents of life (Plummer 1985; Stanley 2013). Yet each of these classes of personal document, or ‘writings of the self’ (see Eiranen 2015) contain an abundance of variation. A characteristic feature of letters compared to other forms of autobiographical writing is its place on the temporal continuum. Letters are inclined to be more situational whereas other forms tend to be more retrospective; looking back in time, the writer creates a broader temporal spectrum. Letters can also be distinguished from other forms of autobiographical writing by their sense of in-betweenness, for the letter-writer, unlike the diarist, generally writes with a very particular audience in mind, often a single recipient. The letter works discursively to bridge a distance between two selves, the writer and his or her reader (Bakhtin’s dialogism). These acts of communication are dynamic and evolving, according to how the writer views or positions him- or herself vis-à-vis the reader of the letter (for more on positionality, see Davies & Harre 1989; Bamberg 1997; Pöysä 2009; Hyvärinen et al. 2021; McVee et al. 2024). Letters typically, but not always, create a space of trust, one also reinforced by the secrecy of correspondence. From a pragmatic perspective, it is important to acknowledge the perception of shared knowledge, which covers the mutual history of the writer and the recipient and their understanding of each other as people and as interpreters of the text. In this way, the immediacy of letters nonetheless expands to encompass a broader temporal range.
8. And folklorists find variants irresistible because of their organic connection to the definition of folklore.
9. However, there are strong grounds for the claim that suspension of all that has come before, that is, *epokhē*, is practically impossible for interpreters of linguistic phenomena. After all, the ability to understand a language is predicated on an involvement in the traditions that give meanings to words. Advocates of New Criticism, literary scholars who sought to analyse each poem or novel as an entity unto itself, were somehow tripped up by the underlying premise of their interpretive enterprise. As we read a work of fiction, for example, we invariably make assumptions about its author and the historical, political and cultural setting of the literary work, even if we consciously choose not to engage in facile biographical readings of literary texts.
10. The processual idea of the endless hermeneutic circle comes also to mind (See Gadamer 1975).
11. It is worth noting that not only letters (private, semi-public and public) exhibit dialogical features. For example, a diarist may also be in conversation with a past or future self; a biography, when the life and work are already in the past, engages its reader to draw their own conclusions; the autobiography, however, leaves the least space for dialogism.
12. See also Ahlqvist 1982 for an interesting collection of examples about different types and functions of letters in academic life and ethnographic fieldwork in imperial Russia. About letters as travel writing, see also Lukin 2025.
13. For more recent research on the study of emotion, the body and ideology in Finnish folklore research, see Hämäläinen & Mäkelä 2022.
14. Professor Anna-Leena Siikala was said to have given the following advice to a young researcher: ‘Never send a letter written in anger.’

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# PART ONE

## Public Careers and Domestic Lives



# Caring, Intimacy and Academic Frustrations

## Folklorist Väinö Salminen's Letters to His Wife, Kaarina

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Väinö William Salminen (1880–1947) was born and raised in Myrskylä, a village located in the eastern reaches of Uusimaa, a region in Southern Finland. Salminen was the professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research at the University of Helsinki from 1931 until his death in 1947. For the first two years of his professorship, however, he was acting professor after the sudden death of Aukusti Robert Niemi (1869–1931), the previous holder of the post. Salminen's official appointment to the professorship took place in 1933. In the established history of folklore studies, Salminen emerges as a transitional figure in the evolution of the discipline, sandwiched between two dominant figures, namely, Kaarle Leopold Krohn (1863–1933) and Martti Henrikki Haavio (1899–1973).

Until recent years, historical studies of Finnish folklore research have been inclined to dismiss Väinö Salminen's contribution to the discipline's development (e.g., Hautala 1954), often overlooking his insights regarding fieldwork and archives, 'living lore' (Botkin 1958) and the overall life of folk poetry (Virtanen 1969–1970; Virtanen 1991; Pöysä & Timonen 2004; Pöysä & Seppä 2021). In our study, we examine Salminen's role through the lens of his personal correspondence to bring out the private, lesser-known sides of the researcher's life and persona. Our key sources are his letters to his sweetheart and later wife, Kaarina Salminen (1886–1979), née Syster Karin Sofia Lindfors.<sup>1</sup>

Housed at the Finnish Literature Society Archives, the personal archive of Väinö Salminen adds up to 1.06 shelf-metres of material. The materials are presently unorganized. The collection contains correspondence, manuscripts, biographical materials, an edition of the *Kalevala* with marginalia, documents relating to the editing work he did on the collection of volumes titled *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* ('Ancient Poems of the Finnish People', shortened to the initialism SKVR), various notes, official documents, and other materials including academic theses, collected poems and newspaper clippings. The correspondence between Väinö and Kaarina adds up to a total of 22 letters, of which 21 were written by Väinö, and one by Kaarina.

Väinö Salminen's research interests revolved around the core themes of Finnish folklore research, with a focus on Kalevalaic poetry. He studied the narrative poems of Ingria (e.g., Salminen 1919; 1929), giving particular attention to the wedding poems (Salminen 1916). Salminen was also a dedicated fieldworker, travelling to numerous regions in Scandinavia, especially the borderlands inhabited by the 'forest Finns'

between Sweden and Norway (*skogsfinnar/metsäsuomalaiset*), and in Ingria, the surrounding environs of St. Petersburg. Drawing from his extensive experiences as a folklore collector in the field, Salminen was able to make novel observations about the life of folklore and the real people who performed it and used it. Salminen's firsthand observations of folklore in situ may explain partly his vehement break with Kaarle Krohn, both the man and his theory and method for studying folk poetry. The first evidence of Salminen's critical opposition towards Kaarle Krohn can be traced to 1908 (see Pöysä & Seppä 2021: 231–234; see also Häggman 2012 for a possible political motivation behind the personal antipathies). Besides academic rivalry, the roots of Salminen's antagonism towards his former teacher may well have also been personal, based on Salminen's perception of Krohn's habitus and class position.

In his memoirs, Väinö Salminen counts Emil Nestor Setälä (1864–1935), A.R. Niemi (1869–1931) and Kaarle Krohn as his teachers (Salminen 1946a: 57–67). Salminen's own students were, among others, Matti Kuusi (1914–1998; see Virtanen, in this anthology) and Jouko Hautala (1910–1983), two men who both later went on to shape the discipline of Finnish folklore research. Initially asked by A.R. Niemi for assistance, Väinö Salminen started his academic career by editing materials destined for publication in the volumes of *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* or SKVR.<sup>2</sup> The last volume, the poems of Uusimaa ('New Land', the regions surrounding Helsinki) (SKVR XIV), were published posthumously thanks to the editorial work on the manuscript by his wife and daughter.<sup>3</sup>

Salminen's subtle and unobtrusive approach as a teacher and as a person is acknowledged in a few lines of a letter written by (later professor and Academician) Matti Kuusi when the latter was still a post-graduate student:

[...] as a student of Krohn, Setälä or Niemi, I doubt I would have had the opportunity to pursue the truth without bias – I would have had to settle for proving my mentor's theories correct, regardless of what my own observations might have been. [...] (Matti Kuusi's letter to Väinö Salminen 28 Nov. 1946; VSA)<sup>4</sup>

In 1991, looking back some fifty years later, however, Matti Kuusi expressed regret for his former support of Salminen's aggressive critique of Krohn and the historic-geographic method (Kuusi 1991: 7). In our view, Kuusi's change of opinion says less about a misunderstanding but more about a shift in the intellectual, scientific and political climate that had taken place during the second half of the century. Evidently, the so-called history of the winners had changed also Kuusi's views, thus making Salminen less acceptable as an academic ideal (see Pöysä & Seppä 2021). After Salminen's death in 1947, the new interpretative frame emerged with the rise of Martti Haavio as the key person in folklore studies in Finland.

If Väinö Salminen has received limited attention in the historiography of folklore scholarship, Kaarina Salminen has remained almost entirely invisible. Their letters offer a unique lens into the disciplinary formations of folklore studies in early 20th-century Finland, revealing both the intellectual tensions and the emotional labour underpinning academic life. The correspondence also provides insight into the precarity of scholarly careers and the overlapping rhythms of everyday family life.

The reading is grounded in archival research based on primary materials from the Väinö Salminen Archive at the Finnish Literature Society. Through close reading, we

examine the language, tone and form of the letters to uncover emotional and intellectual layers. A biographical and contextual approach situates the correspondence within the broader framework of Salminen's academic trajectory, personal relationships, and the socio-political climate of the time.



Kaarina Salminen in a crouching pose on a rocky outcrop. In his written recollections of their joint fieldwork from the early 1930s, Väinö composed a poem in the Kalevala-meter praising Kaarina for her resourcefulness and her precise observations on Ingrian women's traditional clothing and songs. SKS, Väinö Salminen Archive.

### *A Couple's Correspondence as a Source for Studying Disciplinary and Personal History*

Väinö Salminen's letters to his wife<sup>5</sup> offer an intimate glimpse into the domestic life of a folklore researcher in the early decades of the 20th century. It is also worth noting that the couple's epistolary relationship was subject to a degree of seasonal variation. Most of the letters were written in the summer, when the spouses were living apart, the husband in the city of Helsinki and the wife in the countryside with their children.<sup>6</sup>

There are three main reasons for the flurry of summertime correspondence between the spouses. These can be collectively referred to as situational impulses for letter writing. First, distance and separation (a basic need to communicate through letter-writing); second, an evolving relationship of trust between husband and wife; and third, Väinö Salminen's need for a trustworthy reader of his inner thoughts and strong affects regarding his work. Of course, work-related matters were not the only content of the letters. In fact, the letters always contain two other themes: practical concerns and the emotional bonds between the spouses and the rest of the family. In any case, the summers of 1929 and 1930 represented pivotal moments in Väinö's academic career, times when he needed a reliable confidante with whom he could share his misgivings and anxieties about the selection process for a professorship in folklore studies. The summer of 1929 saw the greatest number of letters (16 letters).

The correspondence between Väinö and Kaarina had already begun in 1909 or 1910,<sup>7</sup> though at the outset, the writers, two people just discovering their attraction for each other, appear to be searching for their mutual roles. The later letters clearly convey a mood of stability and clarity regarding the roles of husband and wife, also evident in the forms of address in the letters (simply 'Väinö' and 'Kaarina' in contrast to the variety of nicknames and epithets used in the early stages of the relationship).

While Väinö Salminen's letters to his wife described the academic world at length and all the obstacles he faced within it, he also wrote to her to discuss practical household matters and arrangements. This attention to mundane matters also nourished the couple's emotional connection. In fact, the summer letters show Väinö's efforts to take care of his family in myriad ways, also as a provider. Mentions of cash and payments feature frequently, simply because the survival and wellbeing of the family largely depended on Väinö Salminen's earnings. Letters refer to payments received for editing assignments from the Finnish Literature Society<sup>8</sup> or from providing lessons in Finnish grammar and composition at various educational institutions in Helsinki.<sup>9</sup>

Regarding emotions, these discussions of practical matters most effectively depict the established and habitual emotional connection between the couple. We can see the cash sent to the family and the interest shown in household affairs as the husband's way of communicating emotions such as affection and concern in a stable relationship. This feeling of trust shared by the spouses combined with the intrigues and uncertainty in Väinö's academic environment led to expressions of other kinds of emotions, for example, disappointment, suspicion and resentment. Nonetheless, all the letters exchanged between Väinö and Kaarina Salminen can also be viewed as love letters (Jolly 2008), even though the range of topics discussed in the letters expanded and the quality of the emotional bond evolved as the relationship stabilized.

In keeping with our expectations about the patriarchal culture of the first half of the 20th century, there is far more documentation about the life of Väinö Salminen than that of his wife.<sup>10</sup> To start with, in 1946, Väinö Salminen himself wrote and published two autobiographies;<sup>11</sup> some years later, shorter biographical pieces were published in the Scandinavian journal *ARV* (e.g., a 1970 issue featuring Nordic folklorists), in a collection of short articles based on lectures marking the centenary of Folklore Studies at the University of Helsinki in 1991 (Kinnunen 1991), and in the National Biography (*Kansallisbiografia*) in 2001. Väinö Salminen's career has also been celebrated with the publication of brief biographical essays on the occasions of his 50th and 60th birthdays, not to mention the obituaries, at least three, published after his death in 1947.<sup>12</sup>

If we compare the extent of documentation regarding Väinö Salminen's life and career with that of his spouse, there is almost nothing about her available in the public record. Kaarina, with the help of their children, also took care of Väinö Salminen's research manuscripts and personal documents by arranging them and later donating them to the Finnish Literature Society's Literature Archives.<sup>13</sup> Thanks to Kaarina's conscientious efforts to preserve her correspondence with Väinö, we are now able to study and analyse the communication between the spouses.<sup>14</sup> Of course, it is necessary to remember that our overall impression of the correspondence is also shaped by her vision of her husband's social and professional roles: there is no way of knowing anything about the letters, let alone their authors, discarded from the collection. Furthermore, we have only one letter written by Kaarina to Väinö, dating from 1911, though Väinö Salminen refers to her letters more than once in the collection. Her side of the correspondence was either destroyed by her husband (improbable), was markedly less voluminous than her husband's side, or had been held back by Kaarina herself because she regarded her letters as inconsequential or simply too personal to be included in the documented professional history of Väinö Salminen. Still, with the help of close reading, even a single letter can offer clues to her character and role in the dyadic husband-wife relationship. We have cited many of the letters in their entirety simply because of the richness of the historical details they contain. In addition to being products of an era, these letters can also be regarded as deeds in themselves, that is, the foundational materials upon which social relations have been made (see Jolly 2008).

At the same time, reading, interpreting and translating the Salminens' correspondence is a daunting task. These letters constantly remind the present-day reader of their original recipient, the person to whom these letters were addressed; in other words, such a collection of letters underscores the exclusivity of the correspondents' communication, and the researcher cannot help feeling like an eavesdropper on an intimate conversation.

We have noted four features that make Salminen's side of this one-on-one conversation difficult, if not sometimes impossible, to interpret: 1) The use of a *restricted code* (Bernstein 1971), one which contains intentional 'language errors' understandable only between sender and recipient; 2) the range of the *register*, from exalted to vulgar; 3) the frequency of foreign words and phrases, e.g., Latin, Greek, possibly Hebrew, German, Karelian, etc.; 4) the situational misspellings, mistakes and crossed out words or sentences due to the writer's agitated emotional state. One of the key motivations for the ambiguities seems to have been Väinö Salminen's need to express his linguistic superiority, especially at the beginning of the relationship. The legibility of the letters changes as the relationship develops, partly due to enlargement of the reading audience from Kaarina to include the whole family but evidently also partly due to the more equal relationship developing between the spouses.<sup>15</sup>

### *Basic facts about Väinö and Kaarina Salminen*

Väinö William Salminen was born on 29 February 1880, in Myrskylä, a southern Finnish parish. Väinö Salminen's wife, Kaarina, who was known as Syster Karin Sofia Lindfors when their courtship began, was born in Hausjärvi in 1886. Väinö Salminen appears to have met his future spouse in 1909. Väinö and Kaarina married in 1917. The couple had five children, three girls and two boys, born between 1919 and 1924

in Helsinki. By all accounts, their union was a happy one, ending only with Väinö Salminen's death in 1947. Kaarina Salminen died at the age of 92 or 93, in 1979. The obscured role of the wife in the professor's academic career can be seen in the National Biography's lack of concern with precise dates. One of their sons died during the war (1941), but the others all lived to old age. At the time of the publication of the National Biography article (Rausmaa 2001), the youngest child was still alive.

Väinö's father taught at the village school and the family lived in a schoolhouse built of clay. This living arrangement was a topic of conversation – and amusement – in the parish: 'The villagers spoke of the teacher who dwelt with his brood in a damp clay cock' (Salminen 1946a: 78; x).<sup>16</sup> In his autobiographies, Väinö Salminen remembers his childhood home as one of severe piety and utter joylessness. Maria, his mother, raised her children according to her own stringent faith, forbidding her children from reading anything other than religious literature (Salminen 1946a: 29–33). In fact, an undated sheet of paper with a few lines of poetry bears witness to Salminen's memories and feelings about his childhood home. Preserved among his personal documents in the Finnish Literature Society's archives, this pithy and vitriolic poem in the Kalevala metre about his mother and sister paints a bleak picture. Myrskylä, his native place, emerges as a site 'with mother madly moaning and sister slinging smutty words'. At the top of the page, Väinö Salminen later wrote the following remark: 'I must have been in poisonous mood when I wrote this sketch for a poem in my notebook 30 years ago.'<sup>17</sup>

Väinö Salminen, in the typical fashion of the day, set out upon his academic career path by first leading a rather precarious life as a researcher before finally attaining the position of tenured professor. A professorship, however, was only within reach of a select few in the fiercely competitive world of academe, even then. Achieving success in the academic world required social, cultural and psychological capital plus a mix of aptitude, luck and the right social connections (see Pöysä 2025). Salminen had the good fortune of sealing his relationship with the university through an appointment as docent in 1917. Nonetheless, for years his financial situation remained uncertain and fragile. With no family wealth to back him up, the recurring life-historical theme of money (payments, wages, scholarships) as a source of security and self-respect is understandable. To some degree, the topic of money weighed on Salminen throughout his life. Yet money is much more than just a matter of livelihood, for money also brings its recipient a sense of recognition, that is, *Anerkennung*, if we choose to speak in Hegelian terms (Honneth 1996). For Salminen, scholarships and grants, as a form of 'extra money', made fieldwork trips possible and gave his work social recognition.

As already noted above, unlike the life and career of her husband, Kaarina's activities and accomplishments went largely undocumented. According to the University of Helsinki archives, she began her studies in the Faculty of Law in 1905 but left the programme the following year.<sup>18</sup> It is therefore even more significant that Väinö Salminen made a point of acknowledging his wife's assisting role in his own publications, despite only doing so in the form of private dedications. Kaarina also cherished these written acknowledgments. In fact, she even copied all the dedications in the accompanying letter to the donation of materials to the Finnish Literature Society. Furthermore, in that letter she also provided a brief account of her own contribution to his work along with background material for a possible biographical study of Väinö Salminen. While they can be regarded as simple demonstrations of courtesy, the dedications show how Väinö Salminen, throughout his career, steadily enlisted the help of his wife in his academic

research and publishing work. It is also worth noting that Väinö and Kaarina did fieldwork together in Ingria and Estonia in 1930 and 1931 (Wikipedia: Väinö Salminen; Salminen, K. 1932). After Väinö Salminen's death, Kaarina and their daughter Heliä-Kaarina prepared the prepaid but unfinished manuscripts of the SKVR collection for publication. Such an undertaking would have been viewed with trepidation, even by editors with a background in folklore studies.<sup>19</sup>

Traces of their intellectual partnership are also present in the correspondence. The most telling proof of her collaboration in his intellectual work is evident in the way Väinö addresses Kaarina in his letters as a trusted colleague. In his letters, Väinö Salminen consistently addresses her as a knowledgeable ally in the field, a reliable confidante aware of the academic scene and its actors.<sup>20</sup> The post-mortem role of Kaarina as an 'archiver' and donor of Väinö Salminen's personal documents adds yet another dimension to her role in the 'Väinö Salminen project', an academic career construed as a family mission.



Väinö and Kaarina Salminen's fieldwork in Ingria, 1930. SKS, Väinö Salminen Archive.

### *Reading the Letters of Academic People: From Public to Private*

What kind of source do letters represent in the study of academic history? To start with, academics working in the humanities tend to be experienced and articulate writers. Throughout history scholars have found the letter a valuable forum for trying out and mastering various styles of written communication. Yet it must be said that the border between private and public in letter-writing has evolved over time. The academic lives of A.J. Sjögren (1794–1855) and M.A. Castrén (1813–1852), for instance, demonstrate how letter-writing was regarded as a public activity akin to writing scholarly treatises.<sup>21</sup> Prior to returning home, letters from far-flung field sites were sent to public journals

and newspapers for publication. Stories about perilous journeys to faraway places were a popular topic: readers looked forward to learning about these places and their inhabitants from their ‘own’ travellers. Travelogues, the experiences of travellers rendered into a narrative and published in book form, emerged later, if the reading public continued to show interest (see Castrén & Schiefner 1852, 1853; Castrén & Joki 1953). In the case of M.A. Castrén, such interest evidently did persist, not only because of the scientific importance of his travels among the peoples of Siberia, but thanks to his vivid narrative style (see Lukin 2025).

From Väinö Salminen’s two autobiographies we can see how narratives about faraway places, that is, the locales where ethnographic data was gathered, presumably still attracted a readership in the 1940s. Väinö Salminen begins his *Vaeltajan tarinoita* (1946a) with a poem he wrote about a life spent travelling and reminiscing:

A kid set out along a path  
 longing for faraway places  
 departed for distant lands  
 leaving his little shack  
 briskly his feet whisked him away,  
 his notions far ahead  
 without a backward glance.  
 (Salminen 1946a: 5–6)<sup>22</sup>

In his autobiography Salminen also segued into a meditation on types of travellers and reasons for travelling (Salminen 1946a: 14–22). Significantly, both titles of the autobiographical books allude to Elias Lönnrot’s *Vaeltaja* (‘Wanderer’), an extensive account of the famed folklore collector’s first journey to Eastern Finland in 1828 (Lönnrot 1985). Together, these references to the wanderer as a romantic figure seeking knowledge could be interpreted as part of the wider zeitgeist, the spirit of ‘romantic wanderlust’ (*ars apodemica*, Branch 2006: 351) prevalent in both scientific and literary works inspired by notions of the exotic. According to Leea Virtanen (1991: 23), Salminen wanted the honorific of *collector* to be used for himself.

The publication of field experiences brought the researcher’s fieldwork out of the rarefied circles of academe and into the public eye. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in Salminen’s time the practice of publishing letters from the field had already ended. Instead, the dyadic correspondence between Väinö Salminen and his wife Kaarina could be seen as an example of extremely private letter-writing, contrasting only with more official (but still private) letters exchanged among colleagues, etc. The letters preserved in the archives for future researchers call attention to this paradoxical aspect of letters – they are simultaneously deeply private yet also testimonial.

As mentioned above, Väinö Salminen’s letters to his wife, besides providing him a space to vent his private academic frustrations and disappointments, were also steeped in the details of the day-to-day operations of running the household. At the same time, wider historical events also penetrate the private world of the letters, for example, the Spanish flu of 1918<sup>23</sup> and the right-wing political terror of the summer of 1930.<sup>24</sup>

As Margaretta Jolly (2009) notes, conspicuous gaps in archived correspondences can also be significant. Indeed, for a thorough consideration of Väinö Salminen’s persona, one might observe the striking omission of any mention of the Civil War of

1918 in Salminen's letters to his wife, Kaarina (cf. Seppä, this anthology, on Samuli Paulaharju's letters from the front). There is documentation regarding Salminen's participation in the Civil War on the side of the Whites.<sup>25</sup> In our view, the dearth of letters preserved from the years 1916 to 1919 suggests that Kaarina Salminen may have acted as a filter between the public and private image of Väinö Salminen.<sup>26</sup> In addition, no mentions of the so-called Kinship Wars (*Heimosodat*), which took place in Soviet 'Eastern' Karelia in the years 1918–1922 (Seppä 2022) and in which Väinö Salminen also took part, can be found in the spouses' correspondence. Although outside our timeframe, one more possible omission concerns Salminen's sympathies throughout World War II with the Finnish Realm Union (*Suomen Valtakunnan Liitto*), a pro-Nazi organization (Silvennoinen et al. 2016: 376; Klinge et al. 1990: 146).

As we have already seen, Väinö Salminen's letters to his wife also had an earthy and sensual side to them, though this dimension of their communication was richer and more elaborate in their correspondence prior to married life and children. For the sake of additional context, we will take a brief look at the letters written during the formative phase of their relationship.

### *Courtship Letters*

Väinö Wilhelm Salminen and Syster Karin Sofia Lindfors were married in 1917 and had their first child in 1919. Väinö and 'Kaarina' (the name Väinö used to address her in his letters since 1913) first met towards the end of 1909, judging from the date on the envelope mentioned above. The first archived item of correspondence from Väinö to Kaarina contains a few lines of verse, apparently written by Väinö to accompany the flowers he had sent to her during their engagement. The poem is dated the Eve of the First of May 1910, and it is addressed to 'Kaisa':

The Eve sees the celebration at its height; What bliss there is in hope. [...]

Tomorrow everyone has flowers; Then comes the day of the flowers' death. I thought: Let me send them before (the others) [...] already

On the Eve the spring bells of hope ring in the chest, Kaisa!

Myrskylansis [strong hand, stylized signature]<sup>27</sup>

The courtship letters from Väinö contain many terms of address and endearment for Kaarina: sometimes he calls her Kaisa or simply Kati with the attribute 'dear' or the possessive suffix '-ni' ("Kaisa tyttöseni", "Kati rakas"), other times he just addresses her as 'You' or 'my dearest girl'. The decision to identify 'Kaisa' and 'Kati' as names for the same person whose official name was 'Syster Karin Sofia' is based on an 'archival connection', that is, a co-occurrence in the same archival data: Kaarina Salminen included letters to 'Kaisa' and 'Kati' among her husband's personal documents to be donated to the Finnish Literature Society. 'Kaarina' is also used as her first name in the publication from 1932 (Salminen, K. 1932).

Kaarina also used several names for Väinö during the early days of their courtship. For example, in a letter dated 8 July 1911, she addresses Väinö as 'Vana' in the salutation, but as she closes the letter, she uses a variation of his second given name 'William'.

William is used in the letters as a kind of alter ego, most probably the sign of a restricted code (i.e., words and expressions incomprehensible to a wider audience; see Bernstein 1971) between the lovers: 'Greetings to William'.<sup>28</sup> Väinö is also presumably using his second name as part of a lovers' code in his own text.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the handwriting, the letters also contain other salient stylistic features that blend with the content of the letters and thus reflect the quality of the evolving relationship. During their courtship, Väinö tended to end his letters with a flourish, using a stylized signature with either 'Myrskylansis' or 'Myrskynperkele', thus referring to his place of birth Myrskylä and indicating his emotional strength or the force of his feelings. The strongly stylized use of ink also frequently features in Väinö's letters from this period, most likely referring to the writer's 'stormy' emotions. The name of the village, Myrskylä, is made of the Finnish word for storm, *myrsky*, with the Finnish ending '-la' to indicate a placename. In some letters, Väinö Salminen also added the word *perkele* (meaning 'devil') arriving at the expression *myrskynperkele* ('storm devil'). Due to the signature's abstract form, it is difficult to say exactly when this happens.<sup>30</sup> It may be that Väinö found the addition of the Latin locative *lansis* more germane to the task at hand – that is, to make an impression on a young female student in his first romantic letter to her.

Before their marriage in 1917 and the birth of their first child two years later, the letters reflect the emotional turbulence of their early relationship. From Väinö's side of the correspondence we can discern the volatility of his emotional states through the strong graphic elements, the bolded use of ink to stress certain words and expressions, the highly stylized signature and verbal expressions denoting emotional uncertainty. Väinö's use of language, especially the frequent smatterings of Latin and Greek expressions,<sup>31</sup> suggest attempts to impress her with his erudition. The gaps in the correspondence, however, interrupt our pursuit of the developing relationship – from courtship letters to conversations of domesticity. Nonetheless, there do exist several interesting sequences from the total correspondence that could be regarded as fragments of an evolving and emergent correspondence or an epistolarium (Stanley 2004). When the early and later letters are seen in juxtaposition, a marked change in communication is easily discernible. In these courtship letters uncertainty about feelings (one's own and those of the other) is expressed on the one hand as jealousy and on the other as dreams about a shared future in an academic partnership.

In the summer of 1911, Väinö journeyed to Russian Karelia ('Viena') with painter Akseli Gallen-Kallela and other friends. From Kaarina's letter, dated 8 July 1911, we know that while they were still in Hämeenlinna, about 100 km north of Helsinki, Väinö was also sitting as a model for paintings before the trip. At the time of writing, Kaarina was staying in Hauho, about 30 km from Hämeenlinna, possibly at her mother's home. After expressing remorse about his infrequent letters, Väinö relates news about his companions' fanciful Kalevala plans (a society and a house) and confesses to often feeling overwhelmed by wild waves of emotion. Moreover, at this stage of their relationship, Väinö does not shy away from using bold and even erotic (or obscene) expressions of longing:

Kati dear!

You may already be losing your mind because I haven't yet spoken from the paper to you, but surely you know how rarely I arrive at the thought that 'now I [crossed out] am going to take a pen and write a few lines and I can declare that [...] But when I got your letter, so [...]

Setälä, Kallela, Äyräpää Sailo etc are here building castles in the air that Kalevala house and we established one night the Kalevala Society, which for the time being only has those mentioned above as well as Sibelius, Kajanus and Saarinen. It was the first conception [bold] (fertilization) – will it last until the birth? It would then be May 3rd. The day of revelation, but the seed only [crossed out] zoog En gourdekeitai and could fall from the polis of the gods to the emptiness; but being on the way from the vagina [unclear]

I don't want to talk idly to you 'de rebus variis nonnullis alis' (about all kinds of things) mea voluptas!

I am thinking of You sometimes in longing, sometimes angry about the fact that you are so far away. Would like to see You alive sometimes, except when I remember Your crying face while sitting on that sofa. But thank God, sometimes I am not thinking of you at all, but something else. After saying this, I would like to grab You by your ears, lick you from chin to nose, from nose to dimple, roll you around over a dozen times and say: Kati. [...] Williammi [...]

If I pursue this thought any further, William will start feeling bad, so, Bye [in bold], bye

Myrskyliensis<sup>32</sup>

In Kaarina's letter to Väinö, dated only one day after the letter cited above (8 July 1911), and most probably not in direct response to his letter, she articulates her corresponding feelings of longing with a playful use of bold and demanding language. Additionally, her corporeal imagery and references are provocative in this context. She plans to make her own bundle of birch twigs and bathe in a 'malt sauna', a sauna used for producing beer malt, because her '[...] hands are so very dirty (*musta*) and arms so red and aching from the burning sun'. Written by a young woman to her sweetheart, this passage, replete with references to hard outdoor work, nakedness in the sauna and malt production (for brewing beer), may have summoned up a range of erotic associations for its intended reader.

Hauho 8 July 1911.

Vana dear

Holy boy, I received your epistle, and I was thrown into a flurry of thoughts that I felt like heading over to where you are in Hämeenlinna and from there to send you on your way. Damned kid, if you don't get yourself over here by the middle of next week, I'll be over there in flash, and I won't give you a moment's peace

put this paragraph firmly into your mind.

I am so wildly jealous of that Kallela and those other rascals, who make my young man pose as a model, thanks be to Jesus, that there aren't any great women artists yet.

My hands are so very black and my arms so red and stinging from the burning sun.

Tonight, I'm going to the sauna, I'll tie up my own bundle of birch twigs. And then when they heat up the malt sauna, me too.

Well, I guess this Sunday sermon will do for now, until I once again -, so I'll want to grab you. Heartfelt regards to William

Kati<sup>33</sup>

Is Kaarina euphemistically referring to Väinö's genitals by sending her regards to 'Williammi'? In a similar vein, in his letter dated 7 July 1911, Väinö also resorts to a rather coarse and naturalistic series of physical metaphors (giving birth, seed, vagina) to describe the founding of the Kalevala Society. With gusto, he also recounts his fantasies about what he would like to do to Kaarina (grabbing her by the ear, licking her, rolling about).

In a letter dated 16 July 1911, Väinö mentions gossip he has heard at the Finnish Literature Society about Kaarina's stay in Hauho ('Väinö Salminen's fiancée is often-times seen in Hauho flirting with men').<sup>34</sup> Väinö dismisses such information outright because, as a folklorist, he knows that 'women's tongues play like leaves of aspen' ('akkojen kielet pelailee kuin haavanlehti puussa').<sup>35</sup> These lines imply that Väinö has decided to pour his energy into more important things – that is, his work and possibly turning their relationship into a true academic companionship. From this point of view, the letter dated 11 July 1911 is significant. Here he cryptically refers to 'that meeting' and 'us getting close to each other' and ponders whether they should meet in the summer.<sup>36</sup> Väinö also says that he is considering 'whether You could be my elevating life companion who understands everything'. Harshly describing himself, he says, 'I am shit', referring to his failure to be more productive. He then continues to imagine a future with Kaarina:

My girl, if only I could inspire you to pursue similar work, You could help me with many things – and when I go on my three-year journey, I would need a companion, one able to endure all of the hardships, one whose mind would stir with joy, when my own would be weighed down with boredom and one to whom I could talk about both my bold wishes and [crossed out], dreams – not to mention the vanity of vanities, and who would be so fun to comfort when she weeps [...]<sup>37</sup>

Väinö Salminen, here overwhelmed by his tumultuous emotions, paints an idealized image of an academic marriage, a companionship that was later realized not only in the shared life of the Salminens but also by others, for example, in the marriage of Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, in the past, the notion of ethnographers pairing up as husband and wife to do fieldwork was unheard of.<sup>39</sup> But a trusted companion could also be needed in other areas of academic endeavour, for example, in social life and even in the task of academic writing.<sup>40</sup> Väinö Salminen's mention of a 'three-year journey' is evidently a reference to M.A. Castrén, who was famous for his far-reaching travels in Siberia. For folklore researchers in the 1920s and 1930s, stories of Lönnrot's journeys to Karelia to collect folk poems and Castrén's heroic field trips farther east to explore the roots of Finno-Ugric people continued to loom large in the folkloristic imagination, though the routes to the East had already been blocked because of the rise of the Soviet Union.



Akseli Gallen-Kallela, a central figure in National Romanticism and friend of Väinö Salminen, painted this portrait of Väinö in 1911. The occasion of sitting for the portrait is also mentioned in the correspondence. In a style reminiscent of Van Gogh, Gallen-Kallela painted his friend in a surprising and atypical light; indeed, many of the published photos of Salminen show him looking dour and unattractive, but the man portrayed in this painting exudes vitality with his ruddy complexion and piercing gaze. Taidekoti Kirpilä / The Finnish Cultural Foundation. Photo Rauno Träskelin.

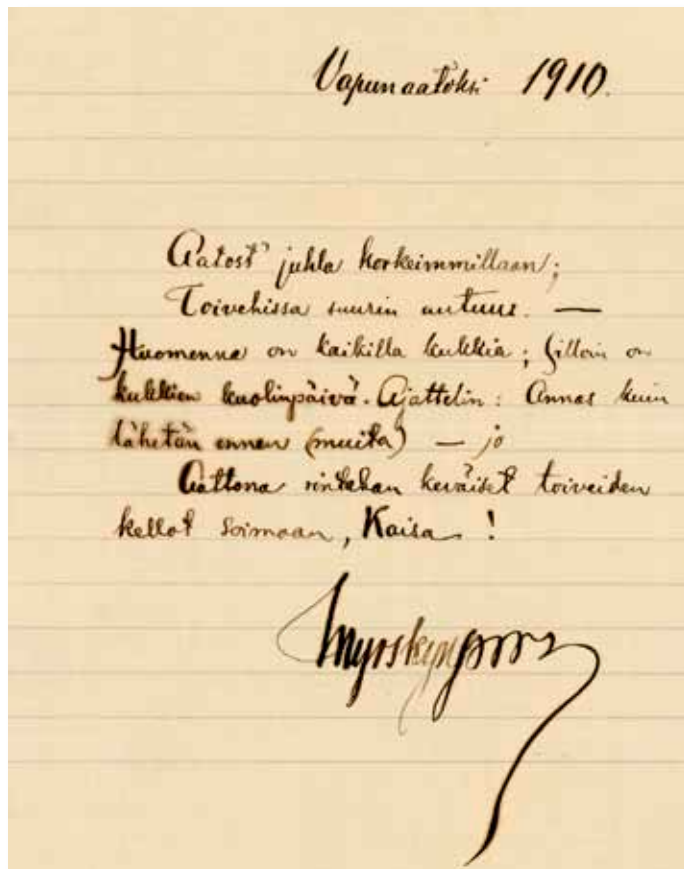
### *Summer letters (1929–1933): A Notable Case of a Couple's Correspondence*

Based on information on the locations of the writer and the addressee, we can conclude that Väinö and Kaarina began to live together, though still unmarried, somewhere between 1913 and 1915. After leaving his bachelor's way of life behind, Väinö only appears to have been separated from his wife and children during the summers.

With its own distinctive topics, the group of letters we have called the 'summer letters' constitute a clear subgenre in the couple's correspondence. The earliest summer letter dates back to 1921, but we will discuss it after this section to illustrate the strained and even hostile relationship between Väinö Salminen and Kaarle Krohn and its possible origins. Of course, the events of 1921 serve as background for the personal disputes to come. Nonetheless, these summer letters form a clear set, thus justifying handling the letters in this particular order.

In letters we encounter different modes of positive and negative affects. When discussing strictly family matters, the letters convey positive emotions of affectionate concern and physical longing. Through his letters, Väinö takes care of his loved ones (a form of shared and reflected love), addressing the wife as dear and mine (cf. above) and expressing his emotional and physical yearning for her. Compared to the courtship letters, the writer now uses terms of address befitting a wife and expressions reflecting the stability of the relationship: Syster Karin Sofia is now called 'Kaarina', usually followed

by an exclamation mark.<sup>41</sup> The dynamic graphic elements (e.g., adding more ink to put certain words in bold) in his script have largely disappeared, though the subtle stylization of his signature ‘Väinö’ serves as a reminder of the graphic tendencies displayed in the early letters signed off with ‘Myrskynperkele’.



Väinö used to sign his letters with his nickname ‘Myrskynperkele’ (Storm Devil). Väinö Salminen’s letter to Kaarina Lindfors, 30 April 1910. SKS, Väinö Salminen Archive.

As the family grew larger and the children grew older, the family structure evolved and communication within it changed. A close reading of the forms of address used in the letters over time offers a clear image of the various phases in the family’s formation. By the summer of 1926, for instance, Väinö has also started to include the children in his salutations ‘Dear darling children’ (”Rakkaat kalliit lapset”), actually as the only addressed recipients in two letters from 1926 or together with Kaarina in 1928 (‘Kaarina and the other dear children,’ ”Kaarina ja muut rakkaat lapset”), where Kaarina is explicitly but somewhat oddly included as one of the ‘dear children’. In 1926, their firstborn, Heliä-Kaarina (b. 1919), was about to turn seven, the age at which children in Finland generally start to learn to read and write. Evidently Väinö wanted his daughter to feel included as a recipient of the letter. Later, the children are once again excluded with the letters addressed only to Kaarina.<sup>42</sup>

One thing that we do learn about Väinö as a persona and a father, at least according to all the summer letters, is his tender concern and affection for his children. This attachment is particularly evident in one of his early summer letters. Väinö wrote the

letter from Suojärvi, one of the easternmost parishes in pre-war Finland, where he was working with a film crew in 1920. The location itself makes the letter deviate somewhat from our basic genre definition. In the letter (dated 15 June 1920), he lingers on his encounter with a small child. He tells his wife about holding the baby, talking to the baby and making the child laugh. When Väinö places the child back into the cradle, it starts to cry. Väinö then turns his attention to food, saying that he is wholly satisfied with it, but he misses his dearest ones: ‘The only thing that is missing is you and Heliä, the daughter, who would sing like a bird every now and then.’ The association of feelings about food with longing for loved ones is surely more than coincidental: food and feelings of affection (as part of family life) are often aligned in Väinö’s letters to Kaarina. His focus on food, moreover, sometimes forms part of his self-portrayal, a sign of his wholesome identification with the common Finnish people, a kind of ‘populist’ stance (Kovalainen & Pöysä 2018) common among folklorists.<sup>43</sup> We will return to this populist theme highlighting food and Finnishness as a part of Väinö Salminen’s biographical profile towards the end of the chapter.

It is possible to look at Väinö Salminen’s summer letters as a specific form of discourse. They can be viewed as an example of a ‘one to many’ type of discourse, that is, a kind of restricted public discourse. Clearly, the main addressee is his wife, Kaarina, yet Väinö simultaneously performs his fatherly role for the benefit of his children. In this sense, Väinö’s portrayal of family life emerges as rather modern, with the husband fully involved in the emotional life of the family. While it is true that Väinö’s work and career also feature prominently in some of the letters, the letters almost always address the children as well, though via the wife, who is positioned as the father’s messenger who reads the letters aloud to the children.

The basic pattern recurs summer after summer: Väinö remains in the city to work on various academic projects while Kaarina and the children leave Helsinki to enjoy country life at a family farm or similar locale. The letters only offer vague clues about the location, what it looks like or what can be done there. Some letters suggest that there is a lake or river nearby because of Väinö’s promise to bring a fishing rod and take the boys (!) fishing with him.<sup>44</sup> They may be staying at a farm, since it ‘smells’<sup>45</sup> there and you can grow (and sell) potatoes there (growing and selling potatoes suggest some form of ownership or renting).<sup>46</sup> One summer place is near the railroad, because the spouses were able to send letters back and forth by train.<sup>47</sup> Clearly, there is more than one summer place because sometimes Väinö mentions about Karjalohja, sometimes Vesanto and other times Hauho.<sup>48</sup>

The passages in the letters dealing with family matters show Väinö Salminen’s caring and loving side, but the passages dedicated to matters outside the family – mainly Väinö’s own academic work and career – are often tinged with disappointment. Most of the summer letters contain these two elements. While many would have poured their anxieties into diaries, Väinö chose to confide in his wife. This reveals much about the nature of their relationship, also just how much Väinö relied on Kaarina as a confidante.<sup>49</sup>

In the academic world, even the most cordial relationships between colleagues can be undermined or even irrevocably ruined by competition for university positions (cf. Häggman 2012: 311). Kaarle Krohn retired from his post as professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research in 1928. For Väinö Salminen, applying for the post after Professor Krohn’s retirement appears to have turned into the emotional focal point of

his career. Väinö Salminen was highly optimistic about his prospects, even though the faculty transcripts and the official evaluations of the applicants' publications do not suggest that his chances of getting the post were particularly good.<sup>50</sup>

According to the summer letters, the selection process was especially intense in the summer of 1929 (a total of 16 letters to Kaarina). In the end, the successful applicant was A.R. Niemi. Niemi, however, passed away shortly after his appointment, thus promptly initiating yet another selection process. Väinö Salminen took care of the duties of professor as a substitute in the interim. As far as social relations were concerned, the next process of selecting a new professor during the years 1931–1932 generated even more drama, for then the young Martti Haavio, Krohn's protégé, emerged as a serious contender for the position. Salminen ultimately achieved his goal in 1933 when chosen for the post. Yet this achievement – and the chain of events leading to it – permanently scarred the relationship between the two men.

In this article we do not aim to outline the professorship application processes in greater detail. The archived letters, at least in part due to the role of Kaarina Salminen as a 'home archiver' and a potential censor of the correspondence, give us only a fragmentary view of those processes. The lack of correspondence preserved from the years 1931–1932 make it impossible to use letters as a source for comparing the two application processes (no letters from 1931; two letters from both 1932 and 1933). What is more significant for the topic of this article, however, is the way in which these letters vividly portray Salminen's 'feverish' emotional states during the application processes, thus revealing his urgent need for a confidante, a person with whom he could openly discuss the emotionally frustrating phases of the processes.

In the archived letters and notes written between 7 June and 21 August 1929, Väinö provides a detailed account of the twists and turns in the first application process for the professorship in Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research. In the letter dated 7 June 1929, Väinö Salminen tells his wife that Emil Setälä, professor of the Finnish language, has refused to act as a reviewer. Väinö Salminen had also received a private note from A.R. Niemi, his competitor (but also his mentor and a friend?), telling him about the selection of experts. Niemi delivered the note to Salminen's door in person, but Salminen did not open the door. Nonetheless, we do know that Salminen did salvage the note, since it has been preserved among his personal documents.

The retired professor, Kaarle Krohn, apparently played a role in the process – at least in Väinö's imagination – though he could not have taken part in the official selection. Writing to his wife, Salminen describes a chance meeting with Kaarle Krohn in the teacher's lounge at the university's main building. Despite Krohn's cordial demeanour, Salminen mistrusts his former mentor's friendly greeting. The letter begins with an account of the various phases of the application process:

Helsinki 7 June 29

Dear Kaarina. Since not even newspapers reach you over there yet, I will send you the news to let you know that I am in good shape [?]. I am including this note by Niemi, which will reveal the side on which the experts stand. Setälä's refusal had arrived even before the faculty meeting of May 31st, even though N. knew nothing about until Linkomies informed him on June 4th. I haven't met Niemi. He dropped the note into my letterbox around 3 pm (May 31st). I was at home, but I didn't open the door. Krohn was very happy and friendly, which made me guess, even before receiving Niemi's note, that things are not going well for me.

But today I saw him again, this time in low spirits. He had yesterday read the letter Setälä had sent to the faculty, where he – I heard this from Salonius when Krohn had left the room – had strongly criticized the faculty and warned them not to select any foreign experts, for among the applicants are people who have done an enormous amount of work collecting and publishing, something the foreign experts are not able to appreciate. The faculty decided to ask Setälä and Krohn again. And in the end, they both will probably say yes.<sup>51</sup>

In the letters, the recruitment and selection process also unfold in ways not always captured in the official documentation. Oral narratives, some of them incontestably academic gossip, play an important role. At one point, Setälä – perhaps Salminen's preferred option – seems to have agreed to serve as an expert (4 July 1929).<sup>52</sup> On an unspecified day in August (the letter has no exact date, which is atypical for Väinö, who habitually set down even the exact time of day in previous letters), Väinö expresses his sense of despair about the eventual outcome of the application process. He cites a few lines of Heinrich Heine's poetry, stating that the competition is over: 'the birdsong is already over, the flowers have bloomed, dreams are dreamt and wishes gone astray.'<sup>53</sup> Salminen often included lines of poetry in his letters. As stated earlier, their inclusion sometimes makes it difficult to interpret the real-life happenings that surrounded them. Even though the handwriting and the fragments of poetry may pose a challenge to the researcher, they effectively communicate the writer's emotion.

Salminen, whose nerves were rattled by the selection process, nonetheless continued to discuss everyday life in Helsinki and express concern for the welfare of his wife and children far from home. Väinö even tried to persuade Kaarina to visit him in Helsinki, joking that she could have a week's respite from the 'smell' (of manure from the farm, most probably):

University, 1 July 1929

Dear Kaarina!

Here's the money. Eat to your heart's content [unclear] No news yet.

As long as I get myself over there, or You here to spend at least one smell-free [unclear] week. Say hello to the kids

Väinö.<sup>54</sup>

One year later, the following summer (5 June 1930), Väinö writes to his wife that the nomination of A.R. Niemi for the professorship will soon take place.<sup>55</sup> Salminen's dreams of a tenured position appear to have been dashed for years to come. Based on the private notes and official documents archived with them, we can infer that Niemi and two other professors had proposed to the department that Väinö Salminen be granted the position of extraordinary professor, a position which A.R. Niemi had occupied before his permanent appointment as professor. The application was evidently written by Väinö Salminen himself; his authorship testifies to the sense of determination and desperation he felt in his precarious life situation. Moreover, it also attests to the good relationship he had with A.R. Niemi, another figure on the same side of the 'academic front' against Kaarle Krohn and the Finnish Literature Society (See: Häggman 2012, 281, 299, 357–358). The death of A.R. Niemi a little over a year later on 28 October 1931, however, changed the situation, drawing Väinö Salminen back into the

feverish frenzy of the application process. There are far fewer letters referring to this second time around. Though this may be due to the time of year, fewer letters may also have something to do with Kaarina's perception of the content and tone (possibly even more bitter than the previous ones) of the letters. If this was the case, Kaarina Salminen, who apparently was keen to curate the public image of her husband, may well have considered them unsuitable for the archives.

This time, Salminen, now the acting professor, was competing with Väinö J. Mansikka and Martti Haavio. Haavio, though nearly twenty years Salminen's junior, enjoyed substantial backing from the Finnish Literature Society, where he was then employed as organizer of the collecting campaign to mark the centenary year of the *Kalevala* in 1935. The archived letters contain only two mentions about the background of this harrowing application process: one letter describes a tense meeting with Kaarle Krohn in the summer of 1932;<sup>56</sup> another letter, dated 22 July 1933, focuses on Kaarle Krohn's death, but also touches upon problems with Martti Haavio and the Society's publications during the second application process.

After his retirement from the university, Krohn continued as director of the Finnish Literature Society. In August of 1932, Väinö Salminen paid a visit to the Society to receive payment for his editing work. 'Miss Bohm', the treasurer, told Väinö that Kaarle Krohn was at that moment in a meeting with the Danish scholar Ferdinand Ohrt. Kaarle Krohn then stepped into the office, but they only had a rather laconic exchange of words – 'Good morning' and 'Goodbye' – before Väinö left the room. In a letter to Kaarina, Väinö shares his suspicions: 'Maybe he was advising Ohrt to praise the competitors' opuses in Denmark.'<sup>57</sup> According to other sources, it is possible to see that Ohrt was actually asked to act as an expert, but he declined the offer to take part in the second application process where, in the end, only E.N. Setälä and Uno Harva were used as referees. The competence of Martti Haavio was the point on which the opinions of the referees and department professors most clearly diverged. In fact, according to the minutes of the selection meeting, Uno Harva regarded Haavio as incompetent (VSA: Documents 26 Nov. 1932; Sievänen-Allen 1993: 245–246).<sup>58</sup> To the surprise of many, Väinö Salminen was chosen for the position.<sup>59</sup>

After the recruitment and selection process, Salminen's distrust of Kaarle Krohn and the scholarly society he led at the Finnish Literature Society is still perceptible in one of the summer letters of 1933; in the letter, Väinö conveys the news about Kaarle Krohn's death, also mentioning to Kaarina the obituary he was obliged to write for the newspapers as the only available representative of the discipline, as he put it. Salminen's letter reveals the resentment he continued to harbour towards Martti Haavio in connection with the application process. The death of the leading authority in the field of folklore research leaves Salminen empowered and inclined to show a trace of vindictiveness:

Helsinki 22 May 1933. [...] But when K.K. died last Wednesday morning, a call came from US [Uusi Suomi newspaper] at 11 am asking for a necrology, and just as I was writing, I received another call from Helsingin Sanomat and I wrote a couple more columns, so that today I plan to go and get what they owe me. This is literally a case of "den enes död är den andres bröd" (one man's death is another man's bread). Sitting there in the 'Pit' the other night, they said that my US necrology was coolly matter-of-fact whereas the one for HS was written with warmth. After letting them have their say, I then said

in response that both of Krohn's necrologies were written with the same one-mark yellow lead pencil.

The battle of life makes death the great equalizer – I wrote about K.K. because none of the members of his guard were in the city and the newspapers asked for my help. If I couldn't inject the lines with warmth, it may well be that there was none, but pettiness, mean-spiritedness [...].<sup>60</sup>

### *A Troubled Relationship with Kaarle Krohn*

There is one summer letter from 1921 that bears witness to an exceptionally dramatic episode in Väinö Salminen's academic life. This is the first written indication of Väinö's need for Kaarina's intimate collegial support. In a letter dated June 11th, 7:45 am (as seen earlier, Väinö Salminen often mentions the exact time of his letter-writing), Väinö announces to Kaarina that he is probably taking the morning train out of the city on Wednesday. He dedicates the first part of the letter to family affairs, telling her about a possible move to another flat in Helsinki. In the second part of the letter, Väinö addresses his wife as a trusted academic colleague and informs her about a strange letter he had received nine days ago (2 June 1921) from Professor Kaarle Krohn. In Krohn's letter to Salminen, Krohn indirectly blames Salminen for an anonymous letter that he had received. The writer of the anonymous letter had accused Krohn of preventing Väinö Salminen from publishing his works. Since he (Kaarle Krohn) cannot respond to 'that cowardly' writer (Krohn's words), Krohn asks Salminen whether he has ever stood in the way of the publication of any of Salminen's writings?

Väinö tells his wife that he is thinking of simply ignoring Krohn's letter and its accusations: 'It is odd that he would even imagine that I use my time [unclear] sitting at a typewriter composing abusive anonymous letters.' Both letters have disappeared, but the third one – Väinö's letter to Kaarina – has been preserved in Väinö Salminen's archive.<sup>61</sup>

This correspondence took place when Väinö Salminen was a docent at the university and Kaarle Krohn, 17 years his senior, was professor and director of Finnish Literature Society (since 1917). Despite having been awarded the title of docent (the right to give lectures on topics of his choosing) in folklore studies in 1917, Salminen did not have any other academic position at the university.<sup>62</sup> Put simply, Väinö Salminen's life situation was highly precarious (cf. Seppä 2018a, 2018b). His income came mainly from various teaching positions, editing work as well as writing newspaper articles and reviews. Bearing in mind the academic hierarchy and Salminen's position vis-à-vis Krohn, the latter's veiled accusation comes across as a grave offence. Clearly, whoever penned the anonymous letter (conceivably someone from Väinö's social network, possibly the poet and journalist Eino Leino?) delivered a severe blow to the relationship between Salminen and Krohn. Viewed from Krohn's perspective, it is not hard to understand his suspicion of Salminen. After all, the latter had already spent roughly a decade both publicly criticising Krohn's approach to folklore research and publishing these attacks in the *Antero Vipunen* leaflet (printed together with the journal *Virittäjä*) edited for folklore collectors in the years 1908–1909 (Pöysä & Timonen 2004; Pöysä & Seppä 2021: 21–24).

If we compare the official and unofficial perceptions of the relationship between these two men, it is worth noting that Salminen generally portrays Krohn in a positive or neutral light, even in his 1946 autobiography, where Krohn is characterized as a friendly and helpful mentor. The duplicitous nature of assessments (praising the other

in their presence and badmouthing them behind their backs) is an unfortunate feature of academic communication, even today – not a practice particular to Salminen. Salminen only finds fault with Krohn's rapid-fire lecturing style and use of soon-to-be published manuscripts as lecturing material (Salminen 1946b: 66–67). In his autobiography Salminen also recalls how Krohn, impressed by Salminen's first study about D.E.D. Europaeus, arrived at the doorstep of his small and smoky flat to congratulate him for a job well done (Salminen 1946a: 65–66). Salminen also published a favourable review of Kaarle Krohn's work *Kalevalan runojen historia I–VII* (History of Kalevala poems I–VII) (Salminen 1910). In a letter to Kaarina dated 22 July 1933, only days after Krohn's death, Väinö Salminen maintains that he will take back his harshest critique of Krohn's method (the 'historic-geographic' method also often referred to as the 'Finnish method'), since there was no longer any point in it after the death of its main representative (we will return to that letter later in this article).<sup>63</sup> Yet the complicated relationship endured, though in the next generation, between the 'heirs' of Väinö Salminen and Kaarle Krohn, in the activities of these individuals in the learned societies, the most prominent among them being the Finnish Literature Society.

### *Problems with the Finnish Literature Society*

As an academic society, an archive, an employer and a publisher, the Finnish Literature Society has always loomed large in the working lives of folklorists. This was the case for Väinö Salminen already from the early days of his career, and especially prior to his interim position as professor in 1931 and his official appointment in 1933. Salminen, who had started his university studies in 1902, after having received important positive feedback for an early student research project with D.E.D. Europaeus as its subject (Salminen 1946a: 55, 66), had then enthusiastically committed himself to the study of folklore.<sup>64</sup> According to Kai Häggman's history of the Society, Salminen was the Society's librarian during the years 1910–1919 (Häggman 2012: 511).<sup>65</sup> It was a part-time position that did not provide him with a steady income. Salminen's autobiography tells us that his employment at the Finnish Literature Society started as early as 1900 or 1902, when he assisted A.R. Niemi in the editing work of the SKVR (Salminen 1944, 1946a: 23, 63).<sup>66</sup> Salminen also edited the catalogue of the folklore collections and acted as the secretary of Ethnological Committee. In addition to these tasks, Salminen edited the *Antero Vipunen* leaflet, a wholly new initiative that was printed as a supplement to the *Virittäjä* journal during the years 1908–1909 (issues 1–4) and aimed at folklore collectors. It was in the pages of this leaflet that Salminen made his first acerbic critique of the historic-geographic method advocated by Kaarle Krohn. Why the Finnish Literature Society published such a text may be explained by Krohn's position at the time: Krohn was not yet the director of the Society but had only just been appointed as the professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research in 1908 (Kinnunen 1991: 78; Häggman 2012: 102; Pöysä & Seppä 2021). One explanation for the hostile tone of Salminen's critique may be found in the politically-charged power struggles that were taking place in the Society's circles between supporters of the Young Finnish Party and the Finnish Party. While E.N. Setälä represented the former, Kaarle Krohn sympathized with the latter. Väinö Salminen, like Setälä, supported the Young Finnish Party, a party opposed to the repressive Russian policies whereas

Kaarle Krohn leaned in favour of the Finnish Party (Häggman 2012: 73, 176, 221; for more about the political parties of that time, see Borg 1965).

During the years of the ‘summer letters’, Salminen primarily earned his living by teaching,<sup>67</sup> writing newspaper articles<sup>68</sup> and editing the volumes of the SKVR. If Salminen harboured any resentment or bitterness about having to earn money by working outside of his field, there is no indication of it in the letters: writing newspaper or magazine articles were apparently ‘a piece of cake’ for him; these writing tasks essentially offered him a reliable and quick source of income to support his family (Salminen 1946a: 23–24). Salminen’s dealings with the Society, however, involved much more aggravation; as well as detailing the difficulties he had negotiating with the Society on fair payment for his work, Salminen’s letters often recount his frustrations regarding getting paid the money he was due.

Indeed, Salminen, much to his annoyance, had to sort out countless misunderstandings about the amounts he was paid for his work.<sup>69</sup> Sometimes the money he received for the SKVR work turned out to be less than he had counted on, and he understandably felt mistreated and exploited:

Helsinki 7 July 1929. Dear Kaarina!

Your letter arrived yesterday with the daily post.

Come whenever it suits you! Of course, you are welcome, and if I know in advance when you’re coming, I’ll be at the station.

I was at the SKS today asking about money. Bohm said that they won’t be paying anything like 3,000 a month [unclear] for the time being. I answered jokingly that I’m not afraid of a missed ‘period’, since I’m a married man. They asked for the reason anyway – they said that I have 73,000 in advance. They have not paid what I am due for all of Part VI.<sup>70</sup>

Writing to his wife, he refers to the Society’s secretary Aarne Anttila<sup>71</sup> as Teufel (Devil) from Goethe’s *Faust*. Moreover, the letters show Salminen’s full awareness of his rights and his determination to get fair treatment, an attitude which may have also made social interactions between the representatives of the organization and Väinö awkward and possibly unpleasant.<sup>72</sup> Sometimes the advance payments were the source of the problems. Repeatedly having to ask for fair payment was surely humiliating for a man who felt that his own work was part of a common national project (see Seppä 2018b).

For Salminen, editing the SKVR was the perfect job. The task gave him the opportunity to delve deeply into the archived folk poetry housed in the collections. At the same time, the assignments put him under tremendous pressure: other folklorists and publishers were waiting impatiently for new pages and volumes of these core source materials.<sup>73</sup> Salminen was especially infuriated by Kaarle Krohn’s students, for the professor had given them free reign of the card indices and, in the absence of supervision, the students often took materials home to do their assignments (Salminen 1944b: 435–436).

### *Other Academic Frustrations*

Writing letters was also a way for Väinö Salminen to vent his frustrations about other issues in academic life. The main target of his epistolary tirades, however, was Kaarle Krohn, whose scientific significance Väinö Salminen repeatedly downplayed to his wife. In a letter written to her in 1922 (17 July 1922), for instance, Väinö Salminen gleefully recounts an incident that took place at the Nordic congress for ethnologists in Helsinki. Salminen apparently drew great pleasure from observing Carl von Sydow, the esteemed Swedish professor of ethnology and folklore, arguing with Kaarle Krohn about the latter's theories of the origin of magic and religion. 'There was no need for me to join the fray, because the others were picking apart his worship of the dead.'<sup>74</sup>

Other colleagues, including Uno Holmberg (Harva),<sup>75</sup> were also the targets of Väinö Salminen's rancour. In a letter to Kaarina from August 1930, Väinö articulates his feelings of resentment about a paper titled 'Karelian wedding songs as an ethnological source' presented by Uno Holmberg at an ethnological conference. In Väinö Salminen's view, the topic should have been reserved for Kaarina, who had been planning to write about Ingrian wedding songs. He threatened to do something if Holmberg published his paper in the yearbook of the Kalevala Society.<sup>76</sup> Fortunately, Salminen did not take any action: later, in his expert role during the second selection process, Uno Holmberg turned against Haavio in favour of Salminen. This change in opinion presumably played a decisive role in Salminen's appointment as professor in 1933.

There is also evidence of a strained relationship between Salminen and Armas Otto Väisänen, long-time secretary for the Kalevala Society. Writing to Kaarina about his recent journalistic endeavours, Salminen makes a passing remark about Väisänen, who had apparently made snide digs about the size of Salminen's family: 'Here we can show that petty Väisänen's rants about "Salminen not producing anything but children" are untrue.'<sup>77</sup> Väinö Salminen's archive also contains an official letter from the Kalevala Society undersigned by A.O. Väisänen (8 June 1922); in it, Salminen's application for a scholarship is rejected and he is further scolded for neglecting to have sent the society collections that had already been paid for in 1918 (a typical source of the numerous conflicts in Salminen's precarious life?). It is noteworthy that Salminen had saved this letter in his personal archives as a reminder of the resentment. According to Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio's diary (4 December 1931), A.O. Väisänen, who was working at the Finnish Literature Society as Haavio's assistant for the Kalevala Jubilee Year of 1935, had told Martti Haavio about Väinö Salminen's 'disgraceful' behaviour at the local restaurant Monttu ('Pit'). Martti Haavio passed on this piece of gossip to Elsa, who in turn recorded it in her diary (Eskola 2000: 272).<sup>78</sup> Read together, the letters and diaries present an eye-opening account of the ruthlessness of academe – a social world also rife with gossip and rumour.

Along with Väisänen, at least Krohn, Haavio and Mansikka seem to have formed a bloc against Väinö Salminen. After the second recruitment process for the professorship was over, the relationship between Salminen and Haavio was presumably strained, but their positions at the university and at the Finnish Literature Society obliged them to cooperate on matters related to folklore studies and the planning for the upcoming Jubilee Year of the *Kalevala* in 1935.

Although Väinö and Kaarina Salminen's archived correspondence remains silent about these topics, evidence of the climate of mistrust can be found in other private

letters. A letter from Samuli Paulaharju to Martti Haavio in 1937, for example, conveys just how hostile relations were between the university and the Finnish Literature Society after Väinö Salminen had been appointed professor.<sup>79</sup> The public dispute about Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio's research for her book *Inkerin virsi* (her monograph on Kalevalaic poetry) in 1944 and 1945 (Haavio, E. 1943, 1944, 1945; Salminen 1944a, 1944c; see also Turunen 1996) exemplifies the fraught nature of scholarly relationships at the time, easily turning differences between 'academic tribes' into 'academic wars' (Becher & Trowler 2001; Trowler 2014). The attack on Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio's research reveals two things: Salminen's poorly veiled attempt to take revenge upon the Haavio family and question the privileged place of the historic-geographic method. The feud went on until Salminen's death in 1947, though it was no longer carried out in the presumably unbiased forums of academic publications.

According to the published diaries of Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio (Eskola 2000: 222–226), we know that after a period of collaboration between Salminen and Haavio within the circles of the Federation of Finnishness, the Haavios had come to view Väinö Salminen – as a person and a researcher – with hatred and contempt. After Uno Holmberg, the second referee, had deemed Haavio incompetent for the post of professor, Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio set down her impression of what had taken place in her diary. In Enäjärvi-Haavio's opinion, Salminen should have been ranked far below Haavio in the academic evaluation:

We [Elsa & Martti] have considered the matter calmly. But that Martti would be pronounced incompetent in a competition in which Salminen was pronounced competent and ranked first among candidates, would have been an injustice that even the stones should have cried out in protest. (Eskola 2000: 288)<sup>80</sup>

The security of an academic position freed Väinö Salminen from his compulsion to wage wars against other folklorists. The final extract from a letter written by Salminen to his wife does, nonetheless, unmask his deep-seated contempt for others, an attitude which may have partially contributed to the conflicts he had with other researchers, even when his apparent rivals actually were roughly on the same side. On occasion, it looks as though differences relating to class or sensibility, for example, may have been more significant to Väinö Salminen than those of ideology. We believe that this is vital to understanding Väinö Salminen as 'an academic persona'. The class differences may also explain the antagonism between Salminen and his closest academic colleagues (Kaarle Krohn and Martti Haavio).

Writing to his wife from Jyväskylä in 1934, Väinö Salminen makes a sardonic sketch of Rafael Karsten, an ethnographer known internationally for his work in South America. The account below continues in the same vein as his portrayals of folklore researchers in the summer letters. To Salminen, Karsten embodied first and foremost all that he detested about the Finland-Swedish upper class, and this consciousness of class difference pervades his description. Salminen's apparent feeling of discomfort or inferiority may also explain, at least to some extent, his strained relations with Krohn and the Haavios. Although the letter featuring Karsten is not central to this article, it does offer a glimpse of Väinö Salminen's apprehension of the social world and his way of ranking the people around him. Nonetheless, it ends the series of the summer letters under our scrutiny:

Jyväskylä, 14 June 1934. Dear Kaarina!

I am giving lectures and conducting practices at full speed, but I haven't had a chance to dip into my other work.

Of course, I forgot my patent leather shoes under the table and here I walk in shoes with flattened heels. Yesterday I went to a few shops looking for new ones, but not a single pair fit my feet, and I cannot walk on aesthetic taste. Perhaps I will still find shoes to fit my feet, then I will accept whatever form they take.

My apartment is modern: warm water in the bathroom, a flushable toilet, and of the two that I use, a picture on the wall and a towel. I can tell the time by looking out the window, I can see the church clock tower and the birches, maples and spruces in the churchyard swaying in the wind.

I eat at the City Hotel. Because I bought discount coupons (serial coupons) a meal like the one in 'Grenadoori' [unclear] costs 9 marks. When you come, for once you will get enough fish. Up to now there has always been 3–4 kinds of fish: ide or bream [unclear] the width of your belly, zander, whitefish and salmon. Prof. Karsten ate so much on the first day that he got a stomach ache. The cheapskate didn't have the decency to eat something at home or on his way, but filled his belly with 9 marks (ate without giving a tip) of lax and cooked salmon, pork chops, cold white fish (zander [unclear]) from 16 plates of food, soup, a pitcher of beer and a bowl of ice cream, the Indian idiot even stretched out for a rest.

From this you can see that hunger is not a problem and that the same beverages as in Helsinki are available to satisfy the thirst.

The building where I live is called Torilinna (Torikatu 9 B 10) There is even a telephone outside the door. The room is slightly bigger than my own and for the time being totally free of smoke, because Lecturer Järvinen is apparently not a smoker. But, of course, my Lady, it's getting better all the time.

I have withdrawn 4,000, so that my wallet is bulging and looks prosperous in my inside pocket, since most of them are 100-mark notes.

There are 22 students, and new ones are showing up every day – there are many listeners – students I count as the ones who have signed up to get a grade in the distant future.

Tell the children that if they stay healthy for the whole summer, each one will get 10 marks for the first day of school.

Keep yourselves as well as I am and eat fresh, healthy.

Väinö<sup>81</sup>

### *The Accompanying Letter to the Archive: Kaarina has the Last Word*

What kinds of emotions are letters able to convey? How do letters effectively communicate these emotions? How trustworthy is the picture that emerges through the letters? The correspondence between Väinö and Kaarina Salminen mainly lays bare Väinö Salminen's need for a reliable reader and a trusted companion with whom to share his academic joys and disappointments. Our reading of his letters draws out a portrait of a caring husband and father; though a member of the Finnish intelligentsia, the importance he attached to the study of Finnish folklore and the promotion of Finnish culture in the early 20th century never outweighed his commitment to his role as a family man and provider. Besides his concern for the children's material wellbeing,

he also sought to nourish their hunger for knowledge, especially by teaching them what he knew best – reading and writing well in their mother tongue. The family's division of labour regarding the children's education thus meant that his wife focused on the other school subjects.

In his letters, Väinö gives voice to the love he feels for his wife, occasionally even using rather vulgar images and turns of phrase to describe his sexual lust for her. The most cryptic expressions could be interpreted as part of a restricted code, a secret performative language that the couple had developed in the early phases of their relationship, making some parts of the letters virtually incomprehensible to outsiders. When needed, his wife is also addressed as a close colleague, a person able to understand the reasons for Väinö Salminen's resentment and to give him strategical consolation.

We know little about the letters and notes that Kaarina Salminen wrote to her husband, since only one is included in the letters given to the Finnish Literature Society's archives. Writing from Hauho in the summer of 1911 (8 July 1911), Kaarina reveals her physical desire for her lover and admits to feeling jealous of Väinö's artist friends; she regards them as rivals holding him captive as a model for their artwork.<sup>82</sup> Although her jealousy and possessiveness may characterize the early stages of their relationship, her enduring loyalty emerges as most salient in the letter written much later to accompany the private letters she donated to the Finnish Literature Society archives. In the note Väinö is characterized as a lone maverick with only his wife and his mother-in-law as his loyal supporters:

For the future biography of Väinö Salminen I want to add the following:

Väinö Salminen had to conduct his field research with hardly any funding. Not even the cultural foundations helped him financially. The only helpers and supporters were the poor widow Wilhelmiina Lindfors' guarantee for a bank loan and the intellectual appreciation of Kaarina Salminen and her tireless industry in the family.<sup>83</sup>

Was this perception of the long-deceased scholar and his past only cherished in the 'family lore' or did Väinö Salminen himself also share a similar version of his identity and life? As a testimony to his wife's role in his research, Väinö Salminen made a point of acknowledging Kaarina's input in his publications. Kaarina copied out some of these acknowledgements to include in her letter to the Society's archives. The extract below is a representative example:

1945 Southern Karelia's rune-singers and sages

Southern Karelia's poems 1–4

My wife Kaarina Salminen took part in the publication work of the Southern Karelian poems. She proofread the manuscript, took part in compiling and checking the names of the singers. It is with gratitude that I recall how she sacrificed many summers, ensuring that not only the printing house but also the editor dedicate themselves to the work. Helsinki, July 1944 Publisher'. (VSA)<sup>84</sup>

Perhaps the clearest evidence of Kaarina Salminen's direct contribution to Väinö Salminen's work was the completion, with the assistance of her daughter Heliä-Kaarina,

of the last volume of the SKVR, the Uusimaa poems (SKVR XIV, 1948). The women undertook this task because Väinö Salminen had already been paid for the work, and they both disliked the idea of remaining in debt to the Finnish Literature Society. Interestingly, only the daughter is mentioned as the editor of the volume (see: <https://skvr.fi/skvr-osat>). Kaarina included this information in her letter to the archive:

1948 Uusimaa poems

1947 July

When Väinö died, the publication of the poems of Uusimaa were unfinished.

11 sheets folded

17 sheets still unread

When Väinö Salminen started preparing the Uusimaa poems for publication, he owed the SKS about 9,000 marks – there were also other withdrawals in connection with Väinö and Kaarina's work; these can be verified in the SKS ledger, which Professor Anttila showed me. Going over the work of the publication of the Uusimaa poems I concluded that if we continue the work under the same conditions, I will have to pay the remarkable sum of 25,000 marks upon its completion. My daughter Heliä and I nonetheless feel that is a matter of honour that we get the Uusimaa poems published, as long as the country is at peace.

The foreword written by Heliä is dated February 29, 1948, when the publication of the poems was completed. The publication of the Uusimaa poems was completed during a difficult time, during August 1947 to February 1948, when the proofs and the singer catalogue or all the household tasks with a food shortage, with no help with the household chores and laundry, and with Heliä as my only help and consolation, with Ohto ailing. The payments I received for the singer catalogue and the table of contents belonged to me [crossed out] also the other money earned from the SKS. But we did not charge the estate the 25,000 marks for the 17 sheets of the Uusimaa poems because Heliä and I regarded it as a matter of honour to clear the debt to the SKS.<sup>85</sup>

In the end, Väinö Salminen's 'family business' was dissolved with his wife's donation to the Finnish Literature Society. These documents, purposefully selected by Kaarina Salminen for the archives, present another and possibly fuller and truer portrait – from the family's vantage point – of a key folklorist of that era. At least for now, the extent of Kaarina Salminen's role in outlining the image of Väinö Salminen the folklore scholar remains to be seen. The impression is no doubt faithful to the idea she cherished of her husband and wanted to transmit to the public and later generations. The close reading of these documents nevertheless offers us glimpses of the man behind the academic persona, a human being beset by his own psychological complexities and contradictions.

## Notes

1. The name *Kaarina*, a Finnish variation of her second given name, will be used throughout this article simply because the documents of the couple's life suggest that 'Kaarina', already in the early stages of their relationship, was taken into use by both the couple and the academic community.
2. Väinö Salminen is named as either the sole or joint editor of 16 volumes of the *SKVR*. In his autobiography (Salminen 1946a: 63), he makes note of the work he did with A.R. Niemi preparing the volumes from Viena for publication; only Niemi, however, is credited for editing the Viena poems. See also Salminen 1944b.
3. Regarding the Väinö Salminen Archive (shortened to VSA) at the Finnish Literature Society (shortened to SKS) Archive, see Kaarina Salminen's accompanying notes for the donation of Väinö Salminen's personal documents. Most of the letters cited in this article are from the Väinö Salminen Archive. Besides the letters, the archive contains other personal documents connected to Väinö Salminen's academic career, for example, copies of statements written for professorship applications.
4. [...] Krohnin, Setälän tai Niemen oppilaana minulla tuskin olisi ollut mahdollisuutta ennakoluottomasti pyrkiä tosiasia in perille – olisi pitänyt tyytyä todistamaan oppi-isä in teorial oikeiksi, osoittivatpa omat havainnot mitä tahansa. [...] (Matti Kuusi to Väinö Salminen 28 November 1946; VSA).
5. The majority of the letters cited in this chapter were written by Väinö Salminen to Kaarina Salminen (née Lindfors), unless otherwise indicated. They are housed in the Finnish Literature Society (SKS) in the Väinö Salminen Archive (VSA).
6. Among the Finnish middle and upper classes, it was already a common practice since the 19<sup>th</sup> century for families to spend their summers in the countryside. The city was regarded as an 'unhealthy' place, whereas the countryside, a place with fresh air and natural surroundings, offered much more for children to do. From today's standpoint, the 'countryside' could even be a place located in the town, on its margins.
7. The collection also contains a partially torn envelope, stamped 21 December 1909 in Helsinki-Helsingfors (the latter is the Swedish form with Russian letters) and addressed to K. Miss Kaisa Lindfors, 16 Vuorimiehenk. 1 Entry 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor ("K. Neiti Kaisa Lindfors, 16 Vuorimiehenk.1, 5.porras, 3:s kerros"). Since it was included in the donation to the Finnish Literature Society archives by Kaarina Salminen, there is reason to believe that the address on the envelope was written by Väinö Salminen. The same address is written on a calling card used as a note, with the written address 'Graduate, Miss Karin Lindfors / 16 Vuorimiehenkat. 16, Entry 5' ("Ylioppilas Neiti Karin Lindfors / 16 Vuorimiehenkat. 16 porras 5"). It is reasonable to assume that Kaarina and Väinö Salminen saved these envelopes, making them memory objects, private souvenirs from the beginning of their courtship. The preservation of personal documents of this kind not only reveals something about the distinctive personae of the people who chose to save these papers, but it also says something about the importance they attached to those early days of their courtship.
8. Officially speaking, Väinö Salminen was working as the librarian at the Finnish Literature Society during the years 1910–1919, but his actual work, according to their archives, seems to have been mostly arranging and editing materials (Häggman 2012: 511; regarding the low salary, see Salminen 1946a: 23–24; Sievinen-Allen 2002: 188; Eskola 2002: 210).
9. From ca.1920, Väinö Salminen also earned his livelihood by teaching Finnish at the police academy (1919–1931) and by providing instruction in professional writing at various business colleges (Rausmaa 2001).
10. In a study about a local family business in Joensuu, a small town in Eastern Finland, one can see a similar phenomenon in a non-academic context of the local elite: only the husband was culturally visible and publicly celebrated, although the women of the family also were involved in the family business, even running it after the death of the male head of the family (see Pöysä 2018).

11. *Vallattomilta vaellusvuosilta* (Salminen 1946b) and *Vaeltajan tarinoita* (Salminen 1946a). The titles could be translated as 'From my unruly years of wandering' and 'Wanderer's tales'. Both titles refer to the wanderer as a kind of alter ego for Salminen (see also Virtanen 1991). Salminen focuses primarily on his field trips to the border area between Sweden and Norway, the so-called 'Finnish forests' (*Suomalaismetsät*), and to Northern Sweden and Norway, but he also brings to life his association with the intellectual circles in Helsinki and episodes in his personal life, such as his formative years in Myrskylä and Porvoo (Borgå), where he attended school. His excursions into the field and his social life at the university city of Helsinki take place mostly before marriage. It is noteworthy that Salminen leaves the private family life and the field trips with Kaarina out of both autobiographies.
12. See Kinnunen 1991: 114.
13. The donation to the Finnish Literature Society's Literature Archives (nowadays part of the Society's archives and known as Archive Materials on Literature and Cultural History) is dated 27 December 1979.
14. Regarding the significance of saving letters, see Jolly 2009. Apart from writing letters, saving or destroying letters can be seen as important forms of agency within the 'epistolary complex' (Mikhalchenko & Tkachenko 2022) of correspondences.
15. As an example of the difficulties involved in the close reading of personal letters, we will take a letter from 12 November 1913, where Väinö depicts himself as a man in a 'cave' waiting for Kaarina to pay him a visit. Two years later, however, in letter from 29 May 1915, Väinö, no longer a cave dweller, describes himself as a husband preparing food in their shared kitchen. Studying the letters written during different phases of the relationship can make close reading somewhat challenging. Also, the level of formality of the letter could be indicative of the deictic, mental locations of the writer and his addressee: both letters look like notes, but the second letter looks more like a casual note left on the kitchen table, a message conveying matters of household concern. The use of Latin words and phrases in the first note serves to highlight social hierarchies, i.e., the letter-writer is a university man. The playful tone of the second letter is revealed also in the vocabulary, especially in the couple's use of a restricted code, a kind of untranslatable secret language: "suittaa" (pro saattaa / may), "ruuaksiksi" (pro ruuaksi for food), "nyppylikka", "kärsäisen alusta". Compare the letter from 12 November 1913, 2:15 pm: / Kaarina! / I think that we didn't talk about meeting today in the afternoon too [too underlined] so therefore I'm not expecting You at my cave, so I'll be elsewhere. Perge qua caepisti! [in bold] / Zuid hoe sivi vult! Sua quisque ... [in lower case] / Väinö – 1913 12/XI k:lo 2.15 i.p / Kaarina! / Luulen ettei aamupäivällä ollut puhetta siitä, että tapaisimme tänään iltapäivälläkin, [kin alleviivattuna] enkä siis odota Sinua luolaani, vaan pysyn muualla. / Perge qua caepisti! [lihavalla] / Zuid hoe sibi vult! Sua quisque ... [pienellä] / Väinö, with the letter from 29 May 1915, 11:43 am: My Kaarina! I may be at work until 6 pm. The food for dinner is on the kitchen windowsill / 550 g. salmon / 1 cauliflower / 2 bunches of radishes / I'll buy the cream on my way home / Don't be a bobble girl and tear the weevil's [unclear] board??? 11:45 ante [post crossed out] meridiem 29 May 1915/ Tuus / Väinö Myrskylänsis – klo 11:43 ap. / Kaarinani! / Suittaa olla, että työssä viivähdän k:lo 6:teen. / Ruuaksiksi on keittiön ikkunalla / 550 gr. Kokemäen lohta / 1 kpl kukkakaalia / 2 nipp. Rediisejä / Kerman ostan vasta kun tulen / Älä ole nyppylikka ja revi kärsäisen [epäselvä] alustaa! / K:lo 11.45 ante [post yliviivattuna] meridiem 29/V 1915 / Tuus / Väinö Myrskylänsis
16. Pitäjäläiset sanoivatkin: "Opettaja poikasineen asuu kosteassa savikukossa" (Salminen 1946a: 78). The Finnish word 'savikukko' (clay cock) refers to a simple instrument, that is, a pipe (or whistle) fashioned from clay in the shape of a rooster.
17. Lienen 30 vuotta sitten ollut myrkyttyneillä tuulella, kun muistikirjan välistä "Den ritte[epäselvä] sidan" löysin elokuisen runoluonnoksen, joka alkaa: / Joenrannalla jo joutessansa / kukkinehet ovat kurjenmiekat / kanervat on kankahilla kohta / kukassansa kaikkein kauneimmillaan / pääskynpoijat pesästänsä päässeet / siivin omin sinitaivahia kohti liitelevät / takaisin taas kevään tullen lentävät / pesiänsä pehmoisia nähdäkseen / ja rakentaakseen uudet pirhat[epäselvä] pienokaisillensa / Alla aurinkoisen armaan,, sanovi [epäselvä] / murjottaisinko ma muukalaisna / myrkyttisinkö mä Myrskylätän,/ jossa äksy äiti älytönnä ärjyy, / sisko ainut siivottomat sanat

- sinkoo? / En, mull muuta, onhan muistamista ja mista[epäselvä] / Jne. (VSA, no date).
18. Email from Marianne Hirvonen, 3 November 2021: According to the University Registrar, Syster Karin Sofia Lindfors (b. 24 Sept.1886) matriculated from high school on 20 May 1904. She was enrolled in both the Faculties of Arts and of Law. On 11 Oct. 1905 Syster Lindfors registered in the Faculty of Law, where she had completed two courses, criminal law and the nursing care legislation. Syster Lindfors was already withdrawn from the university registrar in 1906 because she had not registered as present.
  19. Heliä-Kaarina Salminen, Salminen's daughter, has also published articles on regional dress in the Yearbook of the Kalevala Society (Salminen, H. 1945, 1946).
  20. In a short stipend report for the Finnish Literature Society about a trip to Ingria in the summer of 1931 Kaarina Salminen has the title 'Scholar's Wife' (Salminen, K. 1932).
  21. A.J. Sjögren's published letters from the field can be found in following journals: *Journal de St. Petersburg*, *St. Petersburgische Zeitung*, *Åbo Tidningar*, *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* (years 1825–1828; Branch 1973: 267–268). Castrén's published letters from the field can be found at the National Library Collection "[Alexander Castrénin Matkakirjeet](#)".
  22. Poikanen polulla kulki, / kaihoeli kaukomaille, / matkaeli maailmalle / pienoisesta pirttisestä: / notkeasti jalki nousi, / kuvitelmat eellä kulki, / taaksensa ei tarkkaellut. (Salminen 1946a, 5–6)
  23. The letter to Kaarina was dated 22 October (no year), but Väinö's contextual clues suggest the year was 1918: 'In other words, all is well, the Spanish flu won't be able to get me, since there's an abundance of everything [unclear], though no screwing.' ("Siis kaikki hyvin, ei Hispanian tauti minuun nyt pysty kuin on kaikkea [epäselvä] yllin kyllin paitsi naimista.") Salminen's vulgar sign-off, a show of masculine bluster, reveals something of his personality and the tenor of their relationship.
  24. Letter from 5 July 1930, 8 pm: Dear Kaarina! / Thank you for your letter! I'm here in this heat, toiling from 12 to half past four in the afternoon in the Finnish Literature Society's building and then for the rest of the damned day at home at work on the poems of Paraske. Feeling distracted with the air electrified with politics. Today they dragged two communists by the hair out of the Constitutional Law Committee's session in the House of the Estates and shoved them into a car. Of course, we have total peace, except for the Bolsheviks. – Helsinki 5/VII 30, klo 8 ip / Rakas Kaarina! / Kiitos kirjeestäsi! Minä tässä lämpimässä istun 12 – ½ 5 ip.isin SKS: talolla ja toisen mokoman kotona Parasken runojen kimpussa. Pyrkii puulle maistumaan, kun poliittista sähköä on ilma täyteen ladattuna. Vetivät tänään kaksi kommunistia tukasta autoon Säätytalon perustuslakivaliokunnan istunnosta. Meillä on tietysti täysi rauha paitsi bolšuilla.
- Letter from 9 July 1930: Dear Kaarina! 'Other boys are at war and sowing hatred; and me I just feel love.' (in Karelian) / Those words of Karelian men come to mind, as I am just compiling Paraske's love poems, and the rest of the city has been on the warpath for the past few days. And that's why [unclear] I have to be at the university, looking out the window 7 days, 12,000 marching. – Helsinki 9. VII 1930 / Rakas Kaarina! / "Muut brihat sottaa käyt da vihhaa pitää; a mie, mie vaa rakastan." / Nuo Karjalan miehen sanat muistuivat mieleeni, kun parhaillaan järjestelin painoon Parasken lemmenrunoja ja muu kaupunki oli viime päivinä sotajalalla. Täytyi sentäki [epäselvä] olla yliopiston ikkunassa katselemassa 7 p. 12,000 marssia.
25. The archive also contains both a certificate addressed to Salminen, acknowledging his service in the White Guard during the Kinship Wars and a medal known as the *Heimosotaristi* ('kinship war cross'). The medal was awarded to soldiers who had fought in the Freedom and Kinship Wars in Viena Karelia, East Karelia in the years 1918–1922 (Fabrin 2020). He was also awarded an Estonian Cross of Liberty for his participation in the liberation war of Estonia (VSA). Therefore, despite the scarcity of letters salvaged or included from that period in this archival donation, Salminen clearly took part in the Kinship Wars.
  26. The Väinö Salminen Archive at the Finnish Literature Society contains a map of Jaala with reference to the events of 1918. Jaala was one of the sites for White terror after the Civil War (see Mainio 2007) and Salminen may have also taken part in the firing squads at end of the war.

27. Letter to Karin Lindfors 1 May 1910: Aatost' juhla korkeimmillaan; / Toivehissa suurin autuus. [...] / Huomenna on kaikilla kukkia; Silloin on kukkien kuolinpäivä. Ajattelin: Annas kuin lähетен ennen (muita) [...] jo / Aattona rintahan keväiset toiveiden kellot soimaan, Kaisa! / Myrskylansis
28. Letter from Karin Lindfors to Väinö Salminen 8 July 1911.
29. Letter to Karin Lindfors 7 July 1911.
30. The epithet Väinö Salminen used to refer to himself seems to have been known among an even wider circle. At least Samuli Paulaharju mentions "Myrskyn Perkele" in his field notes in 1918 (Sotapäiväkirja [War Diary], Salla 1918, SKS Paulaharju). Paulaharju also uses a variation on 'stormy evilness' ("Myrskyistä Pahaa"), Salminen's well-known nickname, in his letter to Martti Haavio from June 1937 (SKS Paulaharju letters; see also Pöysä & Seppä 2021).
31. For example, a short letter dated 12 November 1913: 'Kaarina! I don't think that there was any talk of us meeting today, even in the afternoon [even underlined] and so I am not expecting you at my cave, rather I'll stay elsewhere. / Perge qua caepisti! [in bold] / Zuid hoe sibi vult! Sua quisque ... [in small letters] / Väinö' ("Kaarina! / Luulen ettei aamupäivällä ollut puhetta siitä, että tapaisimme tänään iltapäivälläkin, [kin alleviivattuna] enkä siis odota Sinua luolaani, vaan pysyn muualla. / Perge qua caepisti! [lihavalla] / Zuid hoe sibi vult! Sua quisque ... [pienellä] / Väinö")
32. Helsinki 7/VII 11 / Kati rakas! / Olet jo tainnut olla julmistumaisillasi, etten ole ennen paperilta puhellut Sinulle, mutta tiedäthän miten harvoin tulen siihen ajatukseen, että "nyt minä [yliviivattu] otan pännän käteeni ja kirjoitan muutaman rivin ja saan ilmoittaa, että [...] Mutta kun sain kirjeesi, niin [...] / Setälä, Kallela, Äyräpää Sailo etc rakennamme täällä pilvlinnoja sitä Kalevalan taloa ja perustimme yhtenä yönä Kalevala Seuran, johon toistaiseksi kuuluvat vain yllämainitut sekä Sibelius, Kajanus ja Saarinen. Se oli ensimmäinen conceptio [lihavoitu] (hedelmöityminen) – jaksaneeko synnytyk- / seen asti? Silloin olisi t.k. 3p. Tavaltaan ilmestymispäivä?, mutta siemenhän vasta [sehän yliviivattuna] zoog En gourdekeitai ja voi sitä jumalten poliilta luikahtaa tyhjyyteen; mutta ehkä saamallaan emättimen! [epäselvä] / en tahdo sinulle rupattaa "de rebus variis et nonullis alis" (kaikenkaltaisista) mea voluptas! / Ajattelen Sinua konsa ikävöiden, konsa kiukustuen ettäs olet niin kaukana, väliin kuin näkisin Sinut ilmielävänä, paitsi se viimeinen itkevä ilmeesi tuossa sohvalla niin pahasti mieleeni – mutta Kies' kiitetty! Väliin en ajattelu Sinua ollenkaan, vaan asioita / Saatuaani tämän sanottua tahtoisin ottaa Sinua korvista, nuolaista // kolmasti leuasta nokkaan, nokasta hymykuoppaan, kierittää Sinuas ympäri sellaisen tusinan, jossa 27 kappaletta ja sanoa: Kati [...] Williammi [...] / Jos jatkan tätä ajatusta tulee Williamin paha olla, siis joutuise / Hei [lihavoitu], hei! / Myrskylansis
33. Hauholla 8/VII 11. / Vana rakas / Sakramenttu poika sain sun epistolan, ja mulle tuli niin kiire ajatusmeininkeissäni tekis mieli suin päin lähteä H:linnaan ja sieltä toimittaa sinut reissuun. Peijakkaan penikka ellet sinä nousevan viikon keskivaiheilla lähe laputtamaan tänne päin niin vähäst äkkiä tulen sinne enkä anna sulle rauhaa // paina tämä parakrahvi visusti mieleesi. / Olen niin hurjasti mustasukkainen sille Kallelalle ja niille muille mokomille, jotka vesaani istuttavat mallinansa, kiesuksen kiitokset, ettei vielä niitä suuria naistaitelijoita eksisteeraa. / Käteni ovat niin huigian mustat ja käsivarret ihka punaiset ja kirvelevät kun auri poltti. / Tän iltana menen saunaan menen itte vastaksia taittamaan. Sitte kun täällä lämmitetään mallassauna niin mää kans. / Jo kai tätä sunnuntaisaarnaa riittääkin täksi kerraksi, sillä taas avita, niin tahdon sun käsi- // ni. Sydämmelliset terveiset Williamille / Kati
34. [...] kuten eräs neitonon Seuran talolla eilen pahansuopuudesta kieliskeli, lähetti sisarensa kautta terveisiä, että hän "usein näkee Salmisen V:n morsiamen Hauholla hakkailemassa" [...]. Väinö Salminen's letter to Karin Lindfors 16 July 1911.
35. Helsinki 19 July 1911.
36. Helsinki 11 July 1911, 9 pm.
37. Helsinki 11 July 1911, 9 pm. 11/VII 11. klo 9 i.p. [...] Tyttöseni, jos voisin Sinut innostaa samansuuntaisiin töihin, Sinä voisit minua paljossa auttaa – ja kun lähdän kolmen vuotiselle matkalleni tarvitsisin toverin, joka kestäisi kaikki vaivat, jolla ilo mielessä liikkuisi, silloin kun minua tuppaisi ikävystyttämään ja jolle voisin jututa rohkeista toiveista sekä [yliviivattu], unelmista – sekä turhuuden turhuudesta, ja jota olisi niin hauska lohduttaa kun se itkee.

38. For more about the collaboration between academic couples, see Gottlieb 1995, Creamer 2001, Meens & Sintobin 2018. Regarding the folklorists Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio, see Svanfeldt-Winter 2019 and Svanfeldt-Winter's chapter in this anthology.
  39. For example, A.J. Sjögren and M.A. Castrén settled down to family life only after returning from their heroic (and mostly solitary) field travels.
  40. Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio explicitly discusses and analyses the need for companionship in her consideration of another folklorist A.R. Niemi and his wife (who apparently failed to live up to the ideal of an academic partnership) in her notebook on 13 February 1932 (Eskola 2000: 303–304). Ultimately, Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio felt compelled to make heart-wrenching sacrifices for her career, love and family life. In fact, Enäjärvi-Haavio, when dying from cancer, though aware of Martti Haavio's love affair with the poet Aale Tynni, chose to keep the family together until the end (Tynni-Haavio & Seppälä 2005).
  41. The Finnish form of Syster Karin Sofia Lindfors' name could be interpreted as a practical decision in a Finnish-speaking family, though using the Finnish form could also be interpreted as a political statement in light of the linguistic and ideological climate in the early decades of the 20th century (See Meinander 2017). Väinö's letters or autobiographies make no mention of language politics and her name, but the hesitation to call her 'Kaarina' at the beginning of the relationship provides some grounds for this interpretation.
  42. In letters, addressing the recipient represents a typical example of positioning, acts which largely take place as implicit alignments with the imagined reader (cf. the concept of the *implied reader* in literary studies) and the mutually meaningful social environment shared by the writer and the reader (Davies & Harré 1990; Bamberg 2004; Pöysä 2009).
  43. At end of a letter written from a filming trip (15 June 1920), Väinö Salminen praises the meals they are being served and then describes seeing a child younger than his own: [...] The food we have here is excellent. We eat in a fine-looking dining room, with a kantele hanging on the wall and a piano in the corner. And so on. The table is always set with the finest cheeses, French sausages, sardines, etc. We bought cans of blood, milk and fish, plus 10 kilos of sugar, so we are eating as though we were staying in the finest hotel. Canned food, fresh milk, fish and sugar we have bought 10 kilos, dining like in best hotels in old times. The chemist sold us a bit of original cognac. When you add the healthful walks, rowing, and a real sauna, you can imagine that the only thing I am lacking is Your presence here and that Heliä would be chirping sweetly, then I would sing: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.'
- / Ruoka meillä on erinomainen. Syömme hienossa ruokasalissa, jonka seinällä riippuu kan-nel, nurkassa on piano j.n.e.p. Pöydässä on aina prima juustoa ranskalaista makkaraa, sardi-neja y.m. Säilykkeitä verestä maitoa, kalaa ja sokeria ostimme 10 kiloa, joten syömme kuin muinen parhaassa hotellissa. Apteekkarilta saimme originaali konjakkiakin hieman. Kun tä-hän vielä lisää terveelliset kävelyt, soudut ja oikean saunan, niin arvaat ettei minulta puutu muuta kuin että Sinäkin olisit vielä täällä ja että Heliä väliin visertäisi, niin voisi laulaa: "Kun Herra mua paimentaa, ei multa mitään puutu."
- A detailed description of this filming trip is published in the first Yearbook for the Kalevala Society, written by U.T. Sirelius (Sirelius 1921). The filming trip resulted in a dramatized documentary film with excerpts from actual documentaries (*Häidenvietto Karjalan runo-mailla*, 1921 / 'Karelian Wedding in the Land of the Kalevala' (official translation, see: [https://elonet.finna.fi/Record/kavi.elonet\\_elokuva\\_107922](https://elonet.finna.fi/Record/kavi.elonet_elokuva_107922)); see: [https://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%C3%A4iden\\_vietto\\_Karjalan\\_runomailla](https://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%C3%A4iden_vietto_Karjalan_runomailla) (12.8.2024).
44. Letter from 12 June 1928.
  45. Letter from 1 July 1929.
  46. Letter from 12 July 1926.
  47. Letter from 11 June 1921.
  48. Letters from 16 June 1928 (Karjalohja), 19 July 1929 (Vesanto), 19 July 1911 (Hauho).
  49. A separate note among his personal documents (see endnote 32: "Lienen 30 vuotta sitten ollut myrkyttyneillä tuulella, kun muistikirjan välistä [...] löysin [...]"/ "I must have been in

- poisonous mood when I wrote this sketch for a poem in my notebook 30 years ago”) indicates that Väinö Salminen was keeping some kind of notebook (”muistikirja”). A diligent researcher, Salminen most probably recorded his observations while on his field trips. These notebooks, however, were not included in Kaarina Salminen’s donation to the archives. (See endnote 17.)
50. VSA: Documents of the Helsinki University Historical-Philological Faculty copied for Väinö Salminen.
  51. Helsingissä 7.6. 29 / Rakas Kaarina. / Kun sinne ei tule vielä edes lehteä, niin kirjoitan uutisista, jotta tietäisit että olen hyvässä kunnossa[epäselvä]. / Liitän tähän Niemen lippusen, joka osoittaa, millä kannalla asiantuntijain vaali on. Setälän kieltäytyminen oli saapunut jo ennen tiedekunnan kokousta 31.V, vaikkei N. siitä ollut tietoinen ennekuin 4.6. sai Linkomieheltä tietää. En ole tavannut Niemeä. Hän pisti lapun k:lo 3 aikaan (5.VI). Istuin kotona, mutta en avannut. / Krohnin tapasin 4 p. Opettajahuoneessa ja hän oli hyvin iloinen sekä ystävällinen, joten arvasin jo ennen N:n lappua, että asiat minun kohdaltani ovat huonojapäin. Mutta tänään tapasin hänet uudelleen ja alakuloisena. Oli eilen lukenut Setälän tiedekunnalle lähettämän kirjeen ja sain Saloniukselta heti Kr.n lähdettyä kuulla, että Setälä antaa hartian voimalla koirannuuskaa tiedekunnalle ja varoittaa valitsemasta ulkolaisia purkki[?]tiedemiehiä, kun hakijoiden joukossa on sellaisia, jotka kerääjinä ja julkaisijoina ovat tehneet vuosisataistyön, jota eivät ulkomaalaiset ymmärrä arvostaa. Tiedekunta päätti pyytää uudelleen Setälää ja Krohnia. Ja kaiketi molemmat lopulta suostuvat.
  52. Helsinki 4 July 1929.
  53. Helsinki / Aug. 1929 [No precise date]
  54. Yliopistossa 1.VII 29 / Rakas Kaarina! / Tässä rahat. Syökää kursailematta [?] / Mitään uutisia en ole vielä kuullut. / Kunhan täältä tulemaan sinne tahi Sinä tänne pitämään edes yhden haisuttoman[?] viikon. / Tervehdi lapsukaisia / Väinö
  55. Letter from 5 July 1930, 8 pm: Niemi’s appointment will be coming at the end of this month. Not a single SKS man in the city, the building is ruled by Heikkinen and the caretaker. / I haven’t done / published the interview from the trip, because it might look like I am grumbling about the appointment and therefore, ‘I have found something greater’ so let it be for a later date.  
– Niemen nimitys tullee t.k. loppupuolella. S.K.S:n miehiä ei ole yhtään ainoata kaupungissa, talossa hallitsevat Heikkinen ja vahtimestari. / Haastattelua matkasta en ole laittanut, sen vuoksi että saattaisi tuntua kuin sillä nurkuisin nimitystä ja sen vuoksi ”löisin suurrumpua”, joten olkoon toiseen aikaan.
  56. The letter is dated in the month of the ‘Kaleva Lights’, in August when the nights are dark enough to see the faint flashes of distant thunderstorms: The month of the Kaleva Lights, 4<sup>th</sup> day, 1932. / Dear Kaarina! I’ll just say that yesterday, when I came home from accompanying you back, Miss B. called and said that 3,000 marks have been paid. I went directly over to pick it up, to lighten up. B. told me that K.K. has invited F. Ohrt to see him and won’t leave until 12 o’clock. At that same moment, K. arrived at the office, but we had nothing to say to each other except ‘Good day!’ ‘Goodbye’ and I left. Maybe he instructed Ohrt to go back to Denmark and praise the opuses by the competitors. But so what about that. [...]  
– Kalevantulien kuun 4:ntenä 1932. / Rakas Kaarina! / Kerron vain, että eilen, kun tulin kotiin Sinua saattamasta nti B. Soitti ja ilmoitti, että 3000:– on nostettavissa. Menin heti ”nostamaan”, että keventyisivät. B. Ennätti kertoa, että K.K. On kutsunut F. Ohrtin luokseen ja menee klo 12 vastaan. Samalla tulikin K. Toimistoon, mutta meillä ei ollut muuta puhuttavaa kuin ”Hyvää päivää!” ”Hyvästi!” ja minä läksin. Ehkä hän instruoii [epäselvä] Ohrtin Tanskassa kehumaan kilpailijoitien opuksia. / Mutta mitäpä siitä. [...]
  57. See previous endnote.
  58. According to the published diaries and letters of Martti Haavio ja Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio (Eskola 2000: 266–267, 273–276, 282, 287–288, 290; see also Sievänen-Allen 1993: 204, 211–213), Elsa played a crucial role in encouraging and helping her husband in his career. Elsa even gave one of her incomplete manuscripts to Martti, who finalized it and published it as his own work under the title *Leikarit, vertaileva kansanrunoudentutkimus* (Haavio 1932).

59. The Haavios felt betrayed because they believed that Uno Harva had personally encouraged Martti Haavio to apply for the professorship (Eskola 2000: 267, 323).
60. Helsinki 22/VII 33 [...] Mutta kun K.K. kuoli viime keskiviikkoamuna soitettiin klo 11 U.S:sta, että kirjoittaisin nekrologin ja juuri kun kirjoittelin soitti H. Sanomat ja kirjoitin siihenkin pari palstaa, joten tänään aion mennä perimään saataviani. Tässä toteutuu kirjaimellisesti ”den enes död är den andres bröd”. Istuessani toissailtana ”Kuopassa” sanottiin, että minun U.S:een kirjoittamani nekrologi oli viileän asiallinen, mutta H.S:n lämmöllä kirjoitettu. Annoin heidän puhua tarpeensa ja sanoin sitte // vasta, että molemmat Krohnin nekrologit ovat samalla 1 mk. keltaisella lyijykynällä kirjoitetut. / – Elämää taisto tarkoittaa, hautahan kaiken tasoittaa – Minä kirjoitin K.K:sta sen vuoksi, ettei kaupungissa ollut hänen kaartaiaan ja kun lehdet pyytämällä pysyivät apua. Jos en riveihin saanut lämpöä, johtunee se siitä, ettei sitä ollut, mutta pikkumaisuutta, halpamielisyyttä [...] /
61. Helsinki 11 June 1921, 7:45 am: [...] A letter from Krohn arrived on June 2nd. In it he claims to have received an abusive letter anonymously because of my book [Finnish ending for another word, ‘kirjeeni’ (my letter), crossed out and the beginning for book ‘kirj-’ left] [+ unclear addition]. And because he cannot respond to ‘that cowardly’ writer, he is asking me, sir, [unclear] for a response, ‘if he ever has been able to stand in the way of me publishing something’ etc., I have not answered yet [underlined], and I don’t know whether I will answer. It is odd to think that he would even imagine that I use my time [unclear] sitting at a typewriter to compose abusive anonymous letters [...]
- [...] Krohnilta on tullut 2/VI kirje, jossa hän sanoo saaneensa nimettömän haukkumakirjeen minun kirjeeni [eeni yliviivattu] alikoien [epäselvä lisäys] johdosta. Ja koska hän ”ei voi raukkamaiselle” kirjoittajalle vastata, niin hän pyyt minulta, herra [epäselvä] vastausta, ”olenko voinut [alleviivattu] koskaan estää sinun kirjoituksiasi tulemaan julkisuuteen” j.n.e. En ole vielä vastannut [alleviivattu], enkä tiedä vastaanko. On omituista, että hän luulee minun varautuvan nimettömien koneella kirjoitettujen haukkumakirjeiden sepittämiseen [...]
62. It should be noted, however, that the status of docent has changed. In the past, university docents had the freedom to give lectures on topics of their choice and were paid for their lectures (see Salminen 1946a: 64).
63. Apart from the writings published in *Antero Vipunen*, Salminen’s public criticism of Krohn only came out after the latter’s death on the pages of *Virittäjä*. In that publication, Salminen voices his displeasure and frustrations during the editing process of the SKVR and his disapproval of Professor Krohn’s negligent attitude with regard to students and their use archival materials during his professorship (Salminen 1944b).
64. While it is true that Salminen showed a genuine interest in folk poetry from the outset of his studies (Salminen 1946a: 27–34), this orientation was also possibly influenced by his previous political activities during the years of oppression (Russification), e.g., organising call-up strikes in 1902; Salminen thought that such activities may have prevented him from getting any government posts as a teacher (Salminen 1946a: 46, 52–53).
65. According to an article published in the daily *Helsingin Sanomat* on 28 Feb. 1930 in honour of Salminen’s 50th birthday, his work as a half-time (and half paid) librarian also included archiving duties. The reason why he lost or quit this job remains unknown. Later, at the beginning of 1931, the same type of job was offered to Martti Haavio by Kaarle Krohn in January 1931 (Eskola 2000: 210). Haavio evidently worked in the archive section of the library (where the manuscripts were stored; no real archive existed that time). According to the letters written to Kaarina, Väinö Salminen’s situation at the Finnish Literature Society appears to have been more akin to a part-time job. Writing in *Virittäjä*, Salminen outlined in more detail how the SKVR editing tasks were subject to the financial situation of the Society (Salminen 1944b).
66. The year 1902, however, would probably be more accurate; indeed, the records at the University of Helsinki registrar indicate that Väinö Salminen only began his studies at the historical-philological department that year on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

67. The summer letters also document Väinö's commutes between providing language instruction to police officers (at Manees, previously the Tsar's riding arena in Kruunuhaka) and the Finnish Literature Society at least in 1926, 1928 and in 1930. Letters from 2 Aug. 1926, 16 June 1928, 3 Aug. 1928, 5 Aug. 1930 and 8 Aug. 1930.
68. Letters from 2 Aug. 1926, 6 Aug. 1929, 22 July 1933.
69. Letters from 20 Aug. 1929 and 6 Aug. 1929.
70. Helsinki 7. VII 29 / Rakas Kaarina! / Kirjeesi tuli eilen päiväpostissa. / Tulehan vain konsa sopii! Kyllä minä vastaan otan ja jos ennakolta tiedon saan, milloin tulet, niin olen asemalla. / Olin tänään kyselemässä SKS:ltä rahoja. Bohm sanoi, ettei makseta mitään 3000 kuussa [epäselvä] toistaiseksi. Vastasin leikkisästi, etten pelkää "kuukautisten" poisjäämisestä, kun olen naimisissa. Kysyi sentään syytä – sanoi esitetyn, että minulla on 73,000 ennakkoa. He ovat jättäneet vähentämättä koko osan V1 saatavani.
71. Letters from 6 Aug. 1929 and 20 Aug. 1929. These two letters describe Salminen's conflict with Anttila about the timetable and payment for editing the SKVR collection.
72. Letter from 20 Aug. 1929 [...] It's been tough getting [getting underlined] my money. Anttila arrived from Sammatti today and I was just there at five-thirty getting the 5,400. He had not given the permission for printing the cover page and did not want to pay anything until the book was bound and the committee had decided whether to pay for more than 8 sheets. I said that in the summer at least 5,000 mks had been promised, the same amount that I had requested from the Academy of Science – if that amounts to at least 19 sheets. He said, // that that's Bohm's nonsense – I explained that Krohn, the director notified me of the decision. I finally was able to squeeze 5,000 in advance for the completed work. I went to the bank yesterday to postpone tomorrow's for Wednesday. Since I got that taken care of, I'll send what's left over there. I'm afraid that I won't be able to put together more than 500–600. Maybe that'll be enough for you to get here. They are very 'wicked' – Krohn is apparently in town studying lyrical poems – and I'm going to have to prepare them for printing. / When I send the money envelope in the post tomorrow, it won't arrive until Thursday. / If you come and on Friday, I certainly won't find out through the post. / Goodbye: / Väinö  
 –Tiukassa rahasaatavani [saatavani alleviivattu] ovat olleet. Anttila tuli tänään Sammatista ja olin äsken k:lo ½ 6 perimässä 5400. Hän ei ollut antanut painolupaa päällyslehdelle eikä tahtonut maksaa mitään ennenkuin kirja on nidottu ja johtokunta päättää maksetaanko enemmästä kuin 8 arkista! Sainoin, että kesällä luvattiin ainakin se 5000 mk. jota samaa anoin S. Tiedeakatemialta – jos tuota tulee vähintään 10 arkkia. Hän sanoi, // että se on Bohmin juttuja – Selitin, että Krohn, esimies ilmoitti päätöksen minulle. Sain irti lopulta 5000 "ennakkoa" valmiista työstä. Pankista kävin eilen pyytämässä lykkäystä huomiseen keskiviikkoon. Saatuvani sen asian selväksi lähetän huomenna sinne tulemaan mitä jää. Pelkään pahoin, etten saa enempää kokoon kuin 500–600. Ehkä sillä pääsette. Kovin siis ovat "häjyjä" – Krohn näet on kaupungissa lyyrillisiä runoja tutkimassa – ja ne minun nyt pitää siis saada painoon. / Kun huomenna panen rahakirjeen postiin tulee se sinne vasta torstaina. / Jos tulette ja perjantaina, en tietenkään ennätä siitä saada postitse tietoa. / Näkemiin: / Väinö
73. Letters from 20 Aug. 1929 and 6 Aug. 1929.
74. Letter from 17 Aug. 1922: [...] A discussion at the Congress between Krohn and Docent von Sydow from Lund turned into a heated debate. S. even though he was appointed docent thanks to Krohn, is now on the opposite side. There was no need for me to join the fray because the others were picking apart his worship of the dead. [...]. 17/VIII 22.[...] Kongressissa sukeni keskustelu, jossa Krohn joutui Lundin dosentti von Sydowin kanssa väittelyyn. S. on nyt, vaikka Krohnin toimesta sai dosentuurin, vastakkaisella kannalla. Minun ei tarvinnut puuttua suukopuun, sillä muut höyhentivät hänen vainajainpaltontansa. [...].
75. Uno Holmberg changed his surname to Harva, a Finnish name, sometime around the year 1932 (See Anttonen 1987: 2004).
76. Letter from 8 Aug. 1930.
77. Letter from 19 July 1929.

78. A.O. Väisänen's position in the Kalevala Society was strong, partly due to his family connections. He was, after all, married (since 1933) to one of the daughters of Akseli Gallen-Kallela, one of the key members of the society. Väisänen also served as editor of the Yearbook of Kalevala Society for almost 20 years (Kalleinen 2011).
79. Samuli Paulaharju to Doctor Martti Haavio 2 June 1937 / Oulu 2 June 37 / Dear Brother / Heartfelt thanks for your kind letter. It was a pleasure to hear news of the SKSociety... Even the disagreeable matters... / We have certainly already sensed that there is some opposition... When Salminen found his way into your committee... But that you were already resigning we would have never believed that the matter would have gone... / We are not thinking so much of the payments – a hundred here or there, it's not the main thing – but when one feels that there is opposition, it is dispiriting and takes the joy out of the work ... and it is so powerful that you are now forced to resign, it truly feels sad even from here in the Hinterlands. Then – ([unclear] sometimes when I happened to run into the [unclear], I don't know – I wouldn't feel like going to the SKSociety to knock on that Holiest of doors. It would open to release a strange spirit, A Stormy Malevolence unknown to me, I sense it, I have for a long time. / [...] Samuli Paulaharju Tohtori Martti Haaviolle 2.6.37 / Oulu 2.6.37 / Hyvä veli. / Sydämalliset kiitokset ystävällisestä kirjeestäsi. Oli mieluista kuulla SKSeuran asioista... Vaikka kovin ikävistäkin... / Olemme kyllä jo vaistonneet, että siellä on jonkinlaista vastamielisyttä... Kun Salminen joutui valio-kuntaanne... Mutta niin pitkälle, että olit jo eroamassa emme olisi uskoneet asian menevän... / Emme niin paljon palkkioista – satanen sinne tai tänne, ei ole pääasia – mutta kun tuntee, että siellä on vastamieltä, se masentaa ja vie työn ilon... Ja on se niin väkevää, että Sinä olet siellä pakotettu eroamaan, niin totisesti tuntuu ikävältä täältä Takamaillakin. Silloin – asti (?) joskus sattuisin sinne PääPaapeliin, en tiedä – ei tekisi mieli mennä kolkuttamaan SKSeuran ”Kaikkejn Pyhimmän” ovea. Sieltä kun tulvahtaisi vastaan vieras henki, jotakin, Myrskyistä Pahaa, jota en tunne, vaistoan, olen kauan vaistonnut. / (SKS Samuli Paulaharju's Letters).
80. Olemme suhtautuneet asiaan rauhallisesti. Mutta se, että Martti olisi julistettu epäpäteväksi kilpailussa, jossa Salminenkin julistetaan päteväksi ja asetetaan ensimmäiselle ehdokassijalle, olisi ollut vääryys, josta kivienkin olisi pitänyt huutaa. (Eskola 2000: 288).
81. Jyväskylällä 14 VI 1934 / Rakas Kaarina! / Luennoin ja pidän harjoituksia täyttä puhkua, mutta muuhun työhöni en vielä ole ennättänyt kajota. / Tietysti lakeerikengät unohtuivat pöydän alle ja täällä nyt kävelen linttakorkoisissa. Eilen kävin muutamista kaupoista uusia tavoittamassa, mutta eivät yhdetkään sopineet jalkoihini ja esteettisen maun päällä en voi kävellä. Ehkä vielä löydän jalkoihini sopivat, silloin hyväksyn muodon puolesta mitkä vain. / Asuntoni on uudenaikainen: lämmin vesi kylpyhuoneessa, vesi WC ja sen 2:sta, jota käytän, kuva seinällä ja pyyheliina. Kellon määrän näen ikkunasta, kirkontornista ja kirkkopuistossa huojuvat parhaillaan koivujen ja vaahteran oksia sekä kuusten latvat viileässä pohjoistuudessa ja vienossa sateessa. / Syön Kaupunginhotellissa. Kun ostin alennuslippuja (sarjalippuja) maksaa senarvoinen ateria kuin ”Grenadoorin”[epäselvä] päivällinen 9 mk. Kun tulet, niin kerrankin saat tarpeeksi kalaa. Tähän asti on aina ollut 3-4 kalalajia: vattasilevyisiä säynäviä t. latikoita[epäselvä], kuhaa, siikaa ja lohta. Prof. Karsten söi ensimmäisenä päivänä vattansa kipeäksi. Kitupiikki ei ole kotonaan raskinnut syödä eikä matkalla ja ajoi 9 mk:illa (söi juomarahoitta) maarunsa kurkkua myöten täyteen gravia ja keitettyä lohta, siankyljystä, kylmää siikaa (kuhaa?) 16:sta asetista antimin, keittoruoan, kannullisen kaljaa ja jäätelöä, jopa veti intiaani-idiootin pitkälle. / Tästä huomaat, ettei täällä nälkä ahdistaa ja janoonsa saa samoja juoksevia aineita kuin Helsingissäkin. / Rakennusta, jossa asun sanottanee Torilinnaksi (Torikatu 9 B 10) Puhelinkin on oveni ulkopuolella. Huone on hieman suurempi kuin oma murjuni ja toistaiseksi aivan savustamaton, sillä lehtori V. Järvinen kuulemma ei ole tupakkamies. Mutta kyllähän minun Signorani tässä jo parastaan panee. / 4000 olen nostonut, joten lompasakin lotkottaa hyvinvoivan näköisenä povitaskussani, kun suurin osa on satamarkkasia. / Oppilaita on 22 ja uusia tulee joka päivä – kuulijoita on paljon – oppilaisiksi luen sellaiset, jotka ovat ilmoittaneet joskus hämärässä tulevaisuudessa suorittavansa arvosanan. / Sano lapsille, että jos pitävät itsensä koko kesän terveinä, saavat kukin 10 markkaa koulun alkajaisiksi. / Voikaa niin hyvin kuin minäkin ja syökää tuoretta, tervettä. / Väinö

82. Letter from Karin Lindfors to Väinö Salminen 8 July 1911; See endnote 33.
83. Väinö Salmisen elämäkertaa varten tahdon myöskin tuoda esille seuraavaa: / Väinö Salminen joutui suorittamaan tutkimusmatkansa miltei aivan ilman minkäänlaisia apurahoja. Eikä kulttuurirahastoistakaan myönnetty taloudellista tukea. Ainoat avustajat ja tukijat olivat: Köyhän lesken Wilhelmiina Lindforsin takaus Kansallis-Osake-Pankista saatua lainaan, ja Kaarina Salmisen henkinen ymmärtämys ja kodinhaltijana suoritettu uuttera työ. (VSA)
84. 1945 Etelä-Karjalan runonlaulajat ja tietäjät / Etelä-Karjalan runot 1–4 / Etelä-Karjalan runojen julkaisutyöhön on vaimoni Kaarina Salminen osallistunut käsikirjoituksen tarkistukseen, laulajien luettelon laatimiseen ja korjauslukuun. Kiitollisena muistelen, miten hän on uhrannut monet kesätkin, kun kirjapaino – samoin toimittaja silloin on yhtenäisemmin voinut työhön omistautua. Helsingissä, heinäkuulla 1944 Julkaisija. (VSA documents)
85. 1948 Uudenmaan runot / 1947 heinäkuussa / Väinön kuollessa oli Uudenmaan runojulkaisu-työ keskeneräinen. / 11 painoarkkia taitettu / jäljellä 17 painoarkkia lukematta / Uudenmaan runojulkaisuun ryhdyttyäessä oli Väinö Salminen velkaa SK.Seuralle noin 9000 – oli myös muita nostoja Väinön ja Kaarina töistä mitä käy selville SK.S. tilikirjasta, jonka professori Anttila minulle näytti. Selostaessani Väinön kuoleman jälkeen Uudenmaan runojulkaisu työtä tulin siihen loppupäättökseen, että jos jatkamme työtä edelleen samoilla ehdoilla on minun maksettava huomattava summa ainakin 25000:- työn valmistuttua. Pidimme kuitenkin Heliä-tyttären kanssa kunnia asianamme saada Uudenmaan runot painetuksi, niin kauan kun maassa on vielä rauha. // Heliän kirjoittama alkulause on päivätty helmikuun 29 p:nä 1948, jolloin siis runojulkaisu työ oli loppuunsa suoritettu. / Uudenmaan runojulkaisu tehtiin siis valmiiksi raskaana aikana, elokuussa 1947 – helmik. 1948 jolloin korrehtuurin ja laulajien luettelon tai kaiken taloustyön ohella ruokapulan vallitessa, ilman talousapulaista ja pyykkäriä ainoana apunani ja lohduttajanani Heliä, Ohdon sairastaessa. Laulajien luettelosta ja sisällysluettelosta saamani maksut kuuluivat minulle[yliviivattu] Samoin kuin muut SK.Seuralta ansaitsemat varat. Mutta 17 Uudenmaan runojen painoarkin valmistamisesta 25000 emme Heliän kanssa, ole veloittaneet perikuntaa koska katsoimme kunnia asiaksemme saada tili selviksi SK.Seuralle.

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‘All the “evil” in me has been born of a desire for good, for beauty and for truth.’

## Marie Under’s Epistolary Conceptualizations of Marriage and Divorce

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In January 1916, Marie Under (1883–1980), often considered one of Estonia’s greatest poets, wrote two long letters to Ants Laikmaa (1886–1942), her life-long friend and a well-known Estonian painter. These letters address the accusations Laikmaa made against Under upon her decision to file for divorce from her first husband, Karl Hacker. Written in response to Laikmaa’s harsh and unanticipated criticism, Under’s letters were fuelled by a sense of being unfairly judged and a passionate desire to defend her life choices and world view. Under’s elaboration of her ideas on love, partnership between man and woman and creative self-realization make it possible to trace the affinity of her thought to wider debates on changing views on the institution of marriage, emancipation and freedom of self-definition for women, all topical matters in Europe during that time. In my analysis of Under’s letters to Laikmaa, I focus on the capacity of the epistolary format to serve a range of interrelated purposes for the author. These range from seeking reconciliation with an old friend and disclosing deeply intimate and personal matters to partaking in a feminist revision of the concept of woman and her position in society, one of the central concerns of the first wave of feminism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In accord with these concerns, Under problematizes the foundations of the traditional institution of marriage and voices her support for alternative models of relationship between men and women based on freedom of choice and freedom of emotion. For Under, these freedoms would, in turn, enable her to attain autonomous selfhood and support her artistic self-realization as a woman.

In a critical reflection on letters by a female author, particularly when focusing both on the way emotions are considered in the letters and on their emotional stances, it is useful to take a look at the strongly gendered history of the genre. As several life-writing scholars have argued, letters, like diaries, have been considered a feminine genre par excellence (Barton & Hall 1999: 7; Jolly 2008: 35; also, Clarke & Spender 1992; Goldsmith 1988: 46–59). Letters and their literary applications, most prominently the epistolary novel, have been viewed as ‘the trope of authenticity and intimacy’, which has overshadowed their cultural, historical, linguistic and political aspects, resulting in ‘constru[ing] the letter as feminine’ (Gilroy & Verhoeven 2000: 1). In the Anglo-American context, the feminization of the epistolary genre is related to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century development of the novel, a literary form that has been viewed as directly related to and blending with the

moral instruction of women; moreover, its frequent representation in epistolary form, though 'valori[zing] woman's capacity for feeling,' highlights the need to follow norms of propriety, thus firmly joining romantic attachment with the institution of marriage (Gilroy & Verhoeven 2000: 2). Yet in historical perspective, letter-writing, like keeping a diary, also emerges as a type of writing practice that was accessible to and acceptable for women. As Olga Kenyon's anthology *Eight Hundred Years of Women's Letters* amply demonstrates, it was a practice skilfully adopted by women of different rank and social standing during different historical periods for a wide range of purposes:

to inform; to instruct (children, even monarchs at times); to entertain family and friends with descriptions of society or daily life [...] to keep up relationships (a female quality); to convey news [...] to explore psychological problems, often with wisdom and insight; to keep in touch [...] to offer love and express caring. (Kenyon 2009: ix–x)

Feminist scholars have highlighted the relevance of letters as sources of inquiry for cultural and political history, valuable for their capacity to 'reveal the cognitive and moral experiences of individuals [and] ... the importance of the everyday, the prosaic, as a source of individual creativity and social criticism' (Sharp 1995: 56). Letter-writing and epistolary relationships have been viewed as crucial vehicles of political struggle for women that underscore 'feminism's ideals about personal relationship itself as a belief system' (Jolly 2008: 2) and support female self-affirmation and empowerment 'through discourse to enact specific changes in society' (Gring-Pemble 1998: 41–42; see also Sowards 2018: 298).

### *Biographical Context of the Letters*

Sirje Kiin, the main biographer of Marie Under and a prominent scholar of her poetic heritage, considers Under to be an exemplary figure of Estonian literature whose poetry 'has become the voice of the heart of Estonians [...] for several times during the 20<sup>th</sup> century' (Kiin 2009: 13). According to Kiin, Marie Under's poetry resonated with her Estonian readers during decades of political upheaval and collective suffering. During the First World War, for example, Marie Under's 'bold, sensual love poetry freed her generation from the harrowing trammels of the period'; in the years of independence between the two world wars her poetic achievements and ballads 'became a token of the maturity of [Estonian] national culture'; during the periods of German and Soviet occupations, her poetry offered consolation to cope with the tragic losses of the period, and in political exile, her work 'contributed to the preservation of national self-belief' (Kiin 2009: 13). Despite her leading place in the literary movement 'Siuru' (1917–1919) and, after emigration to Sweden in September of 1944, her prominence in the Estonian diasporic community, Marie Under's significance in Estonian culture cannot be contained solely by her role as an exceptionally talented and prolific poet and literary figure. Indeed, Under's iconic status in Estonian culture can also in part be attributed to the wealth of biographical research dedicated to her personal life and literary works.<sup>1</sup> This research has been made possible thanks to an extensive archive that, according to the Estonian literary scholar Rutt Hinrikus, can be considered 'one of the most important personal archives in Estonian literary history' (Hinrikus 1997: 1098). While to this day there are few extensive biographies of well-known Estonian men

and women of letters, several biographies have been written of Marie Under: Artur Adson's *Marie Underi eluraamat* [The Book of Marie Under's Life] (1974); the amply illustrated overview of Marie Under's life and work *Marie Under* by Rutt Hinrikus, Janika Kronberg, Sirje Olesk and Tio Tepandi (2009); and Sirje Kiin's monumental, nearly 1000-page biography *Marie Under. Elu, Luuletaja identiteet ja teoste vastuvõtt* [Marie Under. Life, Poet's Identity and Reception of Her Work] (2009).

Marie Under was born on 27 March 1883 in Tallinn.<sup>2</sup> Her parents came from the island of Hiiumaa, where Marie's father, Priidu (Friedrich) Under, was a schoolmaster in the Kasevälja and Kassari primary school. After the family moved to Tallinn, her father was first employed at the Bauer primary school for boys in Tallinn and later worked as a travelling book salesman. Marie Under was raised in a modest and pious household; her access to books was largely limited to the family's library, a collection dedicated solely to religious literature. Due to her parents' lack of financial resources, Marie Under's formal schooling was extremely limited: in 1887 she attended a German preschool for children aged 4–9; from 1893–1898 she went to Cornelia Niclasen's private school for girls but never completed her studies (Hinrikus 2003: 15). Marie Under's parents spoke Estonian at home, but she learned to read and write in German (Kiin 2009: 60–61; Mihkla 1968: 465; Rajamaa 1983: 8). According to Artur Adson, her years at Cornelia Niclasen's school also fostered Marie Under's interest in reading German classical literature (Adson 1974: 14). Under's letters to Laikmaa confirm the central role of German classical literature in her poetic and intellectual development:

[at home] I secretly read whatever I could lay my hands on, desiring poetry above all. The biggest names for me were Goethe and Schiller – sacred for me! I was able to borrow them from someone when I was 13–14. I spent half of the nights (full nights even) copying them in my notebook. [...] I had a small cabinet, one shelf full of 'copied' classics. [...] This was my library! (Under 1997: 1110)<sup>3</sup>

When Marie Under first started to write poetry, she also composed poems in German: the Under-Adson archive contains two notebooks of poems written in German, mostly from 1899 and 1900,<sup>4</sup> among them a semi-biographical cycle of poems „Dir“ from 1899–1900 (Heero 2008: 865), possibly dedicated to her fiancé, Karl Hacker (Kiin 2009: 71).

In 1901, *Teataja*, a progressive and radical newspaper, was founded in Tallinn and, on the recommendation of Eduard Vilde, a well-known Estonian novelist whom Under had met a year before, Under found work at the newspaper. Vilde became an important influence in Marie Under's life, and it was through Vilde, who was known for his socialist views, that Marie Under was first introduced to ideas about women's emancipation. Under writes about Vilde's influence on her to Laikmaa:

Vilde gave me books to read: Tolstoi's *Resurrection* and a few things about the woman's question and socialism. I remember that the latter had such a profound influence on me that I became almost sick [...] for the first time the terrible immeasurable power of injustice came to my attention. (Under 1997: 1111)<sup>5</sup>

Vilde was also romantically interested in Marie Under but her interest in Vilde was purely intellectual, a circumstance which eventually took its toll on their friendship. In February 1902, at the age of 19, Marie Under married Karl Hacker, an expeditor at a

beer factory whom she had met a few years before. By then, Marie Under was becoming known in the Estonian artistic and intellectual circles of the time. The same year, the Hacker family moved to Moscow, where their daughters Dagmar and Hedda were born in 1902 and 1905. Her first poem, 'Ema laul' ('Mother's Song'), was published under the pseudonym Mutti in the Noor-Eesti (Young Estonia) album in 1905, her first collection of poems *Sonetid* (The Sonnets), in 1917.

In 1913, at the opening festivities of the 'Estonia' concert hall, Marie Hacker met Artur Adson, a young land surveyor from Pskov who was actively seeking to get acquainted with the Estonian cultural elite. Their relationship started developing slowly from there on, proceeding hand in hand with Marie Under's remarkable poetic growth that was to turn her into one of the leading poets in Estonian literature. In her biography of Marie Under, Sirje Kiin characterizes their relationship in the following manner:

[The situation] where a man dedicates himself entirely to the service of his wife's talent is nearly unknown to history, but Estonian cultural history has one such case. Artur Adson, Marie Under's second husband, dedicated his life to his beloved woman, serving more than 60 years as her faithful Page: private secretary [...], but first and foremost her unconditional lover and caretaker, the first reader of her work, her supporter and admirer. (Kiin 2009: 149)<sup>6</sup>

The documents of the Adson-Under archive provide ample evidence of Adson's unswerving devotion to Under and his single-minded determination to pursue her. For instance, a document titled 'Viiekümnendama kirja asemel' [By Way of My 50<sup>th</sup> Letter], in reality a handmade booklet decorated with red ribbon and tassel that also contains Adson's poems dedicated to Marie Under, his ideas of love and the (ideal) relationship between man and woman and various other kinds of addresses and dedications to Under. For instance, in a section titled 'I only live as much as to', Adson itemizes all the things that he likes to do for Under, which include:

choosing books for You [...] choosing lingerie and stockings for You [...] choosing a dedication for You to write in the books [...] preparing a small manuscript for Your birthday [...] filling my rucksack at the market for You [...] writing for You with a special pen [...] and fresh ink.<sup>7</sup>

Adson's letters and (diary) notes demonstrate that he placed their relationship, its very essence – utter dedication to each other and a constant effort to keep the 'Sunday side' of it alive – above social norms. Adson's personal writings also reveal his indifference to the fact that Marie Under was married to another man. In a notebook from 1916, he writes, '[l]oving another man's wife is considered unhappy love. Altenberg, you and I call this a happy love.'<sup>8</sup>

Under and Adson's romance started in 1914. Marie Under filed for divorce the following year, but the court (the church) did not rule in her favour. In Estonia at that time, it was considered highly unconventional and socially stigmatizing for a woman to file for divorce, in particular if 'a married woman openly had a lover for several years' (Kiin 2009: 160). The divorce was only granted in 1924, and Marie Under and Artur Adson got married the same year. Though their relationship started and persisted for 10 years outside the traditional framework of the institution of marriage that Under fiercely criticizes in her letters, once it became possible, both partners were in favour of its legalization. This can partly be related to not only the question of the upbringing of Marie Under's two daughters and their financial security but also their wish to rehabilitate or

legitimize themselves in the eyes of society and larger family networks. Based on Adson's notebooks, where he kept a detailed record of Under's mood, the number of hours she slept each night etc., Sirje Kiin concludes that since the beginning of the divorce proceedings, 'Under started suffering from chronic insomnia, night terrors, and acute headaches that tortured her until the end of her life' (2009: 118).

Marie Under faced significant familial opposition to the divorce: her husband, Karl Hacker, was against the divorce, and so were Under's deeply religious parents. The Adson-Under archive contains a letter from Marie Under's father, Priidu Under, from October 1915 where he warns Marie against going through with the divorce, stating that 'the laws forbid' her from marrying Adson, she will be overwhelmed by those who testify against her, will lose the custody of her children and will be subject to social stigmatization.<sup>9</sup> While the above-cited advice may have been motivated by the concern of a father who wanted to spare his daughter from anguish and social stigmatization, Priidu Under proceeds to offer religious advice that implies their problems are the doings of a devil that Marie can only banish by asking for her husband's forgiveness:

Ask for his forgiveness and humiliate yourself, then Carli will forgive you and God will also forgive you. [...] To those who revere God, such things can never happen. If only you had prayed every day, you would both have been protected.<sup>10</sup>

It is noteworthy that Under's father, though opposed to the divorce, does not condemn his daughter but only asks her to be sensible. While he acknowledges Karl Hacker's failings as a husband, he still urges his daughter to try to overcome her pride, also referring to the necessity of enduring 'humiliation' and asking for forgiveness in the given circumstances. When Marie Under refused to reconsider her decision to divorce Karl Hacker, her parents gradually accepted Artur Adson as her partner, though certainly more fully after they were married in 1924. According to Sirje Kiin, Under's family and friends turned against her during the divorce proceedings, even testifying against her in court (Kiin 2009: 113). As documentation about the court proceedings has not been preserved, there is no definite information about who might have testified against Under (most probably Under's mother-in-law and a few of Karl Hacker's siblings).

As a member of the cultural elite, Marie Under was surrounded by people who may not have shared in entirety the conventional views of the society as a whole. Nevertheless, her decision to file for divorce sparked sharp criticism and even condemnation among several of her close friends, among them Ants Laikmaa, a well-known Estonian painter, who was himself known for his bohemian and unconventional lifestyle. Marie Under met Laikmaa in 1903 or 1904. In 1904 Laikmaa made a pastel portrait of Marie Under, titled 'Mutti' that today is considered one of the iconic images of Marie Under. In response, Marie Under wrote a poem in German, known as 'Bin ich's den wirklich?' (Is this really me?), where she thanks Laikmaa for the emotional and spiritual awakening that their friendship had sparked in her. Laikmaa is credited for supporting Under's poetic talent and advancing her career as a poet. Additionally, Under's biographers have speculated about Under and Laikmaa having a romantic involvement prior to her relationship with Adson. Rutt Hinrikus even considers it possible that Laikmaa, not Hacker, was the biological father of Under's second daughter Hedda, born on October 4, 1905 (Hinrikus 1997: 1104). Sirje Kiin, though she denies the possibility of Hedda being Laikmaa's daughter, nonetheless maintains that Under and Laikmaa



Marie Under photographed in 1917. Photo Parikas, Estonian Academy of Sciences Under and Tuglas Literary Institute, UTKK F125/125/A11.

were briefly lovers in the summer of 1904, using several of Under's unpublished poems as proof of the nature of the relationship (Kiin 2009: 134–136). When Under filed for divorce, according to existing archival sources, Laikmaa was perhaps the closest of Under's friends to censure the decision, but his criticism, though partly motivated by Under's and Adson's flouting of social norms, may have also been triggered by a touch of jealousy.

### *Epistolary Contexts of the Letters*

The two letters of Marie Under to Laikmaa from January 1916 are preserved in the Under-Adson personal archive in the Estonian Cultural History Archives (EKLA) in the Estonian Literary Museum (EKM).<sup>11</sup> The same folder also contains a letter written by Artur Adson to Laikmaa where he heatedly defends his relationship with Marie Under and strongly criticizes Laikmaa's lifestyle and world view. Marie Under's letters to Laikmaa were published with an introduction by Rutt Hinrikus in the Estonian literary journal *Looming* in 1997 (Hinrikus 1997: 1098–1109). Regarding their context of composition, the letters partially lack what Liz Stanley considers to be the 'defining attributes of epistolarity', most importantly, they are not 'predicated upon absence' or even 'around interruptions of presence' (2011: 139). Under and Laikmaa both lived in Tallinn at the time, and her letter is a response to a conversation or a series of conversations with Laikmaa. Rather than seeking to explain her position and her views on this matter in person, Under turns to the epistolary format. Her exact motivation cannot be known but her preference for an epistolary response doubtless says something about the distinctive features of letter-writing as a medium of communication. In the opening lines of her letter, Under emphasizes its high degree of candour: 'Please believe all [of my letter] to be the truth, embarrassing outspokenness. I have never revealed myself or my [everyday life] conditions to such a degree' (1997: 1110).<sup>12</sup> It is rather difficult to speculate on the extent of knowledge Laikmaa would have had about Marie Under's marital relationship with Karl Hacker. Indeed, it is also doubtful that Under would have confided in Laikmaa about her marital dissatisfaction. Although Laikmaa was Under's close friend, he was also a close family friend of the Hackers, not to mention the godfather of Hedda, their younger daughter (Hinrikus 1997: 1103). It is not known whether Laikmaa ever responded to Under's letters – if he did, his letters have not been preserved. Among Laikmaa's letters to Marie Hacker, often addressed both to Marie and Karl Hacker, and Laikmaa's letters to Marie Under and Artur Adson that are part of the Under-Adson collection at EKLA, there is an undated letter that most probably constitutes Laikmaa's response to Adson. Besides a few rather disdainful comments concerning the impropriety of Under sharing her marital problems with him, in the letter Laikmaa demands that the content of Under's letters should be also made known to Under's husband, Karl Hacker.<sup>13</sup> Although it is true that Laikmaa disapproved of Marie Under's absence of reserve regarding her marital life, Under's letter demonstrates that she trusted Laikmaa with the intimate details of her life and, even more importantly, that she found the epistolary format best suited for sharing this kind of information. It is important to keep in mind, moreover, that the objective of Under's letter was not to disclose her private marital life as such but to use it as part of her wider argument on her views on marriage and creative freedom.

In her letters to Laikmaa, in addition to offering a comprehensive overview and interpretation of her formative years and marriage to Karl Hacker, Under shares her views on love, partnership and creative self-realization as a poet. Although she also touches upon her relationship with Artur Adson, she does not discuss their relationship in detail and completely avoids any reference to erotic feelings. These letters can be considered among the most detailed accounts that Marie Under herself ever wrote about her life, unparalleled in openness and scope to any other preserved archival record by her. It is necessary, though, to keep in mind Margaretta Jolly's argument about the contexts of truth – one of the central concerns of life writing studies – in the case of letter writing: 'the textual contract between reader and writer functions on terms more similar to those of fiction than history [...] because the truth, with the reader, is defined as particular rather than general. [...] Put simply, the 'truth' of the writing is in the relationship rather than in its subject' (Jolly & Stanley 2005: 92–93). Under's letters are conditioned by the dynamics of her relationship with Laikmaa, a close friendship and shared world view that was saturated by residues of romantic and possibly also sexual attachments. As Marie Under explains in the letter, the matter at hand is of utmost urgency for her and needs to be tackled right away (Under 1997: 1110). This highlights the immediacy of letter writing, for the writer can compose the letter at his/her convenience, whereas a face-to-face meeting may need time to be arranged and to take place. At the same time, Under's decision can also be interpreted in a contrasting vein – writing a letter provides (physical and temporal) distance, a space for the author to express his/her views without fear of confrontation or interruption. As her letters clearly show, Under felt that she was being judged unjustly and, as she seems to have been unable to defend herself and her choices convincingly during her conversation(s) with Laikmaa, she may have considered the epistolary format not only more liberating but also more authoritative.

### *Reading the Manuscript Letters*

The letters are written on thick, slightly yellowish, unlined sheets of paper folded in two. Under's vigorous, slightly sloppy handwriting that extends over the pages unevenly, sometimes crossing the margins in the middle fold and at times turning to the margins, several underlined and occasional crossed out words and sentences are suggestive of spontaneity rather than premeditated argumentation. Her frequent use of exclamation marks adds to the impression of immediacy and emotional agitation. Adson's letter to Laikmaa addresses similar issues but handles them in quite a different manner; his letter is undated, but its opening sentences refer to a series of 'debates on matters of principle' with Laikmaa<sup>14</sup> and the use of similar stationery indicate that the letters may have been written at the same time, perhaps as the result of a jointly taken decision to address the matter in the epistolary format. Yet the letters are very different. Marie Under's argument, which she bases both on her own life experience and her knowledge and interpretation of current ideas on male-female partnerships and the artist's vocation, is laid out in a relatively systematic manner. She does not discuss Laikmaa's character or his views on life apart from his accusations against her regarding the decision to file for divorce. Adson's letter, however, is packed with slanderous accusations and criticisms of Laikmaa's lifestyle and, according to Adson, hypocritical



Laikmaa's name, which prior to its Estonianization in 1935 was Laipmann, is deliberate and is Adson's way of flaunting his victory over him (1997: 1107).

Marie Under's letters do not leave the impression that she viewed her altercations with Laikmaa as expressions of insurmountable differences in their world views. Judging from all preserved (epistolary) evidence, Under emerges within the web of epistolary skirmishes between the concerned parties as the one seeking to establish an equilibrium and to maintain and restore their friendship despite a (perhaps temporary) breach in the affinity of world view. While pursuing such an aim, however, Under refuses to renounce or compromise her views on marriage, the ideal partnership between man and woman and, most importantly, her right to pursue artistic freedom. Her self-representational account is self-consciously, even strategically, interwoven with and elaborated as fitting into a larger critical frame of socio-cultural discourses on marriage, love and sexuality of the period. While not seeking to decrease the value of her letters as an autobiographical record or problematize their reliability as such, such a perspective highlights the relevance of specific generic features of epistolarity. Apart from a detailed overview of *Die weibliche Eigenart im Männerstaat und die männliche Eigenart im Frauenstaat* (The female character in the male state and the male character in the female state) (1921) by Mathilde and Mathias Vaerting, which was published in the addendum of the newspaper *Päevaleht* in four instalments from 10–31 March 1924 (see Under 2008: 204–236), Marie Under had not publicly addressed questions concerning the emancipation of women. Placing personal disclosure within larger debates concerning the emancipation of women, that is, the redefinition of the institution of (bourgeois) marriage and female creativity, is a rhetorical strategy she uses in her letters. It helps her to argue a strong case and to show (to use the slogan of second-wave feminism) that the personal is political. It also demonstrates her awareness of the capacity of the epistolary format as a powerful rhetorical instrument.

### *First-Wave Feminism's Criticism of the Institution of Marriage*

Problematizing the foundations of the traditional institution of marriage, seeking alternative models to it and envisioning woman's social role beyond domestic and wifely duties were among the central concerns of the first wave of feminism. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many women started to discard the 19<sup>th</sup>-century ideal of femininity, an ideal which confined them to the roles of simply wives and mothers. In addition to claiming a foothold in the public sphere, fighting for the right to higher education and entrance into the professional world formerly reserved only for men, women also began waging a battle for their political and legal rights. The period from 1880 to 1920 can be considered the heyday of the first wave of feminism with the women's suffrage movement as its most visible political agenda and the public image of the 'independent, educated, (relatively) sexually liberated' New Woman, 'oriented more toward productive life in the public sphere than toward reproductive life in the home' (DeKoven 1999: 174; see also Ledger & Luckhurst 2000: xvii; Offen 2000: 188–189). Criticism of the institution of (bourgeois) marriage constituted one of the defining features of the New Woman. On a more general scale, the plays of Henrik Ibsen, particularly, *A Doll's House* (1879), played a key role in initiating heated debates about the bourgeois institution of marriage in many cultural contexts

of the period. Marie Under named her second daughter Hedda after the title character of Ibsen's play *Hedda Gabler* (1891) and her letters to Laikmaa testify not only to her familiarity with Ibsen's work but also to Ibsen's influence on her views. 'In [real] life,' she writes, 'Magdas and Noras do not impress our society at all, no matter how much they are admired on the stage!' (Under 1997: 1120).<sup>17</sup>

The critique of bourgeois marriage voiced in Ibsen's plays was equally significant for British New Woman writers (e.g., Ella Hepworth Dixon) and for Finnish writers focusing on the theme of marriage at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Lappalainen 1999: 53–54). Päivi Lappalainen sees the criticism of the institution of marriage in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century realistic fiction as mainly targeted at so-called arranged marriages and those unions driven primarily by economic considerations, whereas bourgeois marriages based on love, were, according to her, viewed as having more progressive potential (Lappalainen 1999: 53). Some critics, however, view love and marriage in a solely antithetic relationship and as 'an example par excellence of the master-slave relationship,' manifested, for example, in the work of L. Onerva (Parente-Čapková 2003: 70–71). The criticism of the traditional marriage (in particular in the work of women authors) in Finnish literature often also found expression in the theme of adultery in novels such as *Salakari* [Pitfall] (1887) by Minna Canth, *Onnea etsimässä* [Seeking happiness] (1898) by Aino Kallas's half-sister Helmi Setälä, and *Kaksi rakkautta* [Two loves] (1898) by Maila Talvio (Lappalainen 1999: 53–54). The British New Woman writer Ella Hepworth Dixon views contemporary marriage as ideally a union of equals, which, in her opinion, is an arrangement to which men should also greatly contribute. If the Angel in the House (often in reality taking the shape of the shrew, the nagging woman and the jealous wife) is replaced by 'an agreeable companion, a gracious mistress and a loyal friend [...] the standard of human felicity will be steadily raised,' argues Dixon (Dixon 2000: 88).

For the Estonian-Finnish writer Aino Kallas, the process of revising gender roles started during her engagement to Estonian folklorist Oskar Kallas when she challenged the moral code that refused to recognize the manifestation of female desire in the conjugal relationship. A few years later, taking a critical look at the stereotypical gender roles within marriage at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Kallas notes that the modern wife is no longer satisfied with an assurance that she has taken good care of her husband. Instead, she is expecting him to be her intellectual companion and her lover, to offer his contribution to issues 'from all fields of life circling in her head' as well as to her need for change and adventure (Kallas 1994: 256). More than a decade later, after having fallen in love with the Finnish poet Eino Leino and feeling that the desperate search for a way to make her role as a wife compatible with her creative, intellectual and sensual needs had failed, she voices a much more radical claim for personal freedom: 'Am I not justified to do with myself, with my soul and my body, what I want?' (Kallas 1993: 90).

### *Under's Critique of Bourgeois Marriage*

Based on her experience of marriage to Karl Hacker, in her letters, Marie Under takes a firmly critical stance against bourgeois marriage – in fact, her letters focus more thoroughly on exposing the everyday contexts of her marriage than on her relationship with Adson. Similarly to Aino Kallas, in her letter Under highlights the centrality

of physical attraction in relation to her first husband: 'I liked Karolus as a "handsome" man. Dark glowing eyes, black hair, pale complexion' (Under 1997: 1110).<sup>18</sup> Her letters also attest to the importance of the erotic side of their relationship: 'of course, there were a lot of kisses a lot of [physical] passion' (Under 1997: 1111).<sup>19</sup> Admitting that she loved Karolus 'with the plenitude and fulness of her romantic soul' (Under 1997: 1110),<sup>20</sup> she refers to a widespread early 20th-century idea of romantic love to which, according to her recollection, she, as a young woman of roughly 16 years of age (her age when she met Karl Hacker), was particularly susceptible. Yet she also adds that 'something was lacking. Mutual understanding, spiritual harmony', proceeding to recount the harrowing moment when she realized that her husband was far more limited (intellectually) than she was (she uses the German word *beschränkt*) (Under 1997: 1110).<sup>21</sup>

Under's biographers have pointed out that Under was cautioned against rushing into a marriage with Karl Hacker when she was barely 19 and had just gained a foothold in the intellectual circles of the period (Kiin 2009: 118). In her letter, Under reflects on the start of her marriage with the following words: 'This is how I entered marriage: loving [my husband] but [intellectually] shrivelling' (Under 1997: 1112).<sup>22</sup> By the time she married, she was already expecting their first child who was born in Moscow, on 1 September 1902 (19.08.1902). According to Sirje Kiin, Under's older daughter Dagmar only found out about her real date of birth in 1922 (Kiin 2009: 100). When Marie Under defends her decision to file for divorce in writing to Laikmaa in 1916, she foregrounds the narrow-mindedness of her husband, his rough, emotionally neglectful and at times violent behaviour and his failure to appreciate aesthetic and intellectual matters as the main reasons for her marital dissatisfaction. She writes about her efforts to improve their marital relations by undertaking the especially challenging project of educating her husband. She describes compiling their home library and attempting to change both her husband's reading preferences and view of the world:

I have chosen and bought all the books in our library (except for Zola), [...] – in every one of them there's a bit of my soul. [...] I have been married, yes, but spiritually and intellectually entirely alone. I have had to raise a husband for myself, to clarify his views, to fight with his prejudices. I have taught him to select and to know literature. [...] I have lived by his side with an open heart to beauty [...] and also tried to bring him along in this area. (Under 1997: 1116)<sup>23</sup>

As she describes it, her project had failed or, to be more precise, she had not succeeded to the extent that she had wished.<sup>24</sup> However, she gives credit to her husband for making it financially possible to build a library (mostly one book at a time), though she emphasizes that purchases of books come at the expense of updating her wardrobe. 'How many women would exchange dresses for books', she asks rhetorically (Under 1997: 1116).<sup>25</sup>

Addressing Laikmaa's presumably conservative and male-centred comment that defends the institution of bourgeois marriage at all costs, she retorts: 'What a blow is such an idea: he has catered to your financial needs, now be silent and stop pursuing your own world view, your own destinations, your own life! You have sold yourself to him! (Under 1997: 1120).<sup>26</sup> Under's view of marriage as a form of slavery points to an alternative paradigm for configuring intimate relations between men and women that can be tackled within the framework of the ideology of free love or 'the free sexual

union.’<sup>27</sup> The advocates of free love problematized the institution of marriage as the only legal channel of sexuality (Lappalainen 2003: 214), also raising the question of the ‘reality and importance of female sexuality’ (Showalter 1992: 45). The concept was popular with socialist thinkers, such as Karl Pearson, who thought that by gaining economic independence women would no longer need the legal protection offered by marriage and the intimate relationship between men and women could be now based on ‘mutual sympathy and affection [and] its form and duration would vary according to the feelings and wants of individuals’ (Pearson 1887: 442, quoted in Showalter 1992: 50).<sup>28</sup> Another supporter of free love was August Bebel, a German socialist whose views Marie Under was familiar with, for she refers in her letter to Laikmaa to a notebook where she had recorded excerpts on ‘the woman’s question and socialism’ (Under 1997: 1111). Both Bebel and Pearson believed that the relationship between a man and a woman was a personal matter not to be regulated by the state or society (Showalter 1992: 50; Leskelä 2000: 226).

### *Freedom of Love and Freedom of Self-Definition*

Marie Under was also familiar with the work Ellen Key, one of the supporters of free love or, as she formulated the idea, freedom of love (Lappalainen 2003: 214) in the Scandinavian countries. Key’s views on marriage and love were elaborated most systematically in her *Über Liebe und Ehe* (*Love and Marriage*, 1904, translated into Estonian in 1920). Although Marie Under mentions a notebook into which she copied excerpts on the woman question from works lent to her by Eduard Vilde, it has not been preserved, so it is impossible to say whether she had been familiar with Key’s work when it was first published.<sup>29</sup> In her letter, Marie Under mentions being well-acquainted with another work by Ellen Key, her biography of Rahel Varnhagen (1908), an 18<sup>th</sup>-century German writer of Jewish descent, a woman who hosted one of the most prominent salons in Europe during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. One of Key’s most radical claims was her call for the ‘open recognition of the sexual side of love, including woman’s eroticism and sexual pleasure’ (Offen 2000: 238). In *Love and Marriage* Key also highlights the need to redefine the concept of marriage, discussing in detail the nature of love between man and woman that, always involving both spiritual and physical feelings (1920: 26), could not always be contained within the boundaries of (one) marriage (Key 1920: 74). For Key, the ideal love relationship is that of Tristan and Isolde, a free love that ‘seeks its own laws and abolishes all others’ (Key 1920: 50). As Under’s letters make clear, for her, the relationship with Adson meant the possibility for a fully realized and self-conscious female artist’s identity. In order to have this, Marie Under is ready to face not only the judgment of society at large but also that of some of her closest friends, such as Ants Laikmaa.

Under points out that she resisted Adson’s advances for a long time and that it was, first and foremost, the affinity of world views that ultimately brought them together:

In A[dson] I have found an empathic (understanding) person (not merely a man). [...] For A I do not have this crazy love that comes overnight like a storm (and where one does not know why one loves) and that can also disappear overnight. (Under 1997: 1119)

Under includes a wealth of detail in her effort to provide proof of the shared view of the world in terms of intellectual pursuits and aesthetic appreciation that she posits as the foundation of her relationship with Adson. As is visible from her letter, the reason for the need for strong focus on these matters springs from Laikmaa's apparent charges against Under for 'seeking [physical] passion' (Under 1997: 1119) in her relationship with Adson. Confronting him and also reminding him of the essence of their relationship in the past, Under writes:

Oh, Honourable Mr. Laipman, I need to have someone for whom I mark the margins of books with a scratch of my nail, it is the same as: I have to have someone to whom I show a bird, a tree, the sun, a yellow crocus in the flowerbed and most of all – a little lark, who never tires of praise! This is what [mutual] understanding, the fusion of souls is about. (Under 1997: 1119)<sup>30</sup>

The need to define a female subjectivity able to sufficiently foster their creative self-realization as writers figures prominently in the work of many early 20<sup>th</sup>-century and late 19<sup>th</sup>-century women authors. It emerges in varying degrees of confrontation with the patriarchal expectations of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and finds support in the debates over the redefinition of women's role in society in relation to marriage, motherhood, education, professional self-realization and women's political and legal rights in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. An important feature characterizing the female subjectivity that emerges as the basis of the (modernist) poetics of many women authors of the period (e.g., Virginia Woolf, Anaïs Nin, Mina Loy, Hilda Doolittle, Djuna Barnes, Aino Kallas, L. Onerva) is the process of reclaiming the female body, in particular in terms of an autonomous definition of female sexuality that is a fundamental component of their poetics of writing.

In her letters, however, Marie Under fervently denies the significance of erotic desire in this matter. She ends her first letter with a passionate defence of her right to pursue an intellectually and spiritually, not physically, intensely intimate relationship with Adson, returning to the question once more with the very first words of her second letter, writing: '[In your opinion] it is (physical) passion I'm after! Is that why I need the divorce then? One can live "wisely" (as you have recommended!)' (Under 1997: 1119).<sup>31</sup> Under's remark refers to Laikmaa's advice to carry on an affair with Adson, adhering to her married status in public. Responding to Laikmaa's (alleged) accusations about relationships of an erotic nature with other men (among others, also the Finnish opera singer Wäinö Sola and the conductor Toivo Teofilos Murén), Under strongly insists on her desiring (she uses exactly this word) them for their minds, their inspiring perception of beauty, their intellectual knowledge and mental alertness. In her first letter, Under also discusses her relationship with Laikmaa, reminiscing about her years in Moscow, where she felt her intellectual life to be 'in a completely fallow state' (Under 1997: 1112). 'It is from my starving soul', she writes, 'that my search [for other people] originated', continuing quite boldly to confront Laikmaa about the dynamics of their relationship regarding the nature of Laikmaa's interest in her:

Did I 'seek' you, Mr Laipmann, or Vilde? Under asks, continuing, '[p]erhaps – yes: You had intellectual presence, so did Vilde – this fascinated me. But sought – in the vulgar sense of this word – never! But you 'sought' me also sexually! Why charge me now with what you are also an accomplice to, in fact, the only guilty one?' (Under 1997: 1112–1113)<sup>32</sup>

Her letters sketch a story of her spiritual and intellectual growth and awakening with remarkable intensity and outline her development as an artist and an intellectual. But it is the commitment to an ideal of beauty that Under places above all else. Even though her pursuit of this ideal may have led her astray or off her course – she uses the German word *Umwege* that means ‘detour’ or ‘diversion’ – as she formulates it, she maintains her unwavering commitment to this ideal, the ‘desire for good, beauty [and] truth [...] the desire for life – the desire for a beautiful life’ (Under 1007: 1110), that defines her existence. Toward the end of her first letter, explaining her need for a relationship with Artur Adson, she concludes: ‘The desire to live my life, my spacious, beautiful new life I have so far been unable to give up. To live one’s life is everybody’s sacred duty’ (Under 1997: 1119). Although Under initially highlights the capacity for sharing, most importantly, matters of intellectual and aesthetic nature as the core of her relationship with Adson, she concludes with an almost manifesto-style declaration of the ultimate relevance and even obligation of pursuing individual freedom and self-fulfilment. In her epistolary mediation of their relationship, Adson’s role is subjected to a supportive role in Under’s trajectory of attaining an independent, artistically viable selfhood. Such a manner of presenting their relationship, however, may have been Under’s conscious strategy of keeping Adson in the background of her epistolary argument in order to highlight more strongly the inadequacy of her marriage to Karl Hacker as well as downplaying the fact that her relationship with Adson was not merely spiritual and intellectual but also physical. This aspect of their relationship attracted further public attention when Under’s first collection of poetry, *Sonetid* [Sonnets], was published in 1917 by the publishing house of Noor-Eesti, a literary grouping instrumental in developing Estonian literary culture in the first decades of the 20th century. The collection’s strongly sensuous love poems were interpreted as directly autobiographical by the reading public.

As is visible from Under’s response to Laikmaa, his accusation of her seeking physical passion is also based on his interpretation of Under’s poetry, though *Sonetid* had not been published at the time of writing the letters. As a cultural figure close to the Noor-Eesti grouping (Talvistu 2008: 230–231), Laikmaa may have been familiar with the poems before their publication. Under finds Laikmaa’s charges against her poetry not only insulting but also revealing of his own limited and narrow-minded views on the nature of art. She writes: ‘The times have long passed when works of art were supposed to function as paragons of morality. Art has a different purpose to serve’ (Under 1997: 1117).<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, in both letters she also advances a defence of her poetry also from a moral point of view, reminding Laikmaa of the poem ‘Mother’s Song’, a poem that she is convinced grants her ‘more right to her children than [all] other mothers’ (Under 1997: 1118). In her second letter, she emphasizes that in her ‘poems published so far (as it is still too early to discuss those not yet published) there’s only one that touches (and not very strongly) upon erotic feelings [...] but five poems focus on children (published poems)’ (Under 1997: 1122).<sup>34</sup>

Marie Under neither confirms nor does she ultimately deny the autobiographical dimension of her erotic poetry. This aspect is especially significant in the context of Laikmaa’s accusations that her relationship with Adson was triggered by her thirst for (erotic) passion that she addresses in both letters. It is a common opinion that Under’s encounter with Adson sparked in her a poetic awakening and at least partially, this found expression in poetry where the power and lure of erotic feelings played an important role. In her letter to Laikmaa, Under, placing her poetry alongside the work of

Gabriele D'Annunzio and Walt Whitman, wishes it to be judged according to an aesthetic framework, not a moral social scale that would dwell on its autobiographical basis.

Marie Under also calls upon several models for imagining her relationship, the most significant of which is the love story of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning, which began in 1845, when Robert, six years younger than Elizabeth and a much lesser-known poet at the time, wrote to Elizabeth to praise her poetry. Under probably learned about the love story of Barrett and Browning from Ellen Key, who had 'describe[d] their marriage as one of the most perfect ones' (Under 1997: 1118).<sup>35</sup> Another model for relationships mentioned by Under is that of Rahel Varnhagen, who, according to Under, 'was engaged several times' and adds, 'we would here call it throwing oneself from the arms of one to those of another' (Under 1997: 1118).<sup>36</sup> Under also points out that Rahel Varnhagen, like herself, chose a younger partner, a way of responding to Laikmaa's probable comments about the unseemliness of the six-year age difference between Adson and Under. What is more important, however, is Under's quote of Varnhagen's idea of love: 'Well organized hearts must be always in love, they always want to be in love' (Under 1997: 118).<sup>37</sup> Here and elsewhere, Under's letters testify to her belief in the kind of love that entails mutual inspiration, understanding, dedication and freedom that have moral prevalence over conventional views of love and (bourgeois) marriage.

## *Conclusion*

Marie Under's letters to Laikmaa and the diary notes and letters of Artur Adson demonstrate that Under and Adson pursued a relationship based on the equality between the partners and the freedom to pursue poetic and aesthetic self-realization. This understanding of partnership between men and women, which for them held a higher moral value than the frameworks of the conventional bourgeois marriage, echoed the ideas cultivated by first wave feminism and partially also the ideology of free love, popular in Europe at the time. In her letters, however, Under speaks first and foremost on her own behalf, defending her right as a female artist to a mode of existence unconfined by societal norms, that is, a way of life that would support her need for creative self-realization. Apart from being a valuable autobiographical account of the formative years and most highly cherished values of the author, Under's letters also splendidly attest to the capacity of the epistolary genre to embrace multiple purposes and interweave emotional registers and rational arguments. In her emotionally agitated letters, Under addresses Laikmaa as a long-time friend with long-term (and perhaps intimate) familiarity with her personality, artistic ambitions and world view. Composed in an informal, emotionally exalted and spontaneous manner, her letters of defence match the modalities of her earlier letters to Laikmaa, though without her earlier attitude of admiration, trust and intimacy. Expressing her indignation at Laikmaa's unjust accusations, Under's letters at the same time also seek to restore their friendship and the mutual recognition of a compatible world view.

In her letters, Under also positions herself within wider debates about the role of women in society and the social expectations of bourgeois marriage that are related via a personal account of her own formative years and married life. Given her vulnerable status in society due to the divorce proceedings, publicly voicing her concerns about the outdatedness of the foundation of the conventional bourgeois marriage would have

further complicated her situation. The private nature of the epistolary format provided a suitable platform for addressing these concerns that – as her letters make quite clear – she considered to be of wider social and cultural relevance. While it would not be perhaps entirely justified to claim that Marie Under (and Adson) made a self-conscious public attempt to problematize the foundation of the institution of bourgeois marriage, their archive offers evidence of focusing on these issues very intensely in their own lives, finding support in the new re-conceptualizations of love and marriage that formed an integral part of the topical issues of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century modernity.

## Notes

1. The Under-Adson archive was brought from Sweden to the Archives of Cultural History, the Estonian Literary Museum in 1996. Parts of the archive were left behind in the house where Under had lived with her second husband, Artur Adson, in Nõmme, Tallinn, a house that was later the residence of another prominent Estonian literary figure, Friedebert Tuglas and his wife, Elo Tuglas. These materials were donated to the Estonian Literary Museum in the 1970s.
2. At the time of writing the letters, Marie Under's family name (married name) was Hacker, yet in Estonian cultural history, she has always been known as Marie Under, hence the use of this name also in the current chapter.
3. Salaja lugesin, mis kätte sain, kõige suurema isuga luuletusi. Kõige suuremad nimed olid mulle Goethe ja Schiller – otse pühadused! Sain neid 13–14 aastasena kuskilt laenata. Pooled ööd (peaaegu tervedki) kirjutasin neid enesele heftidesse ära! [...] Mul oli väike kapike, kus üks riul tungil „ärakirjutatud” klassikerisi täis oli! See oli siis minu bibliotek! (Under 1997: 1110)
4. EKM EKLA, f 180, m 19–22.
5. Vilde käest sain raamatuid lugeda: Tolstoi „Ülestõusmine” ja mõnda naisküsimumuse ja sotsialismuse üle. Mäletan, et mis ma viimase üle lugesin, mu pääle siis nii raske mõju avaldas, et peaaegu haige olin [...] Esimest korda sain ma aimu ülekohtu piiramatust hirmsast võimust. (Under 1997: 1111)
6. 'Page' was the nickname Adson gave himself in his letters and notes to Under from the very early stages of their relationship.
7. Nii palju ma elaangi kui [...] Sinule kaupluses raamatuid valin [...] Sinule valin kaupluses baptiste ja sukki [...] Sinule raamatusse pühndust valin [...] Sinule väikest manuskripti juubeliks korjan [...] Sinule turul Rucksacki täidan [...] Sinule kirjutatan ja spetsial sulevarre, uue sulga, puhta tindiga. (EKM EKLA F 180, M 165: 3)
8. Kui ma teise naist armastan, siis nimetataks seda õnnetuks armastuseks. Altenberg, Sina ja mina nimetame seda õnnelikuks armastuseks. (EKM EKLA F 180, M 35: 4)
9. EKM EKLA, f 180, m 123:5, cited also in Kiin 2009: 113.
10. Palu andeks [...] ja alanda ennast, küllap Carli siis ka andeks annab, ja Jumal annab Teile ka andeks [...] Neile kes Jumalat kartnud ei juhtu seda ilmas. Oleks sa iga päev Isameiega palunud siis oleksite mõlemad kaitstud olnud. (EKM EKLA, f 180, m 123:5; cited also in Kiin 2009: 113)
11. EKM EKLA f. 180.
12. Kõigepealt palun Teid ühte: uskuge, et kõik allpool öeldud – tõde on, piinlik otsekoheesus. Ei ole ma veel ühelegi inimesele end ega oma olusi sedavõrd paljastanud. (1997: 1110)
13. EKM EKLA f 180 79:1, p 165.
14. EKM EKLA f 180. M 47: 1, p 39.
15. EKM EKLA F 180, M 165: 1 p.
16. Lapimann[i] [...] manitsushurjutuskõne. (EKM EKLA f 180, M 35: p 4)
17. Elus ei imponeeri meie seltskonnale Magdad ja Norad sugugi, kui väga ta neid ka teatris ei imesta! (Under 1997: 1120)

18. Karolus meeldis mulle kui „ilus“ mees. Mustad põlevad silmad, must juuks, kahvatu pale. (Under 1997: 1110)
19. Muidugi, suudlusi oli palju ja kirge oli palju [...]. (Under 1997: 1111)
20. Armastasin kõige oma romantilise hinge külluse ja ülevoolavusega. (Under 1997: 1110)
21. [K]uid leidsin et – midagi mu vahekorras puudub. [...] Hirmus oli silmapilk kui enesele ütlema pidin, „ta on rumalam kui sina – beschränkt“. (Under 1997: 1110)
22. Nii astusin ma abielusse; küll armastades kuid siiski kiratsedes. (Under 1997: 1112)
23. Minu valitud on kõik raamatud (pääle Zola) [...] igas ühes on minu hinge. [...] Olen küll abielus olnud, kuid vaimliselt, hingeliselt täieste – üksi. Olen pidanud enesele meest – kasvatama, tema vaateid selgitama, tema eelaarvamistega võitlema. Kirjanadust olen teda tundma-valima õpetanud. [...] Ma olen ta kõrval ikka ilule lahtise südamega elanud [...] jaa teda ka üles upita[nud]. (Under 1997: 1116)
24. This impression of Karl Hacker is somewhat exaggerated, for after the family returned to Tallinn, the home of the Hackers became well known for hosting a literary salon, and though Marie Under enjoyed a leading role as hostess, Karl Hacker was not unhappy with it.
25. Kui paljud naised ei vaheta kleita raamatute vastu! (Under 1997: 1116)
26. Missugune kõrvahoop niisugune idee: ta on su eest majandusliselt hoolitsenud, nüüd vaiki! Ära aja taga oma vaateid, oma sihti – oma elu! Sa oled enese äramüünud! (Under 1997: 1120)
27. The idea of free love or 'the free sexual union' (Showalter 1992: 49) was promoted, for example, in the USA by Victoria Woodhull, in Great Britain by Olive Schreiner and Eleanor Marx as well as Karl Pearson (Showalter 1992: 46–58) and in Scandinavia by Ellen Key. (Lappalainen 2003: 214)
28. There was more at stake for women engaging in 'free sexual union' than for men both with regard to their reputation and, more importantly, with regard to children, as contraception was not available at that time. Women advocates of free love were more concerned about the legal guarantees regarding the children and also more pessimistic about the assumption that the new ideal of love ruled out the issues of abandonment, jealousy and infidelity. (Showalter 1992: 50–51)
29. There is, for example, a record in the diary of Aino Kallas of having read Key's *Über Liebe* in the autumn of 1904 (Kallas, R. 1988: 231); this record indicates that this work reached the Estonian readers right after its publication.
30. Ah, austatud hr Laipman, mul peab keegi olema kellele ma küünekriipsutusi raamatusse tõmban, see on seesama mis: mul peab keegi olema, kellele ma näitan lindu, puud, päikest, kollast krookust peenral, ja üle kõige, väikest löokest, kes ei väsi elu jaatamast, kiitmast! See ongi see arusaamine, see hingede ühtesulamine. (Under 1997: 1119)
31. Ma otsida kirge! Kas selleks siis lahutamist vaja on?! Võib ju niisama „targu“ (nagu Teie ju ka soovitasite). (Under 1997: 1119)
32. Vaimuilm täieste söötis. [...] Mu nälgivast, haigest hingest läksid kõik mu „otsimised“ välja [...] Kas ma otsisin Teid, hr Laipmann, või Vildet? Võib-olla – jah: Teis oli vaimu, Vildes ka – see vaimustas mind. Aga otsinud – selle sõna labasemas mõttes – ei kunagi! Kuid Teie „otsisite“ mind ka suguliselt! Miks heidate seda mulle nüüd ette, milles ise kaassüüdlane olete, ehk – ainus süüdlane? (Under 1997: 1112–1113)
33. Ajad on ammu möödas, kus kunstitööst moraali ja õpetust otsiti. Kunstil on teine otstarb. (Under 1997: 1117)
34. Minu senini üleüldse ilmunud luuletustes (ilmumattadest oleks veel vara kõnelda!) on üksainus, mis erotikat (ja ka mitte vängelt) käsitab [...] Aga – lastest on viies laulus juttu (ilmunud laulus). (Under 1997: 1122)
35. Robert Browning's admiration for Elizabeth Barrett as a poet was not unusual, at the time of their meeting, 'Barrett was a famous and respected writer whose work was considered learned, innovative, obscure, and difficult as well as expressive and moving' (Mermin 1981: 351). After twenty months of correspondence and meetings, they eloped and moved to Italy, getting married a week before. During the time of their courtship in letters, Barrett began the sonnet sequence, beginning immediately after their first meeting and chronicling her reactions to their relationship. The sonnet sequence titled 'Sonnetts from the Portuguese' was presented as a translation of Portuguese poetry, while in fact it referred to a term of endearment Browning had for Elizabeth, 'my little Portuguese', a reference to her dark complexion (her

- family had a sugar plantation in Jamaica; there has been some speculation about her Creole background, the reason why her father may have prohibited his daughters from marrying). In 1899 their son Penini published the correspondence of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett's courtship that Marie Under claims to have read: 'Their correspondence, she claims, is one of my most loved books' (Under 1997: 1118). It would also be interesting to know whether Under may also have been familiar with 'Sonnets from the Portuguese' and whether her choice of the sonnet form for many of her passionate and erotic love poems may have been inspired by Barrett Browning's sonnets as a rewriting of traditional love poetry by a woman poet in accord with what Sidonie Smith calls 'the rules of female propriety' (1993: 54).
36. Rahel Varnhagen oli mitu korda kihlatud (meil nimetatakse seda „end ühe kaenlast teise viskamiseks“). (Under 1997: 1118)
  37. Hästi organiseeritud südamed peavad alati armunud olema, tahavad seda alati olla. (Under 1997: 118)

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# PART TWO

## War and Longing



# Rage and Revelry at the Northeast Front, 1918

## Samuli Paulaharju's Letters

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The wind has turned southward, but it is still fiercely cold. They say there's a snowstorm in Oulu.

Good Friday Eve. Sauna's heating up. We'll ski to kill. (SKS Paulaharju 1918, War Diary, Kuusamo 28 March 1918)<sup>1</sup>

This chapter is an examination of wartime letters written by Samuli Paulaharju from the front in Soviet-Russian Karelia in 1918. Paulaharju was a well-known folklore collector and writer in Finland. The letters, mainly addressed to his children, colleagues and future wife, are replete with accounts of his emotions: fears, feelings of inadequacy as a man or a parent, and expressions of veiled or carnivalized violence, even instances of hate speech. The northeast front in Soviet Russia was fraught with complexities: political, cultural and territorial, to name a few. The year 1918, moreover, saw the additional upheaval brought about by the Civil War. The Kinship Wars, in which Paulaharju took part, were triggered by the Finnish Civil War. Paulaharju was – and continues to be – known for his tireless work as a folklore collector and writer dedicated to folk culture in Finland, but these war-time letters reveal another side of him altogether. For this reason, the letters provide an opportunity to analyse the conflicting emotions conveyed in the letters of an individual linked to the national sciences, culture and the kinship ideology. The correspondence contains an alarming number of articulations of violence and bloodlust:

Yesterday Riekkki and I went to do some target practice. My rifle is good. I fired from a distance, hit the target right in the middle. When I released the trigger, it went off course, but surely it would have hit one of the Red Guards.<sup>2</sup>

Both dated in the spring of 1918, the above excerpts from Samuli Paulaharju's war diary and letter combine feelings of hatred with the ideology of the Greater Finland. While there was a firm idea of bringing 'kindred peoples' – such as the noble Karelians – into the Finnish fold, destroying Reds, either in Finland or in Soviet Russia, had even greater urgency. Such extreme feelings of hatred plausibly led soldiers to take part in executions that today would be defined as war crimes.

Fuelled in part by ideas about the kindred peoples of the Finns, the Kinship Wars during and after the Finnish Civil War remain a largely unknown part of Finnish history.

The Kinship Wars, which took place between 1918 and 1922, attracted many volunteer soldiers who were students or researchers of the national arts and sciences<sup>3</sup> (Roselius 2014: 121–122). For example, Ilmari Kianto, a Finnish writer, and Väinö Salminen, who was later a professor of folklore, took part in these interventions. The wars were fought to achieve one goal: to incorporate the Finno-Ugric peoples, or at least the inhabitants of White Sea Karelia and East Karelia, into the Greater Finland. Proponents of the Greater Finland believed that all the Finno-Ugric peoples and their territories should be brought into the fold of the newly formed Finnish nation-state. Later, these activists founded the Academic Karelia Society, which was eventually dissolved because of its fascist principles (Juvonen 2000; Eskelinen 2004; Leinonen 2013). Samuli Paulaharju, a folklore collector, writer and elementary school teacher, took part in the military expedition led by Kurt Martti Wallenius in 1918. In this chapter, I examine Paulaharju's accounts of the expedition with the help of autobiographical documents, mainly his correspondence but also the war diary.

The experiences of the Finnish folklore collectors, writers and researchers who took part in the 1918 Karelia expedition have not been studied before with a focus on emotions and autobiographical sources. Samuli Paulaharju, for example, never reflected on the war later in life by writing a memoir. This chapter tackles the question of emotions and how they were articulated in letters at the Northeast front, in Kuusamo, in 1918. What kinds of emotions are shared in the letters and with whom? Further, what is the context of the discourse of violence represented in the correspondence? How does Paulaharju articulate and portray gender, especially masculinity, in the letters? And finally, what are we to make, not only of the preservation and availability of this correspondence in the Finnish Literature Society's Archives (SKS), but also of the very fact of its compilation long after the war, during the years 1944–1950, after Paulaharju's death? I will return to this matter later in the chapter.

My earlier research has focused on describing Paulaharju's correspondence and war logbook in the context of the kinship ideology and the national sciences (Seppä 2018; 2022). Here my focus is on both the expressions of emotions in the letters and the representation of gender in the correspondence. The original starting point of the whole study began with the War Diary of the Northeast Front (Paulaharju, SKS). My study of the war diary led me to the personal archives of the expedition commander Kurt Martti Wallenius in the National Archives. Thereafter I discovered the wartime correspondence of Samuli Paulaharju. This collection of letters, though also housed with the Archive Materials of Literature and Cultural History of the Finnish Literature Society (*Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura*, SKS), was not stored with Paulaharju's other correspondence.<sup>4</sup> In this chapter, I am making the letters the focal point of my discussion and placing the war in the background. I will concentrate on analysing Paulaharju's accounts of his experiences and feelings at the front and also draw some conclusions about the cultural elite's connections to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century political ideologies and nationalistic ideals.

Samuli Paulaharju was a prolific writer, folklore collector, elementary school teacher and photographer. Although Paulaharju endures as a well-known cultural figure in Finland, he enjoyed little scholarly recognition during his lifetime and never held an academic position at a university<sup>5</sup> (Harju 1989; Seppä 2015). Paulaharju's folklore collecting career, which began in 1901 among the Finns, the Karelians and the Sami, spans just over forty years; his second wife, Jenny Paulaharju, recognized the value of

his mission to record the oral traditions of Finno-Ugric peoples and joined him in his work soon after their marriage in 1919 (see Paulaharju 2022). The material includes a wealth of written notes, professional drawings and photographs. On his field trips, Paulaharju also acquired traditional tools and other objects, sometimes purchasing them with his own money, for the collections of the Historical and Ethnological Museum of Oulu (*Oulun historiallinen ja kansatieteellinen museo*).<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, most of these items were destroyed in a fire in 1929 (Harju 1989: 108).

Paulaharju is primarily remembered, not as a soldier, but as an indefatigable collector and prolific writer in the fields of folklore and ethnology. Though an avid writer with many publications, Paulaharju never chose to write a memoir about his participation in the Kinship Wars in White Sea Karelia despite having been encouraged to share his recollections. This chapter presents a close reading of Paulaharju's 1918 correspondence; this attentive reading of his letters was undertaken to better understand the experiences and emotions of individuals who supported – even at risk of death – the idea of the Greater Finland. The correspondence mainly includes letters to his family, his adult daughters and their spouses, his future wife, Jenny Simelius, and some of his colleagues.

Paulaharju's wartime correspondence is an extraordinary example of what Kirsi Keravuori describes as an ego-document (Keravuori 2017; see the Introduction to this anthology for more on letters and other life narratives); set in the formative years of Finland's independence, the correspondence chronicles the war front experiences of a cultural figure driven by ideological zeal. In addition to the collection of his letters, I have also read letters from other correspondence collections; these letters cast Paulaharju in an altogether different light. The main source, the letter collection housed in the SKS archives, was compiled for the purpose of future biographical work. It is also worth noting that the collection was frequently scrutinized and screened by Paulaharju's family members and by Martti Haavio himself. To gain a better sense of context, I have also read some letters written by K.M. Wallenius and Ilmari Kianto.<sup>7</sup>

Because of the unusual content and even graphic depictions of violence in some of these letters, it is important to understand this exceptional correspondence in its original context. The use of private letters as a research source always needs to be evaluated ethically. The researcher, the present-day reader, is always something of an intruder or an indiscreet third reader, as Mireille Bossis has put it (for an account of Bossis's concept, see Keravuori 2017: 129–130; Bossis 1998). As for the Paulaharju correspondence, it was gathered together shortly after Paulaharju's death in the 1940s by Martti Haavio, who later was appointed professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research. Based on the accompanying documentation, Haavio appeared to have been planning to write a biography of Paulaharju. For reasons unknown, however, the project was abandoned. It was only some 50 years later, in the 1990s, that a biography of Paulaharju by Marjut Harju (1994) was published. According to the documentation included with the correspondence, Haavio had asked to borrow these letters from Paulaharju's friends and family to help him create a comprehensive portrait of his friend. Also, Paulaharju's family and friends knew about Haavio's plans to write a biography and to preserve the letters in the Finnish Literature Society's Archives. In these letters, Paulaharju himself even noted their potential as biographical sources; despite his intended irony, he obviously saw it as a possibility.

As for private letters, the power wielded by the researcher needs specific ethical evaluation (see Lahtinen et al 2011: 23–24; Stanley 2004). Researchers who use auto-

biographical materials such as letters need to weigh the risks involved in publishing private and possibly sensitive information about their subjects. In this case, the correspondence is linked both to the Civil War and the political and ethnic-nationalistic ideology that was widely shared among scholars and writers working in the national sciences. As a source, Paulaharju's correspondence therefore provides a rare view into this broad social and political phenomenon through one person's experiences. Furthermore, Paulaharju himself, his family members and his colleagues evidently felt no need to censor or hide these letters from the wider public.

### *Finnish Ideas of Kinship and Karelia*

Now all of Finland is said to be free: Turku, Helsinki, Viipuri and all. How delightful is that? We can breathe easy again. And begin a new era, towards a grand and wonderful future, the one that finally reveals itself to us, the ones who have been eternally persecuted. If we could only get Karelia and Olenets, Inkeri, too, into the 'Greater Finland'! then we would have the entire tribe under the same roof. But Karelia, the wistful tribe of White Sea. Lord, grant him wisdom, and Saint Michael, grant him right understanding and raise him from the misery into which the Russki (Russia) and our hooligans have driven him. At least here in the North.<sup>8</sup>

By 1918, Samuli Paulaharju was already a distinguished folklore collector and writer. While employed as an elementary school teacher, he had also published several monographs on folk culture. During the war of 1918, he had several ongoing projects concerning, among other things, folk beliefs and traditional architecture. During the Finnish Civil War in 1918, he served as a member of the Civil Guard, a voluntary militia of the Whites, but he soon resigned to volunteer for the White Sea Karelia expedition.

The Karelia expeditions in the years 1918–1922 and later, during the Continuation War, were ideologically motivated by the idea of a Greater Finland, an ideology whose proponents imagined Finnish territory to extend all the way to the Uralic mountains. Against the odds, Finnish independence was achieved in 1917 and the dream of adding the areas populated by Karelian people to the newly sovereign Finland emerged as a possible reality. Such territorial gains, after all, looked promising in light of the political turbulence in Russia combined with German support of Finland's endeavours to gain areas in White Sea Karelia. Germany, however, was operating with its own future interests in mind: envisaging a victorious Germany after World War I, they saw the potential benefits of having access to the Arctic Ocean (see, e.g., Hentilä 2018). Nevertheless, the military interventions and goals of occupation failed.

Samuli Paulaharju's war diary begins in March of 1918, when the expedition reached Kuusamo. The diary entries tend to be brief and fragmented, though they occasionally contain thorough and specific descriptions of battles. The manuscript is primarily made up of short and choppy sentences, which may indicate that the author of the diary meant to transcribe and possibly revise the text later. It is only in his accounts of the battles, which he also refers to as fights, clashes and skirmishes, that one can perceive care and attention to detail. These passages also provide information on the composition of the troop and the soldiers' illnesses. At the beginning of the expedition, Paulaharju also made

ethnographic notes, especially on the villages and their inhabitants.<sup>9</sup> Paulaharju paid particular attention to the number of buildings, horses, reindeer and the extent of their material wealth, which he measured in grain, horses, reindeer and money. Generally speaking, Paulaharju's detailed descriptions of material wealth in the diaries and logbooks stand in stark contrast to his vivid accounts of violent battles. These documents also reveal the Karelians' indifference to the White Army's goals; in addition, the Karelians clearly had no interest in choosing their side: 'Just do your fighting far away from us, fight for two years if you want, as long as you fight far enough away so that the bullets don't reach us.'<sup>10</sup>



Paulaharju and the military staff at Mäntyniemi. Kurt Martti Wallenius, the head of the platoon, is in the middle wearing leather gear. Paulaharju stands on the left. Samuli Paulaharju, Koillinen rintama 1918, SKS KRA.

### *War Zone Atrocities*

The most brutal and violent accounts of war appear in the letters sent to Paulaharju's oldest daughter, Lyyli, and her husband, Eero (Westerholm, Warsta). In these letters, Paulaharju writes in an ironic, somewhat offhand, and even cheerful style. Although the tone of his letters can be explained by the trauma of wartime combined with a desire to shield his daughter from worry and anxiety, Paulaharju makes no effort to tone down any harrowing scenes of brutality. In fact, he writes about his experiences with astonishing attention to detail. For example, he candidly describes his desire to take part in killing enemy prisoners and the role he played in cruel interrogations, ones which often led to the prisoner's execution.

In a letter sent to Paulaharju in early 1919, the troop commander, K.M. Wallenius, asks Paulaharju to send him 'the book of the red'. According to the information in

this letter and in several others, the book in question is full of ‘shadowy pictures of reds with hazy eyes’. It is likely that the book contained lists of Reds, and possibly also photos of the bodies of those who had been killed or executed. If its contents were so graphic and politically contentious, it is not surprising that ‘the book of the reds’ has not been conserved – or at least not found – in the National Archives, the Finnish Literature Society archives, or any other Finnish archives:

You remember that picture book? The one you and others during your service were gluing those shadowy pictures of blurry-eyed reds in? The book is obviously in your possession because it hasn’t been found here. There are nearly 50 new pictures collected in a cigar box (Bahara-Bat). I’m asking, also for the sake of future doctoral dissertations, that you kindly return the book to be filled up. Remember that we too, when necessary, fulfil the minimum academic requirements. And you with your bride will have no opportunities for looking at those red pictures, we will have then amusingly photographed and left unphotographed,

I suppose we’ll meet again. That star you live on is relatively small.

Wallenius<sup>11</sup>

Here the meaning of ‘dissertations’ is obscure. The same can be said for the cryptic choice of words: ‘amusingly photographed and left unphotographed’. According to some of Paulaharju’s letters, the so-called book of the reds contained a list of Red soldiers and sympathizers. This list was complemented with photographs, possibly taken before the execution of these alleged traitors. In his letter, Wallenius also discourages Paulaharju from viewing the book’s contents in mixed company: ‘And you with your bride will have no opportunities for looking at those red pictures.’ Wallenius then adds, ‘we will have then amusingly photographed and left unphotographed’. His enigmatic comment hints at the possible existence of a ledger with records of those who were executed. This kind of documentation has not yet been found.

Paulaharju mentions the ‘book of the red codgers’ in a couple of letters to his oldest daughter, Lyyli. According to these letters, the book is over 700 pages long. He does not clearly outline its contents, but in another context, he does describe his experiences of interrogations and executions:

I have interrogated many reds on my own. And I have grown accustomed to being cruel and devilish in that. I have slyly made them talk, this way and that way, sometimes with the help of a Browning, I’ve squeezed the truth out of them. One red was shot last week. A grave was already dug right next to him, and he was immediately placed there after he was dispatched. I was there, too. I also wanted to see that event. I was able to look on coldly as three men shot him in the face.<sup>12</sup>

There are only a few reports of executed men in the War Victims in Finland list.<sup>13</sup> The War Victim Sampo 1914–1922, a list which contains the names of identified victims from those years, includes several of the executions mentioned in Paulaharju’s letters, but it does not offer additional details about the executions. There is only confirmation of six Reds having been killed in Kuolajärvi; the political affiliation of an additional victim remains uncertain. Of the seven victims identified, only two of them are said to have ‘fallen’, while the others are said to have been ‘murdered’, ‘executed’ or ‘shot’. It is likely that these men were shot by Paulaharju’s platoon.<sup>14</sup> Since most of the men identi-

fied in the War Victim Sampo were killed in an unknown location, the evidence available makes it impossible to reconstruct the course of events accurately. Paulaharju's letter offers a few clues:

Last Saturday the butchers sent another defector into Abraham's care, to stand face-to-face in front of the Heavenly Father. I also sat with this red on Saturday for many hours, taking notes and luring him into betrayal [of his comrades], I wrote. And in the end, the boy asked to go home to the church 'to see his mother'. 'You can go in the evening', I said. What a bastard I can be. Gold plated. It would have been interesting to peek through a keyhole and hear what God the Father was saying to his prodigal son and what the boy said back. Damn, that could have been turned into a hilarious and successful 'article' for the readers in Oulu. Father G, for example, would ask: 'Where have you been, my poor son?' And then he would snap: 'What the hell were you shooting over there by Kuivitsa pond?'<sup>15</sup>

This epistolary account corresponds closely to the fate of a young man who was indeed executed. At the time, Esaia (Vertti) Kivelä was 21 years of age. According to the oral history of his family, Esaia was on his way home from Russia but was shot near the shore of Ahkiojärvi Lake.<sup>16</sup> His mother, Brita Kivelä, was living in Kuolajärvi and probably never found out that her son had been so close to getting home again. Kivelä's picture also appears in a list of deceased with the note 'murdered at Kuolajärvi' published in *Työväen kuvalehti* (Workers' illustrated magazine) in 1929. In his letter, Paulaharju proceeds by stating that the young man was pretending to be hunting wood grouse ("*mettoo ampumassa*"). Although many of the surrounding details of this young man's death are unclear, it is certain that this young man died by execution.

Now and then, Paulaharju pauses to pass judgement on himself and his actions. In fact, he frequently uses the epithet 'hypocrite' in his moments of self-reproach; in the letter above, he refers to himself as gold plated, underscoring the gap between his idea of himself and his own dishonourable conduct. In the passage above, however, he rationalizes the execution in the next sentence by distancing himself from the incident with humour and presenting the execution as a logical and unavoidable outcome. While the letters do contain inklings of shame, pity and other humanizing emotions, Paulaharju remains resolute in the belief that the executions and interrogation techniques were entirely justifiable and legitimate.

According to one of his letters, the book also provided visual documentation on the fates of English soldiers:

They have brought some reds here again, and I want to see them. Yesterday they brought one who is in England's service; he was taken as a prisoner. He is dressed in an English uniform. I am going to photograph him before...<sup>17</sup>

The Reds in the Murmansk Legion had sworn an oath of allegiance to the King and wore the summer uniform of the British Army. The soldier described in the above passage was likely to have been a Finnish Red (Ojuva 2014: 40). According to the War Victims in Finland (National Archives), this person could be identified as Tobias Nurkkanen. A member of the Murmansk Legion, Nurkkanen died in Kuolajärvi on 27 August 1918, a date which corresponds with the one in Paulaharju's letter.<sup>18</sup>

The only photographs now available from the Northeast military expedition are in the collections of the Finnish Literature Society and the Finnish Heritage Agency. These images are of rehearsals, fells, accommodations, salmon dams and landscapes. Among them, however, there are three striking images: one of them is a blurred photograph of bodies of people executed by the Reds; the other two feature the men from the Red Guard who probably were later executed.

Paulaharju's war diary also describes the torture inflicted by the Reds on their White prisoners. Similar horrific tales of torture and human suffering were also told by the Reds, but their stories focused on the suffering endured by their people at the hands of the Whites.

Last Saturday I was photographing bodies (17) that had been mauled by the red guards. Hideous, they were, frozen, filthy, naked, some with just a shirt, others wearing nothing at all. Many of them had had their skulls crushed, some only had a jaw intact, one had shot himself in the head, they said it was Patala, the clerk.<sup>19</sup>

Ulla-Maija Peltonen has observed how the oral history of the Civil War replicates the narrative formulas from the tales about the border wars that raged from the 1200s to the 1600s. Like the older war tales, the narratives from the Civil War describe atrocities committed by both Reds and Whites (Peltonen 1996: 136–202). Because the Civil War narratives that chronicle wartime atrocities so closely resemble those used as propaganda, they need to be read with a critical eye. Despite the focus Paulaharju's diary places on the atrocities committed by the Reds, it also includes an account of the robbery and desecration of the dead bodies of Red soldiers. The perpetrators, two young men, had even positioned the corpses on the side of the road to appear as though they were wrestling:

Body snatchers. One boy was slashing the trousers with a knife to get to the pocket. He asked, 'Have you been thrifty, codger?'

This corpse had been lying there for a good three weeks. The boy tore the shirt off the body and put it on himself. Since he was shirtless. Two Russian corpses were rearranged into a wrestling pose. Since they were frozen in those positions. Then they hid to watch.<sup>20</sup>

While it is true that the diary does not explicitly identify the youngsters, Paulaharju's own narrative position suggests that these young men were from the White troops. In all likelihood, Paulaharju's fellow soldiers were the ones performing the crude antics described.

Paulaharju's most thoughtful meditations on the war can be found in the letters he wrote to Jenny Simelius, a friend and colleague from his school. The two married shortly after Paulaharju's return from the front. In his letters to Jenny, he candidly shares his fear of death and his disenchantment with the ideology. In addition, it is only in his letters to Jenny that he expresses remorse and blames himself for leaving his children home alone. Feelings of misery or self-reproach never appear in the letters to his children, not even to those who had already reached adulthood. Instead, the letters are packed with coarse language, graphic depictions of violence and declarations of his dogged determination to remain at the front. Considering the contents of these letters, it is no surprise that Paulaharju expresses no longings for home.

In fact, the most graphic and disturbing epistolary accounts of the war are the ones he wrote to his oldest daughter, Lyyli Westerholm (later Warsta, later Anhava). One partial explanation for the content of these letters is that they were also addressed to her husband, Eero Westerholm. Besides the chronicles of carousing with the other officers, flirtations with women, battles and executions, these letters also contain Paulaharju's own articulations of bloodlust, as evidenced in the letter cited below:

Well, if those red devils come over here with a mind to cause trouble, then I'll have a go at them. I'd shoot a man, damn it, for once. That time in Soukelo, I shot at a man on horseback five times, but the bastard was too far away, over a km – so it wasn't even possible with luck. Maybe he felt a whirring in his ears because he spurred his horse onward. It would be fun to have at least one murder and a soul delivered to hell on my conscience. At least the Devil and the head of our troops would be sure to thank me.<sup>21</sup>

Paulaharju does reflect upon and acknowledge the change in mood and register of his letters, but he only does so with sardonic humour:

You think my letters are filthy? And I am trying to present myself so politely. Am I foolish? What will become of this child if I survive and stay among this scruffy lot of Christians. Well, there's no need to worry, I'm already an old man, not a youngster on his way up. And I haven't done anything reckless, so far. I've just gotten nasty and long-winded, and I often don't even notice what comes out of my trap. Do save my letters 'for the sake of my fame.'<sup>22</sup>

I'm now trying to write this letter correctly, without talking any shit at all. If I feel like saying shit, I'll just talk about fertilizer, kainite, saltpetre or superphosphate. That'll make, if I do say so myself, a much more sophisticated impression.<sup>23</sup>

The letters are also humorous, ironic and self-reflective. On occasion Paulaharju refers to himself as a *lahtari* (butcher), a pejorative name for the men in the White Guard. Moreover, his letters convey the joy and excitement he feels about taking part in the expedition, a venture that represented a radical departure from his workaday routines and daily life.

There'll be a lot to tell you when I get back home. This has certainly been a different life from whatever I've lived before, and I have got to know many of the most extraordinary people, both men and women, jaegers, civilians, and the like.<sup>24</sup>

Life at the front teemed with raw energy and vigour. That existence and the mix of people he encountered there, especially the jaegers, made his previous life in Oulu pale by comparison. These potent frontline experiences invariably also filtered through to his correspondence.

The archived correspondence of Samuli Paulaharju can be regarded as an ego-document, in other words, a body of autobiographical writing shedding light on his own experiences, in this case, of the war front. The correspondence includes letters to several persons, and the style and content varies depending on the addressee. The most disturbing letters – those containing the most graphic depictions of violence – were written to Lyyli Westerholm and her husband. By contrast, the archived letters

to Jenny Simelius, convey a whole set of other emotions. His letters to Jenny lack the bravado displayed in his letters to others; writing to her, he expresses, more than he does in any other letters, anxiety, uncertainty and even guilt. These letters also reveal an air of gravitas wholly absent in those addressed to others.

The correspondence shows tremendous variation in Paulaharju's position vis-à-vis his addressee. This variation makes the material particularly interesting because the letters to different recipients bring to light the many dimensions of the writer, also when writing under exceptional circumstances (Stanley 2004: 203). In her study on correspondence during World War II, Sonja Hagelstam notes that soldiers were more inclined to share their fears and horrific experiences with their mothers than with their wives (Hagelstam 2011; 2014).



Defectors at the border. The identities and fates of the people photographed here remain unknown. Paulaharju, Koillinen rintama 1918. SKS KRA.

Paulaharju's remorseless depictions of executions and bloodlust testify to both the pervasiveness of the war propaganda and the soldiers' endeavours to justify their own involvement in acts of savagery. In our present day, such writings would qualify as hate speech. This rhetorical mechanism divested the enemies of their humanity; by calling their adversaries Red Russkies (*punaryssä*), those identified as Reds were redefined as Other, even foreign, which they were not. In fact, the majority of the Reds came from the Finnish working class. The same technique was in use shortly after the Civil War had broken out in Finland: the war was referred to as the 'Freedom war'; not only were the Reds called Red Russians, but they were also racially identified as Russian, which made killing them easier. The use of rhetorical devices, such as 'othering' language, functioned to distance the Reds from the Whites. Portrayed as despicable and subhuman, the Reds were said to have descended from the Mongolian race (Hentilä 2018: 25–27).

### *Among the 'Real Men'*

One day, Montonen asked me why I wouldn't allow my daughter Aili to come here [to work as a typist] since she was so keen to come. After all, she would be under father's watchful eye. I said, 'What if it's the father who ends up under her watchful eye? For that reason, she's not allowed to come here.' And that's the way it is, I say.<sup>25</sup>

A preoccupation with masculinity and how to be man recurs throughout Paulaharju's letters. Indeed, he often expresses a sense of his own inadequacy as a man in his correspondence. In the letter cited below, however, Paulaharju turns his attention to other men, especially the working-class recruits, fiercely denouncing them for failing to measure up:

One of the men cut his own hand with a knife, probably out of fear, thinking he could get away. And then there were the legions of 'the sickly': stomach pains, insides aching, etc. In just one troop there were thirty men whining and begging to be put on leave. They were afraid of the fight; that's just the way the men in these parts are. Nothing like the boys from Suupohja. The commanders sure called them pathetic. I also chewed them out, told them they should be ashamed of themselves, damned cowards. I'm an old man, here of my own free will, with a son in Pori and two small children at home, and you wretches, young men, are asking about getting home.

They got an earful from here and there. The jaegers<sup>26</sup> asked them straight out, 'Have you s--t yourselves already? And then many ran away during the fight, took off on the sly.'<sup>27</sup>

At the same time, Paulaharju often considers his social standing as a man vis-à-vis the other men. Having the stamina to drink oneself to inebriation emerges as one measure of manliness, and Paulaharju uses it to assess his own capacity to 'be man enough'. His abiding concern with masculinity, moreover, extends to his son, Lauri. In the passage cited below, Paulaharju expresses the wish that his son would come back from the war 'more manly' than before:

There's vodka and spirits here, too, and I indulged one evening at Kuusamo Church, just a few drinks but enough to bring it all out the same way, bloody hell. I'm not even man enough for that. For that reason, after that episode I've just watched and listened as better men take care of those gigs, and I have played the part of the minister in matters of taste and whatnot.

And me, I'm the eternal wanderer, where will I finally end up, what kinds of hardships will I endure, and what sort of man will I be by the time I've returned. And what kind of man will little Lauri come back to be? That both of us would come back more manly. And that I too would come back as a man of some sort.<sup>28</sup>

Paulaharju appears to have mixed feelings about the drinking habits of the other men at the front. At times he frowns upon their drunkenness, but at other times he expresses his admiration, even envy, for their ability to hold their liquor. He also repeatedly uses the expression, 'proper manliness', a trait which comprises, for example, the ability to use vulgar language:

And besides, it's very healthy for me to be here among real men. Because the men at our school [P's workplace, the school where he is a teacher, TS.] aren't really worthy of carrying the name. Neither am I. But here one gets another kind of schooling, for example, talking phosphate and kainite. Just like that!<sup>29</sup>

His ambivalence about his own masculinity is evident in his reflections upon his own role and position vis-à-vis the other men; for instance, he frequently mentions the nickname, 'Codger of the Cabin', which was given to him by the other men. And to add insult to injury, he also faced the indignity of having the young female typists call him 'uncle':

I now have an assistant to help me with my work. A young woman from Mikkeli. Emmy Margareeta Montonen (the Westerholms know them) – was studying for her master's degree. She is working as a typist and archivist with me. A nice girl, she calls me 'uncle', just like all the other women around here. [Paulaharju uses word *knäökkä* to refer to all the women at the war front. The word is an old dialectical word from Ostrobothnia, Finland, to describe a weak or feeble person, here, a woman.] 'Uncle', damn!<sup>30</sup>

Paulaharju earned the nickname 'Codger of the Cabin' because of his fastidiousness and earnest endeavours to keep the accommodation house clean and orderly. Obviously, a concern for housekeeping was uncommon among the 'real men' at the front. In addition, Paulaharju was generally older than the other men, a difference that he also reflected on with self-mocking humour.



Paulaharju's self-portrait. He titled the sketch 'The Codger of the Cabin'. SKS Paulaharju Salla: War Diary.

Being a real or proper man also meant being a bona fide White soldier; ideas about gender, especially masculinity, play a conspicuous role in the politics of the Civil War and nationalism. In other words, a real man obeys orders and never shows fear. Moreover, his manliness is expressed in his heteronormative behaviour with regard to women at the front. Later, and already to some degree during the Civil War, women at the front were viewed as morally questionable, often even regarded as prostitutes or 'indecent women' (see Heikkinen 2007; regarding the correspondence between Kianto and Paulaharju, see Seppä 2022: 230).<sup>31</sup> Paulaharju's letters contain few references to sexuality, and though their contents are generally decorous, he does comment on the sexual tension between men and women at the front.

The discourse of true manhood was not a concern unique to Paulaharju, especially in the context of the Civil War. In Finland, the idea of authentic manhood was strongly linked to the idea of the proper soldier, a man capable of enduring physical and psychological stress and able to follow orders, even if it meant killing. In addition, a proper man was politically and racially defined: in the context of the Civil War and the ideology of 'The Greater Finland', the Red Army soldiers and the Bolshevik army soldiers failed to conform to this nationalistic idea of manhood (Ahlbäck 2014; 2006: 124). In Paulaharju's letters, for example, he dismisses deserters and men willing to inflict wounds on themselves to escape fighting on the frontlines as simply not man enough. Such men were regarded as disloyal to their native country and too weak to cope with the gruelling conditions of war.

According to Ilari Taskinen, who has studied Finnish wartime correspondence during the Second World War, men generally only wrote about battles in letters to other men. Their letters to male relatives and friends also tend to lack dialogue, questions and expressions of care or concern – but the emotions expressed also appear to be more honest. This pattern has its roots in the competitive nature of male relationships, a dynamic absent in letters written to mothers or wives (Taskinen 2024: 144–154). This may help explain the graphic tone in Paulaharju's letters. Although they were mostly addressed to Lyyli Westerholm, his eldest daughter, the letters contain frequent mentions of Eero Westerholm, her first husband and the director of the fertilizer section of the cooperative Hankkija.<sup>32</sup> Paulaharju may have incorporated mocking substitutes for swear words such as 'kainite' and 'fertilizer' to catch the attention of his son-in-law. Westerholm, who changed his surname to Varsta in 1919, purchased a house in Tuira, Oulu, for Paulaharju and his new bride-to-be Jenny Simelius. However generous the gesture, this gift may also indicate an underlying spirit of competition between the two men. The tension between father-in-law and son-in-law provides a possible explanation for the tone and content in some of Paulaharju's letters to his daughter. After all, he knew his son-in-law would also be reading them and was likely to have composed them with Eero in mind; in fact, some of Paulaharju's letters were even addressed specifically to his son-in-law. Researchers have also observed that the use of military slang, not to mention sarcasm, humour or swearing, also serves to mask emotions (see Taskinen 2024: 155–163). Yet another explanation could be found in Paulaharju's distinctive style of writing. On his travels to gather ethnographic data, for example, he tended to adopt the language and mannerisms of the people he encountered. As he often confessed in his letters, the jaegers and the front represented an alien world to him, but he did his utmost to understand and adapt to it.

## *After the Expedition*

The northeast expedition had a tremendous impact on Paulaharju's literary output; moreover, throughout his life, he returned to Lapland many times. He even made Lapland the setting of his only work of fiction, *Tunturien yöpuolta* (The dark side of the fells) (1934). Yet Paulaharju was not the only one to have fallen under the spell of the North. Commander K.M. Wallenius, after his military career, also turned to writing, and moved to Lapland permanently in 1940. Like Paulaharju, he also found the region an attractive backdrop for many of his literary works; in fact, Paulaharju's work has been regarded as his inspiration, with a few commentators going even so far as to say that Wallenius plagiarized Paulaharju's writings (Harju 1989: 236). Paulaharju also appears to have made note of this connection, as indicated in a 1943 letter to Wallenius:

Warm thanks for your beautiful storybook, recollections told by the old mother tree – weathered driftwood from the primeval forest...

I noticed Suongil's reminiscence, also Akku-Jauri's witch. I wonder whether it's permissible to borrow old memoirs like that, I don't know.

All the same, many thanks for remembering the old Codger of the Cabin. Wishing you all the best with your writing and this year that is already off to a good start.<sup>33</sup>

After leaving the front in October of 1918, Paulaharju appeared to have lost his enthusiasm for taking part in any military ventures. Even an invitation from K.M. Wallenius to join the East Karelian Union (*Itä-Karjalan toimituskunta*) in 1918, shortly after the parish of Repola had been seceded from Russia to Finland, failed to stir him. While there is no record available of Paulaharju's response, it is known that he did not join the union. The most obvious explanation for his withdrawal from military duties was the change in his personal circumstances. Paulaharju and Jenny Simelius, his long-term colleague and friend, were planning to get married and buy a house in Tuira, Oulu. Suddenly, his entire life, also evident in his correspondence, underwent a complete transformation. After the wedding, Jenny assumed her place in the household and was immediately known as 'mother'. She also took charge of the family correspondence. In fact, according to many of the covering letters accompanying the correspondences from Paulaharju's friends, Jenny usually wrote the letters and Samuli only added a few words and his signature at the end (see also Paulaharju 2022). This division of labour was a conventional arrangement in line with the gender contract. As a married man, Samuli only wrote letters as an individual when corresponding about purely professional matters.

Politically speaking, Paulaharju stayed on the political right. He continued to be a staunch supporter of the IKL (Nationalistic People's Movement) until his death. During the Continuation War, he wrote to his friend Juho Ala-Jyrä, saying that Finnish politics had moved far too much to the Left and that the IKL did not get the appreciation it deserved. In a letter addressed to Tuomas Anhava, his daughter's son, Paulaharju justified the occupation of the areas in White Sea Karelia and Syväri: 'But these are ancient Finnish lands.'<sup>34</sup>

Paulaharju's outlook later in life calls to mind Seppo Hentilä's observation about the rhetoric of the Civil War in general: after the war, the Reds were refashioned as the victims of their own commanders. Paulaharju writes to Juho Ala-Jyrä:

We (the old IKL members) have nothing against the poor Red invalids of the War of Liberation receiving a pension. Most of them were betrayed by their miserable commanders. If you insist, however, that they have always been keen on battling against the Russians, well that is a lie. That is unacceptable.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Kinship Ideology and its Legacy*

Paulaharju's experiences of the military intervention remain an essentially hidden part of his career as a writer, even to a researcher who has worked extensively with documents related to his life. Paulaharju neither transcribed the war diary, nor did he ever give it to Wallenius for publication or documentation (Harju 1989: 117–118). After her husband's death, Jenny Paulaharju transcribed his handwritten manuscripts and sent them to the Finnish Literature Society. In a letter written in 1946, she asked whether she should transcribe the war diary or not. Archivist Lauri Simonsuuri, though he considered the war diary valuable for historical reasons, urged her to prioritize the folklore materials:

As far as the notes of 1918 are concerned, indeed they are not – as you have also found – actual folk poetry, but they certainly have historical value and importance as a memoir. And, above all, they form an essential part of the great Paulaharju collection, and therefore, I believe they should also be included in our archives. Nonetheless, please put the transcription of the actual folklore materials first.<sup>36</sup>

Based on the information in the war diary and correspondence, it is clear that Paulaharju had taken many more photographs than have been preserved in the archives. Moreover, these writings suggest that Reds had been photographed, possibly before and after execution. Although these kinds of images are indirectly referred to in the correspondence, there are no such photographs to be found in The Finnish Literature Society, the National Archives or the Finnish Heritage Agency. Neither have they been stored in the Military Archives, which were incorporated into the National Archives of Finland in 2008, nor have they been preserved in the Northern Ostrobothnia Museum.

While wartime atrocities are unlikely to take anyone by surprise, they are rarely considered within the context of studying folklore or tradition. Yet the participation of folklore collectors and future scholars of folklore and ethnology in these expeditions and the Civil War cannot be denied. This chapter takes a preliminary look at a phenomenon that pervaded the national sciences and the whole idea of the Finns and Finno-Ugric peoples. The background of folklore studies and ethnology, not to mention that of history and linguistics, resides in a belief in the Greater Finland, the Kinship ideology and the political right. The study of this correspondence is one way to observe how these political ideas actually materialized and were manifested to family and friends. Although it remains uncertain as to how these ideologies shaped the discipline of folklore itself, without doubt the memory organizations such as the Finnish Literature Society and most of the publishing houses also supported the official ideology of White Finland (see Turunen 2003; Knuuttila 1993). This correspondence also reveals the consistency of the shared ideology: the rarely occurring variances only had to do with register or style. This can also be said of the official correspondence. In

the letters sent by SKS or the State Archaeological Commission, for example, the Reds are the 'others', the Whites are 'us' (see also Peltonen 1996: 14–15).

For Paulaharju, life at the front was wholly different from anything he had ever experienced before, and this new setting required him to reconsider himself and his own standing in this masculine world. He had to reassess his status in relation to the other men around him: soldiers, jaegers, and men who were clearly younger than him. This negotiation of his masculine identity required him to take various positions vis-à-vis others; this discursive activity is palpable in his letters, especially through vivid forms of expression, mostly connected to gender. In the correspondence, Paulaharju assumes various positions towards his recipients, also rendering them more visible by pushing at their boundaries, even performatively. Judith Butler has maintained that the performativity of gender is especially visible when its limits are crossed and violated (Butler 1999). Paulaharju manages to toy with the prevailing stereotypes while also expressing them uncritically or even unconsciously. He seems to be aware of gendered expectations of behaviour and the performative aspect of gender, both of which are bound to the discourse of masculinity, that is, how to be a proper man and a soldier able to follow orders, kill on command, show courage and have the right political views (Ahlbäck 2006; 2014).

Paulaharju's letters also contain a range of emotional expression. Interestingly, he rarely expresses fear, sorrow or misery, at least explicitly. It is only in one letter to Jenny Simelius where he confesses to feelings of guilt for leaving the children home alone. In that same letter, he also voices his ideological disappointment in the war: contrary to expectations, the Karelians did not want to join forces with the Finnish soldiers, nor did they see them as liberators.

The letters written to his grown-up children represent the most unsettling of all his correspondence. Judging by their responses back to him, moreover, the recipients of these letters were also somewhat shaken by what they read. From the vantage point of today's reader, these wartime letters are equally, if not more, disturbing. In Finland, Paulaharju has largely enjoyed the reputation of a mild-mannered educator, writer and enthusiast of folk culture. Bringing these letters to light, therefore, may have been disturbing to his living relatives and to many folklore researchers. It is no surprise that his daughter found the letters alarming. Paulaharju tended to write in a playful and ironic style, but the style and the contents of a portion of the letters clearly deviated from his usual mode of expression. The unflinching accounts of violence in the letters can certainly be explained by what Paulaharju saw and experienced during the military expedition. It is worth noting, however, that it was not only the anomalous circumstances of the war expedition that unleashed such thoughts and emotions, but also the extraordinary political climate prevailing throughout the newly independent Finland of 1918.

There is also another explanation. Hatred for the Reds and the espousal of the political ideology of the far right were widely shared among academics and writers involved in the so-called national sciences. The ideology of the right was also associated with aspirations for the creation of a Greater Finland – an idea that still had currency in the late 1930s and early 1940s – and pro-German sentiment. Consequently, hating the Reds was ideologically compatible with right-wing thought. In addition, there were also social motivations for siding with the Whites; in certain circles, it was socially unacceptable to support the Reds. For example, Jenny Simelius's family, though initially

suspicious when she told them about her engagement to Samuli Paulaharju, welcomed him into the family upon learning of his role in the war on the White side (Simojoki 1987: 46). By the same token, Paulaharju even openly expresses his hatred of the Reds in letters to his 13-year-old son, Ahti. In one letter, Paulaharju asks the boy which side was supported by the family that took him in during the war. Paulaharju threatens to 'give them a proper kick in the ass' if they turned out to be supporters of the Reds.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the military operations, executions and killings also needed to be justified with rhetoric (Ylikangas 1993: 320).

It is impossible to know or understand how Paulaharju processed the war experiences intellectually or emotionally later in his life. He did not transcribe the war diary or take part in the publication projects concerning the War expedition. Nonetheless, he appeared to adhere steadfastly to his right-wing ideology, convictions which he continued to express openly in his letters, even as late as the 1940s. For decades, White Finland propagated the dominant narrative and official truth about the Civil War (Hentilä 2018). This appropriation of the truth by the political right also provides a context for the correspondence analysed here. From a 21<sup>st</sup>-century standpoint, such fierce expressions of hatred and verbalizations of the desire to kill members of a group can easily be identified as hate speech. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, these sentiments about the Reds were widely held and communicated publicly, especially among the Finnish intelligentsia. Many regarded hostile feelings towards the Reds and the violence done to them as wholly justified. The Reds, after all, were seen as the enemy of the Patria, a perception deliberately circulated via the White propaganda (Hentilä 2018: 67–73). In addition, almost all the people who took part in the work of gathering correspondence at the Finnish Literature Society also shared this narrative of White Finland and the ideology of the political right; at the time it was 'politically correct', and therefore nothing to be ashamed of. Most of the scholars of the so-called national sciences were also members of the far-right associations and parties such as the Nationalistic Peoples Movement (IKL) and even the Federation of the Finnish Realm (*Suomen Valtakunnan Liitto*), which was a far-right organization operating from 1937 until 1944.<sup>38</sup> The organization advocated the Nazi ideology on race, for example, and was reputed to have had a hit list that included, for example, the then president, Risto Ryti, and several Social Democratic politicians.

The year 1918 and the following decades marked an era of political divisiveness, violence and human suffering. Although the atrocities described in his letters and the emotions that spurred such acts are incompatible with the public persona of the well-known writer and folklore collector Samuli Paulaharju, this climate of violence pervaded the everyday life of that period. After the Second World War, however, the Greater Finland ideology and the war crimes committed during the Civil War were largely shrouded in silence. Furthermore, it is probable that much of the personal correspondence concerning these wars has been either lost or destroyed. For this reason, Paulaharju's correspondence offers a valuable perspective on collective emotions and experiences of the era that have been little studied or discussed. Many folklore scholars took part in the Kinship Wars, but their wartime correspondence remains unavailable to researchers. The military expeditions mentioned in this chapter played a key role in shaping the national sciences, for instance, through the Academic Karelia Society, although their impact on the disciplines still requires further study. Even today, the legacy of the Kinship Wars continues to haunt research related to Karelia.

# Notes

1. Tuuli kääntynyt etelän puolelle. Mutta on vielä vihaisena viimana. Oulussa kuuluu olevan lumimyrsky. / Pitkäperjantain aatto / Sauna lämpiää Kuusamossa aattosauna / Me surmantöille hiihdämme. (SKS Paulaharju 1918, sotapäiväkirjat. Kuusamo 28 March 1918)
2. Oltiin eilen Riekin kanssa pilkkaa ampumassa. Hyvä kivääri on minulla. Ammuin pitkältäin, pilkkaan aivan keskelle. Polveltani kun päästin meni sivuun mutta kyllä se punakaartilaiseen olisi sattunut. (SKS Paulaharju, Paulaharju to Eero Westerholm, Kuolajärvi 5 April 1918)
3. The so-called national sciences include the disciplines of literature, folklore studies, Finnish history and linguistics (see Häggman 2012).
4. There are two collections of Paulaharju's letters in SKS. One collection was copied from the Oulu National Archives and the other was collected by Martti Haavio, professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research and also Paulaharju's personal friend. Apparently, Haavio had asked relatives and friends of Paulaharju to lend him letters to be copied for the collection and then later returned the originals. Leena Koivu transcribed and edited the mostly handwritten letters. As a result, the letters underwent extensive editing (Seppä 2018; 2022).
5. Although Paulaharju, thanks to Martti Haavio's efforts, received an honorary professorship in 1943, this title was granted only shortly before his death. In fact, he died four months after having received it and thus had little time to relish this scholarly recognition. It may well be that his honorary title meant more to Jenny Paulaharju, his wife and enthusiastic partner in the field (Paulaharju 2022).
6. The museum is now called the Northern Ostrobothnia Museum (*Pohjois-Pohjanmaan museo*).
7. Ilmari Kianto (1874–1970) was a well-known Finnish writer famed for his misogynistic sayings (Nevala 2001; Pekkalainen 2011; Rajala 2018). Kianto was a good friend of Paulaharju, at least during these years of the Civil War and the ideologically-driven military interventions in Karelia.
8. Nyt kuuluu koko Suomi olevan vapaana: Turut, Helsingit, Viipurit ja kaikki. Voi kuinka hauskaa. Saadaan taas ruveta hengittämään. Ja alkaa uutta aikaa, kohti ihanaa suurta tulevaisuutta, joka näyttää meille ainaisesti sorretuille nyt kerrankin kangastavan. Saataisinpa vielä Karjala ja Aunus, Inkerikin, samaan "Suur-Suomeen"! jo meillä olisi koko heimo saman kurkihirren alla. Mutta Karjala, Vienan haikea heimo. Herra häntä valistakoon ja Pyhä Mikkula antakoon oikean ymmärryksen ja nostakoon siitä surkeudesta, johon ryssä and meidän huligaimme ovat sen painaneet. Ainakin täällä pohjoisessa. (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, SP to Jenny Simelius, 5 May 1918)
9. The expedition proceeded from Kuusamo to Salla and on to Alakurtti and Kantalahti. The areas were inhabited by Karelians, Sami, Russians and a group Paulaharju called the 'Muurikko' - a term similar to the ethnonym used by M.A. Castrén in his travelogues to refer to people who are 'part Russian, part Karelian or Lappish' (Castrén 1852:177–178). Paulaharju had little interest in other ethnic groups besides Karelians.
10. Ka, kunhan tappelette selkosella, tapelkaa vaikka 2 vuotta, kunhan tappelette niin kaukana ettei meihin kuulat tule (SKS Paulaharju 1918, Sallan sotapäiväkirja).
11. Muistat sen kuvakirjan, johon virantoimituksessasi omalla ynnä muiden syljellä hämäreäsilmäisten punikkien vähemmän kirkkaita kuvia liimailit. Se kirja on nähtävästi sinulla, koska sitä ei täältä löytynyt ole. Uusia kuvia on vajaa 50 kappaleen sikariloota (Bahara Bat sikareja) kertynyt, pyydän siksi, ja tulevien sukupolvien tohtorinväitöskirjojen vuoksi, että sanotun kirjan ystävällisesti täytettäväksi palautat. Muistappa, että mekin tarpeen vaatiessa täytämme välttävät tieteelliset vaatimukset. Ja sinähän et morsiamesi kanssa ole tilaisuudessa punaisiin kuviin enemmän tuijottelemaan, olemme sittemmin hauskaasti valokuvanneet ja valokuvamatta jättäneet, / Kai näemme. Se tähti, jolla asut, on mittasuhteiltaan pieni. / Wallenius. (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, K. M. Wallenius to Paulaharju 1919)
12. Monia punaisia olen yksinäni kuulustellut. Ja olen tottunut siinä aikana aika ilkeäksi ja piruliseksi. Kierona olen heitä monesti puhuttanut sinne tänne, joskus rouningin kanssa puristanut totuutta esiin. Muuan punainen viime viikolla ammuttiin. Walms hauta oli vieressä,

- siihen mies nostettiin, kun oli läpi laskettu. Minäkin olin katsomassa. Tahdoin mennä näkemään senkin tilaisuuden. Kylmänä saatoin katsoa, kun kolme miestä ampui vasten naamaa. (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 8 May 1918)
13. The War Victim Sampo 1914–1922 is 'a semantic portal and a Linked Open Data service that publishes data about the war victims in Finland during the years 1914–1922. The project is based on the database War Victims of Finland 1914–22 (*Suomen sotasurmat 1914–22*) of the National Archives of Finland and related data compiled during the project' (War Victim Sampo 1914–1922 site).
  14. One of them is said to have taken place right in Kurtti, where Paulaharju's platoon was stationed in April 1918. The victim, Matti Jokilehto, was a farmer from Oulu. Though known as a Red sympathizer, Jokilehto never joined the Red Guard (The War Victim Sampo 1914–1922).
  15. Viime lauantaina taas lahtarit täällä toimittivat erään "yliloikkari" Aaprahamin helmaan, seisomaan taivaallisen Isän kanssa turpa vasten turpaa. Minäkin saman punaisen kanssa istuin lauantaina monta tuntia ja kirjoittelin ja houkuttelin häntä kavaltaamaan, minä kirjoitin. Ja lopuksi poika pyysi päästä kotiin kirkolle "äitiä kattomaan". "Päaset illalla!", sanoin. Hyi helvetti minuakin. Ulkokullattu. Olisipa ollut mielenkiintoista vaikkapa avaimenreijästä toisella silmällä tirkistellä ja kuulla, mitä Isä-Jumala sanoi tuhlaajapojalleen ja mitä poika vastasi. Saakeli ja siitä vissistikin olisi saanut Kaikuun aika hauskan ja oululaisiin menevän "artikkelin". Isä J. Esim. Kysyisi: "Mitäs tulet, kustas tulet poikani poloinen! Ja sitten pian tiuskaisisi: "Mitäs saakelin pirua sinä paukuttelit siellä Kuivitsalammella?" (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, SP to Eero Westerholm, 6 June 1918)
  16. Esaias Eevert Esaiaksenpoika Kivelä, Geni.net.
  17. Punikkiakin on taas tullut ja niitä haluan nähdä. Eilenkin tuotiin muuan, joka on engl. palveluksessa saatiin tuonnoin vangiksi. Englannin puvussa on ukkeli. Aijon pakanan valokuvata ennen kuin ... (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm Aug. 1918)
  18. One of the executed Reds was a man called Tobias Nurkkanen. Nurkkanen is mentioned in the War Victims in Finland list: He died on 27 Aug. 1918 in Kuolajärvi. Nurkkanen's (or Nurkkala's) death have also been reported elsewhere. According to the oral history sources, Nurkkanen was first taken to hospital in Kuusamo, and then, after being tortured, he was executed in Kuolemajärvi on 6 Dec. 1918. This description from oral history does not tally with the information in Paulaharju's letter or the War Victim list, but the depiction of torture may approximate the truth (Geust 2004: 124).
  19. Viime lauantaina kuvasin täällä ruumiita (17), joita punakaartilaiset olivat raadelleet. Hirveitä ne olivat, kylmettyneitä, likaisia, alastomia, paita vain päällä, monella ei sitäkään. Monelta oli pääkallo aivan kokonaan rikki ruhjottu, jollakulla ei ollut kuin leuka pääkallosta jäljellä, muuan oli itse ampunut kuulan päähänsä, konttoristi patalaksi sanoivat. (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm 8 May 1918)
  20. Ruumiinryöstäjiä. Muuan poika puukolla ratkoi housuja jott pääsi taskuun. Arveli -ootko sie äijä ollut säästäväinen / Oli 3 viikkoa jo raato maannut. Poika veti paidan päältä ja pisti päälle. K[un]. ei ollut paitaa. Painiasentoon asettivat 2 ryssää. K olivat ne maassa jäätäneet semm. asentoon. Sitt rytyään piiloon katsom. (SKS Paulaharju 1918, Sotapäiväkirja Salla, 28 March 1918)
  21. Kunhan punaiset perkeleet sieltä tulisivat sieltä tänne kenkkuilemaan, niin sais taas koettaa. Ampuisin, piru vie, kerran miestäkin. Soukelossa kyllä 5 kertaa pamautin muuatta ajajaa järvellä, mutta oli, vietävä liian kaukan – yli km:n – jotta ei sattumaltakaan sattunut. Ehkä korvissa viuhasi, koska juoksuun koninsa kuskasi. Olis hauskaa, jos minäkin olisin saanut edes yhden murhan ja ihmissielun helvettiin toimittamisen omalletunnolleni. Pirulta ainakin olisin kiitokset saanut sekä päälliköltämme. (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 13 April 1918 Mäntyniemessä)
  22. Kirjeenikö "ruokottomia" a mikskä. Ja minä koetan hyvin siivosti esiintyä. Hupsukos – soo. Niin mikä tästä lapsesta vielä tuleekaan jos saa elää ja täällä olla rähjään ristillisessä seurassa. No ei tarte huolehtia, olenhan minä jo vanha, menevä mies, enkä nouseva nuorukainen. enkä minä mitään tyhmyyksiä ainakaan vielä ole tehnyt. Pirulliseksi olen vain tullut ja vähän suuta prukaamaan, ettei aina huomaakaan, mitä turvastaan tupsahuttaa. Pidähän kirjeet

- tallella sitä minun ”kuuluisuutta varten”. (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 29 June 1918)
23. Koetan nyt tämän kirjeeni kirjoittaa oikein, en puhu paskojakaan yhtään. Jos tekee mieli lausua paska niin puhun aina apulannoituksesta taikka tuomaskuonasta tai kainiitista, chilesalpetteristä tai superfosfaatista. Se tekee, se itsenikin täytyy tunnustaa, paljon sivistyneemmän vaikutuksen. (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 7 July 1918)
24. Onhan sitä kertomista kunhan täältä tulen. On tämä ollut eri elämää kuin koskaan olen ennen elänyt ja tutustunut moniin mitä erilaisimpiin ihmisiin sekä miehiin että knääkkiin, jääkäreihin, siviileihin ja sen semmoisiin. (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 24 Aug. 1918)
25. Kysyi tässä Montonen, jotta miksi en anna tulla Aili tyttäreni tänne, kun se niin mielellään tulisi. Jotta olishan täällä isän valvonnan alla. Sanoin, jotta ”jospa joutuisikin isä valvonnan alle, sentähden en laske tänne.” Niin kuin se onkin, sano! (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 20 July 18, Salla)
26. A Finnish soldier, trained in Germany during the Civil War of 1918.
27. Muuan leikasi itse kätensä puukolla, luultavasti pelosta, että pääsisi pois, peukalohaukurasta valtasuonen vetäisi. Ja ”sairaita” ilmestyi niin saakelisti: vatsa kipeä, sisus kipeä. Yhdestä ainoasta komppaniasta ilmestyi 30 miestä ruikuttamaan ja pyytämään lomaa. Pelkäsivät tappelua, semmoisia ne on tämän kulman miehet. Ei ole suupohjain poikain meininkiä. Kyllä päälliköt niitä raukoiksi haukkuvat. Haukuin minäkin niin saakelisti, jotta hävetkää, perhannan pelkurit. Minäkin vanha mies olen vapaaehtoisesti tänne lähtenyt, on poika Porissa ja 2 pientä lasta kotona ja te, ryökäleet, nuoret miehet pyydätte päästä kotiin. / Saivat ne kuulla yhdeltä jos toiseltakin, yhtä jos toistakin. Kysyivät jääkärit ihan suoraksi suomeksi, jotta: onko sulla p--a jo housuissa? Ja sitten tappelussa moni lähti pakoon, hiljakseen pois luikki. (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Eero Westerholm, 4 April 1918, Kuusamo)
28. On täällä votkaa ja pirtuakin ja Kuusamon kirkolla muiden mukana otin sitä eräänä iltana joitakuuta plöröjä niin että se vie rupeasi jo takaisin tulemaan ja samaa tietä, niin että saakeli. Ei minusta ole siihenkään miestä. Jonka tähden olen sen jälkeen vain katsellut ja kuunnellut kun paremmat miehet ovat niissä hommissa ja sitten olen toiminut makuasiain ministerinä ja semmoisena. / Minäkin ainainen maankiertäjä, minne vielä joutunenko, mitä kokemuksia saanen ja millaisena palannen. Ja millaisena palannee Lauri pahanen. Kumpanen palaisi miehempänä. Ja kun minustakin jonkinlainen mies täällä tulisi. (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Eero Westerholm, 5 April 1918)
29. Ja muuten on minulle hyvin terveellistä olla täällä vähän oikeiden miesten joukossa. Sillä eipä siellä meidän koulussa miehet ole oikein miehen nimen kantajia. / Niin kuin en minäkään. Mutta saahan nyt täällä vähän toisenlaista koulutusta. Niinkö jotta oppia puhumaan tuomaskuonaa ja kainiittia. Vaikkapa niinkin! (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 30 July 1918 Salla)
30. Nyt on minullakin apulainen toimessani. Muuan neiti Mikkelistä. Emmy Margareeta Montonen (Westerholmit kyllä tuntevat) – maisteriksi ollut tulossa. Konekirjoittajana ja arkistonhoitajana kerallani. Mukava tyttö, ”setäksi” minua kutsuu kuten muutkin knääkät. ”Setä”, perhana”. (SKS Paulaharju’s Letters, SP to Lyyli Westerholm, 20 July 1918)
31. In general, all women acting in military contexts were looked upon as morally lax, especially in the aftermath of the wars. This also includes the female volunteers from the Lotta Svärd paramilitary organization. Attitudes to Red women were even more harsh (see Lintunen 2010).
32. Westerholm died of the Spanish flu at the age of thirty, in 1921.
33. Lämpimät kiitokset kauniista satukirjastasi, vanhan emäpuun kertomista muisteluksista – paljon nähnyt ja kokenut aarniometsien ajopuu... / Huomasin Suongilin muisteluksen, samoin Akku-Jaurin noidan. Lieneekö tuo kiellettyä vanhojen muistelusten lainaaminen, en tiedä. / Suuret kiitokset vain, että muistit vielä vanhaa Mökin Äijää. Hyvää jatkoa kirjalliselle työllesi sekä myös alkaneelle jo hyvässä vauhdissa olevalle vuodelle. / Samuli Paulaharju. (The National Archives of Finland, K.M. Wallenius’ private archive. SP to Wallenius 7 Jan. 1943)
34. Mutta nämä ovat ikivanhoja suomalaisia maita (Paulaharju to Tuomas Anhava 18 May 1942).
35. Emme (me vanhat IKL:läiset ole sitä vastaan, että vielä eläville vapaussodan punikkiparoille

- invalideille annetaan eläke. Kurjien johtajien pettämisiä useimmat olivat. Mutta, että he ovat aina olleet puolustustahtoisia ryssää vastaan, niin se on jo valhetta. Sellaista ei pidä hyväksyä. (Paulaharju to Juho Ala-Jyrä, undated)
36. Mitä tulee vuoden 1918 muistiinpanoihin, niin eiväthän ne – kuten itse toteatte – ole varsinaista kansanrunoutta, mutta niillä on varmasti historiallista ja muistelman-arvoa ja ennen kaikkea ne liittyvät oleellisesti Paulaharjun suur-kokoelmaan, joten puolestani pitäisin niidenkin saamista arkistoomme suotavana. Varsinaisen kansanperinneaineoksen puhtaaksikirjoittamista pidettäkään kuitenkin tärkeysjärjestyksessä etusijalla. (SKS keruukirjeenvaihto [collecting correspondence], Lauri Simonsuuri to Jenny Paulaharju 6 Oct.1947)
  37. [...] tulee sinun isäukkos ja antaa kunnon potkun persuksiin (SKS Paulaharju's Letters, SP to Ahti Paulaharju, 13 June 1918).
  38. For example, the Federation of the Finnish Realm (*Suomen Valtakunnan Liitto*) still had 30 university professors as members in the early 1940s. The federation supported both the Greater Finland, and the racial theories championed by the Nazis in Germany. Väinö Salminen, a professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research, was also a member (Silvennoinen, Tikka & Roselius 2016: 376).

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# Linguist Pertti Virtaranta's Wartime Letters

## Declarations of Love and Academic Ambitions

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Midsummer Night, 24 June 1942

Dear Aune!

I tried to sleep, but dreams evaded me. I started – frankly – to miss you. A vast yearning seems to afflict me to no end here in Karelia. The desolate and wild landscapes and the strangeness of the people around always keep you with me. You are unlike anyone else; you are my land. Here, when the company sleeps and only the duty officer and the sentry are awake, I have a tranquil time to linger in all that makes life worth living. I don't know how to blacken the pale paper so that opinions and moods would be visible there with clarity and precision. Human abilities are extraordinarily limited. But still the written word can convey something from deep within. And my word conveys this to you: I am immensely fond of you. I would like to take you as my own. When the war is over, amidst this destruction, the recuperating world would see at least one happy, exceedingly happy, couple: you and me. [...]

It's awfully quiet. Towards Poventsa, the artillery pounds away in the usual fashion, but nothing else disturbs the peace of the evening. That's what makes it so pleasant to be awake, letting thoughts drift as they will. The road to Tiurunniemi is always busy. Our May meetings are on my mind. You were like an angel and are still as distinctly easy-going as ever. You are slightly different from others, but once one gets to know you, one finds you utterly beyond compare.

All of the above must strike you as *nicht passend*, the kind of thing I shouldn't even write to Aune. But allow me, now on Midsummer, to speak my mind. Some of your words suggest that I have no right to do so. Am I correct?

With affectionate regards, Pertti, whose fondness for you goes beyond what you would be likely to permit.<sup>1</sup>

Pertti Virtaranta, then a student of linguistics, wrote the above letter to Aune Katara, his wartime sweetheart, during his service at the front during the Continuation War.<sup>2</sup> The letter is one of the 255 letters he sent to her. In this chapter, I reflect on how Pertti Virtaranta (1918–1997), a professor of Finnish at the University of Helsinki, known especially for his expertise in the Karelian language, imagined his future academic career and starting a family in the letters he wrote as a young student. I particularly consider this question in the context of writing letters sent from the war front. I interpret how Pertti Virtaranta articulated his future and envisioned his life in academic

circles. The recipient of the letters, Aune Katara, Pertti's beloved, plays a central role in Pertti's epistolary constructions of his future life and career.

Virtaranta is remembered as a representative of the generation that made significant contributions to the development of the linguistic sphere of Finno-Ugric Studies at the University of Helsinki. In addition, his quintessential trajectory from the countryside to the capital to pursue an academic career and establish himself as an influential figure in university circles also makes him personify the rural youth of his generation, young people with professional ambitions. Therefore, it is crucial to study how he constructed his future as an academic by writing letters to his beloved during uncertain times.



A portrait of Pertti Virtaranta during his early years at the University of Helsinki. Photo A.J. Tenhovaara, Helsinki. Institute for the Languages of Finland. Pertti Virtaranta's Archive.



Aune Katara photographed as a young university student. Written on the back of the photograph are the words: 'For Pertti, 27 October 1943'. Institute for the Languages of Finland. Pertti Virtaranta's archive.

Pertti probably first met Aune, a dentistry student, at a student club at the University of Helsinki. Aune, unlike Pertti, who came from the countryside, was a native of Helsinki, the capital city. They began their courtship while they were both studying at the university, prior to the outbreak of the war, a circumstance which then meant long periods of separation for the young couple. At the beginning of the Continuation War, Aune had an internship as a nurse in a military hospital in Eastern Finland.<sup>3</sup> The two wrote to each other frequently, sometimes every day, but at least once a week; the volume of letters stands as a testimony to their commitment to keeping in touch with each other.

The Continuation War took Pertti Virtaranta to the frontlines of war for the first time. When the war broke out in June 1941, Virtaranta was a 23-year-old student of linguistics. In total, he served in the war for three and a half years during 1941–1944, except for the few months he was off on study leave. At the beginning of the war,

Pertti served in artillery in Ladoga Karelia. By late autumn of 1941, he was in training as an officer in Niinisalo, an inland town of Finland. Later, he was an officer of a truck company in the Mäntyselkä district. Towards the end of the war, he served as an enlightenment officer in the service forces travelling around Southern Soviet Karelia (Yli-Paavola 2003: 186–192).

Wartime correspondences are often shaped by the kinds of topics authors choose to write about to their loved ones. Studies on wartime correspondence have pointed out how letter materials only offer partial accounts or insights into wartime life as they reveal only selected fragments of their writers' reality and tend to suppress more difficult or painful emotions and experiences. Some soldiers, for example, found it impossible to write about the unimaginable brutality they experienced during wartime (Usborne 2019: 286; see also Seppä, in this anthology). Regardless of the content of any given letter, soldiers at war attached great significance to correspondences, for letters were the only way to stay in touch from the front (Vidal-Naguet 2018: 118).

In this chapter, my main goal is to understand the exceptional circumstances that influenced Pertti Virtaranta's motives for writing and the ways he spelled out the future in his letters. The letters give expression to an abundance of emotions, all channelled to the recipient of the letters. These details, in combination with a grasp of the significance of writing the letters in the first place, form the basis for this study. For my work, I have drawn from the entire collection of letters, selecting the most essential texts to present here. His letters to Aune Katara are archived at the Tape Archive of the Finnish Language in Helsinki.

The research questions in this chapter therefore do not concern real life, but rather the images that appear in the letters, for the creation of such images allowed Pertti to normalize his life in the extraordinarily difficult situation at the front, both creating a sense of togetherness and serving to build his imagined identity. Letter-writers also venture into spaces of intimacy. The main research question concerns how Pertti Virtaranta constructs his future in his letters by reflecting on his evolving place in the academic world. Second, I investigate the position Virtaranta assigns to the recipient of the letters in his future plans and how this affects the way the relationship between Pertti and Aune takes shape in the letters. The third objective is to understand the wartime conditions and the significance of writing letters in such circumstances.

To answer the above-mentioned questions, I have chosen the close reading method<sup>4</sup> as my primary tool of interpretation. In the spirit of this anthology, I pay special attention to the emotional import of the writing and the rhetorical means used by the author to accomplish his goals. I have reread several of the key letters many times in order to determine an overall impression of what is being said. The close reading method is well suited for the study and interpretation of letters, particularly for a detailed examination of a relatively limited set of materials – namely, several letters (see also Introduction). I specifically look at how the letter-writer expresses his ambitions about his scholarly career and finding his place in the social milieu of academe. My study of the letters has focused on their author's construction of an academic identity, especially on how academic masculinity manifests itself in an argument regarding the future. Moreover, I have perused a wider set of letters in my efforts to interpret how the war shaped the tone of his letter-writing.

## *The Hidden Private Life of Virtaranta*

Pertti Virtaranta began his studies at the University of Helsinki in 1936 (Hakanen 2018: 17). Like other students of Finnish linguistics from his generation, Virtaranta's academic formation took place within the paradigm of dialect studies (Hakanen 2018: 18). The concern with dialect in the study of linguistics spawned efforts to record concrete examples of speech through interviewing native speakers. Virtaranta's interest in the Karelian dialect also led him to carry out such practical research during wartime. It must be added that his field experiences among Karelians ignited his lifelong fascination for the Karelian language.

Virtaranta published numerous scholarly articles in the field of linguistics. While most of his research concerned the Karelian language, he also, for example, published on the language spoken by Finnish-Americans and on Finnish dialects. As a founder of the Tape Archive of the Finnish Language in 1959, his role was to initiate large-scale collections of Finnish dialects (Lyytikäinen 2018: 131). Samples of Karelian dialects collected from Soviet Karelia were also included. Virtaranta co-founded several associations and clubs focused on Karelian language and culture, which may partially explain his endeavours to collect materials from Karelia.<sup>5</sup> In addition, Virtaranta was an exceptionally versatile and active promoter of many cultural and linguistic projects; these activities made him well known among the general public. Indeed, many Finns came to know him as a television personality in the 1980s, thanks to his interviewing work in Lisa Hovinheimo's documentary films about Soviet Karelians (Hovinheimo 2018: 222).

The private life of Pertti Virtaranta has remained largely unknown, though recently<sup>6</sup> his daughter published an article concerning her childhood and her parents, Helmi and Pertti.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of the present chapter is to reflect on Virtaranta's personal life by looking at the way he, while still a young man, outlined his plans for a future career and starting a family as part of a masculine scientific project. My aim is to reflect on Virtaranta's formation as a scholar. Conceptually speaking, the masculine scientific project is useful for examining the way in which Pertti combines his academic ambitions with his personal longings to marry and start a family.

I examine Pertti Virtaranta's plans for his future as an academic actor by making use of the concept of hegemonic masculinity. I will elaborate more on this concept later in the chapter, but I have chosen this approach because Virtaranta's plans for his academic future in his letters are interestingly illuminated when studied against the backdrop of masculinities. I also make use of the concept of military masculinity, a concept which offers explanations for certain ways of depicting war in the letters. As for earlier considerations of his scholarly career and contributions, much has been said about Virtaranta as a representative of his generation: in other words, like many of his cohort, he had served his country by going to war (Yli-Paavola 2003: 185–193) and had actively worked toward his academic career in the face of tremendous adversity. A significant observation about his war experience concerns his decision to forgo taking holidays at home to remain near the operational area to document the speech of local Karelians (Torikka 2018: 40). Virtaranta has been seen as work-oriented and industrious, a researcher able to turn every circumstance, even wartime, into an opportunity for productive work. Thus far, the scholars who have written about his war experiences have not used his extensive correspondence from the front as data for their research.<sup>8</sup>

This previously unexamined wartime correspondence offers new perspectives on Virtaranta's personal experiences in the war and his plans for his academic life. Going to war also created occasions for research; for example, Virtaranta was able to collect linguistic data from local Karelians (Yli-Paavola 2003:186–192). My research shows how Virtaranta, a young man intent on making an academic career for himself, found ways to pursue his research goals even as a soldier at war. The letter material makes it possible to consider the motivations – specifically, a deep interest in linguistics and a desire to claim his place in academia – behind his actions. I also want to underscore Virtaranta's endeavours to harmonize his personal and professional ambitions. The intersection between the private and the professional offer an interesting vantage point for close reading. The letters to Aune Katara contain much reflection on Virtaranta's place and identity in the world. As their recipient, Aune represented the perfect object of his affection. To start with, she was an unmarried university student.<sup>9</sup> In addition, Aune's father was a professor of the German language<sup>10</sup> at the University of Helsinki. Virtaranta clearly saw the match as beneficial to his own social advancement. Her family connections could have later proven useful for gaining entrance into academic circles.

Pertti Virtaranta had a talent for self-expression. His letters are well-written and make for compelling reading. Through the medium of the letter, he worked out his thoughts and perhaps even practised the writing skills he would later need as a researcher. Moreover, the letters were also intimate, more revealing of the many sides of Virtaranta's persona than his scientific texts.

### *Letters as a Special Genre of Investigation*

Intrinsically dialogical, letters serve as a means of communication between two parties. Letters often focus on the private self, though they can also expand to describe the historical situation of the author's experience. They may be considered an autobiographical reflection of the self, but the 'self' chosen by the author varies depending on the letter's intended reader (Earle 1999: 2–5). Dialogue forms an integral part of epistolary communication. Liz Stanley (2004: 202) has considered the implications of the letter's dialogical nature. The characteristic feature of the epistolary form is its intense awareness of the addressee or reader. The relationship between the correspondents inevitably influences the kind of voice the writer decides to choose for himself. This also determines the matters about which the author will choose to remain silent.<sup>11</sup>

The study of a correspondence requires ethical consideration of how the material is used and interpreted. The material I have chosen contains highly intimate descriptions of the writer's inner life and personal feelings. When studying letter material, it is crucial to keep in mind the original communicative intention of the author. These letters were solely meant for the eyes of the addressee, Aune. Had he written for public consumption, Pertti might have altered the style or content of his letters to Aune. The fact that the letters were archived after his death makes them even more delicate as research material.

The first of these letters is dated 13 May 1941, before the war, and the last one on 3 December 1944. At the beginning of their correspondence, Pertti writes extensively about his feelings for Aune in his letters:

It is strange, but most certainly true. You, my dear Aune, are the only one with whom I can share my innermost thoughts. You are closer to me than anyone and I would hope that our trust in each other would be absolute. And now I believe – right or wrong – that this is the case.<sup>12</sup>

The correspondence was based on a privileged understanding between Pertti and Aune. This understanding formed the foundation of Pertti's correspondence with Aune. She was the one with whom he shared his thoughts in writing, and she was also the object of his affections. The trust established through the letters can be discerned in the overt expression of feelings and the romantic register of the letters. As a young man with hopes of securing the affections of a potential bride, Pertti chose the most apt genre – the love letter – for communicating with Aune. As well as allowing him to explore his feelings for her, the genre gave him a forum for examining his attitudes to women in general, the academic society to which he longed to belong and the war that stood in the way of his future life as a scholar and a family man. As a genre, the love letter is a one-to-one dialogue filled with romantic expression. Wartime love letters, it must be said, are inclined to contain more positive than negative emotions. Letter-writers fashioned their own compositions in accordance with models derived from paragons of the genre found in literature; they also had an idea of the kinds of emotions they were expected to express. Wartime required gallantry and words to reassure the recipient of the letter (Vidal-Naquet 2018: 19, 121–122). Because there are no letters written by Aune in response, one must consider the credibility of the letters as expressions of love. Although his letters resemble love letters, it is not entirely clear whether Aune and Pertti had already started their romantic relationship when the war broke out. The tentative nature of their relationship can be noted in Virtaranta's reflections on how he should address Aune in the letters. His use of the term of endearment 'Dear' (*rakas*) in his salutations, for example, was commonly used in letters to friends or acquaintances at that time. Virtaranta's letters contain a tone of politeness and camaraderie. As a wartime genre, the love letter was extraordinarily common and relatable. Furthermore, war correspondence between young men and women was often laden with romantic expression and expectations. Although it is impossible for the present-day reader to gauge the true depth of Virtaranta's epistolary declarations of love, it is clear that Virtaranta's passionate commitment to his work never wavered. In fact, his indefatigable focus on work is evidenced by the way he and Helmi Linna, the woman he eventually did marry, spent their honeymoon: much of the trip was dedicated to revising and editing one of his research papers for the university (Torikka 1999: 641).

Jessica Meyer, a historian who has studied the gendered history of British soldiers in the First World War, has observed two types of identities emerging in the writings produced (letters and diaries) by soldiers: the first one is bound up with the heroics associated primarily with the battlefield and the homosocial society of the military sphere, whereas the second is an identity that men sought to establish in connection with the domestic sphere, one clearly associated with women (Meyer 2009: 2). According to Meyer, heroism was a concept firmly attached to the warrior's glory. Expressions of heroism were tied up with expectations about soldiers at the front, the ideals of military masculinity internalized by soldiers. Masculinity found its epistolary expression in silence about troublesome feelings. The men fighting on the front rarely shared in

their letters the painful emotions triggered by war and death. On the one hand, war-time masculinity was conveyed in the letters through an emphasis on heroic deeds and patriotism; on the other, it also took shape in silence and a refusal to address difficult feelings (cf. Seppä, in this anthology; Vidal-Naquet 2018: 132–133; see also Ahlbäck 2006; 2014). While Virtaranta does describe himself as an active and capable soldier, infusing his prose with patriotic tones when recounting victories won on the front, his letters do not clearly project a masculine concern with heroism. In fact, Virtaranta articulates his masculinity more pronouncedly in passages dedicated to academic success at the university.

### *Letter-Writing in Wartime*

The importance of letter-writing for soldiers has been examined particularly as a means of emotional nourishment: to keep in touch with people back home and to sustain the identities left behind after enlisting in the army (Meyer 2009: 44–45; Hämmerle 1999: 153). Although the war front was relatively close to the home front during the Continuation War, letters were still the most practical way for soldiers to communicate with their relatives and friends. Letter-writing also represented a space of privacy that was otherwise lacking in military life (Hartley 2019: 185). Romantic correspondences may have even been regarded as status symbols, subtly increasing the social standing of the soldiers who had sweethearts with whom to exchange letters. According to historian Sonia Hagelstam (2011: 281), writing letters provided soldiers with a sense of meaning and distraction in the otherwise stressful conditions of war. The extraordinary circumstances of wartime, therefore, need to be considered when interpreting letters. Wartime letter-writing was defined by an unrelenting presence of fear, a sense of insecurity of what was to come, and the ever-present proximity of death. Virtaranta wrote letters from the front not only to Aune but also to his parents, siblings and friends.

Aware that letters from the front were subject to postal censorship, soldiers had to hold back from expressing themselves with total honesty or intimacy. Soldiers were forbidden to write about the location of the troops, the effects of enemy fire and the physical and moral condition of the troops.<sup>13</sup> Women writing to soldiers were also advised to write cheerful and supportive letters: problems experienced at the home front were not to be reported too much (Taskinen 2015: 20). In a similar fashion, Virtaranta's early wartime letters portray their author as a young man taking part in a daring adventure.

### *Masculinity as an Interpretive Tool*

In this chapter, I use both the concepts of academic masculinity and military masculinity. The concept of masculinity is based on the observation that there is no universal category of man, but rather various social practices of being a man, which are referred to as masculinities. In this context, academic masculinity is equated with hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is a cultural ideal that, in a certain context, is an accepted strategy for maintaining patriarchy (Connell 2005: 77). According to Connell,

hegemonic masculinity is an established set of social practices to which all those who identify as men can relate. I interpret hegemonic masculinity as something that manifests in certain dynamics in connection to other men and power, but also to women. In this chapter, the concept of hegemonic masculinity is connected to how I interpret the letter material regarding gender and the writer's place in society. My particular emphasis is on academic masculinity as a foundation for understanding the construction of an academic career and the gender system to which it is connected.

Military masculinity is a concept used to discuss the ideals that transform turn soldiers into warriors. According to Parpart and Partridge, 'militarized masculinities are specific configurations of gendered characteristics and behaviors that are visible at the levels of individuals, families, communities, and states' (2014: 551). They are a negotiated set of individual traits that are actively reproduced. Words such as strength, toughness, rationality and aggressiveness have historically been associated with military masculinity. Through reflections on it, ideals, fantasies and desires have been expressed, though they represent more of a negotiation of these gendered ideals than a true manifestation of military masculinity (Wegner 2021: 8). Masculine ideas certainly informed Virtaranta's accounts of the exigencies of wartime life, but the letter material does not directly manifest military masculinity. For example, he does not ennoble violence or strictly cast himself in the role of the rugged survivor. Instead, shades of loneliness and longing can be discerned from his letters.

Wartime letters made the gendered division of labour and roles appear more pronounced, though in reality women's activities on the home front expanded to include areas of life previously dominated by men (Hämmerle 2019: 156). Letters were nonetheless more conservative since they functioned to maintain interpersonal relationships from long distances. Moreover, the very notion of explicitly renegotiating gender roles was largely irrelevant at a time when fostering a feeling of commonality and sharing everyday experiences took priority (Vidal-Naquet 2018: 119–120). Traditional gender roles are clearly perceptible in Virtaranta's idea of the academic world – a world into which he envisages a place for himself as a scientist pursuing a career. The hegemonic masculine voice that speaks in Virtaranta's letters concerns itself with the academic community. Masculinity is especially highlighted in the complementary role that he relegates to his future spouse. The ideal wife, in Virtaranta's view, dedicated herself to her husband's career. His letters also contain passages outlining qualities he found either attractive or unattractive in a potential spouse. For example, he mentions his distaste for talkative women. In sum, he had fixed ideas about the place of women in both the academy and the domestic sphere.

Academic masculinity is a useful conceptual tool for interpreting how Virtaranta spells out his plans for the future and seeks to build a relationship with Aune in the letters. The study of gender positions offers ways to analyse how scientific authors have positioned themselves in their disciplines and in the scientific community. In Virtaranta's correspondence this form of academic masculinity is bound up with his future plans as a married academic person. Marriage provided certain benefits. Historian Lisa Svanfeldt-Winter (2019: 269) has investigated some of the expectations surrounding members of the academic community in the 1920s and 1930s. Because the social world of academia was primarily made up of married couples, formal or informal gatherings were invariably arranged with scholars and their spouses in mind. Generally speaking, the scholar was expected to be a man with a wife. Those who fell short of

this expectation were rarely invited to dinner parties or social functions. According to Svanfeldt-Winter (2019: 271), there were also certain skills and resources, for example, academic contacts, that were thought to contribute to the making of a successful career. Virtaranta was presumably aware of their importance. Even in wartime, he found ways to network and build potentially useful social relationships. For example, he invited the professor of his own subject to join him on an entertainment tour for soldiers. Virtaranta also took advantage of the opportunities available for linguistic research, collaborating actively with other researchers working with the Karelian language. For instance, he took part in several collecting expeditions with the linguist Aulis Ojajärvi.

### *The Role of Letters in Moderating Emotions vis-à-vis the War and the Frontlines*

If we want to understand the way Pertti wrote from the frontlines, we need to consider what motivated him to write in the first place. Wartime, of course, shaped the contours of letter-writing. Hämmerle (1999: 163) writes about soldiers' use of letters to normalize their lives and cope with the conditions of war. Virtaranta relies on several rhetorical techniques to convey a sense of normalcy in his accounts of life at the front. His accounts of day-to-day life on the frontlines include numerous scenes of peaceful togetherness. In fact, many of his letters about life at the front foreground the quotidian with depictions of soldiers involved in routine tasks:

I'm sitting here now by our tent. The men are lying on the ground around me, mechanically swatting away mosquitoes. I'm using the only book I brought along for my travel reading as a writing board. It's not even decent to mention its name during this time, the war.<sup>14</sup>

It is likely that life at the front, an existence indisputably defined by sense of urgency, moved Pertti to write a different kind of letter than he would have written in peacetime. In his characteristic fashion of putting thoughts into words, Pertti presents the purpose of the war using elevated language. The chasm between civilian life and combat at the frontlines of war may provide an explanation for the idealism expressed in the letters. Indeed, his letters written at the beginning of the war convey a sense of adventure and a desire to take part in such a patriotic undertaking. This enthusiasm, at least in part, was fuelled by the notion that the war would usher Finland, but also Pertti and Aune, into a new kind of future (in a Greater Finland).<sup>15</sup> The letters written early in the war are infused with a heady sense of optimism.

The people of our generation were born into a remarkable time. As we were growing up, the country's independence proved its credibility. And as we come of age and immediately afterwards, we will actively take part in making a new Finland. And when peace comes again, we will have the best years of our lives to live in a happy Greater Finland.<sup>16</sup>

Virtaranta equates the future of the country with the future he envisages for himself. This identification renders the war a necessity for achieving certain ends. His letters paint a rosy, idealized image of postwar Finland. The idealistic stance he assumes in the letters can be interpreted as a reflection geared towards the future. Visions of the future ahead offer hopes of happiness in contrast with the dire experiences of wartime. The

sense of hope conveyed in the letter also reflects the belief prevalent at the beginning of the war – that it would last only a few months. This belief was also accompanied by a blissful confidence about its outcome:

But we are just forging a happy future for ourselves. You there, me over here, in these places, which are just as important. How fortunate that we can be a part of this. Next month the war is over (no more), then home and then to Helsinki and when we meet there 'never ever will we part', as Larin-Kyösti poeticizes. Everything will turn out fine, and your photo, like an amulet, will make sure that we soon meet again.

With love, Pertti<sup>17</sup>

His view is also influenced by his scholarly identity: for a scholar of Finnish and other Finno-Ugric languages, the redrawing of the Finnish border would create new areas of interest for future linguistic research: 'Knowing that a broad field of work is opening up for enthusiasts of Finno-Ugric languages is an utter delight.'<sup>18</sup>

Surviving the war and building his own future as a scholar recur as topics throughout Virtaranta's letters. Repetition brings out their importance to Virtaranta himself. His explanations for the war show his faith in its sublime purpose:

It's only natural that war takes its toll on men's lives unevenly: many must die, so that the Fatherland can live. And the hardness of war puts us in a different frame of mind than in peacetime. One thinks of so many things that seem irrelevant in the busyness of day-to-day life. No doubt this present war brings along with it a more serious attitude to life. One must remember: *ars longa, vita brevis* (that is, life is short, craft is long). And when peace – the time of permanent peace arrives, then, Aune darling, we will resume our studies with more determination and seriousness than before. Do you agree, oder wie?<sup>19</sup>

Going to war with a sense of duty to the fatherland helped soldiers cope with the pressure and hardships they faced at the front. Virtaranta's personal feelings are further obscured by his use of public images lending legitimacy to the war. Moreover, throughout the letters, Virtaranta regularly employs certain tropes of masculinity, for example, the soldier's duty to sacrifice his life for the fatherland. After all, military masculinity encompasses the belief in the soldier's unbending fidelity, even before death. The faithful soldier embodies the masculine value of strength.

Pertti also appeals to the fundamental importance of duty in a response to Aune's account of her own struggles to cope with her work in the war hospital. His words suggest that she had described the dreadful working conditions there and had expressed a yearning to be back in Helsinki. Instead of acknowledging Aune's feelings, Pertti underscores the value of the war hospital experience. Here he also underlines the need to do one's duty:

Dear Aune!

Your letter was somewhat surprising. Thanks for that. You are close to the front, and your circumstances are much different than in Helsinki. But surely things for you are now much more interesting and exciting. And what is more: there you feel that you are fulfilling your duty in the best way. When the war is over, the last war that we will ever see and experience, you will be satisfied for having been able to experience war from up close.<sup>20</sup>

In Pertti's letters, he turns the war into a matter of honour: a man is duty-bound to go to war without complaint. Besides, those who responded to this call of duty could tap into the unparalleled nature of the war experience as a source of self-worth and character-building.

According to my interpretation of the letters, Pertti resists being drawn into the sphere of Aune's emotions; in fact, he refuses to acknowledge her fears, her exhaustion with hospital work or her desire to return to Helsinki. On the one hand, Pertti's other letters attest to his reluctance to put his own feelings of depression, despair or indignation into words. On the other, it was common for people to put on a brave face despite the precariousness of wartime life: all citizens were expected to maintain an upbeat attitude. Processing negative and difficult emotions would have taken time and resources. Indeed, the exigencies of wartime prioritized action, not emotional well-being.<sup>21</sup> A striking feature of Pertti's letters is the double standard in place regarding emotions. As Pertti writes about how he trusts Aune with his deepest feelings, he nevertheless dismisses Aune's inconvenient emotions, especially the distress and hopelessness she expressed from the war hospital where she was treating the wounded. Pertti's own feelings were bound up with loftier ideals such as defending the nation, a peaceful future and manly honour. This can be explained by the rampant idealism at the start of the war: people believed that Finland would emerge from the war even better than before. Nourished by the notion of a splendid future awaiting the country, citizens had no reason to feel low-spirited or insecure about what lay ahead.

The experience of war on the frontlines has been described as a liminal state forming an intermediate space between past and future. Combat at the front alienated soldiers from the life and people back home, so letters functioned to maintain the link between the war front and the 'home front'.<sup>22</sup> Pertti's richly detailed accounts of everyday life in the dugouts highlight the quotidian aspect of the soldier's reality. According to his own self-portrayal, Pertti comes across as an active and energetic soldier. Moreover, the emphasis he places on activity obscures the challenges he faced in finding his place in the new community and situation. The discomfort Virtaranta experienced at the front turned his thoughts towards his student cohort, the group studying Finno-Ugric languages; these recollections fostered in him a sense of belonging and shared purpose. Thoughts of future academic opportunities offered Pertti respite from the immediate realities of wartime:

This warfare wouldn't be so bad if one didn't have to be without friends. The men are fine companions among themselves, but the leap from camaraderie to friendship is huge. And I am lacking the latter over here. By nature, I am something of a recluse, or whatever you would like to call it, but I don't unreservedly enjoy the company of many. Close friendships are what makes life worth living. And here, when you are left to re-examine your values on your own, you start to understand their significance. I'm thinking, for example, of one of my fellow students, who has already graduated and is a veteran wounded in the last war and is now engaged in peaceful work in Helsinki. His brotherly letters, written with enthusiasm and vigour, leave me speechless with joy. The knowledge that a broad field of work is opening up for enthusiasts of Finno-Ugric languages fills me with delight. He studied the same subject as me, but our topics of interest will be somewhat different.<sup>23</sup>

Writing to Aune, Pertti played up his lack of rapport with his fellow soldiers, thus stressing his affinity with the ranks of the academic youth. This identification with

other university students can also be interpreted as an attempt to stress his own suitability for Aune as a husband. Pertti knew that her family valued knowledge and higher learning. After all, it was at the university where he first met Aune, also a student, whose father was a professor.

### *Constructing a Relationship with Aune*

While the writing of letters to sustain a relationship is undeniably a living process, the actual material body of correspondence can be understood as a relic shaped in retrospect.<sup>24</sup> The letters construct a desirable version of reality, and their contents therefore conform to that desired reality. Wartime correspondence, however, was also defined by regulations imposed by the state and the cultural expectations surrounding writing letters from the home front to the war front (for more about expectations, see Hämmerle 2019: 156). In the case of Virtaranta and Aune Katara, letter writing functioned as a means of establishing a relationship and creating a shared reality for two people unable to meet face-to-face. The present-day reader of Pertti's letters would be hard-pressed to form any clear idea about the actual quality of their relationship, but such an assessment is not even the goal here. The lived reality of Pertti and Aune's relationship was no doubt different from the relationship presented in the letters. The fleeting moments they spent together also no doubt carried over into the content of the letters, and sometimes the intimacy achieved in the letters may have persisted in their face-to-face meetings. One thing is nonetheless certain: Pertti and Aune seldom met each other during the war. Theirs was a relationship that largely took place through words written on the page:

You are lovely, Aune, the best of all those who are striving on this earth. A paragon. You are at the centre of my thoughts. For you are mine. At least that's what I would like, being here I have thought more and more of you and our shared doings. You have become an inherent part of my life. Much said, but good to say it sometimes. It may be a tad dangerous, say the old folks. But this is just between the two of us. And besides: it's wartime.<sup>25</sup>

The importance of the relationship, especially to Pertti, is highlighted in the romantic or otherwise highly demonstrative expressions of care and endearment to the recipient of the letter. Through the letters, he constructs his relationship with Aune, but also his own relational voice as it emerges in the letter. With words, he crafts a reality that, at the moment of writing, also strengthens his own commitment to the recipient of the letters. His descriptions of Aune play a role in building up their relationship, because they rarely met during the war. By constructing Aune as the perfect spouse, he may have shaped his own fantasy of genuine love.

It is apparent that Pertti wrote to Aune with a specific goal in mind. In his letters, he sought to convince Aune that he had the makings of a reliable husband. Although Pertti came from the countryside, in his letters he remakes himself as a denizen of the city. Through letter-writing, he forged a new identity: an urban academic on his way to becoming a family man. The rationale for downplaying his rural background may have also been motivated by desire to win the approval of Aune's family. As evidenced in the letter material, Aune's family did not look favourably upon a future

marriage between Pertti and Aune. Was Pertti's humble, rural background a factor in their disapproval? Or were they merely concerned about their daughter making a serious commitment too hastily? Marriage, after all, in the 1940s, meant more than just a romantic partnership between two individuals, it also united two families. (see also Hämmerle 2019: 163). Their wartime courtship presumably prevented Aune's parents from getting acquainted with Pertti in a less charged atmosphere. Pertti's awareness of her parents' objection to him as a future son-in-law plausibly shaped the tone and content of his letters.

Pertti's letters offer scant information on the degree or quality of their affection for each other before the war. How did they feel about each other? Was it love or friendship? Judging by Pertti's salvaged letters,<sup>26</sup> when the war started their relationship had yet to be defined. In one of Pertti's letters, for example, he reflects on how rarely they had met before the war.<sup>27</sup> Before the war started, Pertti had asked Aune for permission to write to her, a matter to which he refers to in his letter:

My own Aune: now I feel so good, and it is good for me to leave knowing that your thoughts sometimes follow me. Know that you're more precious than anything else. Unless there was such a permission to write. But still, I'll say it to you. And I will stop here: I miss you, dear Aune.<sup>28</sup>

They have clearly agreed to correspond. Pertti underlines both Aune's importance to him as a companion in letters and the unparalleled nature of their epistolary communication:

Enough about the war and whatnot. About something else for a change. Once it came to mind that now and then when I write to you and to the people at home, the letters could possibly, quite understandably, get mixed up and end up in the wrong envelopes. Letters are the most personal kind of text that we can think of. The way I write to you is completely different from the way I write letters home. Nobody else would know how to interpret our correspondence as you and I do.<sup>29</sup>

In his letters, Pertti reveals just how much he trusted Aune, how he could share his deepest, most intimate feelings, only with her. Such declarations of trust can be understood in the framework of Pertti's desire to persuade Aune of how deeply he cherished the relationship and his commitment to it.

Although Pertti's letters to Aune are intensely romantic expressions of his devotion to her, they had not been particularly serious about each other at the beginning of the war.<sup>30</sup> Pertti and Aune had not yet made any promises to each other about the future, nor were they formally engaged to be married. Yet hints of Pertti's hopes of courting Aune in earnest, even before the outbreak of the war, can be found in the letters. His letters also suggest that Aune had some misgivings on the matter. Of one thing we can be sure: there is no doubt that Pertti cherished Aune as an epistolary companion. In fact, from the beginning of the war in 1941 until the winter of 1944, Pertti wrote to her from the front almost every other day. As time wore on at the front, the image of Aune came to occupy a more central place in Pertti's mind. In fact, Pertti was sent to the front early in the war; when serving in the artillery unit in Ladoga Karelia, his detachment was close to the front. Perhaps the imminent attack on Ladoga made this

inexperienced young soldier start to think more seriously about Aune and marriage. Past moments spent together attained even greater weight in his memory, spurring him to express a desire to 'possess' her, to begin looking forward to a future together:

Here on the front, you, Aune, are always on my mind (not just once a day!). When nothing can be known about tomorrow, it's better to live in the past. The happy moments spent with you I relive in my thoughts, and earnestly and truly I wish for nothing more than to meet you, to be with you, to possess you.<sup>31</sup> In this kind of ruckus where 'every moment may be our last', you – as far away as you are – are my constant companion, my mascot. And no one has it better – A pause, the planes are overhead. No bombings.<sup>32</sup>

The above passage vividly exemplifies the ability of wartime letters to convey the terror of living under the constant and concrete threat of bombardment. Pertti refers to bombers as a regular feature of the wartime landscape. Mentioning them adds a serious tone to the letter and underscores the precariousness nature of wartime existence for soldiers and civilians alike. In this atmosphere of uncertainty, thoughts of Aune ease Pertti's anxious mind. To Pertti, the idea of Aune almost functions as a protective charm. In one of his later letters, for instance, Pertti refers to Aune's photograph as his amulet.<sup>33</sup>

Written at the beginning of the war, Pertti's early letters are brimming with romantic feeling. These letters are full of sweet and affectionate terms of endearment for Aune. His choice of register was obviously shaped by the discourse of romantic love. This discourse of love, which was already prevalent in the 1940s, was also exploited by the mass entertainment industry.<sup>34</sup> It is certainly plausible that Pertti, who was racked by feelings of loneliness at the front, started to pour his energies into letters to Aune, a woman he regarded as his peer. His inability to focus on his own thoughts or to find good friends among his fellow soldiers spurred him to retreat to letter-writing. Writing and receiving letters offered Pertti an oasis of relief amid the war, as for so many other soldiers. Taina Huuhtanen,<sup>35</sup> who has examined letter-writing during the Continuation War, underlines the importance letters played in keeping soldiers entertained. Letter-writing was especially crucial in the phases of positional warfare. When there was no active fighting, the men on the front needed to keep their minds occupied. While boredom posed a serious threat to the morale of soldiers, letter-writing refreshed their minds and offered them a comforting distraction.

### *Conflicting Ambitions for the Future*

The relationship between Aune and Pertti changed over the course of the war. The correspondence continued throughout the war and both parties must have had their own motives for writing letters to each other.<sup>36</sup> As the war dragged on, Pertti's feelings towards Aune grew more serious, giving Aune a more prominent place in the future he was mentally constructing. By the summer of 1944, in the final months of the war, Pertti's letters showed an especially keen desire to make a commitment to a shared future. When the end of the war was in sight, Pertti began to look forward to his future life as a civilian – a life with a family and Aune as his wife. In his letters, he shared his feeling and desires with Aune, insisting that they get married on the next holiday.<sup>37</sup>

His impatience may be explained by the war and the surrounding events beyond his immediate control: the large-scale offensive phase had begun in July 1944, and the war's outcome remained uncertain. Pertti's sense of urgency about marriage may be easier to understand in light of his eagerness to get ahead in life and to fulfil the promise held by the long epistolary courtship. He may have also feared that Aune would find someone else because she had just completed her studies and was on the threshold of starting a new phase in her life. It is in his jealous remarks that his dread of losing her becomes most apparent. In her study of an unmarried couple's correspondence during the First World War, Hämmerle notes similar undertones in an unmarried couple's correspondence in the First World War as the daily realities of women at home and men at the front started to drift even further apart as the war continued (2019: 162). It is likely that his years of service in the Continuation War also affected the relationship between Pertti and Aune.

Aune is knowable to the reader only through Pertti's letters. Although her responses to his letters are unavailable, the reader can, now and then, puzzle out some of her perspectives from Pertti's reactions in his letters. One response stands out as utterly unequivocal: Aune's refusal to marry in haste.<sup>38</sup> Unable to respond at once to Aune's negative answer, Pertti chooses to remain silent for a while. In his next letter, he spells out his standpoint on the overturned plans for the future as a submission to fate, with little reference to powerful emotions:

The plan for our speedy spree has thus fallen through. And I don't really know how to plan again for a new one, because the same could happen. What to do? You have a say in this extremely problematic, but at the same time extremely timely and excellent, matter. I suppose we will proceed according to the normal order as we know it, even though it is somewhat slow. My colonel would certainly give me 5 days leave for an engagement at any time. When should I apply for that leave? Tell me, Aune darling!<sup>39</sup>

Pertti and Aune met seldom during the war: only two or three times. While it is true that their holidays often failed to coincide, Pertti also chose to use his own time off duty for collecting linguistic data from Karelians in Soviet Karelia. The fact that they met so rarely possibly took the relationship into the realm of fantasy, one which was largely at odds with reality. No doubt, their differing plans for the future also figured in the break-up. Pertti's letters contain many examples of his inability to take Aune's dentistry studies seriously: for example, he both questions her plans to pursue postgraduate studies and even expresses disapproval at the notion of Aune working full-time once they are married. Pertti's single-minded focus on his own academic career pushed Aune's dreams and plans to the margins of his own future and the one he purportedly wanted to share with Aune. His academic masculinity is expressed in the letters as a dogged determination to prepare a solid foundation for his own career and eventual success. The notion of his future wife pursuing an independent career clashed with the ideas Pertti entertained about the life they would share together. Because Pertti's vision for his own life was steeped in the world of linguistics, he was incapable of conferring equal value to the career Aune planned for herself in dentistry. In one of his letters, for instance, Pertti laments his inability to turn Aune into a linguist. Besides casting doubt upon the value of Aune's studies, he dismisses the required readings as 'too tiresome'. In his view, such laborious exertions were

unnecessary for her, since he had already cast her in the role of housewife in the domestic sphere of his future life.

The years spent at war matured Pertti's plans for his future. His expectations about his life after the war involved planning his studies and working towards a career in linguistics. The letters written by Pertti to Aune offer textual paths for exploring how Pertti constructs himself through language. His letters allow the reader to follow the actual process of identity production and the ways in which his identity is constructed within a specific framework, namely, his relationship with Aune.<sup>40</sup> Despite Aune's rejection of his marriage proposal, Pertti resumed the correspondence after about a month of silence. The two kept up their correspondence, even though the construct of their shared future had collapsed. In a letter dated two days after the signing of the Moscow Armistice to end the war, Pertti writes of his desire to marry immediately upon starting life as a civilian, though the question of who he would marry was still unknown.<sup>41</sup> In this letter, Pertti, already left vulnerable by her previous rejection, makes a playful bid to persuade Aune once again to consider a future with him:

I feel rootless and adrift without a missus to love above all others and with whom to share my life. The war has left me with an overwhelming yearning for a home. And I will make one soon, because otherwise I doubt I'll be able to manage in the world. Will you come along and join me in that colossal venture?<sup>42</sup>

The lines above bear witness to Pertti's firm conviction that a suitable wife by his side would help him reach his academic goals. In the end, his attempt to build a relationship through letters failed: neither Aune nor her parents came to believe in the sincerity of his love for her. In addition, Aune may have felt constricted by the role that Pertti offered her in his life, a role in which she would have been confined to the domestic sphere and unable to pursue her own career. Of course, for both Pertti and Aune, a wartime correspondence may not have established a solid enough foundation for a lasting relationship in peacetime.

## *Conclusion*

The prevailing biographical image of Pertti Virtaranta has been shaped around his academic persona and his tremendous industry. Yet little attention has been paid to his private life or the motives that compelled him to pursue the life he did. This examination of his letters to Aune Katara shows us the private side of Virtaranta's persona at an extraordinary historical moment. Indeed, the war marked an exceptional period not only in Pertti's life but also in the lives of many of his contemporaries. The conditions at the front constituted a reality unto itself, a reality entirely at odds with life at home. In the above quotation from Pertti's letter, thoughts of the future help sustain him through the gruelling and precarious circumstances of wartime. Despite the light-hearted tone often present in Pertti's letters, reading between the lines it is possible to discern the weight of the war on his psyche. To combat any feelings of ambivalence about the war and to justify it, Pertti looked to his own future as a linguist, and how a possible expansion of the Finnish borders could benefit his academic career.

It is true that the Continuation War shook up Pertti Virtaranta's life in numerous ways. When the war broke out, he was a young, unmarried man studying at the university. Although his recruitment hindered the progression of his studies, he did manage to complete his degree during wartime and even start planning for his post-graduate work. Aspects of this private journey, one of an ambitious young man from the countryside into academic life, can be examined in his letters to Aune Katara, a dentistry student he met before the war. These letters, as examples of wartime correspondence, are characterized by a need to express positive emotions and to create a sense of commonality. The exigencies of wartime, moreover, required individuals to take responsibility for their own feelings; courage and endurance were expected of both soldiers on the front and those at home. A close reading of the letters reveals his conscious efforts to draw Aune into the future he sought to make for himself. Indeed, his courtship of Aune and his plans to start a family with her also emerges as part of his career-building strategy; after all, Aune's social pedigree and her family connections would have proved useful for Pertti in gaining a foothold in the social world of academia. Through his letter-writing, Pertti fashions an identity that aligns with the future he was striving to turn into a reality. Despite the prominent place he offers Aune in this narrated future, it is still a place in service of his scholarly career. Ultimately, his dream of a successful academic career – with a suitable wife at his side – carried him through the war. The hardships of war, even at the front, were overcome by his focus on linguistic research and his epistolary construction of a future.

## Notes

1. Juhannusehtoon 24.6.1942 / Rakas Aune! / Yritin nukkua, muttei tullut unta silmiini. Tuli – suoraan sanoen – ikävä sinua. Valtava ikävä, joka täällä Itä-Karjalassa tuntuu minua kovasti vaivaavan. Maisemien autius ja jylhyys ja ympäristön ihmisten vieraus pitävät sinut aina luonani. Olet toista maata kuin muut; olet minun maatani. Täällä silloin kun komppania nukkuu ja vain päivistäjä ja vartiomies valvovat, on ajatuksella hyvä rauha viivähtää kaikessa siinä, minkä vuoksi pitää elämää arvokkaana. Ei osaa mustata valkeaa paperia niin, että mielipiteet ja mielialat selvästi ja täsmällisesti siitä näkyisivät. Ihmisen kyvyillä on tavaton rajoittuneisuutensa. Mutta jotain sisintä kirjoitettukin sana pystyy välittämään. Ja minun sanani välittää sinulle: pidän sinusta huikeasti. Tahtoisin ottaa sinut omakseni. Sodan loputtua kaiken hävityksen seasta tointuva maailma saisi nähdä ainakin yhden onnellisen, suunnattoman onnellisen parin: sinun ja minun. / Hiljaista on kovin. Pöytänsä suunnalla vain tykistö jauhaa tavalliseen tapaan, mutta muu ei riko illan rauhaa. Siksi onkin mukava olla valveilla ja antaa ajatuksen kuljeksia eri teillä. Tie sinne Tiurunniemeen on aina käytössä. Toukokuiset tapaa-misemme ovat mielessäni. Olit kuin enkeli ja yhtä omalaatuisen luonnikas kuin aina ennenkin. Hiukan poikkeava muista olet, mutta kun sinut tuntee, niin verrattomaksi sinut huomaa. / Tämä kaikki edelle syntynyt on vissiin mielestäsi nicht passend, jollaista varmaankaan en saisi niemalo – kannalla olevalle – se minua raatelee – Aunelle kirjoittaa. Mutta sallinet minun näin Juhannuksena jutella suoraan. Eräistä sinun sanoistasi kyllä päätelen, ettei minulla sinun mielestäsi ole siihen oikeutta. Olenko oikeassa? / Rakkain terveisin Pertti, joka pitää sinusta ehkä yli sallimasi määrän. (Pertti Virtaranta to Aune Katara, 24 June 1942)
2. The Continuation War was fought between Finland and the Soviet Union from 1941 to 1944.
3. In his letters, Pertti uses the name Rauha to refer to the hospital where Aune worked (Letter to Aune Katara 12 October 1941). The war hospital in Joutseno, which was called Rauha, had a psychiatric ward (Kivimäki 2013: 57).

4. For more about the close reading method, see Pöysä 2006: 155–165, 2010: 338–340, 2015: 27–33.
5. Helmi Virtaranta, a linguist in her own right, was more than simply Virtaranta's wife and companion. She had a master's degree in Finnish linguistics and also made a substantial contribution to her husband's scholarly output, a fact which was acknowledged in her obituary but has largely been ignored in the evaluations of Virtaranta's career (Torikka 1999: 640–644).
6. The article was included in a publication to mark the centenary of Pertti Virtaranta's birth: *Täyttää työtä, Akateemikko Virtarannan satavuotismuisto*.
7. Virtaranta-Knowles 2018.
8. Aune Katara-Jauhiainen handed Virtaranta's letters over to the archive in 2002 (Email 22 Sept. 2020 from Ulriikka Puura). She donated the letters five years after Virtaranta's death. It is not clear why she chose to keep the letters until then. It is also unclear whether researchers were even aware of the existence of those letters in the first place. For example, Jaakko Yli-Paavola did not use letters as a source in his 2003 article about Virtaranta's war experiences.
9. In his letters, Pertti points out his preference for a wife with a university education; he wanted Aune to remain at home as a housewife instead of working as dentist once they got married: 'So as not to burden yourself too much.'
10. Pekka Katara (1882–1971) was Professor of German philology at the University of Helsinki during the years 1930–1937 and 1941–1944. Pertti Virtaranta had become acquainted with Pekka Katara through the Satakunta Nation, a university student association. Katara was the association's leader from 1943–1949 (Autio 1997).
11. Scholars of wartime letters have found that young men, when writing letters from the front, tend to share experiences of combat and battles with their siblings or parents rather than their wives (Hagelstam 2012: 284–295, 309; Lyons 2013: 126, 157).
12. Omituista, mutta varmaan totta. Sinä, rakas Auneni, olet ainoa, jolle voin empimättä kertoa mieleni syvimpiä ajatuksia. Sillä olet lähempänä minua kuin kukaan ja toivoisin, että luottamuksemme toisiimme olisi ehdoton. Ja niin luulen – oikein tai väärin – että näin onkin asian laita. (PV to Aune Katara, 24 July 1941)
13. Published in 1941, 'The Field Mail Guide', a guidebook for troops on the front, encouraged soldiers to write cheerful and encouraging letters. The guide also advised soldiers to avoid complaining about difficulties (Taskinen 2015: 20). Of course, it is impossible to assess the extent to which this guide influenced Pertti's account of life on the front. Generally, though, the letters contain few instances of complaining or expressions of indignation at wartime conditions.
14. Istuskelen tässä parastaikaa telttamme lähettyvillä. Miehet makaavat maassa ympärilläni konemaisesti torjuen hyttyysiä. Kirjoituslustanani on ainoa matkalukemiseni, kirja, jonka nimeä tällaisena sodan aikana tuskin sopii edes mainita. (PV to Aune Katara, Simpele, 27 June 1941)
15. Virtaranta avidly promoted the Greater Finland ideology at the beginning of the war. In this context, I interpret his support for the Greater Finland cause as a means of making the war more tolerable by attaching it to a grand purpose. Virtaranta's actual commitment to the ideology has not been examined in detail.
16. Meidän ikäluokkamme on syntynyt mainiona aikana. Kehitysvuosinamme maan itsenäisyys on osoittautunut vakuuttavuutensa. Ja täysi-ikäistyessämme ja välittömästi sen jälkeen saamme aktiivisesti luoda uutta Suomea. Ja kun rauha taas tulee, saamme elämämme parhaat vuodet elää onnellisessa Suur-Suomessa. (PV to Aune Katara, 21 June 1941)
17. Mutta olemmehan juuri luomassa itsellemme onnellista tulevaisuutta. Sinä siellä, minä täällä, niissä paikoissa, jotka ovat yhtä tärkeitä. Mikä onni, että saamme olla mukana. Ensi kuussa sota loppuu (ei enemminkin), sitten kotiin ja sitten Helsinkiin ja kun siellä tapaamme "emme erkane konsanaan emme", kuten Larin-Kyösti runoilee. Hyvin kaikki käy, ja sinun kuvasi amulettina pitää huolen siitä, että pian tavataan. / Rakkain terveisin Pertti. (PV to Aune Katara, 21 July 1941)
18. Tieto siitä, että suomensukuisten kielten harrastajille nyt aukenee laajat työalat, täyttää mielet ilolla. (PV to Aune Katara, Rautu, 5 Oct. 1941)

19. On luonnollista, ettei sota voi olla mieskunnoltaan yksipuolista: monen on kuoltava, jotta isänmaa saa elää. Ja sodan kovuus asettaa mieleemme toisenlaiseen vireeseen kuin siviilissä. Tulee ajatelleksi sellaisiakin asioita, jotka jokapäiväisen elämän huminassa eivät tunnu ajan-kohtaisilta. Epäilemättä nyt käytävä sota tuo mukanaan entistä vakavamman suhtautumistavan elämään. On pidettävä mielessä: *ars longa, vita brevis*. (s.o. elämä on lyhyt, taito on pitkä). Ja kun taas rauhan – pysyväisen rauhan aika koittaa, niin silloin me Aune kulta ryhdymme opintojamme jatkamaan entistä määrätietoisemmin ja vakavammin. Olet samaa mieltä, *oder wie?* (PV to Aune Katara, 14 July 1941)
20. Rakas Aune! / Hiukan yllättävä oli kirjeesi. Kiitos siitä. Olet lähellä rintamaa ja olosi on val-  
lan toista kuin Helsingissä. Mutta varmasti sinulla nyt on paljon mielenkiintoisempaa ja jän-  
nittävämpää. Ja sitä paitsi: tunnet siellä täyttäväsi velvollisuutesi parhaalla tavalla. Kun sota  
loppuu, viimeinen sota, minkä joudumme näkemään ja kokemaan, olet tyytyväinen siitä, että  
näin läheltä sait kokea sodan. (PV to Aune Katara, Kaukola, 15 Aug. 1941)
21. Kivimäki 2013: 270.
22. Kivimäki 2013: 165.
23. Ei tämä sotiminen ollenkaan hullumpaa olisi, ellei täällä olisi niin vailla ystäviä. Kunnan to-  
vereitahan miehet ovat keskenänsä, mutta toveruudesta on jättiläisaskel ystävyYTEEN. Ja jäl-  
kimmäiseen kuuluvia minulla ei ole täällä. Olen sikäli erakkoloune tai miksi sitä nimittäisin,  
etten varauksetta nauti kuin harvojen seurasta. Intiimi ystävyys on elämän ylläpitäjä. Ja täällä,  
jossa joutuu itseksensä mittaamaan kaikki arvot uudelleen, oppii ymmärtämään sen merki-  
tyksen. Ajattelen esimerkiksi erästä opiskelutoveriani, nyt jo valmistunutta, joka viime sodan  
invalidina on rauhan töissä Helsingissä. Innostuksen ja tarmon sanelemilla veljen-kirjeillä  
hän ilahduttaa mieltäni sanomattomasti. Tieto siitä, että suomensukuisten kielten harrastajil-  
le nyt aukeenee laajat työalat, täyttää mielet ilolla. Hän on saman aineen opiskelija kuin minä-  
kin, mutta harrastuksemme kohde tulee olemaan hiukan eroava. (PV to Aune Katara, Rautu,  
5 Oct. 1941)
24. Lahtinen et al. 2011: 21–22.
25. Olet kultainen Aune, verrattomien kaikista maan päällä ponnistelevista. Mainio tapaus. Sinä  
olet ajatusteni keskipiste. Sillä sinä olet minun. Niin ainakin haluaisin, täällä ollessani olen en-  
tistä enemmän tullut ajatelleksi sinua ja yhteisiä touhujamme. Olet tullut erottamattomaksi  
osaksi elämäni. Paljon sanottu, mutta sanotaan nyt joskus. Hiukan vaarallista se lieenee, sano-  
vat vanhat ihmiset. Mutta meidän puhumme vain kahden kesken. Ja sitä paitsi: on sota-aika.  
(PV to Aune Katara, 19–20 July 1941)
26. Unfortunately, Aune's letters to Pertti have not been preserved.
27. Letter dated 27 June 1941 from Pertti Virtaranta to Aune Katara.
28. Oma Auneni: minun on nyt niin hyvä olla ja hyvä lähteä tietäessäni että sinun ajatuksesi  
joskus seuraavat minua. Tiedä että olet kalliimpi kaikkea muuta. Ellei olisi tällaista lupaa  
kirjoittaa. Kuitenkin sen sinulle sanon. Ja lopetan: minun on ikävä sinua rakas Aune. (PV to  
Aune Katara, 18 June 1941)
29. Riittää sodasta yms. Välillä muustakin. – Kerran tuli mieleeni, että kun toisinaan kirjoitan yhtä-  
aikaaisesti sinulle ja kotiini, voisi joskus vallan ymmärrettävästi käydä niin, että pistän toiseen  
paikkaan tarkoitettun kirjeen väärään kirjekuoreen. Kirjeet ovat persoonallisinta tekstiä, mitä  
ajatella saattaa. Sinulle kirjoitan aivan toisin kuin kotiini. Kukaan toinen ei osaisi lukea oikein  
meidän välistämme kirjeenvaihtoa kuin sinä ja minä. (PV to Aune Katara, 28 June 1944)
30. The question of the relationship between text and reality is problematic in this context.  
Although Pertti's letters offer an impression of their relationship, today's reader cannot be  
sure of its true nature.
31. Sara Ahmed (2014: 126) has theorized love and considered its two different manifestations:  
'I want to examine this distinction between self-love and object love, which can also be de-  
scribed in terms of a distinction between identification (love as being) and idealisation (love  
as having).' Pertti's expression of his love for Aune approximates the latter.
32. Täällä rintamalla sinä Aune olet alati mielessäni (ei vain kerran päivässä!). Kun ei tiedetä  
huomisesta mitään, on paras elää menneessä. Sinun kanssasi kuluneet onnelliset hetket elän

- ajatuksissani uudelleen ja en muuta niin hartaasti ja todesti toivo kuin saada tavata sinut, olla sinun kanssasi, omistaa sinut. Tällaisessa touhussa, jossa ”voi joka hetki olla viimeisemme”, sinä – niin etäällä kuin oletkin – olet pysyväisesti seuralaisenani, maskottinani. Eikä parempaa ole kellään toisella – Tauko, koneita päällä. Eivät pommittaneet. (PV to Aune Katara, 14 July 1941)
33. Pertti Virtaranta's letter to Aune Katara, 21 July 1941.
34. Pehkonen 2015: 64.
35. Huuhtanen 1986: 133.
36. During the war women were expected to write to men on the front. Letters were therefore also written out of duty (Hartley 2019: 184).
37. Pertti Virtaranta's letter to Aune Katara, 3 July 1944.
38. Pertti also wrote to several other women during the war. In addition to writing to Aune, he regularly sent letters to a woman named Ansa, whom he, based on letters written to Aune, met at least once during the war. In his letter of 16 March 1944 to Aune, Pertti admits to also corresponding with Ansa, but promises that he will focus only on Aune in the future. It was common for young men in war to have several female correspondents (Huuhtanen 1986: 133).
39. Suunnitelma pikaisesta tempauksestamme on siis luhistunut kokoon. Enkä oikein osaa uusia suunnitella, koska niiden voisi käydä samoin. Mitä siis tehdä? Sinulla on puheenvuoro tässä erittäin pulmallisessa, mutta samalla myös erittäin ajankohtaisessa ja mainiossa asiassa. Etenemme kai yhteistä tietämme normaalissa järjestyksessä, vaikka se onkin hiukan hidasta. Kihlausta varten varmasti saisin everstiltäni 5 vrk:n pikaloman milloin hyvänsä. Milloin anon tuota lomaa? Sano sinä, Aune kulta! (PV to Aune Katara, 16–17 July 1944)
40. Maarit Leskelä-Kärki writes about the significance of correspondence between siblings in maintaining family ties (2007: 25). Virtaranta, as he sought to foster an emotional bond with Aune in his letters, also artfully highlighted his own potential for becoming a loving and committed family man.
41. Pertti Virtaranta later married Helmi Linna, a linguistics student. Virtaranta informed Aune of his engagement to Helmi Linna in a letter written in December 1944 (Pertti Virtaranta's letter to Aune Katara, 15 Dec. 1944)
42. Tunnen oloni juurettomaksi ja vakiintumattomaksi, jos minulla ei ole eukkoa, jota rakastan yli kaiken ja jonka kanssa jaan elämäni. Sodan vastavaikutuksena kodin kaipuu on ylivoimaisen suuri. Ja minä perustan sen pian, koska en tunne pärjääväni muuten maailmassa. Tuletko mukaan, tuohon huikeaan puulaakiin? (PV to Aune Katara, 21 Sept. 1944)

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## PART THREE

# Travels and Transformation



# The Long Journey and Diverse Personae of Rasmus Rask

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The linguistic work of Rasmus Kristian Rask (1787–1832) belongs to the same Golden Age of Danish culture as the plays of Adam Gottlob Oehlenschläger and the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen. Like the magic lamp of Oehlenschläger's *Aladdin*, which Rask carried in his travelling trunk, his genius brought him to the threshold of the greatest linguistic discoveries and generalizations. During the years 1818–1822, Rask undertook a long and arduous journey through the Russian Empire (which by then had already included the Grand Duchy of Finland and the Kingdom of Georgia) and South Asia (Persia, India and Ceylon), attempting to make a comparative classification of the languages he encountered and to gain insights into the distant past of their speakers.

The recognition Rask received in his own country during his lifetime was not commensurate with his posthumous veneration in Denmark. There are, however, two national linguistic and cultural traditions in which his exceptional contribution was immediately recognized and never questioned, namely Icelandic and Finnish. While he devoted most of his life to the study of Icelandic (and spent two years in Iceland in 1813–1815), his formal publication record in the study of Finno-Ugric languages is relatively modest; in fact, his only book on the subject was a Sami grammar, which appeared close to the time of his death in 1832. Nevertheless, he had already made an indelible mark on Finnish and Finno-Ugric studies in 1818 and 1819. Suffice it to say that he named six of the eighteen cases of Finnish nouns, and these names became part of the standard terminology of Finnish grammar. Anders Johan Sjögren, who admired Rask only from a distance, spent his scientific career following in Rask's footsteps. The subsequent Finnish adherents of Rask included Matthias Alexander Castrén, who was completing Rask's and Sjögren's research programme, and E.N. Setälä, who praised Rask's classification of Finno-Ugric languages as essentially correct and guided by his *divinatorisk blick*, 'divinatory gaze' (1888: 103). In 1851, Peter Köppen (Petr Ivanovich Keppen), a former friend of Rask, working on the advice of Sjögren, put that classification in the basis of the first *Ethnographic Map of European Russia* (Köppen 1851: 19–20) and thus, ultimately, of the future administrative subdivisions of modern Russia.

These achievements testify to the great intellectual charisma that Rask possessed at the time, but they are not easy to reconcile with the prevailing images of Rask in Danish and international historiography. To describe these images, we may use the modern concept of a 'scholarly persona', or rather different approaches to this concept

by Herman Paul, Mineke Bosch and others, which are summarized by Lisa Svanfeldt-Winter (2019: 26) as ‘an individual identity construction in response to a collective model of how to be a scholar within a particular context’. One of these images is the ideal scholarly persona of the distinguished professor and staunch patriot. His modest background as a tailor’s son from Brendekilde, a village near the city of Odense, made him a collective project of the Danish nation that had afforded her gifted son such incredible opportunities. Rask may have sometimes aspired to live up to this model, but it was only after his death that the Danish academic community and polite society most successfully imposed it on him. Yet this heroic model has not been able to suppress another prevailing image, shared by many contemporaries and subsequent biographers of Rask, of an embittered and asocial pedant, unlucky in his career and relationships and unable to fully develop his extraordinary gifts.

The modern view of Rask grew out of those competing images. The influential portrayal by Louis Hjelmslev (1951) shows a heroic lone genius who would carry out a programme of studies that was far ahead of his time, despite being misunderstood and even hindered by his contemporaries. As Peter Schmitter (1982: 137–142) observed, the ‘concrete research goals that Rask had set himself’ provided Hjelmslev with the key to understanding his life. A focus on the results rather than the goals led to a different conclusion, of Rask unable to fulfil his ambitious programme due to the ‘decisive change in his spiritual habitus’ that took place during his journey (Diderichsen 1960:145).

In this article, I will look for clues to the development of the multiple personae of Rask in his travel diary and his letters, paying attention to the emotional state of the scholar and the role models he followed at different moments of the journey, including the brief but most noticeable Finnish stage.

### *Rask’s Travelogue*

Rask’s journey to Asia marked a watershed event in his life, but his travel diary has, surprisingly, received only sporadic scholarly attention. The Indian entries indeed make for sad reading, and perhaps they cast a shadow over the whole document. The entries devoted to his travel within the Russian Empire, however, provide a wealth of diverse material. There are many polished entries potentially suitable for a public travelogue. Rask organized and processed his notes weeks and even months after the actual events he described; in part this editing work was probably done while he was staying in Tbilisi (while the entries about Tbilisi itself include random and sometimes obscure notes and observations).

Regrettably, the travel diary has never been published in the Danish original, although it was read, and quoted from, by the Danish biographers of Rask (Petersen 1834; Ronning 1887). In the last third of the last century, Marie Bjerrum transcribed the whole diary (except for terms, book titles and other brief texts in languages with non-Latin alphabets), to prepare it for publication. The publication was never realized.<sup>1</sup>

A few Finnish scholars have made note of the diary’s value. A handwritten copy of the segment concerning Rask’s travel within the Grand Duchy of Finland survives in E.N. Setälä’s papers in the National Archives in Helsinki (Häkli 1987: 135, with reference to E.N. Setälä’s collections. 180. Linguistic data 6). Setälä generously made it

available to his colleagues and students.<sup>2</sup> In 1987, this segment only was published by Esko Häkli. In 2018, I published a Russian translation of the section of the diary related to the Russian Empire, together with relevant letters, a commentary and an index of names, which includes the network of Rask's social and scholarly contacts of that time.

Unlike his diary, many of the surviving letters which Rask wrote during his time spent in the Russian Empire have been published.<sup>3</sup> His epistolary output is diverse linguistically (Rask composed letters in Danish, Icelandic, German, Swedish and Russian) and in terms of positioning (adoption of different personae), which is in part determined by the addressee (childhood friends, casual acquaintances, mentors, peers, aspiring scholars) and the social networks with whom the letter would likely be shared (cf. Jolly & Stanley 2005). Some represent drafts of a scholarly treatise framed by the conventions of address, greeting, farewell and signature. As Rask was not entirely sure whether he would be able to survive the journey and preserve his notes, he might have used the post like a modern scholar would use cloud computing.

A particularly significant corpus of letters addressed to his mentor and friend Rasmus Nyerup, like his more polished entries in the diary, could have been composed with a potentially large audience in mind and thus explicitly aimed at creating a scholarly persona for their author. Rask, like most scholar-travellers of his time, was expected to produce a travelogue to serve the erudite interests of the public back home (Lidström 2015). Most published travelogues in fact used the epistolary or diary form as a literary device, which allowed inclusion of heterogeneous material into a single narrative following the course of a narrator's journey (Minard-Törmänen 2016: 34). Although its objective is to disseminate new knowledge, a 'real life' travelogue can be heavily influenced by preceding fictional and non-fictional texts (compare general remarks on the intertextual connections between a collection of letters and epistolary novels, Tamboukou 2011).

When Rask undertook his journey, Nyerup started a new literary *Magazin for Rejseiagttagelser* aimed at a broad audience and specifically asked Rask to contribute to it. Rask pointed out that he was planning neither to describe his journey, nor to write 'a statistical or artistic description' of the lands he would visit. He could only talk about observations that anyone 'who travels with open eyes' would make, and about experiences 'which intrude themselves upon a traveller, try as he would to avoid them' (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 I: 369–370). Judging by these texts, Rask, despite his assurances to the contrary, did have literary ambitions. His letters from the Russian Empire also show that he zealously performed his role as a travelling scholar, which included an unwritten obligation to share his experiences with the public. Some of the letters, first published by Nyerup, were later included in anthologies of Danish literature as exemplary pieces of travel writing (*Håndbog i den danske literatur* 1866: 440–457).

The letters of this type (addressed not only to Nyerup) can be read together with his diary as a single travelogue describing his two-year journey through the Russian Empire, from Finland to Georgia. Following the classic Scandinavian canon, Rask created a heroic-comical context for his travel, cherishing wordplay and opportunities for misunderstanding; these letters often acquire the flavour of a social satire. He found inspiration in the work of Ludvig Holberg, his favourite author and the creator of comedies, such as *Jakob von Tyboe*, the heroic-comical poem *Peder Paars*, and the satirical fantasy *Nicolai Klimii iter subterraneum* (*The Journey of Niels Klim to the World Underground*). Rask quoted other authors as well, both Scandinavian (Peter Harboe

Frimann, Johan Henric Kellgren) and non-Scandinavian (William Shakespeare, Friedrich von Schiller), but quotations from Holberg are especially characteristic for this period of epistolary activity. The very last one from Holberg in his *epistolarium* is in a letter written before Rask left the borders of the Russian Empire:

I have in the meantime provided myself fairly with weapons; I already had two pistols, my servant has a flintlock, and I have a sabre,  
 ‘which is long and stiff,  
 and fit to defend his life from the enemy’.<sup>4</sup>

The quotation is from *Peder Paars* (1.2.459–460), and it describes a boat hook (*Baadshage*) that the hero of the poem had the good fortune of finding on the shore.

While Holberg provided the heroic-comical model for the image of Rask as a character in his semi-public travelogue, Oehlenschläger may have exercised a deeper, more personal influence. Rask carried a copy of *Aladdin* in his travelling trunk, lent it out frequently, and when it fell apart, gave it to a book binder in Tbilisi (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 II, 2). Hanne Marie Svendsen, author of a novel based on Rask’s life, *The Rudiments of R*, rightly paid attention to this book. The recurring theme in her novel is the identification of her principal character, who reveals the structure of languages with the help of the ‘magic lamp’ of his genius, and Oehlenschläger’s *Aladdin*, both sons of village tailors (Svendsen 2009: 15, 50–51, 143, 160).

### *From Sweden to the Russian Empire*

At the time of his travels (and up to this day) Rask’s greatest claim to fame was his *Undersøgelse om det gamle Nordiske eller Islandske Sprogs Oprindelse* (*Investigation of the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Language*), which was published at the very beginning of 1818, shortly before his arrival in Finland. Because of this book, Rask, who was at that time 31 years of age, is considered one of the founding fathers of Indo-European linguistics, a discipline which compares and classifies the languages of the Indo-European<sup>5</sup> family and tries to make conclusions about their presumed common ancestral language. Among chapters on non-Indo-European languages, the most important chapter in the book appeared to be that on ‘Fennic’, that is, Finnish and Sami languages.

Roughly at the same time, Franz Bopp, another scholar who had undertaken a methodical comparison of Indo-European grammatical systems, published his treatise *Über das Conjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache in Vergleichung mit jenem der griechischen, lateinischen, persischen und germanischen Sprache* (On the system of conjugation of Sanskrit as compared to that of the Greek, Latin, Persian and Germanic languages) in 1816. As Rask completed his text in the summer of 1814, the defenders of his precedence prefer dating his *Investigation of the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Language* with a double date, 1814/1818 (Pedersen 1962: 241; Nielsen 1998: 20–21).

Rask was the first to include the Slavic (Russian and Polish) and Baltic (primarily Lithuanian) languages in his analysis of the Indo-European languages, but this fact did not compensate for the absence of separate sections dedicated to the ancient languages

of Persia and India in his book. Franz Bopp's knowledge of Sanskrit gave him an advantage over Rask in building a scholarly reputation. Sanskrit was in vogue, had an aura of oriental wisdom and antiquity, and was widely regarded as a prerequisite for an academic career. Accordingly, Rask had to broaden his research by mastering and describing the languages of South Asia, which became the objective of his journey.

Technically, the journey started in November 1816, when he sailed from Copenhagen to Kalmar and made the first entry in his travel diary. Rask spent about 15 months in Stockholm, staying with his friend and fellow translator of Old Norse literature Arvid August Afzelius, studying languages, editing Old Norse texts, and publishing an innovative Anglo-Saxon grammar. Among other scholars, he met the Finnish historian and journalist Adolf Ivar Arwidsson, whom he taught Icelandic and English (Sarjala 2020: 139). Due to his expertise in Old Norse language and literature, Rask became a member of important cultural and scholarly networks in this time of romantic nationalism and fascination with the Nordic past, when rethinking the relations between medieval Scandinavian texts and modern literature was at the centre of literary debates (see Blom 2013).

However, Rask's Danish benefactors were not happy with his publishing activities, as the political rivalry between Denmark and Sweden extended to the academic sphere (see Gregersen 2013: \*xviii–\*xix). At the same time, he did not have any secure plans. He did have a small stipend from the University of Copenhagen and an additional larger amount from the wealthy Danish patron of arts and sciences Johan Bülow, but the funds were not enough to continue his journey beyond Stockholm. His precarious position led to a crisis in his relationship with the benefactors, which Rask described in the following way in his diary:

Afzelius and my other supporters talked a lot about how they wanted to keep me in Sweden either at the Royal Library where Icelandic manuscripts were housed, or as a professor at Uppsala University. I neither gave them any specific response nor prevented them from talking. Perhaps I would have accepted one of these rather flattering and lucrative offers had they worked seriously to make them happen, but it all remained idle chatter. However, rumours reached Lund and Copenhagen, which resulted in an unpleasant exchange of letters between me and B[ülo]w and Prof. P.E. Müller. They already considered me a traitor to the fatherland, while at that time, due to the lack of money and funds for further travel I thought about becoming a printer's apprentice and to travel in that capacity.<sup>6</sup>

His *Investigation of the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Language* finally came out, and one of his teachers in Copenhagen, Peter Erasmus Müller, secured for the author a grant from the Danish King Frederick VI and the title of professor. The grant enabled Rask to embark on his great journey to study Sanskrit and other languages of Persia and India, while the title of professor, although it did not guarantee a paid position on his return, proved useful in making scholarly contacts. When he arrived in Finland with his new grant, it was one of the few periods in his life when he was free of financial worries, far from his scholarly rivals, and able to enjoy his recently elevated social standing.

He crossed the Swedish-Russian imperial border in the Sea of Åland in an iceboat, clearing Russian customs in Eckerö on 26 February 1818. He left the Grand Duchy of Finland travelling from Valkeasaari to St. Petersburg on March 27th. During this

month, and especially during his stay in Turku, known to him by its Swedish name Åbo (March 1–18, 1818), he made numerous contacts among the Finnish intellectual elite.

Rask had a crucial impact on the ideas and scholarly career of Gustav Renvall, a docent of Finnish at the Academy of Turku, who was starting work on his Finnish dictionary. Rask was proud of the fact that Renvall adopted his ideas about Finnish systems of conjugation and declension, including the names of six locative cases (although Renvall changed their order, a matter about which Rask later complained). Rask directly influenced the work of other Turku Romantics who worked with the Finnish language such as Reinhold von Becker, and indirectly, through Becker contributed to the work of Elias Lönnrot (Häkli 2017: 10–12).

Rask's enthusiasm for his work was contagious, leaving a deep impression on not only those whom he met but also on those who had only heard about him. Anders Johan Sjögren, the future expert in Finno-Ugric languages, but also Ossetian and Georgian languages, who was completing his course of studies at the Academy of Turku and did not hope to be introduced to the star linguist, wrote in his diary on 11 March 1818: 'The things that I have heard about the famous Danish linguist Rask who is sojourning here now have impressed me most deeply'. Envious of Master of Philosophy Salomon Savenius, to whom Rask proposed accompanying him to the Caucasus, Sjögren wrote: 'How I wished to be in the place of Savenius! Ah, everything is so distorted, and I myself am not worthy of a better destiny.' The next day he added: 'The first thing I thought about were the achievements of Rask. [...] I went to Savenius and at least saw Rask's Icelandic Grammar with various handwritten annotations' (Sjögren 2020: 2466; cf. Dyggve 1932: 141–142).

Rask was also quite an attentive traveller. In fact, his detailed description of the Academy of Turku is uniquely valuable, because the buildings suffered in the fire of 1827, after which tragedy the academy was transferred to Helsinki and revived as the Imperial Alexander University in Finland (now the University of Helsinki).

From Finland, Rask arrived in St. Petersburg on 27 March 1818 and lived there until 13 June 1819. There is considerable literature devoted to Rask's stay in St. Petersburg based on letters to and from Rask and on testimonies of his local acquaintances. That literature has mostly kept a narrow focus on the role of Rask in promoting Scandinavian studies and the scholarly connections between Denmark and Russia (Verner 1874; Thomsen 1874; Jespersen 1918: 30–35; Pochljobkin 1962: 95; Dmokhovskaia 1964: 179–180; Chekin 2011; Zharov 2016; Blom 2017). His knowledge of Old Norse literature was especially important to the scholars who gathered around Count Nikolai Petrovich Rumiantsev and who were establishing a programme for the historical and linguistic study of the Russian Empire. As an introductory gift for Count Rumiantsev, he brought a copy of several texts related to Russian history; this autograph manuscript by Rask is preserved in the Rumiantsev archives of the Russian State Library in Moscow (Российская государственная библиотека, отдел рукописей, ф. 256, № 609) and deserves further study (Rask 2018: 15, 106, 202). He helped with the systematization of the Scandinavian part of Rumiantsev's book collection and with the acquisition of new items. He provided recommendations and advice to Andreas Johannes Hipping who was Rumiantsev's librarian in 1820–1823 and to Anders Johan Sjögren who became Hipping's successor in 1823. Thus, Rask played a role in the development of the future Rumiantsev Museum which subsequently grew into the Russian State Library.

One of the scholars who sought Rask's mentorship and advice, Ivan Nikolaevich Loboiko, wrote in his memoir how he 'wept tears of utter bliss' after having listened to Rask explaining new philological ideas (Loboiko 2013: 53; Rask 2018: 145). From Rask, Loboiko learned Danish, and in 1821 published a review of Icelandic literature, in which he demonstrated its significance for a study of Old Russian history. Besides the merits of that review, the title of 'a disciple of the peerless Rask' (Rask 2018: 13, 159) increased Loboiko's standing in Rumiantsev's circle and may have helped him to attain a professorship of Russian literature at the Imperial University of Vilna in January 1822.

While advocating for Scandinavian literature in St. Petersburg, Rask continued his old battle with the 'German spirit' and German ideas. He considered the late German linguist Johann Christoph Adelung his main adversary in this literary battle and protested against Adelung's neglect of the Icelandic language (and against the very term Germanic which Adelung applied to the whole linguistic group). However, even that battle lost some urgency after he was welcomed by the German-Russian academics in St. Petersburg such as Friedrich Georg Adelung (a nephew of the great linguist), Johann Philipp Krug and Christian Martin Joachim Frähn. Moreover, it looks like Rask at least temporarily subscribed to the imperial *Kulturträger* programme. A new publication of letters from Gustaf Renvall to Rask demonstrates that it was in fact Rask who insisted that Renvall provide definitions in Latin and German – as opposed to Swedish, which Renvall and many potential users of his dictionary in Finland, especially Archbishop of Turku Jacob Tengström, would have preferred (*Rasmus Rasks korrespondens* 2017: 21, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 74).

Among other efforts to help his Finnish acquaintances, he secured the funding to publish a Russian-Swedish dictionary to be authored by the lecturer (*docens*) of Russian history and literature at the Academy of Turku Erik Gustaf Ehrström. This fundamental dictionary was never completed. A bound copy of the advance sheets of the first volume has been recently located at the Royal Library of Stockholm (Rask 2018: 210–211; Chekin 2021).

In Rask's diary and letters, we find evidence of his studies of a large variety of languages, not necessarily related to his planned journey. In August 1818, for example, he had an opportunity to interview a speaker of the Aleut language, Markel, and confirmed its affinity to Greenlandic. The first to suggest the affinity between the Aleut and Inuit languages seems to have been one of Rask's new St. Petersburg friends, Friedrich Adelung (1817: 248–255), who may have also granted him access to additional manuscript material (cf. Thalbitzer 1921: 49). His scholarly programme became much broader than what his patrons in Copenhagen had ever envisioned for him. Throughout his Russian period, Rask was working on the idea of a 'Scythian' linguistic community of languages, which was separate from the Indo-European family and would include Finno-Ugric, Turkic, Mongolian, Evenki, Greenlandic, Basque, Georgian and other languages. Moreover, he did not limit his agenda even with perfecting his universal classification of languages, with uncovering their affinities and the ancient history of their speakers. According to Alicja Sakaguchi, it was probably in St. Petersburg where Rask started thinking about a future universal language for the whole of humanity (Rask 1996: 9–10).

In St. Petersburg, Rask appears as a critic of the local theatrical scene, leaving a description of the famous performance of *Iphigenia in Aulis* with Semenova the Senior as

Clytemnestra (Rask 2018: 54, 102–103). He was interested in Russian literature but had no tolerance for the still fashionable sentimental school and criticized Nikolai Karamzin for *megen næsten væmmelig Ordbram og mange skæve Tanker*, ‘a lot of almost nauseating turgidity and many crooked thoughts’ (Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 389 ek oktav 1, [109]). His descriptions and opinions are unique because of his social background. It may look like the time of Alexander I is well known to us, but the only available perspective has been that of the privileged classes. The *raznochintsy* (Russian intellectuals not belonging to the gentry), would first find their voice a couple decades later. Rask can be seen as their predecessor.

Rask’s diverse occupations distracted him from preparing for his trip to India. He was in no hurry to leave and attempted to change his plans and postpone the trip; he even thought about going back to Copenhagen for a year to study a new collection of Indian books at the University Library. He received yet another rebuke from Peter Erasmus Müller, who reminded Rask that he had acquired both his professorial title and the government funds on the presumption that he would go to India, and not completing the journey as planned would bring discredit upon both Rask and his sponsors (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 I: 360–361).

At one point in late 1818, Rask suggested to Count Rumiantsev a plan for an expedition to study the Finno-Ugric tribes of Russia, which could have delayed the Indian journey by another two years. The count had been thinking about such an expedition since 1816 (Teriukov 2003: 26); he admired the scholarship of Rask and supported other scholars’ projects on Rask’s advice (including Renvall’s dictionary). Nevertheless, he rejected the hastily arranged plan (Rask 2018: 115). Perhaps the count, who was not only a patron of arts, but also a brilliant organizer of research, understood that Rask was not suited for fieldwork, which at that time could be extremely taxing, both physically and psychologically.

As a result, Rask had no other option<sup>7</sup> but to continue travelling south, via Moscow, Sarepta, Astrakhan and Mozdok, meeting public officials, scholars and clerics, even striking up a friendship with a serf. Indeed, his readiness to cross the boundaries of class and strata set him apart from others who were describing Russian society during the time of Alexander I. His travel within the Russian Empire ended with a four-month stay in Tbilisi (November 1819 through March 1820), where he further developed his classification of languages, thought about his project of a new universal language, often dined with the de facto Governor, Major General Roman Ivanovich von der Howen, and, as can be deduced from a draft of a letter to Rasmus Nyerup written in a mix of Danish and German, discussed language policy with Russian-German colonial administrators (Chekin 2017; Rask 2018: 21–22). There are important concordances between his writings and the works of the famous poet and diplomat Aleksandr Sergeevich Griboedov, whom Rask met at von der Howen’s table (Rask 2018: 192, 215).

A large part of Rask’s correspondence from Tbilisi is devoted to a humorous description of the German colonists who had settled near the city in anticipation of the imminent second coming of Christ, which they expected in the immediate future. Rask was once invited to a wedding of one of the colonists and, according to his letter to Árni Helgason dated 7 February 1820, he had a really good time, dancing till daybreak with the bride and her girlfriends despite the disapproval of the more pious members of the colony (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 II: 9–10). Rask, the son a village tailor,

is perhaps the only person in Tbilisi at that time to have both dined with the governor and attended a wedding in a farming community.

### *An Aversion to All Things Asiatic*

From Tbilisi Rask proceeded through Tehran and Shiraz, boarded a ship in Bushire on the Persian Gulf and in late September 1820 reached the coast of India at Bombay. In his letter dated 5 October 1820, P.E. Müller reminded Rask that more money had been allocated from various Danish funds towards the Asian part of his journey than to any other scientific expedition since the Middle Eastern adventure of Carsten Niebuhr (also a man of a very modest background) in the 1760s (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 II: 20).

Both expeditions were tragic for different reasons. Of the six participants of Niebuhr's expedition, only Niebuhr himself survived and returned to Copenhagen. Rask's expedition was a one-man undertaking. After his arrival in Shiraz in Persia, Rask became physically sick. He still could productively work, especially in Bombay in the fall of 1820, but in the spring of 1821 suffered a mental breakdown, apparently when he was travelling from Agra by boat along the Yamuna and the Ganges. It is probable that exhaustion and overwork exacerbated the persecution mania which he had at times exhibited before. As we learn from his diary, he suspected the soldiers who accompanied him of stealing from him and scheming to poison him. He eavesdropped on the conversations but could not understand their exact meaning; even his linguistic abilities had their limit. The conflicts would not stop, and Rask entered in his diary: *Soldaten blev så utålrig, at jeg slog ham*, 'The soldier was so insufferable that I hit him' (Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 389 ek oktav 1, [162]).

In this condition, on 1 May 1821, he arrived in the Danish colony of Serampore (Frederiksnagore) near Calcutta where he took up residence at the home of the Regiment Surgeon, Captain Dr. Christopher Mundt (1793–1828). He still felt threatened, this time by the doctor's servants. An investigation conducted by the chief of police did not help. Rask could not work safely in the doctor's home. Dr. Mundt described his painful relationship with his *galen* ('insane') guest in a detailed letter to an unknown addressee (for its edition, with notes based on Rask's diary, see Petersen 1903).

In 1936 the psychiatrist Mogens Ellermann tried to establish the relationship between artistic genius and different psychiatric disorders, fine-tuning the hypothesis of Cesare Lombroso and following the lines of thinking of Paul Julius Möbius and Hans Prinzhorn. Among several case studies in Ellermann's book Rask was the only scholar. Ellermann analysed available evidence and decided that Rask suffered from 'incurable *dementia paranoides*' (that is, schizophrenia). Ellermann alleged that this psychiatric disorder was the 'sister illness' of Rask's tuberculosis.<sup>8</sup> His death from tuberculosis shortly before his 45<sup>th</sup> birthday saved him, according to the medical researcher, from complete insanity (Ellermann 1936: 68–79). The problem of a 'mad scientific genius' is still very controversial (Simonton 2013: 256–257). To my knowledge, there have been no more recent attempts to 'diagnose' Rask or verify Ellerman's claim.

Rask managed to survive the first major acute attack and markedly improved in Madras by the autumn of 1821. The turning point was marked by a new discovery; he was probably the first to have noticed similarities between the Uralic and Dravidian

languages (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 II: 45–47). Ove Nordstrand, who studied his stay in Ceylon (30 November 1821 – 19 August 1822), considered it, despite the physical ailments and material difficulties he endured, an especially happy and productive time (Nordstrand 1961: 76). Still, Rask returned to Denmark (on 5 May 1823) with, as he put it, ‘an aversion to all things Asiatic’.<sup>9</sup>

He never published anything on Sanskrit, and the first book by Rask to appear after his trip was a grammar of the Spanish language written in Danish. The book is a valuable piece of scholarship, which has been confirmed by its translation into Spanish (Rask 2001), and it fits neatly into his project of creating grammars for various languages according to a single plan, but its timing perplexed his friends and successors. To be fair, Rask’s Asian journey did result in important acquisitions of manuscripts and books for the Copenhagen University Library, in a major publication on the Avestan language (initially completed in English in Madras in 1821 in the form of an ‘epistolary treatise’ addressed to the Governor of Bombay, Mountstuart Elphinstone<sup>10</sup>), and in a booklet on Sinhalese script (printed in Colombo in 1822). When it was necessary for him to contribute a new study of an ‘Oriental’ topic, he chose the problem of the transliteration of Georgian and Armenian texts, which became both the first publication of his material from a happier part of his journey and the final publication during his lifetime (the work was printed between 1–10 November 1832, and he died on 14 November 1832).<sup>11</sup>

Another, perhaps even larger source of disappointment, was his refusal to entertain polite society with the tales of his adventures, let alone amaze them with a new world view, like the quintessential traveller-scholar Alexander von Humboldt. Nicolai Christian Levin Abrahams recounts an incident that took place after Rask’s return from his Asian voyage in 1823. Abrahams and several other young people visited Rask in Rasmus Nyerup’s apartment, expecting to hear about the famous traveller’s adventures. Their anticipation went unfulfilled: ‘Rask essentially did not tell us anything; he was shyly shrinking in the corner... Rask had gone abroad in pursuit of language and had obviously looked neither right nor left’ (Abrahams 1876: 179–180).

We now know that 1823 was in fact not such a sad year for Rask, who had met his ‘first and no doubt last love’ on board the ship on his way back from India and until May 1824 still nourished hopes for a happy family life.<sup>12</sup> But similar testimonies after his painful experience in South Asia helped perpetuate the image of Rask as a man travelling in his study utterly oblivious to the world around him. Back home he continued generating great ideas, but he also engaged in bitter fights with his opponents and broke relationships with well-wishers. He still would not concentrate on what his benefactors and some of his colleagues considered his main goal. The results of his ‘extracurricular’ studies were often ahead of his time, and his contemporaries could not appreciate them, which did not help his academic career. He received his first permanent teaching position as the extraordinary professor of Oriental languages of the University of Copenhagen only in December 1831. After hearing the news of his appointment, he famously said, *jeg frygter det er for silde*, ‘I am afraid it is too late’ (Jespersen 1918: 58).

His passionate work on Danish orthography generated ridicule from such adversaries as Christian Molbech, who on 10 July 1826 related to Jacob Grimm a ‘publicly known’ witticism of the king who ‘was surprised that he had not yet seen any fruit of Rask’s years-long journey other than a null above the A’ (*Briefwechsel der Gebrüder Grimm* 1885: 188). The king had in mind the letter *å*, for which Rask had advocated,

and which had finally replaced the digraph *aa* in the Danish alphabet only after the orthographic reform of 1948.

His general reputation during the last period of his life was of a withdrawn, difficult, rather boring and asocial scholar, who wrote prolifically on various topics except those that the scholarly community expected from him. After Rask's death of tuberculosis in 1832, N. F. S. Grundtvig wrote an epitaph, lamenting Rask as 'the sacrificial priest' of the 'languages in the Kingdom of the Dead' who was 'sitting like runestone' 'among the rattle of the dead bones' with 'no poetry' in his ingenious writings (1883: 522–525).

### *The Hero Scholar*

Soon after his death, Danish public opinion began reshaping Rask as an ideal hero-scholar who was finally meeting the public's expectations. In 1842 a beautiful stone was erected over his grave; on this occasion David Monies, at the beginning of his career as a portrait painter of the Danish Golden Age, made a lithograph portrait of Rask, based on the only lifetime image of 1818, but with certain corrections; a significant difference, as Frans Gregersen (2013: \*ix) noted, 'is that in 1818 Rask is pictured in typical peasant clothes, whereas he is dressed like a gentleman professor in the 1842 version.' This post-humous portrait became the most popular image of Rask, and it was copied many times.



Rask in 1818 before his arrival in Finland. From *Edda Sæmundar hinns fróða, collectio carminum veterum scaldorum Sæmundiana dicta, quam ex recensione Erasmi Christiani Rask curavit Arv. Aug. Afzelius*. Holmiae: typis Elmenianis, 1818. Inset between the title page and the preface.



Engraving by Johan Georg Leander Pauli after the posthumous lithograph portrait of Rask by David Monies. From *Illustreret Tidende* 29.8 (20 November 1887), 85.

The gravestone of Rask has inscriptions in four languages (Arabic, Sanskrit, Icelandic and Danish) using four writing systems (Arabic, Devanagari, Runic and Danish). As Otto Jespersen (1918: 60) bitterly remarked, the selection of alphabets demonstrated the memorial committee's erudition but contradicted Rask's own opposition to the diversity of writing systems, which he saw as a barrier to enlightenment and international communication. The inscription in Sanskrit, the language which his benefactors had essentially forced upon Rask, also testified to the committee's failure to grasp the life and work of the great scholar (cf. Nielsen 2008: 34).

The inscription in Danish is taken from an oft-quoted but long-lost letter from 1825. In the letter Rask allegedly rejects an offer of a librarianship in Edinburgh: 'One owes to the fatherland everything one can give.' Later these words were also engraved on a memorial stone on the site of his childhood home in Brendekilde in commemoration of the centennial of his birthday. The phrase evolved into Rask's most famous, and the scholar himself came to be viewed as an exponent of the Danish national idea.<sup>13</sup> Curiously, these words resemble the formula in the letter from P.E. Müller to Rask dated 6 May 1817 ('each of us... owes everything to the fatherland'). Müller reproaches Rask for his extensive scholarly plans related to Sweden. 'Had the fatherland provided no assistance', asks Müller rightly, albeit somewhat haughtily, in the same letter, would 'a son of a peasant from Funen have given lectures in Stockholm and glorified his name in the world of scholarship?' Both in his lifetime and after his death Rask was a collective project of Danish scholarly community which tried to confine him within the rigid framework of its requirements and expectations; the posthumous scholarly persona of Rask obviously included service to the nation as one of the guiding principles and values.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Rask's general reputation in his native Denmark kept growing while his diverse heritage determined the prominent role of the Danes in the history of linguistics. The founder of the fundamental dictionary of the Danish language Karl Verner Hornemann Dahlerup (1902: 1023–1024) noted that 'almost every serious 19<sup>th</sup>-century Danish linguist is either a direct or indirect disciple of Rask'. Recently, Frans Gregersen (2013: \*xxix) stated with even more assurance that 'all Danish linguists are, whether they are aware of this or not, pupils of Rask'. Historians of linguistics and philosophers of language are still discovering new aspects of his legacy, paying attention to his 'premature discoveries', works that were far ahead of his time.

### *The Album amicorum of Peter Köppen*

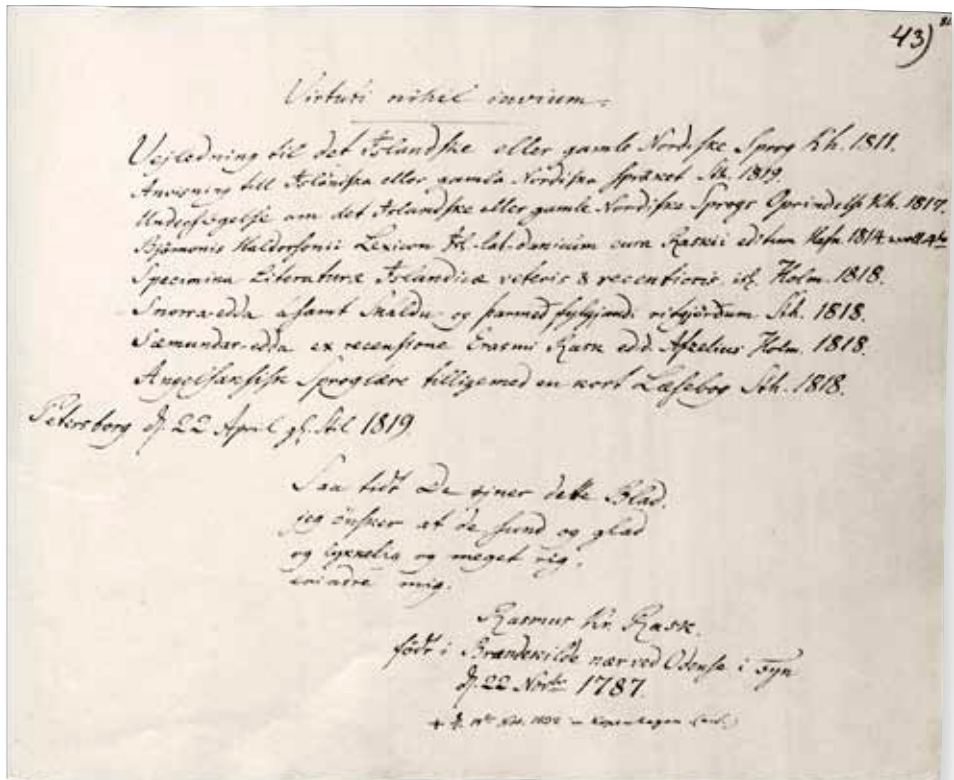
Reading Rask's travelogue and studying the reception of his work in national historiographies, we tend to encounter multiple and sometimes contradictory personae of the Danish scholar, ones which were imposed on him both in his lifetime and posthumously. It is not uncommon for the biographers of Rask to merge his personae from different origins and periods.

An interesting example of a document that has been treated anachronistically is an entry by Rask in the *Album amicorum* ('Album of Friends', that is, an autograph collection) of Peter Köppen dated 22 April 1819 Old Style. The entry starts with a favourite motto of Rask: *Virtuti nihil invium* (Nothing is inaccessible to courage).<sup>14</sup>

Rask then lists his main publications and adds a humorous verse, most probably of his own composition:

Saa tidt De øjner dette Blad,  
jeg ønsker at de, sund og glad  
og lykkelig og meget rig,  
erindre mig

(‘As you look upon this leaf, I wish that you, healthy and happy, and full of joy, and very rich – remember me!’). Rask concludes with his signature and his birthplace and date (St. Petersburg, ИРЛИ [Пушкинский дом] РАН, №10.102, fol. 43).



Rask's entry in Peter Köppen's album. The bottom line, in Köppen's hand, indicates the date and place of Rask's death. St. Petersburg, ИРЛИ [Пушкинский дом] РАН, №10.102, fol. 43, reproduced with permission of Pushkinskii dom.

A very meticulous and devoted Rask scholar, Marie Bjerrum, looked at this entry (1959: 21) claiming that it testified to Rask's flight from the outside world and to his close identification with his works. Why otherwise would he fill his page in the album with the boring details of his publications and date and place of his birth? Bjerrum did not see the album in its entirety and only could view the photograph of that page, which she had received from Leningrad.<sup>15</sup> However, Peter Köppen, the owner of the album, was a bibliographer who requested that his friends provide a short biography

and a list of their main publications. This was rather unusual for the Russian-German literary album culture (Alekseev 1960; Vatsuro 1979: 19). In the context of the album, the entry by Rask, contrary to Bjerrum's reading, presents him as a scholar who at that time saw no limits to his strengths and capabilities (hence the epigraph), but who was not consumed with a sense of his own importance (hence the light-hearted verse).

The same album contains an entry dated 28 May 1821, by Ivan Loboiko, who had studied Danish with Rask, and who here on fol. 51, wrote an ironic self-assessment: 'Talks a lot, does little. He likes to boast about his social and scholarly connections with Linde, Rask, and Vuk Stefanović [Karadžić] and tries to emulate their achievements. [...] He has a strong desire to learn the Lithuanian language in order to enrich our national history and language with new sources, and he learned Danish with the same intention' (Loboiko 2013: 6). On the reverse side of this leaf (fol. 51v) is a previously unidentified excerpt from Oehlenschläger's *Palnatoke*. The text coincides with the printed version in Oehlenschläger 1809: 42. Exceptions are the erroneous spelling of the title in the bottom, one small orthographic difference in the text (*skjønne* > *skjonne*; in this transitional period in Rask's orthography, he was still more likely to spell *skj*-, compare *Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1968 III.2: 518–519) and one mistake (*Urtegaarden* > *Undergaarden*, probably corrected from *Untergaarden*).<sup>16</sup> I suspect that Loboiko never held Oehlenschläger's book in his hands, but had simply memorized the lines copied for him by Rask, with their message of primeval heroic 'strength and piety' embodied by the poem's Old Norse hero. Now we can add *Palnatoke* to the list of literary models which sustained Rask during his long journey.

## Conclusion

The letters and the travel diary of Rask, as well as his entry in Köppen's album bear witness to the vital importance of the emotional and mental state of a scholar in the history of ideas. The initial part of the journey marked a bright period in Rasmus Rask's difficult career. His brief sojourn in Turku in March 1818 'set the course for research in many fields of language studies' (Korhonen 1986: 35). The same can be said of his subsequent year in St. Petersburg, where he continued to attract new followers and admirers. Both his own writings and the testimony of his Finnish and Russian acquaintances present an image of Rask that would have surprised those who knew him after his return to Copenhagen in 1823. He appears as the author of letters full of wit and humour and as an interlocutor in fascinating conversations, certainly not as the boring and shy figure who shrank into the corner of Rasmus Nyerup's apartment. His scholarly persona of the first period of his journey depended on the heroic-comical, satirical and romantic literary models such as Holberg's *Journey of Niels Klim* and *Peder Paars* and Oehlenschläger's *Aladdin* and *Palnatoke*.

After his mental breakdown in South Asia, he regained his creative abilities, but he no longer aroused the enthusiasm of the scholarly public, whose expectations he refused to meet. It was only after his death that he was elevated to the status of a heroic scholar and exponent of the Danish national idea. At the same time biographers of Rask have adopted Nikolai Christian Levin Abrahams' point of view, claiming that Rask 'travelled in his study', that he shut himself off from the outside world and pursued his own programme, however logical, though incomprehensible to his contemporaries.

This point of view may have been one reason why Rask's travel diary was never published in Denmark.

The concept of multiple personae may require us to adjust our understanding of Rask's work. To do so, we must examine each document related to his journey on its own terms and in its own context.

## Appendix

### A letter from Rasmus Rask to Rasmus Nyerup.<sup>17</sup>

#### *Vyborg in Finland, 24 March 1818*

Finally, I am more than 10 miles east of the former border of Sweden.<sup>18</sup> Here all kinds of languages and dialects are spoken, so that I now can most likely hold a conversation in more than ten different languages, 'a maa la mej te,' etc.<sup>19</sup> In the house where I am staying, the maid speaks Finnish, the yard-keeper Swedish, a porter, who at the same time happens to be a valet, German, and my host is Italian!<sup>20</sup> When they come together, it is double the fun. Otherwise, Vyborg is a dirty little town which can be compared to Korsør, although it is much larger and is not that densely built over. Here they have a high school and an old castle which now serves as a jail. Professor would be hardly entertained by either a description of other city splendours or by that of the last leg of my journey here, when I made two and a half Swedish miles in more than four hours, although I had wisely purchased a whip in Åbo.<sup>21</sup> My journey through Finland was very pleasant and highly interesting, however. I decided to go through Tavastehus and Vilmansstrand to see and hear the most authentic Finns, although I had been given advice (even in Tavastehus) to travel along the coast where most of the people speak Swedish. I did not regret my decision, except once when I had an inexperienced little lad, a mere child, as my driver.<sup>22</sup> The horse startled, toppled us over and started with a jerk. My travel trunk fell on my left knee, hit it, and sprained it in such a way that I believed that my foot was broken. I was ten Swedish miles away from Tavastehus and fifteen from Vyborg, and no one in this part knew a word in Swedish or German. Luckily, the injury was not as great as I imagined. On the next day, I covered another ten Swedish miles and now I have almost completely regained my health. In Åbo I applied all my life's energy to studying Finnish, and the peasants are surprised with my fluency in this language (which in fact is not that great), especially when they hear that I am a Dane, which fact, however, is hard to convey to them, since they do not know what Denmark is. They say instead *Juutin-maa* (that is, Jutland). One evening, when I told my hostess who was a talkative and honest woman, where I was from, and asked her whether she had hosted many Danes (*Jutes*) before me, she replied in Swedish: 'Åh, jo vist kommer här ibland tocke der Judar och Italienare!'<sup>23</sup> I was surprised by her mastery of Swedish and asked whether her husband had been a Swede, to which she replied: 'Ja min man var tysk i världen, han var från Småland!'<sup>24</sup> Even the educated classes are not too strong in geography; for example, one pastor whom I asked which is the easternmost Finnish language and people and whether it is the Finns, the Lapps or the Russians who dwell between Finland and the White Sea etc.? – said in response: 'Jag vet ikke hvem det är som bor der borta vid Kamschatka!'<sup>25</sup> At the same time, the Finns are extremely decent, kind and modest. In Åbo, I also met a person who was quite strong in Finnish, namely, Lecturer Renvall. He gave me lessons for 14 days every evening from 5 till 9 or 10. It was infinitely flattering for me to find out that the same system of Finnish declensions and conjugations which I had proposed in my prize essay was now adopted in its entirety and implemented in the draft manuscript of a new grammar which he showed and loaned to me.

I am deeply immersed in the studies of language and customs of Finns in preparation for research of the Fennic<sup>26</sup> tribes of Russia, and especially of the origins of Greenlandic language, about which I could perhaps write a thesis in due time. Professor probably remembers my idea about that in my prize essay; here I have developed it much further.

P.S. Since I did not find an opportunity either to implement my plan in Vyborg or continue studying Finnish, I hurried away from this expensive<sup>27</sup> and unpleasant city after a three-day stay there. Therefore, I did not send out this letter and can report now that I have arrived in St. Petersburg safely and am sitting behind my desk up to my ears in the Russian language.

## Notes

1. Both Rask's diary and Bjerrum's copy (with her introductory notes) are preserved in the Royal Library in Copenhagen.
2. Such as Eemil Aukusti Ekman (Tunkelo), who studied the involvement of Rasmus Rask in Gustav Renvall's dictionary (1899: 21, fn. 1), and Kuuno A. Talvioja (2004: 195–196, n. 27), a biographer of Jaakko Juteini.
3. The work is far from being completed and will hopefully continue online. A standard of perfection today is the publication of Hugo Schuchardt's epistolarium at <https://schuchardt.uni-graz.at/korrespondenz>.
4. Jeg har imidlertid forsynet mig temmelig vel med Vaaben, to Pistoler havde jeg allerede, min Tjener har en Flint og jeg en Sabel, / som er vel lang og stiv, / og tjenlig Fienden at holde fra sit Liv. (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 II: 3).
5. Rask himself at different times called these languages Caucasian, Sarmatian or Japhetian. The term 'Indo-European', apparently first coined by Thomas Young in 1813, is the modern designation for this linguistic family. It is used everywhere except in the German-speaking countries, where scholars prefer the term *indogermanisch* (Nielsen 1998: 21–22).
6. Afzelius og mine andre Velyndere talte meget om at ville beholde mig i Sverrig enten ved det kongelige Bibliotek i Stokholm, hvor de isl. Håndskrifter forvares eller som Professor ved Universitetet i Upsala; jeg svarte ikke synderlig hertil, men lod dem snakke. Dog havde jeg maaskje antaget et af disse såre smigrende og fordelagtige Tilbud, hvis de havde arbejdet alværlig på at sætte dem i Virkelighed, med det blev ved en utrolig Snakken derom og Rygtet udsprede sig til Lund og København fra hvilket sidste det forårsagede mig Ubehageligheder i Brevvekslingen med Bw. og Prof. P. E. Müller, som allerede omså mig for Fædrenelandets Forræder på samme Tid, som jeg af Mangel på Penge og Midler til at fortsætte Rejsen tænkte på at blive Bogtrykkersvend og rejse som Svend. (Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, NKS 389 ek oktav 1, [18–19].)
7. However, Loboiko mentioned in an 1856 version of his memoirs the position of head interpreter at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Asian Department, which Vasilii Fedorovich Timkovskii, an officer at the department, had offered to Rask. The Danish scholar had allegedly declined this lucrative offer because by accepting it, 'he should have renounced his fatherland and thwarted all hopes it had put on him' (Loboiko 2013: 136–137; Rask 2018: 152). Rask's travel diary mentions nothing about such offer.
8. More recent medical data may support an association between tuberculosis and schizophrenia, see Monistrol-Mula, Felez-Nobrega, Oh, Haro and Koyanagi 2024.
9. Johan von Bülow quoted these words (*De siger: "af Lede til alt det asiatiske"*) in his letter dated August 31 [1825] (*Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 II: 75; for the date of the letter see *ibid.* 1968 III.1: 276).
10. For a critical edition of English and Danish versions, see Rask 1932–1933, 2: 125–208. The Danish version was published in Copenhagen in 1826 and one in English (which differs from

- the manuscript completed in Madras) was published posthumously in London in 1834.
11. For an assessment of this important but long-forgotten work, see Boeder 2023. I thank Marine Ivanishvili for this reference.
12. On his unsuccessful marriage proposal, probably to Pauline Boalth (1800–1856), see Diderichsen 1960: 214, fn. 20. The quote is from Petersen 1834: 77. The correspondence between Rask and his prospective bride including Rask's proposal sent on 18 April 1824 and the rejection received on May 11 was destroyed by his brother H.K. Rask on 22 August 1871.
13. There are discrepancies between the language of both inscriptions: "Sit Fædreneland skylder man Alt hvad man kan udrette" in the pamphlet describing the gravestone (Beretning om Gravmælet over Prof. R. Rask 1842: 5); "Vort Fædreneland skylder man alt hvad man kan udrette" on the gravestone as I saw it in April 2015; FÆDRELANDET SKYLDER MAN ALT HVAD MAN KAN UDRETTE on the memorial stone in Brendekilde.
14. He entered this motto two times in his collection of quotes and aphorisms, Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Additamenta 200 oktav. Ultimately, the phrase goes back to Tacitus (Agricola 27).
15. Two copies of this photograph are preserved together with the accompanying letter signed by V[alerii Pavlovich] Berkov and dated in Leningrad, 29 January 1958. Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Acc. 1990/179.
16. I am grateful to Hans Basbøll who first remarked on these differences in his e-mail sent on 7 January 2020.
17. The original letter was lost. Published in: *Magazin for Rejseiagttagelser* 1820 1: 91–93; Rask 1834 1: 54–56; *Breve fra og til Rasmus Rask* 1941 1: 301–303; Finnbogi Guðmundsson 2002: 59–60. Translated into German: *Finnische Sprache und Literatur* 1821: 15–16 and into Russian: Rask 2018: 37–38.
18. Prior to 1809 (when Sweden ceded its territories in Finland to Russia in accordance with Friedrichsham Peace Treaty) the border between Sweden and Russia ran along the Kymmene (Kymijoki) River. One old Swedish mile is 10,688.54 m.
19. A reference to Ludvig Holberg's comedy, *Jakob von Tyboe, eller den Stortalende Soldat*: 'I understand more than 10 languages. For example, I can say in 10 ways: 'I have to get ready' (*Jeg maa lave mig til*)... In Jutish: *Ame lame til*' (2.2).
20. Rask stayed with Giovanni (Johan) Pietro Motti (1771–1833), who owned a hotel in Vyborg. Motti also appeared in a travel account from 1829: 'Vyborg, a city famous for its pretzels, a picturesque castle, and Signor Motti's hotel, where we stayed' (Kern 1987: 81). For more about him, see Hirn 1963; de Anna 2012: 74–76. I am grateful to Nathanaëlle Minard-Törmänen for bibliographic advice.
21. Compare: 'With all respect due travellers, they nevertheless very much take care of their horses, and at times one cannot avoid urging them on. That is why it is not useless, while still in the city, to arm yourself with your own whip'. (Grot 1840: 73).
22. Compare: 'If a traveler would like to drive himself or brings his own driver, he does not have to take anyone from the station; otherwise, he is joined by a carter, whose duty is often performed by a boy of ten to twelve years of age. This happens mostly when farm work keeps adults from travelling'. (*Ibid.*).
23. 'Oh, of course these Jews and Italians come here sometimes!' *Jyder* (the Jutes) sounds similar to *Judar* (the Jews).
24. 'Yes, my husband was German in this world, he was from Småland!'
25. 'I do not know who those are who live over there near Kamchatka!'
26. *Finnisk* (as opposed to *finsk*, 'Finnish'). In the classification developed by Rask in 1818–1819, this term in a wider sense was applied to Finno-Ugric peoples and languages, and in narrower sense – to the Volga Finns, Baltic Finns and the Sami.
27. For another complaint about the unreasonably expensive food and wine in Motti's hotel, see Carr 1805: 131.

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# Positive Emotions and Inclusion in a Community of Folklorists

Elsa Enäjärvi and Martti Haavio in Correspondence with Friends, 1918–1928<sup>1</sup>

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Martti Haavio (1899–1973), who would later become a leading Finnish scholar and professor of Finnish folklore at the University of Helsinki, moved to the capital to begin his studies in September of 1918.<sup>2</sup> As a new arrival at the university, he wrote about his quest to understand academic life and studies to his best friend, Lauri Hakulinen (1899–1985), who was still living in their old school town Turku:

For the mazes of Minos' labyrinth are straightforward in comparison to the physical and mental mazes of this white house. See! Here, the student is an individual, whom no grapevine trellis supports. Even the smallest and most futile issue must be figured out on one's own. And that certainly demands a fair bit of running about! For the customs are strange and inherited from antiquity. Messrs deans and curators and notaries and professors must be sought from their homes, while auditoria, faculty premises, student nation premises are scattered around this vast city [...]

So, try to figure that out! Weekly, one must run up one aisle and down another, to hunt down Messrs students of various faculties, counties, nations and religions, in the hope that these eminences would spare a word or two to the yellow-capped freshman, who with a bent-over back and with the white collar all stiff and high, with their neck outstretched and with ears transformed into phonographs stands before them, begging for a 'foretaste of wisdom' X! But once one eventually figures it all out, a human being, and in particular the *civis academicus*, is in seventh, I dare say seventeenth, heaven.<sup>3</sup>

Haavio's letters not only describe the struggles and joys of being new to the academic world but also his enthusiasm for the subjects he studied and the nationalistically driven intellectual and political life in Helsinki. His letters from his early years in academia portray a transformative time, starting with the bewilderment of a new student and leading to a feeling of belonging in his field and deeper integration into the community of folk culture scholars.

How did students and junior scholars in practice navigate these mazes of academia and reach such a feeling of belonging in their academic community? This chapter studies some of these integrating occasions and processes by exploring how they were portrayed with expressions of positive emotions. By looking at written portrayals of

emotions, we can identify frameworks of how members of the academic community could and were expected to express their feelings about their studies and academic life, that is, the frameworks for what Barbara H. Rosenwein calls an *emotional community* (Rosenwein 2002: 842). I suggest that the accounts of emotions related to academia in these letters can be read as the authors' attempts to negotiate and establish their place in an emotional community of scholars dedicated to the study of folk poetry and culture.

As a main source material, I use letters by two folklorists, Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi (previously Eklund, later Enäjärvi-Haavio, 1901–1951), to study how their letters illuminate practices of letter-writing to friends within related academic disciplines. To a lesser extent, I have also supported my analyses with their diaries and other writings. Of Haavio's and Enäjärvi's extensive letter collections, I have focused the analysis on four archive cases of letters from Haavio to Hakulinen, between Haavio and Enäjärvi, and from Enäjärvi to her friend Maija Ruutu (later Rajainen, 1899–1987), who made a career as a historian and teacher but also contributed to folk poetry research. Hakulinen also studied folklore, but majored in the Finnish language and linguistics, later to become director of the Finnish Dictionary Fund (*Sanakirjasäätiö*) and professor of Finnish. The four friends represent rather typical Finnish students of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the university saw its first wave of students from a wider social stratum (Klinge & Knapas 1991: 568). Enäjärvi and Ruutu were from families that during their childhood moved towards a middle-class life; Hakulinen was brought up in a lower middle-class family in the city of Turku, whereas Haavio came from a rural clergy family. It was also a time of an increasing number of female students – during the first half of the century, about half of the bachelor's degree recipients at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Helsinki, and more than 40 per cent of those studying Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research, were women (Svanfeldt-Winter 2019: 48).

Enäjärvi was to become the first woman in Finland to obtain a doctoral degree in folklore studies. In addition to her academic achievements, she was also an active figure in the cultural and political realm. Besides his academic career, Haavio, too, engaged in publishing, poetry and politics. Enäjärvi and Haavio married in 1928. Previous research on them has increased scholarly interest in shedding light on them both as a professional couple and as individuals. In the latter case, interest in Haavio has predominantly been directed to his work in folklore and poetry, while interest in Enäjärvi's life and work has particularly been studied from, and used as a case for, perspectives on women's and gender history (e.g. Eskola 1999; Eskola 2002; Eskola 2003; Eskola 2001; Sievänen-Allen 1993; Kuusi 1995; Tynni-Haavio 1978; Pohjanpalo, Jääsalo & Rantavaara 1977; Lappalainen 1997).

I begin by discussing the concept of emotions in historical research and how it can be applied to studies in the history of academia and knowledge. This is followed by three empirical sections. The first studies the role of senior scholars in transferring frameworks of emotional expressions within the discipline. The second examines how Enäjärvi and Haavio used expressions of positive emotions vis-à-vis the study of the national disciplines, especially folklore, to establish a sense of belonging to the discipline. The third discusses events of shared joy and celebration as means for manifesting inclusion and exclusion in the academic community.

## *Studying Emotions in Academia and Emotional Communities*

According to Staffan Bergwik, the history of academia is to a large extent a history of competition, arguments and rivalry; in his view this is because research takes place in communities that establish their particularities by drawing borders to distinguish themselves from other communities. Bergwik positions this explanation model in previous research on the history of science, in which controversies are viewed as the formative and driving forces for research development (Bergwik 2016: 90; Collins & Pinch 1993: 106–107).

Although Bergwik applies a gender perspective in his studies, he does not explore the aspect of gender in his commentary on emotions in academia. Nonetheless, the dimension of gender is present in the emphasis that Bergwik places on research as a sphere full of competition and conflict. Women's exclusion from academia was long justified by claims that women were less rational, intelligent, confident and competitive than men. Later, the so-called leaky pipeline, a metaphor describing the high proportions of women in the lower levels of universities and low proportions in the upper levels, has been widely explained with similar assertions about women's supposed lack of confidence and competitiveness, despite a lack of empirical data to substantiate such claims. Rather, it appears that the belief in the absence of ambition and competitive spirit in women works as a self-fulfilling prophecy creating double standards with higher demands on female scholars than on their male counterparts (Keller 1992: 19; Rossiter 1982: xv, 102–103; Schiebinger 1989: 160–213; Wenner & Wold 1997: 341; Wold & Chrapkowska 2004: 335–349). In addition to studying competition, debate and conflict in academia, it is therefore also interesting to ask what insights we can find in the study of practices of gaining membership in an academic community. What can we learn by turning our gaze from competition and conflict to joy and comradeship?

Historian of ideas Annelie Drakman has charted a distinctive change in self-presentation among scientists. She points out how scientists since the 1950s increasingly began to emphasize joy as a crucial factor when describing their success to students or a general audience. By analysing the autobiographies of Nobel laureates Richard Feynman (1918–1988) and James Watson (born 1928), Drakman suggests that these men played a key role in creating a new scientific persona and scientific virtue of a joyful scientist. This interrupted an older and more dominant view and value whereby a scientist's credibility and success were associated with a solemn and earnest presentation. Over time, the image of the passionate scientist with a joyful approach to their work became so widely accepted that a scientist lacking those qualities would appear inauthentic and suspicious (Drakman 2023: particularly 5–9; Drakman 2021: 283–284). Drakman derives her results from analysis of postwar, public-facing sources, and have thus provided inspiration for my study of interwar, private archive sources.

What is, then, an emotional community and how is it a relevant concept when studying only a few individuals' processes of forming themselves as scholars? Barbara Rosenwein uses the concept of emotional communities to study how social groups or contexts have their own sets of norms for how to feel and communicate emotions in certain situations, and how these norms direct the group and its individual members. Emotional communities have the same borders as other social communities, such as families or professional communities (Rosenwein 2002: 842). These shared frameworks of how to feel and express emotions within a collective have comparable effects on the

group and its individual members, as discussed in Randall Collins' theory on shared emotions and the processes of creating a sense of membership in a social group. The main difference between the approaches of these scholars appears to be that Collins emphasizes the social interaction in a shared space with others, while Rosenwein makes no claim of reaching knowledge beyond the textual dimension of her sources (Collins 2004: 47–50). The concept of emotional communities is also similar to William Reddy's concept of emotional regimes. Emotional regimes can be understood as hegemonic frameworks or discourses of feeling and communicating emotions, to which individuals must adapt, or else they will suffer socially and emotionally. Those who do not fit into these frameworks can occasionally or permanently gain entrance to emotional refuges that offer an alternative to the regime's frameworks (Reddy 2001: 124–128). One notable difference between Rosenwein's and Reddy's approaches is that Reddy's division into emotional regimes and refuges builds on hierarchy and conflict, whereas Rosenwein's approach underscores a multitude of co-existing and sometimes overlapping frameworks (Rosenwein 2006: 23; cf. Plamper 2010: 243, 255–257).

In addition to co-existing emotional communities, Rosenwein argues that these communities may have sub-communities that share the general emotional codes, though also have their own, more specific, emotional norms (Rosenwein 2006: 23–24). In this chapter, I am considering the general emotional community to be the community of early 20th-century Finnish academics, and one sub-category of it, the community of scholars in the national disciplines, a sub-category of that, the scholars of Finnish folk culture and poetry, and a sub-category to that, the students of Finnish folk culture and poetry, and so on.

Jan Plamper has questioned the sufficiency of emotional communities as an analytical category, arguing that the borders of communities – emotional or other – are so porous that there is little added value in studying them (Plamper 2014: 71). Indeed, the borders and memberships of communities can be obscure, but in my view, this does not necessarily mean that the category is irrelevant. The social history of science and academia has shown how structures and practices of inclusion and exclusion are of crucial importance for understanding what knowledge is produced (Keller 1985: 7; Widmalm 2008: 88–89; Shapin and Schaffer 2011: 332–335). Not least the history of women in academia has demonstrated how academia consists of groups of insiders, outsiders and those falling somewhere in-between, and that these groups are results of continuous practices of including some and excluding others (Rossiter 1982: xvi–xviii, 11–15, 31–33, 58, 61–62, 90–91; Schiebinger 1989: 1–7, 11–12, 245; Rossiter 1993; Dyhouse 1995: 7, 44–45; Markusson Winkvist 2003). The way I approach the folklorists' practices of letter-writing and expressing emotions in this chapter is further inspired by Tony Becher's notion of academic tribes, in which entrance to the tribe and various positions in it are gained through practices with symbolical functions for the tribe (Becher 1989: 105–107). The diffuseness of borders is therefore no reason to dismiss the usefulness of communities as an analytical category. Rather, studying negotiations of belonging to the academic community offers opportunities to shed light on structures and processes of exclusion and inclusion, that is, who can participate in knowledge-production and on what premises. The perspective of emotions allows us to explore and nuance these structures by studying the negotiations of belonging and access to communities and institutions of knowledge-production.

How do we, then, establish that there is a community to study and who its members are? Rosenwein's approach is to select social groups that already by other means are established as groups and in which the members interact with each other, such as monasteries or guilds (Rosenwein 2002: 842). Rosenwein's empirical material constitutes a wide scope of sources, from which she collects all words to express emotions and lists them thematically. From there, she proceeds to analyse these words and the patterns of these expressions, seeking to understand their meaning through contextualization. In this way, Rosenwein frames emotional communities: groups whose members have common norms of emotions and expressions of shared emotional vocabularies. Unlike Reddy, Rosenwein does not lay as much stress on borders and exclusion from these entities; instead, she proposes a more elastic or organic framing for what or who can fit into these communities. Rosenwein emphasizes the investigation of the cultural significance that emotions carry. This also omits investigating what emotions themselves are or what they are made of, answers that Rosenwein claims cannot be reached from historical sources – a view that she shares with both Reddy and the approach I use in this chapter (Rosenwein 2006: 25–29, 72–78; cf. Rosenwein & Cristiani 2018: 40–41; Reddy 2001: 102).

While Rosenwein uses a wide scope of sources to investigate emotional communities, I limit my selection to letters exchanged between a few individuals. Unlike Rosenwein, my objective is not to explore how particular emotional communities are constituted, but rather how the individuals here sought ways of establishing a place in their academic community through expressions of emotions. Focussing on only a few individuals and analysing their private documents allows us to open our view for more complex combinations of intersecting categories and variables that affect individuals' lives than when studying larger groups of people, where we can only select a few categories of interest (see e.g., Stanley 1992: 6–7). Moreover, a careful study of how a few individuals relate to their community can also shed light on its norms, as the individuals' perceptions of the community's collective values and norms become apparent. According to Ludmilla Jordanova, academic communities can be seen as imagined communities in a comparable fashion to nations, as formulated by Benedict Anderson. Not all members of the community will ever meet each other or ever establish social relations with each other, yet they share a collective memory, identify as members of the community and feel a sense of comradeship with its other members (Jordanova 1998: 197; see also Collins 2004: 3–6). Because the letters used in this chapter were all written to peers, it is reasonable to assume that the authors had a sense of what each intended recipient would generally understand and accept as plausible emotional expressions in their community. The young authors' status in the community is also a meaningful part of the analysis. Historian Marja Jalava has studied emotions in the academic community of historians of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Finland. She points out that an advantage of studying the emotional expressions of young academics is that they can put into words expectations that more senior members have internalized too deeply to articulate in writing (Jalava 2019: 117).

## Senior Scholars as Guides

The opening passage of this chapter portrayed the path to understanding the structures and practices of academia as a quest to seek out senior scholars and students who could guide the freshman further. In addition to practical information, the older generations of scholars participated in conveying to students the joy of studying folklore.

Professors played a particular role in this transmission, both in how they looked and acted and in what they said. Haavio, for example, wrote to Hakulinen about how Antti Aarne (1867–1925) had exclaimed that it was so fun to hear that he was planning to write a dissertation.<sup>4</sup> When later visiting Aarne to discuss the dissertation topic, Haavio noted that a ‘joy, an expansive joy was alive in his [Aarne’s] eyes.’<sup>5</sup> Haavio also wrote about encounters with Professor Kaarle Krohn (1863–1933), in which Krohn had told him about the joys of folk poetry. One of these meetings took place during Haavio’s first semester at the university:

I am coming from the folk poetry collections of the Finnish Literature Society, where I was alone NB alone with doc. [Väinö] Salminen learning about Lönnrot’s original manuscripts, Ganander’s collections [...]. ‘It is fun, it is really fun,’ said Prof. Krohn, when he entered the room complex. Well, it is fun material. And rare material. I was brimming with excitement when I stepped out from Hallituskatu 1, and I decided that my life’s mission [...] is to make you study this subject too.<sup>6</sup>

In the passage, Krohn articulates his genuine interest in the archive collections, which also made a strong impression on Haavio. Simultaneously, Haavio appears to be significantly affected by the attention and words of senior scholars. He made a point of insisting on how Väinö Salminen had shown him the collections privately and that Krohn had spoken to them without an appointment. In addition, the passage demonstrates the tremendous impact that senior scholars could have on students. Haavio echoed Krohn’s expression of the ‘fun material’ and was since ‘brimming with excitement’ about his studies. From later letters, we can also see that he kept to his decision to convince Hakulinen to study with him.<sup>7</sup>

Although Enäjärvi’s letters also include expressions of joy in connection to interactions with senior scholars, in her accounts the source of joy does not appear to stem from the interactions as such, but rather from the information she obtained from the professors. This information generally concerned exams.<sup>8</sup> Though it is true that emotional interactions with senior scholars do not figure in Enäjärvi’s letters, her letters still confirm that these scholars’ favourable attitudes towards her mattered. When philologists Heikki Ojansuu (1873–1923) and Viljo Tarkiainen (1879–1951), for instance, showed her kindness, academic support and approval, Enäjärvi expressed doubt and surprise. The approval could also be non-verbal, such as Tarkiainen’s kind and acknowledging nod in the exam room, a gesture that Enäjärvi wrote made her feel more content and relaxed while writing her exam.<sup>9</sup> As a mature scholar looking back on her academic path, Enäjärvi also stated that Tarkiainen had made a crucial impact on her future career: Before Tarkiainen had started teaching at the University of Helsinki, he had worked as a Finnish teacher at Enäjärvi’s secondary school; there, he inspired her choices of studies (Enäjärvi-Haavio 1948: 4).

The difference in tone between the letters of Haavio, which hum with excitement, and those of Enäjärvi, which are more subdued, may be simply attributed to personality, though gender norms could also play a role. Historian of knowledge Micheal Barany, for example, shows how mathematics has a long-standing tradition of playfulness and games, which evolved in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century into an ideal bringing together internationalism, humour, youth and masculinity. The visible clique of young stars of the field were young men. Yet not all who participated in spreading this wider communal humour were young, nor were they all men; they just conveyed this image to the public under male names that responded to – and performatively consolidated – the idealized persona embodying games, youthfulness and masculinity (Barany 2021: 11). In other fields, too, the images of what constituted a good, credible scholar increasingly began to incorporate publicly displayed passion, virility, and humour (Shapin 2010: 47–56, Niskanen 2021, Drakman: 2023). But such ideals, as a rule, were typically far from acceptable for women in academia (e.g. Rossiter 1982: xv–xvi, Lowe 2003: 13, 30, 65).

Interestingly, when reading descriptions of positive emotional encounters with senior scholars in a Finnish setting, it is Haavio's letters that dedicate the most attention to such meetings; when we move our gaze to international encounters, however, the situation is quite different. Haavio only mentions meetings with professors such as Walter Anderson in Estonia, Ferdinand Ohrt in Denmark, and Johannes Bolte in Germany.<sup>10</sup> During her stay in England in 1927, Enäjärvi, in turn, recounted in the kindness and intellectual generosity of, among others, the folklorist Lady Alice Gomme (1853–1958), the intelligence and warmth of the anthropologist Barbara Aitken (1879–1967), and Professor Alfred Cort Haddon (1855–1940), whom she named the 'joyful professor' in her travelogue.<sup>11</sup> She described two of the pleasant, helpful and joyful encounters to her friend Virve Kallas (1901–1953):

The local scholars are, as the English in my experience tend to be, very friendly; they have provided me with much assistance and pleasant experiences. The best of all was the old Cambridge professor, Haddon, one of the most famous ethnologists of today, who lent me two boxes from his note collection. It was great fun visiting him. We played string games from the South Seas, smoked and looked at the garden, from where I was gifted beautiful flowers to bring back to London. – Lady Gomme, whom I particularly wished to meet here, as she is the most knowledgeable about English games and has written the best books on the topic, has also been very friendly and helpful to me.<sup>12</sup>

Yet the passage that is most riddled with exclamation marks appears in a letter in which Enäjärvi described her third visit to Mrs Aitken. Again, she emphasized her feelings of joyous bewilderment over the older scholar's generosity towards her:

And this time she gifted me with two valuable books. [...] I have been copying Chabrek's book at the Br[itish] Museum, while lamenting that no Nordic library would have such a valuable book. And now I have been given such a rarity as my own!!! It is most useful for me. Isn't this marvellous!<sup>13</sup>

Enäjärvi also thanked Matthias Johann Eisen (1857–1934) in Estonia for the great kindness and hospitality that he and his wife Ella Eisen had shown her in Tartu. To

Ruuttu, Enäjärvi wrote about her pleasant meetings with, among others, archaeology professor A.M. Tallgren and literature professor Lauri Kettunen (1885–1963).<sup>14</sup> The sources do not reveal whether this difference was because the Finnish encounters did not evoke these emotions in Enäjärvi or whether she chose not to write about them. Notably, she did not have access to all communities on the same terms as Haavio. Some national communities were explicitly male only, like the Academic Karelia Society. Others were in principle open, but in practice highly dominated by men, like the community of scholars of national disciplines, where members often spoke of their belonging to the emotional community as a band of brothers (Jalava 2019: 123–125, 132; Svanfeldt-Winter 2019: 89). In any case, expressions of delight and other positive emotions primarily figure in Enäjärvi's portrayals of her experiences of international contexts, whereas similar emotions are associated in Haavio's letters with belonging to a national academic community.

Enäjärvi also pondered on the differences between women's and men's experiences of finding belonging in academia. As a student, she noted that there were few senior women at the university and even fewer who could serve as models for how to make it in academia. She also observed that male students had a wealth of good role models. Since the researchers and teachers were men, she concluded that her male colleagues had an easier time finding their place and identifying their strengths in the university setting. Three years later, she pointed out to Ruuttu how pleasant and helpful it would be if more women stayed in academia after graduation. As she saw it, not only would women contribute to research with new perspectives and different strengths than men, but they could also provide each other with understanding and support through discussions of mutual experiences.<sup>15</sup> Enäjärvi's ideas about women academics as role models and allies were reinforced during her stay at Crosby Hall, the residence of the International Federation of University Women in London. The experience of mingling with female academics from all over the world was something of a revelation to her; there, she saw many ways of being a female scholar, not to mention a wealth of career choices and research interests.<sup>16</sup> The international community of female scholars offered Enäjärvi just what she had been missing in Helsinki—role models, networks and understanding support, which also made up the core aims of the IFUW (Pohls 2013: 23, 43–47).

The way that senior scholars shaped and influenced the thinking of junior scholars did not only happen on a one-to-one basis, but it also took place collectively, which can be illustrated by a letter from Haavio to Hakulinen in March 1919. In this letter, Haavio wrote about how he, together with the rest of the audience, had 'become hypnotized'<sup>17</sup> at a lecture given by Extraordinary Professor A.R. Niemi (1869–1931). According to Haavio, Niemi had spoken enthusiastically about his fieldwork and research, and, like a political agitator, turned the audience into a wild crowd. When Niemi's intoxicating lecture was suddenly over, Haavio, though firmly convinced of the lecturer's message, confessed to Hakulinen about his inability to restate the arguments and evidence for its conclusions. Instead, Haavio added that he had enclosed the message in his heart.<sup>18</sup> Enäjärvi and Haavio were also impressed with the communicative skills displayed by other scholars, such as Krohn, Tunkelo and Uno Harva (1882–1949); these men were excellent speakers, whose eloquence never failed to captivate their audiences.<sup>19</sup> Lectures, such as the memorable performance given by Niemi, did not transmit enthusiasm for folk poetry research privately, but instead established shared sets of emotions for

an entire cohort. Indeed, these kinds of lectures could be perceived as practices that served to introduce and integrate students into collective emotional frameworks of enthusiasm for and pride about folk poetry research (cf. Nagy 2018: 135–136, 140; Sullivan 2014: 268, 276; Salmela 2012: 40–42).

### *The Joy of Studying Folk Culture*

Niemi's riveting lecture had conveyed compelling stories about researching folk poetry, and Haavio's and Enäjärvi's letters echo these emotions about the study of folk culture. As in Niemi's lecture, collection work takes pride of place, especially in Haavio's letters. Enäjärvi and Haavio also wrote joyful letters describing academic travels, work at libraries and archives, not to mention their affection for folk poetry (cf. White 2009: 795). Collection work, academic travel and library and archival research all required the letter-writer to disconnect temporarily from her or his immediate academic community. At the same time, these were also practices that they were expected to perform as folklore scholars. Enäjärvi's and Haavio's descriptions of these practices are very similar, suggesting a collective framework of how to express emotions in connection to these practices.

The letters and diaries contain numerous passages about how working with folklore material fostered a deeper affection for the subject. For example, Enäjärvi wrote in her diary in 1921 that 'since childhood [she] had had a special interest in ballads',<sup>20</sup> but her interest appears to have increased with studies and research. In 1926, she wrote to Ruutu about how research as a professional path 'required [one's] soul' and that one 'had to devote [oneself] to the work that one loves'.<sup>21</sup> Haavio's enthusiasm appears to have grown especially through his early familiarization with Finnish folk poetry and folksongs. In his second semester of university studies, Haavio recounted to Hakulinen the impact reading *Kanteletar* had on him after attending a lecture by Krohn. Using multiple exclamation marks for emphasis, Haavio could then declare to Hakulinen how it had revealed to him that the only true poetry and the only true beauty was to be found in folklore. Half a year later, he told Hakulinen how he could not quell his fascination for the aesthetic perfection of folk poetry, a beauty which made more modern (church) music sound like rubbish.<sup>22</sup>

Though it is true that the passages from these sources about the field of folk culture research demonstrate how two individuals expressed emotions, we can also assume that the writers expected their intended reader, a peer, to accept and understand their heartfelt reactions to the materials. Indeed, the letters written in response do not appear to question these positive expressions. On occasion, moreover, the sources do suggest that their authors also imagined that others in the community would also have felt the same excitement in corresponding situations. For example, Enäjärvi remarked on a journey in North Karelia that she had come across so much dialect 'that it would make a certain E.A.T. emotional'.<sup>23</sup>

Indeed, the field and its collection possibilities did evoke numerous outpourings of positive emotional expressions. Haavio, even at the planning stage of his own collecting work, wrote numerous animated letters to Hakulinen. All alone, he proclaimed, he would unearth the truth behind what he portrayed as the mysterious and ancient past of Säkylä, a place located near his own home village. Haavio detailed the exhilarating prospects ahead, how he could contribute to archive and field research, how he

could use the material for his bachelor's thesis and future research, not to mention the financial support promised for collection work.<sup>24</sup>

When in the field, Enäjärvi and Haavio wrote with delight about landscapes that corresponded to typical nationalist depictions (Eskola 1999: 179; Häyrynen 2000: 5; 16; Cusack 2001: 224; Brittain 2008: 82–83).<sup>25</sup> Elias Lönnrot, the compiler of *Kalevala* and iconic collector of folk poetry, inspired the collecting efforts of both scholars and amateur collectors. Travelling great distances to work with skilled verbal artists, especially by walking as Lönnrot had done, had not only served an instrumental function in folklore collections, but also had had a symbolic role in the national project (Österlund-Pötzsch 2014: 253–254, 262, 271). In Haavio's and Enäjärvi's accounts, the natural surroundings, though beautiful, also presented the travelling collectors with hardships and inconveniences.<sup>26</sup> On the positive side, adversity and mishaps on the road offered those in the field with narrative opportunities; successfully overcome challenges and feats of resourcefulness could be turned into tales of triumph to share with their academic community.

Yet there is a difference between Enäjärvi's and Haavio's descriptions on the topic. Haavio recounted his experiences and challenges in his letters to family and friends alike. Unlike him, Enäjärvi was more selective about to whom she disclosed what information. She candidly told stories of struggle and adventure in her letters to Haavio, but others, especially her mother, tended only to receive assurances about how well she was taken care of, how happy she was and how she was behaving with decorum. In a letter to her brother, Enäjärvi also asked him to remind her mother how safe she was on the road. This letter was composed during a propaganda tour of the Academic Karelia Society; unlike Haavio's touring collection projects, Enäjärvi's long collection project was situated in her childhood locality of Vihti, where she was able to stay with relatives.<sup>27</sup> Although the differences might be of individual character, they do correspond to the argument of Irma-Riitta Järvinen, who has pointed out that female folklore collectors faced disapproval for their mobility in the field, as it was considered to be inappropriate for women (Järvinen 2005: 80–81; cf. Bell et al 1993, Stanford 2017: 42–43). Enäjärvi's accounts indicate that she, too, due to her gender, faced structural obstacles for adapting to the discipline's ideals of mobility and fieldwork that offered communal experiences and status.

Like nature, local people also featured as objects in enchanting portrayals of collecting folklore. In letters and diaries, Enäjärvi and Haavio both articulated their delight about having the opportunity to interview people who could contribute to their collecting task (Eskola 1999: 177).<sup>28</sup> In addition, Haavio wrote excitedly about finding people whom he portrayed as carriers of authentic and ancient Finnish heritage or as personifications of *Kalevala* characters.<sup>29</sup> Similarly to the descriptions of nature, the positive emotions that Enäjärvi and Haavio expressed about people in the field corresponded to the ideals that the discipline more generally held for informants and can be read as an adaption to a shared framework of emotional expressions in that community (Heikkinen 2007: 32; Peltonen 2004: 208–209; Tarkka 1989: 245–248).

The work of collecting folklore, like travelling abroad to do archival studies, library research or participate in another university environment, required Enäjärvi and Haavio to leave their regular university setting. Like collection work, these new research environments generated accounts of enthusiasm, happiness and personal development. Moreover, in a similar vein to their depictions of collecting trips, these

descriptions of emotions appear to adhere to a framework of communal ways of expressing emotions from similar academic experiences. We can compare two passages from their research stays abroad. The first was written in 1923 by Haavio while in the Estonian university town of Tartu to Lauri Hakulinen. This was Haavio's second sojourn in Tartu, a city frequently visited by Finnish scholars, and in particular scholars from the national disciplines (Järvinen 2011: 57–58; Roiko-Jokela 2010). Haavio described the impact of staying in Tartu as a cleansing experience:

And though I am no farther away [from Helsinki] than this, it is as though a new heart and a new soul have been implanted in me and all the trivial sorrows and cares and joys and revels of the past now dwell on another planet. This kind of airing out is necessary now and then, so a human being can gather together the scattered bits of the soul that have been tossed about and join them together again into one clump and cleanse the brain of needless waste.<sup>30</sup>

Haavio continued on the theme in his following letter to Hakulinen about how his stay allowed full focus and a peaceful solitude that led to a mental awakening.<sup>31</sup> Correspondingly, in a letter to Haavio written during her six-month-long research stay in London in 1927, Enäjärvi describes her feelings about studying in London:

[I]t is as though I have been born into a new life. I am in the library, and I have now caught on to using the superb local thematic catalogues and bibliographies, and I see that now I can second the view of Hirn, who says that this is the best library in the world. I visited the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, but it cannot be compared with this grand and well-organized and efficient institution. What is more, I am thrilled about my topic and delight in the book-loads of new results that I find here. It is as though I have awoken from some dream. I feel that I am alive and happy and working in London.<sup>32</sup>

For both letter-writers, studying abroad was intellectually invigorating and personally rewarding. Moreover, each found their newfound environment tremendously conducive to work. Although their productivity had much to do with the abundance of scientific literature and source materials, both scholars also felt altered by the ambience of the place itself. The image conjured up by Haavio's sketch primarily pictured an environment that allowed for deep focus. For Enäjärvi, the city of London in general and the vast but orderly library in particular enlivened her and motivated her to pursue her work with greater earnest. Here, Enäjärvi's writing aligns with a larger, and slightly older, discourse: both in Finland and internationally, *fin de siècle* intellectuals described the British Library as an extraordinary place where great minds did great work (Dahlberg 2018: 175–178). In addition, both wrote about how happy they felt while doing research abroad.

Enäjärvi and Haavio had a close-knit relationship that presumably also influenced their writing styles, not least when writing to each other. The similarities between their descriptions may be explained by their close bond but also by their social circles and the wider and prevalent modernist discourse. There are striking resemblances in the descriptions in their letters to each other, but also to friends and in their private reflections, for example, diary entries summing up the overall impact these places had on their frame of mind or ideas of rebirth. Both also rendered their experiences as awakenings. Enäjärvi stated explicitly that it was as if she had been reborn, whereas Haavio

described a comparable physical and mental transformation, in which his heart and soul were exchanged for new ones.<sup>33</sup> In the last sentence of Enäjärvi's quoted passage, she added that she was feeling alive in London, putting further distance between her former self and her new self, the one brought to life by the new place, its people, and the work she was doing. Correspondingly, when she returned home from her trip to Estonia in 1921, she wrote to Ruuttu: 'I probably developed there quite a bit, without really noticing it myself.'<sup>34</sup>

The depictions of emotional states written from the field and abroad differ from those associated with academic life in Helsinki, for the former tend to outline emotions associated with scholarly solitude rather than community. Yet both Haavio's and Enäjärvi's descriptions of their emotions when alone in Estonia, England and France can be understood as endeavours to write oneself into an emotional academic community for two reasons. Firstly, both Enäjärvi and Haavio situate their descriptions in a setting previously framed by other academics. In her letter, Enäjärvi wrote that she agreed with aesthetics professor Yrjö Hirn (1870–1952) about the library, and later in the letter she described how she was further inspired by the female scholars whom she met at Crosby Hall. Surrounding the quoted passage of Haavio's letter, Haavio wrote favourably about the University of Tartu's Folklore Professor Walter Anderson, likening him to Kaarle Krohn, Antti Aarne and Lauri Kettunen. In other words, the solitude described was limited to work, not a state of detachment from a social and professional network. Secondly, both accounts are situated in a setting that scholars in their community generally experienced. Like fieldwork, the practice itself was conducted alone or in a very small group, but nonetheless, it was a shared or relatable experience within the community. The similarities in Haavio's and Enäjärvi's portrayals of emotions in Tartu and London may indicate that the community had common ways of articulating these kinds of experiences. Correspondingly, not meeting the community's expectations of success and excitement during international academic exchanges could also amplify a sense of professional and personal failure (Jalava 2019: 131–133).

As the practices of fieldwork and academic travel and exchange were shared experiences in the academic community, the descriptions of these practices as transformational for the individual become even more interesting. The practices were characterized in dramatic terms – the individual was changed, awoken from an old self and even reborn into someone new. As a rhetorical strategy underlining the significance of the discipline-specific practices, such self-portrayals effectively affirm the membership of novices in the community. These accounts of an individual's transition can be understood through Tony Becher's approach on academic tribes. Becher argues that academic communities, or tribes, define themselves in their relationship or difference from other tribes, thus producing and reproducing their communal belonging through rituals. To join a tribe, prospective members must go through rites of passage (Becher 1989: 23–27; cf. Collins 2004: 6). Students' collection journeys can be understood as such rites of passage in national disciplines such as the research fields of folk poetry, ethnology and linguistics, etc. Senior scholars also conducted fieldwork but apparently did so primarily for their own research. Although students could also use the material they collected for their theses, the primary objective was to expand the archive collections of the societies that funded collecting stipends for the students.

Simultaneously, students learned the craft of collecting – an experience and skill valued highly enough to be commended in evaluations of professorship applications.<sup>35</sup>

However, it is striking that the students' accounts from the field place less emphasis on the scholarly competence acquired during collecting trips and more on the struggles and successes that they experienced alone but came to share with their peers and colleagues. Collection journeys appear to have shared similarities to entrance rites, while academic travel further reinforced the membership gained. In both cases, rejoicing over successes, insights, and 'awakenings' into new professional persons all conveyed the authors' positive emotional affiliation to the group with which they communicated these experiences. Letter-writing here played a crucial bridging role for transmitting these solitary practices into shared emotional experiences.

So far, the discussed passages from letters and diaries have been about individuals' emotions towards their discipline and field of study. I have suggested that these accounts were written with the assumption that the emotions expressed would be understood and shared by their intended reader and at least to some degree by their community more generally. In this last empirical section, we move our focus to how Enäjärvi and Haavio wrote about joyful occasions within their community, that is, occasions where emotions are expressed as shared in the moment.

Within the student community, momentary and more enduring experiences of joy ranged from joking around and chatting on study breaks in the library to celebrating passed exams and graduations.<sup>36</sup> The friends, all with a connection to the national disciplines, together created a lively atmosphere, as Haavio described to Hakulinen: 'The feelings are in the heavens, the sevenths. There is the electricity of Helsinki and Enäjärvi, the humour of Kärki, the intelligence of Saarimaa, Penttilä, well, what should I say: Penttilä's illuminating personality stands in the centre.'<sup>37</sup> The occasions could be either small gatherings of friends or larger events arranged by student organizations. Haavio, in particular, described in detail the joy he derived from the events arranged for Estonian-Finnish comradeship, a context that also highlighted a shared ideological enthusiasm for pan-nationalism.<sup>38</sup> Enäjärvi even recounted the joys of academia as too overwhelming on occasion, as in 1922, when she had on the same day become 'wild with joy'<sup>39</sup> about good exam results, had learned that she would receive a grant, felt happy about her love life, and had been celebrated at the gathering of the student journal *Ylioppilaslehti*.<sup>40</sup>

Occasions where joyful emotions can be shared with a group can in themselves function to create a sense of belonging with the group (Collins 2004: 48–49; Sullivan 2014: 267). Besides providing impressions of these occasions, the letters themselves can be read as part of the integration process into the academic community. By writing about the occasions and the community, the writer also articulates to him- or herself his or her relationship with that community. Validating this relationship in narrative gains further significance if we perceive letter-writing as a performative practice. That act of association is then directed to an intended reader, the letter's recipient, but is simultaneously part of the process of shaping the writer's self (Stanley 2004: 208, 212). Belonging to the community can be affirmed by describing events experienced together, as in the last quote by Haavio about the atmosphere created in his group of friends, or as in the accounts from the field, where experiences were gained in solitude, but comparable with the experiences of his peers. Membership in the community could also be asserted explicitly, as in the following celebratory account by Haavio, who had participated in a public lecture steeped in nationalistic feeling:

We, the vast horde of scholars of Finnish and national disciplines, are intoxicated with joy and astonishment because of Jaakkola's presentation yesterday. Even TOIVONEN, the grand Critic, is of the mind that he hasn't gone too far off the mark. Saarimaa is quite convinced, RAPOILA [sic] also approves. KROHNA [sic] is beaming... Elsa E. was bursting with joy and wondering why the whole audience wasn't beaming.

The fact of the matter is that Jaakkola has managed to prove the existence of the PIRKKALA CULTURE. [...] Actually, Jaakkola has managed to make such a solid case for so damned many previously inconceivable things that now the questions of *Kalevala* are entirely solved h i s t o r i c a l l y, that is, scientifically. [...]

HURRAY!<sup>41</sup>

Haavio had just listened to Jalmari Jaakkola's (1885–1964) presentation on his research on medieval Finnish history. Jaakkola had relied primarily on place names to make an etymological argument claiming that the events in *Kalevala* had taken place in a central Finnish settlement. Consequentially, the stories of *Kalevala* could be argued to be based on historical events, thus demonstrating a heroic past prior to the Crusades and the annexation of the territory under Swedish and Russian rule. An additional consequence of this (now revised) interpretation meant that the Karelian folk poems could be argued to have their true origins in Finland, thus changing the status of Karelia from a site of heritage to one of mere preservation (Wilson 1976: 103–104).

Here, Haavio includes himself in the community, or 'the horde', but a sense of emotional belonging is also conveyed in the textual strategies in his letter-writing. The closing, a capitalized cheer of victory, is a pithy but forceful demand for a celebration. That instance of capitalization is one of many textual strategies used to underscore key words, thus infusing the description with energy – an art that Haavio cultivates throughout his correspondences with some of his closest friends. This particular letter contains numerous typographical errors, which was uncharacteristic for Haavio; yet, also uncharacteristically for Haavio, the letter is typewritten (cf. Abrams 2010: 145). Yet these errors, too, contribute to the sense of exhilaration and vitality in the writing. The tempo and urgency of retelling the matter is also embedded in the introductory sentence prior to the above-quoted passage. There, Haavio points out that he is writing even though he has not received a letter from Hakulinen since having sent his last letter, thus breaking the structure of the correspondence.

According to the letters of Enäjärvi and Haavio, most larger student events had equal numbers of men and women, which corresponds with the roughly equal numbers of male and female students at their faculty at the time. Women's involvement in student life, however, tended to be limited to femininely coded roles, such as serving; women were also expected to know implicitly when and where they were unwelcome (Klinge and Kolbe 1991: 83–88; Bagge 1974, appendix 4–6; Rossiter 1982: 75–89; cf. Söderhjelm 1938: 59–60).<sup>42</sup> Moreover, as Charlotte Bloch points out, most of the exclusive practices and micropolitics of academia are rarely explicitly outlined, but are rather indicated, for example, by an absence of expressions of positive emotion or by seemingly good-natured humour (Bloch 2012: 72–73, 97). Haavio's early accounts, too, show how the presence of women in the student environments did not necessarily lead to acknowledging their equality with men; moreover, this view of women's inferiority also could be embedded in humorous phrasings.<sup>43</sup> Enäjärvi, in turn, commented on her awareness of others regarding her more as a representative of her gender than as a

student and a human being. She added that since there were so few women in research and in positions at the university, they had to support and encourage each other, with no room for jealousy or conflict.<sup>44</sup> These sources illustrate how entrance into an academic sphere did not automatically result in integration into an academic community, as gendered structures continued to function within the sphere (cf. Rosenbeck 2014: 45; Dyhouse 1995: 189–190; Rossiter 1982: xvi).



Members of the 'Summer University', an informal society of nationalist cultural, academic and political figures formed in 1932, here celebrating the birthdays of Martti Haavio and author Kaarlo Marjanen (seated third and second from the right) in February 1939. Standing sixth from the left is Lauri Hakulinen, sitting fourth from the left is Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio. Friendships formed among students carried into academic and political spheres. The photo also features ethnologist Kustaa Vilkuna (standing fourth from the left), Fenno-Ugrist Lauri Posti (seated on the floor to the left), historian L.A. Puntila (standing furthest to the right), a future Prime Minister V.J. Sukselainen (seated on the floor to the right), and future President Urho Kekkonen (standing second from right) Photo Aarne Pietinen Oy, 1939. Finnish Heritage Agency. Historical Image Collection, HK7769:7.

## Conclusion

The letters investigated here reveal an abundance of joyful and enthusiastic expressions in connection with the study of folklore, academic life and festive events of shared celebration. They also demonstrate how collective frameworks of emotions can be manifested in the writings of single individuals. The frameworks of emotional expressions are embedded in letter-writing, as the recipient, here a peer, is expected to understand and accept the sender's articulations of feeling. By contextualising these expressions, we can further see how they are grounded in the discipline's ideals and practices. Moreover, and perhaps most interestingly, the writers also explicitly connect

their narratives to their academic community by alluding to the participation of other members, often senior scholars. In this way, the letter writer asserts his or her membership in a group with shared experiences and frameworks of emotional expressions, with the senior scholars perhaps adding authority to the account.

The accounts also depict how the emotional community was situated. Societies and presentations, for example, created spaces for meeting each other and exchanging experiences. Fieldwork, however, was situated off site. Nonetheless, both offered opportunities to produce and express shared emotions within the community. The sources give accounts of these processes in these locations, but the sources are in themselves also arenas of these processes. On the one hand, the letters bridged spatially separated individuals and groups, connecting them as scholarly communities. On the other hand, the letters were a means for the students to try out jargon and observations commonly used in their disciplines in a safe zone of friends and peers. In other words, the letters were a platform where students could try out ways of expressing their belonging to their emotional scholarly community, while the societies were spaces where they could share and express these emotions together.

This qualitative analysis of emotions in academia also illuminates how integrating processes for entering the academic community, though seemingly gender neutral, could in practice be restrictive. Some occasions and environments explicitly or implicitly excluded women, thus depriving them of many emotional and hence integrative experiences to share with the community. Enäjärvi's documents rarely communicate a sense of emotional belonging to the national academic community, though there is a pronounced emphasis on international encounters giving rise to such feelings. This striking contrast shows how the same sets of emotional expressions could be used for different contexts; moreover, it also indicates the exclusive nature of the national community. Not all members enjoyed the same kind of welcome and recognition. Studying positive emotions in academia also highlights how not only competition and conflict – or, rather, the notion of an academic world pervaded by these – could pose obstacles for women, but also how collective positive emotions could have operated in a similar fashion. Nevertheless, the perspective of emotions can also shed light on other, and perhaps more open, dimensions of community membership than a study that focusses on access to positions, institutions, networks or funding, as the history of women in academia traditionally has done.

A close reading of a few individuals' personal documents, such as letters, may not provide us with insights into the big-picture consequences of structures or how they were generally used or overcome. They do, however, demonstrate the complexities of inclusion and exclusion, including individual and partial adaptations to the structures (cf. Stanley 1992: 6–7). Perhaps a small selection of letters written by individuals can also help us approach the distinctiveness of those who appear as normal or representative in the big picture. It is easy to see Enäjärvi's documents as a continual negotiation of belonging in a traditionally male-dominated environment. Studying them alongside the documents of a more 'typical' figure such as Haavio is helpful, for it allows us to view also Haavio's writings as performative acts of entering and manoeuvring within a realm that, at least to his young student mind, made the mazes of Minos' labyrinth appear clear and straightforward.

## Notes

1. The research and writing of this chapter were funded by Åke Wibergs Stiftelse and Birgit och Gad Rausing's stiftelse för humanistisk forskning.
2. When Martti Haavio began his studies, the University of Helsinki was still known as the Imperial Alexander University in Finland. The name was changed in 1919, after Finland gained independence from Russia in 1917.
3. SKS KIA. Archive of Martti Haavio (AMH). Letter from Haavio, Martti to Hakulinen, Lauri 18.9.18. Letter 730:2:14. Sillä Minoksen labyrintin sokkelot ovat tuiki selviä näitten valkoisen talon fyysillisten ja henkisten sokkeloitien rinnalla. Katsos! Täällä on ylioppilas yksilö, jota ei minkäänlainen viiniköynnösura tue. Pienemmistäkin ja turhanaikaisemmista seikoista pitää itse ottaa selko. Ja kyllä siinä on juoksemista! Sillä tavat ovat tuiki oudot ja muinaisajoilta perityt. Herrat dekanakset ja kuraattorit ja notaarit ja professorit ovat etsittävät heidän kotoansa, auditoriumit, tiedekuntahuoneistot, osakuntahuoneistot sijaitsevat siellä täällä laajassa kaupungissa [...] Että ota siitä selko! Viikottain saa juosta käytävää ylös ja toista alas, käydä kaikkiin tiedekuntiin, maakuntiin, kansakuntiin ja uskontokuntiin kuuluvien herrojen ylioppilaitten kimppuun, jotka ylhäiset ehkä saattavat tuhлата sanan tai kaksi keltalakkiselle keltanokalle, joka selkä väärässä ja valkoinen kaulus kankeana ja korkeana, kurkku pitkänä ja korvat muuttuneina fonograafiksi seisoo heidän edessään anellen ”viisauden esimakua” X! Mutta kun lopulta saa selon kaikesta, on ihminen ja erikoisesti civis academicus seitsemännessä vieläpä seitsemännestöistä taivaassa.  
Presumably, ‘nation’ and ‘religion’ are humorous additions, as they, like ‘faculty’ and ‘county’ have the same ending for belonging in Finnish. ‘Nation’ was also the word used for the student organizations for students from different counties.
4. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 5.3.1921. 731:1:6.
5. Eskola 1999:271. Ilo, leveä ilo asui hänen silmissään.
6. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 28.9.2018. 730:2:15. Minä tulen juuri kansanrunouskokoelmista suom. kirjall. seuran [sic] talolta, jossa yksin huom. yksin dos. Salmisen kanssa tutustuin Lönnrotin alkuperäisiin käsikirjoituksiin, Gananderin keräelmiin [...]. ‘Se on hauskaa, se on sangen hauskaa’, sanoi prof. Krohn, joka samassa astui huonerykelmään. Jaa, se on hauskaa ainetta. Ja se on harvinaista ainetta. Minä vallan puhkuin ihastuksesta, kun astuin ulos Hallituskadun 1:stä, ja minä päätin ottaa elämäni tehtäväksi [...] saattaa Sinutkin lukemaan tätä ainetta.
7. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 13.10.1918, 11.2.1919, 7.5.1919, 22.8.1919, 19.1.1920. 730:2:16, 730:3:2, 730:3:13, 730:3:20, 730:4:4.
8. SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi to Rajainen 23.5.1920, 28.10.1920, 20.12.1922. 785:10:1, 785:10:8, 785:10:18.
9. SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi to Rajainen 23.5.1920, 20.12.1922. 785:10:1, 785:10:18.
10. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 27.11.1923, [undated, November–December 1923], 14.10.1926, 22.6.1927. 731:11:8–9, 737:11–12; Haavio's diary entry on 8.1.1924, Eskola 1999: 345.
11. Enäjärvi 1928:374; SKS KIA. AMH. Enäjärvi to Haavio 11.9.1927, 18.9.1927. 736:8:5, 736:8:10; See also SKS KIA. AEEH. Aitken, Barbara to Enäjärvi (undated). 775:5:1–2; Lady Gomme, Alice to Enäjärvi 22.9.1927, 31.8.1927, 5.10.1927, 7.11.1927, 19.11.1927. 764:26:1–3, 764:26:5–6; Haddon, A.D. to Enäjärvi 19.7.1927, 9.8.1927. 764:28:1–2.
12. EKLA EKM. 186:175:15. Enäjärvi-Haavio to Virve Kallas-Päss 20.8.1927. 7/19. Täkäläiset tutkijathan ovat, kuten englantilaiset kokemukseni mukaan yleensä, hyvin ystävällisiä; minulla on ollut heistä paljon apua ja mieluisia kokemuksia. Paras kaikista oli vanha Cambridgen professori, Haddon, nykyään kaikkein kuuluisimpia etnologeja, joka lainasi minulle muistiinpano-kokoelmiaan kaksi laatikollista. Hänen luonaan oli hyvin hauskaa. Leikimme nuorapelejä Etelämeren saarilta, tupakoimme ja katselimme puutarhaa, josta sain Lontooseen kauniita kukkatuliaisia. – Lady Gomme, jonka erityisesti toivoin tapaavani täällä, hän kun tietää enimmin englantilaisista leikeistä ja on niistä kirjoittanut parhaat kirjat, on myöskin ollut hyvin ystävällinen ja auttanut minua.

13. SKS KIA. AMH. Enäjärvi to Haavio 11.9.1927, 736:8:10. Ja tällä kertaa hän lahjoitti minulle kaksi arvokasta kirjaa. [...] Chabrenkin kirjaa olen juuri kopioinut Br. Museumissa, samalla haikaillen sitä, ettei näin arvokasta kirjaa ole missään pohjoismaisessa kirjastossa. Ja nyt sain tällaisen harvinaisuuden omakseni!!! Se on minulle ylen hyödyllinen. Eikö tämä ole suurenmoista!
14. EKLA EKM. 24:3:15 Letters from Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio to M.J.Eisen 21.10.1925 (1/1), 16.10.1932 (6/7); SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi to Rajainen 22.6.1921. 785:10:13.
15. See e.g., SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries. 14.1.1923. Case 5; Enäjärvi to Rajainen 31.3.1923, 2.5.1926. 785:10:21, 785:10:31.
16. See e.g., SKS KIA. AMH. Enäjärvi to Haavio 16.5.1927, 19.8.1927. 736:8:1, 736:8:7; SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries. "Lontoo 1927" undated, p. 16. Case 5.
17. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 15.3.1919. 730:3:4. hypnotisoiduiksi.
18. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 15.3.1919. 730:3:4.
19. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 31.1.1919, 15.3.1919. 730:3:2, 730:3:4; SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries (28.9.1920). Case 5.
20. SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries ("Va 15.11.20–9.5.22" 6.1.1921). Case 5, pienestä pitäen ollut erikoinen mieltymys balladeihin.
21. SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi to Rajainen 2.5.1926. 785:10:31. vaatii sielua ... antauduttava siihen työhön, jota rakastaa.
22. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 15.3.1919, 22.8.1919. 730:3:4, 730:3:20; cf. Eskola 1999:271.
23. SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi to Hakulinen 18.7.1923. 764:9:1. [K]ielellistä materiaalia niin että 1 E.A.T. voisi saada mielenliikutuksia.  
The initials presumably refer to the linguist E.A. Tunkelo (1870–1953).
24. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 5.5.1919. 730:3:12.
25. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 12.6.1919, 16.7.1923. 730:3:15, 758:6:1; Enäjärvi to Haavio 4.8.1924. 736:5:6; Diaries, memoirs and notes ("Diary 21.9.1920–7.6.1921" 7.6.1921). Case 5.1.
26. SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries ("Diary of 1923" 12.7.1923); Enäjärvi, Elsa to Enäjärvi, Jaakko 20.6.1923. 764:8:1; SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 14.5.1921, 22.5.1921, 16.6.1921, Midsummer Eve [23.6.]1923, 16.7.1923. 731:2:2, 731:2:4, 731:3:1, 731:10:3, 758:6:1; Enäjärvi to Haavio 25.6.1923. 736:4:2; Diaries, notes and memoirs ("Diary 15.5–15.6.1921" 7.6.1921; 13.6.1923, 2.7.1923). Case 5.1.
27. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 16.6.1921, Midsummer Eve [23.6.]1923. Letters 731:3:1, 731:10:3; Enäjärvi to Haavio 25.6.1923. 736:4:2; Diaries, notes and memoirs ("Diary 15.5–15.6.1921" letter concept from Haavio to Enäjärvi 15.6.1921). Case 5.1; Eskola 1999:177, 179; SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi, Elsa to Toivola (née Enäjärvi), Elvi 18.6.1923. 764:7:1; Enäjärvi, Elsa to Enäjärvi, Jaakko 20.6.1923, 22.7.1923. 764:8:1–2; Enäjärvi to Rajainen 21.8.1924. 785:10:26.
28. SKS KIA. AMH. Diaries, notes and memoirs ("Diary 15.5–15.6.1921" 7.6.1921, 15.6.1921). Case 5.1.; Haavio to Hakulinen 16.6.1921. 731:3:1; Enäjärvi to Haavio 4.8.1924. 736:5:6; SKS KIA. AEEH. Letter from Enäjärvi to Rajainen 21.8.1924. 785:10:26.
29. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 5.5.1919, 12.6.1919, 16.6.1921. 730:3:12, 730:3:15, 731:3:1; Diaries, notes, memoirs (7.6.1921). Case 5.1.
30. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 27.11.1923. 731:11:8. Ja vaikka en ole tämän kauempana, on kuin olisi istutettu uusi sydän ja uusi sielu, ja entiset vähäiset surut ja murheet ja ilot ja riemut kuuluvat toiseen kiertotähteen. [...] Tällaista ilmanvaihdesta kaivannee ihminen silloin tällöin kootakseen hajalleen viskautuneen sielunsa taas yhdeksi möhkäleeksi ja sadakseen aivonsa puhdistutetuiksi tarpeettomista kuona-aineista.
31. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 27.11.1923. 731:11:8.
32. SKS KIA. AMH. Enäjärvi to Haavio 19.8.1927. 736:8:7. [O]n kuin minuun olisi syntynyt uusi elämä. Olen kirjastossa, olen päässyt perille täkäläisestä mainiosta aineenmukaisista luette-loista ja bibliografoista, ja näen että nyt voin yhtyä [Yrjö] Hirniin joka sanoo tätä kirjastoa maailman parhaaksi. Olin Pariisissa Bibliotheque Nationaleissa, mutta sitä ei voi verrata tähän

- mahtavaan ja hyvin järjestettyyn ja nopeatoimiseen laitokseen. Sitäpaitsi olen innostunut aineeseeni ja riemuitsen siitä suuresti kirjamäärästä uusia tuloksia, jonka löydän täältä. Olen kuin herännyt jostakin unesta. Tunnen eläväni ja olevani onnellinen ja työssä Lontoossa.
33. See also SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries ("Vb Kesä 1921", 17.7.1921). Case 5; SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 14.10.1926. 737:4:11.
  34. SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi to Rajainen 27.8.1921. 785:10:14. Kehityin siellä varmaan aika lailla itse sitä suuresti huomaamattaniikaan.  
 Though from a study-related trip, this can be understood as a broader, personal development going beyond the scholarly.
  35. Arkki. KVA. III 1925–1991. Ea 21 (Act Nr KA 12/1933). Setälä's assessment of Salminen, p. 14.
  36. SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries (24.5.1923). Case 5; SKS KIA. AMH. Diaries, notes and memoirs (16.11.1920, 28.4.1921). Case 5.1; Haavio to Hakulinen on Pentecost 1923 [20.5.1923]. 731:9:15.
  37. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 23.1.1923. 731:9:4. Mieliala taivaissa, seitsemänsissä. Helsinkiläistä, enäjärviläistä sähköä, kärkeläistä huumoria, saarimaalaista intelligenssiä, penttiläläistä niin, mitä sanoisin: Penttilän valoisa persoona keskeisenä.  
 The surnames refer to editor Niilo Kärki (1897–1931), teacher and linguist Eemil Arvi Saarimaa (1888–1866) and linguist Arvo Penttilä (1899–1971).
  38. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 17.2.1921, 5.3.1921, [undated, November–December 1923]. 731:1:4, 731:1:6, 731:11:9; Enäjärvi to Haavio, 4.4.1927. 736:9:5.
  39. SKS KIA. AEEH. Enäjärvi to Rajainen 20.12.1922. 785:10:18. hurjaksi ilosta.
  40. SKS KIA AEEH. Enäjärvi to Rajainen 20.12.1922. 785:10:18.
  41. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen [undated, 1923]. 731:9:13. Me suuri Suomen ja kansallisten tieteitten harrastajain lauma olemme ilon ja hämmästyksen huumauksissa eilisen Jaakkolan esitelmän johdosta. Suuri krritillisuus [sic] TOIVONENkin on sitä mieltä, ettei se vallan kamalasti harhaan ole iskenyt. Saarimaa on jokseenkin vakuutettu, samoin suhtautuu RAPOILA [sic] suopeasti. KROHNA [sic] loistaa... Elsa E. oli ilosta haljeta ja ihmetteli kun ei koko yleistö loista. Asia on nimittäin niin, että Jaakkola on kyennyt todistamaan PIRKKALA-LAISKULTTUURIN olemassaolon. [...] Oikeastaan Jaakkola todisti niin jumalattoman paljon monenlaisia ennen aavistamattomia asioita sitovasti, että nyt on Kalevalan kysymykset täydelleen ratkaistu h i s t o r i a l l i s e s t i, siis tieteellisest. [...] ELÄKÖÖN!
  42. SKS KIA. AEEH. Speeches. Speech given at the Student Union's jubilee 28.11.1946, noted down 3. [1?]2.1946. Case III.14.
  43. SKS KIA. AMH. Haavio to Hakulinen 12.7.1919, 7.5.1919, 2.5.1920. 730:3:17, 730:3:13, 730:4:11.
  44. SKS KIA. AEEH. Diaries (14.1.1923, [undated February 1923]). Case 5; Enäjärvi to Rajainen 31.3.1923, 2.5.1926. 785:10:21, 785:10:31.

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Estonian Cultural History Archive (EKLA)

24 Collection of Matthias Johann Eisen

24:3:15 Letters from Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio to M.J. Eisen

186 Collection of Aino and Oskar Kallas

186:175:15 Letters from Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio to Virve Kallas-Päss

Finnish Literature Society (SKS)

Archive Materials on Literature and Cultural History (SKS KIA)

Archive of Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio [in this chapter abbreviated as AEEH]

5 Diaries

764 Letters 1919–1929

775 Letters from the new collection 1925–1937

785 Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio to Maija Rajainen (née Ruuttu)

III Speeches, presentations and radio performances

Archive of Martti Haavio [in this chapter abbreviated as AMH]

5.1 Diaries, notes and memoirs

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# ‘Some Form of Enchantment’

## The Making of Scholarly Persona in Elli Kōngäs’s Letters to Professor Matti Kuusi

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### Orpheus

A moment from the crossway the long stretches of road:  
Forget the dawn and the vineyard,

memory, like the shaman soul in its case,  
carry it, without peering under the lid.  
Look back, lose what is yours,  
open the case: out flies the startled soul bird  
briefly held captive in the hand.

There is time for seeking, another for losing time,  
time to turn around without a backward glance,  
time for longing, time to deny longing,  
time to rein in the restless flutter of hands.

Silent, Orpheus, you stand by the black river:  
the ferry never twice carries the same cargo,  
the current doesn’t turn, the circuit’s direction  
doesn’t change.

Like stalks of straw your harp strings are broken.

### Orfeus

*Hetken leikkauspisteestä linjoina pitkät tiet:  
unohda aamurusko ja viinitarha,*

*muistoa niinkuin šamaani sielua rasiassaan  
kanna, sen kannta raottamatta.  
Taakse jos katsot, menetät omistamasi,  
rasian avaat: kädestä kerkeä karkaa  
hetkenä vangittu, säikkyvä sielulintu.*

*Aika on etsiä, toinen kadottaa aika,  
aika on kulkea taakse vilkaisematta,  
aika on kaivata, aika on kaipaus kieltää,  
aika on hillitä käsien maltiton liike.*

*Mykkänä, Orfeus, mustalla joella seisot:  
lautta ei kahdesti samaa lastia kannan,  
virta ei käänny, kierroksen suunta  
ei muutu.*

*Korsina murtuvat poikki harppusi kielet.*

Written in the spring of 1960, the Finnish original of the above poem was enclosed in an envelope along with a two-page missive typed onto letter-sheet paper, now somewhat faded, that same year, on August 25th. At the time of writing the letter, the author of both poem and letter, Elli Kōngäs (1932–1982),<sup>1</sup> then a doctoral student from Finland, was conducting fieldwork among Finnish-Americans for her doctoral dissertation at Indiana University.<sup>2</sup> The poem, read against the backdrop of the author’s life story and the irrevocability of her first Atlantic crossing, attains even greater poignancy. The intended reader was Matti Kuusi (1914–1998), then the recently appointed professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research at the University of Helsinki; this mentor of her choosing, an accomplished author in various genres, had also published two collections of poetry. Elli Kōngäs completed and defended her dissertation in the late spring of 1963 at Indiana University, though her work only achieved its book form in

1980. Its dry and no-nonsense title, *Finnish-American Folklore: Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis*, belies the emotional dividedness of its author regarding the matter of immigration and her own place in the world during the years of its making. Her departure for the United States in 1959 was not undertaken with the hopes of a migrant or a would-be cosmopolitan; instead, she left Finland with two goals: to liberate herself from paid work and dedicate herself to study and research. At the outset, she appeared to believe that this strategy would help launch her academic career in Finland. As I will show in the chapter, K  ng  s often conflated her commitment to her homeland with her passionate interest in the Finnish language, its literature and the study of its folklore. In addition, her letters and other writings suggest that her preferred way of expressing her patriotism was through the study and promotion of Finnish folklore and its research traditions. If we choose to trust what she said in many of her letters to Kuusi, the very thought of permanently uprooting herself from her country and language filled her with a sense of existential dread. Yet as my interpretation of the letters will reveal, she also felt drawn to the academic opportunities she began to see for herself in the United States.

In this chapter, I focus on Elli K  ng  s's story about her life as a doctoral student abroad as told to Kuusi in the letters she wrote between 1959 and 1963.<sup>3</sup> The letters of these years constitute a clearly demarcated episode in the letter-writer's life and a crucial period in her scholarly formation prior to completing her doctorate and starting her career. As a doctoral student living abroad, K  ng  s inhabited something of a liminal space: she was neither at home nor was she yet a fully-fledged professional. This in-between state vis-  -vis country and academic status also contoured the boundaries of the epistolary relationship she cultivated with Matti Kuusi: these are the letters of a PhD student or junior scholar to her professor. Moreover, the letters, from my standpoint, represent a young scholar's narrative of becoming. This story involves a journey outward, a voyage to study abroad, though the letters also chronicle an inward passage of self-discovery and growth as a researcher. It is possible to see the culmination of this story in a twofold discovery: the theoretical framework she was in search of and found, namely, structuralism, and the colleague who introduced the approach to her, Pierre Maranda, in the summer of 1962. Yet the focus in this chapter is not on that particular result, but rather on the process as told in her letters to Matti Kuusi.<sup>4</sup> Drawing from research on *scholarly personae* (e.g., Bosch 2016; Svanfeldt-Winter 2019; Paul 2019) and life writing, particularly the concept of the 'narrating "I"' at work in autobiographical acts (Smith & Watson 2010), I examine how K  ng  s crafts her identity, or persona, as a Finnish folklorist in an American context specifically with her addressee in mind.

Studies of scholarly personae represent a compelling theoretical approach to disciplinary histories and intellectual biographies, not to mention the use of documents of life, such as letters. The persona – as opposed to the private self – underscores the social and embodied dimension of academic lives and institutions (Paul 2019:13). The concept of persona brings to the fore the cultivation, presentation, enactment and performance of a scholarly identity. According to studies in scholarly personae, scholars draw from collective images and 'repertoires of conduct' to fashion a scholarly persona that responds to notions of reliability and credibility within their respective academic communities. Mineke Bosch calls attention to the way in which such reliability and credibility also resonate with more general perceptions of social and cultural authority (Bosch 2016: 42–43). Besides the 'virtues and skills', associated with the scholarly

persona, Bosch also points out its 'embodied aspects' (2016:54; see also Niskanen & Barany 2021). Bodily habits, gestures and mannerisms, attitudes to food and attention to dress all figure in the cultivation of an authoritative scholarly persona (Bosch 2016: 43). In the pages to come I explore how K ng s, in her years abroad as a doctoral student, shapes and performs a scholarly persona in her letters to Kuusi.

Elli K ng s's letters to Matti Kuusi are preserved among Kuusi's papers in the Archive Materials on Literature and Cultural History of the Finnish Literature Society's Archives. Apart from the copies of two letters written by Kuusi almost twenty years later, the collection only contains K ng s's side of the correspondence.<sup>5</sup> In addition to the letters K ng s Maranda wrote to Kuusi, my interpretation is also informed by a brief chapter entitled 'Elli-Kaija' in Matti Kuusi's 1985 memoir (*Ohituksia*) and the interviews I conducted with K ng s Maranda's colleagues, friends and family in the 1990s and early 2000s. The first person I formally interviewed for my master's thesis on the life and work of Elli K ng s Maranda was Matti Kuusi himself; during our meeting he had urged me to read the chapter from his memoir and had also told me that I might find something useful for my work in her letters, which he had already donated to the archives.

### *Biographical Notes*<sup>6</sup>

Elli K ng s Maranda was the ninth child to be born into a family of twelve children on a farm in Tervola, roughly 50 kilometres south of the Arctic Circle. Thanks to a network of helpful female kin relationships on her mother's side of the family, she was able to continue her education by living with her second cousins while attending Kemi Girls' Lyceum, a school where many prominent women in Finnish society were educated.

Upon matriculation in 1950, K ng s began her studies at the University of Helsinki. She studied Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research, Finnish Linguistics, Finno-Ugric Ethnology, and Psychology. Before graduation, she spent a year studying in Germany. After completing her master's degree, K ng s taught Finnish and Latin in schools in Helsinki and Tornio. In addition to earning a living as a teacher, she also worked as a reporter for the newspaper *Pohjolan Sanomat* in Tornio. In the summers of 1957 and 1958, she spent several months studying Roman culture and Italian. By the autumn of 1957, she had returned to the University of Helsinki where she was hired as university lecturer<sup>7</sup> by Professor Martti Haavio, who had recently been appointed to the Finnish Academy. K ng s then worked more closely with Matti Kuusi and Jouko Hautala, who were both vying for the position vacated by Haavio. Just over a year later, however, K ng s was awarded an ASLA Fulbright scholarship to spend one year studying folklore at Indiana University. With the support and encouragement of Professor Richard Dorson, she stayed in Bloomington to study the oral traditions circulating among Finnish-American immigrants. During the years 1961–1962, while writing her doctoral dissertation, K ng s also worked as a Finnish instructor at Columbia University.

Even before completing her doctorate, she made a name for herself in American folklore studies as a proponent of structural analysis with 'Structural Models in Folklore', a seminal paper she co-wrote in 1962 with Pierre Maranda, then a PhD student

in anthropology at Harvard. The two met at the Folklore Institute<sup>8</sup> of 1962 at Indiana University. Their intellectual rapport rapidly turned romantic, and by March of 1963, they were married. After earning her doctorate that summer, Köngäs Maranda moved to Cambridge, where she worked with the Harvard Centre for Cognitive Studies and served as a consultant for Educational Services, Inc. of MIT and Harvard. She also received a fellowship from the Radcliffe Institute.

By 1966, with a toddler in tow, the couple went to do fieldwork among the Lau of Malaita, Solomon Islands, for roughly 22 months (1966–1968). Another child was born during the fieldwork period. The couple, after a year spent in Paris participating in seminars at the Collège de France with Claude Lévi-Strauss, decided to move to Canada in 1969, to so-called neutral ground, in British Columbia.<sup>9</sup> There they were both hired by the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of British Columbia. In addition to earning renown for her structural approaches to oral traditions, especially the riddle, Köngäs Maranda, thanks to her field experiences working with Lau women, began to write and speak about the fundamental importance of gender in society. By the late 1970s, Köngäs Maranda started to capture the attention of feminist scholars for her appreciation of the subtle interplay between social organization and individual agency. She was nominated for the presidency of the American Folklore Society in 1980 but lost to Alan Dundes. Since her untimely death in Québec City on 1 November 1982, the Women's Section of the American Folklore Society has been granting awards in her name for excellent contributions to women's folklore research and feminist theory.

### *The Reader in Mind*

While it is true that all forms of life writing are 'addressed to an audience/reader' (Smith & Watson 2010: 63), the letter stands out among the various genres of self-referential writing because of its specific addressee. No matter the extent of its author's self-absorption or a letter's tendency to turn into a diary-like monologue, a letter is generally written to a particular reader (Porter 1986: 2; Stanley 2004: 202). In fact, the existence of an intended reader has made some researchers concerned with truth distrustful of letters and their writers. Ken Plummer, for instance, noted how social scientists had often regarded letters as dubious documents of life due to the tendency of letter-writers to shape their stories according to the reader they have in mind (1983: 23). Charles Porter, in turn, distinguished the letter from the diary by the reader's obligation 'to seek to measure the sincerity of the letter' (1986: 4). In an essay co-written with Liz Stanley, Margareta Jolly pinpoints the source of the ambiguous relationship letters have to truth in the letter-writer's sole promise to the reader. Unlike Phillip Lejeune's autobiographer, who makes a pact of truth with the reader, the letter-writer merely promises to 'communicate' with his/her reader (2005: 92). The matter of truth and sincerity, then, according to Jolly, can be addressed through recourse to the role played by rhetoric in all letters; Jolly further maintains that 'the "truth" of the writing is in the relationship rather than in its subject' (2005: 93; see also Käosaar, this anthology). This shaping of a story in accordance with a reader, however, may just be what researchers of letters find most intriguing. Letters, after all, are fundamentally about relationships – and some of these relationships live primarily in the correspondence.

As the chapter unfolds, drawing on these early letters in addition to some complementary materials, I also consider the relationship – on and off the page – between these two individuals.

In just under four years, while working towards her doctoral degree, Elli Kōngäs wrote at least 26 letters to Matti Kuusi. These make up roughly one-third of her letters to Kuusi that are preserved in the archives. The first of these letters was written upon her arrival in Bloomington in September of 1959; the last one, in June of 1963, when she wrote to tell him that the dissertation had been defended. The institutional circumstances, that is, the hierarchical relationship between doctoral student and professor, provided the framework for their correspondence. Interestingly, at least from the perspective of gender, the young woman's letters to her professor invariably convey self-assurance about her work and her academic abilities; she only articulates conventionally feminine feelings of vulnerability and self-doubt regarding the quality of her poems and her letter writing. For instance, in the second letter written she wrote from Bloomington, she points out the letter's inadequacies: 'The letter doesn't seem to have focus or even to be readable. Though perhaps it does give you an idea of how I am doing.'<sup>10</sup> If we consider a few of 'the components of autobiographical acts' outlined by Smith and Watson (2010: 64), Kuusi, by virtue of his institutional role, inadvertently assumed the role of the 'coaxer', the person or institution asking for the story of her life, or rather, her life as a young researcher abroad; Kōngäs, in turn, took the role of the narrator or producer of the narrative.

The entire correspondence between Elli Kōngäs Maranda and Matti Kuusi spans over two decades.<sup>11</sup> The letters preserved in the archives amount to roughly seventy items; although most of them are 'private' letters, including a few postcards and holiday greeting cards, the collection also contains several strictly professional letters regarding academic collaboration. Some of her mailings also include other genres of writing (Barton & Hall 2000: 7), for instance, pieces of her own academic work, either in draft form or as a finished publication, newspaper clippings and samples of her poetry, though not all these items were still enclosed in their envelope, but their existence can be surmised by the content of the letters. The exchange of letters was most frequent throughout her graduate school years, especially the three academic terms during the years 1961–1962 that she spent teaching Finnish at Columbia University. Even though their relationship was fundamentally academic and platonic, for the sake of playfulness, one could say that Kōngäs, as the woman who embarked on a journey, and Kuusi, as the man who stayed behind, reverses the epistolary and literary trope of 'woman waits while man travels' (Jolly 2002: 269). In a word, this epistolary bond was established thanks to her departure from Helsinki. Furthermore, Elli Kōngäs's arrival in Bloomington in the autumn of 1959 coincided with the beginning of two decades of Kuusi's leadership of folklore studies at the University of Helsinki.

The depth of the academic or social connection prior to her departure cannot be known for certain, but it is unlikely that Elli Kōngäs and Matti Kuusi were very close, either professionally or personally. Their working relationship began in October 1957 when Kōngäs started her job as university lecturer in the subject of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research. Kōngäs, who had begun her undergraduate studies in 1950, knew Kuusi as an instructor and had attended his courses, but as an undergraduate she presumably had more contact with Professor Martti Haavio and Lauri Simonsuuri, the archivist at the Finnish Literature Society. According to Kuusi's

recollections, she had a stronger rapport with Jouko Hautala because of their shared interest ‘in spiritual as opposed to worldly matters’.<sup>12</sup> Besides his place in the academic hierarchy as a docent, Kuusi was a married man, and nearly twenty years older than Kõngäs. A prolific writer of both academic works and popular pieces, Kuusi, with the support of his family, was also careful to protect the peace and quiet he needed for his work (Krogerus 2014: 353; Lauhakangas 2008: 305). In other words, Kuusi’s keen work ethic and family life presumably left little time for mixing socially with female students and researchers. Kuusi, moreover, has been remembered for his masculinist ideas about women in academic life and his preference for the easy camaraderie he enjoyed with other men (Krogerus 2014: 631–633). Nonetheless, as Krogerus also notes, Kuusi’s professorship also saw a marked increase in female researchers in folklore studies (e.g., Leea Virtanen, Annikki Kaivola-Bregenhøj, Anna-Leena Siikala, Senni Timonen).<sup>13</sup> As a teacher, Kuusi paid no mind to the social class or background of his students, but he showed a clear preference for those he deemed talented (Krogerus 2014: 613) – and Elli Kõngäs, an outstanding student, surely enjoyed his approval.



Matti Kuusi included this photo when editing the photo book *Ladun hiihdin* to mark the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Finnish Literature Society. According to the original caption, the folklore archives also served as a teaching venue. Seated in the foreground, Professor Martti Haavio listens as Elli-Kaija Kõngäs reads her seminar presentation. Also identified in the photo seated at the front row desk are docents Jouko Hautala (second from the right) and Matti Kuusi (on the right), who are listening ‘critically’; the university lecturer Lauri Simonsuuri (standing behind the first row to the left) ‘is apparently satisfied’ with his student’s work (Kuusi 1956: 23). Photo Yrjö Lintunen, SKS KIAK2006:2:5, 1951.

My reading of K ng s's letters to Matti Kuusi has undeniably been influenced by his memoir chapter. Published three years after she died in 1982, the chapter, simply titled 'Elli-Kaija', reveals a complex set of feelings and notions about her as a scholar, a woman and a friend. Perhaps an attempt at unflinching honesty, the memoir, on the one hand dismissive and verging on caricature, and on the other wistful and bittersweet, could be interpreted as a narrative approach to coming to grips with her sudden death. In addition to sketching the broad strokes of her biography, the chapter harks back to a premonition about her departure. Even though her stay in the United States was meant to be temporary, the author of the memoir writes as though it was not, even suggesting that this unabashedly ambitious young woman from the North was somehow out of sync with the academic circles in Helsinki: 'Jouko Hautala and I reckoned Elli-Kaija's unstoppable entrepreneurial spirit would be best fulfilled in the States' (Kuusi 1985: 339). Though a more in-depth discussion of the memoir portrait is beyond the scope of this chapter, the brief sketch does raise some questions about their relationship, especially in light of their long-term correspondence. The memoir indicates an uneasiness with what he perceived as her mercurial personality, her quickness to laughter or tears, occasionally in settings, for example, a seminar session, where feelings were better left unexpressed. Although it is tempting to suggest that social class and background – he was the son of the president of an insurance firm in Helsinki, she was a farmer's daughter from the rural North – may have contributed to his perception of the young female scholar, I am more inclined to say that any tensions in their professional rapport stemmed from a difference in disposition. The views he expressed in our interview echoed the ambivalence of the memoir: awe for her intelligence, on the one hand, and exasperation with what he regarded as her sensitivity and tendency to display emotion.<sup>14</sup>

But let us turn to the beginning of the correspondence. K ng s's initial motivation for writing to Kuusi from Bloomington can be interpreted in a straightforward manner: staying in contact with a key figure in folklore studies at her home university may have been expedient for a graduate student who had gone to study abroad with the idea of improving her chances of launching an academic career at home. After all, Kuusi, as one of her teachers, had supported her plan to study abroad with a positive letter of recommendation.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, it stands to reason that she would write out of courtesy to inform him of her arrival on campus, describe her study plans and share some news and observations about her new academic environment. This first letter to Kuusi, written at the end of her first day on campus on 10 September 1959, like numerous other letters, also contains requests for practical help. In fact, she asks for three favours: the first concerns a letter of reference for a grant application for another academic year at Indiana University; the second is about making a phone call to a clerk responsible for scholarship applications at the Bank of Finland; the last favour involves a request for transcription paper from the Folklore Archives. Finally, she occasionally writes to ask for scholarly guidance and feedback on her study of the Song of Stephen (Fin. *Tapanin virsi*), a project she had started for her licentiate thesis. These requests reveal her trust and reliance on his goodwill and support. For example, she begins her second letter from Bloomington like this: 'Many thanks for your letter, to which I have intentionally delayed my reply: I realized that answering my previous letter only caused you needless trouble on top of everything else, and I did not want to pester you

again.<sup>16</sup> Writing on 17 March 1960, Kōngäs herself characterizes a key feature of her side of the correspondence: 'My letters to you can be divided into two types: those in which I ask for help and those in which I thank you for it. This one falls into the latter genre. Thanks again. Heartfelt.'<sup>17</sup> Tellervo Krogerus, Kuusi's biographer, also notes this aspect of Kōngäs's side of the correspondence in her monumental study of his life; she estimates that just over one-third of Kōngäs's letters to Kuusi contained expressions of thanks (Krogerus 2014: 749). Matti Kuusi, her intended reader, was in a position to help her – and he often did.

Without a doubt, the student-professor relationship determined the content and tone of the letters in the early years of their correspondence. Her awareness of academic hierarchy can also be discerned by her use of 'correct social salutations and greetings and other formal aspects of the letter' (Barton and Hall 2000: 7). According to Juha Pentikäinen, a near contemporary of Kōngäs, the ceremonial switch to the familiar 'you' with Matti Kuusi took place upon a student's graduation or employment at the archives (Pentikäinen 1977: 136). Krogerus, who had also taken courses with Matti Kuusi, recalls his practice of urging students to drop the formal 'you' once they had commenced their postgraduate studies (2014a: 3). At least in her letters, Kōngäs continued to address him as Professor Kuusi. It is worth noting the contrast between her epistolary and real-life behaviour. As remembered by friends and colleagues, Elli Kōngäs Maranda, a spirited and often spontaneous woman, was not one to stand on ceremony. In her letters, however, even after having obtained her PhD at Indiana and having proved her academic mettle in various scholarly contexts, she continued to address Matti Kuusi with his professional title. Even when she finally dropped the professional title in her letters to Kuusi in the 1970s, she nonetheless refrained from using his given name alone, addressing him always as Matti Kuusi, or playfully, as M6.<sup>18</sup> Significantly, although Kōngäs's early letters to Kuusi, all typewritten, follow the formal conventions of the letter vis-à-vis address, her writing style ranges from brisk and business-like, earnest and heartfelt, to conversational and breezy, often suggesting a feeling of camaraderie or intellectual affinity between them.

So far, I have drawn attention to the institutional framework that enabled and sustained the correspondence. She was a student asking for guidance and support, and he, as her professor, complied by responding to her letters. Even without access to Kuusi's letters to Kōngäs, her letters occasionally offer clues about the content of his letters. For example, a letter written from New York City in December 1961 begins like this:

Heartfelt thanks for your letter. Over here I am bothered by a feeling of missing out on everything; Your letters help bring me up to speed. There's quite a flurry of activity over there on the folklore front, somehow the winds have started to blow. Once again, I can feel that 'though I am poor and without honour, I belong to an illustrious nation'.<sup>19</sup>

Such expressions of gratitude, moreover, highlight the way in which a correspondence can be an 'exchange' based on 'reciprocity' (Stanley & Jolly 2005: 94). Another striking feature about correspondences, which is also evident in Kōngäs's letters, is their back-and-forth nature, that is, in Porter's words, 'a letter is usually a reply to another letter and/or invites a reply' (Porter 1985: 6). Liz Stanley observes how letter-writers, while promising to write, also implore their recipients to write back (Stanley 2004: 202), as Kōngäs does in her first letter from Indiana: 'I would be most grateful to hear now and

then some news from the home front.<sup>20</sup> Kuusi, like many recipients of letters, could not resist the invitation to reply.

In the case of Kōngäs and Kuusi, the so-called professional parameters of their relationship can be discerned through the epistolary conventions to which she adhered and the academic news from America conveyed in her letters. Yet within the formal framework of this professional correspondence, the writer, or persona of the letters, emerges through other, somewhat more personal musings. These lines or more extensive passages come across as autobiographical acts, forays into self-understanding, though these endeavours to understand the self are invariably focused on an identity defined by a scholarly persona. Writing about autobiographies, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson point up narrators' endeavours to 'identify' themselves to the reader using rhetorical means (Smith & Watson 2010: 38, 63). Autobiographical acts, regardless of the guise in which they appear, can also serve as 'investigations into and processes of self-knowing' (Smith & Watson 2010: 90). As the author of the letters, Kōngäs seeks not only to know herself – as a scholar – but also to make herself known to the addressee. This exploration of her scholarly self and consolidation of her scholarly identity nonetheless takes places in a communicative context, a correspondence between a doctoral student abroad and her professor back home. In this context, it is also important to distinguish the 'narrating "I"', the one that is accessible to the reader, from the flesh-and-blood historical 'I' (2010: 72). Below I will examine in more detail how this narrating 'I' shapes a scholarly identity for the benefit of her chosen mentor through various autobiographical acts. These include those which concern her relationship to her mother tongue, her commitment to serve her country through her study of folklore, especially as practiced in Finland, and her fascination with poetry in all its forms.

### *From Wistful Longing to Outlining her Mission*

The tangle of feelings – longing, bewilderment and exhilaration, to name only a few – experienced by those who have left their country of birth either out of desperation or choice has long been a topic of both literary and scholarly concern. Indeed, the matter of migration, separation and letters exchanged by those who leave and those who stay has attracted scholarly attention from various points of view since the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (e.g., Thomas & Znaniecki; 1918–1920; Gerber 1997; Khanenko-Friesan 2015; Muir 2016; Kurvet-Käosaar 2019). Such momentous departures invariably come at a cost. Thomas Couser, considering his own father's experience of displacement, acknowledges the 'psychic toll of migration even under what seemed favourable circumstances' (Couser 2019: 249). Unlike many of her Finnish-American informants, Elli Kōngäs arrived in the United States with a place to study, a preparatory language course, a year of funding and accommodation.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, her stay was meant to be temporary: she went abroad to consecrate her time to research and writing with a view to returning to Finland. In her letters to Kuusi, she often refers to her years of study in America – especially the first year – as an escape from having to earn her living as a schoolteacher or as a university lecturer. Relatively speaking, then, as a scholarship holder, Elli Kōngäs landed in America as a privileged visitor. Yet from the outset of her correspondence with Kuusi, as if by presentiment, she writes as though her return

home was always hanging in the balance. As a letter-writer, Kōngäs is often prone to self-dramatization. Her anxiousness about eventually succumbing to the temptation to stay appeared to make her mission clearer: her goal was to return. Below I will discuss the various ways in which Kōngäs the letter-writer not only underscores her Finnishness and her longing to serve her country through study and research but also seeks to show her lack of interest in America.

In a taped conversation with Barbro Klein, also a PhD student at Indiana University in the 1960s, but from Sweden, I asked if she recalled ever talking with Elli Kōngäs about her impressions of living and studying in the United States. I had supposed that two female students from the Nordic countries would have exchanged thoughts about American culture, politics, or academic life. According to Klein's recollection, however, it was a topic that barely surfaced in their conversations: 'I don't think we spoke about America very much. It wasn't interesting. We lived there. Poetry was much more interesting.'<sup>22</sup> Klein then added that Kōngäs 'reserved different things for different friends'. As a matter of fact, the topic of America turned out to be a matter of considerable interest when writing to Kuusi; in these early letters she articulates her resistance to the allure of America as well as concerns about becoming estranged from her mother tongue.

Separation from her mother tongue and the onslaught of English on her psyche is a salient feature in the early letters to Kuusi. Many of the passages dedicated to her experience of the United States are first and foremost accounts of living, not so much in another country but rather in another language. Apart from a few passing remarks about the weather ('the depressing autumn rain' and 'the only day of snow' in Bloomington), and local sights and sounds (a 'blossoming cherry tree beneath [her] window', and 'the sound of a church bell from Harlem',<sup>23</sup> in New York City), accounts of the ambient, actual physical world beyond the classroom or the library receive little mention. Writing to Kuusi on 10 September 1959, at the end of her first day on campus, Kōngäs, already fearing the erosion of her writing skills in Finnish, bemoans the omnipresence of the English language: 'Writing is just so hard here, when, as far as language is concerned, I am completely surrounded. I'm about ready to order the "Dictionary of modern Finnish" and "Language guide".'<sup>24</sup> In addition to their shared fascination for folk poetry, in all its various guises, Kōngäs and Kuusi were also united by their abiding zest for the Finnish language. Indeed, as Kōngäs strove to find her bearings – lingually, academically, and socially – on the American campus, she immediately set about to create what How refers to as an 'epistolary space' (2018: 3) not only for academic support but also for quenching her longings to communicate on weighty matters in her mother tongue. A few months later, Kōngäs describes how the vastness of the country leaves her feeling lost and longing for the familiarity of home and the intimately known language:

All the while I am here, I am vexed by some kind of feeling of immensity: the land, the people, the things to read, to learn, to hear, sprawl out in so many directions that it terrifies me. Finland feels like a cosy corner, where one is more or less always on top of things, matters general and particular, where one understands each and every nuance of day-to-day language, and therefore one feels at home.<sup>25</sup>

Her words conjure up a striking image: a solitary figure standing in a boundless landscape teeming with possibilities and demands. The disorientation that she describes is in stark contrast with the one of ease she associates with Finland, her corner of the world. While her account is reminiscent of a textbook case of culture shock, for Kōngäs, her sense of displacement is primarily bound to language.

In addition to sharing with Kuusi her uneasiness about the vastness of the country and the language surrounding her, Kōngäs turns to some other perhaps more easily identifiable matters of vexation: 'In a foreign country one must adapt in other ways. I flinch at all the social fussing, the inflated phrases, the familiar you, the obligatory smile, pink walls, etc.'<sup>26</sup> The last one, the use of pink in home décor, appears in another letter as an affront to her aesthetic sensibility. In this instance, writing on 8 December 1961, she first bemoans one of her Finnish-American narrators' penchant for using overblown language, a tendency that she also notes in his preference for new-fangled fashions and products over the understated minimalism of the old country:

Certainly, those matters are not limited only to the problem of style in speech and writing. The same immigrant who says birth-country prefers to see his wife in silk, velvet and lace-up sandals than in a black woollen dress; and of Marimekko, he doesn't have the slightest. And he has a pink bathroom with flowery terrycloth towels, and a porcelain plate with the Aaronic Blessing hanging on the kitchen wall.<sup>27</sup>

The passage above, if taken out of its original context of the letter, may put its author, the folklore collector, in a somewhat unflattering light. After having been welcomed into various Finnish-American homes and communities, she proceeds to judge the taste of one of their members, an individual who had presumably offered her at least some assistance and possibly some folklore materials for her dissertation. My point here, however, is not to highlight class differences, expressed in taste, between Kōngäs and some of her informants, or to remark on her youthful elitism. Instead, I am more interested in her rhetorical efforts to simultaneously distance herself from the crass consumerism she found in America and underline her fondness for the dignified simplicity of traditional and modern Finnish design. The matter of taste, whether expressed in speech, fashion, fabrics or items of home décor, becomes a way for Kōngäs, a Finnish national in America, to demonstrate her affinity with Kuusi, both a member of the Finnish educated elite and a champion of the national folk culture. This is truly a Finnish instance of the way in which class, education, and especially *taste*, as Bourdieu (1984) so meticulously delineates it in his magisterial study of French society and culture, can unite or divide. Pronouncements on the poor taste of others can serve as 'opportunities to experience or assert one's position in social space' (1984: 57). This assertion on the part of the letter-writer appears as an attempt to show her loyalty to the values she associates with Finland. The widespread aversion among university-educated Finns to American 'mass culture', also expressed in the festschrift for Matti Kuusi in 1977 (Pöysä 2018: 100), shows the enduring ambivalence with which Finns have viewed America and the immigrants who left to pursue that dream.<sup>28</sup>

At the end of her first academic year in the United States, Kōngäs, ponders the fates of the Finnish-Americans she has thus far met: 'They have come here to live a life without want. And so, they live, but rootlessness is worse than poverty.'<sup>29</sup> In this manner, Kōngäs partakes in the so-called paradigm of loss that has long pervaded the

study of folklore (e.g., Abrahams 1993; Anttonen 2005; Bendix 1997). Her use of the biological metaphor of roots and rootlessness to describe what she regarded as the culturally impoverished lives of many Finnish-Americans resonates with the modern preoccupation with tradition, cultural continuity and loss (Anttonen 2005: 43–45). In this way, Kōngäs, a Finnish national who had already devoted much of her youth to the study of her own culture (language, literature and folklore) and was convinced of its distinctiveness and value, also identified with Kuusi's primary vocation: the protection and cultivation of Finnish culture (Ilomäki 1994: 7; Krogerus 2014: 596). Writing from such a position and mindset may have rendered the appreciation of immigrant folklore or culture on its own terms difficult.

### *Representing Finnish Folklore Research Abroad*

In addition to Kōngäs's lyrical expressions of longing for the Finnish language, her scholarly persona also took shape through her identification with the research tradition in which she received her early formation and her commitment to working on its behalf. The notion of service – to the discipline and her country – is another recurring feature in her letters to Kuusi. For example, in her first letter to Kuusi from the United States she conveys the good news about the reputation of Finnish folklore scholarship: 'The most reassuring thing here is, unlike in many other fields, Finnish research is respected. Now it is necessary to put forth one's best effort, so as not to bring shame on one's country.'<sup>30</sup> Indeed, as noted by Rosemary Zumwalt, many American folklorists had looked to Europe, especially Finnish folklore scholarship, in search of scholarly direction (Zumwalt 1988: 101). Besides taking pride in the perception of Finnish folklore studies in America, Kōngäs also refines her scholarly persona, identifying herself as a Finnish scholar and national on a mission instead of simply an individual researcher pursuing her own career goals. Referring to the work of Herman Paul and his notion of goods, that is, 'guiding principles or values', Svanfeldt-Winter notes the importance of 'serving the national good' (2019: 20, 26) for earlier folklorists such as Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio. Political activism formed a component of the scholarly personae of Haavio and Enäjärvi-Haavio, whereas Kōngäs largely confined her expressions of allegiance to Finland within the sphere of folklore scholarship and her contribution to it as a Finnish scholar abroad.

Her letters to Kuusi often make clear her intention to make her studies in the United States also beneficial to folklore scholarship in her homeland. During an age when the flow of information was markedly slower than our own, the importance of face-to-face meetings and communication cannot be underestimated. From the very outset of her studies at Indiana University, Elli Kōngäs found herself having to represent her home university and national research traditions. In fact, she embraced this role with gusto upon her arrival to Bloomington. According to the letter she wrote to Kuusi after her first day on campus in September 1959, her initial meeting with Richard Dorson had included a discussion about introducing his forthcoming book to Finnish scholars as well as possible exchanges of scholarly literature and music recordings between the Finnish and American institutions. With a brisk and business-like tone, Kōngäs steps into the role of mediator in knowledge exchange:

Dorson is by the way publishing a new book, *The American Folklore*. He asked where he could have the publisher send a free copy. I said that it would be wise to send it directly to you, if he'd like the book to be reviewed. You will therefore be receiving some reading material in the near future. – Yesterday evening we talked about a book exchange, SKS would be interested, at least according to Dr Vuorela and Rauni Puronen, MPhil. They are interested over here as well. Dorson would also be pleased to receive some Finnish folk music; a folk music archive has been established here, and you would get something in return.<sup>31</sup>

The English words 'mediator' and 'intermediary' were used by K ng s herself in her report to the Finnish-American Scholarship Committee (dated 21 Sept. 1961). There she underlined the importance of studying abroad for the sake of promoting international cooperation in the field of folklore scholarship. Writing to Kuusi from New York City in the spring of 1961, K ng s underscores her dedication not only to rousing enthusiasm about Finnish language and culture among her students at Columbia University but also to sharing her newfound knowledge about Finnish-American vernacular traditions. In fact, she somewhat ironically construes her role and her efforts as spreading the gospel – for example, in a letter dated 17 April 1961, she writes of having 'turned into something of a missionary', and she refers to the trips she takes to lecture various audiences as 'preaching tours'. Though time-consuming, she confesses, 'giving those talks is a pleasant obligation. As a holder of an Academic Women scholarship, I have to go, and as a Finn I want to go whenever I am asked'.<sup>32</sup> Throughout her correspondence with Kuusi, moreover, K ng s demonstrated her interest in sharing knowledge, conveying news from her new academic setting, and fostering good relationships between researchers from both countries. All of these activities fall into line with one dimension of the scholarly persona she cultivates, namely, a researcher skilled in navigating between these academic worlds.

As she also suggested in the above-mentioned report, one of her 'collaborative efforts' involved translation work. During her first year at Indiana University, she 'translated approx. 500 Finnish folktales for Stith Thompson to use for his new edition of the international tale type index originally created by Antti Aarne'. According to her 1959 Christmas letter to Kuusi, the translation work constituted 'quite a deadly thing'.<sup>33</sup> Both Kuusi and K ng s recognized the importance of translation for intellectual exchange between Finnish and American folklorists. Kuusi had apparently even encouraged her to translate folk poetry from *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot*<sup>34</sup> into English. Although appreciative of his suggestion, K ng s expresses doubts about taking on such a project: 'I certainly doubt that I will never learn enough English to take on such a demanding task, but it [translating the SKVR into English] is still a good thing to keep in mind'.<sup>35</sup>

K ng s took up the task of translating disciplinary history with even more urgency. Her letters to Kuusi communicate her tireless efforts to get Jouko Hautala's comprehensive *Suomalainen Kansanrunouden tutkimus* (Finnish folklore research) translated into English. As she puts it in the first letter in which the matter is brought up, she had already been discussing the prospect of an English-language version of Hautala's book with several scholars:

I have now been speaking about this book for one year and a half, and everyone is 'really very interested': Archer Taylor, R.M. Dorson, [Warren E.] Roberts, Sebeok. I am somewhat irritated by Dorson's attitude: he simply forgets over and over again. Here they have a proper monograph series I.U. Publications, Folklore Series. I have tried to open his eyes to the undeniable fact that all over Europe good historical surveys are being written (Cocchiara has written a kind of general history, *Storia del Folklore in Europa*), and he is always enthusiastic when I say that we should collect these and translate them, because they are in languages that no one here knows – and so, in addition, there's Boberg's *Folkemindeforskningens Historie i Mellem- og Nordeuropa* – but then the matter always falls asleep.<sup>36</sup>

As the above passage indicates, Kōngäs's commitment to the translation of scholarly works into English was not confined to the promotion of Finnish research in America but also to encourage wider awareness among American scholars about folklore research done elsewhere, especially in Europe. This matter, especially the way it played out between her and Richard Dorson, according to her letter, annoyed her to such a degree that she could not complete her letter to Kuusi for several weeks: 'January 3, 1961. – My letter was not finished before Christmas first of all because I felt depressed by my own bad mood as I started pursuing that history thought.'<sup>37</sup> She continues by relating the good news that she had spoken on the phone with Dorson about Hautala's book before the Christmas holiday and that he after all had a translator in mind, a well-to-do Finnish-American willing to take on the project without a grant. Several months later, Kōngäs, now writing from New York City where she was teaching Finnish at Columbia University, brings up the matter of Hautala's book again. This time, she has found a willing translator from among her students, though one in need of funding; here she expresses her exasperation to Kuusi with Hautala's apparent lack of interest. Her energetic endeavours to live up to one side of her scholarly persona, a European folklorist able to negotiate intellectual exchange through translation, for instance, prove unfruitful and downright frustrating. Despite her annoyance with Hautala for not answering her letters, not to mention her thwarted attempts to have the book translated in the United States, the task remained at the back of her mind throughout her graduate school years. After some three years of on-and-off deliberations about an English edition of Hautala's book, Kōngäs moved on to other projects.<sup>38</sup>

Besides her efforts on the translation front, Kōngäs was also asked to represent Finnish folklore research by writing articles about it in American journals. Though she was eager to do so, the dearth of works of Finnish folklore studies available to her in the United States made the task challenging. Here again, while asking for another favour, she demonstrates to Kuusi her willingness to promote Finnish research:

Another practical matter: now and then I am urged to write commentaries about Finnish folklore research in these journals. I would gladly do that, but the books get here at a leisurely pace. And even then, when they do arrive at the editors' office to be reviewed, these people are collectors just like anyone else and save works in other languages on their shelves like fetishes. Would it be too bold of me to ask you to send me new publications from SKS now and then? Here they know outrageously little about anything other than research published in English. Dorson cannot even read German, etc. etc.<sup>39</sup>

As she underscores her own role as an intermediary seeking to bring Finnish folklore research to a wider audience, K ng s also makes a dig at the American tendency to insularism. Instances of ignorance range from telephone operators unable to spell Helsinki to university professors unversed in languages other than English. For the most part, in her letters to Kuusi, her role as mediator seems focused on educating the American community of folklorists about Finnish folklore research. At times she seems to underline these experiences for Kuusi's benefit, to show that she has not been captivated by the American dream.

The role of intermediary was also something she practiced in less formal settings and her portrayals of them. For example, when K ng s had the opportunity to travel to California on a field trip and visit America's foremost proverb scholar, Archer Taylor, she wrote Kuusi a vivid account of their meeting. The description of the journey, arrival and visit with Archer Taylor takes up roughly half of this page-long letter to Kuusi dated 10 August 1960. K ng s mentions that her goal had been to arrive in time for the celebration of Taylor's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Their late arrival, however, gave her and Meri Lehtinen, a linguist and her field partner, the opportunity for a more personal visit, not to mention a place to stay the night. The renowned proverb scholar, whom she refers to as the 'prophet', is portrayed out in the garden, picking pears with his 'feisty' wife. The brisk and business-like voice she used in relation to her discussions about knowledge exchange with Dorson and Sebeok, for example, has changed to the gushy exuberance of a novice upon meeting a guru. The meeting with Archer Taylor leaves her 'walking on air'. Besides painting an idyllic image of the Taylors in their garden and making note of the history of their house, she also conveys a cordial greeting from Taylor to Kuusi:

'Taylor asked me (when we next meet) to extend especially warm greetings to You. He mentioned your article, which appeared in the festschrift, he also mentioned receiving a kind and good letter for his birthday. Since I can't wait until we meet, I am telling you now.'<sup>40</sup> The role of academic intermediary also figured in supporting social relationships between international scholars.<sup>41</sup> No doubt K ng s wanted also to remind Kuusi of their intellectual affinity through her admiration for Archer Taylor and his work.

### *Fits of Inspiration*

In a letter written from New York City and dated 20 February 1962, K ng s makes a confession to Kuusi: 'We had a two-to-three-week holiday, one that I spent essentially nailed to my table. But I didn't work on dissertations, wretched creature that I am. I was translating the poetry of Wallace Stevens, and I still have no regrets.'<sup>42</sup> Not in the least repentant, K ng s proceeds to elaborate on her plans for the eventual publication of her translations of these poems, adding that she is confident about the quality of her work. It is also worth noting that this ostensible distraction from her academic work was undertaken with a sense of greater purpose: to offer Finnish readers an introduction to the work of modern poets.<sup>43</sup> Her original plan was to bring the work of two poets together in one volume in Finnish. The other, Salvatore Quasimodo,<sup>44</sup> only a few years before, in 1959, had won the Nobel Prize: 'I have also translated quite a bundle of Salvatore Quasimodo's poetry from the Italian, about 20 of them. They are beautiful, so beautiful that it hurts.'<sup>45</sup>

A sensitivity to poetic language and its patterns forms an integral component in the folkloristic scholarly persona that emerges in reading the letters by Elli Kögäs to Matti Kuusi. As a folklorist trained in Finland, it appears to have been second nature for her to hold poets and poetry from both the oral and written traditions in high esteem. This relationship to poetry – as a scholar, translator, and poet – is discernible as part of the ‘repertoire’ of conduct common to folklorists drawn from the history of Finnish folklore scholarship (Svanfeldt-Winter 2019: 21, 26, 40). Years later, in her review of William Wilson’s 1976 monograph *Folklore and Nationalism in Modern Finland*, for example, Kögäs Maranda, while seeking to make a distinction between nationalism and chauvinism, underscores the cultural role of scholars and poets in nation-building: ‘Another point about Finnish folklorists is that a good number of them have been poets: Julius Krohn, Elias Lönnrot, and Kaarle Krohn. Martti Haavio was one of the country’s most talented poets, and Matti Kuusi has published one collection of poems’ (Kögäs Maranda 1978: 63–64). Yet how does she draw upon and use this particular trait in her own fashioning of a folkloristic persona?

Although Kögäs was known to write poetry – and confessed to this proclivity from time to time, also in academic writings and settings – she refrained from calling herself a poet, either in her letters or scholarly writings. It is of course possible that she herself would have regarded such self-designation as vain and unbecoming. In fact, in connection with her translation work, she denies herself the role of creator, preferring instead to assume a humbler part, one dedicated to craft:

I am not a poet, nor do I need to be, though I sometimes err by expressing myself so. And translation, even though it requires a poetic sensibility, requires above all language skills and diligence, respect for the original text, in other words, rather prosaic qualities. I am at the moment very captivated by the questions of translation, particularly the translation of poetry.<sup>46</sup>

For all her disavowal of a poetic identity, Kögäs renders her academic career as a higher calling or vocation, one befitting an artist. The romantic image of the artist (poet) or the scientist (scholar), a figure driven to creation and subject to throes of inspiration, is a common trope in the popular imagination. The narrating ‘I’ of Kögäs’s letters often draws upon it in working out a position on the work of research and also in fashioning her scholarly persona.

As a yet-to-be-established folklorist writing to a professor she regarded as a mentor, Kögäs, in her second letter to Kuusi, simultaneously cultivates a posture of indifference to her coursework at the ‘American university’ and one of fervent devotion to her own research. This devotion is not construed as a decision made by the researcher; instead, it is the folkloric materials that have an ineffable hold on her intellect and imagination. Let us take, for example, the way in which the narrating ‘I’ of Kögäs’s letter describes her attitude to her project on ‘The Song of Stephen’, a traditional song based on legends about the first Christian martyr. She had started her research before leaving for the United States but decided to postpone its completion until her return to Helsinki, after a year or two abroad. After only a few months into her term at Indiana University, however, Kögäs writes to Kuusi to announce her change of heart, which she describes as more of an irresistible urge than a choice: ‘I am simply writing now out of the need to say that I couldn’t wait until my return for the Song of Stephen, but

rather I have started working on it here.<sup>47</sup> It might also be noted that her decision to forge ahead with the study on St. Stephen despite already having a demanding course load roughly coincides with her application for another year of funding, this time from the American Association of University Women. Below, in a passage from the same letter, Kögäs firmly declares her determination – despite the demands of coursework – to complete her study of ‘The Song of Stephen’. In the letter, Kögäs fashions herself as a rebellious free spirit defying the regimented life of the American doctoral student. Uninspired by courses, lectures and writing assignments, all of which seem designed to monopolize the student’s time, Kögäs performs her own style of resistance by following her obsession, that is, doing ‘what the mind holds dear’:

I have essentially neglected the other ‘term papers’ on account of this fit of inspiration. The term will be over at the end of January, and there would be many other assignments to complete. I’ve just been so enthralled by Stephen that I haven’t found the time for thinking of the things of this world. In case of emergency, I can resort to being a so-called special student, which would surely mean that there’d be no chance of staying on next year: to get another scholarship, I’ll have to dance to their tune.<sup>48</sup>

Her ‘fit of inspiration’ and state of feeling ‘enthralled’ stand in stark contrast to what she terms ‘the things of this world’, that is, the tedium of coursework. The former can easily be associated with the overpowering sense of immersion experienced by artists and scientists in relation to their work. With a somewhat mischievous air, she reconciles herself to buckling down to her coursework and ‘dancing to their tune’. Making a distinction between research, which she deems a higher calling, and the academic assignments and requirements set by the university or scholarship committees, Kögäs underlines her devotion to the former and indifference to the latter.

Kögäs cultivates an attitude of nonchalance vis-à-vis institutional requirements and expectations in her letters to Kuusi. At the same time, however, she assures him that she is fully capable of playing by the rules and, successfully, to boot. In the same letter, she both sums up her recent exam results and offers an image of how others might see her:

In the American Folklore course, I scored highest on the exam, A+, a matter of consolation in my moments of depression. All in all, I have a reputation for being a bookworm, somewhat asocial, though harmless. I can’t handle sitting around at folklore gatherings after one am, in other words, I have always left the party when only half of the American folk songs have been sung. All kinds of scholarship committees want to know which clubs I belong to. I confessed yesterday in a term report that I belong to none, but I did claim to go to people’s assemblies now and then.<sup>49</sup>

Is there a hint of irony in her purported reputation for being a ‘harmless bookworm’? The narrating ‘I’ of the letter paints a portrait of a young scholar wholly immersed in her own research and studies and only grudgingly willing to compromise her ideals to conform to institutional expectations. Clubs, for a researcher driven by inspiration, represent a frivolous distraction. Her projection of how others saw her combined with her professed boldness to defy expectations in the new environment reinforces the persona she is cultivating. By February of the next year, Kögäs has already presented

her work on 'The Song of Stephen' in a course. She shares the news with Kuusi: 'I received an A and the assessment "an excellent and comprehensive study." There was no discussion, but in an amusing way my reputation grew.'<sup>50</sup> Kōngäs appeared to derive pleasure and amusement from being seen by her peers as an academic over-achiever. By the end of the academic year, Kōngäs looks back on the past winter:

Truth be told, this winter has been living from one research paper to the next. I don't regret that I haven't been as sociable as those who made it possible for me to get here would have liked: once you've seen one cocktail party, you've seen them all.<sup>51</sup>

Her insistence on her focus and industry also appears as a strategy to demonstrate to Kuusi, a strict teetotaler, that she is not wasting her time in the United States – she is there to finish her American project and return to Finland.

The driven quality of her approach to research is also evinced in her numerous references to sleep-deprived nights, which represent, in Bosch's words, 'a well-known trope for scholarly and scientific conduct' (2016: 48). Now and then, such nights are mentioned merely in passing, for example, in relation to preparing her article on the Earth Diver for publication: 'I just came back from a place called Research Centre in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics. I have spent many a nightless night there.'<sup>52</sup> In the instance below, a reference to sleepless nights features in a reflection on her own stance to research. The customary practice of students 'pulling all-nighters' to meet essay deadlines is nothing new, but her emphasis on burning the midnight oil has little to do with external pressure. Kōngäs's insistence on her boundless capacity for work and emphasis on productivity (e.g., high grades and pages written), often at the expense of sleep or social life, could be construed as an undertaking to portray herself as one capable of self-sacrifice in the name of research. Yet she does not do scholarly research out of a sense of duty, or even by choice, but rather as though drawn to it by a preternatural force. Despite her emphasis on her own industry, according to her letters, her approach to research had little to do with 'sitting and enduring' but rather her love for folklore materials and her devotion to the discipline. At the end of her first academic year at Indiana University, after a sleep-deprived week, she shares with Kuusi an exhilarating realization:

I've been rather focused in May: I broke the record of my life by staying awake for five days, so that one night I slept three hours, the others an hour at the most. Seventy pages of text were accumulated in this way. I admit that it is unhealthy and to be avoided, but I didn't do it out of a desire for self-torture, but rather in a remarkable spell of inspiration. At the end, I started to feel afraid when I no longer felt the need for sleep; but when I had handed in the assignments, I fell into sleep for 12 hours. Research, if this little research essay offers any foretaste of it, is not after all a matter of simply sitting and enduring: to do it, at least with my kind of temperament, requires some form of enchantment.<sup>53</sup>

Her account of herself in a state of full immersion and focus, a 'spell of inspiration' that made her lose track of time and forget the bodily requirement of sleep, would now be spoken of as an instance of flow, that magical and elusive coming together of skills and striving, ease and challenge. Her self-portrayal in her letters to Kuusi, not as a hard worker but as a 'scientist' in the thrall of a captivating question, is significant, especially if we consider the question of gender and women in the academy.

Mineke Bosch, referring to the biography by Lies Wesseling of the American developmental psychologist Judith Harris, refers to the biographer's analysis of how Harris, who habitually downplayed her womanliness, shaped her scholarly identity and 'invoked the familiar image of the ascetic and saintly scientist or genius, who had been set alight by a divine spark'. Drawing from familiar repertoires of conduct, Harris was thus able to construct an image of scholarly 'credibility and trustworthiness' (Bosch 2016: 37). Likewise, K ng s, in the words of Stephen Shapin, builds her scholarly credibility by employing tropes of 'disembodied truth-lovers' (2010: 255) in her accounts of her work habits. The needs of the body, especially sleep, go unheeded in the characterizations of her fidelity to her work – an attitude of heroic self-denial. Her narrative of disembodiment can also be interpreted as a way of underscoring her mental fortitude and 'endurance', simultaneously effacing her femininity and offering evidence of her scholarly 'credibility' (cf. Cabanel 2021: 127).

Although K ng s was reluctant to call herself a poet, she nonetheless authored poems and occasionally enclosed them along with letters to Kuusi. Let us return to the letter and poem sent from Astoria, Oregon, in August 1960, the one cited at the beginning of this chapter. Written in the midst of a collecting trip among Finnish-Americans, the letter itself conveys the elation felt by a young researcher energized by new experiences and ideas, fuelled by the conviction that she has found her life's vocation and has the privilege to pursue it (cf. Svanfeldt-Winter, in this anthology). The letter is positively awash with thought about the discipline of folklore: she proposes her own 'field theory', discusses situations in which folklore is created and ponders the meaning of authenticity vis-a-vis traditions. According to Smith and Watson, 'the narrating "I"' of an autobiographical text is often polyvocal, an ensemble of voices. Autobiographical narration may shift through a register of voices that are all part of the narrating persona' (2010: 80; see also P ys  2019; Hyv rinen, Hatavara and Rautajoki 2019). When traversing the territory of folklore research, the voice of the narrating 'I' in K ng s's letters exudes self-confidence and spunk. After a breathless exposition of her recently arrived at insights, she apologizes, perhaps with tongue in cheek, using a combination of Finnish and English: '*Tulipa saarna* [There's a sermon.] Excuse me.' Nonetheless, as if unable to contain herself, K ng s proceeds with her 'sermon', stressing the importance of formulating a more theory-based definition of folklore.<sup>54</sup> Towards the end of the letter, sandwiched between a longish deliberation on her prospects after graduation – returning home to Finland or finding employment somewhere in the US – and a comparison of the American and Finnish seminars' workloads, the self-assured tone falters: 'It is with much timidity that I enclose, along with this attempt, one of my other attempts, one which goes back to my vernal diggings into the Orpheus myth. Atelier critique is welcome.'<sup>55</sup> The voice, once assertive and energetic, loses its forcefulness and certainty; referring to her attempt at poetry, the self-deprecating voice, now speaks from a place of vulnerability. The next letter from K ng s, according to what was salvaged in the collection, is dated 15 November 1960. This letter provides no indication of Kuusi's response to the letter written in August or any comments on any feedback about her ideas about folklore or the poem.

## *A Momentous Life Choice: Homeland or Academic Career*

If we look at Kōngäs's academic and social trajectory in the United States without a consideration of her articulations of longing for Finland and her opposition to much of what she encountered in the United States, her American experience emerges as one characterized by achievement, recognition, and tremendous productivity. She quickly mastered English and, on top of advancing with her studies, began publishing scholarly articles in her field after her first academic year in the United States.<sup>56</sup> Her studies at the University of Indiana and her job as a Finnish instructor at Columbia University created possibilities that had appeared far out of her reach in her native country. Svanfeldt-Winter, in her study of persona formation in the academic lives of Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi, notes how international academic experience can further shape and influence ideas about how to be a scholar (2019: 152). Without a doubt, studying and teaching in American academic settings offered Elli Kōngäs the chance to imagine alternative futures for herself. In the United States, she not only had time and funding for study, research, and fieldwork, but she also had the opportunity to gain more teaching experience at an American university. However zealously Kōngäs expressed her aversion to much of what she encountered in the United States, her years as a PhD student in America marked a vital time in her development as a researcher. The first academic year in the United States allowed her to resume her interrupted scholarly journey with renewed vigour and focus. In retrospect, she had considered her path to her vocation to have been diverted by studies abroad in Germany and Italy and unfulfilling work, though she neglects to mention the emotional upheavals caused by broken relationships.<sup>57</sup> In a letter to Kerttu Haukilahti (née Vainio), a friend and flatmate from her undergraduate days, dated 1 January 1960, after the first semester at Indiana University, Kōngäs had characterized the previous six years as 'a long period of meaningless meandering', stating that 'the present journey' was drawing her back to research, to the 'matter'.<sup>58</sup> As the academic year in Indiana draws to an end, while joking about the 'Americanization of [her] values', Kōngäs makes an earnest assertion to Kuusi about the most essential lesson she has learned in graduate school: 'Still, I can say that I do have one thing of value to show for it; Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio put it like this: "Science may not yearn for women, but a woman may yearn for science."<sup>59</sup> She then adds that she decided not to apply for a job teaching school in Helsinki. Her yearning for 'science' prevailed over her desires for national belonging and her misgivings about America.

Though Kōngäs took a dim view of some aspects of American culture, even at the university, in a letter to Kuusi she still concedes that 'the campus is the best available environment: many of the teachers and a visible number of the students are from somewhere else, that certainly helps'.<sup>60</sup> Part of the richness of the 'American university', as she herself often called it, was the international character of its staff and student population. Also, among her new peers in American folklore circles, she emerged as a multilingual European with extensive knowledge about the discipline's history and theory.<sup>61</sup> The American university setting allowed her to reinvent herself and cultivate her scholarly persona. Judith McCulloh, a fellow PhD student at the time, remembered her friend like this:

Elli was really ahead of many of the people that were supposedly teaching her folklore. She was just incredibly impressive in her knowledge of folklore history and folklore theory. Most of the folklore students at Indiana at that time didn't know much about the international scene or about folklore theory.<sup>62</sup>

Among her peers and teachers in Bloomington, K ng s was perceived, not as an up-country aspirant, but as a Nordic woman with a formidable mind. As Barbro Klein put it, 'She was brilliant. She was a star sometimes.'<sup>63</sup>



Elli K ng s in her role as a university teacher, early 1960s, in the United States. Photo K ng s family archive.

I have suggested that the resistance she articulated with respect to many of the things she encountered in America may have had something to do with her intended reader and his views. How these views, tacitly or even openly expressed, cannot be known without access to the letters written by Kuusi. However, there is one letter written to him by K ng s that does provide some hints about his biases (or those she imagined) against America and American academia; this same letter also exposes a crack in her perception of Kuusi. While the majority of the early letters conveys a student's respect for her professor and gratitude for his support, this letter, in which the display of negative emotions – namely resentment and anger – stands out. Even more striking is the fact that her anger is directed at Kuusi himself. As I have noted, K ng s did occasionally criticize the inertia of other academics, for example, Richard Dorson and Jouko Hautala. Although many of her letters include some discussion of her work on 'The Song of Stephen', the eight letters in the collection from the spring of 1961 (Dated 17 April, 30 April, 8 May, 9 May, 18 May, 22 May, 27 May, 31 May) all refer to the thesis and its upcoming examination in the early summer. In the last letter of that spring, dated May 31<sup>st</sup>, K ng s makes a firm stand in response to Kuusi's possible insinuations about the quality of American research and the flaws in her thesis. She begins the paragraph with a terse statement: 'I would like to say something about

the so-called American standards.<sup>64</sup> In addition to outlining the difficulties she had faced while working on the licentiate thesis in Finland (with no time or funding for it) and in the United States (without adequate guidance and sources), she spells out her frustrations about being a foreigner in the United States and her fears about how she will later be regarded in Finland. Significantly, instead of using the word *when*, she writes, ‘if I return to Finland, I will hear about how American I am for the rest of my life.’<sup>65</sup> She also makes the following pronouncement: ‘As delicious as American is as a pejorative term, I don’t want to hear it a single time in relation to this work. I am not an American (Yank) nor will I become an American (Yank).’<sup>66</sup> Though it may well be that it was Kōngäs herself who had unfavourable views about America and some aspects of American scholarship, it is plausible that she played up this anti-American sentiment in her letters to Kuusi as way of showing her loyalty to Finland and Finnish folklore research. In the letter cited above, however, Kōngäs does seek to assure Kuusi, if not of her indifference to America, at least of her fidelity to her chosen path and what she had gained by taking it.

As I have already shown earlier in this chapter, many of Kōngäs’s letters to Kuusi from her years as a PhD student in the United States contain straightforward questions about scholarly literature and requests for practical help. While such questions may have required either an answer or action on the part of Kuusi, the passages in the letters dedicated to the heart-wrenching dilemma that began to haunt her almost upon her arrival – that is, forsaking a life in her homeland for a career abroad – do not directly ask for an answer or require any action. Although longings for Finland and Finnish folklore research, sometimes obliquely expressed in unfavourable comparisons of American and its academic life, often feature in the letters, there are five letters (dated 27 May 1960; 25 Aug. 1960; 19 Dec. 1960; 15 Nov. 1961; 15 Apr. 1962) in which she asks him, though indirectly, to weigh in on the matter. At the end of her first academic year, for example, she tells Kuusi that many of her teachers at Indiana were encouraging her to stay in the United States. The sprawling continent that had left her utterly overwhelmed a couple of months ago now emerges as one full of academic opportunities for employment. Yet she ponders the weighty choice that ultimately must be made, asking herself, and her intended reader, a question: ‘I truly know what there is to gain: the chance to do research. But is this matter so grand that one could give up one’s language and one’s mind? I don’t know.’<sup>67</sup> Three months later, in a letter dated 25 August 1960, writing from her field trip in Astoria, Oregon, she recalls a conversation with Ermine Wheeler-Voegelin, a woman she describes as her friend (Fin. *ystäväni*) and a scholar of ‘Indian’ cultures, about the near impossibility of earning a living as a researcher in Finland. According to the letter, Wheeler-Voegelin points out that academics, though they do find employment at universities, end up being consumed by ‘office work, departmental meetings, etc.’ Kōngäs describes Wheeler-Voegelin’s dismay at the thought of Kōngäs abandoning her academic career: ‘Mrs. Ermine still urges me to stay by all means, because she is horrified at the idea of my return to the chains of the school system.’<sup>68</sup> Rhetorically speaking, Kōngäs’s account of the American professor’s concern for her future and belief in her potential as a scholar emerges as a veiled question to Kuusi, a desire to know his assessment of her and her future in Finnish folklore studies. By the end of 1960, when preparing to leave Bloomington for the post of Finnish instructor at Columbia University, she again finds herself vacillating between the two alternatives:

Austerlitz<sup>69</sup> is negotiating on my behalf about the year '61–62. I try to imagine the far-off future, and it makes me feel uneasy. Besides the sentimental reasons, the scale also tips in Finland's favour because my field is Finnish folklore research, and in New York I would therefore be in the 'periphery'! As far as this is concerned, they say there are vacations and airplanes and that with a salary from here, I could pay my airfare... If only I had the patience to look around here for a little while.<sup>70</sup>

Köngäs, again, perhaps strategically, makes sure that Kuusi is aware of her attractiveness as a potential employee or colleague at Columbia University.

In her previous letter, written from her summer field trip in Astoria, Oregon, Köngäs acknowledges her epistolary tendency to dwell on the dilemma: 'It seems that I am contemplating the same problem in every letter I write to you.'<sup>71</sup> Over a year later, as autumn turns to winter, she revisits the problem, casting the evolution of her question in deeply patriotic language:

Not a day passes without me pondering where I actually belong. Perhaps it's childish to imagine 'belonging' anywhere, but in my case, the question has during these years evolved into a desire to know where and how best 'to be a Finn', to do something to serve the dear corner of the world, where the Finnish people build and live and in whose bosom rests the bones of our fathers. Whoever is born a member of a small nation cannot easily shake themselves loose; even your accent says who you are!<sup>72</sup>

The final letter in which the dilemma is discussed is dated 15 April 1962, only a few months away from the 1962 Folklore Institute of America, where Elli Köngäs met Pierre Maranda. In this letter, she laments the meagre job opportunities for women in the Finnish folklore archives:

Perhaps it's fatalism that I continue to be here in the United States. It would probably be wise to return to Finland. But where to go there: the archives do not need a woman, except as a typist, and there are many others more qualified than I am. By chance I heard that Academician Ravila<sup>73</sup> [Paavo Ravila (1902–1974)] had been discussing my future with my supervisors. As far as I heard, in his view, if I want to pursue academic work, I am absolutely in the right place. Why isn't a woman considered good enough to be a clerk in the archives? SKS seems to be like the Church of Finland: woman be silent. Still, I don't doubt Juha Pentikäinen's competence, he will eventually get it. Elementary schools had the same system, in which the head teacher is a man, even if unqualified. I'm no women's rights activist; my misfortune is just that I am trying to be a career woman.<sup>74</sup>

Read in succession, the above extracts from her letters are striking, especially the last one, in which a female PhD student firmly asserts her views on gender inequality in their shared discipline to her professor. What does the letter-writer expect from her intended reader? Did she harbour hopes of him acting as an agent of change on behalf of women in their field? All these instances of reflection on her own predicament appear to be asking her interlocutor, Matti Kuusi, to respond in some way. Did Köngäs hope to receive a letter from Kuusi encouraging her to return to Finland? There is no clear indication, at least in her letters, that she ever did. It is also worth noting that by this time Leea Virtanen (1935–2000) had already been appointed to the university lecturer

position held by Elli Kōngäs before she left to pursue her studies at Indiana University. Interestingly, her outburst at the unfairness to women in Finnish folklore research is nonetheless followed by a refusal to identify herself as women's rights advocate.

The matter of her career, how and where she is to earn a living, is subsumed in her articulations of national loyalty and commitment. Indeed, it is in these expressions of commitment to Finland and Finnish folklore research that the workings of the 'ideological "I"' in Kōngäs's letters are manifested most clearly. The 'ideological "I"', that is, the historically and culturally embedded notion of selfhood present to the narrator (Smith and Watson 2010: 76–77), surfaces most vividly in her deliberations about her future, even a future outside of Finland: 'Sometimes I wax lyrical and say to myself that one can serve one's country beyond its borders even better than from home.'<sup>75</sup> In these early letters, Kōngäs expresses her longings for home and misgivings about remaining in America with references to the homeland and its shared cultural symbols (e.g., Sibelius, the national anthem, rye bread, Marimekko, etc.). Conspicuously absent in these early letters to Kuusi are references to emotional ties to her large family in the North: Kōngäs never expresses her longings for home through the contours of her childhood landscape in the North or attachment to family, especially a few of her siblings and her second cousin, relations with whom she had close bonds. With the passage of time, however, the content and tone of her letters to Kuusi changed. The letters written after the family moved from Vancouver to Quebec in the late 1970s contain more references to her home regions, her Tervola dialect, family connections and religious background. Liz Stanley, for example, makes note of the way 'the perspective of the moment' develops over time, how voice and persona can evolve over the course of a correspondence (2004: 202–203). Likewise, Smith and Watson remark upon how autobiographical acts, as 'processes of self-knowing' evolve over time and are shaped by place (2010: 90). Actual, known landscapes, as discussed by Karen Armstrong in her study of a displaced Karelian family's letters, are 'invested with social relations' (Armstrong 2004: 33). Does the ideological 'I' suppress her local and familial attachments in favour of a wider, more inclusive, national identity in her letters to her professor?

As I have stated throughout this chapter, the dilemma, whether to remain in the United States to pursue a university career (with a good salary) or to return to Finland and be destined to teach Finnish in middle school, was couched in deeply emotional language, often verging on pathos. When the predicament is suddenly resolved thanks to the passionate meeting of minds between her and Pierre Maranda at the Folklore Institute of 1962, her account of the relationship, one which began as an academic collaboration, is rather laconic and matter of fact,<sup>76</sup> though her description of the theoretical discovery is more dramatic: 'In your letter – many heartfelt thanks for it – you spoke decisively about the need for a new perspective. Your letter arrived at an almost prophetic time, when I had just reached one of my life's insights and have fervently started to carry it out.'<sup>77</sup> She then proceeds to describe the article on structural models in folklore that she is writing with Maranda. The next letter in Kuusi's collection is dated the following year, on 3 April 1963, several weeks after her marriage to Pierre Maranda. Significantly, the 'I' of the letter has now been replaced by a 'we'; as she boldly sketches out the couple's shared plans: a future of intellectual collaboration including a monograph on structural approaches to folklore and an extended period of fieldwork in the Pacific.

Photo taken on the wedding day of Elli K ng s and Pierre Maranda in 1963. The wedding reception took place in the garden of Professor Ermine Wheeler-Voegelin. Each guest received a copy of the article 'Structural Models in Folklore' as a memento of the wedding. Interview with Barbro Klein 1993 AA; Photo K ng s family archive.



### *Conclusion*

When Elli K ng s sat down to compose her first letter from the campus of Indiana University to Matti Kuusi in the autumn of 1959, she did not only act out of courtesy to relay news from across the Atlantic via the most inexpensive and convenient technology available, but she also opened up a space of connection and communication between her and her professor in Helsinki. If we choose to view a letter as a kind of speech act, clearly that first letter *did* something. To start with, it spurred its recipient into action, that is, to sit down and write a letter back in response. Besides establishing what would turn into an enduring correspondence with a professor whom she revered for his erudition, literary acumen and scholarly approach to vernacular poetry, with her letter, K ng s also created an epistolary space for crafting narratives about her life as a doctoral student abroad. The fact that she wrote these letters to a particular addressee, namely, the professor of Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research at the University of Helsinki and an influential presence in Finnish folklore research, shapes the narrative of her academic life in a distinctive manner. These brief narratives, which can also be termed autobiographical acts, can also be understood as expressions and

explorations of the self. And though these explorations verge on intimacy, the self which she made known to her reader was only partial and fragmentary. Moreover, this identity that unfolds in her letters is not a private self but rather a scholarly persona, one of a Finnish folklorist in America – though adamantly not of it. Within the overall persona constructed in the early letters, I identify two main strands: the Finnish folklorist on a mission and the scholar-artist driven by a sense of enchantment. On the one hand, she often presented herself as a representative of Finnish folklore studies, working for the collective good of the discipline back home. On the other hand, Kōngäs also underscored the depth and sincerity of her commitment to folklore studies by drawing on romantic ideas about the scientist or artist. A love for language emerges as an abiding theme within these dimensions of the crafted persona.

Letters – writing, sending, reading, and writing back – once represented the best means of staying connected for individuals divided by distance. While there have been correspondences meant to nurture and maintain already established and close relationships, others have offered opportunities for rapport to grow, at least within the space of the letter. By all accounts, when Elli Kōngäs left Finland to study in the United States, her relationship to Matti Kuusi was one primarily defined by academic convention and formality. She was a student, and he was the professor. Besides the academic hierarchy that separated them, considerations of age, gender and marital status stood in the way of more familiarity. As I have already suggested earlier in the chapter, the two were also divided by contrasting emotional dispositions. Yet when they found themselves communicating from a distance via letters, the differences diminished, allowing an epistolary relationship based on mutual intellectual interests to flourish.

The brief narratives presented in her letters from the United States portray a doctoral student focused on developing mastery in her chosen field and imagining a future setting for pursuing her vocation. While it is a story of her development as a researcher, it can also be seen as a presentation of self, an artful performance of a scholarly persona. Throughout this chapter I have used words such as *fashion*, *cultivate*, and *construct* in reference to her scholarly persona. These words should not lead the reader to consider her scholarly persona as insincere or the work of sheer invention. On the contrary, the persona is crafted from the ‘*repertoires*’ with which the letter-writer had an affinity to build an academic bond with her interlocutor. In this matter, her letters accomplished their goal. Whatever qualms Kuusi might have had about her emotional intensity, Elli Kōngäs’s letters from abroad gave him access to an intriguing academic persona, a persona that sustained his interest, nudged him to respond and uphold their lively epistolary connection. Indeed, theirs was a relationship that may have seen its finest moments on paper.

## Notes

1. With regards to naming in this chapter, I have chosen to refer to the author of the letters as Elli Kõngäs. My rationale for using her maiden name – except when specifically discussing her life/work after her marriage and name change – stems from the fact that most of the letters under discussion were written before her marriage to Pierre Maranda in 1963. Thereafter she used the double-barrelled name Kõngäs Maranda. Writing to Kuusi prior to getting married, she tended to sign her name as Elli-Kaija Kõngäs. Most of her close friends and colleagues, not to mention her relatives, called her Elli. As her sister Eeva Rajatalo said to me when I visited her in Rovaniemi: 'She was Elli to us.' In an informal conversation (ca. 1994) I had with Professor Leea Virtanen (1935–2002), Virtanen told me that Kõngäs had chosen to drop the second part (Kaija) of her double-barrelled first name after having been addressed in a letter in America as Elli-Kana. *Kana* means 'chicken' or 'hen' in Finnish.
2. I suspect that Kõngäs wrote the poem that same spring. According to a letter written to Kuusi on 27 May 1960, she had prepared a presentation called 'The Orpheus Myth in Oral and Written Literature' for a course she had been taking in Comparative Literature, her minor subject. By her account, the paper discussed the structural differences between literary variants (Virgil, Ovid and Rilke) and those recorded from Comanche and Pawnee peoples (Indigenous peoples of the Great Plains and Canadian Prairies). After telling Kuusi about Stith Thompson's praise for the paper, she ponders whether she could have a Finnish translation of the paper published in Finland. In the next sentence, however, she promptly dismisses the idea, maintaining that one journal, *Parnasso*, would be too literary and that the other, *Virittäjä*, would be too national (*kansallinen*) in its scope, etc.
3. Unless otherwise indicated, the letters cited in this chapter were written by Elli Kõngäs to Matti Kuusi.
4. How ideas travel, specifically the way in which Elli Kõngäs Maranda's correspondence with Kuusi and her work in structuralism may have influenced his own thought, would be worth pursuing. Similarly, scepticism regarding the fruitfulness of structural and formal approaches, expressed most vigorously by Lauri Honko (1980), also a contemporary of Elli Kõngäs Maranda from her student days at the University of Helsinki, and by contrast, the interest shown in formal approaches by the next generation of Finnish folklorists, namely, Satu Apo (1992) in her study of the fairy tale, also warrants consideration.
5. I am grateful to Tellervo Krogerus, Kuusi's biographer, for kindly helping me locate the bundle of early letters written between 1959 and 1969 in the Archive Materials on Literature and Cultural History of the Finnish Literature Society.
6. This sketch of Elli Kõngäs Maranda's life and career owes a great deal to Barbro Klein's obituary (1983/1986), first published in *Folklore Women's Communication* in 1983 and later in 1986 in the *Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society*. This brief narrative has also been influenced by conversations / interviews I had with Vappu Torvinen, Kõngäs-Maranda's second cousin with whom she lived in Kemi, as well as Aili Nenola, a folklorist who also attended Kemi Girls' Lyceum. A Finnish-language survey of Kõngäs Maranda's life can also be found online (Virtanen 2010).
7. The position 'university lecturer' was previously called 'assistant' in Finnish universities.
8. The Folklore Institutes of America were initially set up by Stith Thompson in 1942. Organized every four years at Indiana University, the institutes provided a wide range of lectures and courses on folklore and attracted many international instructors and students. The 1962 Folklore Institute, the sixth one, featured a course by Thomas Sebeok on structural approaches to Folklore. In 1993, when I interviewed Professor Sebeok in Helsinki, he referred to the course as his 'fateful seminar' (for more on the Folklore Institutes of America, see Dorson 1959; 1963).
9. According to Pierre Maranda, the couple 'could have stayed in Paris forever' but decided to return to North America. As Maranda put it, when they were in France in 1969, it was Elli's idea to leave France, but not for Finland or Quebec. In 1993, he remembered the decision like

- this: ‘She said, “Well, why don’t we go back to one of our countries? We won’t go to Finland because there is nothing there we could do.” She could have got a job there, she thought, but she said that you would have to learn Finnish, but you’re not going to write in Finnish because no one will read your work. Instead, let’s go to Canada – to English Canada. We had landed in Vancouver coming back from the field and she had loved Vancouver’. (Interview with Pierre Maranda on 17 Oct. 1993, Quebec City, author’s archive).
10. SKS KIA. AMK. Kōngäs to Kuusi 18 Dec. 1959. Kirje ei näy tulevan keskittynyt eikä kovinkaan lukukelpoinen. Ehkä se sentään kertoo, mitä kuuluu.
  11. There is a conspicuous gap of seven years between the last letter from Paris, in 1969, and the first letter from Quebec City, in November 1977. Although this long pause can be explained by the busy lives of the letter-writers during those years, it is also possible that the letters have either been irrevocably lost or are still awaiting discovery among Kuusi’s papers.
  12. When I interviewed Professor Kuusi in 1992, he said that they were not especially close prior to her departure for the United States. Author’s Archive (AA).
  13. An examination of the way in which charismatic professors have shaped the discipline in Finnish folklore studies (cf. Zumwalt 2013) could offer another perspective onto developments in the field.
  14. Krogerus, who has studied the family’s correspondence, maintains that the Kuusi family relations in letters were defined by comradeship and a lack of sentimentality. Matti Kuusi, even with his wife and children shied away from overt expressions of emotion (2014: 353). By contrast, Markku Kōngäs, Elli Kōngäs Maranda’s nephew, was somewhat perplexed by Kuusi’s focus in his memoir chapter on his aunt’s displays of emotion. In a conversation we had over my kitchen table in 2000, he remarked that showing emotion was acceptable in their wider family; even men shed tears.
  15. The reference form is mentioned in a chapter of his memoir (1985: 339). Kuusi also spoke of providing her with a reference to study in the USA in the interview I had with him in 1993. AA.
  16. SKS KIA. AMK. Kōngäs to Kuusi 18 Dec. 1959. Kiitos kirjeestänne, johon en ole tahallisesti vastannut: huomasin, että siitä edellisestä tuli Teille vastaamisen niinkuin muunkin touhun vaiva, enkä ole halunnut rasittaa taas.
  17. SKS KIA. AMK. Kōngäs to Kuusi 17 Mar. 1960. Kirjeitäni Teille on kahta tyyppiä: niitä joissa pyydetään apua ja niitä joissa siitä kiitetään. Tämä on jälkimmäistä lajia. Kiitokset taas. Sydämelliset.
  18. The Finnish word ‘kuusi’ has three meanings: spruce tree, the number six, an, if we include the Finnish word for moon plus the possessive suffix ‘si’ indicating that the noun belongs to you, the second grammatical person. Having made note of these meanings as a child, Kuusi came up with the alphanumerical nickname ‘M6’ in his early school days (Krogerus 2014: 9).
  19. SKS KIA. AMK. Kōngäs to Kuusi 8 Dec. 1961. Sydämelliset kiitokset kirjeestänne. Minua vaivaa tunne, että jään täällä kaikista asioista jälkeen; Teidän kirjeenne auttavat taas kärryille. Kovahan siellä on touhu kansanperinteen rintamalla, on jotenkin ruvennut tuulemaan. Tuntuu mukavasti taas siltä, että “vaikka itse köyhänä ja maineetonna, saan kuulua maineikkaaseen kansaan.
  20. SKS KIA. AMK. Kōngäs to Kuusi 10 Sept. 1959. Olisin mitä kiitollisin, jos kuulisin joskus jotakin kotirintamalta.
  21. Ever since medieval times, Finnish students and scholars have studied and pursued research beyond the borders of their native country. Indeed, this collection includes mentions or more in-depth discussions about the experiences of individuals, namely – A. J. Sjögren, Martti Haavio and Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio, three scholars who went on to research and study trips to Russia, Estonia, Germany and England. Studying in the United States in the 1950s, however, represented something of a new direction due to the connection with world politics in a postwar world. In the aftermath of World War II – and the wars Finland fought against the Soviet Union, the Winter War and the Continuation War – Finland would have benefited from the aid offered by the Marshall Plan, but the country could not afford to aggravate the Soviet Union. Instead, the ASLA Fulbright Program (*Amerikan Suomen Lainan Apurahat*) was established to foster academic exchange and understanding between the two countries.

- I am grateful to Pertti Anttonen for encouraging me to point this out, although its further development would require more research.
22. Barbro Klein. Interview with Author. Turku. 14 Aug. 1993.
  23. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi. Letters from Bloomington 23 Feb. 1960, 15 Nov. 1960 and New York 9 May 1961.
  24. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 10 Sept. 1959. On vain niin vaikea kirjoittaa täällä, kun on kokonaan kielen puolesta saarroksissa. Alan olla kypsä tilaamaan Nykysuomen Sanakirjan ja Kielenoppaan.
  25. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 17 Mar. 1960. Koko täälläoloa vaivaa jonkinlainen äärettömyydetunne: maata, ihmisiä, luettavaa, opittavaa, kuultavaa on niin kovasti kaikkiin suuntiin, että hirvittää. Suomi tuntuu mukavalta nurkalta, jossa suunnilleen aina on tilanteen tasalla, yleisten asioiden ja erityisten, jossa tajuaa tavallisesti kielen viimeisetkin vivahteet ja, niin, on kotonaan.
  26. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 17 Mar. 1960. Vieraassa maassa eläessään pitää sopeutua muutenkin. Vierastan täkäläistä sosiaalista hössötystä, fraasien inflaatiota, sinuttelua, hymypakkoa, vaaleanpunaisia seiniä, jne.
  27. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 8 Dec. 1961. Tietenkin tuollaiset kysymykset eivät liity yksin puhe- ja kirjoitustyyliin ongelmaan. Sama siirtolainen joka sanoo synnyinmaa katselee mieluummin vaimoaan silkissä, sametissa ja nirunarukengissä kuin mustassa villapuvussa; ja marimekoista hän ei edes tiedä. Ja hänellä on vaaleanpunainen kylpyhuone, jossa kukikkaita froteepyvyheitä, ja keittiön seinällä on Herran siunaus maalattuna kiiltävään posliinilautaseen.
  28. In a 1979 interview published in a Finnish newsmagazine (*Suomen Kuvalehti*) Kõngäs cites a popular song roasting the 'wretches' (Finn. *raukat*) that cross the oceans, also speaking of feeling like a 'traitor' (Finn. *petturi*) for having stayed abroad instead of returning to Finland, especially as 'a patriotic person and a scholar of the national sciences'.
  29. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 27 May 1960. Tänne on tultu, jotta saataisiin elää puutetta vailla. Niin eletään, mutta juurettomuus on pahempaa kuin puutteettomuus.
  30. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 10 Sept. 1959. Rauhoittavinta asiassa on, että – toisin kuin monilla muilla aloilla – tämän aineen suomalaista tutkimusta kunnioitetaan. Täytyy nyt siten panna parastaan, ettei tuottaisi maallensa häpeä. Hm.
  31. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 10 Sept. 1959. Dorson on muuten julkaisemaisillaan uuden teoksen, *The American Folklore*. Hän tiedusti, minne antaisi kustantajansa lähettää vapaa-kappaleen. Sanon, että olisi viisainta lähettää suoraan Teille, jos esittelyä kaipaa. Olette siis lähiaikoina saava luettavaa. – Puhelimme eilisillan kirjojen vaihdosta, SKS olisi kiinnostunut, niin vakuuttivat sekä tri Vuorela että maist. Puranen. Kiinnostuneita ollaan täälläkin. Samoin olisi Dorson mielissään, jos saisi suomalaista kansanmusiikkia; tänne on perustettu kansanmusiikkiarkisto, ja täältä saisi vastalahja.
  32. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 17 Apr. 1961. Minusta on tullut eräänlainen lähetysaarnaja; viimeksi tänään soitettiin puhumaan Finlandia Foundationin kokoukseen, ensi lauuantaina menen New Jerseyyn Akateemisille Naisille kertomaan amerikansuomalaisesta kansanperinteestä (maaliskuussa näitä saarnamatkoja oli useita). Noiden puheiden pitäminen on mielui-nen pakko: Akat. Naisten stipendiaattina pitää mennä, ja suomalaisena haluan mennä aina kun pyydetään. Joskus kuulijat ovat lukeneet tietosanakirjansa Suomen-artikkelin huolelli-sesti ennen tilaisuutta.
  33. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 18 Dec. 1959. ...on aika tappava juttu.
  34. Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot (*Ancient Poems of the Finnish People*) is a 34-volume series of folk poems including narrative epic poems, lyric poetry and incantations published by the Finnish Literature Society (SKS).
  35. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 19 Dec. 1960. Kiitokset kuukauden alussa tulleesta kirjeestä, joka taas sisälsi paljon ajatuksenjuuria. SKVR esimerkiksi ja sen käännökset. En varmaan koskaan opi niin paljon englantia, että kykenisin niin vaativaan tehtävään, mutta asiaa on muuten syytä pitää mielessä.
  36. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 19 Dec. 1960. Olen nyt täällä puolitoista vuotta puhunut tästä kirjasta, ja jokainen on 'todella hyvin kiinnostunut': Archer Taylor, R.M. Dorson, Roberts,

- Sebeok. Minua hiukan harmittaa Dorsonin asenne, hän yksinkertaisesti unohtaa aina uudestaan. Täällä on kunnollinen folkloristinenkin julkaisusarja, I.U. Publications, Folklore Series. Olen koettanut avata hänen silmiään sille tosiseikalle, että siellä täällä Euroopassa kirjoitetaan hyviä historiallisia katsauksia (Cocchiara on kirjoittanut eräänlaisen yleishistoriankin, *Storia del Folklore in Europa*), ja hän on aina innostunut, kun sanon, että nämä pitäisi koota yhteen ja kääntää, ne kun ovat kaikki kielillä, joita täällä ei kukaan osaa – niin, lisäksi vielä Bobergin *Folkmindeforskningens Historie I Mellem – og Nordeuropa* – mutta sitten asia aina nukahtaa.
37. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 19 Dec. 1960. Tammikuun 3. päivänä 1961. -Kirjeeni jäi kesken ennen joulua ensinnäkin siksi, että masennuin omasta pahasta tuulestani, kun rupesin kehittämään tuota historia-ajatusta.
  38. An English edition of the work, though an abridged version, was published in 1969 without her input. In the author's preface, in addition to thanking Mrs. Eija Kennerly, Jouko Hautala thanks Mr. Peter Jones and Mr. Kingsley Hart (Helsinki University) for their work on the English version of his book.
  39. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 27 May 1960. Seuraava käytännöllinen seikka: silloin tällöin minua kehoitetaan kirjoittamaan selostuksia suomalaisesta perinteentutkimuksesta näihin lehtiin. Tekisin tuota mielelläni, mutta kirjat tulevat tänne verkkaisesti. Ja sittenkin, vaikka tulevatkin arvosteluosastojen toimittajille, nämä ovat keräilijöitä siinä kuin kuka tahansa ja säilyttävät vieraskielisiä teoksia fetišseinä hyllyissään. Tuntuuko röyhkeältä, jos pyydän, että joskus lähettäisitte SKS:n uutuuksia minulle? Täällä tiedetään niin raivostuttavan vähän mistään muusta kuin englanninkielisestä tutkimuksesta. Dorson ei edes lue saksaa etc. etc.
  40. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 10 Aug. 1960. Taylor pyysi minua (kun tapaamme) kertomaan erityiset terveiset Teille. Hän mainitsi artikkelinne, joka ilmestyi juhla kirjassa, hän mainitsi myös saaneensa ystävällisen ja hyvän kirjeen syntymäpäiväksi. Kun en malta odottaa tapaamista, kerron nyt.
  41. The two men, whose warm friendship grew out of their shared fascination for the proverb, maintained a steady correspondence until Taylor's death in 1973 (Krogerus 2014).
  42. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 20 Feb. 1962. Meillä oli kahden kolmen viikon loma, jonka vietin suorastaan nautiutuneena pöytäni ääreen. En silti tehnyt väitöskirjoja, minä kurjimus. Käänsin erästä runoilijaa suomeksi, Wallace Stevens, enkä vielääkään kaduta.
  43. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 20 Feb. 1962. Haluaisin siis nämä jutut saattaa loppuun ja erään mielenkiintoisen modernistin esitetyksi Suomen kansalle.
  44. The poems she translated along with an introduction to Quasimodo's work were published in book form later in 1962 (*Ja äkkiä on ilta*).
  45. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 20 Feb. 1962. Italiasta olen myös kääntänyt melkoisen nivas-kan Salvatore Quasimodon runoja, n. 20 kpl. Ne ovat kauniita, niin kauniita, että tekee kipeää.
  46. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 20 Feb. 1962. En ole runoilija, eikä minusta tarvitse olla-kaan vaikka joskus erehtyy niinkin mieltänsä ilmaisemaan. Ja käännöstyö, vaikka vaatisikin runollisuutta, vaatii ennen muuta kielten ja työnteon taitoa, respectiä alkutekstiä kohtaan ym. Proosallisia ominaisuuksia. Olen juuri nyt perin viehtynyt käännöstyön ongelmiin, eritoten runouden kääntämiseen.
  47. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 18 Dec. 1959. Syy kirjoittamiseen on yksinkertaisesti tarve kertoa, etten malttanut odottaa Tapanin virttä paluuseeni saakka, vaan rupesin tutkimaan sitä täällä.
  48. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 18 Dec. 1959. Olen aika lailla laiminlyönyt muita "term papereita" tämän innoituksen tähden. Lukukausi loppuu tammikuun loppussa, ja kaikenlaista muutakin tehtävää olisi. Olen kuitenkin ollut niin viehdyksissäni tähän Tapaniin, etten ole joutanut maallisia ajattelemaan. Voinhan hätätilassa heittäytyä ns. special studentiksi, mikä kyllä merkitsi sitä, ettei tänne olisi jäämistä ensi vuodeksi: saadakseen jatkoa stipendille on tanssittava näitten pillien mukaan.
  49. SKS KIA. AMK. Köngäs to Kuusi 18 Dec. 1959. Amerikan kansanperinteen kurssilla olin tentin paras, A+, seikka joka lohduttaa masennuksen hetkinä. Kaikkiaan olen lukutoukan maineessa ja hieman asosiaalinen, mutta harmittoman. En jaksa istua kansanrunousihmisten kutsuilla pitempään kuin yhteen, ts. olen aina jättänyt seurueen silloin, kun vasta puolet

- Amerikan kansanlauluista on laulettu. Kaikenlaiset stipendihuoltokomiteat haluavat tietää, mihin klubeihin kuulun. Tunnustin heille eilen lukukausiraportissa, etten mihinkään, mutta väitin joskus käyväni kansankokouksissa.
50. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 23 Feb. 1960. -Sain A:n ja arvosteluksi "excellent and comprehensive study". Keskustelua ei käyty, mutta huvittavalla tavalla maine kasvoi.
51. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 27 May 1960. Oikeastaan tämä talvi on ollut minulle elämistä tutkielmasta tutkielmaan. En sure sitä, etten ole ollut niin sosiaalinen, kuin tahot tahtoivat, kun minut tänne päästivät: kun yhdessä cocktail partyssa on kaksi tuntia, osaa niitä kymmenen ulkoa.
52. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 17 Mar. 1960. Tulin juuri paikasta, jonka nimi on Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics. Olen viettänyt siellä yötöntä yötä moneen otteeseen.
53. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 27 May 1960. Toukokuun olen ollut joksinkin keskittynyt: vetäisin elämäni ennätyksen pysyttelemällä valveilla viisi vuorokautta niin, että yhtenä yönä nukuin kolme tuntia, muina korkeintaan tunnin. Seitsemänkymmentä sivua tekstiä kertyi tällä konstin. Myönnän, että se on epäterveellistä ja varottavaa, mutta en tehnyt sitä itsekidutuksen tarpeesta, vaan merkillisen inspiraation vallassa. Lopulta minua alkoi pelottaa, kun ei tunnut unentarvetta; mutta kun tutkielmat oli jätetty sisään, putosin uneen 12 tunniksi. Tiede, jos tällainen tutkielmanväsäys siitä esimakua antaa, ei sittenkään ole istumista ja kestämistä: ainakaan minun luontovarustuksellani sitä ei tehdä, ellei ole jonkinlaista haltiokasta vetoa.
54. A few years later, in 'Structural Models in Folklore' (1962), co-written with Pierre Maranda, and in 'The Concept of Folklore' (1963), Kõngäs Maranda was able to articulate her theoretical views on folklore. In this sense, we may detect an affinity between her and Jouko Hautala, also one of her teachers, who sought to examine scholarly concepts (Hautala 1957; also see Anttonen 2005:11).
55. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 25 Aug. 1960. Hyvin aralla mielin liitän tähän tekeleeseen erään toisen tekeleeni, joka juontuu keväällisestä Orfeus-myytin penkomisesta. Ateljeekritiikki tervetullutta.
56. The articles are, in order of publication: 'The Earth-Diver (Th. A812)' Ethnohistory, vol. 7, no 2, 1960 Spring, p. 151-180; 'Immigrant Folklore: Survival or Living Tradition?', *Midwest Folklore*, vol. X, no 3, 1960, p. 117-123; 'A Finnish Schwank Pattern: The Farmer-Servant Cycle of the Kuusisto Family', *Midwest Folklore*, vol. XI, no 4, 1961-1962 197-211; 'Structural Models in Folklore', *Midwest Folklore*, vol. XII, no 3, 1962, p. 197-211; Review: 'Notes on the Slavic Religio-Ethical Legends: The Dualistic Creation of the World by M.P. Dragomanov', *The Slavic and Eastern European Journal*, VI, 1962, p.392-393; 'The Concept of Folklore', *Midwest Folklore*, vol. XIII, no 2, 1963, p. 69-88. In addition to her more academic publications, she put together an anthology called *Finnish Folklore Reader and Glossary*, which was published in 1968. She embarked on the project after Thomas Sebeok had suggested that she select a number of representative examples of Finnish folklore in translation. According to Sebeok, he exceeded his expectations with the completed product. (Author's interview with Thomas Sebeok AA).
57. Kõngäs left for Germany in October to study German language and literature at the University of Marburg, and by May 1953, her engagement, though short-lived, to Albert Erasmus in Marburg an der Lahn was official. Her marriage to Lauri Knuuti, a journalist from Northern Finland, took place in October of 1955. When she started her job as university lecturer in Finnish and Comparative Folklore Research in 1957, her surname was still Knuuti, as pointed out to me by Kaarina Sala in the early 1990s when I spoke to her at the Folklore Archives. AA.
58. Kõngäs to Kerttu Haukilahti 1 Jan. 1960. I have an extraordinary notion about the meaning of this journey. The last one, my first long journey, Germany, caused me to drift away from research. This seems to be drawing me back. Though perhaps the past couple of years were already a return to the 'matter'. Nonetheless, I look back and feel as though a long period of meaningless meandering is behind me, unless meaning resides in now giving value to things in their rediscovery. The excursion was long: six years. AA.

59. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 27 May 1960. Mutta jotakin selvästi arvokasta on jäänyt käteen; se, minkä Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio sanoi näin ”Tiede ei ehkä kaipa naisia, mutta nainen saattaa kaivata tiedettä”.
60. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 17 Mar. 1960. Kuitenkin campus on paras saatavissa oleva ympäristö: suuri osa opettajia ja näkyvä joukko opiskelijoita on muualta, auttaa se sentään.
61. Interviews with Richard Bauman, Barbro Klein, Judith McCulloh. AA.
62. Judith McCulloh. Interview with Author. Memphis. 22 Oct.1999. AA.
63. Barbro Klein. Interview with Author. Turku. 1993. AA.
64. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 31 May 1961. Haluaisin sanoa jotakin ns. amerikkalaisista mittapuista.
65. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 31 May 1961. ...ja jos Suomeen palaan, niin kuulen lopun ikääni amerikkalaisuudesta.
66. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 31 May 1961. Niin herkullinen pejoratiivinen nimitys kuin amerikkalaisuus onkin, en halua kuulla sitä kertaakaan tämän työn yhteydessä. En ole jenkki enkä tulossa jenkiksi.
67. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 27 May 1960. Kuulen kovin usein (opettajieni) kehotuksia tänne jäämisestä. Ei oikein maistu se ajatus. Toisaalta toisin teidän, mitä voitaisiin: mahdollisuuden tieteellä. Onko asia niin suuri, että sen takia luopuisi kielestään ja mielestään, en osaa sanoa.
68. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 25 Aug. 1960. Rouva Ermine silti kehottaa minua jäämään kaikin mokomin, koska kauhistuu ajatusta, että palaisin oppikoululaitoksen remmiin.
69. Robert Austerlitz (1923–1994) was Professor of Linguistic and Uralic Studies at Columbia University. As a student, urged by János Lotz and Roman Jakobson, he went to the University of Helsinki to do research on the work of M. A. Castrén. His scholarly and social network in Finland was further strengthened by his marriage to Sylvi Nevanlinna in 1953 (Flint 2003).
70. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 19 Dec. 1960. Austerlitz neuvottelee vuodesta 61–62. Koen kuvitella aikaa niin kauas eteenpäin, ja tuntuu tukalalta ajatella tänne jäämistä. Paitsi tunnuseikkoja painaa vaakaa Suomen puoleen sekin, että alani on kuitenkin suomalainen folklore tutkimus ja että New Yorkissa siis olisin ”periferiassa”! Tähän sanotaan, että on lomina ja lentokoneita ja että tälläkäläisellä palkalla saa lipun lunastetuksi... Kun olisi malttia katsella täällä ympärilleen jonkin aikaa.
71. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 25 Aug. 1960. Näkyy käyvän niin, että pohdin tätä samaista ongelmaa jokaisessa Teille kirjoittamassani kirjeessä.
72. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 15 Nov. 1961. Ei kulu päiväkään ilman, että pohdin, minne oikein kuulun. Ehkä on lapsellista kuvitella ‘kuuluvansa’ mihinkään, mutta omalla kohdalleni kysymys on näiden vuosien aikana muotoutunut sentapaiseksi, että haluaa tietää, missä ja miten voi parhaiten ”olla suomalainen”, tehdä jotakin palvellakseen sitä kallista maailman kulmaa, jossa Suomen kansaa rakentelee ja asuu ja jonka povessa lepäävät isiemme luut. Joka on pienen maan jäseneksi syntynyt, ei siitä hevin irtaudu; jo kielimurteesikin ilmaisee sinut!
73. Paavo Ravila (1902–1974), a professor of Finno-Ugric languages and university administrator at the University of Helsinki, was also teaching at Columbia University in 1962 (see Kulonen & Eskola 2000).
74. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 15 April 1962. Ehkä on fatalismia, että olen jatkuvasti täällä Yhdysvalloissa. Kai olisi viisasta palata sinne Suomenmaahan. Mutta mihin sinne siellä menee: arkisto ei tarvitse naista muuta kuin konekirjoittajaksi, ja siihen ovat monet minua pätevämpiä. Kuulin sattumalta, että akateemikko Ravila oli täällä pohtinut esimiesteni kanssa tulevaisuuttani. Hänen näkemyksensä kuului olleen, että jos haluan olla tieteen tuntumassa, olen juuri nyt oikealla paikkakunnalla. Miksi ei kansanrunousarkiston virkailijaksi kelpaa nainen? SKS taitaa olla kuin Suomen Kirkko: että nainen vaietkoon. En silti epäile Juha Pentikäisen pätevyyyttä, kyllä hän sen vielä saa. Kansakouluissa on muuten sama systeemi, jonka mukaan johtajaopettajana on mies, vaikka olisi epäpätevä. En ole naisasianainen, onnettomuuteni on vain, että yrittäisin olla asianainen.
75. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 25 Aug. 1960. Heittäydyn välillä lyyrismieliseksi ja sanon itselleni, että maataan voi palvella sen rajojen ulkopuolelta joskus jopa paremmin kuin kotoa käsin.

76. Significantly, though understandably, Kõngäs makes no mention of Pierre Maranda's membership in the Jesuit order when they first met. He left the religious order to marry Elli Kõngäs.
77. SKS KIA. AMK. Kõngäs to Kuusi 19 July 1962. Kirjeessänne – josta sydämellinen kiitos – puhuitte ratkaisevasti uuden näkökulman tarpeesta. Kirje tuli miltei profeetallisesti aikaan, jolloin juuri olin saanut erään elämäni oivalluksia ja ryhtynyt kiihkeästi sitä toteuttamaan.

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# Abstract

## Confessions and Confidences: Academic and Cultural History Revisited in Letters and Other Documents of Life

This anthology, comprised of an introduction and seven chapters, gives letters a central place in the historical study of academic disciplines while also considering how intellectuals – both men and women – engaged with their interlocutors and wider cultural and political discourses. The contributors focus mainly on the epistolary writings of 20th-century academic and cultural figures from the Baltic region, with a particular emphasis on Finland. At the time of writing the letters, many of their authors, while striving to pursue creative and intellectual vocations in folklore, linguistics, ethnography and the literary arts, also endured various degrees of hardship and mental anguish, something to which the letters attest. The extensive citations of the letters – in their original languages and translation – offer readers the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the content, style and register of their authors' epistolary prose. As well as imparting youthful enthusiasm and passion, the extracts from the letters also reveal the darker areas of their authors' inner lives. However private or personal, these communications reflect the zeitgeist of their era.

In addition to practicing close reading, the contributors draw from concepts and theories from the study of correspondences, auto/biography, emotional communities, positioning and scholarly personae; the contributors also note the ways in which social class and gender can influence acceptance and participation among the cultural elites.

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