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having various purposes and different types of landscapes from many decades.

As for my point of view, the selection has succeeded, although some of my own interests have remained outside the book. The book introduces us to built heritage that is studied less comprehensively than what is tend to. Hence, the book increases environmental awareness – it fulfils the task for which it presumably has been intended.

As a product of collaboration, the book published by the Finnish Literature Society and the National Board of Antiquities together spread the message about cherishing our enduring mutual heritage. To go back to the preface of the book, editor Pinja Metsäranta writes: “The

targets selected for the book delineate the built heritage in Finland in as versatile a way as possible in terms of the timing as well as geographically and with regarded to the subject matter. The book opens viewpoints to familiar places and increases an understanding of built heritage and its values.”

Therefore, the book has something to offer for all kinds of readers. It can be approached as entertainment, as a professional reference book or as a source for increasing awareness about our home region. The book should be of interest for anybody interested in built heritage as the framework for Finnish culture and national history.

*Aura Kivilaakso*



### **A Traveller's Guide to the Methodology of Cultural Research**

Pöysä, Jyrki, Järviluoma, Helmi & Vakimo, Sinikka (eds.) 2010. *Vaeltavat metodit*. Joensuu: Suomen Kansatietouden Tutkijoiden Seura. 456 pp. ISBN 978-951-97493-7-2. ISSN 1239-3843.

The article collection *Vaeltavat metodit* [Roaming methods] is an appeal by a group of cultural researchers from the University of Eastern Finland for the utilization of more multidisciplinary methodological alternatives. In the preface of the book, the editors describe how the articles of the 19 writers originated out of their own studies and teaching experiences. The aim of the work is to create a genuine interdisciplinary dialogue in which new ideas are borrowed from one discipline to another. The book is a result of the cultural researchers' own multidisciplinary cooperation in their joint seminars and workshops. The authors come from different disciplines; the majority of them are folklorists and cultural researchers, but disciplines like women's studies and ethnomusicology are also represented. On the other hand, the book is marked by its local

nature, and its viewpoints might be still more varied if researchers from several different Finnish universities had been involved. The collection has been planned as a textbook for students of disciplines that include the study of culture and for others interested in the subject.

The title chosen for the collection, *Roaming Methods*, is an interesting one, and the choice is clearly justified to the reader in the preface of the book. In the introduction, the editors emphasize that just as scientific theories and concepts are always the products of their own era and are constantly shifting, methods likewise have to be examined as continuously changing research tools. It is typical of multidisciplinary cultural research in particular that not only concepts and theories but also methods are borrowed from one discipline to another. This mutability also enables the introduction of innovations relating to research and the establishment of fresh points of view.

This work, which is quite extensive in terms of the number of pages, consists of four different thematic sections. In the first section, entitled *Tutkija luo kohteensa (ja vastaa siitä)* [The researcher creates the object of the research (and is responsible for it)], the authors state that they are examining the relationship between the re-

searcher, the research object and the research itself. The second section of the book, *Itsen näköinen menetelmä* (A method in one's own image), describes in greater detail the methodological experiments that the writers have carried out in their own work when seeking new perspectives on their sources or on the theories of their disciplines. The section *Läsnäolon haasteet* (The challenges of presence) concentrates on questions related to fieldwork. Here, a central role is played by the notion of identifying the location of the researcher: For example, what era, age group, gender or nationality, does he or she represent? Here the aim of the authors is to promote multilocated research. The last section of the collection, *Kaksin tekstin kanssa* (Alone with the text), deals with the question of the researcher's approach to archival sources and literary texts.

The articles in the book use a wide variety of sources: interviews, research diaries, soundscapes, the lyrics of songs, discussions in the social media of the Internet, fiction and texts that have been entered for writing competitions are all used in addition to more traditional archival sources. The researchers also employ a wide variety of methods in addressing their sources, and the articles cover quite a broad spectrum of cultural phenomena. For example, Kaija Heikkinen examines the position of gender and ethnicity in the location of information, while Helmi Järviluoma discusses friendship between the ethnographer and her informants, and more widely the frame of reference of distance and vicinity in research. Seppo Knuuttilla writes about the production of research materials, and Pekka Suutari about changes in musical activity in Russian Karelia.

It is interesting to note that, for example, Tuulikki Kurki and Tiina Seppä have taken the methodological inspiration for their articles from the ideas of the microhistorian Carlo Ginzburg. The most interesting of the methods used, albeit still very unusual ones, are the listening walk presented by Noora Vikman and the use of autoethnography by Johanna Uotinen in her research, an approach which she herself characterizes as somewhat self-contradictory. In autoethnography the information is located in the researcher him- or herself, and what makes this method challenging

is the fact that it unavoidably embodies both a subjective personal viewpoint and the objective approach of the researcher. However, it offers an excellent tool for examining everyday private phenomena, making it possible to begin fieldwork really from very close range.

The listening walk is an interesting method of studying soundscapes; it is based on an examination of the voices observable in the environment as the researcher proceeds step by step on his or her walk. It can be used to study the relationship formed by the auditory sense between the human being and the environment, and thus for example a hearing perspective can be used instead of the research point of view. Movement is a crucial element in this method because it makes it possible to obtain new hearing perspectives for the research and to compare different voices and acoustic environments. The observation of the soundscape can be employed in the study of subjects related for example to cultural permanence, care of the environment and the reduction of the noise pollution.

In her article *Periaatteista eettiseen toimijuuteen – tutkimusetiikka kulttuurintutkimuksessa* (From principles to ethical action – research ethics in cultural studies), Sinikka Vakimo addresses the question of “the ethical turn” that has taken place in scientific discussion during the last few decades and which has led to an even greater interest in the ethical principles of research work. Vakimo successfully and in some detail assesses the challenges related to the teaching of research ethics. She emphasizes that it is important, especially in multidisciplinary cultural studies, for the researcher to locate his or her own engagements and starting points and to make them visible to the reader. Furthermore, according to Vakimo, it would be necessary for researchers to learn to identify in advance the possible ethical problems related to their own research.

The writers of the book have striven to show the reader how the method chosen by him or her might advance cultural studies. The authors reflect on their own methodological choices in a praiseworthy way and give the reader plenty of examples of how the use of these new methods has affected their work. The authors of the

articles refer to each other's earlier studies, but with a few exceptions they do not really refer to each other's articles in this particular book even though the texts have been prepared by them in joint seminars and meetings. Visibly linking the articles to each other would have made the collection an even more integral unit.

For the reader, *Vaeltavat metodit* opens up a wide-ranging view into the methods used by folkloristics and cultural studies today. As the collection shows, cultural studies constitute a broad field of research, and it would have been quite possible to write a methodological guide for each one of the four sub-themes dealt with in the sec-

tions. Indeed, this might also have served to further deepen the examination of each subtheme. As the editors themselves note in the introduction, the discussion about research methods is on-going and constantly changing, and as such it never reaches a state of permanence or finality. That is why these articles, too, can serve to inspire discussion when future researchers once again seek new methodological initiatives. In any case, *Vaeltavat metodit* offers students of closely related disciplines an interesting traveller's guide to the fields of cultural studies.

Sofia Kotilainen



### Some History of Finnish Furnishings

Sammallahti, Leena & Lehto, Marja-Liisa 2010. Kalusteita kamareihin. Suomalaisten keinutuolien ja pörronkien historiaa. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia 1258. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. 220 pp. Ill. ISSN 0355-1768 1258. ISBN 978-952-222-165-0.

This book tempts a reader interested in the subject: the book looks stylish and feels good to touch. It seems to open a door, at least slightly, into the history of Finnish furniture. Anyone interested in folk art and furnishings feels a temptation to sit down with this book, and she or he will be intrigued by the story.

In fact, this book tells two different stories. The first one is about the position of the rocking chair in Finnish homes. The story continues by describing how the traditional chest was replaced by bureaus and closets as the main pieces of furniture for storage. The writers ambitiously describe how Finnish people began to use these new types of furniture in their homes.

The origins of this study date back to the early 1960s as part of a project financed by the Ministry of Education and the Finnish Cultural Foundation. From the material collected then and later, several articles and two doctoral

theses have been published. The material is also being presented as part of a four-part working series on popular furniture. The first part of the series was published in 2006, *Suomalainen sänky* (The Finnish Bed), which discusses the history of popular bed pieces. This book comprises the second part of the series.

At base, this is an ethnologic study, one which has been written with the strong personal voice of narrator. The sections describe regional and chronological modifications to the furniture and how it was used. The study seems to be accurate and precise. The language is fluent and nice, though the verbal descriptions contain much specific terminology which can in some places even be off-putting to the uninitiated reader. The authors themselves report that they found it difficult going through all of the existing listings and any old materials to put together this historical study. This is what might have influenced the scholarly language somehow.

Curiously enough, they mark sections concerning the most traditional scientific research as being products of their own research – the different sections are separated using different colours. The white pages seem mostly to contain this ethnologic study. The grey-coloured pages give a slightly different cultural-historical perspective wherein there seems to be some of the most interesting background information gathered in the form of local stories and personal memories. This division