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Becoming an Ethnographer. Becoming a Science. Ferdinand Linnus and Estonian Ethnology in the 1920s

Marleen Nõmmela

In the present article¹, the beginning of Estonian ethnological discipline in the 1920s will be analysed with a special attention to one of the leading researchers in the interwar period, Ferdinand Linnus (1895–1941). The analysis of Linnus' fieldwork materials exposes his ambivalent understanding of the discipline and the concept of folk culture and shows that he was a self-critical student of ethnography who had an ideal perception about fieldwork and about the way ethnographic descriptions should be written, derived from the general ideas and objectives ethnology followed at the time, that confronted the reality he was faced with during fieldwork.

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Studying one's own disciplinary history has become more and more popular in the last decades. Deriving from the postmodern concepts of plurality, difference and deconstruction special attention has been paid on how knowledge is constructed in the socio-political contexts. More frequently, the life and work of an individual researcher has been under discussion, studying how he or she has been participating in disciplinary history. In this way, the epistemological foundations and developments of a science are revealed more thoroughly. A reflexive historiography emphasises the need for acknowledging the epistemological and political forces that condition the writings. The personal approach helps to study *science in the making* and it has been successfully used in examining the history of folkloristics and ethnology in different countries (including Estonia). In the present article, I delimit myself with the institutionalization-period of Estonian ethnology and with one researcher, Ferdinand Linnus.

¹ The article is based on the presentation given in the conference "Ethnology: history, present and future prospects", Vilnius, 8–10 October 2010, and was written with the support of the Estonian Science Foundation grant no 7795.

My interest corresponds with that of cultural critique which aims to look more into the discursive aspects of cultural representation. Here, the main philosophical background is the cultural critique of Michel Foucault which questions the validity of “regimes of truth”, seeing the connection between knowledge and power, the discursive role of power relations in creating scientific worldview, and the mechanisms of how the object of study is created, invented or discovered in the human sciences (Foucault 1980). In the article I will look into fieldwork materials written by Linnus while simultaneously putting him in his contemporary societal-scientific context. This way the picture of the beginning of Estonian ethnology will be drawn. By juxtaposing the general context and the thoughts of an individual researcher I would also like to see whether there were similar or conflicting understandings of what constitutes ethnology and its subject.

Ferdinand Linnus (1895–1941; until 1935 Leinbock) belongs to the first generation of Estonian ethnologists. He studied history at the University of Tartu (UT) (then an *Imperatorskij Jur`evskij Universitet*) from 1915 to 1917. He was recruited into the Russian Army in 1917, but from 1918 to 1920 he served in the Estonian Army in the War of Independence. He continued his studies at the UT (*Tartu University of the Republic of Estonia* since 1919) in 1921 concentrating on history, ethnography and archaeology. From 1922 he worked at the Estonian National Museum (ENM) as an assistant and chose ethnography as his major subject. Linnus graduated from the university in 1927 with an MA thesis about locks in doors and gates (*Uste ja väravate sulused Eestis*). He continued his studies for the doctoral degree, but his plans were suspended at the end of 1928 when the director of ENM, Ilmari Manninen left Estonia to be appointed as Head of the Ethnographic Department of the Finnish National Museum. Linnus was appointed to become Manninen`s successor: he worked as the director of the museum and as the head of its ethnographic department till 1941. His possibilities to concentrate on scientific work decreased considerably, but despite that, he influenced the ethnographic work in Estonia with his activities as an editor, lecturer², director, museologist³. Linnus finally defended his PhD dissertation “Archaic Forms of Estonian Bee-keeping I. Forest Bee-keeping” (*Eesti vanem mesindus I. Metsame-*

² Between 1930 and 1939, he lectured at the university in subjects such as ethnography, museology, Estonian folk art.

³ Linnus was also active in several societies as a representative of ENM. In 1929, Linnus became the Estonian representative at the International Committee of Folk Art. From the year 1936, he was a correspondent member of the Finnish Archaeological Society, from 1938 the foreign member of the Finno-Ugrian Society and Hungarian Ethnographical Society, but also one of the editors of the international scientific journal “Folkliv”. Linnus is most known for the foundation of the Network of Correspondents at the museum in 1931.

sindus) in 1938 and became the first Estonian ethnographer with a doctoral degree⁴. He was also the first to publish an overview of the material heritage of the Estonian peasant culture “Die materielle Kultur der Esten” (1932), meant mainly for foreigners. Ferdinand Linnus was arrested by the Soviets at the end of June 1941 and he died in a prison camp in Gorki Oblast at the age of 46. I would say that in his best years of being a researcher, his career was ended.

If we read this kind of short scientific biography we gain the general image of the researcher and we may have some thoughts about his studies and what was his importance in the history of a discipline. But we could ask what is hidden behind this biography: why Linnus chose these themes, what kind of influences he had in his work, what kind of work he did at the museum in the 1920s before becoming a director of the institution. Despite his importance for Estonian humanities and society, there are only few articles on Ferdinand Linnus (Viires 1969; Leete 2005), although he has been mentioned in all the articles about the history of the ENM or of ethnology. Looking at the “science in the making” at the grass-root level gives us a more in-depth understanding of the discipline’s essence. But before analysing Linnus’ materials, there is a need to put his practice into contemporary scientific, institutional and societal context.

Scientific and Institutional Context for Ferdinand Linnus. Estonian Ethnology is Becoming a Science

In 1920s, academic ethnography emerged beside earlier ethnographic activity in Estonia. For the new national state, the independence (since 1918) provided the possibility for the first time to fully develop a nation-based economy, society and culture, where vital importance was given to the so-called national sciences for creating confirmed understanding of a national “own” culture and for strengthening national identity. Therewith the nation’s presence and the possibility for future were interconnected with the nation’s past⁵. Similar tendencies at the time were seen all over Eastern-Europe and these were also in line with 19th century developments in the rest of Europe⁶. Barbro Klein has said that “[B]oth the museums and the disciplines were established to serve the nation-states and their modernization. But the nation-states were no islands. Rather, museums and other scholarly and scientific establishments were developed in

⁴ Linnus was followed by Gustav Ränk few months later with a dissertation „Folk buildings in Saaremaa province“. They remained the only two Estonians who defended their doctoral dissertations in ethnology in the interwar period.

⁵ See Leerssen 2008; Crang 2003; Hobsbawm, Ranger 1995; for Estonian context, see Kannike 1994; Vunder 2003.

⁶ See, for example, Frykman, Löfgren 1987; Klein 2006; Nic Craith 2008; Jakubowska 1993.

a spirit of international cooperation and competition” (Klein 2006: 58). Among other aspects she emphasises the role of museums in developments of folk-life studies and nation states. The discipline of ethnology in the North-European sense really derived from the area of museums and collections. The purpose of regional ethnology as an historical discipline was to describe given ethnographic phenomena with the final aim to give a complete and finished picture of a past material culture of a certain nation. The things – material objects – constituted the discipline’s identity. It is especially evident in Estonia, where the national romantic collecting of folklore and material artefacts had started already in the 19th century (e.g., Kuutma, Jaago 2005).

In Estonia, two similar disciplines – ethnography and folkloristics⁷ – developed into distinct research fields in Estonia⁸. One reason behind this was the historical background; the other can be seen the direct influence from Finland. As it was said previously, there were already considerable collections of folklore and material artefacts about Estonian folk culture by the beginning of 1920s. The objects were kept in the ENM in Tartu, founded in 1909, while folklore collections were divided between private owners and different societies until 1927 when the Estonian Folklore Archives were established⁹. In the Republic of Estonia the question arose how to organize the field of folk life research in the country. The ENM, with all its unorganized collections, was looking for a professional and the scholars decided to combine the position of the museum director with that of an associate professor at the university. This was partly due to economical reasons¹⁰, and partly because of similar developments in other countries¹¹.

The Finnish ethnographer Ilmari Manninen (1894–1935) was asked to come to Tartu, where he started, in 1922, as a director of the museum, simultaneously beginning to give lectures at UT; he was appointed as an associate professor of ethnography in 1924 and given the task to develop a separate science¹². Nonetheless, the centre of ethnographic activity remained in the museum in the 1920s

⁷ The professorship of Estonian and comparative folkloristics was founded at the UT already in 1919.

⁸ While in some neighbouring countries these were not so sharply separated (e.g., in Sweden or Lithuania, see Ehn, Löfgren 1999; Ciubrinskas 2008).

⁹ Although the ENM was founded first and foremost to preserve the famous folklore collections of Jakob Hurt, the museum did not have proper rooms for these in the beginning. Estonian Folklore Archives were established as a subdivision of the ENM.

¹⁰ It was impossible to engage two professionals, one for museum, and one for the university.

¹¹ More about the Estonian context, see Jaago 2003. The museum and university were similarly interconnected in Sweden (see Klein 2006) and Finland (see Räsänen 1992). By choosing Manninen, Estonia decided to derive directly from the Finnish example in developing ethnography.

¹² After Manninen left for Finland in 1928, the department at the university was not filled until 1939 when Ränk became a professor, although several separate lectures and seminars on ethnography were held there.

and 1930s. For Manninen, ethnography was a descriptive and comparative science dealing with material old culture [*asjaline vanavara*=material old treasures]. The purpose of Estonian ethnography was to give a thorough picture of Estonian material culture; to determine typological characteristics and to follow the development of item types in major groups; to estimate the geographical spread of main items and their type variations in Estonia, to identify the ethnographic regions of culture; to identify relationships between the items of material culture of Estonia and its neighbouring countries (Manninen 1924). Manninen's objectives represent these standpoints and the working practice of ethnography at that time and simultaneously show the rules his descendants began to follow.

By studying their tools and implements ethnographers wished to discover the roots of Estonianness and that way to establish an understanding of what Estonian genuine culture consists of. The purpose was to strengthen the contemporary Estonian society and its identity. The general idea behind that kind of research derived from evolutionism, diffusionism and cultural comparison, and hence was derived from the belief in progress. The researchers were not interested in the transformation process but were interested in pure artefacts and phenomena, not touched by modernisation (industrialisation and urbanization). So they studied the "relics" to get in touch with the past, while they themselves lived in a modern town, in a modern society.

Most excellent students were given work at the ENM: F. Linnus, for example, in 1922, Gustav Ränk in 1926 and Helmi Kurrik in 1929; more students in the 1930s. The work at the museum¹³ changed considerably in the 1920s. Besides the new director, who was an ethnographer, the museum acquired its own quarters in the Raadi manor, near Tartu, and began to order and complement its collections according to the principles of contemporary museology. The ENM continued to collect artifacts but started to collect oral material by fieldwork based mostly on questionnaires to get a larger and more comprehensive knowledge. Although the museum-worker spent much of his/her time in practical activities, the museum found time to think about developing its scientific activity. For example, it started to publish its yearbooks in 1925¹⁴ and an outstanding permanent exhibition on Estonian folk culture was opened at the museum in 1927 (see Nõmmela 2010).

With Manninen's objectives, discussed above (Manninen 1924), and innovations at the museum and teaching at the university, began the comparative,

¹³ There were several parts at the ENM beside ethnographic department: the national Archival Library, department of art (with collections of cultural history, history and numismatics), the Estonian Folklore Archives (since 1927) and Cultural History Archives (since 1929). In 1940, the museum was divided into State Ethnographic Museum (was renamed into ENM in 1988) and Literary Museum, dividing also the departments and collections.

¹⁴ The yearbook has been the most important ethnological journal in Estonian since then.

method- and theory-laden research of material culture in Estonia. It became fixed in the following decade when the first overviews of Estonian folk culture and dissertations in the discipline were published.

Fieldworks of Ferdinand Linnus in the 1920s. Becoming an Ethnographer

Fieldwork has been considered one of the most important aspects of anthropological and ethnological practice. Contemporary anthropological ethnographies are based almost entirely on fieldwork and that is where researchers base their authority and credibility. Looking into the history of “regional ethnologies” in Eastern (and Northern) Europe we will see that the importance of fieldwork has been somewhat different but still essential. Because of the focus on the past and “own” culture (and not the contemporary community somewhere far away) the various chronicles, history books, as well as museum collections, played their role in the process of knowledge production for the ethnologist. The questions ethnologists were interested in were different from those of anthropologists, concentrating more on relics found in peasant culture in search of a vanished past folk culture. Going to the field and doing fieldwork every summer was regular practice for students and researchers, at least in Estonia. The duration was usually one month, but the researcher may have gone to the same place repeatedly, year after year.

I see fieldwork as an essentially important practice in the formation of a researcher. Fieldwork is the time and the place when and where the ethnologist-to-be experiences the essence of his discipline: he is forced to think about the discipline, its subject and object and how he himself is related to it. Fieldnotes are writings produced in or in close proximity to “the field” mean they are written more or less contemporaneously with the events, experiences and interactions they describe and recount (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2007: 352). “It can be argued that writing fieldnotes, rather than writing finished ethnographies, provides the primal, even foundational moments of ethnographic representation: for most ethnographic monographs rely upon, incorporate and may even be built from these initial fieldnotes” (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2007: 352). In analysing fieldnotes it is important to take into account that fieldwork begins before the researcher enters the field. “The process of writing fieldnotes often begins in advance of any actual writing, as the fieldworker orients to ‘the field’ as a site for observing/writing, such that the ‘ethnographer’s gaze’ takes in particular qualities and happenings as noteworthy” (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2007: 365)

There are problems and self-criticism is needed when analysing these kinds of materials. For example, when we analyse the fieldwork materials of Estonian ethnographers, these are written in different genres: long descriptions about dai-

ly life and people are in a few fieldwork diaries; there are papers and workbooks with ethnographic footnotes; information about collected items in the special workbooks; ethnographic descriptions written after the fieldwork, based mostly on the information collected during fieldwork and written for the museum archive. The questions why and how the fieldnotes were written, what conditioned it, are essential. The researcher today has to admit that analysing previous researchers' materials is subjective; he or she may wonder if they understood given writings correctly or not; maybe there is something hidden but important.

In the 1920s ethnographers went to fieldwork to collect "ethnographic tradition" or "oral tradition" of folk culture, their attitude towards the "field" was constructed through their studied understandings of what is "authentic" and "folk". They were influenced by the theoretical and methodological literature they had studied and also by the museum policies and general socio-cultural-political context. They were told to look for objective truth, relics about past culture, authentic objects and traditions. But when they got to the field, they met living people in their contemporary environment. Although ethnographers regarded people as "objects" through whom they had an access to the relics and that way to the past culture, they still had to adjust with different views, uncertainties and changes taking place not because of outsiders, but because of the motivation and wish of the people themselves. I am interested in how a researcher or a student managed with those contradictions: theoretical and ideological ideas versus thoughts gained from real life.

Ferdinand Linnus started his fieldwork-career with archaeological fieldwork in 1922 in connection with his studies at the university. His first ethnographic fieldwork was combined with archaeological work in 1923, the latter being more important at the time. Only in 1924, he conducted a distinctly ethnographic fieldwork and after that every year till 1928, researching different areas in Estonia and abroad. Linnus was the only one in the first generation of Estonian ethnologists who had a deeper contact with and studied "other" (ethnic) cultures besides Estonians – Estonian Swedes in Ruhnu island¹⁵ and Livs¹⁶ in the coastal area of Latvia. Although he did not write any long studies about these ethnic groups, just ethnographic descriptions for the museum archive and personal archive (or that was their destiny, though it was not meant to be for Linnus, I think¹⁷). In 1929 Linnus began his work as the director of the ENM and this meant a break in my analysis of his ethnographic practice.

¹⁵ Ruhnu island (Swedish: Runö; 11,9 km²) is situated in the Gulf of Riga in the Baltic Sea, it is appr. 100 km from a mainland of Estonia. Prior to 1944 the island was for centuries populated by ethnic Swedes.

¹⁶ Liv language belong to the Finno-Ugric language group, that is why this ethnic group became of interest for Estonian ethnography. Moreover, not like majority of Finno-Ugric people who lived in an inaccessible Soviet Russia at the time, Livs were living near Latvia.

¹⁷ There are several references about Linnus' plan to finish his "ethnography of Livs".

It may be said that the themes and questions dealt in Linnus' first fieldwork were not derived from his own scientific interest or initiative, but were given by the museum (and Manninen). Linnus had the questions he had to ask during fieldwork but this does not mean that everything was clear to him.

How did Linnus reflect on his activities as a fieldworker? Many objectives can be highlighted: collecting, giving a thorough picture, taking and using photos, observation. During his first fieldwork Linnus stressed the importance of collecting artefacts; this is understandable, as he was sent out by the museum, interested in complementing its collections. When concentrating on collecting, the fieldworker had little time to go into questioning people about all the aspects of their past culture, as was expected from the fieldworker – to give a thorough picture based on questionnaires. Linnus emphasised the importance of taking photos in fieldwork¹⁸ and used them in the ethnographic descriptions as evidence and illustrations. Photos were one tool through which it was possible to describe folk culture. Linnus emphasised the importance of observation and participant observation also, giving this method a prevalent place in his fieldworks after third year of practice. The knowledge about culture/cultural aspect is more authoritative and representative for him when he has seen it himself. The aim for a researcher was to describe a folk culture in depth and for this the observation was the best method. When it was not possible then the describer had to accept general knowledge only.

Depending on the purpose of his visit, Linnus defines himself as a museumman, collector, or as a student of folk culture. The last definition is more prevalent in his later fieldworks in the 1920s in Estonia when he visited Hiiumaa island and North-Estonia and among other things wanted to learn how to do women handicraft, for example, and get more information about the phenomenon. He wants to know the function and construction of an item and for that he learns himself through tangible activity. It is understandable that the study-aspect of a fieldwork became more central when Linnus had more time to concentrate and to be longer on the spot.

Reading the first ethnographic descriptions reveals Linnus as a hesitant and unconfident fieldworker and ethnographer. He felt he had not had enough time to make adequate and sufficient investigations; he is not content with himself. When in 1923 he had to balance his work between ethnography and archaeology and that way did not have time to concentrate on folk life, then in 1924 when writing about Estonian Swedes folk life in Ruhnu island he feels he has nothing important to say because the comprehensive study by Swede Ernst Klein was published just year ago (Klein 1924). Although Linnus was the first Estonian wri-

¹⁸ There are notes about this in his diaries frequently.

ting in Estonian about this ethnic group. Afterwards his confidence grew but he remains rather self-critical in his ethnographic descriptions. These psychological aspects of Linnus as a becoming researcher are manifested in his fieldwork materials and in the way he writes about culture; or how he accomplishes his objectives mentioned previously. For Linnus it is essential to mention all the different possibilities and information he got about a phenomenon, and he does not give his authoritative opinion about it, he leaves possibilities open. It shows that ethnographic description was not a final synthesising place for him. That way he is reflexive about his own work in the field and during writing. I would think that he has been more reflexive than other stipendiats who wrote ethnographic descriptions for the ENM in the 1920s. Thus it can be said that the general definition of ethnographic descriptions (as descriptions striving for scientific essence and „objectivity“) does not apply to Linnus' writings. He becomes „scientific“ in his contemporary meaning only in his published articles.

Linnus had an ambivalent relationship towards handling his informants in ethnographic descriptions. I would say that his attitude towards informants depended on how deep and “scientific” description he was able to write. When he had little information about described culture Linnus often gives personalized examples. When we compare the reference-system of informants in fieldwork materials and ethnographic descriptions and in published articles then it is evident that reference to concrete people is a guarantee for objectivity for Linnus in the first instance, but when he writes articles, then he himself becomes more authoritative and the personal level disappears. For Linnus, it was important that the person himself/herself had had some kind of close contact with the studied phenomenon. It is also interesting to notice that Linnus had key-informants in Ruhnu and among the Livs, but not during fieldworks among Estonians. Their knowledge was the guarantee and gave the possibility to control the information gained from others. But among the Estonians the possibility to control was given through similar information gained from many places. The reasons for this must be sought in the smallness of Ruhnu and Liv communities and because their culture was essentially an “Other” culture for Linnus, on which he did not feel himself to be an expert.

When Linnus writes about aspects of the Estonian folk culture in a certain area he has tried to get information about the past (how things were “in the old times”, “in the oldest time” etc), at the same time he draws comparisons and connections with present, contemporary agrarian culture. He gives clear opinions about folk costumes and their past, this way rendering value judgements deriving presumably from the discourse of modernism:

Nowadays the folk costumes are not worn anywhere in Hiiumaa¹⁹. These are disappeared from usage about 30 years ago. [...] Few parts of the costume, cloth caps, bridal chaplets, skirts are being found almost in every family, but complete costumes and bigger clothes rarely (EA 9²⁰: 37).

He looks for something, which would be genuine to folk culture: “From wild animals generally all the edible animals are eaten. Only sectarians, who are quite many in Hiiumaa, are told to have special perspective about this, but this is not an old original” (EA 9: 157). For some reason Linnus does not think that the attitude of sectarians is old enough to be genuine to folk culture.

Linnus is interested in the pastness of folk culture and for that he looks for older men and women who could give more representative information to him:

The oldest headwear remembered nowadays is skull-cap which was used both by men and women. [...] It is worn by some old women lately, and one was seen by subscriber in Mihkli parish Koonga commune Kalli village Sööni farm from the mother of the master of the house, who is over 70 and from whom most of the information about headwears in Mihkli parish is gained (EA 11: 47).

Anyway the hats were older than cloth caps. The landlady of Sööni farm, over 50 years old, wore this only on Sundays when still young, her mother and grandmother too had worn this hat on weekdays rarely. In pretty old days the hat had to be worn still (EA 11: 49).

By giving references to the informant’s mother and grandmother Linnus accentuates the continuity and the longevity of the described phenomenon at the same time.

But when Linnus discusses other aspects of folk culture, architecture, for example, or fences, he writes about what he himself had seen on the spot. He tries to give the overview of distribution of different types but does not look into the developmental series. The latter aspect is not actually his task when he analyses only the one area and remains in the level of ethnographic description based on his fieldwork. When he talks about agriculture in Hiiumaa, he pays attention to contemporary developments and expresses his wish that it would soon start to develop from its primitive condition: “The techniques of agriculture are quite primitive in Hiiumaa. [...] Hopefully, the nearest surrounding began to follow the example of this [one certain farm in the village]” (EA 9: 205, 217).

In the questionnaires used by Linnus and compiled by Manninen, the phenomena under scrutiny were thought to be old in origin, but a fieldworker could have encountered rather different knowledge. For example, the information about skis in North-Estonia:

¹⁹ Hiiumaa island (989 km²) is the second largest island belonging to Estonia.

²⁰ Ethnographic Archive, volume 9, ENM.

These are still found rather seldom in North-Estonia; more like a single phenomenon of forest wardens, eager hunters etc. The increase of ski-usage in recent years can be explained by the influence of sport movement, which allures boys and young men in the countryside to make skis for themselves. However, skis have been used for a while in several places (EA 11: 223).

But when Linnus describes the culture of Estonian Swedes in a remote island he is trying to give a comprehensive picture about their contemporary life (with references, also, to the past). For example:

That kind of carelessness towards farming in Ruhnu described for example by Russwurm (Eibofolke II, pp 16)²¹ in the old days does not really seem to be the case now. In the previous couple of years the lively interest in developing the agricultural devices has been apparent. These are described in the following paragraphs (EA 7: 635).

The ladders for ricks have not been used. Only in the summer of 1924 Isak Isaks made a pair of ladders for the pastor; these were the first ones in Ruhnu. Inhabitants of Ruhnu have seen the ladders and their usage in the "big land", but they don't consider this necessary in the climate of Ruhnu (EA 7: 667).

Linnus pays attention to social side of life in Ruhnu and talks about events that happened in recent years; he has not so framed himself in describing Ruhnu folk culture. I think that the attitude derives from the need and possibility to distance himself as a researcher from his object of study (compared to studying Estonians as an Estonian himself) and at the same time from his different background as an intellectual living in a modern town.

But it is different when we talk about Livs that Linnus visited repeatedly (1927–1928). In his fieldnotes he seems to have tried to grasp the past in a similar way as when studying Estonians. Linnus rarely mentions the contemporary conditions of Livs. He had gone to study Livs in connection with preparing his dissertation on Estonian and Liv old beekeeping tradition, but Manninen had also asked him to "save for the science as comprehensive a description as possible about the material culture of those kindred people studied so little before" (EAA.2100.2.564²²: 2). This may be the reason why Linnus was focused on past culture in his fieldwork among Livs and at the same time we cannot ignore the historical background of Livs in the 1920s and before²³.

²¹ Here Linnus refers to the book by K. Fr. W. Russwurm (Russwurm 1855).

²² Estonian Historical Archives. The University of Tartu of Estonia Republic. Personal Records. Faculty Members. Ferdinand Linnus.

²³ Being departed from home during the war and coming back after it, the rise of national awakening among them in the 1920s and the problems of assimilation with Latvians and constituting own folk/national culture, etc; i.e. Livs were also looking into their past culture.

Three fieldwork periods among Livs in 1927 and 1928, altogether seven months by Linnus, are exceptional in the history of Estonian ethnology. Linnus's work remained the only one done among other Finno-Ugric peoples by Estonians in the 1920s and 1930s. He wrote over 1000 pages of ethnographic descriptions and over 1000 sheets of paper on ethnographic, folkloristic and lexical remarks; he collected 50 artefacts and made 200 photos. Already in his first fieldwork Linnus understood that there are not enough possibilities to study bee-keeping traditions, but he felt obligation to "save" Livs' folk culture in its entirety. Although he wished to publish "Ethnography of Livs" and finish his dissertation as soon as possible, his commitment as a director of the museum since 1929 left him little time to deal with scientific work. He managed to defend his doctoral dissertation in 1938 (Old bee-keeping in Estonia, I), but the "ethnography of Livs" remained and still is in manuscript.

The concept of Estonian national culture does not come into question in Linnus' fieldwork materials in the 1920s so clearly because the level of generalisation was related to one specific area (e.g., Hiiumaa). His work derived from the questions about distribution and development of certain phenomena of folk culture, or he was simply describing what he had heard, feeling dissatisfied with the superficiality at the same time. His thoughts about characteristics of Estonian national culture are elaborated in the forthcoming studies in the next decade on a more abstract level (e.g., his book "Die materielle Kultur der Esten", 1932).

Concluding Remarks – a Museum and an Ethnographer in Establishing a Discipline

Analysing fieldwork materials gives interesting insight into the ethnographic practice of previous ethnographers and discloses also their disciplinary practices. The purpose of fieldwork, theoretical and methodological background, and scholarly discourse, condition what kind of materials will be constructed during fieldwork and after. The materials expose something about the way a researcher sees his object of study and himself as a scientist. The fieldwork materials of Ferdinand Linnus reveal his ambivalent relationship to the concept of culture and meaning/purpose of ethnography; feelings of hesitance and insecurity and discontent show that Linnus was a self-critical student of ethnography who had an ideal perception about fieldwork and about the way ethnographic descriptions should be written that confronted the reality he was faced with during fieldworks. His objectives in studying folk culture and doing fieldwork are manifested in his fieldwork writings. These materials themselves show that the way of describing (rhetorics) constitutes the object so that the object becomes constructed and that way becomes an authoritative knowledge.

It may be said that looking into the grass-root level of “science in the making” reveals that the general understanding of what constituted ethnology at that time was not so clear and undubious for the contemporary researchers in the 1920s. But they followed self-confidently the objectives, theories and methods Manninen had proposed in their scientific writings and, for example, in constructing a folk culture exhibition at the museum. The characteristics of a separate discipline (concrete theory, methods, and scientifically gained sources) and its own scientific community, journal, and an institution were all there at the end of the 1920s in Estonian ethnology.

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Tapimas etnografu ir mokslo formavimosi pradžia. Ferdinandas Linnusas ir Estijos etnologija XX a.

3-iajame dešimtmetyje

Marleen Nõmmela

Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjami Ferdinando Linnuso rašyti tekstai, tuo pat metu atkreipiant dėmesį į jų autoriaus gyvenamojo laikotarpio socialinę ir mokslinę aplinką – taip pateikiamas Estijos etnologijos formavimosi vaizdas. Sugreindama bendrą kontekstą ir konkretaus tyrinėtojo mintis, autorė taip pat siekia pažiūrėti, ar buvo prieštaravimų etnologijos ir jos tyrimo dalyko sampratoje. Jos nuomone, analizuojama Ferdinando Linnuso lauko tyrimų medžiaga gali būti laikoma esminiu besiformuojančios disciplinos pagrindu.

Ferdinandas Linnusas (1895–1941) priklauso pirmajai Estijos etnologų kartai. Jis gavo etnografijos magistro laipsnį Tartu universitete 1927 metais. Nuo 1922 m. dirbo Estijos nacionaliniame muziejuje asistentu, o 1929 m. tapo muziejaus direktoriumi, suomių etnografui Ilmariui Manninenui išvykus atgal į Suomiją (direktoriavo 1922–1928 m.). Nors neturėjo daug galimybių susikaupti ties moksliniu darbu, tačiau, nepaisant to, būdamas redaktoriumi, dėstytoju, direktoriumi, muziejininku, savo veikla darė įtaką etnografiniam darbui Estijoje. Pagaliau 1938 m. Linnusas apgynė daktaro disertaciją „Estų bitininkystės archainės formos I. Drevinė bitininkystė“ ir tapo pirmuoju daktaro laipsnį turinčiu estų etnografu. Ferdinandą Linnusą sovietai suėmė 1941 m. birželio mėnesio pabaigoje, jis mirė karo belaisvių stovykloje Gorkio srityje būdamas 46 metų.

XX a. 3-iajame dešimtmetyje, būdamas studentu ir muziejaus darbuotoju, Linnusas keletą kartų vyko į lauko tyrimus (taip pat tęsė šią praktiką ir kitą dešimtmetį, bet iš to laikotarpio paliko mažiau šaltinių). Autorės nuomone, lauko tyrimai buvo labai svarbūs formuojantis tyrinėtojiui. Jie kaip tik yra tas laikas ir ta vieta, kai būsimasis etnologas pajunta savo disciplinos esmę: jis yra priverstas galvoti apie discipliną, jos tyrimo dalyką ir kaip jis pats yra su tuo susijęs. Todėl analizuota Estijos nacionaliniame muziejuje saugoma Linnuso lauko tyrimų medžiaga: dienoraščiai, knygoje esanti informacija apie surinktus daiktus, etnografiniai aprašai ir nuotraukos.

Lauko tyrimuose buvo surinkta daug įvairios medžiagos, kuri saugoma iki šiol. Tai susiję su Estijos nacionalinio muziejaus ir Estijos etnologijos istorija. Kai XX a. 3-iajame dešimtmetyje Estijoje atsirado akademinė etnografija, jau vyko etnografinė veikla. Nors Etnografijos katedra Tartu universitete buvo įkurta 1924 m., dėl istorinių ir ekonominių priežasčių mokslinio darbo centras buvo

Estijos nacionalinis muziejus. XX a. 3-iajame dešimtmetyje muziejuje įvyko didelių pasikeitimų: suomių etnografas Manninenas buvo paskirtas direktoriumi (1922–1928), muziejus įsigijo savo pirmąjį nuosavą pastatą (šalia Tartu esančiuose Raadi dvaro rūmuose) ir pradėta tvarkyti bei pildyti rinkinius atsižvelgiant į to meto muziejininkystės principus. Muziejus ir toliau rinko artefaktus, bet lauko tyrimų metu pradėjo rinkti ir žodinę medžiagą. Daugiausia naudotasi anketomis, siekiant gauti daugiau žinių ir jas labiau suprasti. Estijos etnografija buvo apibūdinta kaip aprašomasis ir lyginamasis mokslas, užsiimantis senąja materialine kultūra [*asjaline vanavara* = senieji materialiniai lobiai]. Ji buvo pagrįsta evoliucionizmo ir difuzionizmo teorijomis bei tipologiniais, kartografiniais ir kultūriniais istoriniais metodais. Siekiant atrasti estiškumo, tikros estų kultūros, šaknis, tyrinėta liaudies kultūrą reikėjo surasti praeityje ir ji turėjo būti nepaveikta modernizacijos.

Taigi etnografai turėjo ieškoti objektyvios tiesos, praeities kultūros liekanų, autentiškų daiktų ir tradicijų. Savo lauko tyrimų karjerą Linnusas pradėjo archeologiniais tyrimais 1922 m., tai buvo susiję su jo studijomis universitete. 1923 m. jo pirmieji etnografiniai lauko tyrimai vyko kartu su archeologiniais, pastarieji tuo metu laikyti svarbesniais. Taigi tik 1924 m. jis atliko atskirus etnografinius lauko tyrimus ir iki 1928 m. juos tęsė kasmet įvairiuose Estijos regionuose bei užsienyje. Linnusas buvo vienintelis iš pirmosios Estijos etnologų kartos, kuris geriau pažino „kitas“ (etnines) kultūras: be estų jis tyrinėjo Ruhnu saloje gyvenančius Estijos švedus ir Latvijos pajūryje gyvenančius lyvius. Tačiau jis neparašė jokio didesnio darbo apie šias etnines grupes, tai buvo tik etnografiniai aprašai muziejaus ir asmeniniam archyvui. Apskritai Linnuso lauko tyrimų medžiagoje atsiskleidžia prieštaringas požiūris į disciplinos ir jos dalyko supratimą. Dvejonės, netikrumo ir nepasitenkinimo jausmai rodo, kad Linnusas buvo savikritiškas etnografijos studentas, turėjęs supratimą apie idealius lauko tyrimus ir kaip juose turėtų būti atliekami etnografiniai aprašai. Tai prieštaravo realybei, su kuria jis susidūrė per lauko tyrimus.

Galima teigti, kad atkreipus dėmesį į „besiformuojančio mokslo“ atstovus paaiškėjo, kad XX a. 3-iajame dešimtmetyje bendras etnologijos supratimas tyrinėtojams nebuvo labai aiškus. Tačiau pasitikėdami savimi jie moksliniuose darbuose kėlė Mannineno pasiūlytus tikslus, rėmėsi jo teorijomis ir taikė jo pasiūlytus metodus.