Schizophrenic Identity and Other Gender Issues in Finnish Folklore Studies

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Abstract

This article gives an overview of two early female folklorists and one folklore collector from the mid nineteenth to the mid twentieth century. The aim is to reveal the symbolic violence and rejection the three female scholars underwent through the use of the term trivialization. I have chosen Charlotta Europaeus, Helmi Helminen and Elsa Enäjärvi as examples because of their early appearance in the field. These cases illustrate to what extent gender, together with presumptions of the gender roles and scientific norms of the era, affected their scholarly work. Charlotta Europaeus, Helmi Helminen and Elsa Enäjärvi were fascinated by women's life, female genres and intimate spheres of culture, but in order to succeed they needed male supporters and adaptation of male-dominated methods. Above all, the collecting and scientific work of the early female scholars concretely elucidates the female as dismissed and further, how the suppression of female gender and folklore is embedded in documentation and textualization practices.

Keywords: gender, folklore, trivialization

The Finnish folklorist and feminist scholar Aili Nenola (1986:26, 27) has ironically claimed that as a female scholar you need to have a schizophrenic identity: you must deny femininity in scholarly working and thinking and instead identify with male scientists. The highest value a female scholar can attain is that she thinks like a man. Nenola published her groundbreaking book *Miessydäminen nainen* [Male-Hearted Woman] in the middle of the 1980s, but her ideas still resonate while thinking of gender bias in folklore studies. Obviously, dismissing female scholars is not by any means a national issue and it has not only appeared in folklore studies. It is closely related to patriarchal societies and their violent structures (see, e.g., Conrad 2021; Babcock 1987). General norms and presumptions of genders in society, even silenced, produce different unjust classifications and practices and, thus, also discrimination as well as violence. In discussing engendered violence, scholars refer to symbolic violence embedded in society and culture (see Butler 2015:34, 59; Karkulehto & Rossi 2017). A little but illustrative

example of the symbolic violence in Finnish culture is the *Kanteletar*, a lyrical anthology of folk poetry compiled by Elias Lönnrot (1802–1884). Lönnrot published the *Kanteletar* in 1840, 1841, after the first edition of the *Kalevala* (1835). The *Kanteletar* aimed at representing a comprehensive entity of Finnish-Karelian lyrical poetry, whereas the *Kalevala* was a presentation of the epic. Despite its canonized status as oral poetry and literature, the *Kanteletar* is pejoratively established as "a little sister to the *Kalevala*". In the national narrative, the *Kanteletar*, based on descriptions of emotions and female experiences, has never been declared as important as the *Kalevala*, the epic of male heroes.

This article[1] aims to give an overview of two early female folklorists and one folklore collector from the mid nineteenth to the mid twentieth century by revealing the symbolic violence and rejections they underwent. I have chosen Charlotta Europaeus, Helmi Helminen and Elsa Enäjärvi as examples because of their early appearance in the field. Charlotta Europaeus was the very first female collector in the mid nineteenth century. Helmi Helminen and Elsa Enäjärvi were female scholars recognized in the research history of Finnish folklore studies *Suomalainen kansanrunoudentutkimus* [Finnish Folklore Research] published by the folklorist Jouko Hautala (1910–1983, professor 1961–1971) in 1954.[2] Hautala's book is still the only overall history of folklore studies in Finland, and therefore its significance in scholarly thinking has been crucial.

To expose the symbolic power and female scholars of this article, I highlight the term *trivialization*. When establishing a typology of decoding strategies of women's culture, Joan N. Radner and Susan S. Lanser (1993:19) indicate by trivialization the following:[3]

> the employment of form, mode, or genre that the dominant culture considers unimportant, innocuous, or irrelevant. When a particular form is conventionally nonthreatening, the message it carries, even if it might be threatening in another context, is likely to be discounted or overlooked. Consider women's self-deprecating use of other's trivial names for their expressive genres. "Oh, we're just gossiping"; "That was only 'woman talk'."

As emphasized by Jennifer Fox (1993), the negative conception of women has been embedded in the forming of folklore studies along with the rising sense of romantic nationalism in the nineteenth century, particularly through the ideas of tradition, patriarchalism and national unity as male-orientated put forward by Johann Gottfried Herder (see also Yuval-Davis 1997). Accordingly in Finland, the nation-building was based on the ideals of a philosopher, J. V. Snellman (1806–1881), who regarded the female sphere of life and women as belonging to the private, reproduction and inside the walls of the household (Lang 2010). Representing "Finnishness" was dedicated to men, and if the interest of women appeared, it was focused either

on admiration of female suffering (see Kurkela 2012; Hämäläinen 2022) or visualizing the female body through the male gaze (Juntti 2011:56–59; see Yuval-Davis 1997:26–28).

Moreover, those collecting and studying folklore have historically been interested in the male-dominated genre, Kalevala-metre poems, especially epic poems of male heroes documented by male collectors/scholars. Collecting folklore started in the first decades of the nineteenth century in Finland, known at that time as a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire, but increased after the *Kalevala* was published in 1835. Collecting practices in the borderlands of Russia and Finland, in Karelia, were mainly intended to prove the authenticity of the *Kalevala* and its oral epic sources. Later, when folklore studies as an academic discipline was established in the 1890s, the folklore method of geographic-historical analysis created by Julius and Kaarle Krohn was targeted at Kalevala-metre poetry, particularly the epic poetry since it was regarded as representing the fixed and solid part of the poetic tradition to benefit the methodological and positivist comparison. Concurrently, female scholars were excluded from the important themes and genres of folklore: "In selecting research topics, women were not allowed into the 'inner sanctum' of folkloristics: the analysis of mythology, folk belief and the source material of the *Kalevala*, epic poetry" (Apo, Nenola & Stark-Arola 1998:22). Besides, the gender bias of the preserved folklore material is undisputed: male collectors and scholars investigated, interviewed and met – or did not, as the case also was – female informants (see ibid.: 7). The male-centred methodological emphasis dominated the field at least until the 1960s and 1970s[4] – and it has long affected not only the interest in documenting and analysing women's life sphere and female genres, for example, lyrics, lullabies, personal narratives, but also the establishment of female scholars in the academic world as well as the knowledge production of folklore (see also Conrad 2021).

Following the historian Lisa Svanfeldt-Winter's (2019) note on what constituted and produced a good and acknowledged scholar, as discussed in her dissertation on Elsa Enäjärvi and Martti Haavio, I will ask, first, what were the possibilities for women to act as collectors and researchers in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century? Second, did they need good relations with men, or a schizophrenic identity, and were they forced to work against their own ambitions? Until the 1970s Elsa Enäjärvi (-Haavio) (1901–1951) was the only recognized female folklorist scholar in the field, although after the first decades of 1900 more and more women were enrolled at the university studying folkloristic and other related disciplines. However, the number of female scholars had increased little by little until the 1970s, but the official holders of professorships were mostly males. By comparison, in the 2020s all the professorships in folklore studies in Finland are occupied by women – which does not necessarily indicate the

success of the discipline but can also denote that the valuation of folklore studies in society has diminished.[5]

The interest in gender and feminist approaches by Finnish folklorists grew after the work of Aili Nenola in 1986, and particularly, the anthology of *Louhen sanat* (1990) edited by Nenola and Senni Timonen. This anthology, followed by an English volume *Gender and Folklore* (1998), consisted of several articles mainly by female scholars and the theme, rather than being gender/feminist-oriented, was women-oriented in folklore. The explanation of gender studies by Finnish folklorists, its non-emancipatory or non-revolutionist emphasis, has been construed by a gender-equal society and early rights for women (Finnish women gained the right to vote in 1906) as well as pre-modern society and its matriarchal power. Interestingly, female scholars have argued that the visibility of women has also been a natural part of collecting and publishing practices of folklore in Finland: "Another theme of feminism in the 1970s, the desire to make women's 'invisible' culture seen and heard, has led Finnish folklorists to recognize that women and their traditions have always been visible in the context of Finnish folklore collecting, publication, and study, from the appearance of Elias Lönnrot's Kanteletar to the present" (Apo, Nenola & Stark-Arola 1998:22). As scholars have stated, along with male singers, early female singers of Kalevala-metre poetry, "Female 'star' informants" (ibid.) have also been celebrated, e.g., Mateli Kuivalatar, Larin Paraske and Marina Takalo (ibid.). Despite the visibility of female folklore and informants, these kinds of comments ignore or at least trivialize the concept of suppression and underrating of women's culture and female genres embedded in documentation and textualization practices, as well as difficulties female scholars have met over the centuries. The note also reveals the strong symbolic power of the gender bias in culture and society that has also been adapted by women themselves.

Charlotta Europaeus

Inspired by the *Kalevala*, long epic Karelian songs of male heroes were the target of interest for folklore collectors of the nineteenth century, who obviously were men – apart from one collector, Charlotta Europaeus (1794–1858), a teacher born in the family of a priest, Peter Adolf Europaeus, in Savitaipale in Southern Karelia in today's Finland. She collected folklore during the time in which women of the gentry were supposed to be married and stay at home. Charlotta Europaeus never married, nor did she have children.

Being a rare exception of her time, articles or information about Charlotta Europaeus are hard to find. A short text about Charlotta Europaeus appeared 100 years after her death in 1957, written by Sulo Haltsonen (1903–1973), who was a folklorist and literary scholar. Sulo Haltsonen's reasons for

writing about Charlotta Europaeus are unknown, but he shared with her the same interest in folklore. Haltsonen published books on children's folklore, which was also one focus on the folklore collections of Charlotta Europaeus. Haltsonen himself was interested in children's folklore at the time when the main geographic-historical method of folklore studies was targeted on Kalevala-metre epic poetry.[6] Later in the 2000s, Charlotta Europaeus was noted in the history of the Finnish Literature Society, where she was the subject of a small text box (Pikkanen 2004). Besides this, she has been briefly mentioned in some articles (e.g., Packalén 2005; Järvinen 2005), and often in connection with her brother, the folklore collector D. E. D. Europaeus (1820–1885) (e.g., in *D. E. D. Europaeus* 1988; Timonen 2020). However, Charlotta Europaeus is more celebrated in her native village of Savitaipale (e.g., Jurvanen 1993).

Charlotta Europaeus is better known for being the sister of the folklore collector and editor, D. E. D. Europaeus, who is famous for his collections from Ingria that greatly benefitted some of the poems in the extended version of the *Kalevala* (1849). D. E. D. Europaeus is also famous for being an ambivalent person who evoked mixed feelings in others, such as Elias Lönnrot.[7] Further, it is often stated that Charlotta Europaeus' interest in collecting folklore did not proceed from herself, but from the *Kalevala* and being inspired by three men: H. A. Reinholm (1819–1883), a collector of folklore, especially folk songs and games, the literary scholar Georg Julius von Schoultz (1808–1875) and her brother (Haltsonen 1957; Timonen 2020), who made seven collecting trips in 1845–1854. However, it is also conceivable that Charlotta Europaeus probably became fascinated with folklore much earlier, even though her main collections are from the late 1840s and early 1850s (see Pikkanen 2004:105).[8]

Charlotta Europaeus was an educated woman of her time. She had a knowledge of several languages, "she spoke French, German and Russian fluently", and she worked as a teacher in schools and elite families. She also knew Finnish from her background, which was a requirement for collecting folklore from the peasantry (Haltsonen 1957:133–134). Charlotta Europaeus attained the status of member of the Finnish Literature Society in 1848, one of the first women in the society (as the 20th woman, Timonen 2020). She was also the first woman to send her collections of folklore to the Finnish Literature Society. To start with, she sent her notes first to her friend H. A. Reinholm, who passed them on to the society (Järvinen 2005). However, the society seemed not to be excited about it, but rather noted down her actions with no great interest – apart from membership of the Society. A short note in the meetings of the Finnish Literature Society in December 1848 indicates that Charlotta Europaeus had sent her "handwritten poems as well as a toque and couple of knife sheaths" to the society: "af *Mamsell Europaeus*: en samling handskrifna runor, samt till Sällskapets

antiquitets-samling: en mössa och en par knifslidor" [From Miss Europaeus: a bunch of handwritten poems, and for the antiquity collection of the society: a toque and a couple of knife sheaths] (SKS protocoller 6 December 1848).

Unlike her male fellow collectors, who are called by their full names or titles in the meetings, Charlotta Europaeus is not represented by her occupation as a teacher, but as a miss, "mamsell", "mademoiselle": "af Mademoiselle Europaeus: en samling handskrifna runor och ordspråk, af kvinna själf upptecknade" [from Mademoiselle Europaeus: a collection of handwritten poems and proverbs recorded by the young lady herself] (SKS protocoller 2 May1849).

Journeys of Elias Lönnrot as well as D. E. D. Europaeus and many others were supported by grants from the Finnish Literature Society, and the society was established in 1831, among other things, to approve funding for Lönnrot's collecting trips. As far as we know from the board meetings, Charlotta Europaeus did not receive any grant from the society for her collecting work. Perhaps the reason was that she never applied for one as she did not undertake any long collecting journeys. As a woman Charlotta Europaeus would have had very little or no possibility to go on long collecting journeys at that time (Järvinen 2005), and she did what she could. Along with her work duties, she collected the folklore of the area close to her, where she was born, lived and worked. The collecting areas were in her home village, Savitaipale, and a village close by, Suomenniemi, both in Southern Karelia, and in the district where she was employed, Jaakkima in Ladoga Karelia. This also seems to be the case with first female collectors in other countries, such as Ireland, where one of the rare female collectors, Bridie Gunning, managed to collect traditional material at the same time as she worked as an innkeeper (uí Ógain 2014).[9]

Charlotta Europaeus transcribed all kinds of folklore, such as children's lore, charms, tales, folk lyrics, epic-lyric poems, rhymed folk poetry, proverbs, games, customs and beliefs in the years 1848–1856 and sent them to the Finnish Literature Society. Charlotta Europaeus seemed to collect folklore very systematically as she sent her well written transcriptions regularly to the society, even though the male scholar described it as a hobby, although serious and long-lasting (Haltsonen 1957:134). Her folklore collection contains 541 texts, of which the published collection of Kalevala-metre poetry contains 153 texts (https://skvr.fi/). There are also unpublished poems and other folklore in the archives of the Finnish Literature Society. The collection of Kalevala-metre oral poetry includes a vast amount of charms. The charm transcriptions are short and are mainly connected to the female daily world, issues of household and family, of cattle and maladies. There are also some well-known lyrical songs (*Jos mun tuttuni tulisi* [If my beloved one would come], *Allahall' on allin mieli* [Low are

the feelings of the long-tailed duck]) and many children's songs. In 1848 in Savitaipale, Charlotta Europaeus transcribed a version of the children's song "Onnimanni", which has been popular and is still widely known in Finland. There are only four published versions of the song collected by 1856, and one of the versions is by Charlotta Europaeus.

The collection also consists of a good amount of rhymed folk songs and literary-based songs, folklore genres that, for a long time, were not appreciated by the Finnish Literature Society, nor by scholars (e.g., Mikkola, Olsson & Stark 2023). Rhymed folk songs were neglected because of their rhyme metre as well as descriptions of gender relationships and often open sexual content. However, collectors transcribed these songs as well, and it is known that for instance C. A. Gottlund (1796–1875) and Elias Lönnrot kept these collections to themselves (see Mäkelä & Tarkka 2022). As Charlotta Europaeus did not note names of her informants, we cannot be sure about the gender of the singers, but considering the morality of the time, these songs were supposedly sung by woman to woman. However, there are no openly sexual rhymed folk songs in the collection, and the songs dealing with gender relationships are decent in their content: "Ei mun kultani kaukana ole, eikä ole lässä, / Tuolla seisoo katon päällä, niin kuin pata ässä" (SKS KRA Charlotte Europaeus) [My beloved is not far away, nor my love is here, / My love is standing on the roof, like an ace of spades].

Altogether, the intimate sphere of life is abundantly present in the collection of Charlotta Europaeus, while this side of folklore is usually lacking in old archive materials (see Apo, Nenola & Stark-Arola 1998:17). Even though male collectors transcribed e.g., children's songs and songs of the female world, these songs were not necessarily the goal of their journeys. Collectors were driven by epic and mythic poems after the *Kalevala*. During these trips, male collectors obviously met women as well, and, for example, while waiting for male singers to come back home from the lake or forest, they elicited folklore from women. However, as a woman, Charlotta Europaeus had a deeper and more natural access to the female world and folklore than male collectors (see also Paulaharju 2022; uí Ógain 2014; Järvinen 2005). The collection of Charlotta Europaeus can be regarded as, if not a vast, then an important and exceptional collection documented by a single woman in the mid nineteenth century. It also pays some attention to the local folklore of Southern Karelia villages (see Järvinen 2005:85). Despite being exceptional in her time, Charlotta Europaeus is not recognized in the history of folklore collections, nor is she included among the "few great female folklore collectors in Finnish history" by female Finnish scholars in their introduction to the volume *Gender and Folklore* (see Apo, Nenola & Stark-Arola 1998:17).

Charlotta Europaeus was also interested in translation and other literary practices. She translated fairy tales and folk songs into German and one of

the translations was directed to the *Kanteletar*. There is a collection of the 30 *Kanteletar* songs in German that Charlotta Europaeus sent to a literary scholar, the publisher Georg Julius von Schoultz, who, as Sulo Haltsonen (1957:136) describes, made several remarks on the translation. Her brother, D. E. D. Europaeus, wrote a letter to Elias Lönnrot and asked which part of the *Kanteletar* poems were not yet translated since "a person I know" (*eräs tuttu*) might be interested in trying to translate them into Swedish (Letter of D. Europaeus 14 May 1847 to Elias Lönnrot). Charlotta Europaeus had an enthusiastic interest in the *Kanteletar* as many others at the time. Songs of the *Kanteletar* were admired and translated for the elite (into Swedish) before the book was published (in 1840 and 1841). There were also competitions for university students writing about the aesthetic of the *Kanteletar* and its lyric (Hämäläinen 2022). Yet Charlotta Europaeus' translation into German is not mentioned in the article concerning translations of the *Kanteletar* (Haltsonen 1950).

Helmi Helminen

"Helmi Helminen on niinikään käsitellyt kansanperinteentutkimuksen kysymyksiä, mm. kirjassaan *Syysjuhlat* 1929 ja artikkelissa Kansanomainen ajanlasku ja vuotuisjuhlat 1933 (Suomen kulttuurihistoria I)" [Helmi Helminen has also dealt with questions of folklore, among other things, in her book "Autumn Feasts" from 1929 and in the article "Calendar and Annual Feasts among the Peasantry"] (Hautala 1954:400).

The quotation is from the research history of Finnish folklore studies by Jouko Hautala. Helmi Helminen (1905–1976) is one of the two female folklorists represented in this book. Here Helminen received only two and a half lines, and unlike the other scholars, Hautala has not indicated the year of her birth. Helmi Helminen's representation is situated in between two male scholars in such a way that she is easily lost in the text when one reads the book.

Helmi Helminen did her main studies in history but her Master's thesis was on a folklore theme, annual feasts among the peasantry. Nowadays she is known, if at all, for her collecting trips to Konginkangas, Central Finland (1927–1933) and Eastern Karelia (1941–1944), when she transcribed words and dialects but also folklore, beliefs and customs (see Hänninen, forthcoming; see also Kaarninen 2006:200). As a biographical note indicates, Helmi Helminen is not defined as a scholar, but as a collector of folklore.[10] This makes one think, as Jonathan Roper (2021) has done in writing about the folklore period, what makes someone a folklorist? Roper's argument is that there are some fruitful periods of life, such as the early years of adulthood, that make one more likely to collect folklore. At that age, people are more open and curious and, therefore, ready to meet

different people and spend long collecting periods with uncertain financial support. However, Roper, when representing a few female collectors/folklorists, does not consider the cultural, social and financial conditions that collecting work demanded, not to mention scholarly valuation by the academic community.

Helmi Helminen pursued her actual career in museums and was the head of the Helsinki City Museum (1946–1971). As in the case of Charlotta Europaeus, there is not much information available about her. There is, however, archival material such as diaries from collecting journeys and personal letters and a few articles (Järvinen 2004; Vilkuna 1976). Kustaa Vilkuna, a professor of ethnology, has written a comprehensive one-page obituary that includes the main events of Helminen's life. Vilkuna (1976) describes Helminen as having strong mental power and a unique synthetic view of life in bygone Finland. Vilkuna also writes that Helminen was "one of the brilliant female students of Kaarle Krohn" and emphasizes that Helminen, during her lifetime, actively wrote and published on folklore, the peasants and their customs. She was also preparing her doctoral dissertation about calendar feasts and rites in the cultures around the Baltic Sea, but this enormous work was interrupted in the 1930s. Helmi Helminen's doctoral dissertation is not, however, mentioned in the obituary by Vilkuna. The question then is why Helmi Helminen is so little known in folklore studies.

One explanation can be found in a sensitive, but not widely discussed issue of the scholarly world, namely, making use of one's research. Irma-Riitta Järvinen notes that the reasons for abandoning the doctoral dissertation were difficult and personal. While away in Hungary as a scholarship student, Helminen's research material, notes and writings concerning the dissertation were used by someone else and she felt totally exploited (Järvinen 2004:44–45). Helmi Helminen was not alone in struggling with the rights to her research and the conditions in which she worked. At the same time in Åbo Akademi, the anthropologist Hilma Granqvist was planning her PhD work and wanted to direct it towards one Palestinian village and to conduct interviews among the villagers, which was contrary to the approach of her professor, Edvard Westermarck, and the scholarly norm of the time. She followed her instinct but had difficulties getting permission for her doctoral defence (she gained her PhD in 1932). Later, in applying for a docentship, Hilma Granqvist was, among other things, accused of plagiarizing one of the professors on the committee, and in the end her application was rejected (Svanfeldt-Winter 2021:257–258). Lisa Svanfeldt-Winter notes that the explanations for the challenges experienced of Hilma Granqvist have usually disregarded her gender and have instead suggested that her research subject was too modern or too international. However, her gender together with her social background (lower middle class) had a strong and harmful influence on Granqvist's scientific career (ibid.:258–259).

Like Charlotta Europaeus, Helmi Helminen was exceptional in her collecting work. During the war, and before, the main interest was focused on Karelia as a result of the enthusiastic Karelianism, and many male scholars such as Jouko Hautala, Martti Haavio, Aimo Turunen, Väinö Kaukonen and Lauri Laiho went there to explore Karelia, its people, customs and beliefs – most of them in between periods of military service. Also, female scholars in their early careers and students went into the field to strengthen the links of the cultural heritage of the occupied area's to Finland (see Pimiä 2012:419). Helmi Helminen spent an unusually long time, over four months, in Eastern Karelia during the Continuation War (1943–1944). Typically, until the 1970s Finnish scholars made only short visits to the field (Apo, Nenola & Stark-Arola 1998:18), and Elias Lönnrot, for instance, visited singers sometimes for only a couple of hours. Her female gender gave advantages to Helmi Helminen. Unlike her male fellow collectors, she was able to live among the peasants and familiarize herself with people. By exploring her diaries, Irma-Riitta Järvinen (2004:49) emphasizes Helmi Helminen's empathic attitude towards people and the ability to be present and listen. Furthermore, she had a strong ethical attitude towards collecting work that Järvinen explains as arising from her interest in Steiner philosophy and anthroposophy.[11] Her collecting philosophy includes very modern thinking, such as questions of context, collecting situations and their effect on informants' remembering. One of Helminen's philosophies is related to the experience of a collector. Helminen wrote about understanding of tradition that comes from suffering. If a collector has had a happy life, she/he is not able to interpret or sympathize with other people (see Järvinen 2004). Helminen's ideas about collecting folklore might have been one of the reasons she was disregarded, and one might think that she was too ahead of her time, which she was. Another female collector, Ulla Mannonen (1895–1958), sent her transcriptions from the mid 1930s until 1956 to the archive of the Finnish Literature Society and she was criticized for sending in unsuitable folklore of individual experiences and the present day, or folklore that had literary influences (see Mikkola, Olsson & Stark 2023: e.g.,66–70.

Elsa Enäjärvi

After Charlotta Europaeus and Helmi Helminen, the two female scholars lost in history, I will introduce an early female scholar who did gain respect and status and who is not forgotten, Elsa Enäjärvi(-Haavio) (1901–1951). Elsa Enäjärvi studied at the University of Helsinki in the 1920s, at the same time as Helmi Helminen, although Enäjärvi graduated in 1923, five years earlier than Helminen. Her biographical notes report that her best student friend and fellow scholar was Maija Ruuttu (1899–1973) (Eskola 2021). Another close friend was the folklorist Martti Haavio (1899–1973), who later became her

husband (1929). Elsa Enäjärvi was the first woman to defend a doctoral dissertation in folklore studies in 1932 and she received the status of docent in 1947, also as the first woman in the discipline. As Risto Turunen (1996:85) emphasizes, Enäjärvi was the very first female folklore scholar who was fully recognized. After Enäjärvi, the next female folklorist to obtain a doctorate was Iiris Järviö-Nieminen in 1959, but after completing the doctoral dissertation she worked as a teacher in Finnish, and after her, Leea Virtanen (1935–2002) gained her doctorate in 1967 and was appointed as the first female professor of folklore studies in 1979 at the University of Helsinki, where she occupied the chair until 1994. Enäjärvi was also exceptional in comparison to many other women who studied at the university in this period. Despite having a university degree, women usually continued working as teachers or got married (Svanfeldt-Winter 2019:57).

Like Helmi Helminen, Elsa Enäjärvi was a student of Kaarle Krohn (1863–1933, professor 1898–1928) and adopted Krohn's geographic-historical method. The method guided her investigations, but she also had other interests which were not in the centre of established research in the first decades of the twentieth century. For instance, her chapter in the book *Suomalaisen muinaisrunouden maailma* [The World of Ancient Finnish Folk Poetry] (Enäjärvi-Haavio 1935) gives an overview of Kalevala-metre lyric songs, their distribution and development, but also considers the aesthetics and emotions of the songs. Enäjärvi had adopted Kaarle Krohn's perception of folk lyric as condensed and brief in form and content, but she had a profound understanding of the living nature of lyric as consisting of accumulation and chaining (see Hämäläinen 2022). Through her extensive investigation of folk lyric, its aesthetics and singers Enäjärvi brought a new female genre to the interest of folkloristics (Järvinen 1991; Turunen 1996:83–84; Timonen 2004). Moreover, Enäjärvi was pioneering in conducting her PhD on folk games, although with a comparative perspective using the geographic-historical method.

However, Elsa Enäjärvi suffered from the gender bias of folklore studies in a deplorable way. Despite being acknowledged, Enäjärvi had to defend her research and thinking against the leading male professor, Väinö Salminen (1880–1947, professor 1933–1947). In 1944 Salminen attacked Enäjärvi in the columns of the main Finnish journal of language and folklore studies, *Virittäjä* (Salminen 1944a, 1944b).[12] Salminen directed his critique mainly at Enäjärvi's ability and her knowledge of the Kalevala-metre poems, the genre that was still a scholarly norm and the central interest of the geographic-historical method in the 1940s. Salminen criticized Enäjärvi's work *Inkerin virsi* (1943) for being focused on the singing area and tradition, something which Salminen himself was known for.

Salminen's criticisms were dismissive. He used pejorative words, such as nonchalant (*yliolkainen*), unskilful (*taitamaton*), confined (*rajoittunut*), and

wrong, erroneous (*väärä, virhe*), and he also accused Enäjärvi of making a lot of mistakes, of not knowing her research material and of distorting, above all, Salminen's own studies. Enäjärvi (-Haavio 1944, 1945) answered the critique in a direct and adroit way by pointing out all the weak statements by Salminen. She complained explicitly that it was regrettable that she had to debate with an old and acknowledged university scholar (Haavio 1945:105). In describing the difference between the two genders in her diaries from the 1920s, Elsa Enäjärvi stated that "the word of a woman is an adjective, that of a man is a noun" (see Svanfeldt-Winter 2019:66). Twenty years later, in the debate between Salminen and Enäjärvi, the expression seemed to be the other way around. In her response from 1944, Enäjärvi sums up Salminen's critique as follows:

> Prof. Salminen on pitkässä kirjoituksessaan – jonka vastinekin on valitettavasti venynyt näin pitkäksi – yhteensä 9:ssä, osaltaan nähdäkseni melko toisarvoisessa kohdassa tuominnut esittämäni kannan. Viidessä kohdassa hän, niin kuin edellä olen osoittanut, on iskenyt harhaan, kahdessa kohdassa on totta tuskin toinen puoli, kaksi kohtaa on sellaista, joissa hänellä on asiallista huomautettavaa (Haavio 1944:199).
>
> [Prof. Salminen, has in his long article – the response to which has unfortunately stretched to this length – in a total of 9 points, in my view, has condemned the position I presented in a rather secondary point. In five points, as I have shown above, he is mistaken, in two points there is hardly one side to the truth, in two points he has something to point out.]

Risto Turunen (1996:82–83) finds the debate to be, above all, a question of generation, but finally agrees that Salminen's critique mainly denied the competence of female scholars to manage a vast corpus of oral song. Salminen could not acknowledge a woman investigating his research area. Besides, the shade of Kaarle Krohn might have affected the critique (see also Eskola 2021). Salminen did not approve of Krohn's method and debated it with Kaarle Krohn. Disputes between these two male scholars may have lain behind Salminen's critique of Elsa Enäjärvi (see Pöysä & Seppä 2021). It is worth noting that Enäjärvi received no public sympathy from her husband while being attacked by Väinö Salminen. As her daughter believes, Elsa Enäjärvi never got over this massive critique, even though she actively continued to do research until her death in 1951 (Eskola 2021).[13]

Symbolic Power and Schizophrenic Identity

Referring to Charlotta Europaeus and two other early folklore collectors, Lilli Lillius (1861–1945) and Jenny Paulaharju (1878–1964), Marjut Paulaharju argues that one of the common features of female collectors was their background. They came from the countryside and had grown up in a rectory environment in which clergymen as educators were also interested

in folklore. Therefore, early female collectors had a natural contact with educating people as well as documenting folklore (Paulaharju 2022:194–195). To proceed with their work and ambitions, women also needed male supporters (ibid.) as has often been noted. What would have happened if early female scholars had had no men to support them? Would they have had any chance to proceed (see also Radner & Lanser 1993)?

Women's own ambitions and talents in advancing their work must have been essential, but it is obvious that early scholars also needed men, or at least it was helpful to have them around, to support and advance their work. Helmi Helminen had Professor Kustaa Vilkuna, Charlotta Europaeus had her brother and H. A. Reinholm. However, the male supporters of Charlotta Europaeus and Helmi Helminen might have helped them to start collecting and studying folklore, but they did not contribute to their work as such – and it seems that in the case of Helminen, her supporter did not give her respect before she died. Unlike Helminen and Enäjärvi, Charlotta Europaeus had no chance to pursue an academic career in the mid nineteenth century. Helmi Helminen, or at least we can assume this, had a silent conflict with her supporter, Kustaa Vilkuna as she faced the exploitation of her research material and decided not to continue the work. Elsa Enäjärvi had an academic marriage to an established male scholar, Martti Haavio, and despite the advantage of sharing scholarly ideas and collaborating, she did not progress in her career as quickly as her husband. One reason is her gender and cultural expectations of what a woman should do. Elsa Enäjärvi took care of their five children and organized the daily household work in the family (with a maid), while her husband had a chance to concentrate fully on his intellectual work. Along with daily and family routines and her research, Elsa Enäjärvi was also a socially active lady, discussing cultural issues, politics and women at work.

Being a female collector or scholar in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, women had to adapt to a male-normative way of collecting and doing science in order to succeed (see Nenola 1986). In doing so, women were forced to work, at least partly, against their own ambitions, like Elsa Enäjärvi, who followed the established method, but had interests in disregarded and unrecognized genres and themes of folklore. Furthermore, as the first woman to become acknowledged in the field of folklore studies, Elsa Enäjärvi was alone and had no academic role models for how to act as a female scholar (see Svanfeldt-Winter 2019:264). If a female scholar was faithful to her own preoccupations, as Helmi Helminen was, the consequences were long-lasting. Charlotta Europaeus collected a wide range of folklore but received no status or recognition from other scholars. One reason for this could be, besides her gender, the area of Southern Karelia in which she conducted her collecting work. Even though her collection consists of Kalevala-metre poems, epics, charms and lyric, the Finnish

Literature Society was not interested in the collecting area of the villages of Savitaipale or Suomenniemi. The society expected to receive folklore material from the celebrated districts of Russian Karelia.

Above all, the three female scholars and their collecting and scholarly work discussed in this article elucidate the *female* as dismissed. They were fascinated by women's life, female genres and the intimate sphere of culture – even when transcribing genres dominated by men, such as the charms collected by Charlotta Europaeus, the content of the material was connected to a female side of life. The case of Elsa Enäjärvi indicates how the schizophrenic identity was a requirement of her success, even though she struggled against it. Charlotta Europaeus did what she could in following her own interest in folklore in the mid nineteenth century. We still know very little of her and her folklore collection has remained unstudied and unrecognized.[14] After what happened to her doctoral dissertation and its exploitation, Helmi Helminen decided not to proceed with her scholarly work. The three female scholars faced difficulties, distrust and control at the hands of the academic world, and this was not unusual. Conversely, it was very typical for early female scholars to meet hardships and critiques and to encounter challenges to their honour and advancement in their careers (Svanfeldt-Winter 2019:64).

Charlotta Europaeus, Helmi Helminen and Elsa Enäjärvi have been chosen as the focus of this article in order to expose their specialties as early female intellectuals in folklore studies in Finland. Their specialties not only result from their gender and exceptionality as women, but the bravery and confidence in what they felt passionate about and perceived as important. The cases of these three intellectual women also show that the research topics, methods and genres they worked on deviated from the dominant intellectual and scientific norm and were considered trivial, "unimportant, innocuous, or irrelevant" (Radner & Lanser 1993:19). The symbolic violence embedded in collecting and in research practices and scholarly perceptions of folklore and folklore research is evident, but not fully acknowledged or investigated.

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[1] I am grateful to Docent Irma-Riitta Järvinen, PhD, for her intellectual comments which have greatly helped me to improve the article.

[2] Hautala (1954:215) mentions a third female scholar, Lilli Lillius (1861–1945), but only as an editorial assistant to Kaarle Krohn on his book *Suomalaisia kansansatuja II* (1893). There were also other female scholars and collectors, such as Astrid Reponen, Maiju Juvas, Jenny Paulaharju, Ulla Mannonen, but some of them acted later or failed to proceed in their research/career (see further Järvinen 2004; Järvinen 2005; Paulaharju 2022; also, Hänninen, forthcoming).

[3] Trivialization does not concern only women's culture and female folklore, but also of other disregarded and ignored groups such as children, ethnic groups and gender minorities.

[4] New interests and paradigms of contexts, performance and informants also enabled female scholars to become more visible. Another question, not fully investigated, is what role female scholars played in methodological changes (see Turunen 1996:86).

[5] Folkloristics can be studied at the Universities of Helsinki and Turku and Åbo Akademi. At the University of Jyväskylä and the University of Eastern Finland folklore studies are integrated in a wider programme of history and cultural studies.

[6] In the research history of Finnish folklore studies in 1954, Sulo Haltsonen has been given only half a page where he is minimized and only described as having written a lot of papers ("joukon tutkielmia") on folklore and was especially commendable for making a series of valuable bibliographies for the help of scholarship (Hautala 1954:399–400).

[7] See Matti Kuusi has noted that D. Europaeus was not that odd, but rather a young student who behaved like a scholar (Kuusi & Timonen 1988:25; see also Kokko 2022).

[8] Pikkanen (2004) notes that Charlotta Europaeus sent her collections to the Finnish Literature Society as early as 1836. However, this knowledge is based on the unclear archive list of the Finnish Literature Society, and it is not fully recognized.

[9] Collecting folklore in Ireland was a professional duty and was paid monthly by the Irish Folklore Commission. No woman worked as a full-time collector, but some of them, like Gunning, worked part-time and were paid according to the number of pages (Uí Ógain 2014:34; Briody 2007:58).

[10] See https://www.kotus.fi/aineistot/tietoa_aineistoista/henkiloarkistot/helminen_helmi.

[11] Helmi Helminen was a friend and colleague of Astrid Reponen (1905–1940) and Maiju Juvas (1905–1955), and the three women shared an interest in Steiner's philosophy and anthroposophy (Järvinen 2004; see also Hänninen, forthcoming).

[12] Salminen continued the debate in the journal *Mitteilungen des Vereins für finnische Volkskunde* (1945).

[13] Väinö Salminen died in 1947.

[14] However, see a forthcoming article by Viola Parente-Čapková and Kati Launis.