



Marleen Metslaid

Ilmar Talve, Emigré Ethnologist from Estonia

Abstract:

The article focuses on Ilmar Talve (1919–2007) and his exile in Sweden, 1945–1959. The complex nature of an émigré position in a scholarly field is analysed from several angles. I explore how Talve adapted to the Swedish academic field while he was working at the Institute of Folklife Research, led by Sigurd Erixon. I am also interested in how his understanding of ethnology evolved in Estonia as a student of the WWII era and in Sweden after the war. Talve's efforts to pursue and develop Estonian ethnology while in exile are then examined in more detail. On the one hand, it shows the influence of the contemporary national discourse on research. In some sense, it was an unrewarding dead end, but even as such, it describes the political and societal conditionality of pursuing science at the time. On the other hand, it raises the question of the influence of Erixon's theoretical views on Talve, and therefore, on Finnish ethnology. Talve implemented his plans in Finland as a professor at the University of Turku. The article also explores the important role played by Finnish scholars for both exile ethnologists in Sweden and Estonian ethnographers in the Soviet Union, and it reflects on Talve's place in this relationship.

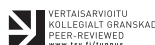
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© Marleen Metslaid

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-2149-8131>

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The well-known Finnish-based ethnologist Ilmar Talve (1919–2007), a long-serving professor at the University of Turku, was originally from Estonia, where he had studied ethnology. The twists and turns of the Second World War (WWII) took him to Sweden, where he managed to continue his studies and professional work at the Institute of Folklife Research (Institutet för Folklivsforskning), headed by Sigurd Erixon (1888–1968). Talve spent 14 years in Stockholm before permanently settling in Finland and enjoying a successful career as the founder of a school of thought.

As scholars, we are part of an intellectual world that could be regarded as a field with its own system of relations and terms of power (see Bourdieu 1984). As agents in the scholarly field, researchers struggle to accumulate and exchange different kinds of power resources (e.g. social, symbolic and economic capitals). The agents can be both core and peripheral players, established or emerging. Although the academic world can be seen as global, each country and each regional discipline has its own specific academic field. Ethnology can also be called a discourse with its own solid, structured system – as a form of scholarship, it has its own theoretical and methodological foundations, which transcend national borders. At the same time, the history of each country gives the discipline its specific characteristics that influence the researchers' knowledge production. What happens when an agent is forced to move from one field to another, even if the disciplinary discourse is supposedly similar? How were Talve's career opportunities and knowledge production affected by the political, social and academic context around him?

Until the 1960s, Professor Sigurd Erixon was 'the best-known and most influential scholar internationally of European ethnology or cultural history studies' (Rogan 2013, 89). He was an advocate for a unified discipline that, according to him, should deal with material, non-material and social aspects of popular culture, both historically and in the present (Rogan 2015, 115). His innovative ideas were in the long run outdated, but this does not diminish his importance in the international, and especially the Swedish, academic world in the period spanning 1930–1960. How did young Talve manage to find a place at Erixon's Institute? What did he study? Other Baltic émigré scholars worked there alongside him. How did they relate to the new academic environment, and how were they received in Sweden?

Scholars have highlighted that the years spent with Erixon had a great impact on Talve, and therefore influenced how he later developed Finnish ethnology (e.g. Ruotsala 2021). Erixon's contribution to the history of European ethnology has been extensively studied by Bjarne Rogan (2008, 2013, 2015), but his work has received attention from other historians of the discipline as well (e.g. Frykman 2012). Talve has thus far received little attention, with the main focus being on his time in Finland (Virtanen 2003; Ruotsala 2019,

2021). He has been studied as an ethnologist of both Finland (e.g. Virtanen 2003; Ruotsala 2019, 2021; Vilkkuna 1979; Lehtonen 1989) and Estonia (Ränk 1969; Viies 1989, 1998), but not as part of the Swedish scholarly tradition. As the author of a number of works on Estonian history, he is also well known in his native country (e.g. Teder 1989, Tonts 2009).

The present article contributes to the historiography of European ethnology. Analysing Talve's activities provides micro-level insights into the history of the discipline, allowing us to investigate the development of the academic field. By focusing on an émigré scholar, I examine in particular the possibilities for invigorating regional ethnology in a refugee context. I am interested in Talve's advancement as a scholar and in the development of his ethnological views on culture and society, which became the starting point for his work in Turku. Initially, he sought more to develop Estonian ethnology, though. How did his understanding of the discipline evolve in Estonia and Sweden?

As an ethnology history researcher, I have been interested in questions of continuity with respect to the discipline in the midst of changing political and social systems and the changing role of individual researchers as a result. The conventional view is that Estonian ethnology split into two separate branches after a core group of researchers went into exile in Sweden in the autumn of 1944 (Viies 1991, 127). Analysis of the phenomenon at the grassroots level shows that the Iron Curtain did not necessarily mean a complete lack of reciprocal influences, nor did the scholars who went into exile renounce their background in Estonian ethnology. Estonian identity remained important to Talve until the end of his life (Ruotsala 2021, 282). This also raises the question of scholars belonging to a national scholarly tradition, even when working abroad and studying other topics.

In the late 1990s, Talve published a three-volume autobiography (Talve 1997, 1998, 1999), and several years later an abridged Finnish version (Talve 2004a). The Estonian-language autobiography provides much of the primary source material for this article. Talve wrote it as a story of personal growth and painted a portrait of himself for posterity. Talve's archive was donated to the Estonian Cultural History Archives at the Estonian Literary Museum (collection 404). It contains diverse material, of which I mainly use his correspondence with his closest colleagues and some professional manuscripts and lecture notes. Materials on Talve can also be found in Ants Viies' personal archive in the Eesti Rahva Muuseum (ERM, Estonian National Museum).¹ I also analyse his newspaper articles and research papers.

1 Talve's materials can also be found in Sigurd Erixon's archive at the Nordiska museet, much of which I am familiar with but do not use in the present article. These materials concern his work at the institute and can shed even more light on the period under study, though.

The Talve correspondence and the publications used for this article offer an illuminating characterisation of the era under study. Applying discourse analysis to the sources sheds light on the political and societal conditionality of pursuing science from a grassroots perspective. I start by looking at Talve's Estonia period, which will allow for a better understanding of the motives behind his later activities. Thereafter, I analyse his entry into the research field of Swedish ethnology and the difficulties associated with obtaining a doctorate. The third subsection of the article deals with the question of the continuity in and reforms made to Estonian ethnology in exile. I end the article with a lengthier discussion on the points of contact between Estonian ethnology in exile, in Soviet Estonia and in Finland, and Talve's role in it.

Studies at the University of Tartu during wartime

In the following section, I provide a brief overview of the historical, ideological and disciplinary historical context of Talve's studies in Tartu. This is necessary to better understand the background to his activities during the Swedish period. What was Estonian ethnology like in the late 1930s and during WWII? What kind of researcher profile emerges from the memories and archival sources of his student years?

Talve began his studies in the still independent Republic of Estonia at the national university in Tartu in southern Estonia in 1938. He has written about how in the interwar period, when Estonia was newly independent, he received a purely national education (Talve 1946a) and how it laid the foundation for a national worldview for the next generation of educated people. Talve entered the Faculty of Humanities and began to study subjects related to Estonian national culture (Estonian, folkloristics, ethnology). Therefore, he was deeply involved in the prevailing national discourse. Yet, Talve could not realise his peacetime desire of working in academia in Estonia. The political situation soon underwent a sea change. The Soviet Union occupied Estonia (along with Latvia and Lithuania) in June 1940, and it annexed the country, known as the Estonian SSR, that August. The academic year of 1940/1941 took place under Soviet rule. In the summer and autumn of 1941, the Estonian territory was a battlefield between two opposing powers. The Nazi invasion resulted in one occupier being supplanted by another. Estonia was under German control until the autumn of 1944.

During those years, academic work took place in fits and starts and required that students be quite independent. Soviet ideological demands placed on research were more stringent² than those affecting researchers during the

2 In a 1941 seminar paper, Talve could thus not avoid including the rhetoric of Soviet ideology in the introduction (Taljud Eestis, ERM Ak 36-6-1).

later German occupation (Vahtre 2005, 209). ‘Red’ subjects and the Russian language were compulsory, while with other subjects the degree of ideological indoctrination depended on the specific teacher and their mindset. The German occupiers did not at first seek to impose an ideology on scientific life, so Estonians were largely able to continue with their previous activities (Vahtre 2005, 209; Kalling & Tammiksaar 2021). Seminars continued to be held in the spirit of the interwar period. However, the continuation of studies was difficult and linked to regulations coming from higher up. Talve still managed to defend his master’s thesis in ethnology in the summer of 1942, though, and started to think about the theme of his doctoral dissertation.

Talve made the decision to continue studying ethnology during the first Soviet occupation, when he was hired at ERM. He later described the decision in a letter to his professor, Gustav Ränk (1902–1998), as follows:

[---]in the end, I have to thank you for the fact that I stuck with ethnography and became some sort of ethnologist. Not so much directly due to your teaching, although that, too, had a major significance. But in autumn 1940, after the coup, when I was looking for a foothold, you were the only one who replied to my letter. I sent three letters to Tartu on that occasion.³ I was and have always been very interested in folklore and literature, and I could have just as easily ended up being a folklorist or literary scholar. Everything was still open then. [---] Your letter, in which you put me directly in touch with the Eesti Rahva Muuseum and ethnology, was the decisive event [---]

(I. Talve letter to G. Ränk, 15 February 1962, EKLA, 404:1:55)

The renowned ethnologist Gustav Ränk, known in Europe for studies written later in exile in Sweden, had only just become an adjunct professor at the University of Tartu (UT) in the autumn of 1939. He continued on the path established by the Finnish scholar Ilmari Manninen (1894–1935), who had served as the first associate professor of ethnology (then called ethnography, or *rahvateadus*⁴) at UT between 1924 and 1928. According to the programme set by Manninen, ethnology studied material peasant culture relying on typological, cartographic and historical-geographical methods. The approach corresponded to the research being carried out in related disciplines in nearby countries (e.g. Finland, Russia, Sweden) (Viires 1991; Vunder 2000; see also Talve 1992). Ethnology was closely related to ERM’s overarching mission, with the museum becoming a centre of excellence in such research during the interwar period, and it remained so even afterwards. The museum collections

3 In the hope of finding work, Talve sent letters not only to ERM but also to the Estonian Folklore Archives and the Estonian Cultural History Archives.

4 Folk science in English, *kansatiede* in Finnish.

were frequently the basis for scholarly research, fieldwork materials were kept there, teaching staff worked there and seminars were often held there.

Talve was hired as a temporary employee at the museum, but he soon became a staff member and worked as an assistant and head of the correspondents' network. His studies were thus closely connected to work at the museum, and therefore, intricately interwoven with practical knowledge in the speciality. The museum determined the academic fate of many other scholars besides just Talve.⁵

In his early student papers and also in his master's thesis, which was on the subject of tar and charcoal production, Talve drew on the discourse created by Manninen. His studies at the time were mainly based on ERM's collections. Yet, the more traditional approach and topics of study did not satisfy Talve's budding research interests. He had a desire to be innovative and broaden the discipline's scope of application, and he shared this desire with a fellow student and colleague named Helmut Hagar (1914–1991).⁶ Later, while corresponding in exile, they refer to their discussions on this subject in wartime Tartu. Talve took an interest in societal folk culture, which he presumably arrived at in connection with his folkloristics studies under Oskar Loorits (1900–1961)⁷ and through reading Finnish religious scholar Uno Harva's works (Talve 1997, 253, 271, 301).⁸ In early 1943, Talve planned a more exhaustive study of social folk culture with the aim of pursuing a PhD, and he applied for a scholarship for this purpose (letter from I. Talve to the Learned Estonian Society, 2 February 1943, ERM Ak 36:6:5) and sought to conduct fieldwork in special cultural regions in Estonia (Muhu Island, the Seto region). But the German

5 A professorship was opened up right before the occupation, and despite the political turmoil unleashed by the WWII era, this decision paid off handsomely. A sizeable number of students formed a core group around Ränk, and four of them defended their master's theses in the summer of 1942. Besides Talve, Helmut Hagar, Ella Koern and Aita Hanko all worked at ERM.

6 Before fleeing to Sweden in the autumn of 1944, Hagar served as an acting director of ERM. During his first years in exile, Hagar worked at the Nordiska museet, mainly with the Estonian Swedes materials. He worked later at the Institute of Folklife Studies, where he helped Erixon with his village research project. He passed the licentiate exam in 1953 and planned to write a doctoral thesis on traditional transport, but this work was never completed (Viies 1998, 699–700).

7 Oskar Loorits, an Estonian folklorist and publicist, one of the founders of the Estonian Folklore Archives and its first director, and a professor of Estonian and Comparative Folklore at UT, 1939–1941. Loorits fled to Sweden in 1944 and continued his research work there.

8 Uno Harva (1882–1949) was a professor of sociology at the University of Turku, 1926–1949. Talve contacted him when he was in Finland (1943–1944) as a volunteer in the Finnish Continuation War (Talve 1997, 301). Even in such a difficult situation, he thought about improving himself professionally. It can be called Talve's first contact with Turku and sociology.

military began to mobilize and the plan came to naught. Talve used the money to escape to Finland instead in early April 1943.

Records left behind in Tartu show how seriously Talve deliberated on the topic of societal folk culture.⁹ He sought to analyse 'our village life in olden days, societal relationships and strata, collective undertakings and customary law' (letter from I. Talve ...), and to further this end, he intended to collect material through his correspondents and personal fieldwork. In 1943, a museum survey that he had compiled was published, entitled '*Küsimusi ühiskondliku rahvakultuuri alalt I*' (Questions from the field of societal folk culture I), which was the first part of a much more voluminous (200 questions instead of 46) draft of considerable depth and breadth. The topics were in part inspired by Finnish ethnologist Erik Anton Virtanen's work '*Varsinais-Suomen yhteiskunnallista kansankulttuuria*' (The Social Folk Culture of Southwest Finland, 1938) (Talve 1997, 271).

Looking back at Talve's Tartu years, the diversity and breadth of his research topics and plans are astonishing. He did not limit himself just to investigating a single topic at increasing depth, but rather had a very broad grasp of folk-life research even as a young researcher. In various levels of work written as a student, he dealt with drawshaves, wheeled conveyances and charcoal and tar production, and he also independently developed the study of societal folk culture. Talve was driven by a passion for work as a scholar. He hoped that every paper he penned as a student would be published. This hope was not just wishful thinking, as he did rewrite his seminar works for publication, but potential publication opportunities did not materialise due to the wartime situation.

A doctorate in Swedish ethnology

To be accepted in the specific scholarly field, one has to demonstrate a certain cultural competence 'in the shape of education, titles, offices, and commissions, and practical knowledge of dialects and local culture' (Lilja 1999, 28). Knowledge of local culture and history was particularly important in ethnology at the time, where culture was mainly studied within the boundaries of the nation-state. Talve ended up in Sweden as a refugee, as a young scholar with a master's degree in Estonian ethnology but no scientific publications to show for it. How did he convince Erixon to employ him? How did he cope with

9 Talve's materials in the personal archive of Ants Viires at ERM include notes on the customary law of Estonian fishermen, social folk culture and village society, and leatherwork (ERM Ak 36:6:5–10). They probably ended up in Viires' hands when Talve fled to Finland. Ants Viires (1918–2015) was Talve's contemporary but began his studies at the UT a little later. Viires also worked at ERM during wartime. He became the most important ethnologist in Soviet Estonia.

entering the Swedish scholarly field? How did Swedish ethnology differ from Estonian ethnology, and how did Talve familiarise himself with it?

Towards the end of WWII, 27,000 Estonians had fled to Sweden, where they made up the largest group of refugees (Tammaru, Kumer-Haukanömm & Anniste 2010, 1162). Half of all university-educated people in the Baltic states had fled to the West (Zadencka, Plakans & Lawaty 2015, 2). Talve arrived in Sweden a year after the highpoint of the refugee exodus via Germany and Denmark (Talve 1998). His colleagues from ERM (G. Ränk, Eerik Laid (1904–1961),¹⁰ and H. Hagar) were already working at the Institute of Folklife Research in Stockholm when Talve started to work there on 10 December 1945 (Talve 1998, 92). The institute had also hired Kārlis Straubergs (1890–1962) and Pauls Kundziņš (1888–1983) from Latvia and Juozas Lingis (1910–1998) from Lithuania. Baltic refugees accounted for a high proportion of institute staff (Viires 1998). Erixon has been described as a humane and open-minded person (Viires 1998, 692) who had helped refugee colleagues before (e.g. from Germany; Hellspång 1993, 57). In addition, he was familiar with Estonian ethnology and had befriended several colleagues there in the 1930s.¹¹ Thus, when the Baltic ethnologists arrived in Sweden in 1944–1945, they immediately contacted Erixon with a request to help them find a professional job. Given the difficult economic situation during the last years of the war, they were able to start as low-paid archive workers. Yet, it was an opportunity to continue as scholars, which proved successful thanks to the existing social network.

Swedish ethnology – *folklivsforskning* in Swedish – had not been affected by the events of WWII, and scholars there continued much as they had before the war. Furthermore, Erixon, who had assumed the leadership position in 1934, continued in that role until 1955. Under his leadership, Swedish ethnology had become a discipline that investigated the country's material folk culture from a historical perspective (Frykman 2012, 576). Like in Estonia, the discipline was closely connected with museums and archives, which offered researchers the source material they needed (Rogan 2012, 613). For Erixon and his school of thought, the most important method was cartography – mapping

10 Eerik Laid was an archaeologist and ethnologist, having received a master's degree from UT in both disciplines. He was the first inspector of antiquities in Estonia, 1936–1940, and served as acting director of ERM, 1941–1943.

11 Erixon had visited Estonia twice, in 1930 and 1934. In 1934, he was the main supervisor in a course on ethnology organised by the Baltic Institute in Stockholm. Laid and Ferdinand Linnus, the director of ERM at the time, took part in it (Viires 1998, 692). Ränk visited Stockholm and met Erixon in 1937, when he was on a study trip to countries around the Baltic Sea (Viires 1998, 692). So, Erixon at least knew Laid and Ränk quite well. Erixon had already published two articles at the time on common features in Swedish and Estonian folk culture (Erixon 1942, 1943).

the range of cultural phenomena, while focusing especially on cultural regions and boundaries. The goal was to compile an atlas of Swedish folk culture, and Erixon had given this assignment to his subordinates during the WWII years (Arnstberg 2008, 213–219). Yet, the atlas project cannot be viewed as solely an internal Swedish project. Cartography and its consistent development was one of the most central endeavours in European ethnology in general and one of the central pillars for increasing international cooperation after the war.¹² Erixon, who had good skills as an organiser, became a leading figure in cultivating relations in the field of ethnology, and thus post-war Swedish *folk-livsforskning* as a whole could be called the flagship of European ethnology.

The institute that had hired the Baltic scholars was later dubbed the ‘Sigurd Erixon research industry’ (Löfgren 1996, 159). Talve has named it ‘Sigurd Erixon’s workshop’ (Gustavsson 2019, 3). To implement his grand-scale project, Erixon needed collaborators with the right professional background, and émigrés from the Baltic states were perfect for this endeavour. Initially, they had limited possibilities to pursue their personal research topics, if doing so was not prohibited altogether. The émigré researchers were tasked with organising and systematising ethnographic responses received by the institute and translating ethnographic works. Their academic development from that point on depended on what they had achieved in their own country and whether they had brought research materials with them. For the most part, they first had to prove themselves in Swedish academic circles, i.e. to publish and, if necessary, obtain an academic degree. Established scholars had an easier time. Ränk was one such example – besides his tenure status and list of published papers, he had brought manuscripts with him, meaning he could start publishing as soon as possible (Viires 1998). It was trickier for Laid, Hagar and Talve. The first had not worked in academia for some years.¹³ Although the other two had defended their master’s theses in Tartu, Swedish scholars had no idea about the calibre of their work. Besides, they did not have any publications to their name.

The difficulty of proving their academic credentials to the Swedish professor is clearly demonstrated in a letter that Hagar wrote to Talve on 12 October 1945:¹⁴

I went to see Erixon a couple of weeks ago on the matter of the examination, to agree on what I should really read. He seemed pretty harried and unfocused and didn’t know

12 Other key topics involving international cooperation included the compiling of a trans-European bibliography and an ethnological dictionary (Rogan 2013).

13 Laid managed to defend his doctoral dissertation in 1954 (‘Såden torkar: sådesuppsättningar i Sverige 1850–1900: en etnologisk undersökning’)

14 At the time, Talve was still in the Vrāka camp in Småland, looking for a professional job in Stockholm.

how to arrange this business. [---] Erixon was interested in how much I knew about European ethnology. We discussed this and that, and then he proposed that I should write down all the books that I had read in my life. I politely declined. Then he mentioned some from his own programme but didn't get far. As we left it, he would contact Ränk and try to find out how much our type might know and how much more to lay on us. He talked to Ränk that same day and he asked me to obtain the Tartu Faculty of Philosophy's curriculum. I have made efforts to do so but haven't yet received it. Ränk also said that he had assigned additional reading outside the programme but he couldn't remember what. He told me to write it down when I remembered. If you have any good ideas, let me know.

(Letter from H. Hagar to I. Talve, 12 October 1945, EKLA 404, 3, 25, 11)

Hagar said studying for the licentiate examination¹⁵ had to start from Erixon's materials. He then added the following point:

Emphasis is placed on Lapps (mainly Wiklund¹⁶), and Swedish Finns (regarding Hämäläinen's¹⁷ last work, E. [Erixon] said in this connection that it was partly naive). The social aspect was very highly valued. And Europe had to be clear – something there wasn't much of in our programme.

(Letter from H. Hagar to I. Talve, 12 October 1945, EKLA 404, 3, 25, 11)

It took Talve years to get to the stage of defending his doctoral thesis. Problems were caused by the sheer volume of the examination and the time expended taking the multi-tiered exam, selecting a research topic and economic instability. Working in 'the research industry' meant participating in fieldwork trips organised to gather materials for Erixon's research topics and intense archival work preparing the distribution maps for the atlas.¹⁸ The job depended on funding, though, which added uncertainty to the refugee life.

15 In the Swedish education system at the time, the degree obtained before completing a doctoral thesis proved the researcher's competence in the field and gave some chance of finding a more secure job in the field (see Talve 1998, 161).

16 Karl Berhard Wiklund (1868–1934), a linguist and renowned researcher of the Sámi language and ethnography.

17 Albert Hämäläinen (1881–1949), a professor of ethnology at the University of Helsinki 1931–1949.

18 Most of the institute protocols written during the time when the atlas maps were being compiled (1946–1953 has been compiled by Talve. He admitted that he composed most of the maps bearing Erixon's signature, with the professor having written only texts for them (Viires 1998, 694–695). The atlas of Swedish folk culture contains 68 maps (Erixon 1957), 49 of which (including six together with someone else) were compiled by Erixon. Thirteen maps were done by Estonian researchers, three of them in cooperation with others. Therefore, Estonian researchers played a significant part in the compilation of the atlas (Erixon 1957).

Therefore, Talve actively engaged in journalism activities and writing fiction, which provided him with significant additional income.¹⁹

Talve and others also encountered difficulties relating to what was perceived as the closed and chauvinistic nature of the Swedish scholar community (see Klein 2017). Émigré ethnologists were forced to choose a Swedish folk culture phenomenon as their research area, but

it was necessary to know and consider what Swedish ethnologists themselves studied or intended to study. [---] If I had wanted to continue working in a scientific area in Sweden, the topic would have had to be one that dealt with Sweden and not issues that, in the local view, were considered peripheral.

(Talve 1998, 204)

At the same time, the émigrés viewed Swedish-centric aspect of research and priority given to the Swedish language as problematic. Talve had originally intended to write his doctoral thesis in German and looked for a translator for that purpose (letter from I. Talve to O. A. Webermann, 1 October 1955, EKLA 404, 2, 19, 55/57), but, probably due to financial constraints, the plan did not succeed. Paradoxically, the selection of a Swedish-centric research topic could limit later employment prospects for the émigrés if they opted to pursue a career beyond Sweden.²⁰

It took him years before Talve started writing his doctoral thesis. In his memoirs, he describes a long and difficult journey to find the perfect research topic (Talve 1998, 204–205). It seems that Talve was quite self-critical in this regard, but he also ran into several external obstacles. Various topics of interest to Talve were deemed unsuitable or already claimed. In his first years at the institute, Erixon gave him the assignment of preparing a map showing the number of saunas and threshing barns in different parts of Sweden. Talve delivered the presentation, written based on the research conducted for the distribution map already in 1947, at a seminar at the institute,²¹ and he was prepared to continue doing research on the topic, but Erixon kept it to himself for the time being. Only in 1953 did Erixon allow Talve to have a go at the topic (Talve 1998, 221).

19 Talve's most important novels were published during this period (Talve 1948a, 1952a, 1959)

20 In 1959, Talve mentioned in a letter to Esko Aaltonen that Laid could not apply for a position at the University of Turku because the topic of his doctoral thesis was too Sweden-centred, and therefore, he did not qualify (letter from 26 February 1959, EKLA 404, 1, 1, 1).

21 Talve was the first Baltic refugee to give a presentation there (Talve 1998, 124–126). The text of the seminar presentation has been preserved ('Rior i Sverige' [Threshing barns in Sweden], EKLA 404, 47, 2).

Financial insecurity, dependence on various scholarships, the immense volume of research material²² and Talve's own thoroughness prolonged work on the manuscript. He studied vernacular outbuildings used for drying grain and bathing, and he analysed their historical development over a broader geographic area, focusing on topics of construction and function. His defence of '*Bastu och Torkhus i Nordeuropa*' (Sauna and buildings for drying grain in Northern Europe, 544 pages) finally took place on 7 May 1960. His opponents were Stockholm University's Associate Professor of Ethnology Olof Hasslöf (1901–1994) and Toivo Vuorela (1909–1982), who had been serving as an associate professor in Turku until recently (Viires 1998, 703). Talve's thoroughness is underscored by the fact that while researching the topic of his thesis, he had amassed enough material for a book on north-eastern European threshing barns, published a year after his voluminous thesis (Talve 1961).

Talve's thesis was recognised by his contemporaries (Granlund 1960; Ränk 1964). Erixon's successor as professor, John Granlund (1901–1982), praised the novelty of his approach and the thoroughness and correctness of his analysis (Granlund 1960, 90–91). Talve's study was part of the Nordiska Museet's tradition of conducting research on the vernacular architecture, which focused on geographical boundaries and typical characteristics of certain regions. But his study also fell outside the established discourse because of a certain methodological innovation – Talve was interested in the relationship between changes in form and changes in lifestyle and use (function). An important part of his study consisted of results from ethnographical questionnaires and interviews (Karlsmo & Löfgren 2016, 20).

Talve's period in Sweden came to an end after his defence. He had secured his academic degree, but his possibilities for pursuing a career in Sweden were non-existent. This was the case for other émigré ethnologists as well.²³ The Nordiska Museet would have been an ideal workplace, but its doors were barred to *émigrés*. The situation was all the stranger because Talve's and Laid's doctoral theses were the only ones defended at Erixon's institute between 1950 and 1964 (Klein 2017, 98). Talve received no response from other museums in the country. Talve and Hagar both vied for the position of assistant at the Gothenburg Museum in 1957, and although they were the only licentiate degree holders, neither was hired. Laid also tried to find a job at several museums, but to no avail (Talve 1998, 281–282). Naturally, they did have friendly

22 Consisting mainly of extensive archival work in various archives and museums in Sweden, Finland and Norway.

23 The problem was particularly acute when compared to those refugee historians and archivists (such as R. Indreko, E. Blumfeldt, A. Soom, J. Koit and L. Kaelas) who had moved quickly from the ranks of temporary archivists to permanent professional positions (Johanson & Törv 2013, 50–52).

relations with quite a few Swedish colleagues, but the general attitude toward Baltic refugees was dismissive.²⁴ In the labour market, preference was given to Swedes for the better jobs (Köll 2015, 429). In general, the mutual distrust between the refugees and the Swedish authorities was based on complex political issues in the post-WWII Cold War situation (Köll 2016).

The institute was ironically called the Baltic Institute during Erixon's time due to the number of Baltic émigrés working there (Viires 1998, 692; Klein 2017, 93). Although Estonian/Baltic émigré ethnologists made a significant contribution to publishing in post-war Swedish ethnology and actively took part in the atlas project, their work has only recently been recognised in the historiography of ethnology done at the institute (Klein 2017). This oversight is partly connected to the fact that the Erixon era itself as a whole was until recently seen as something obsolete, to be forgotten (Gustavsson 2019).²⁵ Erixon secured Ränk an associate professor position at Stockholm University and Hagar a post in establishing the Museum of Spirits (Viires 1998). Laid died before receiving a secure position. Talve moved to Finland.

Talve had made acquaintances with Finnish colleagues through other Estonian ethnologists during the war years. Upon reaching Sweden, he renewed these relations quite quickly. One of his advantages was that he was fluent in Finnish from his upper secondary school days (Talve 1997, 149–154, 173–179). At first, Talve corresponded only with Kustaa Vilkuna (1902–1980),²⁶ but in later years he maintained a larger circle of contacts. As early as the end of the 1940s, Vilkuna invited Talve to Finland to engage in research on a topic relevant to Finnish scholarship, but Talve was reluctant due to his refugee passport and the fraught political situation (letter from I. Talve to K. Vilkuna, 5 March 1947, EKLA 404, 2, 23, 1). The naturalisation of Talve and his wife Liisa as Swedish citizens in 1954 (Talve 1998, 221) opened more avenues for interaction with neighbouring Finland. He obtained a scholarship through Vilkuna and frequented the archives and museums in Finland that year gathering material for his thesis.²⁷ The next year, Talve's summer visits to Finland

24 The fact that the Estonians in Sweden were a large group, forming a prominent community, may also have played a part, creating a sense of alienation among the locals, and this led to a cautious attitude towards them (see Undusk 2015, 244).

25 See also Klein 2017. The title of the second part of Talve's memoirs, *Uninvited guest* (Kutsumatu külaline, 1998), suggests how refugees felt about the Swedes' attitude towards them.

26 Kustaa Vilkuna, a renowned Finnish ethnologist who maintained close contacts with Estonian colleagues already during the 1930s. He was a professor of Finno-Ugrian ethnology at the University of Helsinki 1950–1959.

27 The correspondence with Vilkuna has not been fully preserved, but communication with him seems to have played an important role for Talve. In a 1956 letter to Vilkuna, he acknowledged that he has repeatedly received good advice from him, adding that he

for additional income began in earnest; inspired by Erixon's research, he led summer village surveys there. He landed the job thanks to his acquaintanceship with Niilo Valonen (1913–1983),²⁸ who had become director of the Finnish National Museum's Ethnology Department (Talve 1998, 244). His interactions with Finnish colleagues became closer, which proved a determining factor in Talve's life: it was what made his tenure in Turku in 1961 possible. By then, he had been publishing an increasing number of articles in Finnish academic journals.

The question of the continuity and reform of Estonian ethnology

As a young, rebellious ethnologist, Talve ended up in exile in Sweden where initially refugee scholars tried to continue the tradition of Estonian national disciplines and develop the existing discourse. His correspondence and articles allow us to take a closer look at what kinds of influences, if any, the young refugee researchers received from Swedish ethnology. How did it relate to the established discourse of Estonian ethnology of which they were still a part? In what direction would Talve have taken Estonian ethnology if possible?

Upon arriving in Sweden, Estonians self-organised quickly and started publishing their own newspapers and magazines and founding different associations, academic societies and publishing houses for Estonian literature. They made up a conspicuously large community, comprising a firm subculture where the image of inter-war Estonia was cherished (Undusk 2015; Kõll 2016). Origin, national identity and culture remained important for émigré researchers, even in the different and difficult conditions of trying to prove their worth as professionals in their new home. They had come of age and pursued a career in an independent nation-state with a strong national consciousness, and the loss of that country took a severe psychological toll. In the first years of exile, they hoped that they would be able to return to their homeland and continue their careers. They saw themselves as ambassadors of the Estonian ethnology tradition, which helped them make sense of their professional activities. This perception lasted until approximately the late 1950s. The viewpoint was justified because all ethnologists with degrees had either died or fled to the West during the war.²⁹ Only a few young colleagues who were still studying at the time remained in Estonia. Harri Moora (1900–1968), a pro-

rarely saw Erixon and that Professor Granlund would only sit more behind his books and was of little help in practical matters (letter from Talve to Viikuna, 28 December 1956, EKLA 404, 2, 23, 3).

28 Niilo Valonen became the professor of ethnology in Helsinki after Viikuna was appointed to a position at the Academy of Finland.

29 Ränk, Talve, Hagar, Laid and Ella Koern (1905–1971) had all fled to Sweden. Ferdinand Linnus (1895–1942), the director of ERM, had been arrested in 1941 and

fessor of archaeology, and the young researcher Ants Viires became the main figures continuing to study Estonian ethnology in the occupied homeland (Viires 1991; Vunder 2000).

Upon becoming acquainted with Swedish ethnology, émigré scholars established it as a role model for developing their discipline back home and hoped to apply the new knowledge once they returned to their positions in Estonia. Personal experience with the scientific approaches in the new country and the discipline's operating mechanisms were enlightening for the younger generation in particular, while such approaches and mechanisms do not appear to have influenced the older researchers.³⁰

Talve's correspondence with Hagar shows that going into exile and having contacts with Swedish ethnologists gave them the possibility to view their (national) discipline from an outside perspective. In November 1945, Hagar wrote that he was cataloguing folk costume components at the Nordiska Museet, and to make the work even more interesting, he had started reading Swedish ethnologist Sigfrid Svensson's³¹ book *Skånes Folkdräkter* (Folk Costumes in Skåne). He praised Svensson for his work:

S. is a man with a strong spirit and a very moving spirit. The concept is sociological; the distribution areas are not an aim in and of themselves but a means to analyse the structure of culture. Don't be alarmed now by these few overflowing words, brother. After reading this [i.e. Svensson], you can wipe your a— with MM.'s [Manninen's] fancy and tedious 500 pages³² in the methodological and ideological sense. Of course, it's damned good that something like it exists, but after Heikel,³³ it could have been better.

(Letter from H. Hagar to I. Talve, 21 November 1945, EKLA 404, 3, 25, 3)

Talve responded to him in a long letter,³⁴ in which he critically discussed the past and future orientation of the discipline. He reminded Hagar of the

died in a Soviet prison camp the next year. Helmi Kurrik (1883–1960), head of the Ethnographic Department at ERM, had fled to Germany and later moved to the US.

30 Ränk and Laid had been exposed to Erixon and Swedish ethnology already in the 1930s (Viires 1998, 692).

31 Sigfrid Svensson (1901–1984), a Swedish ethnologist, published his doctoral thesis, '*Skånes Folkdräkter: en dräkthistorisk undersökning 1500-1900*', in 1935. He was professor of Nordic and comparative folklife research at Lund university, 1946–1967.

32 Hagar was referring here to I. Manninen's book *Eesti rahvariiete ajalugu* (History of Estonian Folk Costumes, 1927).

33 Axel Olai Heikel, one of the founding fathers of Finnish ethnology, had written the important book *Die Volkstrachten in den Ostseeprovinzen und in Setukesien* (1909).

34 Both Hagar's and Talve's letters were written in Swedish, Estonian and Finnish. Only this one copy of Talve's letters has survived, but in his autobiography, he writes of repeated letters exchanged in Swedish (Talve 1998, 89). It was an opportunity to learn and practise a new language.

discussions held several years prior in Tartu about the need for a more socio-logically enlightening approach in certain areas of study in the Estonian ethnology. Talve noted that back then, they only had a dim notion of the possibilities of the new methods, but now it seems they had chosen the right path. He proclaimed that the old guard had had their day and that now a new era had dawned, with different viewpoints and methods. Talve recalled that the air was stagnant at ERM in the methodological sense:

we would both have badly needed new influences from outside, above all from Sweden, if you consider the current attitude of ethnology. And I hardly believe that Ränk, as great a man as he is, would have had anything special to say to me and you in addition to those seminars.³⁵

(Letter from I. Talve to H. Hagar, 24 November 1945, EKLA 404, 1, 22)

Talve emphasised that while a typological viewpoint is sometimes necessary, it cannot be the primary focus. Instead, the person who created the objects must be analysed as a part of society. He saw strong prospects in harmonising the cultural-historical and sociological viewpoints, adding that such an approach could be applied to various kinds of ethnological problems (letter from I. Talve to H. Hagar, 24 November 1945, EKLA 404, 1, 22). It is worth emphasising here that Talve revealed these thoughts before he started working at Erixon's institute. He had not yet been exposed to Swedish ethnology and had only heard about it through Hagar.

The émigré Estonians had more pressing problems to resolve in the latter half of the 1940s than pursuing a radical and systematic innovation of the discipline. Instead, they had to adapt to the language, society and work culture of their adopted countries – in short, to get their feet firmly on the ground. Moreover, the sources required for research, and the archives and museums that they were accustomed to, were unavailable. They still had to create and seek out new possibilities for presenting and publishing. The émigré researchers were able to pursue Estonian-themed research only if they were able to bring materials with them (Talve was not able to do so), or if something relevant was discovered in searches of the Swedish archives.³⁶ Development of

35 Translated from Finnish. Compare Hagar's 1952 article praising the quality of Ränk's seminars during wartime and their correspondence on recent trends in modern European ethnology (Hagar 1952, 50).

36 Talve's first article was published in 1949 in Swedish in the yearbook *Svio-Estonica*, by the Swedish-Estonian Academic Society (Talve 1949a). The article was based on his presentation at the Estonian Scientific Society in Sweden and was about the correspondence between Carl Fr. W. Russwurm and Artur Hazelius. It dealt with the problem of acquiring Estonian-Swedish collections for the Swedish museum in the 19th century.

the national discipline was inevitably limited to mere thought processes and oriented towards the future.

Talve did not publicly voice his critical thoughts about ethnology. However, in 1952 he did publish a programmatic, future-oriented article in the Swedish Estonians' popular cultural periodical *Tulimuld*, entitled 'Problems in Estonian cultural history' (Talve 1952a). The innovative nature of his approach has been emphasised later by Viires, who noted that it was not until the 1980s that such ideas were voiced in Soviet Estonian ethnology (Viires 1989, 282). Presumably, Talve sought to articulate the ideas that had accumulated over the years and lay out what he felt was the quintessential aim of his research. The aim was to empower research on the Estonia front so that ethnology in exile would be sustainable and lasting. Talve summarised his arguments in a letter to Estonian literary scholar Otto A. Webermann (1915–1971) in Germany as follows: 'As you see, my understanding of ethnology is oriented in the direction of familiarity with the cultural history milieu, which would contain all of the social classes in Estonia regardless of ethnicity' (letter from I. Talve to O. A. Webermann, 8 April 1952, EKLA 404, 2, 19, 25/27). Thus, Talve was one of the first Estonian ethnologists to take an interest in the 'cultural history milieu' of the Baltic Germans, who had subjugated Estonian commoners for centuries (letter from I. Talve to O. A. Webermann, 8 April 1952, EKLA 404, 2, 19, 25/27). Talve's cultural history perspective – broader than that of classical ethnology – distinguished him from other Estonian ethnologists of his era. Ränk's research perspective was likewise quite far-ranging but bound up with the problems concerning peasant culture that were characteristic of the ethnology of that time.

In the article, Talve develops thoughts already first conceived in Tartu, which in turn were influenced by his studies at Erixon's institute. The impetus for the article may have been his attending a conference of ethnologists and folklorists in Denmark in 1952. At that conference, the need to study different groups of professions and cities had been raised quite acutely (Talve 1958, 439; 1998, 205). Meeting colleagues from all over Europe was inspiring and helped him clarify his ideas about ethnology. Furthermore, Erixon also proposed an idea on how to reform ethnology in the early 1950s, stressing the need to study not only traditional (peasant) societies but also urban and industrial societies and modernisation processes (Rogan 2013, 96–98). Influenced by American cultural anthropology, he defined ethnology as follows: 'a comparative culture research on a regional basis, with a sociological and historical orientation and with certain psychological aspects' (Rogan 2013, 97).

Talve was quite up to date with the changes taking place in contemporary European ethnology, but he broadened his view to include general cultural his-

tory, which also encompassed the study of history, historical sociology and the history of ideas. In the Estonian context, Talve saw a possibility for collaboration between different disciplines, and consequently a way to synthesise them as well (Talve 1952b, 205). He emphasised that such cross-disciplinary work should be cognizant of the determining role of three dimensions (geographic space, historical setting and social milieu) and the need to analyse each dimension. Erixon had written about the role of the three dimensions back in 1937 and again in 1951 (Rogan 2013, 97). The impact of Erixon's theoretical views on Talve is obvious.

Talve's calls for émigré researchers to join forces for a broad-based study of Estonian cultural history did not bear fruit. He inevitably had to focus on Swedish ethnology topics and the goal of defending his doctoral thesis. Still, he found a way to present his ideas on ethnology and its scope of research in 1956, delivering a series of lectures at the Estonian Scientific Institute³⁷ on 'Estonian national culture at the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century' (Eesti rahvakultuur 18. sajandi lõpul ja 19. sajandi alguses, EKLA 404, 11, 3). In his opening lecture, he emphasised the spaciousness of the term *rahvakultuur* (folk culture) and underscored the need to view ethnographic examples in their historical-social-economic and geographic contexts:

But if we wish to view peasant culture not as a static, permanent and unchanging but progressively developing culture as it truly and actually is, other demographic classes and their locations – cities and towns – come even more strongly to the forefront as intermediaries and disseminators of news (innovations). Thus, in treating the culture of a given period, it is pointless and methodologically completely erroneous to separate individual classes and speak of a peasant culture, an urban culture and so on, as separate units. The city and the countryside have always had their specific, distinct cultural appearances but there have always been contacts between them.

(Eesti rahvakultuur 18. sajandi lõpul ja 19. sajandi alguses, EKLA 404, 11, 3)

The idea of doing a more thorough study of (Estonian) cultural history remained with Talve even in the most intense periods of writing his thesis. For example, on 28 April 1958, he again wrote Webermann: 'However, I would like to hope that at some point in the future, we could move from pure ethnology to larger studies of cultural history and the history of ideas – *Lärdomshistoria, Du vet!* When that time will come, I do not know' (letter from I. Talve to O. A. Webermann, 28 April 1958, EKLA 404, 2, 19, 67/70). Paradoxically,

37 The Estonian Scientific Institute was established in 1951 as an affiliate of the Estonian Scientific Society in Sweden to provide centralised teaching of Estonian studies at the university level.

Talve had the opportunity to explore Estonian cultural history in depth only after his retirement in the 1990s.³⁸ The work culminated in the publication of a voluminous book, entitled '*Eesti kultuurilugu: keskaja algusest Eesti iseseisvuseni*' (The cultural history of Estonia: from the early Middle Ages to Estonian independence, 2004b).

Oddly enough, one beneficiary of the 1952 article was Finnish ethnology in general – Talve is remembered as an innovator of the discipline in his role as the long-serving professor of ethnology at the University of Turku (e.g. Ruotsala 2021). His programmatic article on Finnish ethnology, entitled '*Kansatiede ja murroskausi*' (Ethnology and the period of transition, 1958), lays out basic tenets similar to those found in his writings on the problems of Estonian cultural history from six years earlier. Soon after his arrival at the University of Turku, it became clear that Talve's teaching and methods differed from the traditional ethnology practised mainly at the University of Helsinki at the time. His chair became the leading and innovative centre of ethnology in Finland. It is important to note that Talve's programme expanded the existing Finnish discourse on nation and folk culture – in addition to the peasantry, other social strata began to be seen as worthy of study, and research previously focusing only on the past expanded in time to include the present as well (Ruotsala 2021; see also Virtanen 2003).³⁹ This is all that Talve would have wanted to carry out in Estonian ethnology.

Politics in ethnology and Finnish-Estonian disciplinary relations

Talve emphasised his apolitical nature in his memoirs. This facet of his personality has also been highlighted by others in connection with his academic life in Finland (e.g. Ruotsala 2021). For Talve, research must distance itself from politics. However, one can find writings from his Swedish period (both journal articles and reviews of research done in Soviet Estonia) that belong to the competing émigré discourse. In such an extreme situation, where there was the hope of an imminent return home, Talve did not remain a neutral bystander. What rhetoric did he use? Why did he not write similar articles later in Finland? What role did Talve, as a professor in Finland, play for Estonian ethnology in his homeland, both during the Soviet period and after regaining independence in the early 1990s?

Estonian cultural figures and scholars took an active part in émigré culture and research in Sweden. Their activities were closely interwoven with politics

38 Talve had previously published several articles on various topics in Estonian cultural history, e.g. on the Young Estonian movement and its leader, the poet Gustav Suits.

39 Under his leadership, the study of towns, industrial workers and occupational groups became the core of research done in Turku.

(especially in the first decade of exile) and the need to lobby internationally for Estonian independence. Many well-known Estonian humanities scholars (such as E. Laid) made a significant contribution to the work of various Estonian refugee organisations. Talve tended to keep his distance from them, instead publishing journal articles, narratives and short stories, and thus participating in the cultural and political debate about Estonia. According to Undusk, Talve could be called a ‘discerning émigré’ who did not harbour doubts about returning to Estonia, one who deliberately maintained a sense of cultural continuity and called on others to do the same (Undusk 2008, 2261). Talve’s sideline work as a novelist gave him a way of exploring his refugee identity.

In connection with the issue of cultural continuity, the problem of the survival of the Estonian (émigré) research discipline was a significant preoccupation for Talve in his years in Sweden. He wrote several articles that fit into the competing émigré discourse, in which he viewed research as part of national culture and its survival as profoundly important for the preservation of the nation. Talve emphasised the role of ethnology in cultural propaganda and also in shaping national ideology. Ethnology conferred and conveyed this knowledge, and thus, these branches of science have ‘become an active external weapon in the Estonian people’s fight to defend the right to life of their country and people’ (Talve 1946b; see also Talve 1947). Talve also wrote about the role of the social sciences and humanities in serving the community, innovating and diversifying its culture, and about the need to introduce the achievements of Estonian scholars to academic circles in Sweden (Talve 1948b).

The question of the sustainability of a research discipline in exile was particularly acute in the immediate post-war years, when many doubted that colleagues behind the Iron Curtain could conduct academically credible research. At first, the fear appeared justified as political authorities began to actively enforce the Sovietisation of various academic disciplines. All previous work in every field of research had to be re-appraised in terms of the extent to which it aligned with Soviet ideology. In ethnography, as the discipline was called in the Soviet Union, the dominant ideology was based on historical materialism, which was developed from Engels and Morgan’s evolutionary ideas. Scholars were additionally required to study contemporary Soviet society, the establishment of kolkhozes, and so forth. A major problem in ethnology was the dearth of research staff since most had fled to the West or faced persecution and were thus sidelined from academic life for a certain time. Ethnography-related work began to be controlled by Moscow, from the Institute of Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, which dictated the research topics and approaches (Jääts 2019). Nevertheless, as time went on, it proved possible for Estonian researchers to focus on material peasant culture; as a result,

a few remaining researchers and the newly emerging generation of scholars could essentially rely on the older academic tradition. This led to a stagnation of the discipline, though, which continued even after Stalin's death and the Khrushchev Thaw. Indeed, the 'preservative role of Sovietisation' was clearly evident in ethnology (see Saarlo 2018, 152).

Still, Soviet Estonian ethnography in the first decade after the war did not have strong prospects, with researchers desperately looking for ways to continue doing research amidst the harsh realities of Stalinism. Talve's critical reviews are from that period as well. Already in 1948, he wrote a review of ERM's yearbook, published a year before.⁴⁰ This was a yearbook planned already during the German occupation and in which Talve's article on drawshaves was supposed to be published, but for understandable reasons had then been withheld from publication (Talve 1997, 207–208). Talve praises Viires' article on riding as the most substantive and focused of the articles. From his far-away vantage point, he writes with regret,

There is the feeling that presses upon me that due to the lack of free contact with the outside world, such as being able to read the latest scientific literature, these articles were written in an oppressed and stagnant society, which lags behind the general development of ethnology in the Nordic countries by at least 15 years.

(Talve 1948c, 179)⁴¹

The main emphasis of the article commenting on – often in an ironic tone – the 'edifying' articles highlighting the desired direction of Soviet ethnography. Talve had a good sense of the rhetoric and politics of the Soviet discourse, since he had personal experiences from 1940–1941, and he understood the extent to which researchers in the homeland were being forced to reappraise their earlier work. Talve took a pessimistic view of the discipline in Soviet Estonia, since fruitful contacts with researchers abroad were prohibited, and thus, 'horizons constantly are narrowing and the staff's progress in their development is stunted' (Talve 1948c, 182). He continues his critique of Soviet

40 At the time, the museum was still called ERM, but the name was changed to the Museum of Ethnography in 1952. The title page of the yearbook was marked Series I, but the Roman numerals XV were added to indicate continuity. The museum's yearbook was first published in 1925. The next issue was not published until twelve years later, in 1959, a fact that characterises the repression of ethnology by the occupying authorities.

41 An article teaching Soviet Estonian ethnographers the correct Soviet scholarly approach, written by the renowned Soviet ethnographer S. P. Tolstov, was published in the same yearbook. After reading Tolstov's article, Talve dismissed Soviet science as being stuck in the 19th century (exemplified by the desire to achieve universal validity and establish a generalised theory) (Talve 1948c, 181).

ethnography as follows: 'And the politicisation of the science that accompanies it is one of the main axioms of Marxist ideology and means there can be no more talk of freedom of science and research (Talve 1948c, 183).

In reviewing the next Soviet Estonian collection of humanities research in 1949, Talve expressed amazement about the degree of censorship:

There is a carping about errors in all works by everyone else, [but] it's worst in the case of Loorits; he has simply been made non-existent. None of his works are mentioned. That is one of the most curious revelations in this work, but it gives us a snapshot of how those now in Sweden and other places are now viewed.

(Talve 1949b, 145)

However, Talve does make one positive observation – the scholars still in Estonia 'have possibilities to work through the existing subject matter and hopefully also to gather new material', even though they have to work in an uncertain situation when it comes to (research) policy. Talve adds: 'And thus, it's as if all the researchers have been made to walk in a swamp – you never know where your foot will sink into the mud!' (1949b, 146). He then concludes his discussion with the following comment: 'We await with interest and anxiousness the next works from the Soviet-occupied homeland, where like a tired horse, science has to pull the Marxist chariot of state and senses increasingly that it is just a facade' (1949b, 146).

Yet, no more Soviet ethnography reviews were published by Talve: others took over this role (e.g. Ränk and Ivar Paulson⁴²). Nor did Talve deal with the present or future of émigré ethnology. He did, however, compile a bibliography of émigré ethnologists and folklorists (Talve 1957) and wrote individual person-centred articles (Talve 1952c, 1962a, 1962b). The reasons for Talve's passivity can be surmised. In 1962, he was elected the first professor of Finnish and comparative ethnology at the University of Turku, and he worked in that position until 1986. The work of putting his own stamp on the professorship, developing Finnish ethnology and writing up his research certainly took much time and energy. In addition, he fulfilled the duties of vice dean and dean of the Faculty of Humanities for years, which meant much additional office work. In 1970, he was elected a member of the Finnish Academy of Sciences. His work in literature was relegated to the background for years. It seems that some change did occur in his self-conception: an émigré scholar concentrating just on Estonian topics has trouble finding work, but at the same time he had finally attained a senior academic position that he had been aspiring to ever

42 Ivar Paulson (1922–1966), an Estonian ethnologist and religious studies scholar and poet who lived and worked in Germany after the war and later in Sweden.

since his student days, albeit one that was away from his homeland. Still, it was an inevitability that had to be accepted, and he chose to focus more on his research work in Finland. He undoubtedly kept current with the research being done in Soviet Estonia but did not produce further separate writings on it.

The advancement of Talve's career and the increased distance between him and Estonian research themes is characteristic of all Estonian émigré ethnologists who had moved to Sweden. During the ten years following WWII, Erixon's institute had been the epicentre of Estonian ethnology in exile, a fact later characterized by Hagar as follows:

The creation of poorly remunerated work and research possibilities for the Estonian ethnographer cadre in the first years of exile [...] at the institute must be considered, in hindsight, looking at the closed doors of the Swedish museums, a great fortune for Estonian ethnology. The *Institutet för folklivsforskning* was back then an international forum, with a high level of research activity and many series of publications, all of which were open to Estonian researchers. The institute's major research groups [...] forged deep-reaching contacts between Estonian ethnographers and Nordic themes. The same institute also hosted the first encounters in a long time with Finnish colleagues. The Finnish hinterland that had fertilised Estonian ethnological research in the past opened up again. After a few years had elapsed, Estonian refugee ethnographers found themselves in certain key position where, already masters of the Baltic and Eastern European material, now extended to Nordic folk cultures. The diversifying selection of subject matters, expanding perspective and, above all, the transformative research direction, one that observed cultural integration from the societal-functional aspect, began having an impact. The most visible outcome in those first difficult years of exile was the fact that Estonian ethnologists were remarkably prolific. [...] This grouping of Estonian ethnographers in Stockholm started crumbling in the mid-1950s and ceased to exist after a few brief years.

(Hagar 1962)

Since there was a lack of opportunity to work intensively in the field of national ethnology while in exile, inevitably the émigré scholars put more effort into studying Nordic ethnology. Ethnologists accepted new postings away from their temporary work in the archives of the institute, and the ties between them weakened somewhat.

Hagar emphasised the important role played by Finnish ethnologists in rebuilding the academic social network between the Estonian scholars in exile in the post-war years. Similar support has been written about in the context of ethnography in Soviet Estonia as well. Kustaa Vilkuna, Toivo Vuorela (1909–1982) and Toini-Inkeri Kaukonen (1913–1994) visited Estonia in 1956, and

Niilo Valonen (1913–1983) participated in ERM's 50th anniversary celebrations three years later: ties became closer from that point onwards and were a positive factor for Estonian scholars who were otherwise almost completely cut off from the Western world (Vunder 2000). Another factor that stimulated research done by Soviet Estonian ethnographers was their participation in Finno-Ugric studies congresses, held every five years starting in 1960. Unfortunately, due to vetting by the authorities, only a few of them passed the background check and could attend. The third congress, which was a landmark one, took place in 1970 in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia.

Talve's name did not come up in the discussion of Finnish-Estonian relations, oddly enough. He did not travel to Estonia in 1970 (like many other émigrés who declined to travel to Soviet-occupied Estonia for political reasons, even though they were invited). Five years later, the Finno-Ugric Congress was held in Turku, and there Talve met and interacted with his Estonian colleagues. In general, Talve did maintain some ties with scholars behind the Iron Curtain, but they were not very substantial. This was probably because when he fled Estonia, he was still quite young, having only just completed a master's degree, and so had not managed to build extensive contacts in the research sphere in Estonia. Moreover, it was difficult to maintain an open transnational exchange in the face of censorship and state interventions. His contacts with his homeland started becoming more frequent in the 1980s, but that was more due to his status as a writer.

The newly established independence of Estonia in the early 1990s also meant new currents in Estonian ethnography. The discipline was renamed 'ethnology', as is the norm elsewhere in Europe. The new generation of scholars began employing modern theories and methods and studying different kinds of topics. Their role models were the corresponding disciplines in Sweden, Germany and Finland. The strong influence of Finnish ethnology in modernising Estonian ethnology has been acknowledged by Elle Vunder (b. 1939), who received tenure status at UT in 1994 (interview with Elle Vunder, 2017). Arved Luts (1929–2005), who had taught at Tartu before Vunder, contacted Talve in 1991, asking him to lecture at the university (letter from A. Luts to I. Talve, 27 September 1991, EKLA 404, 4, 42). In 1994, he was contacted by Vunder, who asked him for advice on curricula and also hoped to meet Talve as a visiting lecturer (letter from E. Vunder to I. Talve, 19 September 1994, EKLA 404, 8, 4). By that time, Talve had retired and not interested in active lecturing. But he did advise Vunder that first-year students should also be offered, along with core courses, an introductory lecture series on the main concepts in the discipline (e.g. culture, folk culture, tradition, three dimensions of folk culture), research topics, sources and 'methods for obtaining them' (letter from I. Talve to E. Vunder, 6 October 1994, Vunder's private archive). Talve

visited Estonia many times after re-independence. but more in his capacity as a writer than as an ethnologist.

Similarly to Ränk, Talve had retired from active research by the time Estonia regained its independence (like Viires in Estonia). They could not innovate Estonian ethnology in the way they would have done if still professors; they were now bystanders. In 1989, Viires admitted with regret, when introducing Talve as a scholar to Estonian readers, that ‘there is no doubt that had history gone differently, he [Talve] would have been Estonia’s leading ethnographer and would have contributed significantly to the development of our ethnology disciplines’ (Viires 1989, 283). When Viires told Talve in March of 1989 that he had written an article for his 70th birthday, Talve replied:

There is no special need to write about you here, since you are known anyway:⁴³ honorary doctorate, honorary member and whatnot. But you have to of course write about me because I have not been party to such encomiums over there, nor have I expected it, and I would have probably been too modest. But now you can save what can still be saved.

(Letter from I. Talve to A. Viires, 2 March 1989, ERM Ak 36, 2, 16, 9)

The correspondence reveals that it was important to Talve to be known as an ethnologist in his home country. He repeatedly expressed his desire to Viires that reviews of his works appear in Estonia. In 1991, Eesti Televisioon produced a programme on him, entitled ‘Professor Ilmar Talve’, which reinforced his place as a scholar in the eyes of Estonians.⁴⁴ Viires published an article on refugee ethnologists in Sweden (including Talve) in 1998, which foregrounded the importance of these researchers in the discourse of Estonian ethnology (Viires 1998).

Conclusion

The article has shed new light on the history of European ethnology by focusing on the complex nature of an émigré position in the academic world and its possible influence on the development of a (regional) discipline. Taking Ilmar Talve as an example, I examined his adaptation to the field of Swedish ethnology after WWII and the reasons why he eventually became a professor in Finland. I was also interested in the overlap and differences in the discourses of

⁴³ Viires had turned 70 in december 1988.

⁴⁴ The authors of the show were Helle Tiisväli and Peep Puks: <https://arhiiv.err.ee/video/vaata/professor-ilmar-talve> (accessed 7 November 2023). In 1992, the same authors arranged a second show, this time on Talve as a writer: <https://arhiiv.err.ee/video/vaata/kirjanik-ilmar-talve> (accessed 7 November 2023).

Estonian and Swedish ethnology and in Talve's efforts to pursue and develop Estonian ethnology in exile. I underlined the role of transnational exchange and dialogue in advancing the discipline.

Becoming a scholar in exile meant the need to meet new expectations. Working at the Institute of Folklife Research, directed by S. Erixon, was the best possible option after the war for a young ethnologist like Talve, but finding a way to progress academically there was difficult. The Swedish scholarly field was closed, making it very difficult to obtain a solid academic position. The disdainful attitude of Swedes towards Estonian researchers was increased by the culturally strong community of Estonian refugees.

An uncertain position in the Swedish scholarly field did not prevent Talve from receiving positive influences from its ethnology practices. Erixon's theoretical views on studying culture, which expanded the existing ethnological research area in time and space, corresponded with Talve's thoughts from his student years in Estonia. Exposure to new trends in post-war European ethnology encouraged Talve to publish his research programme in 1952, which was intended for Estonian humanities in exile. He significantly broadened the field of ethnological research by focusing on a broad cultural-historical perspective in the study of culture. Ultimately, it benefited Finnish ethnology that Talve was ready to introduce innovative ideas to the discipline ten years later when he became a professor in Turku. His participation in the Swedish scholarly field prepared him for this pioneering work.

Before moving to Finland, Talve was active in the Estonian refugee community in Sweden. He criticised scholarly publications from Soviet Estonia. Like most of his peers, he stressed the importance of Estonian studies done in exile to support the cultural (and political) aspirations of Estonian émigrés and as a vehicle for the continuity of the different disciplines. Talve penned only a few research articles on Estonian topics during his years in exile. His working life required him to concentrate on other subjects. Nevertheless, Talve is included in the historiography of Estonian ethnology, and he considered it important that his work was reflected in his homeland.

During the Cold War period, contacts with Finnish colleagues were important for both Soviet Estonian and émigré Estonian researchers. For the latter group, it meant the continuation of a ruptured academic and friendly relationship in a new context, with Finns providing both material and spiritual support to help them cope with their new homeland. For Soviet Estonian researchers, communication with Finnish colleagues became possible during the second half of the 1950s and was crucial in terms of receiving academic impulses from the West. Talve's role in this communication seems to have remained modest.

AUTHOR

Marleen Metslaid is a researcher at the Estonian National Museum. Her main research interests are the history of ethnology and ethnological knowledge production.

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Archival materials

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EKLA F 404 Ilmar Talve collection

Estonian National Museum archive

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