

English Abstract

Kai Donner. Explorations and Scientific Career elucidates Kai Donner's (1888–1935) fieldwork, explorations and research career. Kai Donner was a researcher of Finno-Ugric languages; he made two expeditions to Siberia during 1911–1913 and 1914. Donner studied in Cambridge in 1909 under the guidance of James Frazer, A. C. Haddon and W. H. R. Rivers – and with Bronislaw Malinowski. After finishing his expeditions, Donner organized the enlistment of Finnish university students to receive military training in Germany. He was exiled and participated in the fight for Finnish independence. After that, he organized military offensives in Russia and participated in domestic politics and policy in cooperation with C. G. E. Mannerheim. He also wrote four ethnographic descriptions on Siberia and worked with researchers of the Scandinavian Arctic areas and Polar explorers.

It is possible to discover two types of fieldwork traditions in the history of ethnographic research in Finland. The first tradition started from M. A. Castrén's explorations and research, and the second one from August Ahlqvist's. Unlike other contemporary philologists, Donner is part of the first tradition. Donner's holistic, lively and participant-observation based way of working is articulated in his writings two years before Malinowski published his thesis about modern fieldwork. Unfortunately, Donner didn't get the chance to continue his work because of the civil war in Finland, and due to the dogmatic position of Professor E. N. Setälä. Donner's main work – the ethnohistorical *Siberia* – encloses his political and anthropological visions about a common and threatened Uralic nation under pressure from Russia. He also wrote a travel book and a short story about Siberia. The most important works coming from his expeditions on the fields of cultural ecology, nutritional anthropology and fieldwork methods. From his short stories from Siberia, one can also find psychological factors that correlate with his early life history.