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**”Den Store Moder”: Om ældre kvinder i dansk familiehistorie. Livshistoriske interviews og narrative analyser**

**Abstract:** Denne artikel er et resumé af en Ph.d.-afhandling om narrativ analyse af gamle kvinders rolle i familielivet i Danmark i en moderne, historisk kontekst. Teksten inkluderer to sammenblandede dele; præsentationen af en analyse af familiehistorie i en dansk kontekst samt forklaringen på den anvendte metodologi, som er en etnopoetisk metodologi indenfor narrative og litterære studier kaldet *kulturelle troper*. Studiet viser at familiekulturen har forandret sig i Danmark i løbet af det 20. århundrede, og har forladt en tradition kaldet *familiecentrummet*, som inkluderede og tog ansvar for familiemedlemmer i alle aldre, til fordel for et moderne ægteskabeligt familiemønster. Dette har ekskluderet ældre medlemmer fra familiebegrebet. Familiecentrummet skal ikke opfattes som et romantisk tilflugtssted for et harmonisk familieliv, men transformationen har også medført en forandring i familieetikken, som har skabt rum for at distancere og kritisere særligt de gamle (bedste)mødres rolle, som nu forventes at opretholde en distance for at undgå at dominere de yngre familiemedlemmer. Derudover synes det biologiske familieskab at indtage en mere central plads end tidligere, hvilket har skabt en ny central rolle til de gamle familiemedlemmer på et symbolsk plan.

**”The great mother”: On older women in Danish family history. Lifestory interviews and narrative analyses.**

**Abstract:** This article represents a resume of a PhD dissertation about narrative analyses of elderly women’s role in family life in Denmark in a modern, historical context. The text includes two intermingling parts; the presentation of an analysis of family history in a Danish context and the explanation of the methodology applied, an ethnopoetic methodology within narrative and literary studies entitled *cultural tropes*. The study shows that family culture has changed in Denmark during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, leaving a tradition coined a *family centre*, including and taking responsibility for family members of all ages, in preference for a modern conjugal family pattern. This has excluded elderly members of the notion of ”family”. The family centre should not be perceived as a romantic haven for a harmonious family life, but the transformation has also effected a change in family ethics, proving space and ability to distancing and criticism of especially the role of elderly (grand)mothers, who are now supposed to keep a distance in order to abstain from dominating the

younger family members. Furthermore, a deeper contention seems to be given to biological familyhood than previously, yielding a new centre stage role to the old members of kin in a more symbolic way.