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Photo illustration from rural areas of Central Finland in 2020.

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Editorial

By Lars-Eric Jönsson

This journal is about to take the step into the second half-century of its existence. But not yet. You are now reading the 50th volume of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. In this issue we recognize both well-argued themes and new ways of applying them. In one way, and perhaps the most important way, breaking new ground is dependent on the curiosity and ingenuity of the scholar and his or her way of doing ethnology and folkloristics.

In the 50th issue we find several familiar empirical topics such as heritage, medical science, nationalism and borders, understood and analysed through concepts such as rituals, emotions, materiality and of course everyday life and practices. This breadth and depth of our disciplines and our investigations is, of course, particularly visible in the reviews section, which is as rich and interesting as always.

This issue begins with *Åmund Resløyken's* article on how the folk culture of Norway was constructed in early folk life research. Starting with Wilhelm Mannhardt's notion of how myths were stabilized in customs, Resløyken traces this idea in later questionnaires. He gives examples from the notion of time and how traditional cyclic time was understood as being closely connected to objects in nature. He shows how the archival material produced by the early ethnologists was also marinated in contemporary cultural theory.

Inger Johanne Lyngø continues with her article about the well-known Norwegian sociologist Eilert Sundt (1817–1875) and his research on food in general and on porridge in particular. Sundt was a forerunner of ethnology as we know it, and in the so-called porridge feud Lyngø traces a history of different ways of understanding science and its methods.

With *Petra Garberding's* article we take a leap forward in time to the Cold War. Garberding writes about the influence of the Stasi on East German music as well as the musical relations between GDR and Sweden. The Cold War influenced society across the board. Garberding shows how surveillance and pressure were part of international musical relations, how the Stasi found it important to be a part of musical contexts.

The following article by *Jakob Löfgren* deals with experiences of boyhood in Finland and Sweden. Through narratives in questionnaires he shows how fun, breaking rules, relating to materiality and expressing freedom are central parts in narratives of experiencing boyhood. In general terms the narratives are related to people, things and other narratives. But they are also to be seen as counternarratives to more often occurring negative boyhood stereotypes.

With *Hilde Danielsen and Synnøve Bendixsen's* article we enter the contemporary and the symbolic values given to birthday celebrations as part of ideas of collectivity and community. Danielsen and Bendixsen show an example of an arena where everyday nationalism is expressed with a certain energy. Children's birthday parties appear as an energetic arena for discussions of norms and values, inclusion as well as exclusion, and ways of living together.

Tove Fjell continues with her investigation on funeral cultures and individualization, with a specific interest in closing rituals and the dead body. Fjell investigates phenomena such as ash scattering, coffin burials and cremation, and how they relate to more general societal changes. Fjell concludes that ash scattering seems to be an ex-

pression of the dead person's identity, a manifestation of who he or she was.

Katarina Saltzman, Carina Sjöholm and Tina Westerlund take us further into the way heritage and market meet in gardens and garden-related goods and services. They show that not only are gardens containers of traces from the past. They are also market places for branding, storytelling and heritage. *Jenny Ingridsson* continues with the heritage theme, focusing on Swedish heritage in the Argentinian city of Oberá over the last 100 years. Ingridsson shows how Swedish identity is lived, imagined and practised in this community and how heritage practices have changed over time, not necessarily becoming less "true", but nonetheless changing. Mixes of experiences, emigration trajectories, classes and languages generate new expressions, traditions, heritages, identities. In Ingridsson's case, Swedishness still matters after more than 100 years.

Marlene Paulin Kristensen takes us to an environment that, from the perspective of the corona pandemic in the spring and summer of 2020, seems deserted: the airport. Kristensen writes about imaginaries of border control, as they were expressed at Copenhagen Airport after 2015. It was, perhaps, the finale of the European Schengen visions from the 1980s and post-nationalism and regionalism. Kristensen shows how this border system was applied after the refugee migration in 2015 and how practice was negotiated between expectations and what seemed practically possible.

In the next article *Marit Ruge Bjærke* investigates the threatening loss of biodiversity and mass extinction of species. She investigates cultural meanings and temporalities in examples from newspaper articles

on red-listed species, with the mountain hare as an example. The hare is presented as female and Norwegian and is well represented in folklore and tales. Bjærke shows, among other things, how threats are framed as either stories of global climate change or more local stories of hunting. *Pilvi Hämeenaho and Elisabeth Wollin's* article continues the processing and understanding of the conditions and consequences of climate change when people try to meet the demands of sustainability. The authors deal with the conflicts that arise when urbanized perspectives meet rural everyday life.

Åsa Alftberg, Kristofer Hansson and Markus Idvall conclude the article section with a study of neuroscientists' descriptions, interpretations and understandings of the cells and neurons they are working on. The authors show biomateriality in constant flux and how the researchers deal with this fact in terms the authenticity of cells. Can they be changed? And what happens if they are transformed or reprogrammed? This article also considers how we could or, according to the authors, even should study materiality, not least a materiality that is mouldable, flowing and transformative.

As for next year, we are now preparing the 50th anniversary of the journal. We will celebrate with an issue including five specially invited authors from the Nordic countries. Their mission is to investigate and characterize the last half-century's developments in our two disciplines, ethnology and folkloristics, through the content of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. Hopefully we will all meet, readers, writers and editors, at the Nordic conference in Reykjavik in August next year 2021 to discuss the findings and the upcoming 50 years.

Crystallized Belief

Objects of Tradition in Folklife Research in the Inter-War Years

By Åmund Norum Resløyken

In 1934, the first number of the journal *Ord og sed* (“Word and Custom”) was issued to informants and the interested public in Norway. The journal consisted in its entirety of questionnaires, collecting the first 22 of what in the end would be over 150 questionnaires collecting information on Norwegian folk customs and the words used to describe them (“ORD OG SED” 2018). The last issue of *Ord og sed* that was issued as a journal was in 1947, collecting all the questionnaires written in the last years of the war. The journal then turned into *Norveg*, which had a much larger focus on articles. Some questionnaires in the “Word and Custom” series were still published here, the last one in 1958. The *Ord og sed* journal is a central publication for understanding Norwegian research on folk culture in the inter-war years.

In this article I will explore what kind of research objects these questionnaires sought to collect and how the concept of “tradition” was understood in relation to them. By doing this, I hope to give a better understanding of how early ethnology understood the relationship between material and immaterial elements of tradition in their collection practices. As I will show, these collection practices formed a reading of artefacts, words and actions as historical and cultural sources that all hinged on a specific way of contextualizing “belief”. Since these ideas were embedded in the source material itself, they still play a part in our present day conceptualizing of material and immaterial cultural heritage and how beliefs are negotiated in and with heritage.

Many of the important institutions of Norwegian folklore and folklife collecting

were established in the early 1900s. The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture (IFSK), established in 1922, was of particular importance for *Ord og sed*. It became a central institution in the development of European theories on cultural development in this period (Kyllingstad 2008). These efforts in comparative cultural research necessitated a standardization, not only of the research theories, but also of the research objects. Effective comparison necessitated that the research objects had to be constructed in a way that made them comparable (Kverndokk 2011: 82–85). How this was done with regard to research objects for “folk culture”, we can see in the “Word and Custom” questionnaires. In them we can see a focus on the “objects” of tradition that was gaining popularity in the inter-war years. It represented a new line of research in Norwegian folkloristics, a focus leading to the establishment of ethnology or “folklife research” as an independent discipline in Norway. Folklife research was a way of describing a folkloristic research that studied the tradition of the people in holistic terms, as tradition as it occurred in the everyday life of the people. If research objects could be gathered with this context intact, they could later be read comparatively, so that broader patterns of history and culture became visible. Folklife research in Norway had a close connection to, but also had marked differences from, the folklife research of Sigurd Erixon and the circle around him in Sweden. The Norwegian version had stronger historical aspirations, seeking to make historical research objects. The most important man behind this development was also the editor of *Ord og sed*, the philologist, and later

ethnologist, Nils Lid (1890–1958). Other prominent exponents of this method were Svale Solheim, Rigmor Frimannslund (Holmsen) and Kjell Bondevik, all of them active in *Ord og sed* in their early academic careers,¹ and Solheim and Frimannslund were both central to the later development of folklore and ethnology, respectively. In this article, however, I will focus on Nils Lid, who held the first professorship in folklife research at the University of Oslo, and who to a large degree formed the premises for this early period.

The idea of “folk belief” was of the utmost importance for Lid’s and his colleagues’ framing of folk culture and the objects that were the sources for it. This had important consequences for the kind of objects they wanted to collect. The research leading to the publishing of *Ord og sed* was based on the premise that magical rituals were the origin of religious development. It was as sources for this premise that the research objects constructed in most of the *Ord og sed* questionnaires were of interest. But if more or less ordinary objects were to be able to say anything about the origin of religion, some work had to be done. First, I want to show the theoretical premises for this work before I show some examples from the questionnaires themselves of how this work was done.

Crystallized Notions and Beliefs

The early folklife researchers based their theories of cultural development on the theories of the German mythologist and librarian Wilhelm Mannhardt (1831–1880). In the 1860s Mannhardt had started collecting folk customs in Europe. Using

one large questionnaire, translated into many European languages, he managed to collect large quantities of agricultural customs. Although questionnaires had been employed as a method of collection prior to Mannhardt’s use, his pan-European focus and the standardization of questions necessary for organizing the answers to this multilingual questionnaire was unique for its time. The survey resulted in Mannhardt’s two-volume work *Wald- und Feldkulte* (Mannhardt 1963a, 1963b). In this work, he argued that the origin of mythology could be found in agricultural customs designed to ensure and extend fertility.² He further argued that customs were more temporally stable than myths, so that in order to look for the origin of religion, it was better to look for survivals in customs than in myths (Lid 1931:15). This was also the rationale for his questionnaire method. Scandinavian folklore researchers who took these ideas as a methodological framework have in the subsequent period been, somewhat pejoratively, named “Mannhardtians” (Hylland 2013:375–380; Nordberg 2013: 308–338; Kjus 2013). It is important though, that the concerns of the Mannhardtians were formed by one of the early twentieth century’s most popular books on the origin of religion, James George Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* (Nordberg 2013:312). This book, first published in 1890 as a two-volume explication of the custom of the golden bough in Nemi, Italy, soon grew into a twelve-volume work, compiling an array of examples from different cultures underscoring the point that religion and folk belief originated in magical fertility rites (Ackerman 1991:46–48). Frazer’s work became a rich

sourcebook, but also of the utmost importance was his theory of magic (Frazer 1925:11–20). It was this theory that served as a premise for Nils Lid and his research into folk belief.

In 1935, Nils Lid defined folk belief in the following way:

Folk belief is the inherited magical and mythical notions, as they are found in proper beliefs, and as they crystallize in folk customs and folk tales. The most constant of these elements are the customs, which is the centre that the popular notions revolves around. In contrast, the ideas themselves change very easily. Hence, the explanations people now have for their beliefs as a rule are secondary. They are mostly new inventions created to explain the tradition that has moved over time from its original soil (Lid 1935:1; my translation).³

As we can see, what Lid focused on was the magical and mythical beliefs that had “crystallized” in folk customs and folktales and that the most constant of these sources was the customs. In this definition we can see clear traces of Mannhardt, especially regarding the crystallized customs, and from Frazer concerning the magical notions. The definition also sums up the basis for the Mannhardtsians’ focus on folk belief and how it related to folk traditions as a whole. And, going to the heart of what the *Ord og sed* questionnaires aimed to produce, there was a focus on “crystallized” notions and beliefs, the idea that in folk tradition, in folk customs and folk tales, one could find “objects” or “elements” pointing back to proper magical and mythical beliefs. Not only could many elements of “folklife” be seen as crystallized beliefs that originally were religious or magical, but it also created a notion of “tradition” as a consistent whole, and that this whole was based on these be-

liefs. The ordinary was thus also, in this particular view, sacralized. It likened the crystallized objects to sacred artefacts. It thus has some merit when the American folklorist Dorothy Noyes comments that tradition was for the romantics a secularization of the Catholic defence of tradition and that, following the romantics’ view, the vehicle itself, “crystallized” tradition, became sacred (Noyes 2009:236). This uneasy oscillation between the secular and the profane that is found in the idea of folk tradition was important for the popularity of folk belief in the inter-war years. Folk belief and folk poetry could tell about primitive spiritual life and the “destiny” of these notions. In this, folklore, religious history, archaeology and ethnography could meet and have a common goal, as Knut Liestøl put it in his inauguration speech for the folklore programme at the Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture (Stang et al. 1925:52–53). It was in this programme that Lid developed his early view of the importance of customs as sources for religious development.

Reading Textual Objects

In my reading of the *Ord og sed* series I have sought to capture this way of thinking about the folkloristic archive material as “crystallizations”, as objects more than primarily texts, which of course they are, materially speaking. In devoting special attention to how the research objects produced by the *Ord og sed* questionnaires were both, or alternately, understood as crystallizations and notions or beliefs, I bring to the fore the relationship between the material and the immaterial in these collection practices. I will thus take Lid

quite literally when he speaks of crystallized notions and beliefs, because, as we shall see, I find it a fruitful metaphor for what is actually taking place in the questionnaires and the practice of collecting folklore that they were part of.

To see these ideas in the questionnaires, I need certain tools for a close reading of them. The first is the concept of “focalization”, taken from the narratologist Mieke Bal. Bal uses the term to speak of the point of view that can be found in narratives, the “vision” chosen in descriptions of events (Bal 2009:145–146). The term is thus useful for describing how the text “looks at” certain facts, which is important for understanding how the objects of tradition are understood in the questionnaires. In describing some of these focalizations I also want to foreground how the described objects in the texts gains a status as *a* notion or *a* belief and thus functions as an immaterial “thing”.

Another way of understanding the relationship between object and description is in the French philosopher of science Bruno Latour’s term “figuration”. Latour defines it as “the flesh and features that make them [the actions] have some form or shape, no matter how vague” (Latour 2005:53). Figuration thus concerns how something in a textual description is given form. Lid’s way of describing folkloric sources as “crystallizations” is of course one such figuration, bearing with it the value and temporal stability of a crystal.

This brings me to the third term I will use in this text, the anthropologist Anna Tsing’s term “worlding”. Tsing states that figurations necessarily bring with them a certain “context”, an ordering of, or relations between, different objects, that form

certain stories the objects can be speaking of. She understands these storylines as “worlds”, a metaphor extending further than “story” or “narrative”, in that she understands this as an ordering of material and immaterial objects into “worlds” accepted as real or objective (Tsing 2010). In the texts presented, “tradition” may be understood as one such “world”. It organizes diverse objects as “objects of tradition” and thus infuses them with a given story, for example as objects pointing to primitive conceptions.

The last term I want to emphasize from the outset is the idea of “scale” as used in science and technology studies (cf. Latour 1993:32; Tsing 2015:37–42) to describe how research objects become able to expand or contract the topic they are made to speak of, without changing framework (Tsing 2015:37–42; Latour 1993:32). Folk belief functioned as such a scale in the inter-war years, which becomes clear when Liestøl speaks of folk customs as pointing to primitive spiritual life. This contributed greatly to how the “world” of tradition was understood, and which objects could be part of it.

The Physical Object as Tradition

First, I want to show how physical objects were understood as tradition in the *Ord og sed* questionnaires. In the series, there was a large number of questionnaires that sought to collect “tradition about” different objects. Many of these were “natural objects”: plants, birds, insects, and other natural features, but also parts of buildings, tools and equipment and other man-made artefacts (Resløyken 2018:62–105).

As an example, I will present what is also the first questionnaire in the series, *Ord og sed* No. 1: *Banabeinet* or “the killing bone”. The “killing bone” is the uppermost bone in the neck of animals and humans, where the head is attached to the spine. This bone has the scientific name “atlas”, a fact that is stated in the questionnaire and that is of some significance in the way this bone is figured in the text. I will come back to that later.

The first figuration (Latour 2005:53) that meets the reader of the questionnaire is the pictorial representation of the bone (see below).

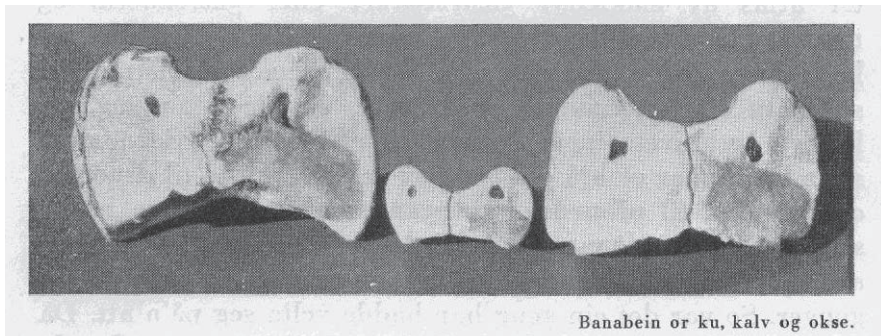
This picture gives three examples of the same bone, as the text says, from a cow, a calf and an ox. The picture gives the reader a physical representation of the object. What immediately connects it to “tradition” is the strange name that is also the name of the questionnaire, *Banabeinet*.

The text consists of a two-page introduction and nine questions. The introduction opens by saying the following:

The furthestmost bone in the neck (atlas) in livestock has had a lot to say in the folk tradition. It has had different names in different parts of the

country, names that must be explained in terms of the conceptions and customs connected to it. In many places it was called *the killing bone* [*banabeinet*], a name that must originate from the fact that, during slaughter, they used to strike the animal unconscious with a knife stab in front of this bone, and in this way “critically wounded” [*bana*] it (Lid 1934:7; my translation).

In this introductory text, we can see how Lid places the object in the tradition while still carefully maintaining its objectiveness and keeping it close to the theories he had from Mannhardt and Frazer. In the first sentence, he opens by stating that the bone “had a lot to say in the folk tradition”. By stating this he also begins to let the bone speak, and inside of something thought of as *the* tradition. We may also note that in this sentence we have not yet heard the name of the bone. It is the bone itself that is focalized (Bal 2009:145–161). It is also here the scientific name (*atlas*) is used. The scientific name thus comes to the fore as the “real” or objective name of the object. We thus have an object, the bone, that we can see in the picture, that had a lot to say, and thus “spoke” in a place called “the folk tradition”.



Three versions of “Banabeinet”. Facsimile from *Ord og sed* 1 (Lid 1937:7).

In the next sentence, the text focuses on the name. It tells us that the bone has had different names in different parts of the country, but that all these names must be explained from the customs and conceptions connected to the bone. This connection between the thing or action and the word formed a basis for the method in *Ord og sed*, as the name implies. This shows an affinity to the “Wörter und Sachen” research, a method that sought to document the spread of cultural elements by following the development of their names (Bakken 1977; Levander 1936). The questionnaire further gives us an authoritative name for the object, *banabeinet*, which can be found “in many places”.

We can thus speak of a three-part object that Lid presents in this text. First, the object itself, the bone in the picture and the bone scientifically called atlas. It is this object that speaks in folk tradition. Secondly, it has a name that connects it to customs and conceptions and that differs in different parts of the country, but it can be referred to by one name, *banabeinet*. Thirdly, this name can be used because the connection between customs and the bone gives it meaning in and as tradition. Because it is these actions that makes the object able to speak “in the tradition”, the authoritative name can also be maintained. The object itself does not differ noticeably just because it has different names.

By establishing an object “in the folk tradition”, a translation between the modern and the traditional becomes possible. The names from the two domains, what “we” call “atlas” and what “they” call “banabeinet”, are highlighted as two equal but distinct conceptions of the same thing

and thus translation of the conceptions can be done by pointing to the object. The Latin word that for “us” is connected to anatomy, the ordering of the different parts of the body, is for “them” connected to customs and conceptions, beliefs and actions, that define both the name and the thing “in tradition”. The translation presented in these lines is thus between atlas and *banabeinet*, a translation not first and foremost between names, but between “our” ordering of nature and “their” ordering of cultural artefacts.

Further in the introduction, the text again asks the reader to focus on the picture:

As one can see from the picture, the bone has the shape of some sort of face. And there has been a conception that this bone, which is so important in that it controls the movement of the head, has been a “life-bone”, so that they thought that after death it could be the foundation of a ghost of the animal (Lid 1934:7; my translation).

Again, it is the conceptions that are in focus, but now it is a likeness in the physical bone that makes it a “life-bone”, a material representation and bodily location, for the life force. This comes on the one hand from its physiological function and on the other hand from its likeness to the face. The text has suddenly changed its focus. It is now the physical bone’s appearance in the picture that is connected to conceptions and customs. And again, a translation is present, both “us” and “them” can agree that the bone looks like a face and that it is important for the movement of the head. We can both agree that it is a life principle. Where we depart from each other is when this principle becomes a foundation for a ghost. The difference between the tradition and the modern may

thus be seen in the way tradition links likeness and belief. In tradition likeness and belief are intimately connected and lead to action. It is because conceptions and beliefs are inevitably expressed in action that this object of nature is able to “speak” of tradition.

This crystallization, or objectivization, of the objects of tradition also enabled Lid to make a profound move with traditions and how they connected to people and “the people”. Later in the introduction, Lid says:

All these names are about ritual actions with the bone. It was common to cut this bone out and throw it to dogs or ravens. The explanation that one could not eat the meat is secondary (Lid 1934: 7; my translation)

In this quotation, and as we also saw in his definition of folk belief, Lid’s focus on customs and conceptions made it possible for him to say that people’s own explanations for their customs often were secondary. The original or actual explanations for customs and conceptions were not what the people said they were. This idea had profound implications on the objects of tradition, for example the bone in question here. While the people might have explanations for their actions and things, this is often not the primary and thus not the actual explanation for tradition. The primary explanation can be found by reading the signs from the object in the right way. As a consequence, what folk tradition consists of in this figuration is not the traditions of the people or the ideas of the people. What tradition consists of is what the objects “themselves”, or as signs, speak of. As I have shown, in the introductory text to the questionnaire Lid established ways whereby the object could be

read right from the beginning as signs by the informants. In Lid’s view of tradition, it is thus not the “culture” of the folk themselves that is the primary focus; instead, it is what makes the folk act as they do. Actions point to this, and as signs they speak of conceptions and beliefs. Lid’s research tradition was thus one that established an alternative voice for the objects of tradition. In this way these objects could become interlocutors in a dialogue between the modern and the traditional.

Cycles of Time and Belief as Chronology

The difference between the traditional and the modern was primarily a temporal division. When Lid framed customs to be the most constant and thus the best crystallizations, he was operating with the complicated temporality given to the objects of tradition. Actions, which is what customs consist of, are by necessity ephemeral. But, for the dialogue between the modern and the traditional to have any value, the traditions had to be survivals from a time prior to the here and now. So how could the focus be kept on the objects and their speech at the same time as the objects were established as survivals from a different time? In the following I want to show how the atemporal signs of the objects of tradition could be read as temporal events.

It is interesting to note that most of the questionnaires that explicitly try to investigate the people’s conception of time in the *Ord og sed* questionnaire series do so in a strict, Mannhardtian fashion. As an example, we can use another of Lid’s questionnaires, or rather three questionnaires that all deal with the chronology of

the people and that most likely were written together. The first one, number 11, is called “The sun and the stars in chronology” (Soli og stjernone i tidsrekningi) (Lid 1934:35–38). This rather long questionnaire is split into two parts, one dealing with reading of time in the daytime and with the help of the sun, and the other at night time and with the help of the stars. But it is also emphasized that the people used the stars to read the time in the wintertime and the sun in the summertime. This view is further elaborated in number 12 “Day and night” (Døgret) (Lid 1934:39–40) and 13 “The year” (Året) (ibid.:41–44). What is most striking in all these questionnaires is that Lid focuses on a duality, between day and night, summer and winter and the sun and the stars.

The short introduction to questionnaire 11 reads: “In rural districts there is still a lot of tradition about the old counting of time. Of great interest are the rules people had for establishing time in the daytime or during the year, and the stars at night” (Lid 1934:35; my translation). Of interest here is the old way of counting time, relating to the movements of the sun and the stars. It is also stated that some of this tradition still exists in the rural districts. This is self-evident in that a lot of the signs discussed in the questionnaire are about how the sun moves in relation to large features such as mountains and farms. However, this is not the main interest in these signs. The main interest is that they are readings of natural signs.

Of the questionnaire’s two parts, the first is called “Markings from the sun” (Solmerke), the second is called “Markings from the stars” (Stjernemerke). Al-

ready in the title it is evident that it is these signs, and how to read them, that are of interest.

In the first part of this questionnaire, “Markings from the sun”, the first five questions are about the markings themselves. The first two of these ask for markings in relation to the farm, while the next three are about how markings are read in the outfields and the wilderness. In the next four questions the focus changes, and it is now on customs for celebrating the return of the sun. The first of these questions, number 8, asks about celebrations. The next question asks if it was common to give “butter to the sun” on this day. This custom draws attention to an offering to the sun. At the same time, it is asked whether it was a good sign that the sun “ate” this butter, thus focusing on the omens read from the same sign. The last of these questions asks if there was a day one could see the sun dance. The questionnaire gradually zooms in on the personifications of the sun: first by focusing on the signs, then on the celebrations in connection with them, then on the active participation of the signifier, the sun, and lastly by the personification of the dancing and eating sun. Question 13 asks about rules of labour in relation to the sun, thus connecting the personified and celebrated sun with the yearly work cycle on the farms. Question 14 asks about how special days are found by using the movement of the sun. With a focus on the calendar of the people, we can see how labour activities and celebrations are put in relation to each other by the use of the personified natural sign, and the close connection between observing, offering and taking omens.

In the second part of the questionnaire,

“Markings from the stars”, it is mostly three signs that are in focus, the Pleiades (*sjustjernen* or the “seven stars”), the Big Dipper (*karlsvogna*) and Orion (*fiskane* or *fiskesveinane*, “the fishes” or “the fishermen”). All these questions relate to two quotations from Jacob Nicolai Wilse’s *Spydebergs beskrivelse* (*Description of Spydeberg county*) from 1779. In contrast to the first part, it asks about how the star signs are read in order to tell the time at night and in winter (questions 15 and 16), but also about the conceptions related to the names of the signs (questions 17 and 18) and also how they functioned as omens (questions 15–18).

Questionnaire 11 establishes connections that are further elaborated in questionnaire 12, “Day and night” (*Døgret*) and questionnaire 13 “The Year” (*Året*). “Day and night” ask mostly about how the day was ordered into periods of work. It also asks about signs that could tell these periods other than signs from the stars or the sun. Questionnaire 13, with its 29 questions, is far more extensive than both number 11 and 12.

The first four questions in number 13 ask about the calendar instrument the primstaff, which marks the days of the year and has signs for all the masses during the year. These masses are asked about in question 5–9, which also asks for rhymes and mnemonic rules connected to them. Question 10 is about the natural markings of the shift between summer and winter, while 11–14 ask about the agrarian working year. Questions 15–25, on the other hand, all ask about conceptions and beliefs connected to the first two lunar months after Christmas, called *torre* and *gjø* respectively. These two, conceived

of as the “male” and “female” month, formed an important basis in Lid’s theory of the fertility magic that seemed to serve as a basis for folk belief. Lid thought these two names could be connected to the dualistic principle of the year, with one part connected to growth, personified as *gjø*, connected to women, summer, the goddess Freya, the flax plant and linen. The other part, connected to the principle of harvest, was connected to men, *torre*, the god Ull and wool (Lid 1928, 1933a). In Lid’s view, customs from these larger primitive conceptions had been gathered together in the period around Christmas, and it was thus traces of these that could be found in Christmas customs as well as the conceptions related to the first two months of the year. It was this, for example, that made February the “women’s month” and was the basis for women being able to propose marriage on 29 February (cf. questionnaire 122 (Lid 1943:29–32)). The women’s month coincides here with the first signs of spring and new life, making for the inauguration of the growth half of the year. The corresponding half, the dying of the god, was from harvest time, and the reason for all the harvest customs relating to the harvest of the grain. It was these customs that had been the focus of Mannhardt’s research and the personifications he named “die Korndämonen”.

The last four questions of the questionnaire ask about how dates were set in accordance with extraordinary events like floods and war. A last question asks about riddles and rhymes concerning time in general.

We can see how people’s timekeeping is always conceived of as a reading of nat-

ural signs. It is this that makes it interesting as “tradition”. Mechanical timekeeping devices, even though they are old and part of peasant culture in the same time period, are not part of the chronological practices of the people. The practice that is called “timekeeping” here is thus not so much ordered as temporal development as it is about what signs are read in order to tell time. “The tradition” thus, as opposed to the modern, orders its actions in direct relation to the natural cycles themselves, without intermediary devices. The signs that mark the events in traditional life are thus by definition cyclical and cannot be read in a linear, progressive fashion.

But still, there is a way that “we”, the moderns, can see progress in the people’s reading of time. The difference that shows temporal progress, or stages of cultural development, lies in how this reading is done in a *rational* fashion. For to what degree the people *believe* in the natural signs is a way of reading cultural-historical time, a way to read the timespan of the tradition. The idea that primitives “personified” nature and that it was this that was the basis for folk belief beings and also gods, played an important role for making annual customs speak of folk belief and thus also making these actions part of a sacred domain. We saw, for example, how Lid associated the goddess Freya and the god Ull with both periods of time (*torre* and *gjø*), materials such as flax and wool, and actions such as harvest and sowing. We also saw, in questionnaire 11, how he forged connections between the reading of signs, offering to the signifiers and omens taken from them. In the people’s reading of time it was thus two components that made the tradition “speak”. On the one

hand, it was the fact that the sign was natural or unmediated that defined the action as traditional. On the other hand, in what way the signifier was “believed in” was a way of reading the deep historical structure of culture. In other words, in this a timeline is visible, beginning with the worship of repeatable phenomena like the sun, the stars or the cycle of growth and harvest during the year, and ending in the mechanical clock that in no way needs to be believed in.

It is thus the events that the objects of tradition were put in that made the objects into survivals. On the one hand by locking them into a cycle of time that made them timeless and thus able to survive over long periods of time, and to be crystallized. On the other hand, they were given a temporality by utilizing the belief in the markings of the cycles. With this in mind, the objects of tradition became both part of a different time structure and a different rationality, but both, through the signifiers established, were able to take part in the conversation between tradition and modernity. In other words, a “worlding” for the objects was established (Tsing 2010). The relationship between the objects was understood with reference to this other time and rationality. The worlding of the objects of tradition made them able to function differently as signs than would other historical sources. This way of understanding time in “tradition” also connected all the objects of tradition together and thus emphasized what they were meant to explore as research objects. With this particular story of tradition became part of the objects themselves, making them scalable as research objects with this story intact, on account of their perceived

direct connection to nature and the human mind.

A Descriptive Method as Staging of Tradition

The examples from the *Ord og sed* questionnaires I have given here show that they made it possible for the objects to become actors in a story of tradition. We saw, for example, how the bone was described as speaking and the signifiers of markings in time also were personified. In these stories the actors are in focus as accounts of reality and it was thus possible for researchers such as Lid to focus on them as if tradition itself spoke. This made him able to portray his research as using a “descriptive” method (Lid 1928:7, 1933a:7). This had profound consequences for how tradition was seen in relation to other historical and social research. The particular techniques that I have shown here made, in sum, a set of research objects, the objects of tradition, that by being “crystallized” made them usable in other fields of research. With these objects, a particular story of folk culture was projected into other fields of research. Modern conceptions, instruments and institutions could be compared to this stable “tradition”, complete with its own reason for acting in the way it did and the place it acted in. This is for example what was the premise when the philologist Knut Nauthella and the economist Klaus Sunnanå studied fisheries in a questionnaire that was added to the first issue of *Ord og sed* called “On fisheries past and present” (Um fisket fyr og no) (Nauthella & Sunnanå 1933) and questionnaire 35 “The fisheries in Northern Norway and Trøndelag” (Fiskeriet i Nord-Noreg og Trøndelag) (Lid & Sol-

heim 1935:55–78). Here past and present were linked to traditional and modern, making the rather precise switch between the two in the motorization of fishing boats. The same can be seen in the jurist Helge Refsum’s questionnaire on poverty, poor people and aid to the poor (Lid 1943:41–48), which places the gap between the two in the making of publicly financed poor relief. It is in this place on the other side of the gap, in the unspecified and stable “before”, that the objects of tradition were allowed to act. We can thus think of the idea of singular “tradition” as a *mise-en-scène*, a staging for these objects. Mieke Bal suggests the following on *mise-en-scène* as a concept:

Let’s suppose, for a moment, that *mise-en-scène* is this: the materialization of a text – word and score – in a form accessible for public, collective reception; a mediation between a play and the multiple public, each individual in it; an artistic organization of the space in which a play is set; an arranging of a limited and delimited section of real time and space. As a result of all this arranging, a differently delimited section of fictional time and space can accommodate the fictional activities of the actors, performing their roles to build a plot (Bal 2002:97).

The idea of a singular “tradition” as a stable past and a reservoir of objects of tradition made these “actors” able to perform in a way that built a plot and made it accessible for a public, collective reception. It was this performance that Lid and others “described” in their works, and it was this plot that was activated in the questionnaires. In thinking of the questionnaires as a *mise-en-scène* of folk tradition it becomes easier to understand how irrational elements were given a voice and how non-human actors like the sun or a bone were made able to speak. But this

mise-en-scène also gave somewhere to place, watch and describe all the irrational elements that were otherwise problematic in a plot-structure of progress. “Folk belief”, which was the irrational element that was “crystallized” in the objects of tradition, became an inherent feature of the objects themselves. With this, folk belief became a particular way of rationalizing irrational traits of culture. On the one hand it was done by making irrational traits part of folk belief and on the other by the use of analogy, by reading irrational behaviour and explanations as if they were crystallizations of belief. The survivals that are found in this research are thus not only objects that have the function of an historical source. They are also a link, something with an effect both in the past and in the present. We can thus problematize to what extent Lid and his colleagues also understood the objects of tradition, which made up the raw material of “the tradition”, as something that was constructed in their present and with present-day effects. It is to this point I want to turn in the last part of this article.

Folklife Research – an Organic Whole

In the article “On folklife research” (“Um folkelivgransking”) from 1933, Lid presents his view of what this new holistic approach to the study of folk culture should look like, and what kind of study it should consist of.

Lid starts his article by pointing to the fact that folklife research, or ethnology, is the study of the “living popular tradition, taken in its widest sense” (Lid 1933b: 151). He goes on to say that divisions have often been made in these studies, for example between folk belief and the folk

customs that have their origin in these beliefs, and how they were used in the old heathen religion. In principle, however, folklife research should have as its object of study “the old way of life, the people’s distinctive character in all its different manifestations and conceptions, as an organic whole” (ibid.: 151–152). Lid saw the reasons for studying and saving these cultural traits as extending further than just its scientific interest. He also emphasizes that this old culture has valuable contributions to modern culture. Since “a lot of the old culture-elements are condemned to death” it is important to save as much as possible before it is too late, especially of the oral tradition (ibid.). Lid goes on to show how collecting elements should be done. He emphasizes the process in two distinct stages and corresponding to them is the role of the carriers of tradition and science respectively.

The first part of research had to be done in as close collaboration as possible with the carriers of tradition. In this process, Lid maintains, science can become “a part of the close living life”, that is, take part in the organic whole of culture (ibid.). Lid shows here that he is aware of the influence of “science” on “tradition” but that both can be a part of an organic, and I should add modern, whole, where the vital quality of tradition is maintained. The *Ord og sed* questionnaires with their explanatory introductions and leading questions become more understandable in this view. The “elements” they were trying to isolate were not only survivals of the old, but also modern products of a culture consisting of a popular and scientific view-point. Lid’s emphasis on “secondary explanations” also becomes comprehensible in this

view. We could think of science as adding a history to the practices of the people in Lid's view.

As we have seen in the questionnaires, Lid's research also handed out distinct roles to play for the different parts of this organic whole. In relation to the questionnaires I have shown above, we can see how the objects of tradition are made into signs that are able to speak in this dichotomous relation that, on the one hand, consists of the people, the past and the superstitious, and on the other hand science, the modern and the rational. The way the objects speak is by translating between these two positions. It is in this way the *mise-en-scène* of tradition becomes such an important premise, because without this place to speak from, where "the people" as a singular actor can speak to the multiple audience that is the people, the practices of the people would have no way of functioning as signs, and science would have no object to add history to.

This way of making diverse practices, things and words into objects of tradition that functioned as concise signs was the foundation of the next stage of Lid's folk-life research.

The second part was the comparison and synthesis of the elements of tradition. It was in this part that the developmental work of science could take place. In his article Lid conceptualized this part as "the distinct versions of the same thing must be compared to one another, so that one can draw conclusions inductively. If one has enough variants of the same thing, all sources of error will disappear by themselves" (Lid 1933b:153, my translation). The comparison of the different variants of the same thing made it possible to draw

sure conclusions, to find the primal explanations why the objects of tradition existed and what their real meaning was.

It was from this position, where the elements existing in the present time could be compared with other historical sources, such as archaeological and text material, that historical research could be done. The national tradition elements could now be compared also to the collections of tradition elements of other countries, and thus make statements about the international diffusion and development of culture. In this it was possible to reach back to a primitive stage of culture, where the origins of culture could be found. It was this that was the main goal of Lid's ethnology, but only after the collection, taking part in the first part of the method, was done.

The Co-construction of Folk Belief

As we can see from this exposition of the methods of early ethnology in Norway, it is striking how the archival material is infused in the cultural theories of its time of collection. We must thus ask in what way this material should now be seen and how it can be used in order to give a meaningful picture of "folk traditions", a figure that, even though heavily criticized today because of the way it essentializes "the people", still plays an important part in discourse on the people and peoples. Folk tradition, much in the way that Lid understood it, tacitly shapes the popular view of different forms of cultural heritage, both institutionalized, that is, as part of museums and archives, and in general society. Too often the understanding of these elements is stuck in between critique and essentialism, between what is academic construction and what is "genuine" old

culture. In one sense, these discussions of course are productive, making new stories of the material in question. But still we often lose sight of the complex relationship that existed between construction and reconstruction, which its collectors were also acutely aware of. “Folk belief” must thus be seen as a co-construction made in negotiation between people talking from the point of view of representing academic theories and the point of view of representing the people. The premise of this co-construction was that cultural beliefs could crystallize and become artefacts, words and actions, and that this happened in “the tradition”, a place divided from modern times and modern life. A parallel to these premises can be found in the notion of cultural heritage, a notion that to some extent has substituted “tradition” for “heritage” but by way of its presentist focus keeps the crystallized objects intact. By focusing on how the past is constructed in the present, the heritage discourse can get away from the overreaching cultural theories that, for example, tradition in the Mannhardtian sense necessitated. But as we also can see in this case study, the presentism of cultural heritage hides the strength with which these earlier practices of collection, through the objects they have produced, co-produces cultural identities as crystallized beliefs. A co-production that is not just between “the traditional” and the “modern”, but a negotiation of different periods theories of culture and the objects these theories produce as culture. I think the utilization of co-constructed objects still has the potential to produce interesting conversations with the past, but this calls for an understanding of the objects of tradition in which they all

have to be seen as having partly differing histories. There is no longer a singular “mise-en-scène” they can point back to, but these objects, constructed as signs as they are, can point back to interesting stories of the co-construction of “culture”. Among these co-constructions are the crystallized beliefs and their ability to act as cultural artefacts.

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Notes

- 1 Svale Solheim was first archivist of the Norwegian Folklore Archives (NFS) from 1952 to 1956 and professor of folklore at the University of Oslo from 1956. Rigmor Frimannslund was a conservator at Norwegian Ethnological Research (NEG) from its beginning in 1946 and from 1953 worked at IFSK on a broad ethnological survey of farming communities, which she also led from 1962 until its end in 1976. Kjell Bondevik had a master’s degree in folkloristics but the major part of his career was as a politician for the Christian Democratic Party, including six years as the Minister of Education and Church Affairs.
- 2 Mannhardt developed this theory in two earlier preliminary studies *Die Korndämonen und Roggenwolf und Roggenhund* (Mannhardt 1868, 1866).
- 3 A note on translations: All texts cited in this article were originally in New Norwegian (*nynorsk*) and have been translated by the author. I have tried to keep close to the wording in the original text, in order to show the sentences and metaphors used in the originals. For some nouns that are not possible to translate without losing their meaning in the text, I have given the original word in square brackets and used an approximate translation of its meaning in the text. In titles of questionnaires and articles I have given the original title in brackets.

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Eilert Sundt on Food and Nutrition

Stories from Mid-Nineteenth-Century Rural Norway

By Inger Johanne Lyngø

In the spring of 1855 the Norwegian theologian Eilert Sundt (1817–1875), known as the founding father of Norwegian sociology, visited a poor peasant family in a rural district north of Christiania (now Oslo). Sundt was then a member of the Poor Law Commission (*Fattigkommissjonen av 1853*) with the mission to prepare a new law on poor relief. Beforehand he knew the family was very poor, even poorer than usual in the area, living with their six children “on the boundary between individual independence and dependence on charity” (Sundt 1993 [1857]:154). Sundt had, however, great sympathy for the family. The children although barefoot and half-naked, had “a contentment that shone out of their faces”, the man was “a reliable hard worker” and the woman had an “unusually fine, regular and beautiful face” (ibid.:161). A year before, she had become mentally disturbed. The reason for this she later explained was that she knew she was pregnant – her eighth pregnancy – and she started to think of all the difficulties that lay ahead of her. Only then, is Sundt’s comment, were the couple in need of help from poor relief.

In this humble cottage Sundt tells his readers that he had to “cheer up” himself. On doing so, he asked the woman if she had a reasonable dinner to serve him. In his book *On Morality (Om sedelighets-tilstanden i Norge)* published in 1857, he renders her reaction as follows.

I will not easily forget the woman’s face when she looked at me questioningly, looked at me to see if I was serious. But then she got into action: [Sundt explains how she prepared the meal with ingredients she had available]. Eventually the food was served and the woman seated herself at the spinning wheel, but all the time she looked too see if I was really eating the food, and when I had almost

eaten and drunk everything there was, we were as friendly as if we had known each other for a year (ibid.).¹

The situation illustrates Sundt’s ways of doing fieldwork. The way he addressed and talked to people he met on his research journeys across the country while he was receiving ministry funding (from the Church Department and the Department of the Interior) from 1850 to 1869, with a mission to study the living conditions and customs of common people. Very often as exemplified in the excerpt, the common people happened to be women and often with food as the starting point for their conversation.

The excerpt also shows how Sundt describes situations and conversations, inviting his readers to participate in his experiences and reflections. And since food very often was the starting point for his conversations, he managed to communicate how food matters and acts as “a tremendous” communicated power, to paraphrase Georg Simmel and his well-known phrase (1984 [1910]: 346).² In this situation, the meal was not the shared meal that Simmel uses to express community; rather it functioned as trust, confidence and recognition.

Although Sundt never published books on food, in various ways food is a topic in most of his books. Even his most famous book, his book on marriage (*Om Giftemålet*) internationally known for its theoretical insight, still named *Sundt’s Law*, starts with a food scene (Sundt 1963 [1855]:13).³ His writings on food, however, have not received much attention.

The aim of this article is to highlight Sundt as food and meal researcher based on careful studies and close readings of passages from two of his most prominent

works, with food stories as the fulcrum. The narrative aspect is not the point of departure, rather how his stories are linked to ways of knowing. The ambition is to study knowledge production in its past present as seen within a culture-historical framework. The article asks what kind of food stories Sundt told and what these stories tell us about time and place he was living in. The article also seeks to reflect on whether and how these stories still have relevance.

Formation of Knowledge and the New Knowledge of Nutrition

In the essay “The History of Science and the History of Knowledge”, Lorraine Daston approaches her topic with a double vision and asks: “If we no longer are historians of modern Western science [...], then what are we historians of?” Her answer is, “we are historians of knowledge” (2017:142).

The turn to knowledge, in her view, has an advantage in placing all knowledge at equal levels and erasing the sharp distinction between what counts as knowledge and what does not in a given time and a given place. Her double vision is an ability to reflect on how the history of science “haltingly and hesitatingly” has become a history of knowledge, in her view, an emerging field, but not yet a discipline. This is also an advantage and makes the History of Knowledge more flexible and explorative (ibid.:132).

In her essay Daston gives an overview of the historiography of her discipline. She describes how the History of Science has been extended, broadened and diversified over the past decades. The sites of inquiry have also been expanded as botani-

cal gardens, forges, libraries, fields, ships and household hearths have become part of the research subject (ibid.:142). Another tendency is a turn to practices, the circulation of knowledge and the ability to include other actors than scientists in the studies (ibid.:143).

In this process historians of science have started to rethink its geography and chronology. Most importantly, however, historians of science are striving to overcome not only *a* but “*the* classical Eurocentric narrative” with a sharp division between us and them (ibid.:141). In addition, and what is important for this article, the turn to the study of knowledge seeks “to erasing the vexing ([...] and often ideological) boundary between pre-modern and modern” (ibid.:141). In other words, the history of knowledge is social and cultural history that is not limited to science, but takes knowledge as phenomenon that touches on every aspect of life. It engages with practices and knowledge production as “forms of knowledge”, such as the skills of craftsmen, hunters, farmers, shepherds, sailors and other practical experts, and also women and their cooking skills (ibid.:143).

Cooking is about practices and about knowing. From the mid-nineteenth century the emerging knowledge of nutrition formed a new science based on works by the German physiologist Baron Justus von Liebig (1803–1875). It has been pointed out that his publications from the 1840s “shaped the science of nutrition in both the scientific and popular culture of Western nations” (Finlay 1995:49). New experts – later known as nutritionists – developed a range of techniques that appeared to allow objective, standardized

and universal ways of defining and measuring the amount of food required for work and productivity (Vernon 2007:83). At the same time, hunger changed status as a social problem that could be measured and defined. This gave rise to organizations that sought to conquer hunger and poverty (ibid.:17). Sundt's practices as researcher and writer can be seen in this context.

An Ethnological Treasure Trove

In the historiography of Norwegian ethnology, Sundt is *the* classic; a cornerstone and a forerunner of our discipline. To follow the historian Anne Lise Seip: "While demographers, historians and sociologists have been concerned with *one* aspect of his immense authorship, Norwegian ethnologists have been inspired by *countless* aspects of his contributions" (Seip 1983: 15). This can be considered as a compliment on behalf of our discipline from one of the few scholars who has studied Sundt systematically within a social historical framework.⁴

Between 1850 and 1869, while Sundt was supported by grants from the Norwegian government, he published an impressive number of books and records. These are books on minority groups (*Fan-tefolket*) published in 1850, with new reports in 1858, 1863 and 1865, one book on marriage and one on mortality in 1855 and three books – on the urban poor, on a mining community and on temperance conditions. In 1859 and from 1861 to 1864 he published reports on living conditions among fishermen at sea, on building practices in rural areas in 1862, on the cottage industry in 1867, not to forget his book on children born out of wedlock in *On Mor-*

ality, with new reports in 1864 and 1866, and finally his book *On Cleanliness (Om Renligheds-stellet i Norge)* in 1869. These are all parts of a never-ending ethnological treasure trove.⁵ Moreover, he published a series of articles in newspapers and in the periodical *The Friend of the People (Folkevennen)*, issued from 1852 to 1900, where Sundt was the editor-in-chief from 1854 to 1864.

His publications have been such a huge inspiration not only through the knowledge he produced, but also through his ways of producing knowledge:

He was a master in making people speak, whether it was a tramp in the gaol who did not want to talk, a peasant of few words, a cross shuttle boy, a shy peasant lassie; in his presence and with his lovely small talk, which nurtured trust, none of them could resist opening up and tell their stories as if he was a confidant. Which he was, or proved to be (Lunde 1917:44, my translation).

He created his source material through observations, conversations, interviews, questionnaires with the use of middlemen such as elementary school teachers and clergymen, not to forget his participatory observations, which he supplemented with additional information. He collected stories, wrote letters and notes. This resulted in a large amount of source material stored in the National Library of Norway.⁶

It is as a statistician, however, that Sundt has attracted most attention among sociologists and historians, even outside Norway. He was innovative in his statistical thinking and ahead of his time, he managed "to combine a qualitative study of traditions and norms with a study of regularities based on large amount of empirical information at a time when these two approaches still seemed separate else-

where in Europe” (Lie 2001:21). Although Sundt as a statistician is unthinkable without Sundt as a folklife researcher, Norwegian ethnologists, with few exceptions, have been less interested in Sundt as a statistician. Our main concerns have been how he gave life to numbers and tables. We have also been less interested in his personal life, his diffuse personality, his political thinking (as a true supporter of Scandinavianism, he attended the Nordic student meeting several times), his struggle against authorities concerning the new medical discipline of hygiene, especially the prominent leprosy doctors on the west coast of the country.⁷

However, there is one exception; the dispute about the peasant women’s cooking practices between the collector of fairy tales and legends, Peter Christen Asbjørnsen (1812–1885), and Sundt in the 1860s. The dispute was already in their time labelled “the porridge feud” (*grødkampen*), as shown in the satirical magazine *Vikingen* in 1865 (fig. 1). The article “Popular Diet in Norway and Natural Science during the 19th Century: The Porridge Feud 1864–66” by Astri Riddervold and Andreas Ropeid, published in *Ethnologia Scandinavica* in 1984, has become a standard reference to the controversy. It is cited and retold in scholarly literature, as well as Norwegian schoolbooks and popular texts as a controversy between science and tradition in nineteenth-century Norway (see for example Raa 2013; Lien 2018).

Riddervold and Ropeid’s otherwise readable article draws a somewhat polarized picture of the two men, to the benefit of Sundt. While he represented tradition, women and common people, Asbjørnsen was on the side of science and expert

knowledge. But was this really the case? Was Sundt in opposition to science? What if the feud is seen in the light of knowledge production in times when the science of nutrition was in its formative phase, as a new knowledge, a knowledge in the making? In addition, there is another level in their story. While the feud had disastrous consequences for Sundt, which I will return to, it was nevertheless he who emerged victorious. Posterity showed that Sundt was right and Asbjørnsen wrong. This is how Riddervold and Ropeid’s story goes. Not only has their article become the standard reference to the feud, it has also become a master narrative and, alas, one of the few stories about Sundt and food.

The feud is also a topic of this article. To avoid it would, literally speaking, be “to walk around the porridge” (*å gå rundt grøten*) as the saying “to beat about the bush” goes in Norwegian. The feud is important for many reasons. It represented a turning point to Sundt personally and professionally; it initiated a process that led to 1869 when he was no longer provided with grants from the Norwegian Government. It also changed his research, his writing style and the audience to which he addressed his research. Rather than polarizing Asbjørnsen and Sundt, this article will propose an alternative story. By doing so I will examine Sundt’s writings on food before, after and of course, while he was in the middle of the battle.

In the first section I will give an account of the feud as seen in the light of the new knowledge of nutrition. How did Sundt relate to this knowledge? Then, I will dig deeper into his writings from his visit to the community north of Oslo, which the introduction has already given a taste of.



This drawing has become a classical icon of the feud printed in the satirical *Viking* in 1865 after the meeting of the Society for the Promotion of Popular Enlightenment. While Asbjørnsen (Mr. Clemens) reaches out his hands towards Sundt, is Sundt gesticulating at him with a *turu*, *tvore*, *trøre* among the many local names for this important kitchen utensil. A *turu* is a kind of whips made from tops of young trees excellent for making barley porridge. Photo: National Library of Norway.

In this section the sociality of food and eating is in the foreground.

The next section consists of methodical considerations as expressed in *On Cleanliness*. Published after the great feud, the book contains a great many references to the controversy. In addition, Sundt provides examples of the form his food study programme might have taken. In this section the materiality of food and eating is in the foreground. Finally, I will return to the starting point of the article, his visit to the humble cottage. How did their conversation proceed and how does Sundt render their talk? Throughout the article I hope to demonstrate how Sundt's writings on food still have relevance, not only as food studies, but as culture studies in general.

Material and Method

The article is based on close studies and a careful reading of a passage from Sundt's fieldwork in the rural community north of Oslo, as described in *On Morality*, and chapters on food in *On Cleanliness*.⁸ In my reading, I have been surprised by his mundane approaches, his thick descriptions and eye for details, his subjectivity and reflexivity, not forgetting the way in which he followed connections, often in unusual, surprising and unpredictable turns.

After his visit to the rural district north of Oslo, he admitted that "precisely on the matter of food" he had truly found it painful to sympathize with the poor. "It often seems that food and only food occupies their minds from beginning to end, and it has been difficult for me to come to grips with this" (Sundt 1993 [1857]:163). He acknowledged the differences in how minds focus on food and believed it was "possible to show a distinct and system-

atic difference in the taste of rich and poor people" (ibid.).

This is in many ways an introduction to the sociology of taste. It seems that Sundt was aware of the differences between the taste of necessity and that of liberty or luxury. He also saw how food acts as an agent of social distinctions and cultural transformations. While poor people "of necessity have to think of enough food for their hunger and their next meal", people from the circles to which he belonged could think of good food as they did not need to nourish their body for the purpose of hard work and did not have to occupy their minds day and night with the struggle for food. He admitted that the "struggle for bread and butter" was difficult to sympathize with (ibid.). This exemplifies the ambivalence in his research, and as the culture historian Ole Marius Hylland has pointed out, it is characteristic of his writing style (Hylland 2002). However, Sundt's ambivalence constituted his sources for the understanding of people's living conditions, and very often formed the point of departure for his research questions.

He has "a special gift", is how one of his contemporaries characterized Sundt's research, emphasizing his ability "to derive new and interesting things out of everyday trivialities" (cited in Ropeid 1972:80). This gift has been articulated as a holistic view, that Sundt describes how everything is connected to everything, as the saying goes. However, rather than viewing his research holistically, I am inspired by Donna Haraway and her alternative to this well-known phrase. Following her, it is more fruitful – even urgent in our transformative time – to explore how

things are connected. “Nothing is connected to everything; everything is connected to something”, is her alternative way of seeing connections (Haraway 2016:31). A “*something*” which again as she adds in a footnote, is connected to something “*elsewhere*” (ibid.:273). I will argue and hopefully demonstrate, that Sundt was a master in following connections to something and to an unpredictable elsewhere. This makes his writing and the stories he tells so fascinating, surprising and relevant.

The Great Norwegian Porridge Feud, 1864–66

On a research visit to Germany in 1856–58 Peter Christen Asbjørnsen, who was trained as a natural scientist, was introduced to Liebig’s theories of nutrition. In 1864, under the pseudonym Clemens Bonifacius, Asbjørnsen published a book on food entitled *Sensible Cookery (Fornuftigt madstel)*. The book contains a rich body of recipes from the Norwegian rural and urban kitchen, as well as from international cuisine. About a third of the book provides guidelines for household management. According to the Norwegian food historian Henry Notaker, *Sensible Cookery* is “the first Norwegian cookery book that treated the science of nutrition in a serious way” (2001:42). Nevertheless, it has turned out to be famous for the assertion about the Norwegian peasant women’s cooking practices. They did not even know how to cook porridge, the most common dish, properly (Asbjørnsen 1864:30).

Porridge, cooked in water and consisting of barley meal or a mixture of barley and oats, was the staple food of the poor man’s diet, especially in the grain districts of eastern and central Norway. In 1850 as

much as 80 per cent of the national food consumption derived from cereals including potatoes (Gjerdaker 2004:248), although, as Sundt observed in 1855, potatoes had not yet become common in the district north of Oslo.

The problem, according to Asbjørnsen, was not the porridge *per se*, but the way in which it was cooked. The custom of adding some meal to the porridge after it had been taken off the fire represented in his view, a heavy socio-economic loss to the individual families and to the country at large since the nutrients were not digested properly. He even calculated that half a million “*speciedaler*” (the currency at the time) were lost due to this particular cooking practice, and he blamed the peasant women for the misdeed (Asbjørnsen 1864:30).⁹

The very same year Sundt published a series of articles in *The Friend of the People* entitled “Woman’s position” (*Kvindens stilling*). In the fourth paragraph published in the winter of 1864, he refers to words he had heard from “learned men” a statement about the peasant women’s cooking practices (Sundt 1864:639). Sundt strongly disagreed and wanted, as he wrote, “to nip such words in the bud” (*standse slige ord i farten*) meaning, “to stop something before it has an opportunity to be established”.¹⁰ However, Sundt did not succeed in stopping the words; indeed, rather the opposite was true. His words caused a “*furore grautommannorum*”, as it was characterized in the newspaper *Morgenbladet* in 1864 (cited here by Sundt 1975 [1869]:400). This gave rise to one of “the funniest popular discussions about social sciences recorded anywhere” (Allwood 1957:83). The whole

country was soon “drawn into the fury of the fray” (ibid.:85). This is somewhat exaggerated, although the controversy received attention. In February 1865, it was discussed at the general meeting of the Society for the Promotion of Popular Enlightenment (*Selskabet til Folkeopplysningens Fremme*). The member, who had acknowledged Sundt’s special gift, added that in this case his gift had taken “a strange turn towards paradoxes” (cited in Ropeid 1972:80).

The text that followed the caricature depicted in *Vikingen* (fig. 1) was not in favour of Sundt. He was portrayed as a quarreller without the ability to listen to his opponents, noisily and angrily raising his hands towards Mr. Clemens’ hat (*Kalotten*) blaming him for bad upbringing and lack of chivalry towards peasant women. He was also criticized and ridiculed for making science out of nonsense. The message was clear: How could an editor of the journal of the society behave like this? (*Vikingen* 1865:34). The critic obviously won support since Sundt had to step down from his position as the editor-in-chief of the society’s periodical, *The Friend of the People*, in 1866.

A Meeting of the Scientific Association of Christiania

On 6 April 1866, the professor of medicine at the University of Christiania, Frans Faye (1806–1890), gave a lecture on the benefit of “our starchy diet” (*Undersøgelser angående Brug og Nytte af vore stivelsesholdige Næring*) at a meeting of the Scientific Association of Christiania (*Videnskab-Selskabet i Christiania*). Riddervold and Ropeid cite this lecture as support for Sundt in opposition to Asbjørnsen (1984:49). In fact, Faye – among the country’s leading

medical authorities at the time, known as a dedicated supporter of miasma theory – made it absolutely clear that he had not participated in the controversy, neither in speeches nor in written words. He had not even read newspapers on the subject. He announced his purpose as strictly scientific (Faye 1867:52). The aim was to give the state of knowledge from current research on the function of food. The question was whether a diet based on cereals was capable of giving the labour force sufficient nutrients.

Referring to the most recent literature, with support from findings from his own experiments, he concluded as follows: “To add some of the meal to the porridge after it has been taken off the fire is both economical and sensible” (ibid.:51). His own experiments demonstrated that the meal did not go undigested through the body. Rather the opposite was the true: A “somewhat thicker porridge” was even more “sensible”, especially for those carrying out heavy physical work (ibid.:83). He called for further discussions on the topic, especially from the mathematical science section of the Society.

On 25 May 1866, four members of the Society responded. Professor Halvor Heyerdahl Rasch and Lauritz Esmark supported Faye, while the professor of physiology Christian Boeck, at that time vice-president of the Society, was critical. First, he decried Faye for giving a lecture on such a controversial topic, and then he expressed his disappointment over the fact that “a member” of the Society had defended a cooking practice that in his view was unfortunate (*Videnskab-selskabet i Christiania* 1867:178). Sundt explained the reason for his involvement. He also

encouraged the “author” (Asbjørnsen, whom he never mentioned by name) to withdraw his claims (ibid.).

Alongside other controversial utterances, especially aimed at “learned men”, among them the famous leprosy doctor Daniel Cornelius Danielssen (1815–1894), this became the turning point for Sundt and his family. Not only did he have to face criticism from his own, as a member of the two societies, his research was criticized in newspapers and magazines and even from the speaker’s chair in the Norwegian Parliament. It was alleged that his research had little practical value, “a storm in a teacup”, and was even useless (Seip 1993:230). From 1869 the government no longer funded him. Reluctantly, he ended his career serving as a parish

priest in the rural district of Eidsvoll in 1870, where he lived until his death at the age of 58, in 1875 (fig. 2).

Rather than looking at the feud as a controversy between science and tradition, I will argue that from Sundt’s perspective it was a discussion about methodology. His scientific project was to include every little detail about everyday practices in his scientific inquiry. This endeavour did not give him any authority in the scientific community, as the satirical text and drawing in *Vikingen* 1865 shows.

“The Philosophy of Food”

When Faye published his lecture in the autumn of 1867, he referred to the article “The Philosophy of Food” published in *The Medical Times and Gazette* in 1866.



Family portrait of Sundt with his wife Nicoline Conradine Hansen and their five sons in their garden in Christiania/Oslo. The Picture is probably taken around 1863, just a year before the outbreak of the porridge feud. Photo: Oslo Museum/Byhistorisk samling.

The article by an unknown writer opens as follows.

In 1842 Liebig, in his “Organic Chemistry”, broached the idea that all articles of food were capable of arrangement in two great groups, the one devoted to the reparation of the tissues, the other to the production of animal heat. [...] Up to the present date this distinction has been looked upon as perfectly established, and as such is quoted in all our physiological text-books, even of the most recent date. Many of our readers will therefore, we doubt not, be somewhat astonished when we say that such a grouping can no longer be upheld – in short, that our ideas as to the various purposes fulfilled by different articles of diet must undergo a complete revolution (ibid.:449).

As is clear from the excerpt, Liebig divided food into two great categories; nitrogenous and non-nitrogenous food. Although he recognized the importance of a balanced diet between the two, he placed the nitrogenous food (above all meat) at the head of the list, as the most nutritious and valuable foodstuff; “the only substance capable of giving rise to force” (ibid.:450). Meat even had political and cultural significance, regarded as the ideal strength-building nutrient. In the historian Mark Finlay’s words, “meat-eaters dominate world politics, meat is essential not only to human health and muscle force, but even as a matter of public policy, essential for all human progress” (1993:49). This was of course problematic and had a national economic impact in countries such as Norway, where cereals were the staple food.

The new knowledge of nutrition rapidly established itself as a science, but it was knowledge in the making. The nomenclature was in flux, vitamins were not yet known and the function of food was not clear. In the 1860s Liebig’s theories were

heavily moderated, even by himself (ibid.: 60). The overriding question was what kind of food, how much and at what cost was necessary to be a healthy and productive member of society. Since different bodies had different needs, depending on their age, gender and productivity, abstract principles for the function of food had to be followed by empirical studies of the dietary regimes and physical demands of various segments of the population (Vernon 2007:84). A crucial issue was whether cereals could feed the workforce and enable muscle power.

Since Western nations needed working hands and working bodies in both fields and factories, the energy question relating to nutrition received the most attention. The unknown writer of “The Philosophy of Food” refers to the steam engine as a “simile” for the human body, and as the steam engine is made of “iron and brass, the body is likewise composite; but without the motive power in the shape of fuel, it is motionless. Likewise with the body and food” (*Medical Times and Gazette* 1866:450).

As the quotation states, food was considered as fuel for the machine (or working bodies). Food generated power and energy (health and muscle strength) for the individual body and for building society at large. The unknown author refers to Frick and Wislicenius and their research at the University of Zürich. The physiologist Adolf Frick (1829–1902) and the chemist Johannes Wislicenius (1835–1902) based their research on the British physician Edward Smith (1819–1877). According to the British biochemist and nutritionist Sir Jack Drummond’s (1891–1952) comprehensive work *The Englishman’s Food*:

Five Centuries of English Diet, published in 1939, “Smith was deeply interested in the practical aspect of dietetics, particularly in the amount of food that was needed by different types of individuals” (Drummond 1994:353). In 1863, he conducted empirical studies of the diets of convicts. Unfortunately, his “observations attracted little attention at a time when few would listen to anyone other than Liebig” (ibid.). It was not until 1889 that a convincing experiment conducted by the two Zürich scientists demonstrated that Smith had been right and Liebig wrong. Their work led to the modern view, which is that “the muscle is a machine” (ibid.). As Faye’s text documents, this was a topic of discussion at the Scientific Association of Christianity in 1866 due to the furore initiated by Sundt.

Sundt and the New Knowledge of Nutrition

In a newspaper article in 1866 Sundt mentions the scientific journal *Medical Times and Gazette*, summarizes its contents and quotes the conclusion:

Finally, we must again affirm that science is good, none can appreciate it more than we do, but when science contradicts the accumulated experience of ages, then, we say, *cedant arma togæ* [let military power give way to civil power] – experience is for us, let science go its own way (*The Medical Times and Gazette* 1866:45).

Riddervold and Ropeid assert this as Sundt scepticism towards science. In their view, Sundt even clearly expressed disbelief in the conclusion of a young science when he claimed that when science is at variance with the accumulated experience of generations, “then experience is better than science” (1984:59). The problem is

that they are not aware of the quotation marks, that Sundt in fact is quoting a scientific text regarding the latest knowledge on the science of nutrition.

Neither Sundt nor the unknown writer drew a polarized picture of science and everyday experience. Science is good they claimed, but must be connected to the practices of everyday life. Science and experience were different kinds of knowledge, but equally important. It seems that Sundt’s objective was to establish everyday practices as a science not in opposition to the upcoming field of the natural science of nutrition but as two ways of knowing.

In their narrative Riddervold and Ropeid do something much more problematic; they *preserve*, to use a concept from food practices, the ideological boundary between a pre-modern and the modern world, where the pre-modern, in their view, is more real, truthful and genuine. According to Daston, this is a “vexing boundary” (2017:142) in this case in favour of the indefinable pre-modern past. The turn to the history of knowledge represents an effort to dismantle such boundaries. I will argue that Sundt was neither an antagonist nor an anti-scientist, but rather gave a double vision to science. In times when medical authorities still put their trust in miasma theory, it is surprising that Sundt seems to be well informed of some living agents, a “peculiarly and terrible dangerous chemical process”, that can occur in cheese and fungi (Sundt 1975[1869]:375). This is in many ways an announcement of bacteriology in its early stage. Sundt’s statistical thinking was also influenced by natural science (Lie 2001: 14). He aimed to find laws that governed

the living conditions of the poor, and thus, on a *scientific* basis he sought to understand the problem of poverty and how it could be solved (Fulsås 2003:14). Even his historical writing was influenced by natural science, and Darwin's theory of evolution is prominent in his book on building practices in rural areas published in 1862 (Bäckström 2012).

A young lady in service at the vicarage in the winter of 1874 wrote in her diary that the priest took a great interest in natural science. He taught her about the newest knowledge on the physiology of food, explained "that a man doing heavy physical labour can live on porridge and potatoes, whilst a sedentary person must have more delicious victuals or food" (cited in Stenseth 2000:20). This is in line with the modified theory of nutrition in the 1860s, but already in 1855, on his visit to the rural community north of Oslo, he was aware of the new knowledge and the connections between food and working bodies.

Food Stories from Rural Norway, 1855

In most of the places Sundt visited in the spring of 1855, he encountered a lot of dissatisfaction with regard to food. He noticed that workers did not eat at their masters' table, he observed that farm owners and their sons withdrew from participating in heavy physical work, and he was convinced that when owners did not participate in work, they could not know what kind of food or how much "a day's work demands of a good fellow" (ibid.:168–170).

In arable areas such as the district north of Oslo, farm owners were responsible for providing food to their workers. Eating at

the master's table (*folkehusholdning*) was an institution in rural Norway, especially in eastern part of the country with the crofter institution (*husmannsvesenet*) as the social profile of the community.¹¹

The Norwegian crofter institution can be classified in two main categories: land-labouring crofters and crofters leasing a small piece of farmland from a farmer. The former were most numerous in the more prosperous arable farming districts in the eastern part of the country, the latter in the fishery communities along the west coast. In fact, these crofters were craftsmen, fishermen or freighters at sea, while land-labouring crofters lived in small tenant cottages on the outskirts of their owner's land, with the potential to feed a cow and a couple of sheep and to till a tiny plot. Land-labouring crofters had to provide labour service to their master's farm during specific periods of the year. Many had to show up at the farm whenever the owner called for assistance. To various degrees, these crofters were dependent on their masters' goodwill.

The family in the humble cottage was a crofter family in this sense, but as Sundt noticed, poorer than was usual in the district, "under a master who was of goodwill, but had little ability to help his working people advance" (Sundt 1993 [1857]: 160). On an evening walk with the man after he had returned from his master's fields (remember that this was in the spring in a very labour-intensive period of the year), Sundt started asking about his rights and duties as a crofter. It seems that Sundt, who had experienced their monotonous diet, was eager to find out whether the crofter's master allowed him to take home portions of meat so that, as Sundt

addresses his readers, “his wife and children would know what meat tasted like” (Sundt 1993 [1857]:162). The only food he could take home, he answered, was a “tiny bit of the evening bread called *kake*”. This is not really a cake, Sundt informs his readers, but only a very plain oven-baked rye bread, but then at least he said, almost to cheer up himself or perhaps his readers, his wife and children “got a taste of rye” (ibid.).

In arable districts food was classified according to two main categories based on locally produced ingredients. Milk and meat were called *suvl*, cereals named *gron* (Sundt 1993 [1987]:164). The combination between the two depended on natural resources, climate conditions, agricultural practices, knowledge and technology, but most importantly, social differences and hierarchies. The portion of *suvl* mirrored the social order of the society and was differentiated according to status and position of the household, with owners’ and their sons at the top. While crofters and servant people could serve themselves freely with *gron*, the *suvl* was carefully apportioned by the mistress of the house. *Suvl* was even considered crofters’ and servants’ personal belongings, and if they wanted they could take portions home.

An article on the meal system in rural areas at the eastern part of the country by the Norwegian ethnologist Ragnar Pedersen describes this as a “*skifte ut system*” (Pedersen 1997). Sundt called it “*den udskiftede mad*” and “*skiftede portioner*” (Sundt 1976 [1857]:156).¹² Taking home portions of meat was an economic transaction in rural Norway as a part of a pre-modern economy, but according to Pedersen, it lasted well into the twentieth

century. At the time Sundt visited the community north of Oslo, however, he observed how the custom was being challenged.

The Lost Atmosphere of *Hygge*

One of the many characteristics of mid-nineteenth-century Norwegian farming was the very long working day due to labour-intensive implements such as the wooden plough and the wooden fail. An old crofter told Sundt that in his youth he had to be at his owner’s fields as early as two o’clock in the morning. A middle-aged farmer remembered that in his youth work started at three o’clock in winter with threshing by flail in the hayloft. In order to get the work done, they all had to cooperate. He recalled that fathers, sons, crofters and day labourers worked together. Before work started, they rested in the hay and in order to keep themselves warm in the dark winter cold, they banged their feet against the wall while porridge was served (Sundt 1993[1857]:167). The man remembered this as a shared moment of brotherhood. Sundt called it a situation of “*hygge*” (ibid.:164).¹³ This situation of “*hygge*” changed with the introduction of the threshing machine. Crofters and hired hands still had to start work early, but now they had to take care of the horses before threshing started. Owners were still responsible for providing their workers with food, but on many farms the meal was no longer communal.

Sundt observed that food practices had improved during the last generation, particularly as regards working hours and food breaks. He also noticed that the quality of food was better, but summarizes: “When I put these and several small mat-

ters together I arrive at the following conclusion” (Sundt 1993[1857]:169). The conclusion he draws is that the improvement among workers was nowhere near as good as among the owners. New working conditions due to new technology had altered the social profile of the rural community. The shared moments of “*hygge*” had not been replaced. On the contrary, Sundt noticed a gap (“*kløft*”) between the classes, reflected in a “dual dining table” and “dual food system” (ibid.).

Sundt experienced how new technology altered the social profile of the community with new eating habits and working hours. Since fathers and their sons increasingly withdrew from heavy physical work, his advice was that they could not rely on science alone. “The running of a farm requires not only understanding the application of chemistry to fields and the like, but also having the gift of dealing with the working people and gaining their trust and loyalty” (ibid.:163).

The Poet and the Researcher, 1864–69

On Cleanliness was published only three weeks after Sundt stopped receiving funding from the government. In the preface, he shared his disappointment with not being able to fulfil his research. However, he expressed his gratitude for the funding and dedicated, perhaps as a provocation, the book to the Norwegian Parliament (*Storting*). The subtitle, *An Account of Industry and Progress in the Countryside (Til Oplysning om Flid og Fremskridt i Landet)* indicates, as Stueland points out, that it now was time for doctors and learned men to be enlightened (2019:86).

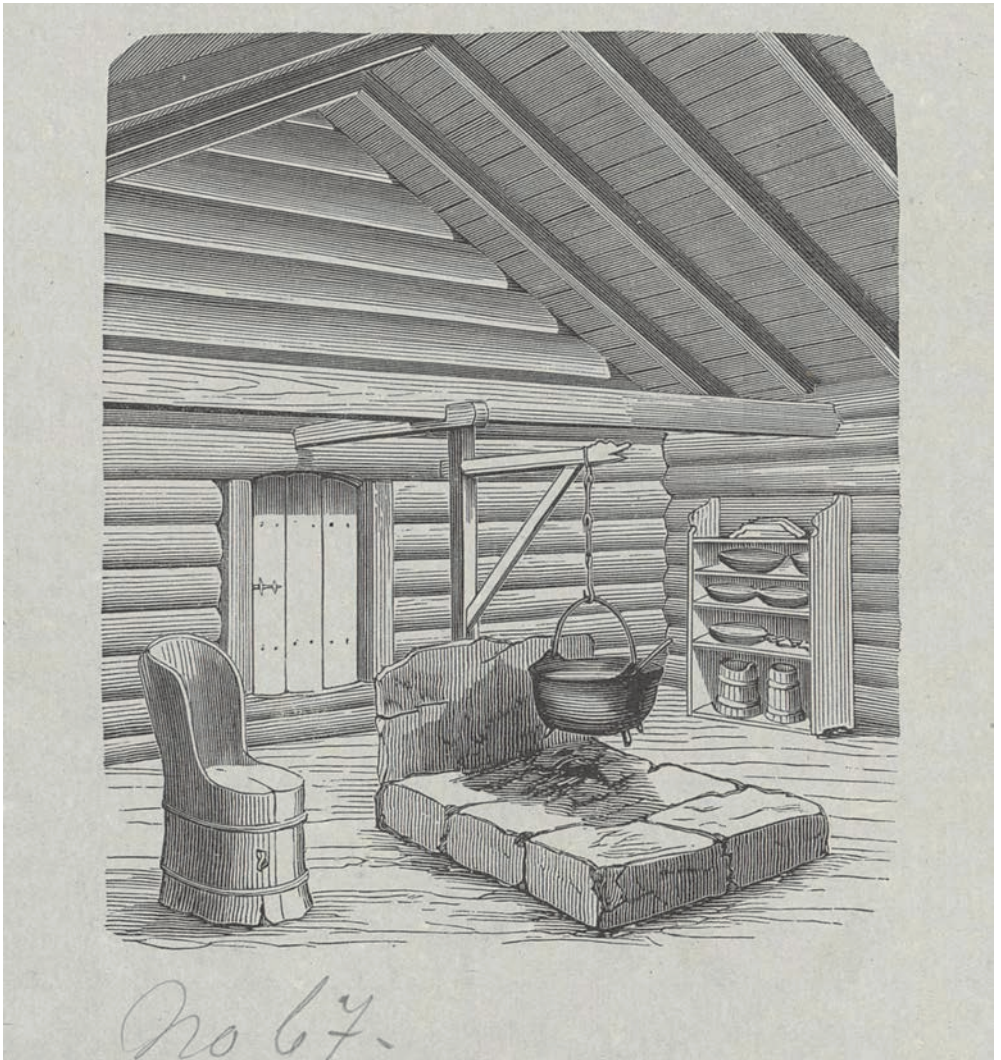
The book contains “the sum of all his experiences from his folk-life studies, and

raises Sundt as never before in his full remarkable distinctiveness” (Lunde 1917: 101). In his own words, the book was his “most elaborate body of work based on all his previous studies” (Sundt 1975 [1869]: 14). It was planned as a work on un-cleanliness, turned out to be a study on cleanliness. This reflects a turning point for Sundt personally and intellectually. The book includes a rich body of descriptions of cleanliness in cottages and cowsheds all over the country. Sundt describes in detail the use of handkerchiefs, floor rugs and soap, to mention only few of his topics.¹⁴ He follows connections between practices and artefacts, connects everyday activities and trivialities to myth, magic and folk belief. The statistician Sundt is more or less absent in the text; rather his readers meet him as a folklife and folklore researcher.

He observed that the standard of cleanliness as regards food and eating habits changed when locally produced household utensils made of wood and used for storing, cooking and eating were replaced by utensils made of tin, zinc, stone and factory-made glassware (Sundt 1975: 374). Moving from wood to zinc represented an industrial changeover. To value cleanliness in homes and cottages he insists on differentiating between “practical good care” and “*properhed*” (from the French *propreté*, meaning cleanliness, neatness, tidiness, fairness). From a contemporary perspective, the latter obviously belongs to a bourgeois culture with its sharp distinction between back and front stage, with cooking as a hidden practice in the kitchen behind the scene. Sundt recommended attaching value to the peasant women’s cooking practices according to the materiality of their conditions, as

many (even the majority) did not have a separate kitchen hidden from the rest of the dwelling. The room with the open fire or brick oven was simply the place in which they lived, cooked, ate and slept.

To understand the rationality of people's ways of living it is important, according to Sundt, to be aware of this distinction and turn one's attention to practices. He claimed that these practices had to be in-



Drawings from his book on building practices in rural area showing the open fire kitchen with the porridge pot hanging from the ceiling and kitchen utensils made of wood on the wall. The illustration was printed in the magazine *Folkebladet* in 1862 and was together with other drawings from peasant cottages, reprinted when his book on building practices was re-issued in 1900. Photo: National Library of Norway.

vestigated in two ways; “carefully described” (*beskrive med nøiagtighed*) and “studied with completeness” (*studert med fuldstændighed*). While the first refers to his ethnographic methodology, the latter is a reference to his statistical analyses, each unthinkable without the other. When it comes to food, due to the lack of funding, he was only able to provide “some examples” as “signs” of his purposes (*ibid.*: 363).

His examples are nevertheless doorways to food practices and everyday life in mid-nineteenth-century rural society. Among his examples there are descriptions of how hands and fingers were used for gutting, cleaning and eating. He explained how the regular bread (the flatbread) functioned as a plate and made the use of a fork unnecessary. In the spring, when the stock of flatbread often was empty, due to a storage economy (*forråds-husholdning*) and food shortage in spring (*vårknipa*), only then was a wooden plate used. Throughout the chapter Sundt invites his readers to follow him in his methodological considerations. He argues that cleanliness in food and table manners must not be assessed in terms of its strangeness or judged by the final product, insisting on the importance of following food practices “through all stages of the process”, from field to fork, farm to plate. He identifies different steps in the food value chain and provides guidelines on how to evaluate each of these steps.

In husbandry it is important to value how animals are taken care of in cowsheds and slaughterhouses. When it comes to preservation and food storage, Sundt refers to “a peculiarly chemical process” he had heard of, acting just like “poison” that

occurred in cheese, due to an as yet “unknown origin” (Sundt 1975 [1869]:375). He does not mention living organisms or microbes. This knowledge emerged a decade later when bacteriology rapidly established itself as a new disease theory (Drummond 1994 [1939]:321; Gradmann 2009:6; Nielsen 2008:334). However, already in the 1860s, scientists, among them Louis Pasteur (1822–1895), had studied fermentation in yeast and fungi, and proved that this had the terrible potential danger of poisoning food and water. It seems that Sundt was well informed in the state-of-the-art knowledge. “At this very moment”, he declared in a footnote, many scientists are concerned about “these things” and every year new discoveries are being made. He was convinced that these discoveries would have a great impact on domestic housekeeping in the future (Sundt 1975 [1869]:375).

Sundt’s methodological reflections can be seen as a critique of Asbjørnsen and his supporters regarding the peasant women’s irrational cooking practices. In his article in *Morgenbladet*, published while he was in the heart of the battle, he formulates his critique as follows.

There is a difference. The poet sees it as a mirage, amazingly delightful, so light, so light, shifting according to each day’s wishes. The view, in contrast, which is the researcher’s sense, is firmly attached to its foundation (Sundt [1865] 1975: 381).¹⁵

Stueland interpreted this utterance as a critique of one of “The Four Greats” among Norwegian writers, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832–1910). Between 1857 and 1868 Bjørnson published several peasant tales (*bondefortellinger*). As we know, Sundt had to face criticism from many angles

and for many reasons, even for his writing style: “He hears he writes so vividly that it is poetry” (Stueland 2019:99). According to Stueland, Sundt did not accept being called a poet; he was not writing peasant tales. His stories were about real life, about the actual facts (*de faktiske kjennsgjerninger*).

Although Sundt made a sharp distinction between the poet and the researcher, he delivered his critique in a poetic language. Stueland himself a poet, called his book on Sundt “*en sakpoesi*” (a non-fiction poetry). The Swedish-American linguist Martin Allwood, also a poet, points out that neither researchers nor poets have described the crude reality of nineteenth-century real life as Sundt did. His captivating stories are heart-rending and thought-provoking, his engaging writing style is so “vivid and forceful [...] that abbreviated resumes can at best be but a poor substitute for the original” (Allwood 1957:10). It is easy to be touched by Sundt’s prose. According to Stueland, even when Sundt is explaining his statistical thinking, known as Sundt’s Law, it is poetry.

A Heart-Breaking Story

As mentioned in the introduction, Sundt had great sympathy for the family he visited in the spring of 1855 and wanted to learn more about their daily routines. After he had eaten the food and a trust between Sundt and the woman had been gained, he started asking:

“Now listen, good woman,” thus I started the conversation [...]

“First, how can you, with only this, clothe your husband and children?”

“Oh, that would be strange to explain,” she answered and laughed, but it was exactly that strange explanation I wanted to hear and received.

“And then there is the food!” I continued, “Can you explain to me equally well how you get enough for all the mouths you have to feed?”

But here the woman burst into tears (Sundt 1993 [1857]:161).

Sundt, known as a master at making people speak, had to steel himself. He repeated his question and she continued to talk. When her husband (“the reliable hard worker”) goes to work in their master’s field at four o’clock in the morning, she gets up too. Hopefully, she adds, the children will not wake, “since they want much more food when they are up so early” (Sundt 1993 [1857]:162). With these few commonplace words Sundt manages to convey the true face of poverty that only food shortage can express. It is a heart-rending story he tells. He admits that it was strange for him to be in this house, “here, precisely here I had to tell myself: I understand only little of the secret of poverty” (ibid.:160).

Sundt confessed: *On Morality* was difficult to complete. According to Lunde, it gives “horrible stories” and “horrible figures and facts”, and is incomparably the darkest picture ever painted by Sundt (1917:57). He started his research in 1851, but it was not until 1857 that the first edition was published. In the meantime, he “drowned his sorrows in numbers and calculations”, and published books on mortality and on marriage, both known for their statistics.

On Morality is also known for its statistics. In addition, it contains a rich body of descriptions from his fieldwork in the community north of Oslo he visited in the spring of 1855. In addition to food, he writes about clothing and festive customs, above all dancing (rumour has it that

Sundt loved to dance). He apologizes for giving space to these topics in an otherwise sad book, but admits it was refreshing to his “spirit to look away from the dark side of people’s lives and for a moment to fix attention on other pictures” (Sundt 1993 [1857]:170). The pictures he draws and the stories he tells are not at all refreshing, rather the contrary: they are heart-breaking stories of true facts.

The culture historian Anne Eriksen has investigated how Sundt in this book “produces pathos, conveys morality” in order to persuade the readers to value his interpretations (2018:25). His stories (or “examples” as they are termed in her analytical tool) are not introductory anecdotes to statistics but rather function as forms of knowledge, equal to hard statistical facts. His qualitative studies gave him an opportunity to observe the conditions of domestic life from many angles, and he admits even before he wrote his book *On Cleanliness*: “Particularly” here he said to himself, “precisely” here (the community north of Oslo) he noticed a discontent, even irritation, regarding food from both workers and owners. He acknowledged that he seemed to “realize how food is significant for more than the body itself” (ibid.:380).

Ways of Knowing

To conclude, what kinds of food stories did Sundt tell and how are his stories connected to the formation of knowledge in *his* time and from the many places *he* travelled while he was receiving funding?

These have been the key issues to explore in this article. By investigating his writings on food during, before and after the great Norwegian porridge feud, the

overriding question has been to show how his descriptions and reflections on food are connected to ways of knowing.

I have argued that Sundt was not in opposition to the emerging mid-nineteenth-century field of a new science, rather the contrary. He was well informed, and had even read a leading scientific journal on the latest news from a young science. In some way he also anticipated the disease theory of bacteriology. In this article I have given an alternative understanding of the controversy, asserting that the feud was not about science versus tradition as the master narrative goes, but about methodology. Sundt saw how small things matter, valuing all kinds of knowledge equally.

He follows connections both open and hidden, between food, nature and people. He tells heart-rending stories about food shortage, hunger and poverty, he confronts authorities, gives lessons on how to evaluate everyday practices, urges masters and mistresses to take care of their workers, and tell workers that they must not tolerate anything and everything from their owners. He describes the lost atmosphere of *hygge*, and offers glimpses of the joy of, for example, being served hot porridge on a cold winter’s day. It is quite clear that Sundt was aware of what food means and does; politically, socially, culturally and emotionally. His bodily and sensory presence in his texts makes his stories much more captivating and heart-rending. Sundt, like few of his contemporaries, gives insight into the many realities of the nineteenth-century rural Norway.

Unfortunately, Sundt was not given the opportunity to fulfil his research project

with a book on food, planned as the third book in a trilogy on domestic life (cottage industry, cleanliness and food). Even though a separate book on food never materialized, the chapters on food in *On Cleanliness* provide examples of what his book on food might have been like. Here he tells stories of small things – the plate, the knife and the tablecloth – treating them as significant.

If he had been able to complete a book on food, he would probably have pursued the connections from the small to the big things, from the origin of food to where it is eaten, prepared, shared and talked about, and thus he would probably have explored the path of the food from tables to the cowsheds, soil and fjords. He would probably have insisted that all the connections, hidden and open, in this chain are equally important.

He referred to “the circle to which he belongs”, those who did not need to struggle for bread and butter, even if this was precisely what he had been forced to do as a provider for a wife and five children, while having no regular income. He admitted that when it comes to food, he found it difficult to sympathize with the poor. But it is precisely the door to the household of the poor he opened.

The nineteenth-century theologian Sundt is acknowledged, as has been pointed out, as the founding father of Norwegian sociology and as a great inspiration to Norwegian ethnologists. He anticipated sociologists such as Georg Simmel (1885–1914) on the socializing power of food, Erving Goffman (1922–1982) on the division between front and back stage, and Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) on the dis-

inction of taste. In his studies, Sundt even saw how the materiality of food interacts as actor and agent. The Norwegian sociologist Willy Pedersen goes even further. In addition to Sundt being on par with his contemporaries and with what today are considered classics in the social sciences and humanities (Adam Smith, Karl Marx, to name a few), he even anticipated thinkers such as Michel Foucault and Norbert Elias, no less (Pedersen 2019). Among researchers who worked with Sundt it is generally agreed that had he published in English or one of the other languages he mastered, adept as he was, he himself would have been counted among the classics, not just in Norway, but also internationally (Seip 1996; Lie 2001; Lien 2019).

In her book *Staying with the Trouble* Donna Haraway insists on the importance of being “truly present” in the time and places in which we are living (2016:1). This article has also been an attempt to show how Sundt was present in his time and in the places he visited. As today, he was also living in transformative times. As a scientist and researcher he was not only an eyewitness to this, he experienced people’s living conditions in changing times with his body and mind; he lived with the people he studied, ate at their table, slept in their houses, questioned them about everything. No details were too small to matter to him. This makes his research an endless ethnological treasure trove.

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Notes

- 1 *Om Sædeligheds-Tilstanden i Norge (On Illegitimacy in Norway: A Study on Moral Standards and Moral Behaviour)* was translated and edited for an English-speaking public in 1993 by the Norwegian-American Odin W. Andersen, entitled *Sexual Customs in Rural Norway: A Nineteenth-Century Study*. With few exceptions I use his translation. However, I use the title *On Morality* which is the most frequently used English title.
- 2 After Simmel's "tremendous socializing power", from the essay "Soziologi der Mahlzeit", published in the newspaper *Berliner Tageblatt*, 19 October 1910, translated into English in 1984 by Michael Symons.
- 3 According to Nylende and Stoltenberg (2019), the name Sundt's Law was coined by the Swedish statistician Axel Gustav Sundbårg in 1894.
- 4 Although Sundt counts as the founding father of Norwegian sociology and was honoured when the new building for the new Faculty of Social Sciences (established 1963) was completed at the university campus at Blindern (University of Oslo) in 1967. Every year prominent scholars in social sciences from all over the world give an Eilert Sundt Lecture at *Eilert Sundt's House*, but with few exceptions the reception of Sundt has not been overwhelming among Norwegian social scientists. This became very clear on many occasions during the bicentennial seminars in 2018. Among Norwegian ethnologists (and culture historians) it is different. The breadth of our interests was revealed at the Eilert Sundt reading seminar in 2018.
https://www.academia.edu/40482096/Eilert_Sundt_200_år_jubileumsseminarserie_Eilert_Sundt_200_years_anniversary_seminar_series_. (9 May 2020). Thanks to Kristina Skåden and Bjørn-Sverre Hol Haugen for their initiative in returning to the original.
- 5 From 1974–78 Gyldendal Norsk Forlag published *Eilert Sundt: Verker i utvalg* (Selected Works) in eleven volumes, edited and facilitated by the intellectual historian Halfdan Olaus Christofferensen.
- 6 https://www.nb.no/hanske/navne_funn2.php (3 November 2018).
- 7 This is one of Stueland's themes in the chapter "Eilert Sundt og den medisinske geografi" in his book *Eilert Sundt-tilstanden* (2019: 83–178).
- 8 These are: a passage on food in chapter 8, "Family Life and Morality in Upper and Lower Romerike" in *On Morality*, and chapter 9 "Renligheden ved madstel" (On cleanliness during the preparation of food) in *On Cleanliness (Renligheds-stellet i Norge: Til opplysning om Flid og Fremskridt i Landet)*. Christoffersen includes his articles "I anledning af den paatænkte husholdningsskole i Romsdalen" (On the occasion of the intended school on domestic science in Romsdalen) published in the newspaper *Morgenbladet* on 30 June and 2 July 1866 as chapter 10 in *On Cleanliness* (Sundt 1975:395–411). According to Christoffersen, these articles were meant to be chapters in his book (*ibid.*:vii).
Unfortunately, this book, considered by many to be his main work, has not been translated into English, I am responsible for the English translation with the help of John Anthony and Erica Jewell.
- 9 "Men ser man til, hvorledes Grøden i almindelighed lages, saa gaar det på flere Kanter af Landet saaledes til, at en hel Del af Melet røres i Gryden, uden at den er blevet rigtig gennemkogt og kommer til at svulle: Maden bliver saaledes ikke alene raa og usmagelig, men den største Del af melet gaar ufordøyet og unyttet ud gennem Menneskets fordøjingsveie" (Asbjørnsen 1864:30).
Live Vedeler Nilsen at the National Library of Norway has calculated that it would correspond to approximately NOK 32 million in today's currency (Nilsen 2019).
- 10 Sundt repeated the words in *On Cleanliness*: "Jeg sagde imod og skrev et stykke i Folkevennen, hvor jeg, som jeg udtrykte mig, ønskede at standse slige ord i farten" (Sundt 1975[1869]:363).
- 11 Andersen (1993) translates *husmann* as "coter", which is not the correct understanding of the Norwegian institution. The formal English word is *crofter*, which will be used in this article.
- 12 Andersen did not notice this as part of a pre-modern economy, and has no English word for the institution.
- 13 "den tapte hygge som lå deri, at husbondsfolket i fordumstid gikk til samme bord, og ellers levede mere på samme fod med dem" (Sundt 1976[1857]:162).

- 14 For further readings see Melgaard 2000; Grimstad Klepp 2006.
- 15 “Det er forskjell. Dikteren ser som et luftsyn, vidunderlig deiligt, så let, så let, skiftende gjerne for hver dags ønske. Det syn derimod, som står for forskerens sands, er grundmuret og tømret” (Sundt 1975[1869]:381).

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“We Could Smell That He’s Stasi...”

Power and Justification Strategies of the Stasi in Music Life in the GDR and in Swedish-German Music Contacts

By Petra Garberding

Justification of the political-operational necessity of recruiting

The political-operational necessity of the [candidate’s] advertising lies in the concrete political-operational situation within the group of people responsible for the musical life of the GDR. [...] It is of particular importance that the candidate has extensive connections in the area of operations, which can be used for the acquisition of information about the aims and intentions of the leading personalities of musical life in Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria; this is important for the MfS, because it opens opportunities for compiling information from other ranges of the economic and social life of these states through the circle of acquaintances of the candidate’s extensive contacts with leading representatives of the monopoly capital. [...]¹

This quotation is an example of the motivation for the choice of the musicologist Gerd Schönfelder (1936–2000) as an unofficial employee (*inoffizieller Mitarbeiter, IM*) of the Stasi (Ministry for State Security of the GDR, MfS or Stasi). Schönfelder, who had an extensive network in musicians’ circles in Sweden, West Germany and Austria, and who was also a respected musicologist during the GDR era, seemed to the Stasi staff to be a suitable person to “enlighten” the GDR authorities about the conditions in musical, social and economic life in these states, to use Stasi terminology. I will return to Schönfelder later in this article.

The aim of this article is to give an insight into the influence of the Stasi on musical life in the GDR and on musical relations between the GDR and Sweden. How did the Stasi exercise power, how was this power justified and what can the exercise of power tell us about ideas regarding music and politics? On the basis of some concrete examples I want to show how the Stasi’s exercise of power was vindicated,

accepted and challenged and what consequences it could have for those affected.

Central concepts of this article are power and “orders of justification” (*Rechtfertigungsordnungen*). This discourse model was elaborated by the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory and has been developed further by the research association “Normative Orders” (Forst & Günther 2010).²

By linking the concepts of power and orders of justification, one seeks to make clear how power functions as a system of legitimization of social rules, norms and institutions (Forst & Günther 2010:2). This concept of power has in common with Michel Foucault’s concept of power that it is understood as a social phenomenon that can be both oppressive and productive, as well as the idea of power as something discursively constructed that operates in cognitive space (Forst 2015: 74). Forst and Günther, however, are of the opinion that Foucault’s concept of power is nevertheless too much about presenting power as negatively connoted – as a power that tends to limit and constrain subjects – rather than illustrating the freedom of subjects to reject or accept the justifications for the exercise of power by others (Forst 2015:74; Forst & Günther 2010:3). Therefore their theoretical model strongly emphasizes power as “the ability to bind others by reasons (justifications)” (Forst 2015:98). It is also about analysing the discursive space “in which claims of justification can be raised, contested, and defended, that is, a discursive space in which the participants can carry out their struggles for normative orders as a dispute over justifying reasons” (Forst & Günther 2010:3). Forst and Günther’s model is

well suited for this study to reveal strategies for the justification of power and to show how the Stasi succeeded – or failed – in combining music and politics in its own sense.

It is also about analysing the discursive space “in which claims of justification can be raised, contested, and defended, that is, a discursive space in which the participants can carry out their struggles for normative orders as a dispute over justifying reasons” (Forst & Günther 2010:3).

Forst distinguishes four forms of power: 1. “Noumenal power”: Power as “the capacity of person A to influence person B so that he or she thinks or acts in a way that goes back to A’s influence, which must be intentional in nature, otherwise one would speak only of effect and not of power” (Forst 2015:97). The point here is to use justification narratives to convince person B to accept the power of A as legitimate. When person B accepts the justification strategies of A as meaningful, Forst speaks of “noumenal power”. It is important that noumenal power describes the power relations between equal persons and is based on free will. Person B can reject the justification strategies of person A without suffering disadvantages; this form of power is exercised between “free actors” (Forst 2015:60). The aim here, however, is also to make “invisible exercise of power” visible (Forst 2015: 59).

2. By coercion or subjugation (*Beherrschung*) Forst means asymmetrical conditions that generate a justification space that is based on certain “not well-founded legitimizations”: Person B does not accept the reasons of person A. Person A maybe speaks here of a “God-intentioned” or un-

changeable order or “the space of justifications is ideologically sealed” (Forst 2015:97). Here there is often illegitimate coercion.

3. When specific forms of exercising power are part of social or political relations, which conforms to a special order in a society, Forst speaks of domination (*Herrschaft*). Here, too, there is often illegitimate coercion.

4. *Violence* is another asymmetrical form of power where physical coercion exists. Here the person exercising power is in principle powerless, strictly speaking, since the ruled have not accepted the justifications of power and the person exercising power is now resorting to physical methods of coercion. According to Forst, “Power is the ability to bound others by reasons; it is a core phenomenon of normativity” (Forst 2015:98). As we will see, all these forms of power existed in the GDR.

The material for this article comes from Swedish and German archives, including the archives of the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic (der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, MfS or Stasi), and the archives of the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm (Kungliga Musikaliska Akademien, KMA). The author also conducted 13 interviews with contemporary witnesses. In this article, two of these informants, who were themselves affected by the Stasi or who got to know IM of the Stasi, have their say. The contemporary witnesses quoted by name in this article were able to read and comment on the

quotations from the interviews before publication. The article is part of the research project "Between East and West: Ideology, Aesthetics and Politics in the Music Relations between Sweden and the GDR 1949–1989", which runs until 2020 and is carried out by the author together with the historian Henrik Rosengren and the musicologist Ursula Geisler; it is financed by the Baltic Sea Foundation at the Södertörn University in Sweden.

The article is a contribution to research on music as a cultural, social and political phenomenon. It is about studying music and musical creation in the field of tension between societal norms and values, as well as social and economic conditions. The focus is usually not on music per se, but rather on the social conditions for musicians, music critics, composers, musicologists and others (see, among others, Dankić 2019; Fredriksson 2018; Arvidsson 2014; Arvidsson 2008).

This article is also a contribution to research on music and music politics in the GDR. There are already a number of studies on various musical actors and areas in the GDR, but so far little research on international contacts in music and on the methods of power of the Stasi on music life in the GDR (Garberding 2020; Garberding, Geisler & Rosengren 2019; Bernhard 2018; Kelly 2019; 2014; Bretschneider 2018; Rosengren 2018; Noeske & Tischer (eds.), 2010; Klingberg 2000). The existing studies are mainly written from musicological perspectives; this article would like to examine the topic of the Stasi's power methods in music life and in Swedish-German contacts from an ethnological perspective.

Stasi as "Shield and Sword of the Party"

During the GDR era (1949–1989), the Stasi described itself as the "shield and sword of the party" (Heidemeyer 2015: 10).³

The task of the Stasi was to secure the SED's monopoly of power in the state and to expose and ward off attempts to influence and penetrate presumed enemies in good time. In addition, the Stasi operated so-called "counterintelligence", placing its own spies in strategically important places, who in turn reported to the Stasi. In addition, telephones and apartments were bugged and postal traffic within the GDR and between the GDR and abroad were controlled (Münkel 2015; Polzin 2015).

For Sweden, the GDR was an important trading partner and political and cultural contact. As Birgitta Almgren, professor emerita of German Studies, points out, GDR authorities regarded Sweden as an alliance-free state, which was described as a "focus country" (*Schwerpunktsland*) and interpreted as an important gateway to Western Europe (Almgren 2011:41; 2009: 15). The GDR regime's plan was to create a positive opinion of the GDR in Western Europe through friendly links and trade agreements between the GDR and Sweden. Almgren has shown how there were different views of the GDR in Sweden: there were those who judged the GDR positively and interpreted it as a model for modern socialist politics, for instance in culture and education, but there were also those who were critical of the GDR and decried it for lacking freedom of speech and travel (Almgren 2009).

My research in the Stasi archives in Berlin also shows that the Stasi was con-

stantly trying to expand its influence in Sweden and how it was trying to gain insight into Swedish cultural life. This also applies to Swedish musical life.

Choosing the "Right" People

The introductory quotation to this article illustrates how important it was for the Stasi to select the "right" people for its work. A crucial source of information for the Stasi were the so-called "unofficial employees" (GI, *geheimer Informator* [the term until 1968] and IM (*inoffizieller Mitarbeiter* [the designation as of 1968, BStU 2015:36, 43]). Their task was to gather information about people, opinions, events and so on in order to help the Stasi protect the GDR against alleged enemies (Gieseke 2011:112–116).

By attempting to gain knowledge about the political views of individuals as early as possible, the Stasi wanted to prevent new rebellions, demonstrations and any opposition activity that could call the power of the SED into question (Florath 2015:40–41). As the German historian Bernd Florath aptly describes it, the IM organization of the Stasi illustrates the state's fear of its own fellow citizens (Florath 2015:41). German research shows how extensive and comprehensive the monitoring apparatus of the Stasi was, considerably more so than in the other Eastern European countries (Gieseke 2011; Münkler ed. 2015). For example, shortly before the collapse of the GDR, 91,000 people were employed by the Stasi, and they received information from twice as many IMs. The IMs came from all groups in society and from all age groups. About half of the IMs were also members of the SED (Florath 2015:40).

The Stasi recruited its IMs by first having them monitored by other IMs in order to determine whether they were suitable for IM activities. Here the political attitude of the candidate was examined, his/her relationship to the GDR, to socialism and to the SED. But the candidate's lifestyle was also important, his/her work, family situation, the networks, contacts with the West and engagement in trade unions, associations and in their neighbourhood (Florath 2015:40–47). If a candidate was not positive about working for the Stasi, the Stasi could put the candidate under pressure (Jahn 2014; Almgren 2011).

If a candidate had contacts in the West, the employees of the Stasi investigated to what extent these could be used to the advantage of the Stasi. My studies in Stasi's archives have shown that in the field of music, the Stasi tried to recruit IMs who were considered particularly professional and respectable by their colleagues, who had a successful career and played an important role in their field. Experts in their field were particularly popular, but they should not be too specialized (Garberding 2020; Garberding, Geisler & Rosengren 2019).

Once the Stasi had found a suitable candidate, Stasi's employees tried to recruit this person as an IM. For the IM, working with the Stasi could mean many advantages, such as facilitating their further career and greater freedom to travel. IMs also received financial compensation for their work, but usually not large sums. If someone had committed him- or herself as an IM, it was usually impossible to end the cooperation without getting into difficulties (Florath 2015:50). This is corroborated not only by numerous eyewitness ac-

counts and previous research, but also by numerous television films about life in the GDR, such as *Weissensee, Germany 1983*, and *Das Leben der Anderen*.

"K. Bergman" and "John": "Enlightener" in Musicology

If the selected candidate had agreed to cooperate, he/she normally had to sign a "declaration of commitment" in which he promised to keep his cooperation with the Stasi secret under all circumstances. In her dissertation on the Stasi at the University of Jena, the historian Katharina Lenski has clearly shown how important the silence about any cooperation with the Stasi was; she also speaks here of "circles of silence" or a "silent community" (Lenski 2015:521).

One example of a declaration of commitment is the letter of commitment signed by the musicologist Alfred Brockhaus, who worked for many years at the Institute for Musicology at the Humboldt University (HUB) Berlin, in the 1970s and 1980s as head of the musicology department.⁴ Brockhaus received his doctorate in 1962 with the thesis *The Symphony of Dmitri Shostakovich* and in 1969 he was appointed professor of musicology at the HUB.⁵ Brockhaus was formally recruited as a "secret informer" (GI) in East Berlin back in 1957, but he did not make his written commitment until three months later:

I, Heinz Alfred Brockhaus, born on 12.8.1930 in Krefeld [...] voluntarily commit myself to cooperate with the Ministry of State Security. I will keep this cooperation secret from anyone.

I will sign my written reports with the name K. Bergmann. I am aware that if I break this obligation I may be held responsible under the laws of the GDR. So far I have not been contacted or recruited by any other department.

Berlin, 27.2.1958, Alfred Brockhaus.⁶

According to files in the Stasi archive, Brockhaus had already been prepared to provide the Stasi with information in November 1957. It was the Stasi's practice to first let possible candidates for cooperation pass a kind of test in order to convince the Stasi of their suitability. Brockhaus had to visit and report about a music arrangement in West Berlin for his "rehearsal". In the summer of 1957 he gave his report to a Stasi employee in a café in East Berlin. His report convinced the Stasi of his suitability, as he not only fulfilled the assignment, but even more thoroughly than expected wrote about a group of students whom he suspected of working with an opposition group, the Young Community (*Junge Gemeinde*, Klingberg 2000: 197). In connection with his recruitment, he was commissioned to contribute to the "Enlightenment of the Institute of Music History" (Klingberg 2000:200). This formulation shows how Stasi's employees defined their work. They did not interpret their mission, as we do today, as a kind of spying and denunciation. Rather, they saw themselves as employees who were supposed to protect the East German state by helping to achieve "clarity" about the political views and activities of individuals, groups and institutions. From a discourse-analytical perspective, one can speak here of a threat topos, a "locus terribilis" (Wodak 1998:85), which laid the foundation for cooperation with the Stasi. One speaks of a "locus terribilis" when an idea of an existential threat exists and one has to defend oneself in time against an enemy. In the case of the Stasi employees, they learned that one had to protect one's own state against "foreign powers", such as the capitalist countries.

In order to clarify whether a threat was present or not, the Stasi needed information from persons who had insight into certain groups, organizations or institutions and had certain networks at their disposal. In the Stasi files, the term "enlightenment" is often used to refer to the gathering of information about suspected opponents of the regime. "Enlightenment" is usually seen as a positive word, and in Stasi's usage it can also be interpreted as a word that illustrates how the Stasi and its IM perceived their work as something important and constructive (see Almgren 2009:448f.).

One year after his recruitment in 1958, Brockhaus was promoted to Secret Main Informator (GHI, *geheimer Hauptinformator*, BStU 2015:36). Now he also assumed responsibility for supervising other IMs, many of whom were students at the Faculty of Philosophy (Klingberg 2000: 202). The meetings with the other IMs were often held in Brockhaus's office, but according to Brockhaus this became "more and more difficult" for him because he was "rarely alone" (ibid.). An example of one of "Bergmann's" collaborations with Stasi is his report to his Stasi contact in 1962:

He [Bergmann] reported the following about the Institute of Musicology: There is now a real conception that some students want prove that music has to be apolitical, that music has nothing to do with society. They continue to demand that modern western music be taught and performed at our institution. The following students belong to it: Spokesman [name] 3. Study year. [Name], [name] and [name]. [Name] said the following: What can be reflected in our music? Only fear and terror. [...] [Name] says, ideological things are decisive, that's the trouble with us. If you don't join in, you're drilled until it fits.

The GHI estimates that [name] is a distinct

enemy. In a seminar presentation with Prof. [Ernst Hermann] Meyer, the student [name] said: "She quoted an essay: 'Science must abstain from any political comment.'"

The student [name] said to this student [name] that she should only pay attention that she instead of Adolf [Hitler] does not say Walter [Ulbricht]. (Underlining in the original.)⁷

While the students quoted here thought that music and politics should have nothing to do with each other, the interpretation and reporting of the GHI shows that these views challenged the official discourse in the GDR, in which music was supposed to express a certain political ideology. The students were opposed to a discourse order in which the political worldview is prescribed by the state and in which the interpretation of musical expressions is also to be determined. This report to the Stasi shows how the discursive space in musicology at the HUB should be designed according to the official authorities of the GDR: Any questioning of the official discourse on music as an expression of a certain (socialist) ideology should be documented and then so-called "measures" (*Maßnahmen*) taken. As Klingberg has shown, for several of the above-mentioned students the measures meant that an academic career in the GDR was made more difficult or even denied. They had problems getting suitable housing, received lower salaries than their colleagues, and some left the GDR for good (Klingberg 2000:201–202). Concepts such as the "enlightenment of conditions in musicology at the HUB" legitimized the exercise of power by the Stasi through its GHI Brockhaus. So he saw it as his task to expose critics and hand them over to the Stasi. By naming the quibbling students, power could be exercised at the individual

level, and individuals could be controlled and persecuted. The power factor was further strengthened by secretly controlling the students – from today's point of view a human rights violation. In this case one can first speak of power in the form of subjugation – when the students were unknowingly intercepted, and their opinions were presented to the Stasi – and then of a form of violence, when the denounced students were subjected to so-called "countermeasures", such as not getting an apartment or employment.

From 1962 onwards, there are no further reports in Brockhaus's Stasi files. In 1969 it was announced that his professional career and his work at the HUB took so much time that he could no longer be "used" as GHI (Klingberg 2000:207). But in 1979 Brockhaus was recruited again, and this time as IMS "John". As an IMS, he had the task of "politically-operatively penetrating and securing an area of responsibility" (*politisch-operative Durchdringung und Sicherung eines Verantwortungsbereiches*, BStU 2015:44), and as one of these areas the Stasi had designated the Association of Composers and Musicologists of the GDR (*Verband der Komponisten und Musikwissenschaftler der DDR*, VKM).⁸ The VKM was the main organization for musical life in the GDR and was founded in 1962 by the composer Hanns Eisler. The Council was superior to all other music organizations and was accepted as a member of the International Music Council of UNESCO in 1966. Numerous international connections were maintained through the VKM, including to Sweden.

The GDR authorities were not satisfied with the development in the VKM. In

1983, "John" reported that there was an influential group of people in the VKM who were not in accord with the party line and who advocated an "ideological co-existence" between West and East German musicology. Another problem were "church-pacifist" tendencies in the VKM, which were expressed, among other things, by the fact that composers used texts by Italian and French writers that could be interpreted as "church-pacifist" statements. The Stasi had this problem confirmed by another employee, Gerd Schönfelder (see below).⁹ "John" sent along a list of names which included the musicologist Ingeborg Allihn, who also had contacts in Sweden. Allihn was the editor of the VKM journal *Bulletin* and "John" regarded her contacts with the West and to the church as a problem.¹⁰

"A. is Politically behind the Fence"¹¹

During a conversation with me, the German musicologist Ingeborg Allihn said that she was not surprised when she read in her Stasi file that the supervisor of her doctoral thesis, Alfred Brockhaus, had reported on her as IM "John" of the Stasi. She and her friends had long had a suspicion. "We could smell, he's Stasi," she said. During the GDR period, she and her friends were often fairly certain who worked for the Stasi. When she read her Stasi files after the fall of communism, her suspicions were confirmed in all cases. When I met Mrs Allihn for a conversation in Berlin, I had been allowed to read some parts of her Stasi files with her consent. I wanted to talk to her about her contacts with Swedish music life and her trouble with the Stasi. Ingeborg Allihn came into contact with Swedish colleagues, among

others Sven-Erik Bäck and Eskil Hemberg, through her work for the VKM and her *Chamber Music Guide* (*Kammermusikführer*, Allihn, ed., 1997). In the early 1980s, by invitation of the VKM, she travelled to Sweden to collect material and find authors for the chapters on Nordic composers in the Chamber Music Guide. She also travelled from Sweden to Oslo at the invitation of the Nordic Music Council to take part in a music conference. From then on she remained in contact with Swedish colleagues, especially with Eskil Hemberg, who visited her several times in the GDR.¹²

She reported to me that her supervisor Alfred Brockhaus had actually not been particularly interested in her doctoral thesis. She now believes that it may have been advantageous for her that Brockhaus told the Stasi about her, that she was "politically behind the fence" and had church connections. This would have had the advantage that the GDR authorities regarded her as "lost" – she could not be used for political purposes. One problem, of course, was that she couldn't pursue an academic career at university for this reason, but she thinks she was lucky because she could work for the VKM, both with the *Bulletin* and with the *Chamber Music Guide*. In our conversation she particularly praised the then head of the VKM, Vera Reiner, as an important pillar in her career: Reiner had repeatedly held her "protective hand" over her. Thanks to Reiner, Allihn probably had relatively large freedom in her work with the *Bulletin*. But the *Bulletin* also meant many contacts with colleagues in West Germany and Western Europe, which of course was a thorn in the side of the Stasi. But after the fall of com-

munism these were exactly the contacts that helped Allihn to survive, since several valuable employment opportunities were offered her from West Germany. Thanks to them, the transition after the fall of communism was relatively unproblematic for her.

Allihn's report can be interpreted as an example of a narrative in which Allihn – looking back on the events – positions herself not merely as a victim of the Stasi. Instead, she describes her own position in its complexity: On the one hand, through her work for the VKM she was a target for Brockhaus's negative reporting to the Stasi; on the other hand, it was precisely this work for the VKM that gave her employment and relative freedom in the GDR. Her report also makes it clear how, on the one hand, international cooperation could allow a certain amount of freedom, but, on the other hand, could lead to even more intensive scrutiny by the Stasi. It is also interesting to see how certain persons who presided over international bodies and did not accept Stasi methods weakened the Stasi's power potential and how this clearly called its legitimacy into question.

But Brockhaus wasn't the only one who reported on Allihn. In the GDR era, Allihn was aware that, as a single mother, she could easily be pressured by the authorities, because they could always have threatened to take her children away. "Thank God this never happened", she said in our conversation. But she also told me about an experience when she was particularly afraid. An important contact for her in Sweden was, as I mentioned, Eskil Hemberg, who was chairman of the Swedish Composers' Association (*För-*

eningen Svenska Tonsättare, FST) at the time. Hemberg often travelled to the GDR and was very interested in the musical life of the GDR. Allihn often acted as his "companion" on behalf of the VKM, which meant that she helped him to get access to concerts, museums, restaurants, etc.¹³

Once, when Hemberg was in the GDR to visit the Dresden Music Festival, Gottfried Scholz, then director of the Vienna Musikhochschule, was also there. Allihn was to look after the guests. When she and the guests had accepted Vera Reiner's invitation to dinner, the musicologist and director of the Dresden Academy of Music, Gerd Schönfelder, was also present (see below about Schönfelder). During their talk, Scholz invited Allihn to visit him and his wife in Vienna. Allihn: "And then I saw his [Schönfelder's] face, and it was clear to me that he would do anything to prevent that." When she came to her hotel in the evening, she had a message that she should be at the Stasi the next morning at 7.00 o'clock. A colleague offered to take her there and wait outside for her. She also received a call from Vera Reiner, who was aware that Allihn was going to the Stasi, and Reiner advised her to say as little as possible.

"Really, it was like a crime thriller," Allihn said. She had rarely been so afraid. When she came to the Stasi the next morning, she was told that she had been charged with allegedly passing on internal information to Western colleagues. That was a serious accusation. Allihn denied everything and got away with a warning. When she was back in Berlin, Vera Reiner said that the charges were not only against her, but also against the VKM. Reiner

went to the Stasi in Dresden to find out who had reported on Allihn and the VKM. There she could read the notification and saw the signature of the person who had done the denouncing; she recognized Gerd Schönfelder's writing. Allihn: "Then the VKM never sent Schönfelder anywhere again." She also learned at that time that Schönfelder and his wife had recently been in Vienna for 14 days on behalf of the VKM. "From that hour on, Schönfelder was dead to me," said Allihn. Today she is certain that she was simply lucky that the Stasi in Dresden had treated her so "benevolently". It could have ended very badly for her.¹⁴

Schönfelder illustrates here how an IM on the one hand establishes good relations with a national and international organization (VKM) in order to then use them for monitoring on behalf of the Stasi. Schönfelder here represents two different orders of power, which he combines as an IM: On the one hand the noumenal power, in which his colleagues in the VKM trusted him as a musicologist and respected colleague, regarding this exercise of power as justified (they let him travel to Vienna on behalf of the VKM). On the other, there is power as a form of subjugation (with a threat of violence in the background) in which he controls the same organization as an IM and reports to the Stasi on behaviour as he regards as harmful to the state. These combinations of different power exercises were characteristic of the conditions in the GDR.

Gerd Schönfelder and the Royal Academy of Music in Stockholm¹⁵

Gerd Schönfelder was a German musicologist who had grown up and worked in

the GDR. During the 1970s he was employed at the University of Leipzig and the Music Academy (Musikhochschule) in Dresden, from 1972 as Vice-Rector and 1980–1984 as Rector. In 1984 he became head of the Semper Opera in Dresden.¹⁶ In 1961 he became a member of the SED, in 1973 of the Central Music Commission (Zentrale Kommission Musik) of the Cultural Association of the GDR (Kulturbund der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik). As of 1969 he was a member of the VKM and was also active on the board.¹⁷

In 1976 Schönfelder was invited to Sweden by the Swedish Composers' Association to represent the VKM. The invitation came from Eskil Hemberg, who was the chairman at the time. After this trip there were regular connections between Schönfelder and Swedish musical life, among others with Hemberg, the composer Jan Carlstedt, Hans Åstrand (the Permanent Secretary of the KMA) and Per Skans from Radio Sweden.¹⁸ Schönfelder's collaboration with Åstrand resulted, among other things, in the jointly published book *Principle truth principle beauty: Contributions to the aesthetics of modern Swedish music (Prinzip Wahrheit Prinzip Schönheit: Beiträge zur Ästhetik der neueren schwedischen Musik, 1984)*.

In February 1979, Schönfelder was granted permanent status as a so-called travel cadre (*Reisekader*) to what were termed non-socialist foreign countries.¹⁹ His wife was also active as a travel cadre and could often travel abroad with her husband.²⁰ This meant that it became much easier for him to travel and that he was considered politically reliable by the GDR authorities. In order to become a travel cadre, one had to show the regime

one's "political utility" (Hedin 2005:289). Only those GDR citizens who were classified as politically reliable could become travel cadres. The political loyalty was determined through a process in which the Stasi had surveys carried out on the person in question at his/her workplace and in his/her residential area. They also examined the family and kinship relationships of the person, their political attitude and contacts in the West (Hedin 2005:294–299).

Within the travel cadre system, there were also various gradations, depending on the assessment of the travel cadre's political loyalty and political influence. For example, there were travel cadres who were allowed to enter and leave the country without applications for their trips, while others still had to submit applications. There were travel cadres who were allowed to take their spouses with them, while other couples were not allowed to travel together, because despite their status as travel cadres they were observed with certain mistrust by the GDR authorities.²¹

As a travel cadre, Schönfelder undertook to accept and obey directives from the Ministry of Culture. Within 14 days of returning home, he had to send in a report in which he gave an account of how he had followed the directives on his trip. According to sources in the Stasi archives, a "permanent contact" with Schönfelder was established at the beginning of the 1980s.²² At that time he had become known to the Stasi as a very reliable travel cadre and his extensive and well-formulated reports were highly appreciated. In a 1981 report, for example, he categorized his Swedish music colleagues according to their sympathies for the GDR and divided them into GDR sympathizers, crit-

ics and enemies. This report was highly appreciated by the Stasi.²³ In Sweden, Schönfelder collaborated with colleagues in musicology; among other things, he produced analyses of Swedish musical works, provided assistance with preparing musicological conferences and helped Radio Sweden with the production of programmes on East Asian culture, especially music theatre.²⁴

In 1981 the KMA wanted to thank Schönfelder for his work in Swedish musicology by giving him a Volvo. Hans Åstrand, KMA's permanent secretary at the time, wrote to the "responsible authorities" in Sweden and the GDR asking them to respect KMA's decision to donate a car to Schönfelder.²⁵ The car was to be a thank you for Schönfelder's important work for the Academy, which he did in the form of lectures, discussions, scientific support and participation in conferences; all this commitment was difficult to measure in money, according to Åstrand. But a letter from the regional administration in Dresden to the Stasi shows that Schönfelder stated that he received the car because his own car had been destroyed in an accident. When he told his Swedish hosts, they decided to give him a Volvo in gratitude for his work.²⁶ In a letter to the customs in the GDR in 1982, Schönfelder thanked them for having been allowed to import the car. Among other things, he wrote that he had not been able to refuse the car "for political reasons". He had accepted the car on the advice of the GDR ambassador Kiesewetter, because a rejection would have been seen as an insult to the Swedish king.²⁷ One of my interviews with contemporary witnesses shows that Schönfelder was extremely pleased with

the Academy's gift and that the Volvo meant a lot to him. It is also well-known today that in the GDR the party elite drove Volvos: the Volvo was a symbol of status and power.

In the GDR, most citizens received a car only on application and after a long waiting period, and then mostly a Wartburg or Trabant. "Western cars" were mainly driven by politicians or people with high social status. Car brands clearly marked class affiliation in a state that liked to present itself as classless. For example, the Stasi always examined what kind of car a citizen drove (Münkel 2015). Schönfelder therefore had to justify his gift from the KMA to the GDR authorities so that they would not become suspicious and so that he would not jeopardize his freedom to travel or even be deprived of his car and see it collected as state property. Although Schönfelder had apparently been very happy about the gift, he was not allowed to show the GDR authorities his pleasure with the car. Instead, he presented the car as an imposed gift that he had to accept for "political reasons". But a gift always obliges one to give something in return, as the French sociologist Marcel Mauss (2002) has stated. Because a gift always establishes a relationship between the donor and the recipient, the recipient is expected to give a counter-gift in the future. From this point of view, the gift of the KMA can also be interpreted as an obligation of Schönfelder: the KMA hoped that he would continue to make his services available to them in the future – which he did.

In February 1983 Schönfelder was recruited as an IMS by the Stasi. As mentioned above, the designation IMS means

an unofficial employee at the Ministry of State Security with a specific area of responsibility.²⁸ In 1984 he was upgraded to IMB status. This designated an unofficial co-worker, who was to work more specifically with control and defence against enemies or potential enemies (*inoffizieller Mitarbeiter der Abwehr mit Feindverbindung bzw. zur unmittelbaren Bearbeitung im Verdacht der Feindtätigkeit stehenden Personen*, BStU 2015:43).²⁹ Schönfelder was advertised as IMS and later as IMB in order to "utilize" his extensive contacts with musical figures in West Germany, Austria and Sweden to "gain information about the aims and intentions of the leading personalities of musical life in Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria for the MfS".³⁰

Although Schönfelder was regarded as politically reliable according to his Stasi files, he was not easy to recruit for co-operation with the Stasi. He himself cited his high workload as a reason. His Stasi files show that the Stasi visited him several times to recruit him, which finally succeeded in February 1983. In this recruitment, Lieutenant Greif of the Stasi had used the "recruiting legend" as a method, which was quite common among Stasi recruiters. The recruiting legend was a narrative in which the person to be recruited was portrayed as extremely important for the development or safe-keeping of the state. In doing so, the recruiter, if possible, referred to an earlier successful activity of the person to be recruited in order to convince them of their great importance for the state.³¹ In Schönfelder's case, Greif mentioned Schönfelder's reports on Sweden's work for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Europe; this was

something of particular interest to the Stasi.³² As a travel cadre, Schönfelder had described this work in Sweden in a report about his trip to Sweden in 1981.³³

The recruitment of new IMs by the Stasi can be described as a combination of noumenal power in connection with a threat of subjugation. Noumenal power was important in Stasi's recruitment methods. As previous research has shown, the Stasi can be described as making use of a "professionalization of denunciation" (Florath 2015:42). In the early years of the GDR, the SED had established that voluntary reports by fellow citizens on political opposition were not always reliable and could also be based on resentment and conflicts between individuals. For this reason, the IM system of state security was continually expanded and professionalized in the 1960s (*ibid.*). This professionalization can also be described as a strategy of justification, since it was always a question of justifying the secret surveillance of political views as indispensable to the state – so that the state could survive and people could gradually be drawn into the new political system. In its 1979 guidelines, for example, the Stasi emphasized the importance of recruiting IMs, who would join of their own free will and appealing to the personal willingness of individuals. A dilemma for the Stasi was that it was difficult for party members to monitor their fellow human beings, as their party membership was often known and it was often difficult for these people to inspire confidence in others. As a result, the Stasi tried to recruit more and more people who were not known to be close to the party or who were not party members (Florath 2015:42).

According to Florath, the Stasi often managed to use partial agreements with the IM candidates to persuade them to cooperate. Frequent narratives were for example that the Stasi asked for help in investigating crimes, that the Stasi offered support in the candidate's professional careers, promised them trips to the West or even exploited a previous piece of misconduct in order to recruit a candidate for the purpose of making amends. But fear of the power of the Stasi also led many candidates to commit themselves (Florath 2015:47).

It was precisely this combination of voluntarism and coercion that characterized the Stasi. In the case of Stasi's recruitment strategies, it becomes clear that an important narrative in recruiting new IMs was that of political and social engagement, which can be interpreted as an expression of noumenal power. This was a reason that many IM candidates could certainly consider acceptable. Another justification narrative was that of the threatened state, which had to be protected. Noumenal power, however, could very quickly turn into coercion, even when the IM candidate was just "offered" help with his/her professional career or travel abroad when he volunteered as an IM. A rejection of these "offers" could already be interpreted by Stasi's employees as criticism of the state, but did not necessarily have to be.

According to his Stasi contact Uwe Greif, Gerd Schönfelder became an IM out of "political conviction". Greif:

It can be said that the IM itself has an interest in a close and trusting cooperation with the MfS. He has recognized that socialism in the GDR and internationally can only be reliably protected from

internal and external enemies through the use of conspiratorial tools and methods in connection with the other prerequisites. The IM represents consistent political-ideological positions. He is a convinced communist and internationalist, which he does not reveal in every case.³⁴

In Greif's description of Schönfelder, Schönfelder accepted the then common narrative of the threatened state, which also had to be protected through "conspiratorial tools and methods". Schönfelder is also clearly presented as a "convinced communist and internationalist" and therefore as a suitable IM. He was given the alias "Hans Mai".³⁵

According to Rainer Forst, any political normativity claims legitimacy, that is, that the political order can be justified and that these justification narratives are accepted by those living in that order (Forst 2015: 187). But the mere fact that the Stasi wanted to keep its surveillance methods secret shows that it was aware of the problem, that such methods basically violate democratic rules. In a genuine democracy, these monitoring principles should have been openly discussed and decided by a parliament. In the GDR, as in the Soviet Union, however, an important discourse was that people must first learn socialism and not always know what is good for them – but what the state knew (Jarausch 1999). Starting from Forst's ideas about democracy and justification narratives, it can be said that in the GDR the discourse of education to socialist people divided fellow citizens into different groups – those who felt these methods were justified and those who rejected them as an encroachment on personal freedom. There were also problems when the secret surveillance strategies could suddenly be exposed. I will come back to that in a moment.

One of Schönfelder's most important tasks as IMS "Hans Mai" was to observe musical life in Sweden, West Germany and Austria. He was supposed to gather information about "the aims and intentions of leading personalities of musical life in these countries",

because this opens up opportunities to obtain information from other areas of the economic and social life of these countries, as through the candidate's circle of acquaintances there are extensive contacts to leading representatives of monopoly capital.³⁶

Here it becomes clear how Schönfelder's contacts to "leading personalities in musical life" were to be used for political purposes: Music was to be used here as a way to spy on social, political and economic activities in the above-mentioned countries.

But one of the first orders for the Stasi was to be executed by Schönfelder in Norway. Here he was commissioned to observe the celebrations on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Norwegian Music Academy (*Musikkhøgskole*) in Oslo. Among other things, the Stasi wanted to learn more about the political and social development, about the participation of West German citizens in the celebrations and, further, to gain information about former GDR citizens.³⁷ Schönfelder stayed in Norway from 26 September to 3 October 1983 and wrote a detailed report after his return home. Due to lack of space, the report cannot be described and analysed in more detail here. But in summary it can be said that Schönfelder emphasized the great interest of his Norwegian colleagues in music exchange with the GDR and their great respect for the cultural work in the GDR. But he criti-

cized, among other things, that 98 per cent of the students at the conservatory would be unable to find work after their studies because there were not enough permanent positions. He was also of the opinion that musical life in Norway would develop better if the Norwegians realized that successful cultural work was not just about professionalism and the right people, but about socialist cultural policy. Cultural life in Norway, as in other capitalist states, was too much determined by problems of profitability.³⁸ According to Schönfelder, the "only efficient authority" in Norway in the musical field was the Oslo Philharmonic, whose "artistic level", however, did not or only rarely come close to that of the Dresden Philharmonic.³⁹

And how did Schönfelder report on Sweden? For reasons of space, only one example can be given here. The Stasi was particularly interested in the KMA in Stockholm. In 1984, the same year that Schönfelder was promoted to IMB, he was elected as the first East German representative to the academy in December. The Stasi took his election as an opportunity to give them questions about KMA as a directive, before he went to Sweden:

What is the current attitude of academy members towards the GDR?

What expectations are placed on further cooperation with the GDR in the cultural field?

What role is Prof. Schönfelder to play in this?

What is the attitude of the academy members towards Prof. Schönfelder as a communist?

What material remuneration will result from the election to the Royal Swedish Academy?

What rights and duties does an academic have? What are the Academy's national and international objectives?

What funds are allocated to the Academy?

How are the interests of right-wing bourgeois forces perceived?

How and through which persons are the interests of the USA and other reactionary systems enforced?

Where are the starting points for the penetration into the conspiracy of Western secret services recognizable?

In particular, all findings in connection with the awarding of Nobel Prizes are significant.⁴⁰

In addition, the Stasi wanted information about the political and economic situation in Sweden, wanted to know to what extent one could recognize a right-wing orientation in Swedish politics and how long the "opportunistic tendencies" in Swedish politics should be maintained. It also wanted more information about Hans Åstrand, Per Skans and Eskil Hemberg in order to "further clarify the personality profile".⁴¹ The questions show that the employees of the Stasi did not have particularly good knowledge of KMA and that they apparently assessed its influence on Swedish cultural life as being greater than it actually was. They also seem to have confused KMA with the Swedish Academy.

Before I go into Schönfelder's answers to these questions, I would like to briefly report on his election to the KMA. The choice of Schönfelder for the KMA was not entirely self-evident, as sources in the KMA archives and contemporary witness reports show. In 1984 he was proposed by the composers Jan Carlstedt, Eskil Hemberg and Ingvar Lidholm, and the musicologists Bo Wallner and Gunnar Larsson, whose proposal was based on Schönfelder's commitment to Swedish music in the GDR and his important contribution to musicology through the publication *Prinzip Schönheit Prinzip Wahrheit*. They also described him as an important musicologist, humanist and Swedish bibliogra-

pher.⁴² However, he received only 24 out of 44 votes in the election.⁴³ This distribution of votes allows us to assume that Schönfelder's election was not entirely self-evident and that not all of the members of the KMA supported him. From today's perspective it is surprising that several people who supported Schönfelder's election to the KMA have been central figures in Swedish musical life. This raises the question – which cannot be answered here: Why did these people support Schönfelder's election to the KMA?

Erik Lundkvist, a Swedish organist who gave concerts in the GDR for the Institute for National Concerts (*Institutet för Rikskonserter*; it existed from 1968 to 2010) and who has been a member of the KMA since 1983, said in an interview with me that he and several of his colleagues in the KMA were surprised at the choice of Schönfelder: "Why was he elected? A cultural personality of the GDR? [...] We were never properly told who he was, we knew too little about him."⁴⁴

But even when Schönfelder was elected to the KMA in 1984, there was apparently a suspicion that Schönfelder came to Sweden not only for scientific reasons. Schönfelder's Stasi contact Uwe Greif reported to the Stasi that Schönfelder had told him that before his election to the KMA he had "been questioned by the deputy president [Claude Génétay]". Greif:

He [Schönfelder] was confronted with the fact that the Swedish Academy had information that he was on a "secret service mission of the Ministry of State Security". This allegation was vigorously rejected by the IM. The Swede's question whether he [Schönfelder] could also take his oath on this was of course answered in the affirmative by the IM.⁴⁵

According to Greif, Schönfelder had held back in Sweden because of this mistrust and had not fulfilled "his tasks". His Swedish colleague Hans Åstrand was of the opinion that this suspicion could be connected with the fact that someone in Dresden, where Schönfelder had just become head of the Semper Opera, was resentful about the appointment and now tried to defame him.⁴⁶ KMA seems to have believed Schönfelder's statement and apparently did not pursue the issue any further at that time; Schönfelder was elected as a new foreign member.

But what answers did the Stasi receive to its questions about the KMA? Because Schönfelder had not answered the questions in his conversation with Greif, he wrote a report for the Stasi in January 1985. Among other things, he reported that the academy pursued a strict policy of neutrality at national and international level. He also mentioned that "material remuneration" by the KMA was "only" settled to the extent that the KMA paid him twice a year for the trip to Stockholm, provided him with a free guest apartment during his stays in Sweden and paid daily expenses.⁴⁷ According to Schönfelder the aim of the KMA was:

... to uphold cultural values and, above all, to develop the tremendous work of increasing the cultural demands and the cultural level of the population and, by raising this level, to paralyse the Americanization of Europe. He [no name mentioned here] told me very clearly that these are clear alliances that point them to us. Various things that we have done here, for example, are adopted by them, such as music for children, child class work, in order to direct people from the outset towards a culturally high level of education.⁴⁸

In this report, the cooperation between the KMA and the GDR is justified by a narra-

tive of the "locus terribilis": the image of a threat is constructed, against which joint action must be taken (Wodak et al. 1998: 85). It was important to create "alliances" with like-minded partners, which also is a kind of unification strategy in the critical discourse analysis: Two individuals or groups must work together to fight a common enemy (Wodak et al. 1998:84). The "alliance" with important partners such as the GDR is legitimized as an effective strategy against the aforementioned threat to Sweden by Americanization. According to Schönfelder's and his informant's description it is necessary to raise the cultural level of the population in order to counteract Americanization. What is meant by Americanization here remains vague and is not explained in detail. One interpretation might be that the informant of the KMA assumed that he/she and Schönfelder had a similar idea of the problems with Americanization, for example, the threat that other, new musical styles posed to the position of classical music in society.

According to Schönfelder's informant at the KMA, it is important to start cultural work with the citizens as early as possible. The term "child class work" (*Kinderklassenarbeit*) can have two different meanings here: (1) musical education at school, and (2) creating class consciousness in children. The description remains vague here, and it is possible that both are meant. Here the GDR becomes an important role model for this child class work. This narrative also points to Sweden's great interest in the East German education system and state cultural work in the GDR. As the previous research on the contacts between Sweden and the GDR shows, many Swe-

dish politicians regarded GDR's school system with "one school for all" and the state-financed cultural policy as a model (Almgren 2016:110ff.; Almgren 2009; Abraham 2007).

However, it was difficult for Schönfelder to identify the "right-wing bourgeois forces":

It is always very difficult to safeguard the interests of the right-wing forces, because they never expose themselves in such a way. When you are in their apartment, they make each other bad and when they sit opposite each other at the banquet, they say the most beautiful and kind things to each other. So the party principle is not the same there as in West Germany. It is very difficult to recognize right-wing forces, but there are some. They expose themselves like this Welin, Karl-Erik [sic!] did, who has publicly opposed the GDR with all these insinuations such as freedom, humanity, etc., which are idiotic. He is also a member of the academy and stayed away on the day of my election. He was also one of those who spoke against it for two years. But he was also one of those to whom the GDR gave an international career.

He was one of the organists who came to the GDR and played at big music festivals here like Händelfestspiele, Musiktage, Biennale, etc. Now he is no longer coming, I have already clarified that with the GDR Artist Agency [*Künstleragentur der DDR*]. It was this person of all people who used this opportunity to carry out a subliminal propaganda over the years.⁴⁹

Here Schönfelder tried to fulfil his task, to identify his opponents and the potential enemies of the GDR and to make them "harmless". One can also speak here of the "art of distribution", as Michel Foucault calls it (Foucault 2003:143). The aim is to place different individuals in closed milieus, to monitor and control them and to classify them according to a certain system and to grant them some freedom of action – or not. Schönfelder's aim was to

classify individuals according to sympathies and antipathies towards the GDR. He describes here how the members of the KMA take on different roles in private and in the more public milieu of the KMA. However, these differences can also be interpreted as showing that Schönfelder had the confidence of the members whom he was allowed to visit at home and who complained to him about colleagues in the KMA.

The Swedish composer and organist Karl-Erik Welin is positioned as an enemy in several places in Schönfelder's Stasi files. Since Welin publicly opposed the GDR, Schönfelder had the GDR Artist Agency arrange for him not to be allowed to travel to the GDR. One can also speak here in Forst's words of subjugation and oppression. Welin did not accept the official justification strategies of the GDR authorities and could therefore not be influenced by GDR propaganda. In principle, the removal of Welin from the GDR points to a kind of powerlessness on the part of the GDR authorities: Noumenal power could not be exercised here – i.e. Welin could not be persuaded to respect the GDR of his own free will. Therefore one had to limit his mobility and not let him enter any more.

Interviews with contemporary witnesses showed that Schönfelder's colleagues in Sweden wondered why he could come to Sweden so often, but they did not suspect that he might have worked for the Stasi. Erik Lundkvist, for example, reported to me that he wondered why Schönfelder was allowed to leave the GDR so often. Later he understood that Schönfelder had to have a kind of "mission". At that time he thought that it had to

be observations of the Swedish military or something similar.⁵⁰ The then permanent secretary of the KMA, Hans Åstrand, had introduced Lundkvist to Schönfelder. They became friends, and Schönfelder visited him several times at home. Lundkvist describes Schönfelder as a "super-intelligent person" and says that it was very interesting to talk to him. In retrospect, he also finds it interesting that Schönfelder often criticized the GDR and was very open with his criticism.⁵¹

At that time, Lundkvist had no way of knowing that this was a common strategy for the Stasi staff; they had learned to make personal contacts with those whom they observed. They were often very social and friendly and could speak on many different subjects – they learned this during their training with the Stasi. Birgitta Almgren, in her studies on the contacts between the GDR and Sweden, has shown how Stasi's employees were expected to create trust by "covertly" expressing "political views". The GDR authorities knew that not many Swedes liked to discuss politics and therefore recommended not expressing political views directly (Almgren 2009:206). Stasi employees learned systematic strategies to make personal contacts with "key people" and they practised certain argumentation techniques to give a positive picture of the GDR and to avoid difficult situations. Sometimes it could even be an advantage if a Stasi agent criticized the GDR in order to try to get his counterpart on his side (*ibid.*).

Ingeborg Allihn also told me that her West German colleagues were amazed at how "courageous" Schönfelder was when he dared to criticize the cultural policies of the GDR and Eastern Europe. She be-

lieves that it must have been very difficult for foreign colleagues to understand this, because it had already been difficult for the East Germans themselves. "You must have grown up here [in the former GDR] and developed a sensibility for that, ... that you can say I smell it, he can't help it, he is Stasi...". As mentioned above, she meant that East Germans could "smell" who the Stasi was. But in Schönfelder's case it was difficult because he was very skilful.⁵²

Today one might ask why the suspicion that Schönfelder could work for the Stasi was not pursued further in Sweden after 1984. The question is still difficult to answer. But the suspicion arose again in the end of 1989, when Schönfelder was in Sweden and suddenly had to go back to the GDR. In December 1989, the musicologist and journalist Carl-Gunnar Åhlén wrote articles in which he pointed out that Schönfelder had worked for the secret police of the GDR.⁵³ Even at that time there did not seem to have been any discussion in Sweden and not even in 1994, when Åhlén and the journalist Stefan Koskinen took up the subject again.⁵⁴ Up until today there has been little discussion of this topic. But that is the subject of another article.⁵⁵

Music and Politics: Strategies of Justification and Power

According to the historian Jens Gieseke, many former unofficial employees of the Stasi today justify themselves by saying that this is certainly difficult to understand today, but that the main reason for their Stasi cooperation was their political conviction. Basically, they believed in the "good core of the socialist idea", "in the legitimacy of protection from operations

of enemy powers", in the "desire to impart better knowledge of the opponent" and "to do something for the interstate or intra-societal 'peace'" (Gieseke 2011:126). This shows that the Stasi's justification narratives from the GDR era are still being updated. On the other hand, as Gieseke also emphasizes, other studies have shown that there were also many Stasi employees motivated by personal advantages and career opportunities (Gieseke 2011:127–128).

The historian Ilko-Sascha Kowalczyk emphasizes that in the GDR all citizens had some kind of relationship with the Stasi. Thus there were those who had committed themselves to the service of the Stasi – voluntarily or not – and who were closely interwoven with it both professionally and politically. Then there were also those who were disappointed in the political development of the GDR and hoped for reforms to come through the Stasi apparatus. A third group were critics and opposition members who suffered under the Stasi's ruling mechanisms (Kowalczyk 2015:73–75).

In this article I have given examples of various justification narratives and power strategies of the Stasi. Frequent justifications of Stasi employees in promoting new IMs were the narratives of the "enlightenment" of political positions of individuals, groups and institutions or the construction of so-called legends in which personal or professional merits of the candidate were presented as indispensable for the protection of the state from enemies. Other justifications that could motivate people to volunteer were support for professional careers, the possibility of getting a place for their children at university or finding an apartment.

As in other professions, the careers of musicologists, music administrators, composers and musicians have been influenced by the presence of the Stasi. Stasi staff members received many benefits, were given desirable positions in the academies, and were able to exert strong pressure on others. Those who refused to participate in the Stasi were not party members or expressed opposition were marginalized and discriminated against (Halbrock 2015:77). As I have shown, however, international contacts or even mere interest in them could also be problematic. Of particular interest here are international organizations such as the VKM, which had a high status in the GDR and internationally and was vital for international cooperation. If such organizations had leaders who did not accept the noumenal power of the Stasi, they could conquer certain power areas themselves and protect their employees against forms of coercion or violence by the Stasi.

Stasi's power methods and justification strategies moved constantly between noumenal power, subjugation and physical and mental violence. It was precisely this mixture of different power methods and justification strategies that made the Stasi so unpredictable and difficult to assess. As Kowalczyk notes, this was precisely the intention of the Stasi. An important principle of rule was to intimidate people and repress individuality (Kowalczyk 2015: 69). In my opinion, on the other hand, an important principle of the Stasi was also to emphasize and use individuality, for example when new candidates were to be recruited. The story of the consequential individual, who has already done important things for the state in the past and who is

therefore needed in the future to protect the state, was an important narrative of the exercise of noumenal power. These different perspectives fit in a state that is described in different studies as a "welfare dictatorship" (Jaraus 1999:60) and a "participatory dictatorship" (Fulbrook 2005:12): Emancipatory and egalitarian goals were combined with a repressive, dictatorial practice. On the one hand, the individual was expected to be committed to society, on the other hand he/she was clearly expected to subordinate him- or herself to the collective.

When the state of the GDR finally disappeared after 1990, the ways in which power was exercised and the justification narratives changed radically. Now it was up to the Stasi employees of the time to reposition and legitimize themselves, and as for the victims, it was up to them to come to terms with their own past, to demand justice. And they too had to reorient themselves. There has not as yet been much research done on this subject, and even less on the influence the Stasi has had in other states, such as Sweden. Also still missing is a discussion of how the Stasi's power and justification strategies can have influenced cultural life in other states and how this issue could be addressed in our time.

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Notes

- 1 Bezirksverwaltung für Staatssicherheit Dresden, Leutnant Greif: "Vorschlag zur Werbung eines IMS", February 2, 1983. BStU, MfS BV
- 2 Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 370. German original:
"Begründung der politisch-operativen Notwendigkeit der Werbung
Die politisch-operative Notwendigkeit der Werbung liegt in der konkreten politisch-operativen Situation innerhalb des für das Musikleben der DDR verantwortlichen Personenkreises begründet. [...] Dabei ist es von besonderer Bedeutung, daß der Kandidat über umfangreiche Verbindungen ins Operationsgebiet verfügt, deren Nutzbarmachung zur Informationsgewinnung über die Ziele und Absichten der führenden Persönlichkeiten des Musiklebens in Schweden, in der BRD und in Österreich für das MfS von Bedeutung ist, weil dadurch Möglichkeiten eröffnet werden auch Informationen aus anderen Bereichen des wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Lebens dieser Staaten zu erarbeiten, da durch den Bekanntenkreis des Kandidaten umfangreiche Kontakte zu führenden Vertretern des Monopolkapitals bestehen. [...]"
- 3 "Normative Orders" is an association of researchers from various social sciences and humanities disciplines, including European Ethnology. The association was founded at the University of Frankfurt am Main in 2010, and it sees it as its mission to investigate how political, economic, legal, religious and social orders change, how different power structures develop from this, and how these in turn influence power structures and life chances, on both a national and a transnational level. See also: <https://www.normativeorders.net/de/> (visited May 2, 2020).
- 4 For more information about the Stasi and its history, see among others Münkler (ed.) 2015, Gieseke 2011, Almgren 2011. See also: <https://www.bstu.de/informationen-zur-stasi/themen/was-war-die-stasi/> (visited May 2, 2020).
- 5 In 1969 the academies in the GDR were reorganized and from that year on the Institute for Musicology was transformed into a scholarly department (WB) Musicology in the new Institute "Aesthetics/Art Science" (IÄK) (Klingberg 2000:196).
- 6 BStU, MfS, AIM 4952/89 C, pp. 81–82, 88.
- 7 BStU, MfS, AIM Nr. 2452/63, Part I, pp. 21–22. German original: "Ich, Heinz Alfred Brockhaus, geb. am 12.8.1930 in Krefeld [...] verpflichte mich freiwillig, mit dem Ministe-

rium für Staatssicherheit zusammenzuarbeiten. Über diese Zusammenarbeit werde ich gegenüber jederman [sic!] Stillschweigen bewahren. Meine schriftlichen Berichte werde ich mit dem Namen K. Bergmann unterschreiben. Mir ist bekannt, daß ich bei Bruch dieser Verpflichtung nach den in der DDR geltenden Gesetzen zur Verantwortung gezogen werden kann. Ich wurde bisher von keiner anderen Dienststelle angesprochen oder verpflichtet.

Berlin, den 27.2.1958, Alfred Brockhaus."

- 7 BStU, MfS, AIM 2452/63, part A, Vol. 2, p. 88. German original: "Über das Musik.Wissenschaftl.-Institut berichtete er folgendes: Es gibt jetzt eine richtige Konzeption von einigen Studenten, die Beweisen [sic!] wollen, daß Musik unpolitisch sein muß, daß sie nichts mit der Gesellschaft zu tun hat. Sie fordern auch weiterhin, daß man die moderne westl. Musik bei uns lehrt und aufführt. Folgende Studenten gehören dazu: Wortführer [Name] 3. Stj./ [Name], [Name] und [Name]. [Name] sagte folgendes: Was kann sich schon in unserer Musik widerspiegeln? Nur Angst und Schrecken. [...] [Name] sagt dazu, Weltanschauliche Dinge sind eben ausschlaggebend, daß ist bei uns eben das Schlimme. Macht man nicht mit, wird solange gedrillt, bis es paßt.

Der GHI schätzt ein, daß [Name] ein ausgesprochener Feind ist.

In einem Seminarreferat bei Prof. [Ernst Herrmann] Meyer sagte die Studentin [Name]: Sie zitierte einen Aufsatz: 'Die Wissenschaft muß sich jeglicher pol. Stellungnahme enthalten.'

Der Student [Name] sagte zu dieser Studentin [Name], sie solle nur aufpassen, daß sie statt Adolf [Hitler] nicht Walter [Ulbricht] sagt."

Note: [Name]: due to the protection of personal rights, I was not allowed to know the names of these persons in the file.

- 8 BStU, MfS, AIM 4952/89 C, pp. 2–3. See also Klingberg 2000:210 and BStU 2015:44.
 9 BStU, MfS, AIM 4952/89, Part II, pp. 48–49.
 10 BStU, MfS, AIM 4952/89, Part II, pp. 49–50 and p. 57.
 11 BStU, MfS, AIM 4952/89, Part II, p. 2. "A. is politically behind the fence" can be interpreted as a metaphor, with which "John" wants to say that "A." [Ingeborg Allihn] is on

the wrong side politically, i.e. not in line with the party.

- 12 Interview with Ingeborg Allihn, June 18, 2018.
 13 Allihn emphasized in our conversation that she did not have to report about him to the GDR authorities.
 14 Interview with Ingeborg Allihn, June 18, 2018.
 15 Some parts of this section about Gerd Schönfelder, the Stasi and the KMA have already been published in a Swedish article, but with a focus on the person of Schönfelder and his role in the KMA (Garberding/Geisler/Rosengren 2019).
 16 "Antrag auf Ernennung des Prorektors für Lehre und Forschung der Hochschule für Musik 'Carl Maria von Weber' in Dresden, Genossen Dozent Dr. Sc. phil. Gerd Schönfelder, zum ordentlichen Professor für Musikwissenschaft (Musikästhetik und Musikgeschichte)", October 29, 1975. BStU, MfS BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 93.
 17 "Kurzbiografie Dr. Sc. Gerd Schönfelder", October 10, 1973." BStU, MfS BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 56.
 18 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, pp. 170–171.
 19 BStU, MfS BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, pp. 190–191.
 20 BStU, MfS BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, pp. 187–189.
 21 An example is Erich Stockmann, professor of musicology, and his wife Doris Stockmann, associate professor of musicology. They were considered politically unreliable and were not allowed to travel together. BStU, MfS, HA VIII, Nr. 2656, pp. 166, 168; BStU, MfS HA XVIII AP 51144/92. See also Garberding (forthcoming), 2020.
 22 BStU, MfS BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 374.
 23 BStU, MfS BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, pp. 327–336. See also Garberding/Geisler/Rosengren 2019.
 24 Ibid.
 25 Hans Åstrand; October 13, 1981. KMA archives, The Swedish Musik- and Theatre Library (*Statens Musik- och teaterbibliotek (SMB)*). Secretary's correspondence, E 5 a, vol. 9.
 26 Inspector Köhler to Region Department Dresden, October 23, 1981. BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, pp. 198–201.

- 27 Gerd Schönfelder to GDR's Customs, March 9, 1982. BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, pp. 198–199 and p. 356.
- 28 BStU, MfS BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 374.
- 29 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, pp. 383–395.
- 30 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 370.
- 31 BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 26648, pp. 47–49.
- 32 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 374.
- 33 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, pp. 327–336.
- 34 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 393. German original: "Es ist einzuschätzen, daß der IM selbst Interesse an einer engen und vertrauensvollen Zusammenarbeit mit dem MfS hat. Er hat erkannt, daß der Sozialismus in der DDR und auch international nur durch die Anwendung konspirativer Mittel und Methoden im Zusammenhang mit den anderen Voraussetzungen zuverlässig vor inneren und äußeren Feinden zu schützen ist. Der IM vertritt konsequente politisch-ideologische Positionen. Er ist überzeugter Kommunist und Internationalist, was er nicht in jedem Fall offenbart."
- 35 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 374.
- 36 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, I, Vol. 1, p. 370. German original:
 "[...] Dabei ist es von besonderer Bedeutung, daß der Kandidat über umfangreiche Verbindungen ins Operationsgebiet verfügt, deren Nutzbarmachung zur Informationsgewinnung über die Ziele und Absichten der führenden Persönlichkeiten des Musiklebens in Schweden, in der BRD und in Österreich für das MfS von Bedeutung ist weil dadurch Möglichkeiten eröffnet werden auch Informationen aus anderen Bereichen des wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Lebens dieser Staaten zu erarbeiten da durch den Bekanntenkreis des Kandidaten umfangreiche Kontakte zu führenden Vertretern des Monopolkapitals bestehen."
- 37 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, p. 55.
- 38 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM, 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, pp. 67–72 and pp. 73–79.
- 39 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM, 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, p. 69.
- 40 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, p. 242. German original:
 "Wie ist die aktuelle Haltung der Akademiemitglieder zur DDR? Welche Erwartungen werden an die weitere Zusammenarbeit mit der DDR auf kulturellem Gebiet gestellt? Welche Rolle ist Prof. Schönfelder dabei zugeordnet? Wie ist die Haltung der Akademiemitglieder zu Prof. Schönfelder als Kommunisten? Welche materielle Vergütungen ergeben sich aus der Einwahl in die Königliche Schwedische Akademie? Welche Rechte und Pflichten hat ein Akademiemitglied? Welche Zielstellungen verfolgt die Akademie im nationalen und internationalen Rahmen? Welche Gelder fließen der Akademie zu? Wie werden die Interessen rechtsorientierter bürgerlicher Kräfte wahrgenommen? Wie und durch welche Personen wird versucht die Interessen der USA und anderer reaktionärer Systeme durchzusetzen? Wo sind die Ansatzpunkte für das Eindringen in die Konspiration westlicher Geheimdienste erkennbar? Insbesondere sind alle Erkenntnisse im Zusammenhang mit der Vergabe von Nobelpreisen bedeutsam."
- 41 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, p. 242.
- 42 KMA archives, SMB, KMA minutes, "Protokoll dossier", A 3 a, Vol. 21, 1984–1985.
- 43 KMA archives, SMB, A 1 a, KMA minutes, 1984–1985.
- 44 Interview with Erik Lundkvist, March 2, 2018.
- 45 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, p. 249.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, p. 290.
- 48 BStU, MfS, BV Dnd, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, pp. 290–291. German original: "Ziel der Akademie ist, die kulturellen Werte hoch zu halten und vor allen Dingen eine ungeheure Breitenarbeit zu entwickeln, um die kulturellen Bedürfnisse und das kulturelle Niveau der Bevölkerung zu heben und mit der Hebung dieses Niveaus im Grunde genommen die Amerikanisierung Europas zu paralisieren. Es sind klare Bündnisbeziehungen, die sie zu uns hinweisen, das hat er mir ganz klar gesagt. Verschiedene Dinge, die wir hier gemacht haben, werden z.B. von ihnen übernommen wie Musik für Kinder, Kinderklas-

senarbeit, um den Menschen gleich von vornherein in der Erziehung auf ein kulturell hohes Niveau hinzulenken."

- 49 BStU, MfS, BV DnD, AIM 3242/90, II, Vol. 1, pp. 290–291. German original: "Die Interessen der rechtsorientierten Kräfte wahrzunehmen, ist immer sehr schwierig, weil die sich nie so exponieren. Wenn man in deren Wohnung ist, dann machen sie sich gegenseitig schlecht und wenn man sich dann am Bankett gegenüber sitzt, dann sagen sie sich die schönsten und liebenswürdigsten Sachen. Dort ist also das Parteienprinzip nicht so wie in der BRD. Rechtskräfte zu erkennen, ist sehr schwierig, aber es gibt welche. Sie exponieren sich wie dieser Wellin, Karl-Erik [sic!], der sich öffentlich gegen die DDR gestellt hat mit diesen ganzen schwachsinnigen Unterstellungen wie Freiheit, Menschlichkeit usw. Er ist auch Mitglied der Akademie und am Tag meiner Einwahl ferngeblieben. Er war auch einer derjenigen, die zwei Jahre lang dagegen gesprochen hat [sic!]. Er war aber auch einer derjenigen, denen die DDR die internationale Karriere verschafft hat.

Er war einer der Orgelspieler, die in die DDR kamen und zu großen Musikfestspielen hier spielten wie Händelfestspiele, Musiktage, Biennale usw. Jetzt kommt er nicht mehr, das habe ich schon bei der Künstleragentur geklärt. Ausgerechnet dieser Mensch hat diese Möglichkeit dort genutzt, um eine unterschwellige Propaganda zu betreiben, über Jahre hinweg."

- 50 Interview with Erik Lundkvist, March 2, 2018.
- 51 Interview with Erik Lundkvist, March 2, 2018.
- 52 Interview with Ingeborg Allihn, June 18, 2018. German original: "Da musste man schon hier aufgewachsen sein und eine Sensibilität dafür entwickelt haben..., dass man sagen kann, ich rieche das, der kann nicht anders, der ist Stasi..."
- 53 Åhlén, Carl-Gunnar: "DDR-hefen [sic!] som vände åter hem." *Svenska Dagbladet*, December 2, 1989;
- Åhlén, Carl-Gunnar: "Mitt påstående blir obesvarat." *Svenska Dagbladet*, December 23, 1989.
- 54 Åhlén, Carl-Gunnar: "Stasi-man favorit hos operachefen." *Svenska Dagbladet*, June 6, 1994; Bäumel, Mathias: "Kulturellt och poli-

tiskt mullvadsarbete." *Svenska Dagbladet*, June 6, 1994; Koskinen, Stefan: "Stasiman var ofta i Sverige." *Svenska Dagbladet*, January 9, 1995; Koskinen, Stefan: "Spionen som gick vilse i salongerna." *Svenska Dagbladet*, January 9, 1995; Koskinen, Stefan: "Svar." *Svenska Dagbladet* 1995.

- 55 See Garberding/Geisler/Rosengren 2019.

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Boys' Memories in Adult Narratives

Positioning and Qualia in the Retelling of Boyhood

By Jakob Löfgren

How would you recount the experience of growing up as a boy? Stories we tell ourselves are often normative and tell of how the world should be according to our cultural norms (Veissière 2018). Stories bring the world they describe into being (Veissière 2018). In public, boys are often spoken of as a cohesive, worrying group. Concerns typically related to boys are violence, exclusion, or anti-schooling (Kivijärvi et al. 2018:8). The stories (and to some extent research) connected with boyhood tend to represent boys as gendered archetypes: free, feral and up to no good (cf. Veissière 2018).

In narratology, the experience narrative corpus explored in previous studies highlights similar concerns: boys' academic performance, school violence (Dutro 2002) and boyhood anxieties (Thorn & McLean 2003). Other studies focuses on the representation of the boy in literature, or on stories aimed at boys' potential market. Stories about boys and boyhood in literature tend to represent the character as feral. Representations studied are protagonists like Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn (cf. Ziff 2012). An example of a study of boys as intended audience and connections to masculinity constructions is Wooden and Gillam's study *Pixar's Boy Stories: Masculinity in a Postmodern Age* (2014). Wooden and Gillam's approach is a feminist analysis of the media directed at boys. Kidd's (2004) study of feral stories and the construction of boyhood or Pollack's study of the "boyhood myth" (1998) both deal with stories and boys while focused on mediated stories. The choice of topics previously studied in male childhoods mirrors a discussion of masculinity as hegemonic, hierarchical

and (at times) toxic (cf. Veissière 2018; Kivijärvi et al. 2018:13 ff.). Boyhood stories are ascribed a qualia with certain connotations: feral (in literary representation), problematic, toxic and hierarchical (in public). This leads to the question: How is qualia constructed in male life stories?

The aim of this article is to highlight connections between qualia and positioning in autobiographical stories about boyhood in the Swedish-speaking context. By analysing qualia in the informants' stories, through the lens of narrative positioning I will analyse their autobiographical process, and the informants' evaluation of their upbringing. By doing this I want to diversify the picture of male stories concerning boyhood, concentrating on narration rather than representation, and qualia and positioning rather than normativity and ideal types.

Questionnaire Questions and Answers

The material in this article consists of answers to a questionnaire in Swedish, distributed digitally in Sweden and Finland in 2019. The questionnaire has been designed, distributed and archived at the Swedish Literature Society's (SLS) archive in Helsinki and at the Folklife Archives at Lund University (LUF). The choice to send out lists in two countries was intended to broaden the informant base, to get as many Swedish-speaking answers as possible, and to diversify the answers in relation to upbringing, class and geographical whereabouts.

The questionnaire was exclusively aimed at men, which was unique. A great deal of effort was devoted to constructing open and inclusive questions that "create

the opportunity to express experience in the form of storytelling in a reflective way and where the use of evaluative words and emotional expressions conveys the narrator's attitude to the world." (Marander-Eklund 2012:65). The issue that kept coming back in the collaboration with the archives was the issue of the average percentage of male respondents/responses in archive rolls being very low. In the Nordic archives, the majority of respondents are women. Therefore, the list was partly treated by the archives as a marketing strategy aimed at obtaining more men to enlist in the archive respondent systems, partly treated as an opportunity to get a material corpus of male life stories.

With that in mind, about 25 answers per country have been obtained. In demographic terms, all the informants are men, born between 1933 and 2001. They represent different socio-economic backgrounds and different regions in Finland and Sweden. As for ethnicity, the informants are Swedish-speaking men. The answers to the individual questions have varied in length from a couple of sentences to approximately 20 pages per theme. The answers to the questionnaire as a whole range from two to 85 pages. The informants will be referred to only by date of birth and the town or region of upbringing they have provided to the archive. I leave out names and occupations, as these details, especially in smaller locations, can lead to the informant being traceable.

I have sorted, categorized and approached the informants' stories by a method of close reading (Pöysä 2010). Close reading is attentive analysis of a text with a focus on significant textual details that let researchers develop a deep under-

standing of the text's form, function and significance. Pöysä points out that close reading is an intuitive method, in which a dialogue is formed (2010:331–334). This dialogue is done by repeated re-readings of the text, but more importantly, in taking notes (*ibid.*). In the close reading process, I have looked for passages where the informant tries to position himself as a narrator in order to understand the narrator's view of his experience, his feelings and his boyhood.

Autobiography, Qualia and Positioning

The narratives are discussed through (primarily) two separate narratological concepts: (1) qualia and (2) narrative positioning. These two concepts move in the realm of story and emotion, which makes them relatable to autobiographical storytelling. Autobiographical storytelling communicates a view of what we call ourselves and our actions, reflections, thoughts and place in the world (Bruner 2001:25). Such stories are a subset of life narratives that can be described as a selective process involving memory, experience, identity, execution and agency (*cf.* Smith & Watson 2000:15). The retention of the autobiographical process is an endeavour to "win back what has gone wrong" in one's life (Freeman & Brockmeier 2001:81). The goal of this process is not a historically correct representation of a lived a life, but to show that a life has been worth living (*ibid.*) The autobiographical stories are seen here as a separate story world (Herman 2009; Young 1987), in which emotion is conveyed through positioning (Douglas 2010). A process of the informants' active selection

of memories shows “an affective pattern and themes that define a person’s most important concern” (Singer & Salovey 1993:4).

The concept of qualia or “the sense of what it’s like for someone or something to have a particular experience” (Herman 2009) is a basic function of stories. The term is used to focus on the subjective experience conveyed in stories, rather than storytelling. “Qualia is an unfamiliar term for something that could not be more familiar to each of us: the ways things seem to us” (Dennet 1997:619), which includes thoughts, experiences and perceptions of an experience. Narrators readily use different techniques to evoke a representation of experience in the storyworld. The term “storyworld” is the occurrences and situations in narrative texts upon which the audience’s interpretation of the story is based (Herman 2009:106–107). The points of evaluation are revealed in the use of clues or “signals that convey information about these underlying norms and values” (Herman 2009: 70).

Narrative positioning is the construct in which a character is explained in a series of positions vis-à-vis, for example, other characters in the story, other stories or social stages. This conveys an understanding of the narrator and his worldview (Herman 2009). Narrative positioning studies have been conducted by Anna Hynninen (2017) and Jyrki Pöysä (2009). Positioning theory marries well with the folkloristic study of everyday life narrative studies, since “[P]ositioning takes place in affective relationships with people, but also with different discourses, practices, places, and spaces” (Hynninen 2017:90). The act of positioning is often seen as part

of a construction of one’s identity (Hynninen 2017) and as such it is a potent tool in the deconstruction of autobiographical narratives and self-defining memories.

Jyrki Pöysä examines narrative agency using positioning theory (e.g. Davies & Harré 1990; Harré & van Lagenhove 1999) and positioning analysis (e.g. Bamberg 2003). Positioning tends to be viewed as a technique that is used in interaction, between narrator and narrated. Pöysä made the argument that, in everyday narrative, for example in a conversation, positioning takes place immediately, in a space-time shared by speakers, then the idea of narrative positioning extends the scope of the subjects to a position beyond pure interactive positioning (cf. Pöysä 2009). Narrative positioning is driven by narrative framing and rhetorical reimagination (Pöysä 2009:323). Building on this understanding of narrative positioning, Hynninen explicates Pöysä’s notion stating that:

The narrative frames function as if they were between the immediate real world and the abstract narrative world [...] rhetorical reimagination usually involves the crystallization of the narrative [text] (the content and form of the narrative are established) and the narrative [performance] (the narrative, stylistic, and thematic features of the narrative that were not present in the original narrative). By reimagining and at the same time repositioning, the narrator can construct new actors’ positions (Hynninen 2017:263 [author’s translation]).

Thus, narrative positioning functions on a common horizon that is shared between narrator and narrate, beyond the present time and place of when the narratives were written. Keeping in line with Hynninen, I will analyse the positioning by the informants on a storyworld level (e.g. the

position from which the informant writes). The analysis is conducted by investigating textual cues of positioning that express affective relationships to people, discourses and material things. The purpose of this article is not a psychological analysis of the answers. Rather, I want to show how the feeling and experience of boyhood appear in the stories.

For the purpose of this article, I have selected the answers of three informants. All three answers are between ten and twenty pages long. They tell the stories of different generations of Swedish-speaking men's upbringing. The oldest of the three was born in 1933 in Mariehamn (Åland Isles), and writes a boyhood story that stretches through the winter war and into the 1950s. The in-between informant is a man born in Vasa (Ostrobothnia) in 1970, and his story takes place in the late 1970s and '80s. The youngest informant was born in a Stockholm suburb in 1987, and tells a story that stretches between the late 1980s and 2000. The choice to analyse these three autobiographies was dictated by geographical and generational differences, as they exemplify three time periods as well as three different locations. As such they are a representative sample of the entire material corpus, meaning that the informants discussed here represent the informants as a whole, the age groups and geographical spread of the respondents, and that the issues and positioning techniques correspond with the entire material corpus.

Positioning within the Storyworld

I will concentrate on the positioning done by the informants within the storyworld. In short, who are the informants position-

ing themselves as, in the story? (cf. Hynninen 2017:263). I will explicate these positions, by using three positioning tools; relationships, materiality and position vis a vis (master)narrative context (cf. Hynninen 2017:90; Fivush & Haden 2003).

The happy war child, the "non-thug" and the introvert

Early in the autumn of 1943 we were sent to Sweden as war children. We came to the same city; [small town in Sweden] Sweden's largest railway hub, in [Southern County]. We actually came to live in the same house too, though we were not together in the same way as before. [Brothers name] came to a medical family with two older children. My family was childless, but had a dog (Man, Mariehamn, 1933).

During the wars in Finland numerous children were evacuated to Sweden, and placed in foster families. One part of the story of the elderly man from Mariehamn dwells on his experience as a "war-child" in Sweden. The above quotation is the opening of the retelling of that experience. It is part of the answer to the question concerning everyday life. He begins the entire segment with the position of a war child, referring to his brother who happened to stay in the same building as him for the duration of the war. The comment about himself being placed in a childless home, I interpret as a position of a "wanted boy", rather than an expression of loneliness; an explanation of what-it-was-like.

In a subsequent section of the story he writes about his relationship to his "Swedish dad":

My Swedish dad, [Dad's name], and I had a good relationship. Locomotives were my big interest. He got literature on the subject from the library. Dad was [working as an] accountant at a company called Bilkompniet, and he had previously been

a taxi driver. So, my great interest in cars was founded.

He saw that I was collecting stamps. So, he picked up his old stamp albums and bought me albums for Finnish and Swedish stamps. And he himself took up his old stamp interest. Then we both sat sometimes in the evenings and fiddled with stamps.

The informant is pointing out the good relationship and shared interests with his Swedish dad, emphasizing the position of a happy child, by positioning his Swedish dad, as a father, with whom he had an excellent relationship. In the same manner the friend mentioned is a clue to the same childhood happiness, showing how “positioning takes place in affective relationships with people” (Hynninen 2017:90). The relationship with the dad functions as a textual clue to how the boyhood is to be perceived by a narrate; as a happy one. An emotion that culminates in a segment describing the family’s summer place:

The family had a summer place in a community located two railway stations from [Resident town] along the narrow-gauge railway line towards [Bigger town]. [Friend’s name]’s family were our neighbours there. Two other families lived nearby: Lindgren’s and the old couple [Female] and [Male]. [The couple] had grown boys. One was a sea captain, the other had a fox and mink farm right next door. I was often there when the animals were fed. I enjoyed being with [them] and was maybe a little too often there. They had a dog of the same breed as my family had (German Vorsteh), but their dog Mitzi was calm in contrast to Sicken who was apparently wrongly raised. The community was next to [a lake] where there were crayfish. I had to learn to catch crayfish with cords and pieces of roach. We didn’t use nets or traps because we didn’t really have permission to catch crayfish at our dock. (I later wondered why there was a dock because the family had no boat, and you couldn’t swim at our beach). [...] [My friend] had an older brother who was an engineer, and a

sister of my age. [She] and I sometimes took bike rides together. We enjoyed each other’s company.

This is yet another example of how the story transmits the what-it-was-like of the wartime childhood, depicting the boyhood as a happy one. I claim that the function of the people referred to in the segment is to function as textual clues used to transmit the qualia of happy memories. The affective component of positioning with people (Hynninen 2017:90) provides textual clues to transmit happiness. This technique is prevalent throughout the informant’s writings, also when talking about his brother, his friends in Finland or his parents. The story that emerges is one few antagonistic characters. It is told as a reminiscing about a happy past, despite it being wartime. This is a sort of justification; the boyhood was happy despite the war. In conjunction with qualia, the use of positioning *without* any direct conflicting position with close ones accentuates the position of a happy childhood and that the narrative self was a happy child. This technique, transmitting happiness through lack of conflict with characters in the story, is one readily used by other informants in the material corpus, signifying that happiness is expressed as a lack of interpersonal conflict and is tied to narratives in which the informant wants to portray himself as happy and lucky, despite conflict.

The informant from Vasa utilizes positioning-by-way-of-character in a different manner. A self-professed introvert, the positioning is contingent on an opposing position vis-à-vis the others in the story. This example is written by the informant in the answer to the second question in the questionnaire:

Of course, since we were close in age, [Friend's name] and I played a lot together. However, we are very different, he is an extrovert and likes nightlife and such, while I am introverted and more fond of reading and thinking about profound questions. In our teens we did not get on well. I thought he was slap-happy and he thought I was a dullard. Later we started to appreciate each other again (Man, Vasa, 1970).

The positioning of the informant as an introvert is here directly contrasted against the friend's slap-happy disposition. This position is furthered throughout the answers:

The schoolmates had their idols – pop stars and athletes. I abhorred this whole silly cult. I couldn't understand that anyone could identify with people who produce loud music or do trivial things like kicking a ball. Dad has always been my role model. He was knowledgeable and proficient in all areas, except for things that require social skills, and so he thought independently. Once in my teens I would buy a new jacket, but could not find one that I liked, but then I found the same model that Dad had, so I took it (Man, Vasa, 1970).

In this quotation the informant ratifies his position as an introvert, by positioning himself in connection to two sets of characters: the others (his schoolmates) and his father. In contrast to the preceding informant, the affect transmitted by positioning *vis-à-vis* the (affective) relationships construct, uphold and transmit a *qualia* of outsideness. The informant uses the affect of the relationship to emphasize the what-it-was-like to experience his boyhood. This is done by the textual clues in telling about pop stars and athletes. Together with the description of his dad as a role model, this creates a position and transmits the *qualia* of outsideness, and emphasizes for the narrate the affects and experience of the informant. This is

done by two juxtaposed relationship positions connected to affect; the detestation of the schoolmates juxtaposed with the admiration to the father as a role model. Later on, the informant tells the story of being bullied in school, but he is not without friends in his childhood. In one excerpt the informant writes:

In school, however, I had a certain feeling of insecurity. The comrades were unpredictable and could be nasty. And I was a year younger than the others. I remember once when we built a treehouse in the neighbourhood and some older boys came and meddled. They had other opinions about how it was to be built, but I didn't dare to assert my opinion. When I misunderstood their instructions, they got angry, which scared me. I was also shy. In the classroom, I never said anything without being asked. In high school, I was uncomfortable expressing a dissenting opinion, but overcame the fear due to strong conviction (Man, Vasa, 1970).

Yet again, there is a position *vis-à-vis* other characters. In this case, it is not the strategy of othering, in the sense of "they were stupid". Rather the strategy is a classic, polarizing "strong vs. weak" position (Herman 2009:55), where the informant explains his emotions of anger, fear and introversion, in an underdog position. The crucial textual clues are the use of the affect of shyness, fear and insecurity *vis-à-vis* the older boys. The affects justify the position of the others as "stupid". This position is a stance found in all informant narratives in the corpus, in which the informant positions himself as the underdog. The positioning-by-character in this form transmits a *qualia* of the experienced boyhood as a struggle for survival. This is not odd, seeing that the informant tells a story that explicates a boyhood plagued by bullying. In that sense it is an answer that has a reflective aspect in a

therapeutic sense (cf. Asplund Ingemark 2013); writing “something off one’s chest”.

The youngest of the informants tells a tale in which he positions himself as part of a group of boys. The position he ascribes himself is one of a “geek”, class clown, hanging out with loyal friends in a world that he finds violent. The story told is one of a posse of loyal, lifelong (male) friendship, in what he experiences as a violent environment:

Some of my friends at home carried a knife and [Friend 1’s Nickname] had started hanging with the gang that had previously robbed us. They were the “immigrant gang”. My and [Friends Nickname]’s buddy [Nickname] had started to become a racist and planned to buy a gun to shoot his old bully (luckily it didn’t come to that). There was a great deal of talk that we needed to get to know gangs, AFA or Hells Angels or Dalen in order to have some defence in case we were attacked. [...] It was better in town than at home, I thought. In town, we used to sit on [2nd friend’s name] dad’s roof, one of the old six-storey houses along [Street name], and talk about life. About girls and who we were in love with. Me and [2nd friend’s name] and [3rd Friend’s name] talked a bit about politics too, [...] it was good conversation, not conflict-filled (Man, 1987, Stockholm).

The position vis-à-vis characters is one of a collective “us” against another “them”. The segment is written in a form that continuously promotes (and positions) the informant as part of a crowd. This is done by telling the story of the surrounding violent environment, through the crowd, and friends; using textual clues such as names of gangs and reference to weapons; juxtaposing the violence with the conflict-free friendship. Furthermore, the informant’s story could be interpreted as first-hand experience which is referred to as “toxic masculinity” (Veissière 2018 and see be-

low). The violence experienced in the segment (and in the answers) as a whole, is always part of ‘the other’. The position of the posse is juxtaposed against “Turks” and “racists” as the other.

The informant, in contrast to the other two considered in this article, tells in a style that positions him against a lot of characters (friends, family, “others”). The story throughout is an evolution from the position of a self-professed geek, and “nice guy”, who has to evaluate the violent surroundings and explain the experience of the upbringing. The experience is retold as gratitude towards the posse of friends. It is a story about male friendship:

Between the age of 12 and 15, [Friend 1] and [Friend 2], were my best friends. I told them everything, even the stuff that I wasn’t supposed to, like when my dad was in prison. Officially he was touring with his band. But they got to know everything. We used to discuss who deserved to be together with the girl we all fell in love with at the time (usually [names of girls]) and tried to get it as fair as possible while rationally listing which couples were most compatible. [Friend 2] was the best-looking, and we all had a hard time in our way, so usually we came to the conclusion that [Friend 2] had the most chance. [Friend 1] liked a girl in the class that no one else liked and we thought we were good. [...] We used to talk about who we thought were poor, and who were rich in our class and who probably was taking drugs, had lost his virginity and so on. Most of all, we probably still talked about our parents and how and why they were who they were (Man, Stockholm, 1987).

Referring back to constant conversations with the posse of friends is part of the positioning strategy that relates to qualia. The experience, the what-it-was-like, of the story is one of collective and gratitude towards the friends during boyhood. The position vis-à-vis the posse expresses

more than just gratitude. The pattern of continuous referral to the posse signals a sense of explanation; “if it was not for you guys, it would’ve been shit”.

The positioning techniques that is used by the informants here is found throughout the material collected for the analysis. The use of character positioning is tied to narration of how one wants to be perceived: happy, as an outsider and part of a crowd.

The happy, the feral and the mischievous – positioning through objects

Positioning can be an act of attachment to material actors (Davies & Harré 1990:48). I will now turn to the connection between material objects mentioned in the autobiographies, and the qualia connected to positioning using objects. The use of objects is seen as a part of telling from a position. I will consider a series of quotations from the informants, all of which bring objects into focus to as part their history as a boy.

Near our home there was a shooting range in the woods. We went there to pick up empty shell casings. We used the sleeves in our small wooden cannon when we had tin soldier’s war. In the yard we had a small pool of water in a depression in the mountain. There we played with bark boats, and had ants and beetles as a crew. Said animals as well as centipedes were also made to crawl up from more or less deep sand craters that we dug. In the winters we built snow fortresses and had snowball fights, skied and went kicking or sledding on the “Big Hill” (Man, Mariehamn, 1933).

In this excerpt, there are references to several material objects: tin soldiers, snow fortresses, bark boats. Especially the tin soldiers are a reoccurring object throughout the informant’s story:

The tin soldier war had changed little. A ball had replaced the guns and shell casings, and the soldiers sought protection near the chair and table legs and moved according to certain rules. Sometimes there was war on the “great plains” on the attic floor (Man, Mariehamn, 1933).

The tin soldiers and the games convey a sense of a feral and happy boy; in this case throwing balls in the attic. The same can be said about the fortress and the ant crew of the bark boat. The stories connected to material objects are mostly reminiscent of the boyhood representations in literary works: playing, feral and happy. Curiously enough, this seems to be a pattern that repeats itself in the other informants’ autobiographies as well.

We had a villa [...] on an islet in the archipelago. There we spent all of Dad’s holidays and all weekends during the summers. The islet was not that big, but we owned the entire islet. It is filled with stones and boulders, so we always climbed on them and also in the trees. We built huts and made small boats of board tags, and I remember we built a cannon of some logs. It lasted for several years. [...] Mum gave us free rein on the islet, although you can injure yourself if you fall from the rocks or into the water, but no accidents ever happened. The island was (and is) a paradise (Man, Vasa, 1970).

In this quotation, the informant utilizes material objects (the log cannon, stones, rocks, the surroundings of the cottage) to convey a feeling of freedom and paradise. The environment of the cottage and sauna itself can be seen as a cultural artefact “relied upon as tools for remembering, focusing attention, and interpreting, but also, and simultaneously, as tools for socially positioning oneself and others” (Cole & Holland 2009:487). The position constructed by using the material objects and environment is one of a boy free from the

boundaries of the self-expressed problems with bullying and introversion; a paradise. It conveys a what-it-is-like component of "lack of restriction", using materiality as a backdrop to express a feeling of a feral and happy boy. The use of material objects is connected to the same sense of freedom and feral boyhood later on in the informant's story:

We used to cycle into town and go and ask different companies if they had stickers. We rode a lot, and we had speedometers on the bikes. Sometime at this time it became mandatory for moped riders to wear a helmet. We thought that was ridiculous. When I was twelve, we would ride [...] to Grandma's cottage, which we now had as a summer residence. In [village name], a truck ran past us and my hat blew off because of the wind (Man, Vasa, 1970).

In the excerpt the bikes are the artefacts that focus the attention for the retelling of a story that ends in an evaluation of the boyhood as free; the informant's games were more active than those of his sisters. The informant from 1980s Stockholm uses the same techniques when describing his "things":

After school we go to the video game exchange and stand in line to try out Tekken 2 or we go home to Erik and play "Golden Eye" on his Nintendo 64. Sometimes we go to the arcade hall and go to the Laserdome, or go to the adventure bath in [Borough name]. I go diving and I've dived from the number seven and did a bellyflop from number five. [My friend] and I will start orienteering together this autumn and it will be fun. I play with soft air guns that [Nickname] has and once we get robbed with a knife, which we report but instead, [Nickname's] mum gets fined for letting us have soft air guns. I play Starcraft at home alternating with the Sims and Age of Empires (Man, Stockholm, 1987).

Keeping in line with the story of a gang of boys, the informant from Stockholm refers to a communal experience. What is

interesting vis-à-vis the positioning by means of material objects, in this case Laserdome, arcade hall, games and guns, is that they too perpetuate the understanding of boyhood as free and feral. The passage about the soft air guns positions the boys vs. parents, in that the mother is fined for the boys' behaviour, but also a position against society. The mother is fined for letting them have toys that society disapproves of, despite the boys being robbed. Peculiarly, the quotation tells a story of the feral boy which is in line with the informant's story as a whole: a band of friends, who lives in a violent environment. The qualia in the story, I interpret as one of freedom and a feeling of the feral. The two go hand in hand. The story takes place after school, with friends, and tells about the leisure time spent with friends. In a later use of positioning by means of material, the informant positions himself as the feral boy:

What I really loved about being a boy was that I was expected to be active.[...] I love that I got to climb, wrestle, fight with latex foam rubber swords and play temple knight wars, that I got to moon at the window of the hairdresser's salon and piss down on passing cars from the pedestrian bridge on [street name] (Man, Stockholm, 1987).

The material objects (rubber swords, the window and the bridge) acts as a means of social positioning. The social position against society is an explanation using what-it-was-like to position and emphasize the informant's experience as free (feral) and happy.

Throughout the informants' quotations concerning and referring to material objects, one can see a connection with material objects, breaking of rules, and a notion of freedom. This is done by using the ma-

terial act as “the crystallization of the narrative” (Hynninen 2017:263), using the materiality to transmit freedom. The man born in 1933 does not explicitly tell about rule breaking, but there are certain clues. The bark boats filled with insects, the pit filled with insects, and the fact that they throw balls indoors all lead me to interpret the what-it-was-like as mischievous, if not rule breaking. The story of the Ostrobothnian man directly reveals his position about the ridiculousness of moped riders having to wear helmets, insinuating a rule-breaking attitude towards the law. Similarly, the passage about the summer cottage includes the notion that there were fewer rules, in that the mother gave the boys free rein, in other words, a paradise. The Stockholm lad connects rule breaking, boyhood, friendship and being feral by explicit use of material objects as means to focus the story and position himself as anti-authoritarian.

Of the techniques described in this article, the expression of freedom, fun and breaking the rules by positioning with material objects is the most commonly used by all informants in the material. The qualia of freedom is connected to toys, bikes, and other objects in male retellings of childhood.

Happy vs. suffering – A twelve-year-old anti-communist – despite-violence-here-I-am

The last part of this article concerns positioning by means of master narratives. Master narratives are used by narrators as strategies for sense-making (cf. Thorn & McLean 2003:171): “The minimal criterion for identifying a master narrative is the perception that a particular emotional po-

sition is acceptable to, or resisted by, a valued audience” (ibid.). The informant’s positioning of himself vis-à-vis a master narrative is a form of explanation of what-it-was-like growing up, in the particular time and place where this happened. The particular position told is a textual clue to how the qualia is to be interpreted by an audience.

The oldest informant was brought up amidst the Winter War and the Continuation War between Finland and the USSR (1939–1940, 1941–1944), and the experience of being a war child is part of the self-defining memories of his boyhood. Keeping that in mind, the mention of the war is marginal. The war(s) are however a constant backdrop, a master narrative in the background of his boyhood experience. Consider the following quotations:

There was a war going on. Empty bottles and newspapers were collected for the state, and raspberry leaves and rose hips for the family. And I tried to dig up troublesome dandelion roots. The roots would be dried and ground to become surrogate coffee. During part of the continuation war, Dad was stationed in the area around north-west Ladoga; [...]. It must have been pretty quiet then, because he sent home lots of salted mushrooms and a set of bows and arrows mounted on a cardboard board (Man, Mariehamn, 1934).

I think I wasn’t really scared at any time. (Once I noticed that the boat I was pushing out with force was missing oars. But I had a bailer. When the city was bombed during the war and you sat in the basement you were so small that you just thought it was exciting) (Man, Mariehamn, 1934).

The two quotations are the only time the war is mentioned directly in the informants’ retelling. Both quotations entail a return to the position of “the happy war child”. This is done by using textual clues that emphasize both struggle and joyful moments. The gifts sent home from the

front, together with the casual mentioning of the war – “There was a war going on” – and the chores that had to be performed; this position states the fact of a war going on, but retains the position that it was a happy boyhood. This is a position prevalent throughout the narrative, turning the retelling into an explanation or justification, contingent on the master narrative of the Finnish wars. What-it-was-like is described through the position of the happy war child, conveying a feeling that can be described as my-upbringing-was-a-happy-one. This experience of the war is juxtaposed with the master narrative of the wars in Finland, reflecting on the war through reflexive positioning by continuously reminding the narrate that the childhood was happy. The story of the happy war child is a form of rejection or correction of the prevailing picture of the suffering of the war, a slight resistance to the master narrative (Thorn & McLean 2003). This strategy re-occurs in different forms in the retellings of the two other informants.

Thorn and McLean state that “the concept of master narrative positioning allows for considerable agency with regard to acceptance or rejection of community value” (Thorn & McLean 2003). The informant brought up in Vasa in the 1970s and 1980s use this form of master narrative positioning. He rejects the values of the community he is brought up in: Finland in the midst of the Cold War.

In my teens, I became very interested in politics. I watched the US presidential election closely in 1984, and was happy Reagan won. The anti-Americanism in our media disturbed me. I read *Newsweek*, which Dad subscribed to on my behalf from the age of 14. It provided information, but was probably a little far to the left. The magazine *Tempus*, whose business idea was to translate art-

icles from international press, also belonged to the literature. At the end of that year, a sample of *Contra* magazine dropped into our mailbox. It was anti-communist and fearlessly challenged the tenet of the time. I was fired with enthusiasm and quickly subscribed. I started writing pieces in the Vasa magazine, and with *Contra*'s help, I could easily reveal the copious propaganda that flourished at this time (Man, Vasa, 1970).

In this excerpt from the informant's story, he positions himself as a conservative young boy, by the use of the 1984 US election of President Reagan. He focuses on the experience of communist propaganda and anti-Americanism in Finnish media at the time. The use of the election and the mention of anti-Americanism and anti-communism positions the informant experience as against-the-perceived-societal-values-of-the-time. Later he describes his experience of Finnish state television:

I remember that we were subjected to propaganda. One programme was about a world where boys and girls had different tasks. Then they ended up in different places and a crisis arose when tasks were left undone. But a couple named Hansa and Honsa realized that it doesn't matter who does what, and so everything started to work. Their memory is carved with the pronouns *he* and *she*. I thought the gender uniformity of the sexes was uncomfortable and perverse. A few years later, I may have been about 12 years old, I saw a children's programme whose purpose was to inform children about current affairs. They talked about US President Ronald Reagan. He was an actor and had figured out that you could run the movie about Robin Hood backwards and take from the poor and give to the rich. Even a twelve-year-old could see through such communist propaganda (Man, Vasa, 1970).

This is a prime example of how storytellers resist the master narrative (Thorn & McLean 2003). The informant uses the master narrative of the Cold War to position himself as a conservative, pro-Ameri-

can boy. The use of performative language such as “propaganda”, and his account of viewing the children’s television *Hansa and Honsa* both work as a way to position himself by retelling the affective response to gender uniformity: uncomfortable and perverse. The master narrative is opposed, conveying the alternative position of the informant, justifying the position of feeling compelled to position his personal experience (ibid.). The what-it-was-like to experience this position as a conservative boy among communists is textually underlined by the use of the 1984 US election, juxtaposed with the story of the children’s television show. The qualia conveyed could be interpreted as struggle against society, a justification of a conservative view opposed to the societal discourse he experienced while growing up.

If the two informants can be argued to use positioning by means of master narrative as a form of positioning by resisting, I take the last informant’s narrative as a whole to be a form of justification based on resisting. The story offered by the man born in 1987 has numerous textual clues that can be interpreted as a story about the violent suburbs of Stockholm, in the late 1990s and early 2000s:

I thought that since I was born in a suburb (a prosperous suburb really, just my street and a few more that were a little rougher) I would never be able to get any decent job and I remember how, as a fifteen-year-old, I memorized a lot of entry codes in case I in the future would have to sleep there. A friend lived in our school then, too. Her father had custody of her even though he was a heroin addict and had abused her as a child. So I assumed I would live on the street as an adult. Absolutely absurd, but I thought so. As a 14–16-year-old, I had no good role models. [...] I felt uncomfortable when “Turk gang” was in town. I felt uncomfortable when people were

beaten up at school, and promised myself that I would be brave and intervene when my friends were beaten, but it only happened a few times. There was always a risk of interrupting the bullies, you could get reprisals like a knife in the back later (it happened only once as far as I know). As a guy, you could defend yourself. I remember Dad telling me, “You don’t have to be such a coward” (Man, Stockholm, 1987).

References to assault, gangs and violence create a position in which the qualia is crucial; the qualia is to be perceived as violent and scary. The use of affect, of textual clues such as discomfort, fear of reprisal and violence, positions the informant as onlooker to the violence. Juxtaposed with this, the resistance position is the constant return to the posse of friends, and the feelings of friendship experienced. The position of the teller is one of despite-the-violence-here-I-am. I would also claim that the narrative as whole reads as a commentary on toxic masculinity. The informant’s story is an “eyewitness” retelling of the “toxic”; a commentary on being brought up in what is to be considered toxic masculinity and persistence. In this, the story is a resistance position towards the story of toxic masculinities.

Throughout my material, when master narrative positioning is used there is always a degree of resistance. Master narrative positioning thus seems to be used to explain one’s world view, by way of resistance; the men in the material corpus explain their view of the world around them by means of opposition.

Concluding Remarks

All the men in this study use positioning techniques to convey qualia to the narrate, rendering an understanding that Swedish-speaking men of different generations and

geographical whereabouts use positioning in order to convey the qualia they want to transmit. By positioning themselves vis-à-vis people, things and narratives, the informants employ a process of showing that their life has been worth living (Freeman & Brockmeier 2001:81). The male childhood stories convey what-it-is-like to experience (a Swedish-speaking) boyhood. The way this is done is by a position and qualia of justification. Since the positioning techniques described here are present throughout the material corpus collected for this study, it seems reasonable to conclude that in Swedish, what the informants convey as their most important concerns are to be found in the position they narrate. Furthermore, the positions the men take show similarities to the other informants in the material corpus; characters are positioned to reveal their self-perception, objects are connected to freedom and master narratives are opposed. The positioning is crucial for the transmission of both the “affective pattern and themes that define a person’s most important concern” (Singer & Salovey 1993:4), and for the qualia (Herman 2009). Since the positioning is used in this way, it makes qualia and positioning inseparable. Compared to earlier studies on autobiographies, these autobiographical stories cannot be labelled as “win back what has gone wrong” in one’s life (Freeman & Brockmeier 2001:81). Rather, my informants attempt to show what-it-was-like, and tell how their experience/position is justified. The positioning is used to explain or justify what it-was-like to experience boyhood; reflecting on their place in the world (Bruner 2001:25); showing the informants’ most important concerns. The most

important concern is to convey a justification of one’s life; including views on society, happy moments and justification for one’s behaviour and affects; whether they are happy, resisting or in seclusion. The concerns are conveyed by the various positioning techniques described.

I view the informants’ stories as explanations and justifications. The stories “brought into being” (Veissière 2018) are to some extent to be seen as a reaction against the prevailing boyhood issues discussed in the public sphere (Kivijärvi et al. 2018:8). The justification can be viewed as an attempt by the informants to juxtapose their boyhood with the perceived negative picture of boyhood. My analysis shows how this is done by transmitting a more varied and nuanced boyhood qualia than the feral often associated with boyhood representations in literature (cf. Ziff 2012). This shows that the informants put themselves in contrast to societal understandings of boyhood as problematic and at times toxic behaviour. The feeling conveyed, the qualia, of autobiographical retelling of boyhood thus seems to be something-to-be-explained-and-justified.

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“Is it Mandatory to Celebrate Birthdays?”

Birthday Parties as a Ritual of Everyday Nationalism in Norway

By Hilde Danielsen & Synnøve Bendixsen

”Is it mandatory to celebrate children’s birthdays?” A mother of five with a Somali background asked this question in a parenting class she attended with other parents from East Africa. The mother explained that she experienced a very specific demand from both the kindergarten and school concerning birthdays: that her children should have a celebration. “Why are children with a migration background not attending birthday parties in our children’s classes at school?” A white middle-class mother asked this rhetorically, partly to herself and partly to others, while discussing how to make a more inclusive school environment in a parents’ meeting at a school. During our fieldwork with parents of different class and ethnic background in a diversified area in Bergen, the second largest city in Norway, we noticed that questions about birthday parties were of high concern among both professionals working with children and many differently situated parents. Some parents in our study discussed how to perform it, others whether to do so at all, and many reflected upon expectations concerning guests, gifts and hosts.

A mother with a Somali background asked a neighbour for help on how to organize a birthday party and received a list and explanations that she used. A couple with an Eastern European background told us how they had tried to organize a party “the Norwegian way” and had even surfed the internet for information. But still they had done something wrong: Choosing a date when many Norwegians were on holiday had the result that no guests showed up for their daughter’s party. Parents with a majority background were frequently concerned with the inclu-

sive and exclusive aspects of birthday parties, underlining that they invited either everybody in the school class, or all the girls or all the boys. They had made sure to make religiously neutral food and tried to keep the expenses for the gifts down, hoping to make the birthday party into an inclusive event. They were also concerned with why some children with a migrant background did not attend birthday parties. Some made a special effort to facilitate for poor children or children with a migration background to join birthday celebrations.

We argue that birthday celebrations are not just private or individualized family matters. They are also symbolic events highlighting important codes of belonging in schools, neighbourhoods and nations. An increasingly pluralistic society has brought up discussions about birthday celebrations in different arenas. Discussions of birthday parties for children feature in the media, in integration courses aimed at refugees, parenting classes, parent-teachers’ meetings, working committees at schools, and in everyday conversations. In this article, we will draw on conversations about birthday parties which took place at different settings during our fieldwork, as well as interviews with parents and written material such as newspaper articles and public information on websites for education. Media articles expose the way in which birthday celebrations have come to represent ideas of belonging in the nation state, and symbolic events for integration which we believe are also reflected in the ways in which the parents reflect upon and respond to birthday parties in their everyday lives. Media articles also indicate the invisible scripts that parents

respond to in their meetings with birthday celebrations.

Birthday celebrations may be important rituals within families and between parents and children. Children themselves have an independent and crucial role as actors in organizing birthday celebrations, as shown by Scott (2007). Our focus, however, is not on children's experiences of birthday celebrations, but rather on the symbolic value ascribed to birthday celebrations as part of ideas of the particular collectivity and community. We investigate birthday parties as a ritual of belonging in order to understand broader mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion in Norwegian society. Further, we examine how differently positioned parents and other adults, such as teachers, discuss birthday parties for children, and keep a special interest in investigating how they negotiate ways to respond to the expectations involved. Organizing or attending birthday parties are in many settings in Norway taken for granted rituals with strong scripts. When someone is not following the invisible rules regarding children's birthdays, such everyday happenings become a focus of attention. We will argue that birthday parties for children have become a symbol of Norwegian values and can be interpreted as manifestations of everyday nationalism.

Everyday Nationalism as a Ritual of Belonging

Considering birthday parties as a ritual means that we recognize that the event consists of specific rules and structures that are subject to negotiation and changeable according to specific place and time settings (Scott 2007:96). Rituals are thus

suitable for studying cultural and social processes. Like any rituals, birthday parties bring along tacit but important, social practices and expectations through which these events should be performed. The codes are often implicit, and they are not shared by all, for example, due to class differentiations or ethnic background. As a consequence of migration and new ways of parenting and upbringing in Norwegian society, we see an increasingly heated public discussion about the ritual of birthday parties for children.

Although children's birthday parties are frequently discussed in the popular press, as we will investigate later in this article, and the ritual is an inherent part of Western popular culture (Otnes & McGrath 1994), they have received only limited research attention. Within the fields of Nordic cultural studies, formerly named ethnology and folkloristics, there is a continual interest in everyday and sacred rituals. Birthday parties are interpreted as a ritual developing historically, underlining individuality and the individual's life course (Frykman & Löfgren 1979:37). Jonas Frykman and Orvar Löfgren place birthday celebrations as emerging rites de passage in bourgeois environments in modern times. Such celebrations became more widespread and common among working-class people after the Second World War, following the economic growth and prosperity made available to common people.

Two studies by Erika Scott (1999; 2007) focus on birthdays parties as a ritual for children in Norway, within a multicultural context. Both studies are based on fieldwork and interviews with children, highlighting their experiences with birth-

day celebrations. The last publication also covers the parents' perspectives. Scott concludes that laying on a birthday celebration for one's child, including a party, has become a critical part of parenting obligations. For most majority parents and many migrant parents, celebrating birthday for their child is a habituated and naturalized part of parenting (*ibid.*).¹ Scott underlines that the performance of birthday parties carries strong normative expectations, which are also about social relations, socialization and class (*ibid.*). The Swedish ethnologist Helene Brembeck has studied how birthdays are part of the commercialization of childhood in the Swedish context (Brembeck 2007), and the development of commercial playgrounds as places for birthday celebrations has also been investigated within social sciences (McKendrick et al. 2000).

Earlier research on birthday celebrations and parties in social sciences more broadly has taken up different perspectives and thematic issues. Scholars have studied how children are socialized in their participation in the ritual of birthday parties in the USA, with gendered differences (Otnes & McGrath 1994). The sociologist Michael Windzio (2012) has examined how birthday parties in Germany are embedded in social networks of trust, and considers attending birthday parties as an action based upon having or building trust. Windzio finds that birthday celebrations affect majority and minority children in different ways, as minority children are less interwoven in exchanges of birthday parties than majority children (*ibid.*). Other researchers have focused on the complicated role of gift exchange in birthday celebrations, and the quest for equali-

ty, for instance analysing the pressure on mothers to buy the right gift and arrange the appropriate party in the UK (Clarke 2007).

The concept of everyday nationalism provides perspectives that shed light on the symbolic role of the ritual of the birthday party. Everyday nationalism is concerned with the masses and human agency within nationalism studies to consider the role and relevance of the lived experience of nationalism, from a bottom-up approach (Knott 2015). It focuses on the agency of ordinary people, as participants and users of national symbols, rituals and identities, as opposed to elites. Collective rituals in everyday life is a common object of research within studies that examine everyday nationalism (Skey 2011). The concept of everyday nationalism is developed in relation to the influential concept of banal nationalism, coined by Billig to highlight that nationalism pertains to personal and group identities in the West (Billig 1995). Billig introduced the term to show how nationalism is produced by people in everyday lives through forms that are not always visible and have become naturalized and are considered innocent. Nationalism, Billig shows, is produced though the media by means of mundane symbols and conventional language. The term everyday nationalism focuses more on human agency than banal nationalism, and gives an empirical lens to understand the lived experience of nationalism (Knott 2015:1). There is a distinction between banal and everyday nationalism as stated by Fox and van Ginderachter (2018): whereas banal nationalism considers implicit forms of nationalism, focusing in particular on the role of media

and language, everyday nationalism is more about everyday practices. Hearn and Antonsich (2018), argue that the banal and the everyday nationalism approach should be combined in studies of nationalism in order to capture both unspoken norms and practices. In this study, although taking these discussions into account, we rely on the concept of everyday nationalism as we think it entails both norms and practices.

According to the American sociologist Bart Bonikowski, everyday nationalism should be studied in so-called "settled" times, for instance in stable modern democracies, and not only in moments of fundamental institutional crisis (Bonikowski 2016:424). This is a way to understand latent tensions pre-existing or succeeding periods of shocks to the nation. The research strategy involves understanding dispositions towards the nation as relational, intersubjective, morally and affectively laden and mostly taken for granted (ibid. 429). Everyday nationalism has a tendency to become visible when breaches of ordinary but otherwise unspoken rules of social intercourse take place (Fox 2017:31). This includes when breaches at the borders of the national happen, or in everyday life, for instance if taken-for-granted rituals, rules and norms are infringed (Fox 2017).

The concept of everyday nationalism fits very well with the research agenda in Nordic cultural studies, with the effort to study everyday life and practices and explore the diverse meanings specific actors give to cultural phenomena. In the 1990s several ethnologists began to focus on how nationalism developed and was created in everyday life, by ordinary people, within a Swedish context (Ehn, Frykman

& Löfgren 1993). Billy Ehn, Jonas Frykman and Orvar Löfgren focused in different ways on how national identity is rooted in everyday routines and rituals. This research gained a lot of interest and was followed up broadly. Frykman moved on in the 2000s to include affects and feelings as research objects in the study of nationalism, also in line with how everyday nationalism is perceived.

The social anthropologist Marianne Gullestad saw a strong link between children and nation building in Norway (Gullestad 1996); children carry the Norwegian flag on national celebrations and the Norwegian flag is often included as part of birthday celebrations for children. Her argument about children and youth as carriers of the values of the nation is important to bear in mind. Within everyday nationalism studies, some researchers focus in particular on the role of children in everyday nationalism (Millei 2019:20). The educationalist Zsuzsa Millei investigates how children perform the nation, and from a young age learn how to sense who "we" are in contrast to who "they" are (2019:85). Millei shows that children enact the nation in institutional settings such as kindergartens and schools (Millei 2019, 2014). In such institutional settings, national forms of knowledge, practices and emotions naturalize specific notions of the world (Skeggs 2011). Children's birthday parties are often planned and organized within the framework of schools, and educational institutions play an important part in creating and repeating scripts for birthday celebrations.

In Norway, as in other Scandinavian countries, everyday nationalism must be read within the context of egalitarianism.

Studying the everyday life of the working class in particular, Gullestad (1984) explored the concept of "egalitarian individualism". Drawing on the scholarship of Dumont, Gullestad argued that in a range of social contexts the dominant code of behaviour emphasizing equality in status was a pragmatic one: it was more about partners making each other similar over the course of interactions than about an objective form of equality. Gullestad's analytical term "equality as sameness" has become essential to understand the enactment of "Norwegianness" (Gullestad 2002). Being considered as similar is a precondition for being treated as equal (Olwig 2011). At the core of the argument is that in a society such as Norway where being considered as similar is a prerequisite to be treated as equal, there will be an effort to invite newcomers to adapt to everyday ways of life in Norway and an expectation that they should do so in a similar way. In our fieldwork we found a strong commitment from many parents and professionals to make sure that birthday parties were arranged in what they themselves viewed as an inclusive manner.

Presentation of Cases, Methods and Material

Bergen, Norway, where this study took place, is a relatively medium-sized European city (300,000) – and second largest in Norway. In 2015 almost 15 percent of its population were immigrants from 164 out of 192 countries ratified by the UN. The borough of Årstad, where we have pursued fieldwork, has a mixed population. It caters to both the middle class and social-housing clientele, highly skilled la-

bourers and a growing number of high skilled and low-skilled migrants, and it has the highest number of non-Western migrants in Bergen. Ethnic diversity is a recent social phenomenon, with growing numbers of migrants from the 1990s and especially from the 2000s, and the ways to deal with it are currently unfolding. Both the local municipality and national bodies currently view this area as vulnerable due to a high level of child poverty.

This article draws on qualitative fieldwork and interviews from the study "Parenting Cultures and Risk Management in Plural Norway" (2014–2017), which examined how migration and increased class differences bring differentiations and the co-existence of different ideas of parenting in the same place. We conducted fieldwork and interviews at three different schools where we pursued observation during teacher-parents' meetings in the beginning of the school year (first to sixth year), parent committee meetings at schools and events where parents were invited to the schools. We also followed neighbourhood initiatives and welfare state interactions – including at state-funded parenting class in the areas. We conducted formal, open-ended, audio-taped interviews with participants, sometimes in their own homes, other times at a neutral place. In a few cases, we made use of an interpreter.

We conducted a total of 45 interviews, each lasting between one and three hours, with parents (middle-class and working-class, non-migrant Norwegians and migrants) living in the three different neighbourhoods in Årstad.² Informants were recruited through meetings and activities at schools that we attended, through the

snowball method, and through various leisure and neighbourhood activities where we met parents living in the area. We asked about their parenting practices and ideals, including their views of schooling, the relationship to the neighbourhood, and what they meant by "a good parent". During our interviews, we had an open approach to the field – asking similar questions to everybody, while ensuring that our sample included parents with a variety of class and migration backgrounds. All names in this article are anonymized, in line with ethical guidelines for research ethics.³

In this article, we mostly rely on settings where birthdays were discussed spontaneously, and even in the interviews talk of birthdays mostly occurred when the interviewees themselves brought up the topic. The diverse settings we encountered gave us a broad understanding of performances and discussions of parenting by diverse actors, such as parents with and without a migrant background, and different professionals. We have also used the newspaper archive Retriever to find newspaper articles covering birthday celebrations for children in the time period around our fieldwork, in 2015 and 2016. We used the search words "birthday parties" and "birthday celebrations", which led us to a controversial public debate about birthday parties which we use as one case in the analysis of the media representation of birthday parties. We chose this particular case because it covered many different actors on both the local and national level and it dealt with the issue of migrant children and birthday parties from a range of different perspectives.

We had not included the theme of birth-

days or the perspective of everyday nationalism when we designed our research project or methods. During our fieldwork on how parenting was performed and discussed by diverse actors in different arenas, birthday parties were a recurring topic brought up by different actors, including teachers, social welfare representatives, and parents with and without a migrant background. We encountered both similar and different reflections among majority and minority parents and professionals. Considering birthday parties as a ritual and thus part of the social construction of reality, we found that this activity, like other social activities, can be experienced in multiple ways by diverse actors and observers. The data we analyse for this article are based on our rereading of our fieldnotes and interviews, where we discovered different meanings that different actors attributed to birthday celebrations and observed the different settings where discussions about birthday parties had occurred. We are not in a position to use class as a clear-cut category in this article; while we came to know some of the informants intimately during our fieldwork, other informants we met only once during different parent or school meetings, and we have less background information about them.

Public Discussions: Showcasing Otherwise Invisible Strict Norms of Integration

Several official websites of educational institutions present birthday parties as crucial to participate in as a way to integrate into everyday life in Norway. Some civil society organizations in Norway also offer help in organizing birthday parties to poor

families and families with a migrant background, such as the *Resource Centre Unik* (Frivillig 2019), which helps organize birthday celebrations for children in poor families (<https://frivillig.no/ressurssenteret-nunik-1>). The expectations in Norway to celebrate in a certain way is strong. For example, the *Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training* (Udir) gives advice on how to organize birthday celebrations on their website, when addressing parents and writing about how grown-ups can help create friendship and inclusion among the pupils (<https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/mobbing/voksne-skaper-vennskap/>). Under the heading "Perform an inclusive birthday policy" (ibid.) they advise parents to invite whole groups, for instance the whole school class, or all the boys or all the girls within the school class, to celebrations. The argument is that "leaving someone behind or outside is a common form of bullying" (ibid.). They also urge parents to "talk to your children and explain to them why it is important to invite more children than they usually play with" (ibid.). This way the welfare state constitutes parents and birthday children as citizens responsible for creating inclusive events, and for preventing isolation and harassment from happening. *The National Board for Parents* (FUG), which represents parents who have children in elementary schools in Norway, closely follows up this strategy (FUG 2019, sending the same message as Udir, adding that parents should discuss the organization of birthdays and the price of the gifts at parents' meetings at schools (ibid.). The aim of promoting values such as inclusion and equality is clear. A poster about inclusion is made, highlighting ten ways parents

may contribute to a good school environment (FUG 2019). One piece of advice is the following: "Cooperate with the other parents about common rules regarding birthdays and other parties. Make sure that nobody is kept outside" (ibid.). The formulation makes it clear that birthday parties are a self-evident part of the school environment.

Birthday parties for children are a topic that reoccurs in Norwegian media. Newspaper articles giving advice on birthday menus typically claim: "It does not have to be difficult to make sure that all children are included", presenting a halal-based allergy-friendly menu (*Aftenposten* 10 May 17). Another article advised on "how to invite Muslims on birthdays" (*Vårt Land* 17 January 2016), again presenting birthday parties as an event of possible inclusion. Norwegian media regularly also cover stories where children have experienced that nobody came to their birthday celebration or children who never received invitations to such celebrations (*Bergens Tidende* 7 June 2016). Such mediated stories highlight birthday parties as events of bullying as well as how social inclusion has failed.

Norwegian voices, with and without a migration background, have discussed birthday parties publicly, with an understanding of how this has posed a challenge for integration in recent years. During the period when we did our fieldwork, an imam claimed in an interview in a local newspaper that it was *haram* (prohibited or religiously unclean) to celebrate birthdays for Muslims, both grown-ups and children. He argued that such celebrations were not mentioned in the Koran or the Hadith and were thus against the Islamic

religion (*Fædrelandsvennen* 13 January 2016). This local statement caused a national media outburst and led to a heated national debate. Several public figures with a Muslim or migrant background approached social and journalistic media to defend birthday celebrations. Chaudry, a well-known left-wing politician with a Pakistani background, said:

To deny children the possibility to celebrate birthdays is not only to deny them an innocent and true pleasure, but it is also very harmful for a normal and understanding of co-existence in a pluralistic society (*Utrop* 15 January 2016).

Chaudry further focused on children's rights to take part in this ritual and linked acceptance of birthday celebrations to ideals of how one should live together in a diverse society (*ibid.*). Abid Raja, representing a liberal party, a prominent member of Parliament and with a Pakistani background, encouraged Muslims to turn their backs on the message from the imam and celebrate birthdays with joy and pride, arguing:

The fight over values in Norway is about how we should live together and have common norms and common arenas. Children who eat, play and celebrate together at birthdays are not only creating joy, but it is also good integration in practice (*Aftenposten* 17 January 2016).

This media controversy about birthdays highlights not only current disagreements within Muslim communities in Norway concerning questions of upbringing, religion and integration. It also suggests how children's birthdays have become part of a larger discussion on norms, values and ideas of how to live together. The case also made Norwegian majority society's views on birthday parties very visible. The mayor of Kristiansand went public and

asked the mosque for a meeting with the imam, "to discuss integration in Norwegian society" (*Dagbladet* 16 January 2016). The statement from the imam was framed as unacceptable in the national media debate that followed.

The Secretary of State in the Department for Justice, Jøran Kallmyr, representing the far-right Progress Party said: "It is negative that we have imams that work against integration. I urge the imam to reconsider. [...] Imams should learn Norwegian values and, not least, gain an understanding of Norwegian society" (*Aftenposten* 14 January 2016). Birthday parties were equated with Norwegian values, and allowing children to take part in birthday celebrations seemed like an obligation. A member of Parliament from the Conservative Party, Hårek Elvenes, added: "This is completely unheard of. To prevent children from attending birthday parties is a perverse way of performing religion that affects the children. This way, distance and delusions between groups are created. It instigates parallel societies. This is what we need least of all. This is an anti-integration measure" (*Aftenposten* 14 January 2016).

To prevent children from attending birthday celebrations is here considered as an act through which you define yourself as outside the Norwegian community, with no interest in integrating or following dominant norms and values in Norwegian society. This member of Parliament exposes a fear of migrants and what failure of integration may lead to, by bringing up the idea of parallel societies. A National Child Authority spokesman at the time stated, with reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the

Child that "children have a right to be heard in all questions regarding them, also regarding birthdays" (*Nettavisen* 17 January 2016). He encouraged parents to ask and listen to their children when it came to birthday parties. The case was highly publicized in national media, and in the end the imam had to withdraw from his position in the mosque (TV2 14 April 2016). It was obviously not acceptable to publicly claim that children should not attend birthday parties. This mediated case made visible a strong interlinkage between birthday parties for children and national ideas of inclusion, exclusion and integration, where birthday parties became symbols of Norwegian ways of life.

Birthday Parties as Tools for "Tolerance" or Inclusion?

Schools were an important context for organizing the guest list for birthday parties, within the framework of the school class a child belongs to. In some contact meetings between schools and parents that we attended, teachers would advise parents to make common rules for the birthday celebrations. Parents would frequently raise the question of how to celebrate birthdays at their specific school or class. Birthday parties, although organized and held outside the realm of education, were thus seen as events that were legitimately discussed in public in schools. Some teachers in our fieldwork informed the parents that they were only allowed to distribute invitations to birthday parties in the school environment if everybody in the class or everybody belonging to the same gender in the class was invited.

A teacher telling first-time school parents about the practicalities in the cooper-

ation between the school and home on their child's first day in school, went from talking about reading, homework, behaviour, and breakfast to address the organization of birthdays. She clearly had parents with a migrant background in mind when talking about birthday parties, as most of the information she gave may be considered as common knowledge in Norwegian society. During the meeting, she informed that it is important to invite all boys or all girls in a class and to provide feedback to the hosts when your child is invited to a party. The teacher confessed that she gets a stomach-ache when people do not give notification that their child will not attend the birthday, adding, "It is very painful when children do not come to birthdays", referring to the situation both of children who experience that guests do not come, and of children not allowed to go to parties. "In my opinion, if you are invited, then go", the teacher said. The teacher then addressed economic obstacles to participating, and advised the parents to agree upon a low maximum sum for the gifts, in order to prevent the gifts from becoming too expensive. However, much of this information was not translated to parents with a migrant background in this meeting, as the interpreter was by then exhausted by the amount of information the teacher gave. What the non-Norwegian-speaking parents understood from this information was thus unclear; they did not comment on the information. Judging from our conversations with the parents with a migrant background in that particular class (more than half of the parents), many of them were not able to understand what the teacher was saying.

One of the evening meetings for parents was arranged by a school where parents were invited to discuss how they could contribute to a better school environment. At this event, one of the sessions concerned in particular how parents with a migrant background could become more involved in different activities. During this discussion on inclusion and integration, as we also experienced other places and times, the conversation soon touched on the theme of birthday celebrations. A Norwegian majority mother seemed annoyed with parents who did not send their children to birthday parties. She said: "I feel sorry for the children who are denied the chance to go to birthday parties. We want the best, we want to give! But the communication cannot be only one-sided." She referred to her son's class where more than half of the children had a migrant background. She criticized parents for letting their own and other children down by forbidding them to go or by not facilitating their attendance at birthday parties. In her view, those hosting parties gave something to others, just by inviting them. Other parents continued the discussion, bringing up similar experiences. In a later interview with this particular mother, she explained how she prioritized very hard to save money in order for her child to host a birthday party. They lived in precarious economic conditions, and the boy had to prioritize which birthday parties he would attend, as they could not afford to have him going to all the parties he was invited to.

Many remarked on how arranging birthday parties for their children at this school posed some challenges, such as uncertainty about how many to set the table

for and the amount of food they should prepare, since they often were not notified by the children's parents whether or not the child would participate. Another mother interjected, with a disappointed voice: "It is part of having children in this school, setting the table for everybody and then taking the cutlery away." Some parents added that their children had felt let down because only a few children came to their party, and the invited absentees had not given prior notification. Other majority parents seemed particularly happy to say that in their children's class almost everybody came to the parties, also mentioning that this was a consequence of a specific effort. Majority Norwegians had for instance ensured Muslim parents personally that they would not serve pork to their children. Some parents would specifically call or text parents with a migrant background beforehand, asking whether their child was coming, and sometimes offering to bring their children along in their car to other children's parties. To focus on the inclusion of migrants and level out social differences was a common trait among parents engaged in public bodies in this school (Danielsen & Bendixsen 2019).

Maria, a Norwegian majority middle-class mother who was very engaged in her children's schooling and leisure activities, was among those who had "done something extra to try to involve them in birthday celebrations". "Them" were in this case parents and children with a Muslim background. Maria had experienced that half of the guests did not show up at her children's celebrations, and she remarked that all of those not attending had a Muslim background. At first, her children had

been sad, but later they had accepted that "this is how it is". Maria, however, tried to find out why these children did not come, in order to understand what she could do in order to make them come. She said:

One year I asked the teacher if she knew why they were not allowed to attend. Couldn't they afford it? Because, for example, they can join in with the gifts my children are giving. So I have tried to figure it out, how we can include everybody. But it is not that easy, no. Now, I have spent a lot of energy thinking about what we can do to include all the groups belonging to the school, discussed it with other class representatives. But we have sort of not found a good solution, nor has the school. We can see that when we see who attends parents' meetings. So I really do not know what I can do.

For Maria, trying to include children with different backgrounds in birthday celebrations was an integrated part of her engagement in her children's everyday life and school environment, and her effort to include minorities in activities in the neighbourhood. Pursuing this issue further, she had asked some parents with a Muslim background why their children did not attend birthday parties. They had explained that it was not allowed because it could take the focus away from Allah. Telling us this during the interview, she stresses that on the other hand some Muslim families did let their children take part, explaining that two children with a Muslim background usually came to her children's celebrations. Nonetheless, these two children had not attended other children's birthdays, the reason for which she didn't know. One reason, she reflected, was perhaps that their parents trusted her more than other parents in the class, because she had been in direct contact with them. The engagement of Maria, trying to find out why some children did not attend birthday

parties, and her effort to find ways to promote the inclusion of all children in the school class in birthday celebrations, was a trait we found among other parents too.

For majority parents, birthday parties carried an expectation that children can meet across differences, an ideal some Norwegian majority parents living in these socially mixed areas held high (Danielsen & Bendixsen 2019). In the guest list, it is not socially acceptable to discriminate on the grounds of economic or ethnic background; on the contrary, one should especially make sure that "everyone" should be invited. Thus, what is sometimes viewed as an event and act focusing on an individual child, in practice is tied up to community building and collectivity – highlighting that the individual child is part of a community. As part of our fieldwork, we have investigated how parenting, for some, also incorporates *inclusive parenting* (ibid. 2019). This entails not only a responsibility towards their own child, but a concern for and time investment in other people's children (Danielsen & Bendixsen 2018). This parenting style is linked to a desire to create a more egalitarian society, and a belief that a child's upbringing and future depends upon the well-being of other people's children. It is against this background, we argue, that the parent's emphasis on everyone celebrating birthday parties, and of attending other children's parties, should be understood.

Critical Self-Reflection and New Practices

At one of the parents' meetings we attended at one of the schools, a discussion on how to reach out to parents who were not

present in school meetings turned into a conversation about the possible reasons why some immigrants, mentioning Muslims, did not send their children to birthday parties or arrange parties for their birthdays. The parents wondered if birthday parties involved too high costs because of the socially expected gifts, if the higher number of children in these families made attendance difficult to organize, or if they did not appreciate birthdays.

Later during this parents' meeting, a white middle-class majority father became more critical towards the idea of birthday parties, saying: "Birthdays are so important to us; they may not be so important to them. They may not be able to invite others to a birthday party." Other parents commented that they ("the Muslims") may see the world with different glasses. The father continued:

What is the purpose of the birthday party, should children really get that much attention? We are so engaged as parents, maybe too engaged. Those who come here [to Norway as migrants or refugees] do not have that engagement, the close follow-up with GPS and attending every [soccer] training session.

This father was very critical towards a standard of parenting which he identified as typically Norwegian: much weight on fostering the individuality of the child, being very concerned with giving much attention to the child. Instead of letting the discussion about birthday parties be about the others and their so-called unwillingness to integrate, he turned the discussion around, to become introspective about "themselves" and their own parenting focus. He urged that Norwegian parents should learn from people like his neighbours, the Iraqi family who let their

8-year-old daughter cycle around outdoors on her own. "They show us who we are – the helicopter parents", he added and criticized the risk-conscious Norwegian style of child rearing. The parents' discussion on ways of inclusion and birthday parties turned into a self-reflection on what they considered as Norwegian values, namely the engaged ever-present risk-conscious parents attentive to their offspring. This self-reflection may be interpreted as a willingness to understand and accept why others act differently than oneself.

Some parents told us that they had changed the way they celebrated birthdays due to living in a socially and ethnically mixed area. They had tried to take the perceived economic differences between families into account and organized it so that the birthday child only got one joint present from all the children in the class attending the party. This solution both suited the middle-class parent who could avoid cheap plastic things, and it helped to make invisible the economic differences between families, at least in the gift-giving moment.

Some Migrant Parents' Views: A Necessary Custom?

The migrant parents we met through fieldwork, or interviewed, revealed very different views and experiences of birthday celebrations. We encountered families with a migrant background who took birthday celebrations for granted, a few who thought that birthday celebrations were a Christian tradition and thus *haram* (ritually unclean or prohibited), families who wanted to take part in this ritual as a way to integrate into their neighbour-

hoods, and families who organized birthday celebrations in order to make their children happy. We will now dig into a separate part of the fieldwork consisting of a group of parents with a migrant and religious background often mentioned by majority parents as a category of parents that did not take part in birthday celebrations.

During our fieldwork, we participated in a parenting class for migrant parents and their discussions of birthday celebrations. It was an official parenting class organized by a local mosque with funding from the local municipalities. This specific parenting class aimed especially at empowering parents with a migration background in their role as parents in a new country. The ten participants all had a migrant background from East Africa. The main course leader was a representative from the local mosque, certified by Norwegian authorities to hold this particular kind of parenting class. There was also a course leader with a Norwegian non-migrant background. One of the researchers took part in this setting, observing the interactions and discussions. The participants in the parenting class had a long debate about whether they should accept a researcher in the setting, and they decided it was fine, partly because some of the parents already knew the researcher from other parts of the fieldwork and ensured the others that the researchers did not belong to government's child welfare service.

The setting appeared to the researcher as a safe space for the mothers and fathers participating in the parenting class, as migrant parents dominated the group. The atmosphere was very friendly and light-hearted, with lots of laughter. Participants

could talk in their mother tongue while parts of the discussion took place in Norwegian or were interpreted by the course leader. Birthday parties were discussed twice during the nine afternoon classes and the woman quoted at the beginning of this article, asking whether birthday parties were mandatory, took part in these classes. The first time birthdays were brought up, the group discussed whether it was difficult to switch between two cultures as parents. A mother then answered: "Yes, with Christmas, and Christmas gifts, and birthdays." A father followed up to confirm what she had said: "Birthdays, they are not a custom in my country, and it is challenging."

The course leader, who had a migration background, presented birthday celebrations as a Norwegian custom that parents had to deal with one way or the other, as it was a phenomenon they would encounter. Some of the parents talked about birthday parties as an event that seemed foreign and distant to them. They had not celebrated their own birthdays when they grew up, and birthday celebrations were not important to them. A mother said that birthdays were not important to her, but she made celebrations for her children's sake because it was important to them. Another mother said she felt pressure from her children to arrange birthday parties, and that once her son cried because she had forgotten his birthday. The boy had noticed this when he arrived in the kindergarten and the kindergarten employees had planned a celebration for him. This example also suggests that not celebrating birthdays in Norway is difficult, as the majority society expect a celebration, and the kindergarten and school will mark the

day for the individual child anyhow. In this case, the kindergarten can be said to take over the role of the parents, providing the child with a celebration.

Some of the parents present said they were against birthday celebrations due to their religious belief, stating that such celebrations would take attention away from Allah. One father showed the researcher photos on his smartphone of the birthday parties his family had hosted, and eagerly pointed out that Norwegian majority children were also present as guests in their home during these parties. Yet he did not share this information with the other parents. The course leader wrapped up the discussion by saying that birthday parties are a tricky question – suggesting simultaneously that it nonetheless could be a valuable way to interact with their neighbours.

The second time they discussed birthday parties in the parenting class, the debate was initiated by the researcher who was present. The course leader asked the researcher if it was something she wanted to discuss with the class on the last night of the nine classes. The researcher suggested talking about birthday parties once more, as she felt that there were more to be said about the issue than time had allowed in the past discussion. The researcher brought up the way Norwegian majority parents in the area viewed and discussed birthday parties. She told them how majority parents felt sorry for their own children when invited guests did not show up, and they were curious as to why some parents did not facilitate such celebrations for their children. This second discussion evolved in new directions after this direct quest for answers. The parents now came

up with economic and practical arguments against attending birthdays, which had not been mentioned in the first discussion. Now many of them said that they had so many children, some had five, others seven, and so it would be extremely expensive to let all of them host or attend birthday parties. A mother of seven said that it would be economically and practically impossible if each of her children should attend and give presents to all the parties they were invited to. Many, and probably most, of these parents lived in social housing and identified openly as poor during other discussions in the parenting class.

Others parents commented that it was too difficult to plan and organize their children's attendance at birthday celebrations due to their practical responsibility to look after their other children at home, or to difficulties connected to not having a car to transport their children to the various settings. A father said that because they could not afford to celebrate their own children's birthdays it felt wrong to let their children attend other children's parties. His explanation for not letting his children attend birthday parties thus had more to do with his self-respect and a wish to not feel or be seen as inferior to other families who were more well-off.

Some parents who had seemed reluctant in the first discussion on birthdays, now admitted to also organizing birthday celebrations. A mother of three explained that she herself enjoyed celebrating her children's birthdays, but she made sure to do it the day before or after their real birthdays in order to honour Allah first. During the coffee-break some of the parents showed the researcher photos on their

smartphones of birthday cakes and happy birthday children surrounded by guests. Overall, these parents talked about birthdays as a Norwegian custom and taking part in them as something they did for their kids, who wanted this, rather than for themselves or as a way to get to know Norwegian parents in their neighbourhood. As such, they negotiated and changed everyday practices in their family life in order to fulfil their children's wishes. Looking at how this small group of parents with a somewhat similar social, ethnic and religious background encountered birthday celebrations and expectations, strikingly different views and practices became visible.

Discussion: Birthday Parties as a Litmus Test for Belonging in Norwegian Society

The open qualitative research design of this study, based on fieldwork and interviews with open-ended questions, allowed us to follow up on what parents and others in a socially and ethnically mixed area were concerned with. The inclusion of socially differently situated majority parents and migrant parents of different economic and educational background gave a possibility to analyse what differently situated actors talked about. During our fieldwork, it became clear that the issue of birthday celebrations as a topic was discussed in different ways across social, economic and ethnic differences. Why did birthday parties for children cause so much engagement, hope, anxiety, frustration and discussions? To understand the centrality of the ritual of birthday celebrations for children in everyday interactions, the perspective of everyday nationalism is useful.

Throughout this article, we have argued that birthday parties for children are represented in the media, through major institutions and in everyday talk among majority parents as a naturalized and taken-for-granted occurrence in childhood in Norway. The importance of birthday celebrations for children is not questioned, and the underlying premise seems to be that all children should have the opportunity to experience the same attention on their birthdays as other children do. For many Norwegian majority parents their individual child's happiness and fulfilment of expectations is in focus when arranging birthday celebrations. However, simultaneously at stake is their child's social position in the larger community: the birthday party is also about creating and maintaining social networks and friendships. The latter is why parents describe it as a tragedy if few or no guests come – through such events loneliness, lack of friends and social position becomes established, noticeable and affirmed.

Taken-for-granted rituals, norms and practices are typical features of everyday nationalism. Not facilitating birthday celebrations is interpreted as breaking unspoken rules of conduct in Norway, and this draws attention. In the media debate it was even considered as an act of anti-integration or a signal of developing parallel societies. In media debates we saw an equation between birthday parties and Norwegian ways of life. Supporting or not supporting birthday parties becomes an invisible litmus test of whether you belong, or wish to belong, in Norway or not. Migrant children and their parents become objects of nationalization into Norwegian rituals. The Swedish sociologists Åker-

blom and Harju (2019:1), also using everyday nationalism as a perspective, argue that migrant children in Sweden are fostered to become "Swedish" in the pre-school setting to integrate them into Swedish society. Their research shows that preschool education mediates dominant culture to migrant children and they "are being compensated for lack of assumed national identity" (ibid. 2019:11). Our study shows, in a similar way, how birthdays are educational tools used by teachers and other professionals and parents to integrate children into Norwegian society.

Majority parents talked about birthday parties as social arenas where every child should be included. Some had an ideal that special measures should be taken in order to include migrant and poor children, such as negotiating prices of the gifts in advance to make reciprocity possible. By framing the organization of birthday parties as part of anti-bullying strategies that may encourage inclusion in school classes and neighbourhoods, such parties become part of preventing children from becoming marginalized. Birthday parties are seen as potential meeting points between children who otherwise do not spend time together outside of school. The inclusionary aims that are linked to birthday parties in the sense that "everyone should be included", as expressed by some parents, can be a response to anxieties: if some children today are marginalized and excluded – or excluding themselves, this can make inclusion in Norwegian society more difficult tomorrow. Birthday parties are thus seen as events where it is important to include everybody and the effort to ensure that nobody is left out is often

framed as part of an anti-bullying strategy. As such, inclusion measures such as birthday parties can be interpreted as risk management, with an effort to solve anxieties related to integration, both in the present and in the future. Children attending in birthday parties become citizens, seen as expressing normative standards and symbolizing ideals for how to live together in Norway today.

Minority parents had different ways of responding to the birthday ritual in Norway and its tacit rules: from embracing it as an ordinary event in their children's lives, to struggling with being able to perform this ritual, to being critical against the idea of birthday celebrations. In contrast to how many majority parents talked about the celebration of birthdays, some of the migrant parents understood the ritual as situating the individual in focus (the birthday child) – an individual event in which one person receives a lot of attention and thus it became religiously problematic for some. Additionally, the focus on how they should deal with their children's birthdays may for some be experienced as a trespassing of their private lives. The detailed norms regarding how you should perform the party, such as having to include all members of a school class or all boys or girls in the class, or serving specific food, are intended to make the party inclusive. But for some families such rules can mean that it becomes too overwhelming or difficult to host such a party due to lack of space in their home or lack of knowledge about the food expected to be served.

Majority parents' disappointment when some migrant children did not attend such events may also reflect an anxiety of par-

allel societies and express a potential fear of too large difference in lifestyles and religious beliefs. Bringing your child to other children's homes requires a certain degree of trust, of believing that the other parents will show proper care and respect that your child has a certain diet, for instance. It may be that the Norwegian majority parents feel that they are not trusted when other parents will not let their children visit them. For some, it might appear as if arranging inclusive birthday parties is a gift that the migrant parents do not recognize or are unwilling to take on.

Frykman has claimed that national identity, rightly viewed as a dangerous force of exclusion, can also, under certain circumstances, serve as a tool in the service of cultural complexity – not homogenization – and can contribute to negotiations and deeper reflexivity (1995). This carries a complex understanding of nationalism where the outcome is open. Birthday parties can bring different people together, but they can also be experienced as an enforced obligatory ritual, imposed from above. Another aspect is that birthday parties intended to offer a common ground of participation expose economic and social differences as they can make differently situated homes visible for the participants. In his introduction to *The Gift*, the sociologist Marcel Mauss (1990) points to modern societies where Christmas and birthday presents, weddings and any kind of invitation imply obligations, and the gift's recipient feels strongly compelled to reciprocate. The wish to appear on an equal footing with other families can nudge parents to make an extra effort, economically and socially, to arrange a birthday party. The quest for inclusion

and equality can also result in parents making sure that their children give birthday presents that are less expensive, much cheaper than they can afford. This way they can keep down the costs of attending birthday parties, also for other families.

During our fieldwork we talked to a poor single mother who even sold her own furniture in order to be able to host the kind of birthday party her child expected. This was not a common practice among those we interviewed, but it suggests how the wish to be in an equal, egalitarian position can include an effort and a struggle to be able to arrange birthday parties. This was the case not only for parents with a migrant background, but also for majority parents struggling socio-economically, such as the single mother. The desire to be on an equal footing can in some cases mean that parents do not celebrate birthdays for the child and do not allow their child to attend other children's birthday parties in order to avoid the feeling of shame related to poverty.

Ideas of cultural sameness, Gullestad (2002) argues, are part of the production of an "invisible fence" vis-à-vis immigrants. Immigrants are expected to play down their differences or else they risk being viewed as compromising the narrative of Norway as "a homogeneous, tolerant, anti-racist, and peace-loving society" (Gullestad 2002:59). Scandinavian societies are characterized by notions of strong similarities and cultural notions of equality (Olwig 2011), which produces specific policies and ideologies of social incorporation (Bendixsen, Bringslid & Vike 2018). The image of egalitarianism upheld, although cracking, by the Norwe-

gian majority population has partly become dependent on whether non-Western immigrants are considered to perform according to standards of normality.

The present construction of egalitarianism as a social norm and cultural value – that is, a one norm society – is a factor of exclusionary mechanisms as Norwegian society grows more heterogeneous (Bendixsen et al. 2018). Using sameness as a scale for measuring whether someone should be identified as equal, risks constituting certain kinds of difference as problematic and can even be interpreted as a deviation or a lack. The ways in which the cultural construction of egalitarianism as sameness has become entangled with nationalism and the racialization of difference contributes to a situation in which “immigrants’ are asked to ‘become Norwegian’, at the same time as it is tacitly assumed that this is something they can never really achieve” (Gullestad 2002:59). Simultaneously, such expectations also mean that newcomers such as migrants are seen as people who potentially can fit into Norwegian normative standards.

Different reasons, rationalizations and practicalities interacted in different ways and affected whether parents let their children take part in birthday celebrations or not. Some minority or Muslim parents in our material expressed that they cannot or do not want their children to participate in birthday celebrations due to religious concerns or economic or practical limitations. Some other minority or Muslim parents in our material did engage with and organize birthday parties for children, some expressing that they saw this as a way for them and their children to take part in Norwegian rituals.

The fear or shame of exposing their own economic or practical shortcomings can make both majority and minority parents withdraw from birthday celebrations. In order to appear equal it might be a better option for some to hide differences that could become visible by hosting or attending birthday celebrations. From our material it becomes clear that parents who do not let their children attend or celebrate birthday parties have many different reasons to do so, intertwining practical, economic, social and religious aspects of their everyday life. As seen throughout this article, the understanding among members of the majority society for different reasons for not participating in the birthday ritual seems to range from no understanding at all to a more open-minded curiosity about why some people do not take part.

Conclusion

As we have seen, birthday parties are loaded with meaning, and bring together many intersecting conflicts and expose economic, social, cultural and religious differences in Norwegian society today. Going back to the question of whether birthdays are obligatory, raised by the mother with a Somali background, our foray into the organization of birthday parties shows that informally they are thought of as obligatory, being a naturalized and integrated ritual of childhood within majority Norwegian culture. As such, they constitute a ritual of everyday nationalism. The way that a number of parents and professionals talk about birthday parties gives the impression that migrants who embrace the tradition of birthday parties “the Norwegian way” are viewed as better included than those who

celebrate birthdays differently or not at all. Discussions and practices of birthday parties can be interpreted as statements concerning how to raise the next generation, and how to develop local and national communities. The ritual of the birthday party is politicized and given the symbolic importance of fostering national identification, committed to values of equality and inclusion.

Birthday parties are considered to be able to instigate encounters between children attending the same school. The repetitive and continuous celebration of children in the school class is intended to create and affirm inclusion and prevent exclusion. Sharing this ritual is assumed to promote trust and solidarity, also among parents. At the same time, the celebration is filtered with particular ideals of how to do it "the right way". Migrants as well as non-migrants are expected to comply with these ideals and norms that are mostly implicitly vocalized. In the fieldwork we did within the larger project of which this study is a part, we found that schools expected migrant parents to comply with dominant and largely unspoken ideals of intensive parenting in Norway (Bendixsen & Danielsen 2020). Performing birthday parties becomes part of the generalized expectations towards parenting.

Birthday parties represent a hope and a desire to create encounters across social and economic differences. Preventing or not facilitating for children to attend birthday parties was seen as unacceptable by Norwegian majority society because it also denied the child the opportunity to become a member of Norwegian society. Not accepting a birthday invitation can be

interpreted as rejecting social relationships with the specific child, engagement with the school class, the neighbourhood or integration into national values such as trust, equality and social inclusion. Taking part in the ritual of a birthday party became a symbol of adapting to Norwegian ways of life. Notably, those who for various reasons did not arrange or attend parties may not be aware of these expectations and concerns as they are seldom vocalized directly. However, some migrant parents considered birthday parties for children as a ritual that was imposed on them from institutions such as kindergartens and schools.

This article has shown that there are many different reasons that interact and influence the ways parents view and react to birthday parties. Among the migrants who were reluctant to participate in the ritual, some dismiss it as against their religious conviction. Others said it was too expensive for them to afford. Others fear that they are not capable of doing the ritual in the way that is expected of them, or that it is too much work due to practical reasons if they have many children to raise. The wish to appear on an equal footing can encourage some parents to facilitate birthday parties and others to avoid such parties in order to hide existing differences. As a consequence, while some consider birthday parties as important encounters between children with a different backgrounds, in practice birthday parties sometimes expose and sharpen economic and social differences to such an extent that the ritual exposes and establishes difference and leads instead to avoidance.

As Scott (2007:104) points out, rituals have intended effects as well as unintended

ed effects when performed in practice. When rituals have a strong standing, as birthday parties for children have in Norway, they affect and can have consequences for those who do not participate or are excluded from taking part in the ritual. The Australian anthropologist Ghassan Hage has interpreted Western ideas of white tolerance, presented through ideas of multiculturalism, as a fantasy of a national order where minorities are objects of a national will (2000: 98) and a lack of capacity of acknowledging minorities' own wills. Birthday parties for children are indeed examples of such tolerance and its borders. Along with Knott (2015) we also underline here the "contingency and messiness of nationalism in everyday life" (2015:8). When nationalism is investigated through empirical fieldwork, as we have done, the complexity of the phenomenon becomes visible, showcasing the blurring of borders between us and them and how nationalism is given meaning by different actors. Some majority parents are willing to adjust the content of the ritual of birthdays celebrations in order to make the ritual more inclusionary. To take part in a birthday celebration can act as way to make contact with others you would not otherwise have a common ground to meet with. With the help of the concept of everyday nationalism, the article has highlighted contradictions in how nationalism is enacted in different ways in everyday life. Using birthday parties for children as a lens to discuss how we live together today, shows the importance of schools and neighbourhoods in making inclusive and exclusive paths in our everyday life. As Millei (2018:94) states, exposing and

learning about processes of everyday nationalism can help to offer new entry points where relations can be reshaped towards a more inclusive ideal and form of everyday nationalism.

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Notes

- 1 There are however, established religious groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses who do not allow their members to celebrate birthdays, but these are considered as deviant from the general norm.
- 2 All quotations from Norwegian sources are translated by the authors.
- 3 <https://www.etikkom.no/en/ethical-guidelines-for-research/guidelines-for-research-ethics-in-the-social-sciences--humanities-law-and-theology/>.

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Quotations are from five parents' meetings arranged at three different schools (autumn 2016) and from two different lessons in a parenting class for migrant parents (autumn 2016).

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The Coffin, the Urn and the Ashes

Conceptions of Death

By Tove Ingebjørg Fjell

Death is a change of status, usually leading to some form of rite of passage, in which the dead are separated from the living and integrated among the dead (cf. van Gennep 1999). In all such rites, there are some specific modes of communication that are expressed in closing ceremonies, such as in coffin burial or cremation ceremonies. These forms of communication are generally standardized but change to some degree over time. This study discusses contemporary cultural conceptions of coffin burial, cremation, and ash scattering, and of the dead body, and thoughts on how to rejoin the biological cycle after death.

In his work on the history of death, the historian Philippe Ariès (1914–1984) described changes in attitudes to death from the Middle Ages to his own time. He originally distinguished between three different phases: “tamed death”, “one’s own death” and “Death of the other” or “thy death” (Ariès 1991; see also Jacobsen 2016:3–5).¹ According to Ariès, in his own lifetime – the twentieth century – a schism occurred, and the fourth phase, “forbidden death”, expresses an alienated, tabooed and distanced attitude to death. A slow waning of faith in eternal life now makes death meaningless and the ultimate enemy, so it must be kept at a distance. Critics have pointed out that Ariès, when describing forbidden death, was greatly influenced by his own time, namely, a time of two world wars and significant numbers of deaths with a subsequent death-fatigue in populations. These conditions make an understanding of meaningless death possible (Jacobsen and Haakonsen 2008:15–16).

The sociologist Michael Hviid Jacob-

sen and the art historian Mette Haakonsen argue that our own time represents a period of change in the culture of death, where we see a reaction against forbidden death (Jacobsen & Haakonsen 2008: 13ff.). According to the two researchers, the death-denying society which has rewritten and privatized death and hidden it away is no longer an apt description of how we relate to death in our culture. The taboos and the secrecy that belonged to the forbidden death are disappearing, and the contours of something new appear. The researchers point out that it is difficult to know exactly what has led to this development, but they list a number of societal changes that include increased political awareness of caring and terminal care, recognition of worthy death, and the importance of self-determination (Jacobsen & Haakonsen 2008:16–17). This gives rise to several new terms such as “spectacular death” and “mediated death”, a death that is observed and exposed in the public media; “the paradoxical death”, because there is a distinction between the desires and imaginings of our death on the one hand, and on the other hand what actually happens after death; and “death interregnum”,² an in-between time, suggesting it is difficult to specify why the recent changes in contemporary death culture have occurred, and whether the changes will continue (ibid.; Jacobsen 2009; Jacobsen 2016). The fifth stage in the history of death “is returning from its existential exile and its societal hiding place” (Jacobsen 2009:36; my translation).

So even though death belongs to “slow culture”, with no rapid changes (Jacobsen 2009:18), attitudes do change. This is seen in the way that people increasingly take

care of dying relatives, albeit with good help from pain relievers and health professionals. It is seen in the way children become central to funerals again, after being excluded for decades (Kjus 2019). There are ways in which obituaries are increasingly being “individually customized”, though they still largely resemble obituaries published 50 or 100 years ago (Fjell 2019). And it is seen when death is broadcast from cancer departments, from grieving survivors, in television series about young people’s suicides, or debates about active euthanasia (cf. Jacobsen 2009:23). The same is true when Facebook friends show up after their death in the Facebook feed, for example, when it is their birthday. Michael Hviid Jacobsen calls it a democratization of death (ibid.). This new phase in the developmental history of death is seen in connection with several factors:

There are many reasons for that change [...] where taboo, silence and suppression of the previous century seem to be a thing of the past. One can talk about the impact of soft values, increased political awareness of care and care for the sick and dying, the recognition of the need to create a framework for dignified death, the need for self-choice, the return of the repressed, the actualization of death due to increased focus on the risk of terror, violence, environmental crises, etc. (Jacobsen & Haakonsen 2008:16–17; my translation).

A focus on self-determination and being able to choose – the late-modern individual orientation – constitutes the theoretical framework around the present study. The active and unique contemporary individual is increasingly shaped by doing, not by being (cf. Giddens 1997:93ff.): The narrative of the individual is created, among other things, by the individual him- or her-

self throughout life, and by the individual’s bereaved afterlife. An authentic narrative about an individual, a perception of a sincere presentation about an individual, is increasingly in focus, even after death. The same trends in “individually tailored” closing ceremonies may be seen, although these, whether religious or non-religious, have many similarities to so-called “traditional” closing ceremonies (Utby 2019). The changes are seen today in the visibility of death, how death is viewed and how it is handled.

It is this “death interregnum” (cf. Jacobsen & Haakonsen 2008:16–17) that I focus on in this study, and my contribution will include how a general individual orientation in society is reflected in the death culture, particularly in notions of closing ceremonies and the dead body. Research questions are: What conceptions of coffin burial and cremation are found in a Norwegian context, and what do new practices such as ash scattering express? What are contemporary cultural conceptions of dead bodies, and how do notions of nature and the environment play into these conceptions? Before I get to the research questions, I will first explain the material and methods, and give a historical review of cremation as a practice in Norway, as a context for the later analysis.

Material, Methods and Research Ethics

The study’s main material is a response to the Norwegian Ethnological Research (NEG) questionnaire 240, “Death and Burial” (2012). I have examined the replies to the questions “Coffin burial or cremation – what do you think of this choice?”, and “In cremation you can do

other things with the ashes than bury them in a cemetery. Do you have any experience with this or thoughts on it?" (my translation). There are 231 replies to this questionnaire, from 180 women and 49 men, in addition to two unanswered submissions. The list is sent to regular respondents, as well as being posted digitally. Using digital questionnaires, NEG reaches younger respondents, who may only answer this one questionnaire. Most respondents were born between 1940 and 1989.³ Ethical approval has been obtained for the research and the material has been anonymized.⁴

Other material used in the analysis are laws (the Funeral Act of 1997, the Cremation Act of 1913, the Graveyard Act of 1897, Denmark and Norway's Church Ritual 1685⁵) and the proposition to the Odelsting on the Church Act and the Funeral Act, statements from the government, county governors and the Church Meeting on ash scattering, as well as some general media material about death, along with statistics. Where it is relevant, information on funeral practices in the Nordic countries and the UK will be mentioned.

Closing Ceremonies in Norway

There are various closing ceremonies in Norway, such as coffin burial and cremation ceremonies under the auspices of the church, under the auspices of the Norwegian Humanist Association and civil ceremonies (Utby 2019).⁶ A cremation ceremony may end with an urn burial or ash burial. A coffin burial must take place within ten working days after death, while inurnment and ash scattering must occur within six months after death (Section 12 of the Funeral Act).⁷ Most choose a tradi-

tional ecclesiastical burial or cremation ceremony, some choose a humanist ceremony, and a few choose a civil ceremony. Cremation was prohibited in Norway until 1898. Since then, the number of cremations has risen slowly but surely, although in Norway majority still have coffin burials. Cremation implies that the body is cremated after the closing ceremony and that an urn is placed in the ground at some subsequent date, either with a traditional named headstone, or in a named or anonymous memorial garden, alternatively the ashes in the urn are scattered. An increasing number of people are cremated in Norway, and a few choose ash scattering.⁸

Cremation, from the Latin *cremo* which means "I burn", was practised in closing ceremonies in Norway from the early medieval period to the Christianization of the country (Hadders 2013:196; Østigard 2006). In a Christian context, fire has been associated with hell, sin, and punishment, and burning was incompatible with the resurrection of the body; therefore, cremation was prohibited as Christianity was introduced (Hadders 2013:197; Østigard 2006:36). Even today, there may be some resistance to cremation. It is difficult to find theological evidence that cremation is incompatible with resurrection, but a literal interpretation of Paul's parable of the wheat grain has led conservative Christians to conclude that there must be something left of the body for it to be resurrected (cf. Lahtinen 1989:21).⁹ The religious historian Tuomo Lahtinen describes the literal interpretation of Paul's wheat parable as absurd, in that Paul's message is that the body is perishable, and that God will create a new heavenly body (Lahtinen 1989:21).¹⁰ But the issue of whether cre-

mation is compatible with the resurrection has been debated for a long time, and when it comes to cremation and ash scattering, these practices have been shown to violate belief in the resurrection. Ash scattering, where the body is cremated and the ashes are not deposited in consecrated earth, presents problems for some priests. This is the basis for the suggestion of the hearings that Norwegian priests, for reasons of conscience, should be able to make a reservation against participating in ash scattering (Church Meeting 2012:37; Hadders 2013:202).

The introduction of cremation is often linked to a lack of space in large European cities during the industrial revolution. Hygiene was also an issue and eventually allowed for the acceptance of cremation (Østigard 2006:14). In 1873, a crematorium oven was displayed at the World Exhibition in Vienna; the first modern cremation took place in a Siemens furnace in Germany in 1874 (Hadders 2013:197; Lahtinen 1989:39–40); while the world's first crematorium was built in Milan in 1876 (Lahtinen 1989:15, 35). There were few cremations in the first decades, partly because there was resistance to cremation in the church and in society at large, but also because it was more expensive than a coffin burial. In Norway, the ban on cremation was lifted in 1898, following efforts by the Norwegian Cremation Association (Norsk Kremasjons Forening), which had been established nine years earlier (Hadders 2013:197). The Norwegian Cremation Association, which consisted of an urban intellectual elite of doctors, lawyers and businessmen, worked to legalize cremation and establish crematoria. Norway's first crematorium was built in

Møllendal in Bergen in 1907, nine years after the lifting of the cremation ban (Østigard 2006:15; Hadders 2013:197). The Graveyard Act of 1897 did not contain provisions on cremation, nor did Denmark and Norway's Church Ritual of 1682. The first cremation act came in 1913, and here it was granted that persons over the age of 15 could declare in writing or orally that they wanted to be cremated, but only if they had "the full use of their minds" (§ 1; my translation). In this law, there was particular concern that a deceased person should not be cremated without the state prosecutor's consent, if the death was possibly the result of a criminal act (§ 4). The law also had a provision on how the ashes should be treated:

When cremation has taken place, the ashes must be carefully collected in an urn, which is buried in a cemetery or put in a room arranged for the storage of ashes (chapel, urn hall) and approved by the King. However, the King or his authorized representative may authorize the ash to be stored in another way (§ 6, pt. 2; my translation).

There were thus clear provisions for how the ashes should be collected in an urn, and that the urn should be placed either in soil or in a columbarium; this section was regarded in the 1990s as a prohibition on ash scattering (Ot.prp.no.64 (1994–1995):66), although it may be assumed that ash scattering was not in the legislators' minds in 1913. Provisions in both this act and the Graveyard Act were replaced by the Funeral Act in 1997. In comments from hearings on the act, the Church had reservations against ash scattering, as it "could open for pantheistic notions" (Ot.prp.no.64 (1994–1995):46; my translation).¹¹ Other consultative bodies emphasized that religious freedom

should be considered, and that “people who, for religious reasons, want to scatter the ashes should have their desire fulfilled” (ibid.; my translation). There was also a debate about whether there are theological reasons why ash scattering is difficult to implement. Some believed that the earlier reservation against cremation and later ash scattering was linked to tradition, and that resurrection did not depend on the body being laid whole in the earth. However, more conservative voices argued theologically that ash scattering violated faith in the resurrection (Church Meeting 2012:23ff.).

Thus, there is a relatively restrained attitude to cremation in Norway. While Denmark and Sweden are considered the most “innovative” with a relatively high cremation rate, Norway and Finland are considered the most “traditional” with a high degree of coffin burial and a low percentage of cremation (NOU 2014:43–44; Hadders 2013:198; Holm & Lahtinen 1985; Lahtinen 1989). In Finland cremation was first used in the 1920s, while it was introduced in Sweden in 1887 (Holm & Lahtinen 1985:13–14). Denmark conducted the first cremation in 1886, but this was without the permission of the authorities. The first legal cremation was carried out in Denmark in 1892 (Lahtinen 1989: 42–43). Norway was not the last of the Nordic countries to introduce cremation, but today has one of the lowest rates of cremation in the Nordic countries, and the weakest increase. While Denmark and Sweden are at almost 80%, Finland at 44%, Norway is at 37%, and Iceland at 25% (NOU 2014:11, 43–44). While cremation in Sweden, Denmark and Finland is legally equivalent, cremation in Nor-

wegian law is an *alternative* to coffin burial and may only happen “unless it is known that it was contrary to the deceased’s wishes” (NOU 2014:12; my translation). In Norway’s 428 municipalities, 40 crematoriums were reduced to 24, based on new environmental regulations (Hadders 2013:200). Furthermore, there are large variations in the percentages of cremations: while in 2012 in eastern Norway, such as Oslo, Akershus and Buskerud, it was 76%, 53% and 52% respectively, in other parts of the country, such as Sør-Trøndelag, Nordland, Finnmark and Sogn and Fjordane, it was considerably lower, 13%, 6%, 5% and 3% respectively (NOU 2014:23). There may be different reasons why Norway has had another approach to cremation, especially compared to Sweden and Denmark. One reason is that population density is lower, with a number of rural areas where it takes hours to travel to the nearest crematorium, which makes coffin burial the more obvious choice. Another reason may be the church, and conservative voices within the church, having been allowed to play an important role in debates on cremation.

Following the enactment of the new funeral law in 1997,¹² ash scattering was permitted in Norway, and by 2012, the rate of ash scattering was very low, around 1% (Hadders 2013:201). To be allowed to scatter ashes, one must apply to the County Governor and the applicant must be at least 15 years of age. One can apply on one’s own behalf before one’s death, or it must be proven that the deceased wanted this. On the application form, the chosen location must be marked on a map. The ash can be scattered on land, but not where it is built-up and only where it is suffi-

ciently desolate, and not in popular tourist areas. It can be in open sea or close to land, but not where there is a lot of leisure traffic. One can also choose fjords or rivers, but only where it is desolate enough.¹³ Most applications are for ash scattering at sea or in the fjords (57%), and otherwise the applications are for ash scattering in mountains (38%), in forests (5%), and in rivers or lakes (below 0.1%) (NOW 2014:27). All the ashes must be scattered in one place; one cannot choose to scatter some of the ashes and bury the rest, or scatter some ashes at a holiday home, some in the garden, some in a cemetery, some in the sea and the rest in the mountains, nor can one scatter the ashes at home in one's garden, in practice creating a private burial ground (Government 2018; see also Hadders 2013:201).¹⁴ As mentioned, one cannot erect a headstone, or add an inscription to an existing headstone, after having ashes scattered. One can also sink urns of easily soluble material, so-called environmental urns, into the sea. This choice is equivalent to scattering the ashes to the wind. The common feature of these methods is that the ashes are absorbed in nature and cannot be recovered.

Attitudes to One's Own Burial

The survey "Attitudes to Burial", conducted by Statistics Norway (SSB), shows that over half (54%) would leave the provisions for their own burial to the bereaved, while far fewer (37%) would want to decide this themselves; however, only a small proportion (29% of the latter category) had already made such a provision on their own behalf (NOU 2014:21, 216).¹⁵ This tendency shows a distinction be-

tween cities and rural areas: in less central areas, more people will leave this decision to the bereaved, while in central regions more people want to make the decision themselves. This trend also shows a gender divide, as more women than men want to decide for themselves. A number of people with immigrant backgrounds also want to make this decision themselves. When asked what kind of closing ceremony they wanted, half (50%) responded that they wanted a coffin burial, 37% cremation and an urn, and a full 13% wanted cremation and ash scattering (NOU 2014: 58). The figure of 13% is high in the Norwegian context and may be explained by the fact that about half of the respondents were under the age of 44, and questions about the type of grave they wanted may have been remote for them. When we see how many people actually apply for ash scattering, the figure is far lower, which may also be related to this being a new practice in Norway. In 2012, there were only 251 instances of ash scattering, or 0.6% of all deaths that year (NOU 2014: 162).¹⁶ In comparison, ash scattering is carried out in about 3.8% of all deaths in Denmark, 2.4% of all deaths in Sweden, and less than 2% in Finland (NOU 2014: 162).¹⁷

Ash Scattering – More or Less Spectacular

In Norway, there is a conservative attitude to ash scattering; permits must be applied for, locations marked on maps, and only areas with a desolate character will be approved. This contrasts with, for example, the practice in the UK, where cremation has been allowed since 1885 and ash scattering since the 1930s. Here

it is not required that ash scattering take place far from people. On the contrary, ash scattering occurs where people move, such as on cricket grounds, golf courses, racetracks, and there are memorial gardens attached to major football stadiums such as Manchester United and Arsenal, as well as in smaller football clubs (Appel 2017). Many want to scatter ashes at famous football stadiums, so this is not advertised, for fear that there will be too many requests. The historian Hans Henrik Appel, who has studied death culture associated with football pitches, emphasizes that this is an institutionalized mourning culture with inflation. It makes death visible in a way “that breaks with the taboo and displacement of death, as the French historian Philippe Ariès’s major division of the cultural history of death into four main stages characterizes the twentieth century”, and constitutes the spectacular death (Appel 2017:3; my translation; cf. Jacobsen 2009; Jacobsen & Haakonsen 2008).¹⁸

The spectacular death is an over-exposed death to which a commercial industry is linked (Appel 2017:3), and in this context, it is not only football pitches that are relevant places for ash scattering in the UK. There are several possibilities available, for example, that for £440 an hour, the deceased’s ashes may be scattered from a “vintage wartime Tiger Moth” aircraft; or from a £1550 helium balloon sent up 100,000 feet and exploded in the stratosphere or at the edge of space, where some of the ash will orbit the planet, and some of the ash will return to earth in raindrops; or at a memorial site for up to £1950 where the name of the deceased is inscribed on a memorial

plaque rented for 99 years, and when that time expires, the company does not expect it to be removed; or in a 5–8 minute firework display, with or without music, at a price between £950 and 2350 (Scattering ashes, undated). In Norway, there are currently only offers for ash scattering from boats, which is probably related both to Norwegian regulations and to the boat as a well-known funeral and headstone symbol for “the last voyage”. Vega Sailing, which offers a variety of event types including summer tours, mystery tours, stag parties, weddings, baptisms, confirmations and sightseeing from the ship *S/S Vega*, presents ash scattering trips thus:

Vega tailors trips for ash scattering on Oslo Fjord, and makes the last goodbye a beautiful and dignified farewell. Have the captain pick out a classic, beautiful route on Oslo Fjord, or tailor the trip to your own needs – in consultation with knowledgeable local people. [...] We offer food and drinks from a diverse menu, provided by one of the city’s best catering companies. Together we create a personal and beautiful event, where you decide how involved you will be in the process, decoration and planning. Feel free to contact us for more information on events related to the scattering of ash on Oslo Fjord (Vega Sailing, undated; my translation).

This “floating function room” costs NOK 6500 per hour, and there is information about the application form to the County Governor and which areas are permitted for ash scattering. A somewhat smaller boat offers the same type of services in the same area. The text contains contact information, pictures of an urn being lowered into the water and a drone video, but prices are not shown:

We are committed to having a fine and dignified framework around the ceremony, and we strive to

the utmost to ensure that the bereaved should be left with positive impressions and a worthy closure.

We can accommodate 12 people, we have catering on board according to your wishes, the boat will be nicely and simply decked with flowers suitable for the occasion, if you have your own wishes for flowers etc. this can be done as desired.

We can offer trips just for ash scattering and subsequent return, or trips for ash scattering, followed by anchorage / mooring to quay in the archipelago for dining and coming together to remember the one who has passed away before returning to the starting point.

We are available for inspection if desired (Ocean Princess, undated; my translation).

This is a far cry from the more spectacular opportunities available in the UK market. In addition to being able to have an individually tailored ceremony, there is a focus on silence and dignity, not unlike that which is central to traditional closing ceremonies. There is also a burgeoning focus on environmentally friendly and spectacularly expensive burial vehicles. In consultation with the Tesla plant, a Norwegian has developed the Tesla burial car. There are four such cars worldwide, three have been sold in Norway, and the market in Finland and Iceland has announced an interest (Brustad 2019).

Coffin Burial or Cremation?

What conceptions of coffin burial and cremation are found in the questionnaire material? It indicates that most respondents had conceptions of coffin burial versus cremation, and it is interesting how conceptions of coffin burial and cremation are similar. Both practices were referred to as grotesque, gruesome and macabre. But there were more opinions about cremation than coffin burial: in addition to the terms grotesque, gruesome and macabre, crema-

tion was also referred to as strange, unusual, pagan, impersonal, alien, dramatic, brutal and horrific.

Furthermore, several of the respondents were concerned about how coffin burial and cremation may have different environmental consequences: an older woman believes that coffin burial is the best for the environment, because the burning process itself involves too much air pollution, while a younger woman believes that a body has been exposed to so much through a long life that it is best to get it cleansed through cremation before the body is put into the earth.

Practical considerations were emphasized when coffin burial and cremation were compared. A young archaeologist who, through her position, has “become intimately acquainted with the legislative protection of coffin graves”, considers conservation conditions in Norway before concluding that she herself would prefer cremation (40490, K1982; my translation). Others prefer cremation because the clay in the municipality is so compact that it will take 50 years before the remains disappear. Still others emphasize that it is 100 km to the nearest crematorium, and it is therefore natural to choose a coffin burial. One respondent points out that, unlike cremation, coffin burials allow for the possibility for unsolved crimes to be investigated by opening graves at some future date and extracting DNA. Another practical consideration is land availability. One argument for cremation is that there is little space, such as this person who points to conditions in her own municipality: “Maybe one ought to be cremated, because there is a constant need for the cemetery to be enlarged, at least where I live” (40456, K1947; my translation).¹⁹

Pedagogical considerations were only mentioned in connection with coffin burials. When one sees a coffin lowered into the ground, one understands that the body is lying there and that it is dead, while when a coffin is lowered into the floor or driven away, one has no control over what is actually happening. Some emphasize that a small urn grave does not give the same understanding that there is a dead person under the headstone.

Few refer to religious contexts when explaining their thoughts on the subject. A small number of people associated with the Bahai community responded that they prefer coffin burial because it is in line with their faith. One put it this way:

As a Bahai, I have been taught that we should not be cremated. Abdul Baha says that if we were meant to disintegrate as quickly as we do during cremation, then it would have happened spontaneously after dying. Baha'i believes that traditional burial is the gentlest way to treat the soul (40510, K1960; my translation).

One of these emphasized that she is aware that coffin burial is seen as the most correct in the Bahai faith, but that she herself has difficulty accepting this and that she needs more time to think the matter through. There are also some Christians, often from the older generation, who refer to the resurrection as they explain their thoughts. Some call cremation “un-Christian”. An older woman, a Christian, is not that explicit, but she still sees coffin burial as an act in the Christian faith:

I choose coffin burial, and the reason [...] is that I believe that this life is not the end, but that it is part of eternal life. I think we lived like spirits before we came to earth, and our spirit will live on when we die. The Bible says, “we shall return to God who gave us”. Jesus Christ, our great example, rose from the dead. Some places do not have cof-

fin burials and one must be cremated. I have little experience of this, but I have my thoughts. All people will rise again one day and have the same opportunities. Death is not an end to life, but is the path to eternal progress, which will eventually lead to happiness. [...] We are here to prepare ourselves and develop ourselves and qualify ourselves, so that we may be worthy to dwell in the presence of our Heavenly Father. Because of Jesus Christ, we will be resurrected from the dead (40484, K1940; my translation).

The answer shows an ambivalence: the woman explains the use of coffins with reference to eternal life and resurrection. However, she also has thoughts about the fact that some people choose cremation, while emphasizing that *everyone* will be resurrected after death.

The responses show a large variation in attitudes to coffin burial and cremation: environmental consequences of the two alternatives, practical considerations such as land availability, and pedagogical considerations. Few refer to religious contexts. The variation points to a larger degree to individual considerations, and to a lesser degree to what is regarded as tradition and religion.

Ash Scattering – Belonging to a Place and Lack of Memories

What do new practices like ash scattering express? As mentioned above, ash scattering is a relatively new practice in Norway, and not many people have used it. There are however many opinions about this practice. Those who are sceptical call it “poor symbolism” and something one does not “like”, without going into more detail as to why. Others call it “creative thinking” and “silly ideas”, which one keeps silent about to avoid being rude. These short statements, which are not

elaborated, emphasize that the practice breaks with an understanding of what is traditional.

The regulations do not give authorities the ability to control what happens to the contents of the urn after it has been removed from the crematorium. Some people therefore imagine that one can retrieve the ashes from the crematorium, *not* in order to scatter them, but to keep them. This is often referenced in the comment that one does not want a relative standing “in an urn on the fireplace”. The notion of having an urn on the mantelpiece or making a diamond from the ashes may come from popular culture or from knowledge of other countries’ practices. The regulations also do not allow one to distribute the ashes in more than one places, a little in the fjord, a little at the cabin and a little in the woods, or simply to bury the whole urn in a place that the deceased had a good relationship to, i.e. to create a private cemetery. But this may theoretically take place, because, as mentioned above, it is not controlled by authorities. Some, perhaps inspired by popular culture, reason thus about the latter theme:

But assume that we had buried Dad’s urn in the garden here – the garden he built and cared for all those years since he finished building the house in 1954 – what should we have done now, when it turns out that no one in the family will take over the house and garden when I pass away? [...] Then the house must be sold... I think it’s good that the urns are in the cemetery! (44068, K1946; my translation).

The burying of urns on private property might, if allowed, result in official registration or the duty of disclosure to new owners.

Several cite the absence of headstones as a main argument against ash scattering.

A headstone may be considered important as the gathering place of the extended family at Christmas, or memories of the deceased arise when visiting the grave. An elderly man, who himself is to be buried in a coffin next to his wife and perceives this as most natural, puts it this way:

I really don’t like the idea of my ashes being spread by the wind after cremation. I really appreciate walking in the cemetery and stopping in front of the graves of relatives and acquaintances, seeing the names on the headstones, the dates and the little tributes. It’s a celebration, the revival of old and good memories, a good way to process the loss. The dead return to life in my mind when I stand in front of the headstones (41031, M1938; my translation).

The encounter with the physical headstone and how this brings memories to life is touched on by other respondents, when they state that the feeling of loss is different when one can visit a physical grave (cf. Gustavsson 2003). Sitting at a headstone and “talking” to a deceased relative may be experienced as grief therapy – the focus here being on the needs of the bereaved. An elderly woman tells of her parents who insisted on being cremated, and that the urns were buried in an urn garden. She misses having a grave to go to and feels sad that every trace of her parents has disappeared. For this woman ash scattering is an even worse practice, it is “totally obliterating, self-eradicating” (44507, K1952; my translation).

Those with a more positive attitude to ash scattering say both that they do not want the ashes to be buried in consecrated earth, and that the lack of space is an argument, and thus it is an advantage that some people’s ashes are scattered. Others point to the high mobility in our society. People do not necessarily settle in the same area

that they grew up in. This woman therefore finds that ash scattering is a good alternative for herself: “Many do not live in the place where the family is buried, and guilty consciences for unkempt graves are probably widespread. I want my family to avoid this” (40416, K1978; my translation). Some people emphasize that the same argument applies to the childless: they do not have descendants to look after the grave, and then ash scattering is a good alternative.

Several people point to a close relationship between the deceased and a particular place, pointing out that it gives meaning for the ashes to be scattered in a place one feels connected with, either in the mountains, where one has walked a lot, or at a part of the ocean where one has spent time. Several people refer to sailors whose ashes are scattered at sea. Others exclude the sea as a place to scatter their own ashes, because they cannot swim or because they are afraid of water. Being unable to swim should not be a problem when discussing one’s own cremated ashes, but the idea has clear parallels to the desire not to be buried, or not to be cremated. For some, it is important that the person one “is” when alive, one’s identity, corresponds to how one’s remains are treated after life, and which burial method one perceives as best for oneself. It might not be perceived as very authentic for a non-religious person to be buried in a coffin or an urn in consecrated earth, or for a person who loved hiking and who spent all their spare time in the mountains to be buried in a graveyard, however it suits their individual narratives to have their ashes scattered in places where they feel they belong more.

Thoughts about the Decaying Body

What contemporary cultural conceptions of dead bodies are found in the research material, and how do notions of nature and the environment play into these conceptions? A large and important topic in the material is the focus on the aesthetic, unhygienic and claustrophobic aspects of being buried, and popular culture has inspired more people to problematize apparent death. Suspended animation or “living dead” is a well-known film theme. This woman plans to donate her body to research, to reduce the possibility of being buried alive:

I’ve seen people who have been living dead on TV. They can’t scream, move a finger, they were put in one of those drawers in the hospital. But this person was saved, because they noticed the eyes moving (40275, K1974; my translation).

Others point out that they have claustrophobia and can’t bear the thought of waking up in a cramped coffin after the funeral. Some who reflect on being buried alive realize that one can also be cremated alive:

I was raised with coffin burial as the most natural choice. After hearing horror stories of apparently dead people waking up in a coffin after the funeral, I’m more sceptical. The fact that someone is lying in the coffin and trying to claw their way out is awful to think about. At the same time, this can also happen with cremation – in theory. For me, it doesn’t matter if I’m traditionally buried or cremated, hopefully I’ll be dead (40463, K1967; my translation).

The fact that someone one loves, or oneself, will be put into a cold, dark hole is a terrible thought for many people, not least considering the possibility of not really being dead. However, most people who question coffin burial point to the concept

of the decaying body, and the descriptions are concrete, as these people put it: “I don’t like the idea that worms and larvae will eat the body” (40436, K1969; my translation), “The idea that the body should lie and rot and be eaten by worms is very unpleasant” (40390, K1932; my translation), or: “It’s worse to think about the decaying body. A bit unpleasant to imagine seeing the remains of a body in the earth” (40421, M1950; my translation). A young woman who initially thinks the family should be included in the decision about whether to cremate or bury in a coffin, has at the same time difficulties in imagining herself being buried in a coffin, having a picture from her childhood present. A person who was close to her died in a shipwreck, and the respondent imagined “that she and other bodies are eaten by worms – I’ve seen it with animal carcasses several times – it’s one of the nastiest things I can think of” (42821, K1980; my translation). A younger woman also has “childhood images in her head”, describing her grandmother’s funeral in an Eastern European country:

Although I think the tradition is basically fine, I also think that it creates a slightly nasty feeling that the body will rot in eternity. I have also observed termites in cemeteries in the past, and that does not give me nice images in my head (44169, K1989; my translation).

Such personal experiences have an impact on notions of the decaying body. This is also seen in some people who have worked at grave sites. This woman will opt out of a coffin burial because of such an experience:

I had a summer job at the cemetery several summers in a row, so after some of my experiences there, I will probably choose cremation. We

found some bones (not bits, but whole bones) where we threw the rubbish (40413, K1982; my translation).

The experience of having seen decay or the remains of bodies in the earth is something several people mention, and these associate cremation with something cleaner and more hygienic. It is unclear where this woman had her summer job, but in areas with blue clay, it is not uncommon for the decay process to take much longer than Norway’s 20-year conservation period for a coffin grave. In this type of soil, with little oxygen and few microorganisms, the process of decay might have only just started, even after 70 years, but the use of blue clay in grave sites was not an issue until the reuse of graves became relevant (Krüger & Solbu 2019). With so-called “plastic graves” the same problem exists as with clay soil. From the 1950s and for 15–20 years, an estimated 250,000 dead were wrapped in plastic foil to prevent smells and bodily fluids escaping. This too stopped the process of decay from starting. Plastic graves have not been capable of reuse, and therefore, quicklime has been injected into these graves to initiate decomposition (Government 2008).

The process of decay does not only cause disgust, but is also seen as something natural, which, according to some, may become more environmentally friendly than it is today. A few respondents go far in imagining decomposition with minimal pollution. Becoming part of the biological cycle with as little pollution as possible, is a desire that surfaces with work on the new freeze-drying method. Here, bodies are treated with liquid nitrogen, frozen and vibrated to powder – an

ecological method “on nature’s terms” (Wernersen & Dahlback 2014; Krüger & Solbu 2019).²⁰ As of today, this is not permitted by law, but work on developing the method is ongoing.

This new eco-friendly turn in the field, with nature and the environment in focus, is also seen in other ideas about rejoining the biological cycle in the least destructive way. Some have experienced dead bodies being consumed by animals but have problems with the mental images that this has created. An elderly woman has experienced cremation in India, and emphasizes that it is not like on film, where the body turned into fine ashes:

The stray dogs waited impatiently for a bite to eat. When the bonfire had burned down, the corpse did not turn into fine ashes, as is often seen in films, but the corpse was only blackened on the outside and light pink inside. The dogs tore at the meat, which was pink and chewy, like oversized rubber bands (40459, K1953; my translation).

This woman’s experiences have resulted in her taking a stand on how she wants to have her own dead body treated: she has donated her body for research and has already planned cremation and ash scattering afterwards. Others emphasize the desire to join the cycle somewhat more specifically. A younger male who presents himself as non-religious and a science enthusiast, would have preferred either to have his ashes scattered, or to be left in the wild to be eaten by scavengers, as long as this did not cause problems for others:

Personally, when one dies, I think one should become part of the biological cycle which once gave one so much – as long as it does not endanger health and society. I know that coffins often must be crushed for decomposition to begin, and it seems a bit unworthy to bury someone in some-

thing that needs to be destroyed. I would like to be buried without wrappings – if it is not difficult to implement or unclear – or cremated and scattered in the landscape. Being non-religious and a science enthusiast, I have little faith that there is anything left of “me” in my body after I die, so the non-random juxtaposition of atoms that I have been can be easily broken down and shared with whatever lives on in any way possible. If it wasn’t a problem for society and the bereaved, I think I would have had nothing against being left in the wild to be eaten by scavengers. I have seen pictures of a traditional Nepali burial where friends carry the corpse into the wild, where the bones are eaten clean by vultures. It was shocking at first, then really quite OK. I think it would be nice to be given a handful of my nearest one’s ashes if they are cremated, which I can fertilize a bush / tree / plant with. The idea that some of their atoms will live on in new configurations is beautiful to me. It’s nice to have a place to visit where there are some physical “remains” of a person. Looked at in that way, one should have a place – cemetery, memorial or something, where something is preserved. I think that a visit to an apartment, for example, would be the same – to remind one of the independent person they were in their own context – but it is obviously less practical to do it that way (40502, K1984; my translation).

This young man perceives it as “unworthy” to be buried in a coffin meant to disintegrate. His main wish is for his dead body to be directly included in the biological cycle. For him, the most environmentally friendly way would be to be left to scavengers, but he realizes that it could be dangerous for public health if it were carried out on a large scale.

The same pattern as in the analysis of ash scattering is found here. For some everyday experiences like claustrophobia, work experiences from grave sites, or popular cultural presentations of the living dead develop disgust of decay, and fear, which plays an important role to

many, when reflecting on one's individual body after life. For others, there is no disgust about the decay, but rather a desire to join the cycle, in the most natural and environmentally friendly way possible. There is a correspondence between who one "is", or wants to be, and likes and dislikes when alive, and how one wishes one's remains to be treated when dead.

Conclusion

Compared to several other Nordic countries and the UK, in Norway people are relatively traditional in terms of handling dead bodies. Most choose a coffin burial for themselves or their relative, and the percentage cremated only increases slowly. On the one hand, positive notions of coffin burial are linked to tradition, religion and environmental considerations as in avoidance of air pollution in connection with a burning process. Positive conceptions of cremation, on the other hand, are mainly linked to lack of space; a focus on order and hygiene; environmental considerations, the coffin representing a pollutant; and dislike of decay. Many have opinions about the new practice of ash scattering, but not many are positive, and even fewer have thoughts of presently illegal practices such as freeze drying or being left in the wild. Negative attitudes to the new practice of ash scattering are linked to the notion of the loss of self, that one disappears completely and that the bereaved cannot feel the presence of the deceased, when one's name is not to be found on any headstone. Remembrance is made difficult when there is nothing material left, such as a headstone.

The recent democratization of death has opened for thoughts of more individual-oriented and thus diverse closing ceremonies. A positive view of ash scattering seems to be linked to several factors: in addition to reluctance to end up in consecrated earth, and ash scattering being well suited for people who have moved a lot and people without descendants to care for their graves, there is an idea that a person's final journey should be related to who they were, their identity. There must be a relationship between who the deceased was and where the ashes are scattered. If a person loved the mountains, then it is appropriate to scatter the ashes on a mountain top; if a person was a sailor, then it is apt to scatter the ashes at sea; if a person had a fear of water then ash scattering at sea would be inappropriate, but perhaps better on land. A newer concept is avoidance of consecrated earth, and at the same time, in the most sustainable and gentle way possible, to be useful after life by incorporating one's atoms in new constellations, for example by being eaten by animals. This is in many ways the non-Christian concept of eternal life.

The focus on the environment and on sustainability must be read as an increasing expression of the individual-oriented and of diversity, and in the context of similar trends in contemporary times. Death is no longer forbidden territory, it is given a lot of focus compared to only a few decades ago. Closing ceremonies in Norway are perhaps not all that spectacular, compared to some other countries, but they are increasingly more individually oriented, where people, to a greater extent, question what is best with respect to the

identity of the deceased, and to a lesser extent focus on religion and established traditions.

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Notes

- 1 The first phase describes the tamed death of the Middle Ages, which is a natural and recognizable part of life, in a time of high mortality and wars. Tamed death could neither be forgotten nor hidden. During the Renaissance, the phase of one's own death begins. Now death is individualized, and it is the individual's unique life that ends. Death is now associated with fear and alienation. During Romanticism, the third stage begins, the focus shifting from one's own death to the death of the other, "thy death". The fear of losing someone close is the origin of the culture of remembrance (Jacobsen & Haakonsen 2008:14–15; Jacobsen 2016:3–5; Ariès 1991).
- 2 "Death interregnum" is a translation from the Danish "døden i en mellemtid" (cf. Jacobsen & Haakonsen 2008:17).
- 3 Respondents born 1910–1919: 1 response; 1920–1929: 16 responses; 1930–1939: 29 responses; 1940–1949: 45 responses; 1950–1959: 39 responses; 1960–1969: 29 answers; 1970–1979: 28 responses; 1980–1989: 37 responses; 1990–1999: 5 responses.
- 4 See section 9 on confidentiality in ethical guidelines applicable to the subject (Research Ethics Committees 2019).
- 5 The Norwegian titles of these acts are, respectively, "gravferdsloven" (1997); "likbrenningsloven" (1913); "kirkegårdsloven" (1897); and "Danmarks og Norges Kirkeritual" (1685).
- 6 A civil ceremony may be held with or without religious elements (Utby 2019).
- 7 There are major differences here between Sweden and the other Nordic countries. The latter operate with approximately ten working days from death to burial, while Sweden operates with approximately 30 days before cremation and 20 days before burial. Therefore, embalming is used in Sweden to prevent the decay process in the waiting period (Krüger 2019).
- 8 In ash scattering, neither headstone nor an extra inscription on an existing headstone is allowed, because in Norwegian practice there is a principle that a person should have only one grave. However, it is possible to set up a named headstone for a person who is missing and not found, based on the same principle. Until 1997, urns could be placed in a columbarium, a niched vault where cinerary urns are closed or walled in (Hilland 2014). Columbaria were banned because they violated the Norwegian principle that graves should not last forever: Neither the urn nor the ashes decompose in columbaria but may in theory last forever (NOU 2014: 55–56, 165).
- 9 Corinthians 15 verses 35–44: **35** But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" **36** You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. **37** And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. **38** But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. **39** For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. **40** There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. **41** There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. **42** So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. **43** It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. **44** It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.
- 10 The archaeologist Terje Østigard points out an even stronger connection between cremation and prohibition: "There were [...] certain requirements that had to be fulfilled for the resurrection of the body to be possible. In any case, God needed the skull and thighs for the resurrection and therefore cremation was forbidden" (Østigard 2006:36; my translation).

- 11 It is unclear what is meant by pantheistic notions in this quotation. With ash scattering, it can be argued that man, or the ashes of man, is or is part of, everything, which means that God is, or is part of, everything, which is anything but pantheism.
- 12 The provision on ash scattering is in § 20. The Funeral Act applies to the Norwegian mainland, while Svalbard is covered by the Regulations on cemeteries in Longyearbyen and ash scattering on Svalbard (2008).
- 13 The application form must include the name, ID number, address and signature, as well as an enclosed map, marking the place where one wants the ashes scattered. The county governor states the following rules for where the ashes may be scattered: “When scattering in the sea, it is not a requirement that it be done on the open sea. Ash scattering may also be allowed in fjords, rivers, watercourses and other fresh water, but the area must have a deserted character. If there is a lot of leisure traffic in the area or there are beaches or a lot of buildings, one will usually not be given permission. With respect to scattering on land, the importance of the area rather than the altitude above sea level is emphasized. Ash scattering is allowed in areas that are not built-up and where the area has a desolate character. It is emphasized that the ash can be absorbed into the ecological cycle” (County Governor 2018, my translation; see also Government 2019).
- 14 In Denmark it is legal to bury an urn on private property, larger than 5,000 square metres. It is also legal to bury ashes in two different places (Wanseel & Jacobsen 2009).
- 15 Some 9% answered “don’t know”.
- 16 The county governors approved far more applications for ash scattering in 2012 (741 applications). Most were applications from people who had not yet died (64%), and a minority (36%) were applications on behalf of a deceased person.
- 17 Ash scattering is not common in Iceland. Furthermore, it is emphasized in NOU 2014:162 that no official statistics on ash scattering are kept in the Nordic countries; these must therefore be regarded as approximate figures.
- 18 From the standpoint of the deceased or the bereaved, the choice of football club, and ash scattering in that context, is read as an expression of “chosen kinship”, rather than bio-

logical kinship. From the point of view of the football clubs, this is important because one achieves a focus on decency and respect, rather than an unwanted focus on hooligans.

- 19 The five-digit number refers to the answer, K is the Norwegian abbreviation for woman and 1947 is her birth year.
- 20 There are also other methods considered environmentally friendly, such as “green cremation” or water cremation (water and lye), which is available in the US (Krüger & Solbu 2019). A pilot study of “human composting” claims a prevention of 1.4 tonnes of carbon release, and is presented as a climate change awareness project (Ghosh 2020).

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Sellable Stories

The Use of History in the Marketing of Heritage Plants and Gardens

By Katarina Saltzman, Carina Sjöholm & Tina Westerlund

Garden phlox “Alma Jansson” comes from a smallholding in Roslagen. It has been on the farm at least since 1939 when Stina Jansson moved in. It was her mother-in-law, Alma Jansson, who took care of the plants in the garden. “Everything comes from Grandma. She had such beautiful flowers”, said Stina. We do not know where she received or bought this variety, but it was not newly planted in 1939.¹

This story is told in the marketing material for an old variety of garden phlox (*Phlox paniculata*), a perennial flower found and propagated within the Swedish Programme for Diversity of Cultivated Plants. Under their trademark *Grönt kulturarv*® (“Green Heritage”) a number of heritage plants have been (re-)released on the market during the last five years – and there is clearly a demand. The story of Alma Jansson is now part of a product sold in nurseries all over Sweden. Her story is told in a context where the garden’s heritage has become a commodity in a market, and is sold with the help of storytelling.

This article will investigate the use of storytelling as an articulation of heritage in the field of gardening, when “old” plants and gardens are turned into heritage products. Examples show that such stories are used to enhance the values of plants as well as entire gardens. Based on the presentation of heritage gardens to visitors, and on the marketing of officially approved heritage plants as products for contemporary gardeners in Sweden, we will demonstrate how such stories are utilized as tools to strengthen the value of plants as well as gardens. We will discuss how these stories are gathered and conveyed, defining plants and gardens as “old and valuable”.

The purpose of the article is to highlight intersections between heritage, markets and gardens in Sweden, by paying attention to the ways in which heritage is produced and articulated within formal as well as informal markets for garden-related items and services through storytelling. In these contexts stories are used to enhance the value of gardens with a history to visitors and customers; connecting plants, places and gardening practices to people, past and present. By focusing on the production and articulation of heritage we are connecting to understandings of heritage as processes whereby “[t]he present selects an inheritance from an imagined past for current use and decides what should be passed on to an imagined future” (Tunbridge & Ashworth 1996:6). In recent research and not least within the field of critical heritage studies such processes have often been discussed in terms of heritagization (e.g. Harrison 2013). Based on examples of “heritage plants”, “heritage gardens” and the intangible heritage of practical gardening knowhow, we want to discuss the following questions: How is heritage articulated as a value in the garden market and when is garden-related heritage perceived as a commercial value? What is understood as heritage in these contexts are certain origins and histories seen as interesting to highlight and others not? How are ideas and conceptions about origin and heritage used, managed and conveyed by different actors? And how is heritage *made* in a practical sense?

At the intersection between garden, heritage and market we have found a rather unexplored empirical field. In order to examine what happens at this intersection we combine cultural perspectives on how value is created (cf. Macdonald

2013) and critical perspectives on the role of the past in the present and for the future (e.g. Smith 2006; Harrison 2013). In this article we want to stress the actual making of heritage as well as of stories, and have found it instructive to study these issues in relation to the living and ever-changing matters involved in gardening.

One way to gain an insight into the stories about heritage is to study how different actors work and mediate what they think is central to convey. In this article, which is based on a combination of interviews, field observations and document studies,² we have chosen to emphasize the producers' perspective. We have visited several private and public gardens in different parts of Sweden, and have met key actors within the Programme for Diversity of Cultivated Plants. When visiting gardens we have had the opportunity to take different roles, both as visitors among many others and as interviewers in conversation and walks with garden owners and professional gardeners who work with plant production, maintenance and management. We have also participated in seminars on the management, mediation and marketing of gardens as a heritage.

We will here focus on three Swedish examples of how heritage is produced, interpreted and created in contemporary markets for garden-related goods and services. Firstly, we will look into the work on the inventory, collection and preservation of old varieties of garden plants, and the development and marketing of the brand *Grönt kulturarv*. After that we will take a closer look at two examples of visitor gardens where storytelling has become an important way of anchoring experiences by emphasizing traces of history.

One of these is a nationally acknowledged and official heritage site, located in the capital, whereas the other one is rurally located, privately owned, and relatively new as a visitor garden. These are two of the many gardens that we have visited as part of our study, and they are relevant for the purpose of this article through the way they use storytelling as a tool.

Garden Values

Today, gardening and cultivation are often associated with ideals of sustainability, origin, authenticity and inspiration from the past. Commercial actors often highlight such ideals in the contexts where gardening has become a commodity in the lifestyle market. Garden-related objects such as tools and not least plants are widely circulated today in a market that is highly commercialized. The seeds, bulbs and plants that you buy at your nearest garden centre are rarely cultivated in the immediate area, even though “locally produced” and “organic” as well as “heritage” are popular guiding principles in today’s garden trends. Furthermore, private visitor gardens, as well as garden tours and various informal channels such as blogs and internet-based trade have become markets to count on (Lipovská 2013). Public parks and gardens are regarded as valuable and important assets within tourism, urban renewal and regional development (Benfield 2013; Čakovská 2018). Many visitor gardens, private as well as public, are examples of how the heritage of gardens is managed but also how business is created (Connell 2005; Gao & Dietze-Schirde-wahn 2017).

In recent decades, the green aspects of heritage have become increasingly im-

portant in the field of cultural conservation, from being a decorative accessory to culturally valuable heritage buildings. Since 1988 the Swedish Cultural Environment Act emphasizes that gardens and parks can be declared building monuments and as independent cultural-historical objects (*KML*, Kap. 3 §1). Within historical garden research and garden heritage management in Scandinavia, heritage has been studied mainly with a focus on the cultural historical traces that can be found in older gardens; how these can be identified, valued and preserved. There are several studies, based on historical perspectives, that discuss garden ideals in a social context (e.g. Tandre 2008; Jakobsson 2009; Ravn & Dragsbo 2017). However, there is not much previous research on how garden-related heritage is articulated and produced in a market context.

The literature in the field of heritage garden conservation is differentiated. Many books can be categorized as manuals for identification of historic garden values (e.g. Wilke 2006; Iwarsson 2014; Tandre 2014), whereas others discuss values in combination with recommendations for the conservation management processes (e.g. Mackellar Goulty 1993; Flinck 2013). In both cases they can be applied to public as well as private gardens, large as well as small. Some include advice on what to do, provide examples of different kinds of approaches, as well as more or less “authentic” ways of preserving or reconstructing old gardens (e.g. Watkins & Wright 2007). As some of these books have been widely distributed they have had an influence as recommendations and guidelines for the reconstruc-

tion, management and maintenance of garden heritage, and they quite clearly reflect what has been considered historically correct or authentic. Defining authenticity can be a critical task for those involved in the selection and valuation for example of heritage plants, or in the interpretation of documents related to the historic management of gardens.

The focus on heritage values in the context of gardens and gardening can be seen as a result of the broader increase in what has been considered as heritage in recent decades. This is a change that Rodney Harrison, professor of Heritage Studies, has described as a “heritage boom” (Harrison 2013). As many scholars have discussed, heritage can be seen as a process where memories, traditions and associations are chosen from history to be used for various purposes and thus become a strategic factor in the profiling of, for example, a commercial enterprise (cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Bendix 1997). Important keywords that are often used in such contexts are authentic, old-fashioned, vintage, retro, homemade, handmade, local, and sustainable (cf. Sjöholm 2019; Palmköld 2018; Pico Larsen & Österlund-Pötzsch 2015).

The common definition of a market is that it is a trading and meeting place where something is bought and sold, and where pricing, demand and supply are central. Market is an economic term that refers to the supply and demand of a product or service. Here, we rather work with an expanded market concept, including different kinds of markets and also different kinds of values that are produced and negotiated – not just monetary or economic.

Storytelling as marketing and how stories

fascinate people has been a matter of interest and investigation (Fog et al. 2010; Lundqvist et al. 2013). Less has been done about the link between storytelling and marketing of heritage in connection with plants and gardens. The term storytelling is today often used in commercial contexts and has become established as a way of marketing various phenomena, goods and services, i.e. to support a business.³ In this context, telling personal stories is a way to achieve something, and is often part of a well-developed business strategy with the aim of attracting visitors (Salzer-Mörling & Strannegård 2004; Mossberg & Johansen Nissen 2006; Mossberg 2008). Telling stories is also used as a way to strengthen the identity of brands and attractions. Our examples are perhaps not entirely comparable to how, for example, major tourist attractions work with stories, even fictitious ones, based on a distinct business perspective, but there are similarities in the way they both work with stories based on historical background and histories of creation as a means for marketing and as a way of creating historical aura (cf. Strömberg 2007). A story about the previous role or function of, say, a place can also be of importance for strengthening local identity. Our study confirms that it has become very common to explicitly use stories and storytelling to profile places and businesses, as a way to make them appealing to visitors and local residents alike.

Telling Green Heritage Stories

At the very start of this article we met “Alma Jansson”, a perennial flower found in a rural garden in Mid-Sweden. When this variety of phlox in 2013 was reintro-

duced to the market, it was one of the first perennials labelled *Grönt kulturarv*, which translates “Green Heritage” by the official Swedish programme for diversity of cultivated plants. This programme is commonly referred to under its Swedish abbreviation “Pom”, which is short for *Programmet för odlad mångfald*. Pom aims to find, collect, conserve and reintroduce old and valuable varieties of garden plants – edible as well as ornamental. Raising of public awareness has been another important part of the “mission” of Pom, and in the books and pamphlets they have produced, as well as on their website, they declare that there are many reasons to care about old varieties of garden plants, and that domesticated plants have played important roles in human history (e.g. Nygårds & Leino 2013; Strese 2016; Strese & de Wahl 2018).

Pom was initiated in the year 2000 as part of Sweden’s response to *The Convention of Biological Diversity* (1993), which states that the genetic variation is seen as a potentially valuable resource, for society and for ecosystems, including, for example, pollinating insects. When their work started there was little interest in old varieties within the horticultural sector. Pom is organized as a network, including open-air museums, botanical gardens, the Swedish Board of Agriculture, and is coordinated by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in collaboration with the Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Swedish National Heritage Board. Their work is based on the assumption that old varieties should be regarded as resources with potential genetic qualities, such as hardiness and taste, that are no longer available.

A main aim of the programme was to carry out national inventories, searching for old garden plants of different kinds all over Sweden. This was a challenging task: Where to look and how to search in order to find old varieties of plants perhaps once common, but now only surviving in a few private gardens or kept as seeds on an old farm? A lot of the work was carried out by volunteers, in collaboration with teams of experts on each category of plants, and with the general public. “It would not have been possible to do this without the volunteers all around”, says the former director of the programme, who recently retired. Originally a biologist with a focus on plant physiology and working with Pom since its initiation, she has seen the need to tackle the challenges in cross-disciplinary and innovative ways. The inventories were organized through eight different “calls”: The calls for vegetable seeds and perennial flowers were among the first, followed by calls for roses, pot plants, flowering bulbs, fruit and berries, trees and bushes, and perennial crops such as rhubarb and asparagus. The volunteers received training within the programme on what to look for, and they were instructed to collect plants and talk to people to document the stories of each plant.⁴

To be of interest for Pom a plant had to have a documented history in its location since at least 1940, 1950 or 1960, with different time limits for different groups of plants. In order to ensure that the collected plants did fulfil this requirement, it was important also to collect the story of each plant from reliable sources: How long had it been growing in its current location, and in other known places before that? Who had been growing and caring for it over



Some old varieties of geranium collected through the Swedish Programme for Diversity of Cultivated Plants (Pom) have been selected to be released on the market, and labelled ‘Grönt kulturarv’, i.e. Green Heritage. Photo: Carina Sjöholm.

the years? According to the former director, the history of each plant has become a much more important part of the programme than was originally foreseen:

There was not meant to be so much cultural history and garden culture in this from the beginning, not at all. And it would not have been that way if it wasn't for us pushing for it, because in a great many other countries around us, other than the Nordic countries, the focus is almost only on plant breeding.

For those working with Pom, it became increasingly important to regard the collection of stories as equally important as the collection of the plants themselves. There was a fear that a project like this in the end

could turn out to be temporary, and if so, what would happen with the collected plants, and their stories. The former director says that her mission was to find sustainable solutions where the plants were not only regarded “as something you save in a bank”, but rather as something that should be recirculated, together with their stories.

There is however now a “bank” within Pom; a national gene bank for horticultural plants has been established in the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Alnarp, and in addition to that, regional clone archives have been set up around the country. For seeds, there was already a Nordic initiative, NordGen, storing traditional seeds in the Global Seed Vault located in the island of Svalbard in Northern Norway (cf. Breithoff & Harrison 2020). The aim of the national gene bank is to preserve, document, distribute and do research on the plants collected through Pom. The gene bank now hosts more than 2,200 varieties of old garden plants (in the field collection and the local clonal archives). The aim of the gene bank is not only to protect and preserve the genetic material but also to make sure that this is available for those who might see values of different kinds in the old varieties. “The information and the plants should get out. That is the best way to preserve them”, says the former director when describing the role of the gene bank.

After test growing in the gene bank and elsewhere, and careful considerations within Pom’s “Propagation and Marketing Group”, a few plant varieties have been selected to be more deliberately spread. One goal for Pom has been to make a selection of the collected plants

available, by introducing – or in some cases rather reintroducing – them on the market. During the last few years many different kinds of plants, including 16 varieties of perennial flowers such as “Alma Jansson”, have been released on the Swedish market and are now sold in nurseries and garden markets all over Sweden under the label *Grönt kulturarv*. According to Pom representatives, their work towards this goal had to be strategic, as there were many hurdles to pass on the way. They were aware that a programme with similar goals in Norway, *Plantearven*, had failed with their reintroduction of old garden plants because they were not prepared for the large public interest when these varieties were launched, and the number of plants that were available at the time of the launch was simply too small. “That’s a good way to kill a market”, notes the former director. As a plant physiologist she is well aware that plant propagation takes time, and with this in mind she and her colleagues made sure to have a good supply of plants ready when new Green Heritage varieties were introduced:

There was a lot of discussion about what we should do with the plants when they come out – should we label them or do something to show that these are special plants? And that it is not just any plant that you sell at a nursery. That they have been around. That they have a history. This also starts with the fact that history is important. And today this has almost the same weight, but in the beginning it was like, what the hell...

The end of this quotation refers to how the Pom team initially struggled with plant propagators who found the historical aspect completely irrelevant. Over the years, however, this has changed, and now the stories are regarded as a significant part of the product. The naming of the plants has

become important in the process of turning collected plant varieties into products, and within Pom it has been agreed that all names given to Green Heritage plants should have connotations either of a person, a place or a tradition with documented connection to the plant. Choosing a name has often proved to be a challenging task, when donors' preferences need to be reconciled with the actual documented history of the plant, and at the same time with the market potential and the regulations for naming plants within the garden industry.

In the marketing material that is available on Pom's website, the phlox "Alma Jansson" is presented with facts about the colour ("dark green foliage and bright purple flowers with white eye"), height (100–110 cm) and growth ("healthy and spreads well with runners without having an aggressive growth pattern"), accompanied by the story of the plant and how it was found:

Two of those working with the inventory of perennials noticed the phlox when they were visiting the home of almost 90-year-old Stina Jansson. In the summer of 2005 they visited her in Edsbro and in a flowerbed on the farm, this tall, light purple phlox grew. It has done so at least since 1939 when Stina Jansson moved in. Then she was newly married and came to the in-laws' farm. The plants in the garden were taken care of by her mother-in-law Alma Jansson who was interested in gardening and planted many of the plants in the yard. We do not know where she got or bought the autumn phlox, but it was not newly planted on the farm in 1939.

After collection in the garden of Stina Jansson and test growing at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Alnarp, this phlox was assessed to be a worthy representative of the old garden plants collect-

ed by Pom, and good enough to be marketed as a heritage plant. Perennial flowers such as this one also proved to be surprisingly easy to propagate using modern, lab-based micro-propagation methods, and thus it was possible to provide a large enough number of plants to the market for the release. Since then the story of Alma Jansson has been spread together with the plants. Thus, the story of the origin of this phlox and other old plant varieties is now an essential part of products on a market. From almost complete neglect these old plants are now receiving a lot of attention. In garden centres, garden media, on the internet and in private as well as public gardens in Sweden today you can easily find plants labelled *Grönt kulturarv*. This labelling can be understood as an authorization of heritage (cf. Smith 2006).

There are however still a number of challenges connected to the promotion of Green Heritage plants. The collected plant material includes many different kinds of plants with differing growth patterns and requirements, as well as a wide variety of different kinds of histories and documentation thereof. Some of the plants, as for example different varieties of hops (*Humulus lupulus*), has proved to be more difficult to propagate in large quantities, and others, such as varieties of dahlias (*Dahlia*), have been accompanied with plant diseases.

A Prince and His Flowers

Let's now move from inventory, collection, conservation, production and marketing of old garden plants to the management, mediation and marketing of old gardens. The first example that we will take a closer look at is the garden at the Swedish

art museum Prince Eugen's Waldemarsudde in Stockholm, the home of Prince Eugen in the first half of the twentieth century. The house with its surrounding terraced garden is located by the waterside at the harbour inlet of Stockholm. For many decades it has been an established visitor destination with a special art-and-garden profile.

The prince was born in 1865, as the youngest son of the Swedish King Oscar II and Queen Sophia. Already at a young age he showed artistic promise, which would result in a life-long commitment to arts. He was also dedicated to the art of gardening, as we can still experience when visiting Waldemarsudde today. In a letter to a friend⁵ he wrote: "After painting, I think flowers are my greatest pleasure" (www.waldemarsudde.se). Prince Eugen had firm ideas about which plants he wanted to see where in the garden that was established around his house. He employed a head gardener to lead the work, and in addition to the construction of the garden, a nursery with a greenhouse was built to provide the home and garden with plants. Flowers indoors were seen as equally important as flowers outdoors.

After the death of Prince Eugen in 1947, the entire property with its collections was passed on to the Swedish state. In his will, the prince expressed a wish that everything in and around the house should be "preserved as a living cultural image" (www.waldemarsudde.se). Waldemarsudde was opened as a museum the following year. Since 2017 the museum has been run as an independent foundation with government grants.

Waldemarsudde is an example of a historical environment where plants, parks

and gardens are included in what is considered valuable to show. The guides not only show the estate as it was, they also tell its story with the help of the garden and the plants. In addition to the regular guided tours, where the house, the collections and the garden are displayed, the gardeners offer special guided tours of the garden and the surrounding park. In these guided tours, the stories focus more on the different "rooms" in the garden and on specific plants. On some occasions, visitors are also invited into the garden's nursery. They are told about the Prince's choice of plants and how the gardeners work to preserve as much as possible of what was grown in his time, including tricky tasks such as replacing old plant varieties that can no longer be obtained with something as similar as possible.

Today's gardeners at Waldemarsudde work in the tradition that was established in the days of Prince Eugen. The nursery is still there, with its greenhouses and frames where many old varieties of plants are propagated, and the flowerbeds in the garden are still flourishing. Not only are these an attraction in the garden, they are also a resource for the museum florist in making the flower arrangements indoors. Some of the indoor arrangements are repeated every year exactly as the prince wanted them to be. The seasonal change, both in the garden and inside the house, is an attraction in itself, and makes tourists as well as locals return to visit the house and the gardens at different times of the year.

A more in-depth story about the garden and the plants can be read in a book written by the today's head gardener (Rydberg 2014). In the book, the history of the

garden is highlighted in text and images. Stories from past times, illustrated with old photographs, are interspersed with the gardener's own interpretations and reflections. Contemporary photographs show the garden rooms and plants during different seasons. The head gardener writes about the different sources she uses to find out what the garden may have looked like and what it may have contained. Photographs are one source, old inventory lists another, and so are sketches and plans. She has found information in correspondence from the years when the garden was established, where the prince himself describes how the work is progressing. From this time she has also found invoices that tell about seed and plant orders made from near and far.

On the 1st of April 1900, the prince ordered flower seeds from Kelways, a British nursery in Langport: the perennial "Sammetsaurikeln", a garden auricle in mixed colours, California poppy, coastal tidytips, two kinds of mignonette, namely "Mignonette Bismarck" and "Nineteomen". As usual, the prince carefully specified all the shades of colour. I recently tried to plant a flowerbed with exactly those plants. It all fits very well together and you can imagine the prince's thoughts on the colours, and realize how closely he must have studied the flowers (Rydberg 2014:21–22).

Here the head gardener describes what she has found in an old delivery note and how she has tried combining the listed plants in a reconstruction of a flowerbed. The reader thus gets an insight into the detective work needed to show what once was, and the gardener's search in itself becomes a story. When visiting the recon-

structed flowerbed, it is also possible to share the gardener's reflections on the prince's choice of colours in the flower combinations, and compare these reflections with your own.

In the collections at Waldemarsudde there is not only art; the prince also had collections of plants. One section in the book by the head gardener is devoted to the museum's collection of geraniums:

In the list of gardener Löfgren, from 1949, there are six varieties of zonal geraniums [...] Of these varieties only "Meteor" is in our current assortment, but surely the other varieties could be found in other collections, and it would be nice to grow them for display. The geranium "Genitrix" is apparently hard to find. Certainly many more kinds of geraniums have passed through the greenhouse at Waldemarsudde since 1901, and the varieties still come and go (Rydberg 2014:187).

As in many cases, stories about past and present are intertwined in the search for heritage value. In the book, it is the current gardener who has chosen what she wants to tell about this place. This book is not published to be a manual for garden conservation, but the stories can nevertheless affect readers in their approach to the management, preservation and reconstruction of their own gardens. Reading this book can raise some questions in relation to the heritage making process, for example: What kind of connection to the prince did the gardener experience when she created "his" flowerbed? How did she perceive the colour combinations suggested by the prince? And was it possible to get hold of all the varieties described by the prince for this particular flowerbed? With these questions, we want to highlight the importance of discussing how the past is described through today's experiences, views, assessments, as well as access to

materials and workmanship (cf. Mårdh 2017). The production of garden conservation manuals and books is to a certain extent about creating a cultural heritage by telling how to reconstruct in the “right” way. The question is how clearly such guidelines convey one’s own starting point, and how it influences the making of cultural heritage.

This book about the garden is something that visitors can buy in the gift shop at Waldemarsudde, so that they can bring the stories with them. However, the book is not the only thing connected to the garden that is possible to buy in the shop. Plants from the nursery are also for sale, newly rooted cuttings from the Waldemarsudde plant collections. Selling plants with connections to the site is not uncommon in historical gardens today, and can be regarded as yet another way of telling and spreading stories of heritage along with the material, vegetal heritage.

At Waldemarsudde, another kind of storytelling is also used, conveying stories of the craft of cultivating and designing with plants. On a few occasions every year, the museum organizes activities where visitors are allowed to participate in the practical work with plants. The gardeners organize workshops in cultivation and the museum florist guides the visitors to make arrangements with cut flowers. By doing this, they take responsibility also for the mediation of the craft knowledge needed in the management of a historic garden. As with the guided tours, these workshops are something that visitors pay an additional fee to take part in.

A recurring workshop theme at Waldemarsudde is about geraniums, which is a popular group of pot plants today, just as

in Prince Eugen’s days. In this workshop the gardeners show and describe how they grow and manage to preserve the old geranium varieties that they have in their collection. In addition to getting to see the entire collection and hearing the story about the work, participants get an opportunity to try for themselves to sow seeds and take cuttings. At this workshop, one of the gardeners tells what is needed to grow and preserve these plants, and this is not only communicated in words. He demonstrates how he cuts pieces of plants for cuttings; he shows how he handles them and points out what he is looking for. The materiality of the geraniums is used to communicate the practice. From our point of view, this is also a kind of storytelling, where the telling involves the plants, the tools, the pots and the soil, which relates to how the anthropologist Tim Ingold argues that “we can tell what we know through practice and experience” (Ingold 2013:109). Ingold states that because something is not articulated, or written in words, it does not mean that it is untold. He uses the verb “to tell” in two related senses, on the one hand to recount stories and on the other hand “to recognise subtle cues in one’s environment and to respond to them with judgement and precision” (Ingold 2013:109). When the gardener *tells* the participants of what he knows he uses his sensory experiences to guide them, to understand what he is recognizing in the material and how. He makes comparisons to clarify what kind of judgements needs to be made in order to get a good result. By trying this themselves, and experiencing it hands-on, the participants at the workshop become more aware of the variations in the material and how to judge. By this way of tell-



Knowledge and know-how concerning cultivation of old plant varieties is here conveyed in a workshop at Waldemarsudde, where the participants get a chance to practice the handling of cuttings of geranium. Photo: Tina Westerlund.

ing, a skilled practitioner can guide novices by making them see, feel and listen (cf. Ehn 2011, 2014; Pink 2009).

The gardener does not only tell about his own experiences, he also conveys how work on propagating geraniums has been carried out by others before him, at Waldemarsudde and in other places over centuries. This is knowledge that has been developed within a tradition, a professional tradition that can be seen as a constantly *ongoing story* that is passed on between people, where each person forms a link (Molander 1996). Within research on practical knowledge, with a focus on crafts, there is a discussion of how the

transfer of knowledge within a specific professional tradition is influenced by the individual's own experiences (cf. Planke 2001; Westerlund 2017). Passing on practical skills in this manner is a specific way of connecting past and present through storytelling. At Waldemarsudde this kind of storytelling also is used as a business strategy with the aim of attracting visitors.

In their marketing material, the museum stresses that it is its mission to preserve the collections and the entire estate and make them available to visitors. Regulations have been developed for how the conservation work at Waldemarsudde should be carried out, not only for the buildings and art collections, but also for the management of the park and garden (www.waldemarsudde.se). However, there are significant differences in the task of preserving paintings, sculptures, textiles and buildings, compared to preserving a park or a garden. Plants – the most fundamental components of parks and gardens – are living things in constant change and interaction, and thus the preservation of a garden needs to embrace the fact that vegetation can never be static (Mackellar Goultly 1993). Gardeners have to accept and manage long-term as well as short-term changes, involving not only plants but also other non-human organisms, all with their own characteristics, requirements and growth patterns. An oak tree, for example, grows slowly and can be standing for hundreds of years, but when it finally falls it causes a sudden and radical transformation of a large part of the garden. For other plants, their visual appearance is more closely connected to regular human interference, such as the low box hedges around the flower beds in

the formal parts of the garden that are trimmed at least once a year. Yet other plants, such as annual flowers and pot plants are placed every year in the garden by the gardeners, and develop quickly from seeds, to flourish a few months later and then wither and die with the first frost in autumn. The preservation of a historic garden is indeed a challenging task involving many kinds of considerations and coincidences.

Searching for Family Stories in a Garden

Not only official heritage sites but also private garden owners have chosen to open their gardens in order to attract visitors and tourists. Enterprises like these are nothing new per se, but the numbers of open private gardens, as well as how they are run and kept, have changed and today the private visitor garden has more or less become an institution (Benfield 2013; Lipovská 2013). Often these activities have explicitly become part of the tourism and hospitality sector, and can be understood as elements of the cultural economy where different kinds of storytelling are of significant importance. In this and previous projects we have visited a variety of large and small, as well as private and public visitor gardens. One such garden, which we use as example in this article, is a rather large private garden at a manor located in a rural setting in south-western Sweden. At the time of our visit, this particular garden had not been open to visitors for so long, but was well known in the area, and the current owner is part of a network for visitor gardens in the region.

This garden includes remains of a park that has a long, documented history. The

main building was erected in the late seventeenth century but the history of the estate goes back at least to the twelfth century. When today's owners took over in the 1970s, large parts of the garden were overgrown. The long historical roots of this garden and the estate where it is located are emphasized by the owners in their storytelling. Just as at Waldemarsudde, the history of the garden is presented in detail in a book, in this case written by the current owners, and made legitimate since it is published by the regional museum. The history is also presented in an exhibition in one of the buildings at the farm. In the exhibition, visitors are introduced to stories about the history of the specific place, with a certain focus on gardening. There are lists of plants that have grown in the garden over time but also histories about individuals of importance for the creation of the garden, and stories about methods and materials that have been used when making the garden. All in all, many elements not only from the old but also the more recent history are picked up and highlighted when this garden is presented through storytelling in the exhibition as well as in the book:

Today, there are no neatly raked gravel paths with sharp edges. Much has happened during the three hundred years that have passed since the Baroque garden was established. Fashion, business and interest have changed. In the 1980s the remains of the ornamental garden became a pasture for the heifers on the farm. Then it turned again, and today we cherish the memories of what once was, we add something new, and take care of the plants we found when we cleared away all that was not a garden (Thorburn 2014a:121).

One common thread in the story about this garden is about people: The family, the ancestors and the gardeners who have

been involved in the creation of the garden. The initiative to develop and show the garden was taken by one of the current owners, who is married into the family and started with “the garden idea”, as she puts it, about ten years ago. She has a background as a journalist/communicator and was already interested in gardening and cultural history, but had not thought of the garden as anything other than for private use. It was a friend who put her on track, when being shown around the garden and told about what it had once been. “You have to do something about this”, the friend said, and that was the start. “It goes without saying that you should maintain the buildings on a farm, but when it comes to the gardens, they are just a tedious, costly project that needs to be simplified... So, I thought, what the... Here it should be possible to do something about it.” She continues her story about the creation of the garden: “When I first arrived here in ’75, it was completely overgrown. So here we have cut down trees and dug up stumps with an excavator and uncovered the old shrubs – that was 25–30 years ago”. She talks about old plants that gained new vitality when others were cleared away, but other things were found too, for example an old pond that was discovered when thick layers of vegetation were removed. The core of the story is no longer what the place looked like once upon a time, but the reconstruction and preservation work itself.

Together with her historically interested husband she began to search the archives for traces of the garden during different periods. “What we know best is the 20th century. From earlier periods we have little evidence. We do have photo-

graphs and they are all from the 1900s”. However, they have also found some sketches of the older gardens. The work began, creating a visitor garden inspired by what they found in the archives.

Visitor gardens are often displayed through guided garden walks, as we have seen in the case of Waldemarsudde, and sometimes combined with other experience-based activities such as diverse kinds of events and the possibility to shop and eat. In this case it was the owner herself who showed the garden, and this strengthens the credibility of the storytelling. In their marketing, it was emphasized that the guided walk would offer opportunities “to hear the story about that which once was, and look at that which currently is”, as stated in the advertising. To take part in such a guided walk was the only way to gain entrance to this garden, which enhances the exclusivity. In the stories there are many different things that are highlighted: the people, the place, the plants but also how the garden has been arranged in the past and in the present. Many of these stories were emphasized by the owner during the garden walks. During the ten years that she had arranged garden walks, visitors had been turning up almost every Sunday. The record, she says, was 83 visitors in one day, and she is overwhelmed by the reactions

I never got as much cred for anything I did as for this. [...] That tells a lot about people’s interest. This garden is very unpretentious in its current form, as I take care of it myself. [...] And since it’s not pretentious, people feel pretty inspired when they leave. They feel that maybe I could do this too.

Part of the success of this garden seems to be that it offers possibilities for visitors to



Stories about the origin of a plant are often used in marketing, as in the case of these locally collected seeds, for example: “I have heard that in 1920 they succeeded to revive seeds from the herbarium of Linnaeus, and since then they grow this marigold at his farm Hammarby. I got seeds from a garden friend and this is the third year that this nice and easy plant is growing in my garden”. Photo: Carina Sjöholm.

find inspiration for their own gardening projects. Many of those who took part in these walks are themselves gardeners, or dream of having a garden in the future. It is obvious that an important aspect of storytelling can be to convey ideas and inspiration. The walk itself was about one kilometre long, it took about an hour and a half, and concluded with the opportunity to see the exhibition. This was displayed in the old stable, where the tour also started, and where visitors were given the opportunity to buy the book about the manor and some other books

related to gardening and conservation. Here, the visitors could also buy some plants from the garden: “I multiply the plants that are willing to multiply”, the owner said, making it clear that the plants and seeds that she sold, collected and packaged by her, were ones that are easy to propagate, and ones that have a history in this particular garden.

As so often in the hospitality industry, visitors want to be able to bring something from the place they have visited (e.g. Pine & Gilmore 1999; Urry 1995). Buying a souvenir from a journey can be a way to

remember what you have been through and often becomes part of a new and different story (Löfgren 1999). Planting the flower that you brought from a visit to a special garden in your own backyard might give you reason to tell others about the visit. Buying a book about a garden and/or some plants that have grown on the site are clear examples of how to materialize the experience.

When it came to the management and the mediation of the garden, the owner of this garden had many ambitions. She wanted to inspire visitors to create or manage a garden themselves, possibly a historical one. She wanted to share insights, knowledge and what she herself has managed: “It is a joy to share this wonderful property that has so long been inherited in the family and which we will eventually pass on”, she says. Here she points to a key issue for many owners of private visitor gardens: Succession. It is increasingly common that the conservation and care of the green heritage is given prominence and, as we have seen in contexts like this, it is often presented as an obligation towards generations to come. In the case of this gardener, her ambition has been to “develop and refine but not destroy” but how do you guarantee that future generations will do the same? In an article written for a yearbook of the regional museum, she writes:

That’s the way it is with gardens, they are ephemeral and for the one who gets to be a link in a historical garden, it is no choice to mourn what is lost. Instead, I enjoy everything I find, both plants, archival material and knowledge. In different ways, I keep this heritage alive, and I am strengthened by the appreciating words that I meet, eye to eye or in old documents (Thorburn 2014b:13).

In this garden, heritagization and storytelling have become guiding principles. The stories told about it rely on different kinds of documents, but when searching for knowledge about what it once looked like and all the changes that have been made over the years, the result is inevitably a mixture of different kinds of plants and stories. Depending on what time you are referring to, it looks “real” in different ways. There are many things that matter for how things become what they are: different kinds of heritage, different traditions, and not least coincidences. One specific example that the owner of this garden talks about is the different varieties of the perennial flower astilbe (*Astilbe*) found in the garden. One has been there for generations and can be traced to the early 1900s, another comes from her own grandmother and a third one has she bought herself. What is considered genuine/false or right/wrong varies depending on ideals. Regarding other plants she is able to link them to their exact location, based on old photos, as with the Apothecary’s rose that grows on what she describes as its original place in the garden.

Confirming Heritage Values

For some owners of old private gardens, one possibility to identify values and get guidelines for what to regard as heritage in the garden has been to ask for advice from Pom, in connection to their inventories. To get an official confirmation that you have something unique and particularly old in your garden can be desirable, and when talking to gardeners we have noticed a wish to be confirmed by Pom. Visits by experts from Pom to assess specific plants

can be interpreted as a kind of judgement, even if such an impression is not deliberately sought by the visiting experts. At the same time, Pom has been dependent on reports from gardeners and other representatives of the public in order to find unknown old plants. Thus, the relationship between Pom and individual gardeners can be described as reciprocal.

When we met the owner of the private visitor garden described above, she told us about Pom's visits to her garden. "I have had contact with Pom, or still have, and they have selected four plants from here for their gene bank, but they have also helped me very much to tell me what kind of plants I have here", she says. One of the plants that Pom found particularly interesting in her garden was an autumn ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemella serotina*), that according to DNA analysis was a unique old variety.

When they got to see the autumn ox-eye daisy they were happy, because it's not that common, they said. And they also said that it is great to spread it to several gardens so that it will surely survive somewhere in the future. And it is easy enough, just dig it up along the edges and make small pots with plants, and it grows willingly also in pots as you see.

In her garden there are many other plants that she believes have historical connections to the place, and on a number of occasions she has checked whether these could qualify as "Pom plants". However, not everything that is old is unique. On the other hand, there are different aspects of uniqueness. For example, Pom has identified white strawberries on her property, and the owner knows that these are descendants of the white strawberries that her husband's grandfather bought in Alnarp in the early 1900s. The Pom collec-

tors, themselves based at the gene bank in Alnarp, found her white wild strawberries more tasty than other specimens, so even if it is the same variety they brought some plants with them. The owner proudly concludes: "So it is ours that will end up in the gene bank." On the other hand, there were other old plants in her garden, each with its own history, that Pom was not interested in, including the hundred-year-old peonies that she is pleased to have saved and that she believes are "original". During the interview it became clear that this had caused some disappointment:

The thing was that I had to have such amazing stories about them as well, and it just wasn't enough that I told them that it was my husband's grandmother who planted them in the garden here. It wasn't enough, apparently they needed more...

When you visit attractions of different kinds, it is rare that you go there to do only one thing. For example, a garden may be the reason why you go there, but once you are there, there are often surrounding activities such as the opportunity to eat and drink, to be able to buy a book or locally produced plants. Often it is combinations of several different parts that create a significant whole. This garden is thus a quite typical representative of visitor gardens, although they have no formalized plant sales from greenhouses, nor a café, as many others do have. To emphasize that the business has been inherited is a way to stress that the storyteller is well-rooted. Ambitions to manage the garden heritage, to convey knowledge about place, plants and history, and also to sell, are recurrent in such stories (cf. Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2014).

This garden was displayed for a certain fee. For garden owners this can be a difficult decision to make, as the expectations

from the visitors to really get to know the garden, as well as its owners and their history, might rise with a fee. Some owners find it tricky to charge visitors for experiencing their garden (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2014). It is well-known within tourism research that a good experience is supposed to include new knowledge, but also elements of entertainment and pure escapism, something beyond everyday life; and that it should all be wrapped in an attractive package (Pine & Gilmore 1999). Storytelling can be of vital significance here, in order to create a profile for the actual place – in this case a garden – and to create a brand. At the same time, the storytelling is in this case also part of the branding of an entire region, as this garden was participating in a regional network that is promoting visitor gardens in Western Sweden.

Heritage on the Market

In the making and staging of heritage, a place, a person, family or a garden can be used to highlight specific meanings and values. In the sections above we have seen examples of processes where heritage is made into an attractive product. We understand heritage as a construction of the present and the future rather than of the past, and we have now seen that what heritage *is*, is negotiated between different interests, and understandings of heritage are constantly revised. Heritage is both created and used for more or less fixed purposes, and when something is heritagized it is often a certain kind of history that is seen as especially worthy of marketing, medialization and management.

In the production of heritage as a part of the marketing of places and plants, certain

things are emphasized rather than others. Managing and mediating an old garden as a garden with a story directs the attention of visitors and locals – as well hosts – to certain parts of this history, which is manifested in specific details and passages. There are always many different stories linked to a place, and which stories are highlighted is the result of a complex and constantly ongoing process. When something is defined as heritage, something happens to our way of thinking about it, and this process is never neutral; it depends, among other things, on the purpose of the heritage making.

So, what happens when something that has been selected to be regarded as old and valuable is also made into a commodity? Here, there are clearly parallels to the ways in which “old stuff” of different kinds is today often revalued and upgraded with labels such as retro and vintage (e.g. Appelgren & Bohlin 2015; Hansson & Brembeck 2015). Within the field of historic gardens we see many examples of commercialization of tangible heritage “objects” such as places and plants, as well as intangible heritage such as methods and knowhow connected to cultivation and management. Turning a heritage plant or garden or skill into something desirable and sellable often involves a selection of what stories to be told. And quite often, there is an underlying tension between preservation and commodification.

When things are circulated on a market they tend to get affected and to some extent transformed by it. In the case of the heritage plants labelled *Grönt kulturarv* the genetic properties of each plant should be identical to those in the gene bank, but in practice it is difficult to control that every plant sold with this label fulfils this

requirement. And in circulation, the stories connected to the plants also tend to transform. A mere Google search for “phlox Alma Jansson” shows that the story of Alma continues to live and develop, beyond the control of Pom. At the website *perenner.se* “Alma Jansson” is somewhat surprisingly described as “Green Heritage from Småland”. In the app *Gardenize*, designed as a tool for garden owners to keep a record of the plants in their garden, “Alma Jansson” is one of five suggested garden phlox varieties – although illustrated with a picture of another pink/violet phlox variety. Interviews with representatives of Pom reflect on examples like these as a dilemma: Even if such mistakes are clearly beyond their control and responsibility, “it can be frustrating if it goes wrong”, as one of them puts it.

Heritage gardens are sometimes used on local, regional and national levels as components in the wider marketing of cities, districts and regions. This is largely a question of brand building at a time when business, in this case visitor gardens, has become a way of marketing municipalities, regions and individual entrepreneurs (Ek & Hultman 2007). The emphasis on the historical that we see in many of the examples we have considered is an expression of how heritage has become an essential part of the cultural policy of the last few decades, where heritage is often used as an asset in the branding and commercialization of places and regions (cf. Beckman 2010).

Despite many similarities to other heritage fields, green heritage, exemplified here by historical garden plants and heritage gardens, differs in certain ways from other kinds of heritage “objects” (Mackel-

lar Goultly 1993:xi). Constituted to a large extent by living material, parks and gardens are constantly changing, in long-term processes of transformation as well as shorter and cyclical changes connected to seasons, weather, daylight, etc. This has many implications, and always has to be considered in garden management. In critical heritage studies, Rodney Harrison has discussed the limitations of categories such as natural and cultural heritage, and proposed that heritage “emerge in the dialogue of heterogeneous human and non-human actors who are engaged in keeping pasts alive in the present, which function towards assembling futures” (Harrison 2015:28). Inspired by Harrison’s approach, we suggest that historical gardens and garden plants are best understood if we refrain from distinctions between nature and culture, and rather regard them as a *living heritage*. Working with green heritage, conservation is always a question of keeping heritage alive.

The living nature of the garden heritage entails difficulties as well as opportunities in relation to economic sustainability. As we have seen, the marketing of heritage plants needs to be planned in relation to the time it takes for specific plant species to grow big enough to be “sellable”. And for visitor gardens, the seasonal cycle can be a commercial advantage compared to other kinds of heritage sites, as visitors seem to be willing to return to experience the garden in different seasons during the year.

Collecting, Finding and Making Stories

Storytelling is used in the marketing of heritage plants and gardens, in both for-

mal and informal contexts. Stories can become ways to create a value by telling them to visitors, but also as ways of reinforcing an identity for those who create them. From our examples it is obvious that conceptions of origin and authenticity are important components of storytelling. The term authenticity is used in many fields, and in many different ways, and dichotomies such as what is considered historically “right” or “wrong” are continuously reproduced. Authenticity is connected to different kinds of values, meanings and contexts within the heritage field as well as in the tourism and hospitality industry in general (e.g. Urry 1990; Gilmore & Pine 2007; Knudsen & Waade 2010). The search for authenticity is also discussed as an important part in the valuation of what should be preserved or maintained in historic parks and gardens (Gustavsson & Peterson 2005; Tandre 2014; SFV 2015). Certain objects, such as trees and perennial plants that have been growing in the same place for many years, are often pointed out as authentic in relation to a certain history. Authenticity can in this context also refer to the original orientation of a pathway or the height of a hedge (*The Florence Charter* 1981). More recent research also stresses the authenticity of traditional working methods and that the knowledge and skills in horticulture are a vital part in garden heritage conservation (Seiler 2020; Westerlund 2017, 2020). When it comes to conveying intangible heritage such as knowhow and knowledge in gardening crafts, the question of who has what knowledge is raised.

In the display of visitor gardens it is common that stories about people who have created, managed and used the garden over time are emphasized. Many of

those who have taken over the management of such a garden talk in terms of present and past when presenting the garden, for example in walks, in lectures and on websites. On the market, it seems to be of great value to envision and encounter the people behind the scenes, and get a glimpse of how others, today as well as in the past, live their lives. This reflects a desire to be a guest in other people’s reality and a fascination with stories of what something has been, what it has become and how it was made (Sjöholm 2011). In the private visitor garden that we have described above, this is evident not only in the oral stories and the texts about the garden, but also in the exhibition on the farm. Pictures and maps of what it once looked like and how it has changed are displayed, together with names of key persons such as gardeners, and original examples of tools that were used, and other traces of history that can be regarded as links to the garden’s creation story (cf. Flinck 2010). In addition, those who visit the gardens and are presented with the stories, in turn tend to create their own stories about their experiences when they return home. And so the cycle of stories is set in full motion.

When gardens are opened to visitors, there are often things for sale, such as plants and seeds with a certain origin. In both the gardens presented in this article it is emphasized that the plants for sale are not only of the same type as the ones seen in the garden today, but that they in fact have been cultivated in this specific place for a long time. Such stories stress how past, present and future belong together. Management and dissemination of visitor gardens include values beyond the plants themselves. In these processes, heritage

values of the whole (garden/park) and the individual parts (e.g. plants) are quite often made to support one another. We regard this kind of interaction as a particularly interesting aspect of the making of heritage values.

As we have seen, the story of “Alma Jansson” that we met at the beginning of this article did not end with the presentation of it as an authorized Green Heritage plant. During the years that have passed since the launch of the first perennials under the label *Grönt kulturarv*, micro-propagated copies of this plant have spread to gardens and parks all over Sweden, and are probably also circulated in more informal ways, for example in the form of cuttings that might be swapped or shared as gifts (cf. Saltzman & Sjöholm 2019). “Alma Jansson” is no longer a rare old plant, but indeed a rather widespread one. Even when visiting the garden at Waldemarsudde, where many of the plants are of varieties that have been cultivated there ever since Prince Eugen’s days, we were surprised to find “Alma Jansson” flourishing in a large flowerbed. In our view, this can be seen as a reminder that there is actually a risk involved in the authorization of a few selected old varieties as heritage plants. When certain stories are told and certain plants are chosen, this means that others are *not*, and thus perhaps even made invisible. There is a risk that gardeners aiming to maintain a historical garden might choose to buy these authorized heritage plants, rather than to look out for and take care of plants that have a local history in their specific garden and its surroundings. If so, a limited selection of heritage varieties – and their stories – might in fact spread at the



The garden phlox ‘Alma Jansson’ from a smallholding in Uppland was one of the first perennial flowers to be labelled Green Heritage in 2013. Since then, it has been planted in many gardens all over Sweden, also here at Waldemarsudde. Photo: Katarina Saltzman.

expense of a number of more unknown old plants and stories. Our interviews confirm that Pom is aware of this risk, and so are many gardeners working in historical environments.

It is interesting to consider what is perceived to be worth preserving, and what is not. Certain plant varieties have proved to be particularly vital, have a long history as cultivars, and are today understood as heritage plants. Some of these have spread over centuries and are today regarded as “belonging” and as more or less “natural”. In some cases, garden plants have spread too much, and are today frequently ac-

knowledge as a risk, labelled “invasive” – potentially threatening local biodiversity (www.naturvardsverket.se; Qvenild 2013; Qvenild, Setten & Skår 2014). Here, boundaries are constantly crossed and some garden plants are in fact regarded simultaneously as heritage plants and as invasive plants, balancing between being desired and despised (Frihammar, Kaijser & Lagerqvist 2018; Saltzman, Sjöholm & Westerlund 2020).

Gardens and their plants are constantly changing, and can always be incorporated into new stories. We have been following the use of stories about plants and gardens and their roles within management, medialization and marketing. As the examples above show, it has become common to explicitly use stories to profile places such as gardens in different ways towards visitors. Person and place are often closely linked in storytelling concerning heritage gardens and heritage plants. There is great interest in personal history, not least in visitor gardens where visitors are often presented with stories about how the garden has been created, developed and changed. Whose story is emphasized in different visitor gardens varies; sometimes the lives and works of those who once established the garden are highlighted, other times those who managed or who recreated it. In yet other cases, it is the garden and specific plants rather than the people that are stressed. What is emphasized depends on what kind of garden it is and who is responsible for it. Sometimes this also depends on the purpose of the story. Storytelling is not just “innocent” stories; sometimes it is a question of out-right marketing. How we remember and

interpret our history is inevitably linked to the present and the future. Many of the stories that this article refers to are based on ideas about maintaining things perceived to be disappearing. Thus, when certain plants, places and phenomena are selected and labelled as heritage in the present, it also becomes a guiding factor for what will be regarded as representative of the past, and of our own time, in the future.

Through our examples we have shown how stories, and selections of stories, relating the past are used in the making of heritage, and how this heritage in turn is made sellable, and marketed as products. It is obvious that the heritagization of gardens, of certain historical gardening actors and practices, as well as of specific garden plants, often implies a commodification where storytelling is used as a tool to create and enhance values on a market.

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Notes

- 1 This and other quotations originally in Swedish have been translated by the authors.
- 2 This article is primarily based on material collected as part of the research project “Roots En Route: Heritage Politics on the Garden Market”, funded by the Swedish Research Council.
- 3 Storytelling has become an established concept within the tourism industry and in tourism research. Corporate storytelling is, in short, a method of communicating ideas and creating brands (cf. Mossberg 2008) and is used extensively especially by practitioners working with strategic storytelling.
- 4 In connection with this training of volunteers for the inventory work, a number of instructive books were published within Pom, e.g. Andréasson 2007; Engström 2007; Nygårds 2008; Oskarsson 2008; Persson 2010.
- 5 Letter to Erik Werenskiöld, 1901.

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Waffles with Dulce de Leche

Swedishness and Heritage Practices in Northeast Argentina

By Jenny Ingridsson

In northeast Argentina, in the province of Misiones, located in the border zone between Paraguay and Brazil, the city of Oberá rests in lush vegetation and green hillsides. This is a place where the tea-bush-like *yerba mate* traditionally grows. It is also the place where some Swedish emigrants and their children formed a community that they called Villa Svea at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Through relations, practices, and different kinds of activities, the Swedish community of Oberá has created, maintained, and developed what can be described as a Swedish heritage-making over the last hundred years. During this time, an idea of Swedishness has prevailed, strong enough to keep people occupied with activities related to it. In her study of Swedish heritage celebrations in Kansas, USA, Lizette Gradén asks how it comes that people dedicate time and effort to celebrating heritage (Gradén 2003:7). Likewise, one might wonder why Swedish heritage is still central for many individuals in this community so remotely located from what we might usually think of and consider Swedish. This leads up to the question to be addressed in this article: In what way is Swedishness and Swedish heritage lived, imagined, practised, and conditioned in Oberá?

To understand this, I will look at the anchor points through which Swedishness is shaped and heritage is practised in Oberá, Misiones. This means that I will focus on the structure that makes Swedish heritage in Oberá possible, tracing the way a joint past, and the idea of it, has been interlaced with a discourse about Sweden and Swedishness, in such a way that materiality, organizations, and activities, from the foundation of Villa Svea until the present,

have been organized around it, creating a structure for this heritage. I will analyse the historical background of the Swedish emigrants' settlement in the region, focusing on the formation of the community's structure in order to understand how ideas of Swedishness and heritage practices have been shaped. As Gradén has noted, the making of ethnic heritage alternates with time and place (Gradén 2003:26).

This study draws on Laurajane Smith's understanding of heritage as a cultural practice (2006). A premise for understanding heritage for Smith, is that heritage is always intangible (Smith 2006:3). True, material structures exist, the porcelain brought from the far-away homeland and the handwritten recipes in Swedish are tangible artifacts, yet the meaning of materiality is not intrinsic or inherent – rather, meaning is decided through social relations that govern practices and epistememes. This means that what is regarded as heritage is conditioned by materiality, but the meaning assigned to this materiality it is always decided by social relations. Smith's re-theorization of the heritage concept was a response to what she calls the hegemony of authorized heritage discourse, AHD (Smith 2006:11). This is a discourse that, she argues, depends upon:

the power/knowledge claims of technical and aesthetic experts, and institutionalized in state cultural agencies and amenity societies. This discourse takes its cue from the grand narratives of nation and class on the one hand, and technical expertise and aesthetic judgement on the other (Smith 2006:11).

The specific heritage-making in question here is locally anchored in a specific Argentine region, but also created through multiple personal, informal and formal re-

lations to Sweden. This turns the focus towards what happens to the relation between the institutionalized understandings of heritage in the Swedish national context and the heritage practices in a space beyond the nation state.

Popular science and fictional texts have been written about the Swedish emigrants who went to Latin America,¹ and linguistic studies investigated the Swedish language spoken in Oberá (Flodell 2002, 1986). Yet there has never been a qualitative ethnographic study in this community. Therefore, the opportunity is here taken to provide a thorough empirical background to the way Swedishness and Swedish heritage have been lived and are still practised in this region.

Material and Method

The empirical material analysed here was produced together with the photographer Victoria Galmarini and the photographer and political scientist José Curto. Observations and semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with 34 persons, during two periods of fieldwork; in April 2017 and February 2019. Working in a team like this was a creative way to reflect about the field and the material in the field site, the visual material in the form of hundreds of photographs was also helpful for the analysis beyond the field.

In order to locate participants, we resorted to personal contacts and to the Swedish honorary consul, who were asked if they could put us in contact with individuals of varying ages who were Swedish descendants or who were active in Swedish associations. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Spanish, but some were also made in Swedish, or in some cases a mix-

ture of the two languages. The interviewees were of varying ages, the oldest over 80 years old and the youngest 19 years old, all of them were residents of Misiones. All interviews have been transcribed and thematically coded in the software program NVivo. The quotations in this article are translated by the author. All names used in the text are pseudonyms. When information in a quotation has been deleted due to lack of relevance, i.e. repeated words or a half-spoken sentence, this is marked /.../, if there are more than three words deleted it is marked by //...//.

Background: Emigration to Brazil and Settlement in Argentina

Between the years 1868 and 1911 a relatively small number of emigrants, in total approximately 3300, set out from Sweden towards Brazil (Friborg 1988:78; Retsö 2016).² Like the many emigrants who travelled to the USA at this time, these emigrants were driven by factors such as unemployment and poor working conditions. As Albin Widén noted in his many studies of Swedish emigration to the USA, emigration served as a solution to “the problem of Swedish poverty” (Widén 1996:10). The Brazilian government, in need of recruiting European labour, fostered immigration by subsidizing part of the boat fare from Hamburg (Friborg 1988:39). The state requested families with agricultural experience to come and work the land, and many of the Swedes, even though they were of diverse backgrounds such as sawmills workers, miners, and factory workers, were registered as farmers upon arrival (Retsö 2016). Some of them sought work at the sawmills in Paraná (Friborg 1988:74),

while others settled as farmers on land of poor quality, suffering high mortality due to diseases and unsanitary conditions (Friberg 1988:44). After meeting with harsh conditions some of the migrants decided to cross the Uruguay River and enter the province of Misiones in Argentina where conditions were more favourable.

Swedish immigrants are first found in local Argentine statistics in 1903, when 15 Swedish families were registered in Misiones (Flodell 2002:61). These Swedes were emigrants who had arrived with the 1890–91 or the 1909–11 contingents, and they had lost many on the way, but also had children who had been born during the years-long journey through Brazil (Flodell 2002:27). In 1903, the Argentine state initiated an extensive colonialization of the Misiones region through small-scale farming. As settling colonists, the Swedes could acquire a “chacra” – a land slot of 25–100 hectares – where they were to clear the forest and grow crops, preferably yerba mate. Like Brazil, the Argentinian state recruited overseas emigrants during this period. Occupied with the idea of supreme European culture and morals, Argentine intellectuals of the nineteenth century strove for a strategic whitening of the population as a solution to the nation’s supposed problems of backwardness (Helg 1990). Endorsing European immigration, policies sanctioning European immigration were implemented into the Argentine National Constitution in 1853. This was followed by other policies, like the 1876 immigration law that included several economic subsidies, among them passage to agricultural colonies, and the offer of possible access to low-price land and seeds (Bastia & vom Hau 2014:478).

Through these policies of settler colonialism, it became possible for the Swedish emigrants to access land and settle in Misiones without economic capital. Settler colonialism is understood here as a governmental practice of establishing agricultural colonies on indigenous territories claimed by nation states. As Patric Wolfe noted, settler colonialism is premised on a “logic of elimination”, by which settler colonial states such as Australia, Canada, or the USA forged a genocidal erasure of indigenous peoples as the governmental basis for the replacement by settlers (Wolfe 2006). Currently I am developing articles on how the heritage-making processes of the Swedish community in Misiones can be analysed in relation to the power structures employed by settler colonial society, and how settler heritage can be analysed in relation to the invisibilization and dispossession of the indigenous Guaraní Mbyá. Even though my focus here is strictly on how heritage has been practised and lived during the history of the Swedish community in Misiones, this process must be understood as part of a settler colonial context.

Various Ways of Organizing Swedish Heritage

The idea of Swedishness and the practices of Swedish heritage-making in Oberá are not unique in form. Descendants of Swedish emigrants have celebrated heritage and Swedishness in various manners across the Americas for a long time, as extensively studied by ethnologists and folklorists in the US context. In an early phase, scholars were interested in a perceived static tangible heritage, for example, how migration affected Swedishness and traditions, Swe-

dish heritage was analysed as something to be found in material artefacts and celebrations (Widén 1996 [1948]). Interest was then turned to processes of acculturation (Palmqvist 1984; Fjellström 1970), or how folklore could be transmitted (Klein 1970). Ethnicity, identity, and inclusionary/exclusionary processes would then become an important focus for researchers of heritage (Klein 1997).

This investigation is grounded in this tradition of ethnological studies on Swedish emigration, yet it adheres to more recent ethnographic scholarship on Nordic migrant communities that approaches cultural heritage as an active cultural practice, for example, in Swedish heritage-making in the USA (see for example Aronsson & Gradén 2013:12; Gradén 2003), as well as studies on contemporary Swedish migrants, for example in Spain (Blaakilde 2018; Woube 2014; Blaakilde & Nilsson 2013). This study presupposes that identities formed in heritage-making processes are made through social, cultural, and political relations, always dependent on place, time, and context. Even if the form of heritage-making is similar to the cultural processes studied in the US context, the content of the heritage-making in Oberá clearly differs – the setting is different and the local context and history affect the way Swedishness can be imagined and heritage practised.

The Swedish community in Misiones is one of many rural settlements established through the policies of settler colonialism in Argentina and the Southern Cone (see e.g. Bjerg 2000; Ruggiero 1982; Williams 1991; Woortmann 2016). In the nineteenth century, Misiones was a territory of the indigenous Mbyá Guaraní, who

moved across present national borders. There were also Paraguayans, Brazilians, cattle herders and farmers from Corrientes living there (Bartolomé 1975:246). In 1876 it became Argentinian and was inserted into a legal framework that promoted European immigration and the establishment of rural colonies (Schmidt 1991: 8). During the early twentieth century, small-scale colonist agriculture emerged in Misiones, which was extensively populated by European immigrants (vom Hau & Wilde 2010:1292).

Villa Svea and Parque Svea: The Initial Years

There is no clear-cut answer to how people think about Swedishness and how many participate in Swedish heritage practices in the province of Misiones. The interviewees of this study were all invested in heritage-making to different extents. There is, however, a clear difference between individuals of different age and their proximity to Swedish language. When the interviewees born between the 1930s and the 1960s talk about Swedishness and Swedish heritage, they all mention the neighbourhood Villa Svea and the Parque Svea as sites that have been – and to a certain extent still are – important for the Swedish community of Oberá. In this section I will discuss how the initial years of the Swedish settlement are remembered by interviewees.

Villa Svea was the first settlement of Swedish colonists. Established in 1913, the neighbourhood emerged as the colonists settled in their land slots, planted crops, constructed roads, and united in building a place for social gathering and the needs of colonist life. In 1917, a cem-



The famous red soil of Misiones and a road that leads through various “chacras” owned by Swedish settlers in the early 20th century. Photo: Victoria Galmarini.

etery for Scandinavian settlers was built, today known as the Swedish cemetery. In 1918 the first school of this region was inaugurated and the majority of children attending had Swedish names (Flodell 2002:66). Villa Svea was a society in the making, one that many of the interviewees and the local history writing refer to as a “pioneer society”. The neighbourhood Villa Svea was the heart of this society and the cradle of Swedish identity and

heritage. As such, its name also reflects a national idea of Swedishness, Mother Svea, the symbolic personification of the Swedish nation. The park, Parque Svea, was constructed as a space for social gatherings, and in 1915, an association called the Svea Society, was formed there. The Swedes were in the majority in this society, but there were also Danes and Norwegians in it (Flodell 2002:77). The society had different functions, for ex-

ample it received books from the Society for the Preservation of Swedishness Abroad, a society founded in Sweden in 1908. The Society Svea also established a court of arbitration to settle conflicts between Swedish colonists (Friborg 1988: 88), and in 1923 it printed the first journalistic newspaper of Oberá, written in Swedish (Flodell 2002:65). It is interesting to note how there was a notion of preserving Swedishness, but surely also a need to cooperate around everyday issues in working the land and living together. For example, in 1929 an agrarian cooperative was created by various colonists of different nationalities.

The initial society of the 1920s was an active environment where much of the organizational structure had a reminiscence of the contemporary Swedish workers' social organizations. The Svea Society was dominated by men, but in 1923, the colonist women started a society they named Verdandi. Like its namesake in Sweden, it was dedicated to social work, mainly among children and the elderly. Apart from the Svea Society and Verdandi, a society for sobriety was also formed, as well as the social club Viking, and various sport clubs open for Nordic colonists (Flodell 2002:67f). From the 1930s up until 1952, Swedish was taught in different school forms organized by the Swedish colony of Villa Svea (Flodell 2018:179). When Federico, born in 1939, remembered life in Villa Svea he emphasized how, already in 1915, the Swedish colonists had constructed a house for the associations, ensuring social relations:

It was in Villa Svea, the same spot where we have the Parque Svea today //...// They gathered there for parties and funerals, they did everything in that

place. It was a place to gather, and it became quite popular (1. 10).

The way the colonists organized themselves in the initial years of settlement gives some clues to the everyday life of hardships and challenges. The societies served to collectively organize around issues such as harvest, practical education, caring for elderly and children, schooling, problems with alcohol and so forth, while also providing a site for social gatherings for Swedish and Scandinavian colonists. In this way, a material structure for Swedish identity was formed, and associations through which relations to the former nation could be maintained. During these initial years the community received artefacts from Sweden, such as books used for education, and in this sense they were oriented towards Sweden in a way that would change over time.

Besides the Swedish and Nordic colonists, other European immigrants, for example Poles, Ukrainians, and Germans, settled in the area as well. The anthropologist Leopoldo Bartolomé has described the process of settling Misiones with immigrants as a "family-based agricultural exploitation" which ensured that the Argentine state could push the agricultural frontier further (Bartolomé 1975:246). In the 1920s, Argentinians born in the country to parents of European origin – called 'Criollos' – also became interested in the region's emerging possibilities and came to settle (Eidt 1971:9). In 1928, the city of Oberá was founded close to where the Swedes had settled and constructed Villa Svea. In this way, what had been a small settler colonial community became increasingly linked to the emerging Argentine nation. The relations between the governing state

and the colonists were not always harmonious. The local historian Lloyd Jorge Wickström describes many conflicts regarding the right of the Svea Society to organize events on their own lands, or conflicts where the state wanted to seize land from “foreigners” in order to grant access to Criollo settlers. According to Wickström, the Swedish colonists were considered too foreign, and as such were encouraged to show solidarity with their new country. In the press, it was argued that a border zone should be populated by Argentinians rather than by foreigners (Flodell 2002:66ff).

Many of the interviewees point towards language, and the increasing loss of language, as crucial for the preservation of Swedish heritage in Oberá. The question of marriage across ethnic lines was something that many touched upon in reflections on how to preserve language and Swedishness. Federico looked at the community’s history and pointed out that when the Swedes organized dances in Villa Svea and people from other communities participated in the festivities; “the Swedes were a bit jealous of the Argentinian boys, they were not happy that the Argentinian boys came there, because the daughters had to marry the Swedish boys” (1.10). Like Federico, some other interviewees also mention how, during the initial years, some families desired their children to marry within the group. Other interviewees give an opposite view, saying that the Swedish colonists practised interethnic marriage right from the start. María Fogeler, who did a genealogical study on Nordic descendants in Oberá for a master’s thesis in social anthropology, has noted that while Scandinavians of the first generation of emigrants married other Scandinavians, this tendency de-

creased in the following generations (Fogeler 2007:138).

The Swedish community was neither homogeneous nor inherently attached to the idealized Europeanness the Argentine intellectuals strove for when they decided that governing Argentina meant populating it with white European bodies. As the city of Oberá grew and developed into a town of various settler colonial communities, questions of ethnic identity and class seemed to have become an important aspect of how life was shaped in rural and urban settings. This is noted, for example, in the way questions of race were sometimes implicit in interviewees’ reflections on heritage. For example, Victoria, born in 1954, had married a dark-skinned man that her family had not approved of. She said that when she attended events in Villa Svea no one would speak to her or her husband. For this reason she had left the community. Others mentioned how the Swedish priests on mission would not visit the humblest of the community, implying there was a class issue involved in where the priests would choose to perform religious services before there was a church in place. However, all interviewees critical of the class-based and racialized structures of the Swedish community and settler society still identified with Swedish heritage, even if their sense of heritage was not always located in the material structures and sites where the community gathered. Some of them would actively engage in questions of heritage from the standpoint of them “all being Swedish”, seeking their own way to remember, negotiate or assert Swedish identity. In this way, heritage became “a way of knowing and seeing” (Smith 2006:54) – a manner of negotiating the present and positioning

oneself regardless of materiality or participating in organized institutions.

Paula, born in 1957, reflected on the choices her mother and aunts, who had been born of Swedish emigrants in Brazil or Argentina, made when marrying. According to her, Criollo men, who formed part of an emerging professional class in Oberá, were more attractive for her mother and aunts. She thought their time in Buenos Aires had made them more “refined”, and that they were clearly different from “*from the man who was left behind in the chacra*” (2.16.1). The idea of someone staying “behind in the chacra” – doing hard manual rural work in the land slot acquired by the first generation of colonists – clearly had a class aspect that others also touched upon. Mario, born in 1964, talked about how class differences could be played out in his parents’ generation, where the class structure and economic resources were important factors of the social fabric. According to Mario, the Criollos, who held positions in public offices or had their own businesses, were privileged by the social structure, while the immigrant colonists – who worked the land in the “chacras” – could suffer discrimination.

This class discrimination was also associated with ethnic heritage and related to issues of language. The closed social environment in the “chacras” made it easier for the colonists to maintain the Swedish language, yet, at the same time, maintaining the language over time, and not learning proper Spanish, became a disadvantage for such a small community as the Swedish in the local society. According to Mario, a typical insult was “Polaco chacra” (“Polish guy chacra”), a degrading phrase said to, and about, “any person who spoke (Spanish) with difficulties”.

Mario believed that had been “one of the harmful things about maintaining the language” (2.2). He remembered an anecdote that a man of Swedish descent born in the 1950s had told him about how he and his brother suffered in school:

They came from the chacra to the city, because in this era people started thinking of coming to the city so the children could continue studying after secondary school. So, they came with this accent, from the (Swedish) language ... and here it was all “Polaco chacra”. Like this, “Polaco chacra” was someone who did not even know how to speak. // ...// (It) was said to Germans, to Swedes, to the Ukrainians, it was for everyone (2.2).

Keeping the Swedish language was a necessity in the daily work, but could also serve as a stigma in the emerging Argentinian society, revealing the class aspects of its speaker. Other interviewees mention how their parents had been teased in school for speaking Swedish amongst themselves or speaking Spanish with an accent. Some said that the language had been lost because of the assimilation processes the children went through in school. Victoria, who had been born in a chacra in 1954, spoke about her own loss of the Swedish language. Her siblings, who had stayed at home in the chacra, all spoke Swedish while she, who had been sent away to go to school, had never been taught either the language or, for example, how to cook Swedish food. Victoria’s parents and siblings had lived an everyday life where Swedish was spoken and some of the practices, and objects, that would later be picked up and regarded as heritage were just part of the daily life. Due to her late arrival in the family, however, Victoria’s access to Swedishness was conditioned by the demands of the state on the settler colonists to become part of the na-

tion. It is interesting to note how these memories of the Swedish language being a stigma are interlaced with understandings of heritage and one's own ethnic identity. During the time of the fieldwork, there were still individuals in Oberá who spoke the Swedish they learned when growing up. Many expressed concerns about what would happen when these individuals would no longer be around; nevertheless, many of those actively engaged in heritage-making did not speak Swedish. It seems that the language was connected to a sense of heritage when conversation touched upon the past, yet had less relevance when it came to the future of the heritage. Some of the interviewees born in the 1980s or '90s expressed a wish to learn Swedish, while others said it was probably better for them to study English.

For the interviewees, Villa Svea and the Parque Svea were not sites of active community building; rather these sites existed in memories of former times and as such they were associated with heritage and assigned a meaning of Swedishness. Paula, born in 1957, associated the Parque Svea with her sense of feeling "Swedish". For her, Parque Svea made her think of a united family and the Swedish celebrations in community: "all our Swedish emblematic celebrations, they were always held in the Parque Svea ... That means that we belonged there, we did things there" (2.16.1). It is clearly a place that many of the older interviewees had dear memories of – all related to Swedish heritage. Victoria, who was born in 1954 and grew up in Villa Svea, remembers how her older siblings participated in activities, such as cooking and classes in Swedish organized in the Parque Svea. She said

people would also go there to learn trades, such as carpentry. However, she noted that over time the activities decreased. The "people that taught the classes died or they got too old ... and slowly it was all lost" (2.6). Over time, the activities that shaped Villa Svea, the persons involved in activities there and the daily needs of the community changed; in addition, so did the location of this neighbourhood as the centre for the Swedish community.

In the 1950s the Svea Society ceased to exist, although celebrations associated with Swedish heritage were still held occasionally in the Parque Svea at the time of the fieldwork. One of these celebrations was the annual midsummer celebration. Linnea talked about the typical Argentinian barbecue made for midsummer. She said that it had always been a popular event; "it was a way for the whole community to get out and socialize" (2.4). Nevertheless, she noted that over time this had changed, and fewer people attended:

The place is really nice, the barbecue is so tasty, but it is like it is getting lost. And the other generations do not – they just want to get take-away barbecue, "I'll eat at home", "I have stuff to do" / /...// And that used to be the only social gathering there was /.../ it was the only option, there was nothing else to choose between /.../ So it was everyone's shared happiness. Today when we have so many options, well, options within everyone's own life (2.4).

During almost half a century, 1915 to the 1950s, it seems that Villa Svea and Parque Svea were important sites for living and practising Swedishness in collective form. Apart from its ethnic aspect, the Parque Svea was certainly a space that filled the needs of the community's everyday life – regardless of identity making. Here, activities took place through collective effort,

traditions such as celebrating midsummer or the cultural knowledge of how to construct collective organizations were perhaps lived as part of what was needed to build settler society, rather than as mere identity practices of Swedishness. This is of course nothing new, the immigrant settler's development of this kind of institutions in the USA has been described by Arnold Barton as part of a process where the cultures of Swedish immigrants in the USA and the Swedish nation developed complementary and contrary to each other. While the immigrants engaged in building institutions in their new homeland, they also transitioned further away from the country they had once left (Barton 1994). Likewise, in her study of a Danish community in the Argentine Pampas, María Bjerg concludes that while the first Danish migrants focused on integrating into Argentine society, the later community focused on Danish culture and religion (Bjerg 2003). In a similar manner, the Swedish colonists first engaged in the building of institutions and a society. Slowly, the society of Villa Svea "was lost", individuals passed away, collective needs changed and the local society at large went through major transformations.

Lutheran Swedishness and Heritage-Making

Another important structure for Swedishness and heritage practices that many interviewees refer to is the practice of Lutheran faith.³ Through the interaction of the Swedish legate in Buenos Aires, a seaman's chaplain from the local branch of the Church of Sweden in Buenos Aires arrived at Villa Svea in the 1920s (Olsson 1991:73). The chaplain would stay a

couple of months in order to perform religious acts of worship. In the 1930s, however, the religious practices took on a more institutional form. In 1932, the community received a nurse and likewise a midwife, Sigrid Bjurström, who had been sent on an official mission by the Church of Sweden. In 1942, the first priest sent from the Swedish Church was installed in the congregation of Villa Svea (Flodell 2002:68). This was the first priest in a series of five Swedish priests that would stay in Oberá up until 1973 to make sure the congregation would have the possibility to practise the Lutheran faith and attend sermons also in Swedish. In this way the heritage practices of the local community were interlaced with religious practices and the institutionalized celebrations of the church that became associated with Swedish heritage.

In the 1950s, the Lutheran Church, "Olaus Petri", was built in what was to become the centre of Oberá. The church was constructed with support from the Church of Sweden and was inaugurated in 1956. In this way, one important assembly point for the Swedish community was moved from Villa Svea to the centre of Oberá and social gatherings took on new forms. For example, the women's society Verdandi was incorporated in the Lutheran Church's home sewing organization in 1958 (Flodell 2002:67). From the late 1950s, the Swedish community still gathered to celebrate traditional midsummer and other events in the Parque Svea, yet many activities, and traditional celebrations, now took place in the facilities of the Swedish congregation. Next to the church, the private school "Instituto Carlos Linneo" was built by the congregation.



Parque Svea and the maypole from the Swedish midsummer celebration. Photo: Victoria Galmarini.

It opened in 1962, and during the years many children of the Swedish community have passed through its gates. It was a site mentioned by interviewees who had attended the school or who associated it in various ways with Swedish heritage – albeit not always in a positive manner. Some of the interviewees born in the 1980s and 1990s spoke of discriminatory practices and of class-related power structures, while others remembered their time in the school with happiness and nostalgia.

The Swedish church and the congregation were mainly described by the older

interviewees as a site where it had been possible to meet and speak Swedish to old friends, but also to make new acquaintances and maintain ties to Sweden. For example, Maja, born in 1944, met her husband in the church. Like herself, her husband's parents were born in Sweden or during the journey through Brazil. Both of them attended the church because of the social network that they were part of and because they spoke Swedish. In this way the church seems to have functioned as a social ethnic site, an extension of the former space of Villa Svea. Hector, born in

late 70s, said that his grandmother much appreciated when the Swedish priests came to visit, “it was an opportunity to speak Swedish with someone” (2.5). Settler society was ethnically mixed and his grandmother had learned German, which she spoke with her husband, Portuguese, from the journey through Brazil, and “she was very good at Spanish, but she did not have many to speak Swedish with” (2.5). Therefore, the church became an important site for her. Hector reflected that, given this, one could say that the Swedish church could be regarded as “an ethnic church cared for by the Swedish priests” (2.5).

The Olaus Petri Church, built in the 1950s, is a solemn building, with minimalist Lutheran decorations, in the church one finds the Swedish and Argentinian flags and Bibles in Swedish. A couple of years back a mural came up on one the walls that surrounds the church’s garden: a Dala horse, with the Argentinian and Swedish flags. Next to the church space is the reading hall where the congregation can gather. During the fieldwork the reading hall was filled with Dala horses and dolls dressed in Swedish folk costumes, there was also a large collection of books in Swedish, and traditional Swedish wall tapestries. The space for social gathering was filled with pictures of Swedish visitors, the priests who have served in the community, the Swedish royal family, and important state guests who have visited the community, for example ambassadors, and Prince Wilhelm who visited in 1947. These official, and unofficial, relations seem important for the sense of community, Swedishness, and Swedish heritage created in Oberá. As Gradén has discussed, in the transnational repertoire of

objects that represent Swedish heritage, the Dala horse and the folk costume stand out, while each context also has their local variation (Gradén 2003:232; 2000). Many interviewees held on to this sort of objects that would be considered typically Swedish according to an authorized heritage discourse. Yet while simultaneously treasuring a Dala horse as part of their heritage, they could also describe a pierced jaguar skin hanging on the wall in a settler colonist’s chacra as typical of the Swedish heritage in Misiones. In this way heritage was lived, and made meaningful, in relation to a local context where the settler colonial history was important for identity making.

Interviewees who attended the church were thankful for the way the church had become a ground for practising Swedish heritage, which was made possible through the connection to Sweden through the religious practices. Illustratively, Federico, born in 1939 and an active participant in the congregation, said the only reason “we are here” was because of the Church of Sweden Abroad: “we need to give our gratitude to the Church of Sweden Abroad, it all started with the Swedish sailors” (1.10). He said this referring to the missionary work the Church of Sweden did abroad in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Federico felt “proud to have my roots in Sweden ... Sweden has done a lot for the Swedes in Oberá. The aid they have sent us, money and everything, through the Church of Sweden they helped us a lot” (1.10). Through the church came not only spiritual beliefs, but also materiality in the form of economic support, and the construction of a church where the congregation could gather. Clearly this material structure had been

crucial for Swedish institutional heritage-making in Oberá. When older interviewees remembered the church and its activities during the years with Swedish priests, they associated it not only with their religious faith, but also with a sense of family and ethnic identity. For Katrin, born in 1945, the church was an important place that she associated with her life trajectory: “I was confirmed there, I got married there, I spent my childhood there, my youth” (2.13). Linnea, who was born in 1955 remembered the Swedish community of her childhood as a community closely tied to the activities of the priests sent from Sweden. Her parents worked with the priest in the church and she spent all her spare time there playing with the priest’s children:

It was a supportive environment; we all went there with happiness. Mum sold the cloth they used for the uniforms, the women gathered for the activities of La Colmena, where they did events and repaired clothing, or they collected money, or they did small things of carpentry in order to sell or donate to those in need (2.4).

For Linnea the church was a place she associated with her childhood community and Swedish heritage. In this way, life biographies and heritage were interlaced with an understanding of Lutheran faith.

More recently, a local conflict related to the church had shaken and divided the community. This painful conflict was something many interviewees experienced as a threat to the Swedish heritage in Oberá, since they felt it made community members constantly more divided. This article will not go into the details of this conflict, it is just interesting to note how some aspects of the conflict are made meaningful in relation to Swedishness and

heritage. Some interviewees, for example, felt that the Olaus Petri church had ceased to be an ethnically Swedish church when the Church of Sweden withdrew in the 1970s. For example, Katrin thought that the only reason the Olaus Petri church was still called Swedish was “out of habit”. According to her, it was not Swedish anymore, “because the Swedish disappeared when the Swedish priests left ... maybe some priest comes to visit and give a sermon in Swedish, but really there’s nothing left, except for Lucia” (2.13). In this way the authentic Swedishness of the church was tied to the nation of Sweden rather than to the local congregation that Katrin had left. Being an active member of the new congregation, Katrin felt that the separation was not a threat to Swedishness because she did not assign heritage to the structure of the Olaus Petri church in itself. Rather she felt, the new church that she attended was a continuation of the Swedish heritage in its practice. It had taken the same name as the church built by the Swedish community, because “we are the same descendants, for no other reason” (2.13). Katrin drew the lineage from her new church to the first Swedish settlers and their religious activities, pointing out that they tried to preserve the Swedish traditions and maintain traditions such as Lucia. When Katrin spoke about this she drew a lineage to the historical heritage of Villa Svea, emphasizing that in the new church they did “all of the things that they did from the beginning in Villa Svea, because the first church was in Villa Svea” (2.13). In this way she also signalled that the church built in the 1950s was actually not the first church, but just a part of the lineage from Villa Svea, a site she con-

structured as an authentic Swedish heritage.

The way Swedishness and Swedish heritage has been practised in this religious context has travelled from the religious organizational form from the initial site in Villa Svea, but also from the authorized heritage practised through the connection to the Church of Sweden. Like Katrin, other interviewees also found it important to connect the actual practices of heritage and faith with the history of the community and with their Swedish ascendancy. Similarly, Hector related the social care work that the women's group "la Colmena" did in the first church to the historical work of the Verdandi society: "they inherited everything that the work of the first Verdandi here meant. It comes from the immigration, right? It comes with that ... with the reality that group of women had to face ... in the beginning here in Oberá" (2.5). In this way, the present heritage-making, even if the community had been divided, was connected to the past in ways that ascribed authenticity to the Swedish heritage of the religious practitioners, while, also in accordance with local heritage discourses, assigning importance to the deed of the first settler colonists.

In the 1950s the structure for organizing Swedishness and practising heritage thus seems to have been centred on the activities of the church. Indeed, much of the activities and associations that partly constitute Swedish heritage practices and Swedishness in Oberá has been made possible through the transnational relation to the Church of Sweden. The Swedish priests seem central for the importance of ethnic identity and language. In a similar manner, in her study of Danish Lutheran communities in southern Buenos Aires and the

Pampas, María Bjerg has found that the church served as an axis of "religious, cultural, and social life" (Bjerg 2000:7). Through Lutheran faith, in the celebrations of traditions, but also in the church's organizational structure and the materiality provided by the church, traditions and objects have been given a meaning through an idea of authorized heritage imported from Sweden, while simultaneously other forms of ideas about heritage and Swedishness have existed.

The Nordic Collective and the Immigrant Festival

The descendants of the Swedish settlers in Oberá belong to a complex and heterogeneous community, and as with Swedish communities in the USA, the making of heritage and the points of identification with Swedishness for those that identify with Swedishness and/or engage in Swedish heritage practices, is not necessarily bound by ancestry (Gradén 2003:22). This is made visible in the heritage-making of the association the Nordic Collective and in the celebration of an annual heritage festival.

The Immigrant Festival started in a sports complex in the early 1980s, and consisted of stands with "traditional food" and groups that performed folk dances. From this small initiative of different ethnic communities that wanted to celebrate their heritage, the festival has grown massively, attracting tourists nationwide, as well as internationally. In the late 1990s, the politicians of the city dedicated approximately ten hectares of land in order to construct a public park where this annual festival and other celebration of the city's settler communities' heritage could be performed. In 1998, the "Park of Nations" was inaugurat-

ed, and each community constructed its own house for social gatherings. This massive and increasingly commercialized heritage celebration can be understood as an example of the fusion between the tourist industry and the idea of the multicultural state, as has been discussed by Casper Jacobsen in the case of indigenous heritage and tourism in Mexico (2019).

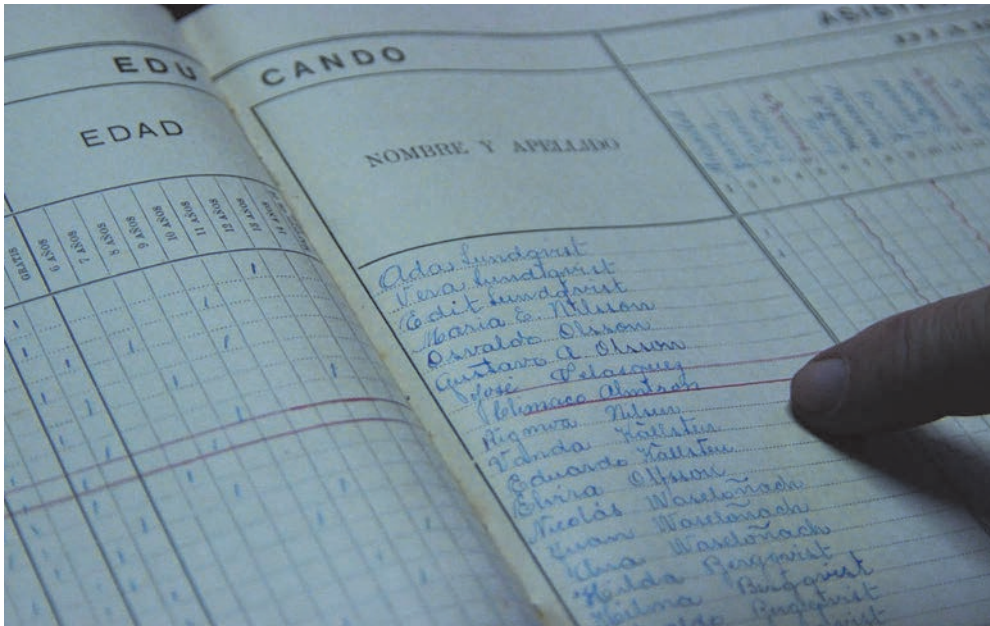
Celebrating Heritage

The Immigrant Festival starts with a parade, where each community parades in traditional costumes from the city centre to the park. The celebration consists of, for example, traditional foods, live music, games, dance shows, and a beauty pageant where an elected queen from each ethnic community competes in representing their heritage. This form of heritage celebrations is something that can be found in other settler communities in the Americas (see e.g. Linde-Laursen 1999; Bjerg 2003). The celebrations of elements such as these represent a non-threatening and socially non-transgressive otherness, aspects of heritage that can be celebrated by all the groups of settler society.

Swedish heritage practices associated with the festival were channelled through the association *Colectividad Nórdica* – the Nordic Collective (NC) – which resides in the Nordic House. This is a red two-storey house, its corners and window frames are painted in white, and its opulent garden is ornamented with a runic stone and a large barbecue space. On the inside a hall opens for social gatherings, on the dark wood panelling hang pictures portraying, among other objects recognizable as Nordic, a Swedish Lucia, the Swedish warship *Vasa*, a map of Sweden, the municipal

coat of arms of Stockholm, and pictures of red wooden houses in the forest. There are also small ornaments such as midsummer poles and Dala horses – all objects resembling traditional ideas about Swedish heritage. According to the interviewees the house was a place for all the Nordic communities to gather, yet the majority of those that attended were Swedish descendants. “We always put the Swedish flag first,” a member said.

The NC and the many activities related to the Festival occupied a central place in many interviewees’ ideas of Swedishness, where heritage could be practised. At the time of the fieldwork, the NC was dedicated to year-long preparations for the festival, as well as to the assemblies of the board for the cooperation between the sixteen different ethnic settler groups that were represented with a house in the park.⁴ Federico, born in 1939, talked about the festival and the work of the NC as something helpful for the future of the Swedish community: “there are always activities in the Nordic House /.../. And there is the ten days long festival, a big festival, then we gather people from all of Argentina, and usually there are also groups from Sweden” (1.10). In this way the celebration of Swedish heritage was turned into a practice that reached beyond the local community, establishing ties nationwide with Argentina and internationally with Sweden. Some days before the interview, the NC had hosted the Swedish ambassador and the honorary consul at a ceremony where the guests ate together with Swedish-speaking senior members of the community. Over time, the organizational structure for the making of heritage had shifted, but the way Swedishness and heritage were imagined was still inter-



A record of the children who attended the first school in Villa Svea, Yerbal Viejo, opened in 1918. Photo: José Curto.

laced with representatives of the Swedish nation. Outside the Nordic House's front entrance hung placards that solemnly announced important events in the community's history; for example, during the 2002 Immigrant Festival, the Swedish, Finnish, and Norwegian ambassadors honoured the community with their presence. There were also placards commemorating the 100 years of Swedish presence in Oberá, for example: "Homage to the brave Swedish immigrants who 100 years ago built the beginning of our beloved Oberá, June 6, 2013". In this way historical landmarks in the Swedish community's history were connected with local history and the Nordic nations.

The heritage practices of the NC were a yearly cycle and a social commitment that reached both the local and an international

community. The members of the NC described how their schedules were filled with activities. Maja, born in 1944, had a position on the board which meant she had a meeting every week. In addition, she had other undertakings in the NC:

There is always something to do, some party or something, like now in June, then it is our ... the day of the Swedish flag, then we serve coffee and cake /.../ Yes, then in March we start making waffles ... and then come the rehearsals of the dance group" (2.14).

The year before the second fieldwork, in 2018, the NC had arranged the celebration of Swedish midsummer for the first time. Traditionally it had been celebrated in the Parque Svea, but it now seemed to have taken a new shape in the Park of Nations. One of the interviewees took me out to the garden to show the maypole, and said that

the traditional song and dance “Små grodorna” had been good marketing for the NC because it attracted Sunday strollers who then bought waffles. One can presume that the celebration of midsummer in the settler community of the early twentieth century filled certain functions. A century later, it had come to occupy another role in the community, turning into a practice that – of course among other things – also benefited the waffle sale. This points towards how the meaning over heritage has shifted over time, and how Swedishness becomes a contingent relational process. That the meaning of heritage changes, or is used as an advantage for marketing (Gradén 2000; see also Caspersen 2019), however, does not necessarily mean that it is more or less authentic. As Smith has noted, heritage is a cultural practice, “which engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways to understand and engage with the present” (Smith 2006:2).

The dance group of the NC was described as important for the present practices of heritage and the making of Swedishness in the community. Some of the interviewees born between the 1980s and early 2000s was, or had been, dedicated to the Nordic folk-dance group. As the group represented all the Nordic countries, they chose a new country to represent each year. Their leader took pride in investigating dances and traditional costumes through Youtube, but also through journeys to the Nordic countries. He said he wanted to make sure the dances resembled the folk dance of the original places. The group assembled participants ranging in age between children and people well over 80 years old, during the festival they performed a dance show, but all year long

they met to rehearse and perform. They also travelled to dance festivals in Buenos Aires, as well as to Brazil, where they met with Swedish descendants who danced Swedish folk dances as well. In this way, Swedish heritage had taken a meaning of a transnational Latin American community for them, and they invested time and effort in their costumes and the choreographies. Andrés, born in 1991, described how all the effort and the work dedicated to the NC and the dance group made it worthwhile because he felt they were honouring the Swedish settlers and Sweden as a nation: “because if it had not been for Sweden we would not be here today. So, it is a form to represent” (2.1). One of his dreams was that the Swedish royal couple would come to see them dance.

This interest in folk dance seems to have been stimulated by the festival. An active participant in the NC, Mario, born in 1964, was eager to trace the roots of the dance group back to the Swedish community of the 1930s and the dance classes led in Villa Svea by the Swedish nurse and midwife, Sigrid Bjurström, a representative of the Church of Sweden. In this way the heritage-making of the dance group was ascribed an authenticity rooted in the origins of the community, but also in the mediating role between the local community and the authorized heritage that Bjurström has as a representative of the Church of Sweden. According to Mario, it was not until the Immigrant Festival began that the interest in folk dance really became popular, and when people of the Swedish community wanted to get involved and do something the dances taught by Bjurström were revived. Thus, the work members dedicated to NC can be understood as a way to practise heritage

and to live Swedishness. Katrin, who was born in 1945 and had worked over 20 years in the NC, said that in their work in the NC they always tried to “follow the culture like it was” (2.13). For her, this meant “typical costumes from over there”, as well as the dances they performed. Like Katrin, the interviewees who participated in the NC all described a similar wish to practice heritage and to keep Swedishness alive.

Heritage as an Identity and a Hobby

Apart from the importance of Swedishness and heritage, the time dedicated to the NC was also about the social relations formed there. Interviewees said that they felt very at home in the Nordic House, and that the NC was like a family. Maja, born in 1944, had been an active member of the NC for over 20 years. Her main duty was to be in charge of the cooking of traditional dishes such as Swedish meatballs with brown gravy or the Norwegian “fårikål” (mutton in cabbage). Apart from the festival, she also cooked for birthdays, weddings, or family reunions – events that members of the NC could host in the Nordic House. Maja liked the quiet atmosphere of the Nordic House and she was happy to have so many friends in the NC, not only peers of her own age, but also young members: “the youngsters here, the ones that come for the folk dance, they call me grandma, I am grandma for everyone here” (2.14) she said contentedly.

Sandra, born in 1994, had participated in the dance group of the NC, yet could not afford the loss of time this participation took time away from her present work life. She would, however, still visit the house and attend the Immigrant Festival. Similarly, Andrea, born in 1986, was no

longer active in the NC, but she associated the Nordic House with her Swedish heritage. For her, strolling through the park on a Sunday and having waffles in the Nordic House was a way to feel close to her family and her grandparents; to honour their Swedishness. In this sense it was related to issues of identity and kinship, since the stroll took an ethnic meaning. Similarly, for Iris, born in 1993, who was raised in a Swedish-speaking family and with a strong Swedish identity – to participate in the activities of the NC was a way to recognize her family’s heritage and express an ethnic identity. Active members of the NC who were not of Swedish, or Nordic, descent but still dedicated time and effort to the work of the NC, said it was because of the way the Swedish culture characterized the work of the NC (observation note 2019). This affiliation by choice has also been noted in the US context (Gradén 2000).

On the other hand, some interviewees were critical towards the Festival becoming a spectacle that was too expensive to attend. Victor, born in 1957 and previously active in the NC, compared the celebration of heritage in the festival parade with a circus. He felt it had become too much of a spectacle. I asked him whether or not it could still be understood as a sense of creating community:

Of course, there are disputes in the sense of arguing who has most people in their block of the parade, who has the best music, but I think that’s all right, it does no harm, people also dispute about football games or volleyball (1.12).

This is an interesting comparison; like Victor, other interviewees who still were or had been active in the NC could switch between describing the celebration of heritage through the NC as part of an ethnic

identity or a heritage, but also as “a hobby” – something similar to sports like football or volleyball. Illustratively, Iris, born in 1993, felt the festival had been a way “to get out a little bit” when she was an adolescent. It was a way “to do something different than just being at home or going to school. So, with my sister we always went to dance rehearsal, to the youth group’s meetings in the church. All of that we did to get out a little bit”. (2.9). Iris agreed with me that in this sense it was fair to say that her social life as an adolescent was organized through her Swedish ancestry. However, this was not just typical for the Swedish community, but was rather applicable to all the ethnic groups organized in collectives in the Park of Nations.

The mixture of different ethnic groups that characterize the former settler colonial society of Oberá was often stressed as an exceptional, multicultural, and integrated social environment by the interviewees. According to Mario, who had spoken about the discriminatory attitudes of the colonist society, the festival had changed the ways in which ethnic belonging was imagined and lived. “Thanks to the festivals” the “new generations” could celebrate their heritage more freely. Mario felt that “the recovering of traditions is different now; it is no longer a stigma” (2.2). According to Mario, one result of the festival was that former stigmas associated with ethnic difference had ceased. Through the festival, heritage seems to have been made something open and fluent – a way for people to socialize. Many of the interviewees who had grandparents or parents of different national origins expressed how they would choose which heritage to celebrate in a given situation, something also seen in the US context of

heritage celebrations (Gradén 2000:220; Klein 1997). Andrea, who had grandparents both from Sweden and Switzerland, had chosen to dance either with the Nordic group or with the Swiss group, depending on where her friends were dancing. Likewise, Tomás, born in 1989, left the Nordic dance group to dance with the Italian group when his girlfriend started there. Iris who used to dance in the Nordic group, did not think one’s heritage was important among groups of friends. She said people normally did not think about whether someone was Swedish or German, but perhaps these origins were revitalized by the Immigrant Festival when heritage became a topic for conversation. She believed that in the present society “everyone is so mixed up” so they could choose between multiple collectives. For example, she herself could have chosen to celebrate heritage with the German or Brazilian collectives, “but we were very rooted in the Swedish ancestry and its traditions. So, it stays there” (2.9).

In Gradén’s study of Swedish heritage-making in a festival in Kansas, she finds that two understandings of heritage emerge: heritage by choice or heritage by lineage. The first concept included everyone who wanted to participate in activities and recognized certain virtues framed as Swedish. Gradén finds that this was really about localism and community building, while the latter came down to ancestry and blood (Gradén 2003:228). Likewise, the NC provided a space where Swedish heritage could be lived and imagined regardless of one’s ancestry. In this way it was also a place where this heritage was inscribed into the national context of Argentina. The ethnic mix of the former settler society found in Oberá is often im-

aged as a real example of the Argentinian “*crisol de razas*” – a melting pot characterized by its mixture of European immigrants. Illustratively, some of the interviewees had no Swedish ancestry, yet had chosen to “sympathize” with the NC, or had married into a Swedish heritage – a phenomena also found in the US context (Tallgren 2000). Nonetheless, at the same time, one’s origin and blood ancestry were also a criterion in order to access certain positions on the NC board or organizing the beauty pageant.

It must also be noted that the fluidity of identity was expressed by interviewees with a European heritage. As Mary Waters noted in her study of European ethnic identity in the USA, white subjects tend to be freer to choose a “situational ethnicity” depending on the context, in ways that non-whites cannot. For the white suburban middle-class Waters interviewed it meant no social cost, but rather enjoyment to invoke a European heritage (Waters 1990). Likewise, it meant no social cost for the interviewees in my material to choose freely between different settler heritages. As I will discuss elsewhere, this idea of fluidity, celebration, and choice did not seem to include celebrations the indigenous group Mbyá Guaraní heritage.

Heritage as a Fusion

For many of the interviewees, food was an important aspect of their association with Swedishness or with heritage. In the Nordic House there was a large kitchen with room to make traditional Swedish food, but also traditional Argentine barbecues. On the shelves, the many waffle machines imported from Sweden shared space with Argentine cups for drinking yerba mate. In this way objects and materiality closely

associated with the heritage of two different national settings had merged in an ordinary way related to everyday practices of the NC. A member of the NC told me that one of the traditional Swedish foods he had always been served at home and still prepared was *mandioca* – a starchy tuberous root that in the regional context serves as a logical dietary replacement of the potato – an everyday aliment in Sweden. This can be understood as one way that the content of Swedishness acquires a new form according to the local materiality. Another example of how the Swedish heritage practices take their form and content from the Argentinian context is the traditional barbecuing of 250 kilos of meat that Matías described as part of a traditional Swedish midsummer celebration: “Well, let’s say we have Argentinized it quite a bit” he laughed (1.3).

Above all, something almost all interviewees spoke about as something they related to Swedish heritage was the making of waffles. In the NC they sold waffles during the festival, but also yearly on Sundays in order to raise money for the needs of the NC. Andrés explained that a lot of people in Oberá had grown fond of the waffles, even if they were not of Nordic descent:

When we make waffles on the weekends, in the kiosk, we sell almost 150 waffles. On Sundays we are open between 15 and 19. And then people know there are waffles in the NC and they come. They write to each other “hey, there’s waffles today”. So, then people know ... and it is really a Swedish thing /.../ So that’s the way, and of course it has been adapted because in Sweden they eat waffles in another way, here we eat them with dulce de leche. Which is really our thing. /.../ So, this mixture was made because of the excellence of the dulce de leche. Well, maybe someone likes their waffles with salty stuff, like ham and cheese, they are also made with fruits or other sweet stuff, like in the more traditional way they do them in



The Nordic House where the Nordic Collective resides, in the Park of Nations, Oberá. Photo: José Curto.

Sweden. But not the one we do here, it is most known as the fusion, the waffle with dulce de leche (2.1).

In a similar way, “the waffle with dulce de leche” was often mentioned as a good example of how the practices of Swedish heritage were a mixture between the Swedish settler colonists and Argentina. In this mixture, the fusion between the waffle, which symbolizes Sweden, and the dulce de leche, the ultimate symbol of Argentina, became a telling image of the Argentine-Swedish heritage in Oberá. This symbol of the mixture of different ancestry also reflects an Argentine auto-image, canonized for example through influential Argentine scholarship, like the historian José Luis Romero who has regarded Argentina as a “hybrid society” (1956) or the sociologist Gino Germani who referred to the Argentinian melting

pot as a fusion and amalgamation of populations (1962). Unlike the older interviewees, the younger members of the NC interviewed seemed to identify with multiple heritages rather than with an ethnic identity. To partake in a heritage practice is a looser form for organizing belonging, and gave scope for them to be a little bit of everything, perhaps celebrating Swedish heritage one day and Swiss heritage the other, but always feeling Argentinian.

Conclusions

As Gunvor Flodell has pointed out, the Swedish language and traditions alive in Misiones today are a result of over a hundred years of heritage-making (Flodell 2002:27). As I have shown above, this heritage-making has been grounded in certain structures that have provided

spaces for Swedishness and heritage to become lived, imagined, and practised. The discourse of Swedishness has allowed a material structure to take shape according to the needs of the community – but also as a result of relations between the Swedish settler community and, on the one hand, the Argentine state, and on the other hand, the Swedish state. This structure is both solid and loose, allowing for the contingency of heritage practices and the meaning of Swedishness to change and take on new shapes. The making of Swedish heritage has also certainly taken place in sites not discussed here, particularly in private homes, yet the structures I have described can be highlighted as important collective hubs.

During the initial years of the Swedish colony in Misiones, the society was structured around everyday needs of the settlers. Thus, in this sense, Swedishness and some parts of what would later be practised as heritage were a lived practice of everyday life. Another condition for this possibility was the transnational ties to the Swedish society that sent books and newspapers, as well as representatives of the Church of Sweden. These relations created a certain structure where influx to the Swedish ethnic identity and the maintenance of the language was made possible. This exchange surely also affected the artefacts related to heritage and the idea of Swedishness in the community. However, the practice of heritage or the idea of Swedishness was neither monolithic nor exclusive. The settler colonial society was, and still is, one where many experiences, emigration trajectories, classes, and languages mixed, giving rise to diversified experiences and practices. The way heri-

tage practices have been lived, practised, imagined, and conditioned in Oberá are influenced by the relations to Sweden and the authorized discourses on national heritage, yet at the same time it has taken its own shape, influenced by the local settler society context.

All the interviewees who spoke about their identification with Swedishness and who engaged in heritage practices said they were of course Argentine citizens before anything else. In Argentina, where the national myth is so fundamentally based on the idea of the country being built up by European immigrants (Grimson 2012: 31ff), it seemed self-evident for the interviewees that they would have an origin in a European country that could be celebrated as heritage, both in official acts by the city and in their social life and private homes. In this context, celebrating non-transgressive forms of Swedish (or any other) heritage just made them more Argentinian. And perhaps that is why Swedishness still matters in Oberá today. If the organizational structure of Villa Svea and the church was more a form of creating community out of diasporic needs and ethnic traditions, in ways that the state at one point even regarded as a threat to the nation, then Swedishness, in the form in which it was practised at the NC in the late 2010s, is sanctioned by the Argentine national discourse as an authorized heritage. As such it is linked to the Argentinian national idea about the nation being a melting pot of European immigrants. Unlike the settler colonists of the initial period – who were just foreign to the state – the interviewees were Argentinian precisely because of their Swedish heritage.⁵ In this way celebrating Swedish heritage becomes part of a mani-

festation of national diversity contained within its limits – in this process Swedishness needs mandioca and barbecue in order to be authentic, the waffles with dulce de leche become the logical way to imagine and live Swedish heritage in contemporary Argentina.

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Notes

- 1 See e.g. Wilhelm 1948: *Röda jordens svenskar*. Stockholm: Norstedt; Paulin, Axel 1951: *Svenska öden i Sydamerika*. Stockholm: Norstedt; Tell, Per Erik 2011: “Svenskarna slet ont i Brasilien” *Populär Historia* 12/2011.
- 2 The majority arrived in 1890–91 and 1910–11. The figures for Swedish migrants in Brazil differ in emigration and immigration figures. This discrepancy and the different statistical sources have been discussed by Dag Retsö (2016).
- 3 The importance of religion in the context of immigrant life in America has been discussed by others (see Attebery 2007), and particularly the Lutheran faith in contexts of settler colonies in Latin America (Woortmann 2016: 61f). Likewise, in the context of settler colonial societies, scholars have also discussed faith as an important aspect of recreating a nation or constructing a new society (Gahman 2020).
- 4 Argentina, Germany, Poland, Paraguay, Ukraine, Switzerland, Spain, the Nordic countries, Russia, Arabic, Brazil, French, Italy, Japan, Czechia, Portugal. There was also a space constructed for the indigenous Mbyá Guaraní in 2010.
- 5 The celebration of European heritage can also be regarded as a way to invisibilize the fact that the Swedes and other European immigrants settled in indigenous lands that were violently conquered by the state in the nineteenth century. Elsewhere, I will discuss how this particular making of heritage can also be understood as a way to write history from the advent of the settler colonial society, ascrib-

ing indigeneity to settlers as they are regarded as being the first to settle an “empty land” (see e.g. Gahman 2020:38f; Dunstan & Peñaloza 2017:610).

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Low-Quality Border Control?

A Cultural Analysis of Alternative Border Imaginaries among Police Officers at Copenhagen Airport

By Marlene Paulin Kristensen

Copenhagen Airport is currently a gateway for illegal migrants to the Nordic countries. This has been revealed to the magazine *DANSK POLITI* by frustrated police employees (Dansk Politi 2013a).

This intriguing statement could be read in an article published in the independent magazine *Dansk Politi* (“Danish Police”) in March 2013. The article was the first in a series of articles in a public dispute between police employees and their superiors at Copenhagen Airport, Kastrup, which concerned the quality of border control at the airport. In the dispute, the police employees at the airport claimed that they had been told to “turn a blind eye” to flight arrivals that they knew from experience were likely to be carrying travellers with forged documents. In a series of articles printed in *Dansk Politi* (2013ab, 2014ab, 2015ab) in which both anonymous employees and named employee representatives voiced their criticism, a range of claims were put forward: First, the police employees asserted that there was not sufficient time or resources to carry out the investigative work of border control. Secondly, some also claimed that they were specifically being told to turn a blind eye to illegal migration in order to avoid the resource-demanding processing of asylum cases. Thirdly, the articles reported criticism of the low number of controls conducted on flights from European Union Schengen member countries as well as criticism of the selection of controlled arrivals. Furthermore, reductions in personnel and the lack of specialized training were pointed out as reasons for poor-quality border control. Finally, some claimed that the top management of the Danish National Police was trying to

hide the unsatisfactory conditions from the public, and some employees lamented the fact that the low level of control at the airport was pushing illegal travel towards neighbouring countries, e.g. Sweden and Norway (ibid.).

In this article, I investigate this controversy about the level of control in the airport through an ethnographic account based on interviews and field observations with Danish police at Copenhagen Airport in 2015 and 2016. By probing into the emotional responses that arose at the airport in the midst of the above allegations, I am guided by the following question: *What border imaginaries were intertwined in the claims of poor-quality border control at the airport?*

In the article, I will show how alternative imaginaries of the border emerged in the incompatibilities and insufficiencies of the current European asylum and border regulations, imaginaries of a border which promised a simpler manner to distinguish between legitimate travel and non-legitimate travel. Further, by bringing international research on the European Union border and migration system into dialogue with ethnology contributions, I argue that recognizing the multiplicity and simultaneity of borders has a potential for furthering critical analysis of studies of border enforcement in the European Union.

Fieldwork among Border Officials at European Border Crossing Points

The article is based on fieldwork material generated at Copenhagen Airport, planned and carried out by the author between 2015 and 2017, with the majority of material cited in this article concerns the time between September 2015 and spring 2016.

The analysis is based on semi-structured interviews with police officers at the airport, field observations and informal conversations, and is combined with written material, mostly from the professional journal *Dansk Politi*. The fieldwork on which this article builds is part of a larger fieldwork which also included interviews and participant observation with other border officials who enforce state borders in the realm of the European Union, specifically in relation to Schengen regulations and legislation. I conducted fieldwork with Danish Police at the Danish-German border and with the EU border assistance mission (EUBAM) at the Moldovan-Ukrainian border. The entirety of the material consists of interviews with border officials and experts, participant observations of their diverse working situations, and analyses of internal documents, reports, promotional publications, archival material, and news articles.

My choice of methods, interviewing and shadowing everyday work routines, has been guided by an interest in finding analytical pathways into exploring the processes of standardization and coordination of border procedures, that followed the legislative harmonization of border and asylum procedures in the European Union and neighbouring countries in the twenty-first century. During fieldwork, I have been particularly attuned to capture the border officials' everyday conceptualizations of the task of ensuring safe and efficient borders. In other words, I have explored how official prescriptions to ensure safe and efficient borders come to matter amongst border officials. The entirety of the fieldwork material has informed my questions and concerns in this article,

even though this article is only explicitly concerned with matters at Copenhagen Airport.

State Borders and Their Changing Significance in Europe

In a Scandinavian context, the shortcomings of the EU-Schengen and asylum system became clear to a wider public during the refugee arrivals of 2015 and 2016, when hundreds of thousands of Syrian citizens were fleeing a civil war which had left their country devastated. As these refugees moved north through Europe, so did certain insoluble problems, which exposed a European border and asylum policy that had severe legal, moral, and logistical shortcomings (Hess et al. 2016; Staaf, Nilsson & Åkerman 2017). The authorities' struggles made it obvious that the situation could not be resolved within the constraints of current national or European legislation. In order to counteract the unprecedented pressure on asylum, immigration, and police authorities – and the logistical and political chaos that resulted from the refugee crisis – a number of EU-Schengen member states, including Norway, Sweden and Denmark – introduced temporary border controls, thereby compromising what had been a cornerstone in the Schengen cooperation: the right to free movement of people and goods. The reintroduction of border control was a clear break with the ideals of free mobility and was a solution that for long had seemed to be a highly controversial and almost unthinkable move to make.

This article speaks to this breakdown of the Schengen cooperation, although without being directly concerned with

the events of 2015 and 2016 and the reintroduction of border control (for a study of the reintroduction of border control at the Danish-German border, see Paulin Kristensen 2020). Rather, the article approaches the shortcomings of the EU border and asylum system by studying border officials' emotional responses to border enforcement procedures and their difficulties of ensuring safe and efficient border control within the Schengen system; difficulties which date back as far as 2013, and which performs a profound criticism of the Schengen-way of constructing borders altogether.

In his account of the Schengen Agreement as a hallmark of past decades' transformation of borders within the European Union, the social scientist William Walters writes, "Westphalia, Vienna, Versailles, Potsdam, Maastricht ... if the history of Europe's formation as, and within, a space of territories, sovereignties, economies, and cultures can be evoked in terms of such symbolic place names then perhaps we can add to that series the name of Schengen" (Walters 2002:561). He thereby underlines the symbolic and transformative role that altering the European state borders has played. The development of the Schengen Area was the culmination of a post-World War II integration of European countries; and launched a post-Cold War era in which a goal to overcome the European continent's divides was advanced by harmonizing policies and security and economic measures (*ibid.*). The Schengen Agreement initially developed through the 1980s and 1990s with Germany, France, and the Benelux countries as the primary drivers at the intersection between visions of post-nationalism, liberal-

ism, and regionalism (Zaiotti 2011). In March 2001, the Schengen Agreement began its implementation in the Nordic countries Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and Finland. By 2004, the Schengen Area was expanded to include a range of former Warsaw Pact countries, including Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and the three Baltic states, covering a total of 27 countries in 2007, excluding some EU countries (e.g. United Kingdom and Ireland), while encompassing non-EU member states (e.g. Norway and Iceland). At the end of the 2000s, the Schengen area had thus grown considerably and had become one of the most tangible successes of the European cooperation.

Emphasizing the right to free movement (i.e., of people and goods) in exchange for the political promise of secure external borders, the Schengen Area was designed as a space that would be exempt from the border control of passenger and transport vehicles. The agreement accelerated the mobility of people and goods amongst EU member states, and in terms of border enforcement, it paved the way for the reorganization of procedures regarding customs, border control, and criminal investigation (Schwell 2008; Casella Colombeau 2017). This reorganization led to a range of diverse transformational processes that impacted the participating countries symbolically, legally, and materially. The removal of border enforcement from the international borderlines also relocated the border procedures to other locations within and beyond the EU-Schengen territories, and this process involved a range of new methods (Follis 2012; Kristensen 2016). In the official vo-

cabulary, the territorial national border was replaced by a de-territorialized, intelligent border, which instead of stopping, searching, and slowing down traffic, promised smooth mobility and high-level security at the same time. In other words, the rhetoric of the open borders promised to strengthen police cooperation among EU member states and to strictly enforce the external borders of the European Union, in order to ensure that within the Schengen area, only efficient and *bona fide* travel would take place (Frontex 2014).

In official discourse, the intensified cooperation on border procedures was celebrated as the unification of a divided Europe, and the European Union was even awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012 for its success in overcoming the twentieth-century divides of the continent through enlargement and harmonization processes. However, the border alterings of the European Union were also criticized from the beginning for building a wall around the rich and prosperous west, leaving only illegal pathways to the continent open for anyone without the proper passport (Snyder & Andreas 2001; Balibar 2004). The promise to ensure efficient and smooth travel *and* strong external borders proved more difficult than expected, at least within the bounds of liberal democracy and the rule of law, and for many commentators the promise of open borders turned into the nightmare of failed neo-liberal politics, which tried to combine inclusive and exclusive policies, which led to casualties, an illegalized labour market, and overcrowded asylum centres (Andersson 2014).

Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Europe's Borders

Before I turn to the analysis, I will provide a short introduction to research on the borders of the European Union, both internationally and in a Scandinavian context, and show how I am concerned with bridging the two. I will argue that international research, much focused on the neo-liberal and dehumanizing aspects of the border and asylum system, can benefit from analytical approaches developed by ethnologists who emphasize the multiplicity and ambiguity of borders.

Over the past two decades, scholars and activists have critically scrutinized and critically called out the combination of open, internal borders and closed, external borders for creating inequality, for producing illegalized subjects, and for creating a spiralling effect of militarization at the borders (e.g. Tsianos & Karakayali 2010; Hess 2012; Lemberg-Pedersen 2013; De Genova 2017). Scholars and activists have argued that the inequality, the illegalization, and the militarization violate the European Union's humanitarian obligations to adhere to the Human Rights convention, to which the union itself is committed in several ways (e.g. Charter for European Rights from 2000). Scholars have for instance forcefully shown how the current system of border control deeply challenges European liberal democracy by violating the responsibility to ensure asylum and the right to protect lives at sea (e.g. Gammeltoft-Hansen 2011; Vaughan-Williams 2015; Follis 2015; Pallister-Wilkens 2015, Mainwaring 2019).

Taken together, this scholarship suggests that the borders of the European Union – and the movements that the bor-

ders seek to control – cannot be adequately grasped by simply pointing to a dichotomy between inside and outside, or by examining a release of control within the European Union at the expense of strengthening the external borders (Andersen and Sandberg 2012:2–3). To classify and map the complex practices of twenty-first-century borders, many scholars reject the term “border” as a suitable term. Instead, they suggest concepts such as *border regime* (cf. De Genova 2017; Hess & Kasparek 2017a, 2017b) or *border-scapes* (Lemberg-Pedersen 2013; Brambilla 2014; Wagner Tsoni 2019), which emphasize that borders in a post-Cold War, globalized world work through networks, zones, and filtering mechanisms. To paraphrase William Walters, European borders have been constructed as a sort of *firewall* that meticulously filters those who can enter and those who cannot (Walters 2006). Other scholars have discussed how the borders of the European Union reach both well within and far beyond the territories of Schengen, for instance by attending to processes of externalizing border enforcement to neighbouring countries (Bialasiewicz 2011; Jansen 2009), outsourcing to private companies (Lemberg-Pedersen 2013), and the integration of border enforcement into other realms of migration policies, such as language and marriage policies (Gutekunst 2018).

In a Scandinavian ethnological context, the study of borders is closely intertwined with discussions of state, national identity and migratory and refugee practices (see Povrzanović Frykman 2001; Bendixsen et al. 2013; Linde-Laursen 2016). Among others, the Swedish ethnologists Fredrik

Nilsson, Orvar Löfgren, and Tom O’Dell have studied the making of the Öresund region, as an example *par excellence* of the withering importance of state borders, and a turn to the European Union’s emphasis on the strengthening of border-crossing regions (O’Dell 2003; Nilsson & Löfgren 2010).

Turning my interest towards the everyday handling and maintaining of physical state borders, I am also inspired by ethnologists who have developed a performative approach to borders (e.g. Sandberg 2009ab; Andersen 2012; Lundin & Nilsson 2015). Fredrik Nilsson and Johan A. Lundin’s study of liquor smuggling at sea between Denmark and Sweden in the 1920s and 1930s illustrates how bordering was a complex, heterogeneous, socio-material network that brought together smugglers, customs authorities, vessels, speed, darkness, and technology (Lundin & Nilsson 2015). The authors thereby show how “the border” as a concept is inherently multiple, networked, and performative – and thus underline that complexity is not merely a trait of present-day borders. A historically informed study such as Nilsson and Lundin’s thus holds the potential to oppose the understanding of a present as more complex and interconnected than a static past. This is a very important message to send to a field of studies which tend to paint a picture of a development from “simple, national borders” to “complex, global borders” (O’Dowd 2009).

In their work on borders, the ethnologists Marie Sandberg and Dorte Andersen have emphasized the multiplicity of borders, by devoting their studies to analytically show how divergent notions of the

border align, collide, and co-exist (Sandberg 2009ab; Andersen 2012; Andersen & Sandberg 2012). They thereby emphasize the critical importance of grasping the border in the multiple simultaneity rather than in its singular entirety.

Another strand of Scandinavian research on borders arose in the wake of refugee arrivals in the mid-2010s, and study the myriad of civil society initiatives that arose all over Europe in order to accommodate, help, and welcome refugees illegalized by the current European border and asylum system (Staafl, Nilsson & Åkerman 2017; Sandberg & Andersen 2020). The research shows how voluntary initiatives all participate in the reorganization or redefinition of categories such as “legal” and “illegal”, and thereby question the role of borders in Europe. Further, the studies show how the enforcement of borders stirs a range of emotional responses among European citizens; from fear and anxiety to feelings of a responsibility to act and to accommodate. In the analysis, I also delve into the emotional responses of police officers by drawing on work by the anthropologists Yael Navaro-Yashin (2002) and Katerina Rozakou (2017), who both work with emotional responses to state practices.

The contributions to border studies that I build on, emphasize the multiplicity and ambiguity of borders, and thereby contribute important pathways for developing critical analysis of borders in a European context; pathways left unattended in international research on borders. Where much international research tries to capture the workings of current EU border and asylum system under one concept, such as a *border regime* (e.g. Hess 2012; De Geno-

va 2017), I suggest an emphasis on the multiplicity of borders within the EU border and asylum system. By doing so, I wish to bring critical nuance to the representation of an all-encompassing neo-liberal border system, and to encourage further research to nurture the skill of analytically capturing differences and simultaneities rather than conflating differences and contradictions into one concept. It was thus with these conceptual concerns in mind that I embarked on my study of borders in Europe, and I bring them together with the international interest in scrutinizing the current EU border and asylum system.

In the next section, I will return to the analysis of the frustrated police officers at Copenhagen Airport with the aim of showing how, in the dispute about the level of control at the airport, there was indeed a multiplicity of borders.

Frustration: “Copenhagen Airport as a Gateway for Illegal Migration”

The claims put forward by the “frustrated police officers” in *Dansk Politi* articles that I quoted at the beginning of this article involved questions of decency and fairness, about professionalism and the level of adherence to regulations, and about the unsustainable conditions under which the police officers believed they were working. The claims suggested that there was a growing distrust both in the current system and in the management’s handling of the system’s insufficiencies, namely, that too many people could illegally cross the border.

Copenhagen Airport is the largest airport in Scandinavia and serves as a hub for not only Denmark and the Greater Copen-

hagen area, but also for the Southern Sweden region. In my fieldwork I identified three conditions which framed the working conditions in the airport concerning border control. The first condition was an increased professionalization alongside cutbacks. A second condition was the fact that the airport is a site for both border and non-border legislation in the sense that the distinction between *internal* and *external* borders is a cornerstone in the Schengen cooperation, and each of these border types comes with its designated regulations, guidelines, procedures, and vocabularies. The external borders are sites for border control because they are entry points into the Schengen Area. Internal borders (i.e. flight arrivals from other Schengen member countries) are not sites of border control, which means that only spot-checks of selected passengers based on specific, intelligence-based suspicion can be carried out. Finally, police officers also had to consider the commercial interest of the airport company to ensure quick and easy travel for all passengers. Prescriptions of efficiency were not merely commercial, however; efficiency is also a core characteristic of the EU-Schengen ideal of borders, which emphasizes precisely the simultaneity of efficient, smooth borders which enable travel and trade, while also combatting crime and illegal migration (Frontex 2015). It was in the midst of these complicated and contradictory working conditions that the police officers had sounded the alarm and claimed that the airport was “a gateway for illegal entries into the Nordic countries”.

When I entered the airport as a fieldworker in 2015, the level of quality was

still a topic of concern among police employees and management at the airport. In the following I look into two incidents in which these concerns came to matter through expressions of cynicism and anger.

Cynicism: “They Have an Open House at the Airport”

As I was granted access to follow work routines at Copenhagen Airport, a reorganization of border control procedures was being implemented: in order to relieve pressure on police employees at the airport, the management decided to employ non-police staff. With Norway as a role model, Danish police started to train non-police as border guards specifically for passport control at Copenhagen Airport, controlling travel between Denmark and non-Schengen destinations. The introduction of this new staff at the airport was the result of various but coinciding calls to use resources more efficiently, and was intertwined in a number of developments such as the increased work pressure due to the expansion of the airport and the number of passengers, requirements to adhere to certain standards of control and investigation vis-à-vis the Schengen regulations, the past years’ reductions in personnel and, more broadly, the process of introducing other professions into the Danish police force, which had traditionally been comprised of police and attorneys. As part of the general transformation of the police from an emergency-prepared unit to a public law-enforcement agency, academics, accountants, communications staff, and other professions had been employed by the organization in order to perform jobs and solve problems that were previ-

ously only handled by police-trained staff (Stevnsborg 2018).

The new group of non-police-trained staff at the airport was introduced to perform passport control at the booths that physically separate the Schengen areas from the non-Schengen areas. In the vocabulary of the Schengen border codex, the work in the passport control booth is referred to as “first-line passport control” and is ideally complemented by “second-line passport control”, which offers an opportunity to further investigate passengers and their documents, according to the Schengen Borders Code. This distinction between the two kinds of control at the external border was the point of departure for resource allocation and the distribution of tasks in the process of integrating the new staff into the police unit at the airport. In the following, I will show how the ideal of having sufficient resources to carry out both first- and second-line border control was ridiculed among police officers.

The training of the new passport-control staff took place at the Danish Police Academy. It lasted for eight weeks and was followed by exams in all subjects. The course consisted of a variety of modules that covered topics such as Schengen regulations, ethics, interview techniques, social science and geography, and first aid. There were no educational requirements to apply for the job as staff in the first-line of passport control. Most of the prospective passport-control staff whom I met had some sort of previous connection to either the travel or the aviation industry. Some had worked as administrative staff at embassies; quite a few had been flight attendants or sales staff for airlines, which

meant that they knew about the daily work at an airport and the kinds of situations that can occur between passengers, staff, security, and police authorities in the context of aviation.

Again, the journal *Dansk Politi* covered the events. The introduction of new administrative staff at the airport’s passport-control booths was described in terms of resource allocation, and they wrote: “Five administrative staff members have completed eight weeks of training in document-handling and are now ready to take their seats in the passport-control booths. This is meant to relieve the police, giving them time to concentrate on second-line work” (*Dansk Politi* 2015a). The article continued, quoting a superior officer who said: “When we start to consistently work with second-line, our professional satisfaction will increase.” However, he also touched upon the possibility that this new initiative might not be as successful as promised, adding: “We are hoping that this does not mean a reduction in police because then the goal would not be to strengthen; it would just leave us at status quo, and that was not the intention of hiring non-police” (*ibid.*).

The hopeful (yet doubtful) attitude that the police intendant conveyed, also appeared in the course of the training sessions, in which I participated, including the module “Border checks and control of visa/residence permit in first-line: workflow, examination of documents, and stamping”, which covered a wide array of techniques and procedures related to the work in first-line border control: from profiling techniques, the differences between forged and false documents, information on situations where one should or should

not stamp a passport, complicated quizzes about residence-permit rules and exceptions to the rules, and the use of databases. The first-line passport-control staff were brought in to assist the overburdened police at the airport, and the logic of this solution was that it would allow the police more time to perform the much-coveted second-line investigation and case-processing work, and thus ensure a higher level of border control than what was currently the case. However, during the training course for the new staff, the textbook understanding of the Schengen system's division of first- and second-line control was both presented as an ideal and ridiculed as impossible.

In addition to being introduced to the regulations, the profiling and interview techniques, the new staffers also had to be initiated into the "cynicism" of the police force. Through the training of the new first-line staff, then, a sort of contradiction played out. On the one hand, in the courses that were taught by police who worked at the airport themselves, this first- and second-line border control was celebrated as state-of-the-art border control and as the goal for which to strive. On the other hand, it seemed clear to everyone (instructors and class participants alike) that the division between "first" and "second" line was just a textbook understanding of how police and border work could actually be performed, and that the level of control at the airport would still not be satisfactory, even with the introduction of the new staff. Furthermore, the police who mocked the system would also defend it to the new staff and reassure them that they were about to perform an important job – *as if* the border procedures made sense.

This "*as if*" I borrow from the anthropologist Yael Navaro-Yashin, who in her analysis of the complex relationships between citizens and a corrupt Turkish state apparatus, argues that citizens keep acting *as if* their state was a reliable and predictable entity, even if they know by experience that the state system is deeply corrupt (Navaro-Yashin 2002:161–163). Navaro-Yashin shows that even if the citizens are highly cynical towards the idea of the state as well-functioning, they continue to address it as a non-corrupt state and to expect the state to act stately. Thereby, they uphold the very notion of a state as something that can actually be coherent or just (ibid.). Even if the empirical conditions differ, something similar was at play among Danish police officers in the airport. The officers were also highly cynical about the idea of ever being able to be able to perform the EU textbook definition of border, and in that sense, they were cynically laughing at the EU-Schengen border and its promises of ensuring smooth and efficient transition, while combatting crime and illegal migration. However, they were also trying daily to uphold the system, acting *as if* the textbook definitions were within reach, and as I will emphasize in the following, they did not laugh at the notion of the *border* as such.

Anger: "This is What 'Familien Danmark' Does Not Like"

According to the EU-Schengen regulations developed by the EU's agency for external borders, Frontex, the police officers had to complete a two-week course in *second-line* border control, which had been developed by the National Border Control Unit in accordance with Frontex

guidelines for training curricula. The overall goal of the course was to ensure the quality of border control through compliance with the Schengen border code of conduct. In this section of the analysis, I show how an alternative imaginary of the border played out at such a course for police officers working second-line border control, and how this paradoxically led to a questioning of the rules and regulations of the state itself.

Similar to the training sessions of the non-police that I described above, the police attending this course also joked about the standards, procedures, and regulations; the standards and procedures that were taught at the courses were perceived as a mockery when compared to their lived experience of the working conditions at the airport. Their criticism was ironically summarized in an anecdotal recounting of what a conversation with the management could sound like: “You cannot say this to the press.” “But it’s true.” “Yes, but leave it up to us.” “Will you say it, then?” “No.” “Then who will?” However, even though some of the courses contained a light-hearted atmosphere with jokes about the state of the system, the officers’ frustration with the current situation also led to discussions about the sense of the system, and what was perceived as a waste of (scarce) resources.

The seriousness became evident during a session about border control and fundamental rights in which the course’s external instructor clashed with the course participants (fieldwork observation December 2015):

“His face was all red when he left the classroom,” noted one police officer as a new class

was about to begin. “Well, I think he’s biased; he’s not a neutral party because he has an interest in attracting as many refugees as possible,” another replied.

The police officers were referring to an incident during the previous lecture in which a representative from a Danish NGO for asylum seekers’ rights had been invited to speak about fundamental rights. The lecture was part of a compulsory two-week course for police officers who work at the external borders of Schengen at Copenhagen Airport. However, before the NGO representative even got very far with his prepared presentation, he was interrupted with critical questions regarding the NGO’s involvement in police work and its motives for working with the police. Eventually, what was intended to be a lecture on the fundamental rights of asylum seekers ended up as a heated discussion of the legitimacy of asylum claims and a debate about the system for processing them.

The NGO representative began his presentation by proudly describing the cooperation between the NGO and the Danish Police in the return operations of rejected asylum seekers. However, soon after he began talking, a police officer interrupted him: “You guys are so biased!” the officer exclaimed, and a heated discussion about the true purpose of the NGO followed: was it to attract as many asylum seekers as possible, as the police officer claimed, or to ensure the rights of asylum seekers, as the NGO representative claimed? During this discussion, the police officer contended that he was confronted on a daily basis with asylum seekers who lied to his face, whereas the representative insisted that the officer could

not know whether they were lying before their case had been processed. He instructed the police officer that, under the rule of law, asylum seekers have the right to have their claims processed. Another police officer contended that anyone can claim that they are in danger of being persecuted if returned to their country of origin, and another objected, "This is what 'Familien Danmark' doesn't like.", indicating that the system led to the loss of confidence among 'Familien Danmark', an idiom for the general Danish population.

The NGO representative strongly objected to this, insisting that the asylum-processing authorities know whether claims are true or false; the UN conducts fact-finding missions that form the basis for decisions regarding asylum cases, and he emphasized that the cases always include various kinds of information and are not merely based on the statements of the asylum seekers. The representative specified that the NGO did not encourage asylum seekers to cheat, lie, or steal, but simply worked to ensure that their rights as asylum seekers are respected. He reminded the police officers that Denmark is bound to human rights conventions regarding the right to protection, and he insisted that, regardless of whether or not the police officers agreed, it remained their job to comply with these conventions.

The entire dispute made for a very peculiar experience: a group of police officers were agitatedly fighting with a representative from an asylum seekers' rights organization about the "rule of law". Some police officers in the classroom seemed to be questioning the sense of the border system, while in a surprising twist,

the NGO representative assumed the role of an advocate for the current system, insisting on the reliability of fact-finding missions and asylum case-processing procedures. Pointing to inconsistencies, some of the police officers claimed to be safeguarding the interests of "Familien Danmark". The class participants frowned upon what they referred to as "asylum shoppers"; i.e., people who registered as asylum seekers in multiple EU member states, which meant they could not be turned away at the border, but had to go through resource-demanding processing in both the police and the asylum systems. In that sense, the officers were questioning whether a border that allows people through before deciding whether or not they can stay is even a desirable border. As the disagreement in the classroom demonstrated, they were tired of being ridiculed by bogus asylum seekers "lying to their faces", especially when *they* were the ones who cared about the state and the well-being of "Familien Danmark". As such, they were what Navaro-Yashin has called more "statist than the state" (Navaro-Yashin 2002:165), insofar as being "statist" means expecting a system to be able to catch all, a system to be all-encompassing, and expecting the state to be able to fully manage its borders. For the context of this article, I find the disagreement particularly interesting inasmuch as it makes visible how the frustration with current incompatibles and insufficiencies led to an anger which paved the way for the articulation of a need for a simpler border: a border which could be sealed off by drawing on a sense of justice rather than a system of justice.

Expectations, Deviations and the Feeling of Abandonment

Research on state officials has indeed pointed to the discrepancy between expectation and the practically possible. In his classic definition of “street-level bureaucrats”, Michael Lipsky explains that some of the main conditions of public street-level bureaucrats are chronic lack of resources, a higher demand than can be accommodated, and weak or contradictory expectations (Lipsky 1980). In his classic text on the sociality of bureaucracy, the anthropologist Michael Herzfeld argues that complaining about the insufficiencies of state employees, and the complains of the state employees seem to be part of the social fabric of bureaucracy (Herzfeld 1992). Furthermore, in the anthropologist Colin Hoag’s studies of bureaucracy, the discrepancies between expectation and the practically viable are understood as pertaining to the powerful imaginary of bureaucracy. Hoag asserts that bureaucracies are *aspirations* for order and completeness; aspirations which are nevertheless powerful in appearing as *prescriptions* of order and completeness (Hoag 2011). As a consequence of the conflation between aspiration and prescription, practitioners and clients often come to interpret deviations from the ideal as a lack or a mistake (ibid.:82).

The anthropologist Katerina Rozakou has recently studied the feelings of lack or mistakes in relation to the bureaucracy of the European border. In her study of the non-registration of asylum seekers in Lesbos, Greece, she argues that the Greek border guards cling on to a fantasy about the regularity of bureaucracy, even in the midst of chaos and non-regular bureau-

cratic procedures (2017). Rozakou shows that, in the case of Lesbos in the mid 2010s, irregularity in bureaucratic practices was becoming far more prevalent than regular bureaucratic practices. All of the agents involved, however, remained loyal to the fantasy of an ideal-type bureaucracy, for instance by continuing to register asylum seekers, even if the registration process was full of mistakes and irregularities. Rozakou shows that the Greek Ministry of Immigration instructed the Greek border guards to continue to register refugees even if the registration practices could not be carried out in accordance with regulations. The ministry did this to avoid refugees getting stuck on the island: by continuing the flawed registration of the refugees as asylum seekers, they were provided with paper that could ensure that their movement through Europe was not halted (ibid.:37). Rozakou argues however that even as the border police was involved in the irregular registration practices, a fantasy of the regularity of bureaucracy was persistent among them. As the representatives of the ministry seemed to opt for the facilitation of movement of refugees through the continent rather than the facilitation of regular bureaucracy, the border officials felt abandoned by the state (ibid.:42).

The fact that the irregularity of bureaucracy can lead to the feeling of being abandoned is something I also encountered in my work, and showed in the above analysis. I thus follow Rozakou’s argument, but by using the lens of multiplicity, I want to emphasize that the dissatisfaction and feeling of abandonment among Danish police officers can be understood as the co-existence of alternative

border imaginaries. To underline my point, in the next and final part of the analysis I will return to the 2013 dispute in the journal *Dansk Politi*.

The Emotional Responses as More Than a Misunderstanding

During the months following the allegations in *Dansk Politi* in 2013, the controversy about the quality of the level of control at the airport travelled to national media and television. In the Danish national television show *Deadline*, a management representative kept repeating the same message again and again: the level of control at Copenhagen Airport is in accordance with EU-Schengen regulations, and we are not allowed to carry out systematic checks on flights from other EU-Schengen airports (*Deadline*, 2013). Meanwhile, the journalist interviewing him tried to shake him by pointing to the number of illegal immigrants entering Denmark and Sweden, a matter which the management representative would not comment on, since – in the European Union border vocabulary – it did not concern regulations on *border procedures* but on *immigration control*.

A similar discrepancy in conversion could be detected in a committee consultation in the Danish Parliament in November 2013, in which the then Minister of Justice had been called into meeting by the opposition, specifically including the Danish People's Party, who are EU and Schengen sceptics, in order to explain the level of control at Copenhagen Airport. Reading from the papers his civil servants had written for him, the minister kept repeating the regulations and rules of the EU-Schengen: the police at Copenhagen

Airport are not allowed to carry out border control at internal Schengen borders; the police at the airport systematically carry out border procedures at the external borders of the EU-Schengen Area. Meanwhile, the opposition politicians kept pointing to the number of illegal immigrants entering through the airports, insisting that this could not be interpreted as satisfactory (www.folketinget.dk 2013). In the television news show as well as in the video-recorded committee consultation, the two discussion partners seemed to have a hard time understanding each other's point of view. By returning to the controversy between police officers and management at the airport, I will argue that the reason for this was that they were not talking about the same thing; or in other words: they were not talking about the same kind of border.

The Multiple Border Imaginaries at the Airport

In response to the harsh criticism of the employees, who claimed that they were told to “turn a blind eye” to illegal migration, the management of the police unit at the airport did not acknowledge the criticism, and under the headline “Unfair article in ‘Dansk Politi’” (*Dansk Politi* 2013b), they brushed aside the criticism by pointing to technicalities:

Copenhagen Police adheres to the current regulations: we are not allowed to routinely check passengers arriving from other Schengen countries. It is as simple as that. We are allowed to perform [immigration control] based on a concrete suspicion that a passenger on board is carrying out an illegal activity – document fraud, human trafficking, or other things (ibid.).

The above quotation from the management, who fought back at the police of-

officers' allegations, indicates that the lack of resources was refuted by the management, who claimed that the police officers had misunderstood the purpose of the border control. So, the management did not acknowledge the criticism that police officers brought forth; quite the contrary, the management made it clear that all regulations and obligations were indeed met in the airport at Kastrup. The management even went so far as to lecture the police officers on the actual purpose and methods of the border control they were employed to enforce by emphasizing the difference between immigration control regulations at internal borders and border control procedures at the external borders of the EU-Schengen area. However, this answer did not respond to the criticism of the low level of quality at the airport. Rather, the police officers maintained their dissatisfaction.

I will however argue that the controversy between employees and management (patterns of disagreement which were repeated in national media and in the committee consultation) was not a simple question of a misunderstanding in which the repetition of rules and regulations could put an end to the frustration of the officers who had complained. Quite the opposite, I argue that this controversy shows that the police officers voicing the criticism had not in fact misunderstood the EU-Schengen regulations – they were indeed aware of the difference between border control (conducted at the *external border of Schengen*) and immigration control (conducted at the internal borders of the Schengen) – however, they were not convinced by that particular form of border

ing of what a border should be able to do – that is, seal off illegal travel.

In a similar vein to Rozakou's analysis of the disappointed Greek border officials, the Danish managers' response thus left the Danish police officers feeling abandoned by a management who were supposed to be the ones ensuring the regularity and quality of the border. However, the kind of border that the frustrated police officers were trying to defend was not the same kind of border that the EU-Schengen system was built on, and as such, within the vocabulary and framework of the EU-Schengen system, the criticism of the border officials could not be heard. This, however, did not make police officers lose faith in the notion of the border *as such*; rather it reinforced their frustrations with the current system in which the border could not be properly enforced according to their understanding of a border.

Frustration, Cynicism, and Anger: Emotional Responses to the Border's Insufficiencies

As is evident from the above analysis, the claims of the low-quality control at the airport were intertwined with a range of emotional responses from the police officers. The insufficiencies and incompatibilities of the current border system led to frustration and a feeling of abandonment among officers, but also to jokes and cynicism, which helped officers carry on, even if they knew that the border control they could offer was far from the textbook definitions and ideals. Finally, the system's incompatibilities also led to feelings of anger as the heated debate between the NGO representative and the police officers indi-

cated. In the emotional responses that came with the complaints of the supposedly low-quality control at the airport, I have located an alternative border imaginary, which thrives on the idea that *if* more resources were allocated, *if* resources were properly spent, then mistakes, inconsistencies, and violations of the law could be avoided.

However, I would like to stress that my intention has not been to paint a picture of an entire police station completely apathetic or turning their backs on liberal democracy or Human Rights conventions. This I have no grounds to claim. I do, however, wish to take seriously the ever-present dissatisfaction which I continuously met in my encounters with the police working at Copenhagen Airport, and which I argue were indicative of the co-existence of diverse manifestations of the border (cf. Andersen & Sandberg 2012).

Furthermore, emotional responses to border enforcement are indeed not restricted to police officers. Rather, the enforcement of European borders preoccupies a broader public, and intertwines discussions about state, nation, and identity. Just as volunteer initiatives supporting the idea of open borders and solidarity emerge in response to the insufficiencies of the European border and asylum system (Staaf, Nilsson & Åkerman 2017), so does the fantasy of a sealable border. This makes research into the role, capacity, and possibilities of European borders so pertinent.

Conclusion

With this analysis, I have been engaged in a critical project of multiplying the border (Andersen & Sandberg 2012). I have at-

tempted to add to the research on the current EU border and asylum system, which is often defined as a “border regime” (Hess 2012; Casas-Cortés 2015; De Genova 2017) by highlighting how different imaginaries of the border coexist and intertwine as in the case at the airport, where the claims of police officers were rebutted by the management. By being attuned to capture not only the dominant, but also emergent understandings of the border, the article thus adds to the larger body of research which stresses the importance of rethinking the current border and asylum policies in order to strengthen European liberal democracy.

The article proceeded from the claims of low-quality control at Copenhagen Airport put forward by frustrated police officers. To the police officers, the regulations and standards of the EU border and asylum system seemed unattainable in everyday border procedures. I therefore emphasized how the insufficiencies of the current border and asylum system led to frustration, cynicism, and anger among the officers. Their emotional responses seemed to go hand in hand with a longing for a simpler, sealable border. An imaginary of a border which laughs cynically at the idea of EU-Schengen standards as attainable, and which even provokes fantasies about turning its back on conventions and rules of law, thus seemed to grow in the ruins of the European border and asylum system.

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Miss Hare Struggles

How Examples of Species Threatened with Extinction Tell a Story of Climate Change

By Marit Ruge Bjærke

The rapidly increasing pace of biodiversity loss is considered one of the major environmental threats in the world today (UN Environment 2019; Cardinale et al. 2012). Although species have always gone extinct and new species have succeeded them, estimates now show the extinction rate to be much higher than the rate at which new species develop (Chivian & Bernstein 2008; De Vos et al. 2015; Ceballos et al. 2015), and some scientists even contend that we are in the middle of an ongoing mass extinction, although there is as yet no scientific consensus about this (UN Environment 2019: 144, 154).

Two of the obstacles when communicating environmental problems such as climate change and biodiversity loss are the fact that they often happen over long periods of time, and that they necessitate action before the effects can be seen (Adam 1998:8–10; Doyle 2011:4). One way of making environmental problems visible and meaningful is to present them through examples (Kverndokk & Bjærke 2019). Examples can be defined as particular instances presented to support a general statement. They are fact-based snippets of reality placed into an argument to illustrate or to persuade. However, although the examples are seen as pointing towards reality, they are always artificially selected, and this also means that they are “cut out” so that they represent only some part of what they are (Lyons 1989: 33). Thus, examples contain numerous potential interpretations and connotations which, by association, are brought into the texts where they are used.

People’s perception of the temporal and spatial scales of environmental problems

influence both their understanding of the relevance of the problem and what they are willing to do about them. Escobar (1998) has highlighted biodiversity as a construction that is produced, negotiated, and maintained through networks of sites and actors. My contention is that the choice of which species to include as examples in texts on biodiversity loss is one important way in which different conceptions of this environmental problem are produced and reproduced. Both the choice of particular species and the understandings of temporal and spatial scales that are conveyed with the help of these examples affect how biodiversity loss is understood and made meaningful. In this article,¹ I therefore study the use of redlisted species as examples in newspaper articles on biodiversity loss, and investigate the ways in which these examples make biodiversity loss temporally, spatially and culturally meaningful (cf. Doyle 2011:8). Through their inherent excess of meaning, brought into the text by association, the examples contribute to specific understandings of the relationship between different environmental problems, particular conceptions of the present and future, and to the idea that some environmental problems are of a global nature, while others are local and secondary.

The material used in this study comes from Norwegian newspapers. Although Norway is a small country, it has played an active role in environmental policy since establishing the world’s first Ministry of Environmental Protection in 1972, being among the first countries to ratify the Paris agreement in 2015 as well as contributing positively to international negotiations on marine protection and pollu-

tion (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2011: 97–99). The national climate policy is ambitious, and the question of climate change is characterized by political consensus (Båtstrand 2014). At the same time, Norway is a large oil and gas provider with a high per capita carbon footprint, and according to the OECD it has difficulties implementing national goals regarding biodiversity, for instance with regard to forest protection, aquaculture, and especially the protection of large carnivores (OECD 2011:142). The duality between Norway's active role in international environmental policy-making and the country's position as an important supplier of oil and gas makes it particularly interesting to study how Norwegian newspapers present biodiversity loss.

Example Rhetoric, Exemplarity, and Time

The examples of threatened species that are included in newspaper articles on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* are the main objects of this study. According to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the example (*paradeigma*) is one of the two forms of logical persuasion used in rhetoric. Aristotle calls the example a rhetorical induction, that is, an argument based on a number of similar cases (Aristotle *Rhetoric*: chapter 2). The popular media today use examples for the same reasons that Aristotle used them; to illustrate a point, to explain something, and, first and foremost, to persuade someone. In the case of the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, this would mean mentioning one or several species from the list, to illustrate that biodiversity loss is going on.

As stated in the introduction, examples are particular instances chosen among a range of possible cases to represent a general statement. The general statement, however, only accounts for a limited aspect of the particular instance, and this means that the example contains an excess of meaning which is brought into the text by association (Lyons 1989:33–34). At the same time, the particular nature of the example that was chosen also influences the general statement, threatening to make it less general than intended. Thus, examples always both exceed and reduce the issue they are meant to illustrate. Examples are at the same time always too much and always too little, and as such, they create a large space for possible interpretations in a text.

Most of the work on examples and exemplarity stems from literary studies of medieval or early modern texts and rhetoric (Scanlon 1994; Lyons 1989). However, the use of examples has also been studied in more recent texts, revealing a tension between the example as a rhetorical figure on one hand and as an epistemic structure on the other (Gelley 1995; Kverndokk 2015:249; Eriksen 2016; Kverndokk & Bjærke 2019). Although examples today are mainly considered rhetorical tools, pointing out of the text and towards reality, they also imply specific ways of thinking. This is partly due to the fact that since antiquity, two different ways of using examples have existed: One where the examples are used inductively to illustrate a tendency or a general statement, and one where the example works as a paradigmatic ideal or a model (Gelley 1995:1–2). Eriksen et al. (2012:13) have remarked that these logics are often entangled, and

they describe how examples, including those that are meant to have an illustrative function, always contain a basic ambivalence between the serial aspect of the example and the uniqueness that made the author of the text choose it. Thus, when specific species from the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* are included in newspaper articles as examples, they do more than just underscore an inductive argument. Their additional characteristics move the text towards specific stories and ways of understanding biodiversity loss, working as models for understanding as well as illustrations. Examples are often seen as pointing towards a common ground between writer and reader outside the written discourse (Lyons 1989:28). As models for understanding, they carry different underlying assumptions about space and time, as well as different conceptions of what and where this common ground is. For instance, are the examples rooted in specific local places, within national or regional boundaries, or do they draw upon ideas of a global environment? Is their authority embedded in the past, in the present, or maybe even in the future?

The relationship between the past, the present and the future is especially multi-layered and difficult to grasp when discussing biodiversity loss. Still, as Adam (1998) and Doyle (2011) have shown, temporalities are important when trying to understand, communicate, and not least do something about environmental problems. Thus, understanding the ways different temporalities play into different understandings of biodiversity loss is of great importance. The concept of biodiversity loss is based on information on various geological and biological time-

scales (Chivian & Bernstein 2008; De Vos et al. 2015; Ceballos et al. 2015), and the temporalities within Red Lists are complex in themselves, as they aim to predict the possibility of a species going extinct in the future, based on present risks and pressures (Henriksen & Hilmo 2015a). The idea of a massive biodiversity loss, however, has never been based solely on scientific knowledge. As Escobar (1998) has established, it is closely linked with politics and environmental values, as well as with expectations of large-scale future consequences. This makes it necessary to juggle even more layers of temporality, historical and cultural as well as biological and geological (Jørstad & Skogen 2010; Heise 2016; Braverman 2017). In recent years, the idea of a mass extinction of species has often been coupled with climate change, presenting climate change as the most important cause of future species extinctions. Thus, the idea of climate change and the idea of a massive loss of biodiversity intertwine, especially when perceived in a long-term perspective. While climate change is predicted to be one of the most important drivers of species extinctions in the future, however, there are several more important drivers today, such as changes in land and sea use and overexploitation (Diaz et al. 2019).

Presenting the 2015 Norwegian Red List for Species

In the science-policy interface, knowledge of potential/future loss of biodiversity is often presented in the shape of Red Lists. Red Lists are lists of species at risk of going extinct. Today, such risk assessments are usually based on the guidelines from the International Union for Conservation

of Nature and natural resources (IUCN), the organization that also provides the global *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* (IUCN 2018). In Norway, the *Norwegian Red List for Species* is compiled by the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre, in co-operation with natural scientists. The *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* is the third version of the list.² It states that more than 20% of Norwegian species are in danger of extinction, while 11% have a high or extremely high risk of going extinct.

When the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre launched the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, they sent a press release to all Norwegian newspapers about a week before the launch date.³ A total of 4,438 species had been placed on the Red List in 2015, and these were subdivided into six categories: Regionally Extinct (RE), Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NT) and Data Deficient (DD). While all species on the Red List are called redlisted species, only species that are classified as Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN) or Vulnerable (VU) are defined as threatened (Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre 2015a). Of the species on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, 2,355 were classified as threatened.

The release of the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* was covered quite extensively in Norwegian national and local newspapers, both on the launch date and during the following weeks. A search in the media-monitoring database Retriever, which covers all Norwegian newspapers and media houses except one, identified 41 articles and op-eds in printed newspa-

pers and 44 articles on different websites (mostly online news articles, op-eds and various press releases) during the five weeks following the release of the new Red List. Many of the articles were, however, relatively short notices based on texts provided by the Norwegian News Agency (Norsk Telegrambyrå, NTB), which is the primary news agency in Norway. Along with the press release and web postings from the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre, I have chosen to close-read the examples of redlisted species in two online newspaper articles from the newspapers *Dagbladet* and *Aftenposten*. Both newspapers were among those that published articles on the new Red List on the launch date, and both presented relatively long articles with several species as examples. The article in *Dagbladet* was about 950 words and the one in *Aftenposten* was just over 1,000 words (Brustad 2015; Mathismoen 2015). Both articles contained mainly news material, but also included several interviews with representatives of environmental NGOs and public authorities. As the second and third largest online newspapers in Norway, *Dagbladet* and *Aftenposten* had about two million readers in total in 2015 (Media-Norway 2018).⁴ They are both daily newspapers with a national scope and distribution. However, the two papers differ in political outlook. While *Aftenposten* is a subscription-based newspaper, politically positioning itself as an independent, centre-right newspaper (Nohrstedt et al. 2000), *Dagbladet* is a left-wing newspaper in tabloid format, sold on newsstands. As online newspapers, they both contain a combination of open access articles and articles that require subscription or payment. The

articles used in this analysis are from the online versions of the two newspaper and had open access.⁵

The press release about the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* from the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre is a typical representative of numerical reasoning, as opposed to narrative reasoning (Hastrup 2013:8–9). It categorizes and presents biodiversity loss in the shape of risk categories, numbers, and percentages of threatened species. The first paragraph goes like this:

Of the 2355 threatened species on the Red List 2015, 241 are critically endangered, 879 endangered and 1235 are vulnerable. 139 species that were placed in the category of Least Concern in 2010 are redlisted this year. At the same time, 414 species have disappeared from the Red List. 1063 species have been assessed for the first time, and 2302 species have changed category.⁶

The press release text contains no stories of individual animals or plants, neither does it mention specific species. When published on the website of the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre, it did, however, contain several photos of plants and animals.⁷ The newspaper articles keep many of the numbers from the original press release, but expand the numerical reasoning with narrative modes of reasoning. Both *Aftenposten* and *Dagbladet* present the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* through a combination of numbers, photos, interviews with people from non-governmental environmental organizations, and examples of species that are on the list (Brustad 2015; Mathis-moen 2015).

In this article, I explore the ways in which specific cultural meanings, temporalities and spatial scales emerge in the

two newspaper texts through the examples of redlisted species they include. I have chosen to do this by first examining all the redlisted species that are used as examples as two series, one for each of the newspaper articles. Then, I turn to what I consider to be the main example species in both articles, namely, the mountain hare (*Lepus timidus*). The choice is based on the length of the presentation of the species, as well as whether it is mentioned in headlines and headlining photos. I analyse this species first as an individual example and then as an exemplar. As an individual example, the species “mountain hare” can be understood as a representative of all the species on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*. As an exemplar, however, the individual mountain hares in the two newspaper articles can be understood to represent all individuals of the same species. The examples are studied primarily with regard to the excess information they bring into the texts and what kinds of common ground they evoke, with a focus on the temporalities, spaces, and cultural understandings of biodiversity loss this excess of meaning points towards. I have chosen to study the examples in the newspaper articles in three different ways – as a series, as an individual and as an exemplar – to highlight that examples bring excess of information into the text in several different ways. Thereby, I also highlight the ambiguity that is always present within the examples themselves.

A Series Is More than its Parts

From among the 4,438 species on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, the *Dagbladet* article mentions a total of five species as examples of redlisted species:

grouse, walrus, polar bear, mountain hare and great yellow bumblebee, as well as a mention of “several species of seal”. The *Aftenposten* article mentions seven species in total: mountain hare, plain dark bee, willow grouse, ptarmigan, eider, long-tailed duck and common scoter, in addition to a mention of “the big four”.⁸ In both articles, the species are used in various combinations, both in the main body of the texts and in lists, fact boxes and subtitles under photos. They are obviously meant to be serial examples, that is, examples in the inductive sense (Gelley 1995:1; Eriksen et al. 2012:12–13). The newspaper articles use the examples to gesture outside the numerically constructed Red List, towards reality, the reality in this case being that certain more or less well-known animals are becoming fewer and fewer. “Dramatic changes in Norwegian nature: Hare and grouse have ended up on the list of endangered animals”, *Aftenposten* journalist Ole Mathis-moen (2015) starts his article. The Red List itself, with its specific criteria and categories, is abstract and largely unknown to most readers, but species like mountain hare and grouse are well known, and thus common ground.

As the Red List contains species with varying degrees of risk/threat assigned to them, one might expect that the examples were all among the most threatened species. However, this seems not to be the case. Of the five species that are used in the *Dagbladet* article, two belong to the Near Threatened category, which is the lowest category on the Red List, two belong to the Vulnerable category, while one is considered Endangered. Neither are the examples in *Aftenposten* among the most

threatened species. Most of them belong to the Near Threatened category, although the plain dark bee is considered Regionally Extinct, while “the big four” are either Critically Endangered (wolf) or Endangered (brown bear, lynx and wolverine).

What the species used as examples in the *Dagbladet* article do have in common, in addition to being on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, is that they are all species threatened by climate change. In the background material for the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, climate change is listed as a pressure on 87 of the threatened species, while changes in land use are a pressure on 2,125 of the threatened species (Henriksen & Hilmo 2015b). The newspaper article mentions that changes in land use are important, but does not provide any examples of animals or plants threatened by such changes in the subchapter “The Habitats Disappear”, where changes in land use are described. As susceptibility to climate change is a feature that all the examples have in common, the excess provided by the series of examples offers a new generalization or a new combination of generalizations to replace the original one: the species on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* are threatened by extinction because of climate change. Although *Dagbladet* cites the Secretary General of the Norwegian environmental organization SABIMA⁹ saying that “climate changes have so far had a fairly small impact on the species population in Norwegian nature”, the examples all point to climate change:

In some places, however, one already sees that a warmer climate has a negative effect on certain species. Many mountain birds are doing badly, including both grouse species. [...]

It is especially the species that are dependent on ice that are threatened by climate changes, according to WWF. One of these is the walrus. The walrus needs ice and is adapted to a cold life in the Arctic. Along with polar bear and several seal species, the walrus is among ice-dependent species struggling because of climate change (Brustad 2015).

Thus, the new generalization fills the space of interpretation provided by the examples, turning the article on biodiversity loss into a story of climate change.

In *Aftenposten*, the series of examples produces another generalization. They are all, with one exception (the plain dark bee), species that are subjected to hunting in Norway:

The four large predators have been threatened by extinction for years. Nevertheless, they are systematically and regularly hunted. But we hunt more threatened animal species in Norway. [...]

Besides eider, the ducks long-tailed duck and scoter, both of which are endangered, are hunted. Long-tailed duck is even threatened with total extinction globally (Mathismoen 2015).

The article has an interview with the Secretary General of the Norwegian Ornithological Association, saying: “Hunting threatened species cannot be accepted. It is not sustainable” (Mathismoen 2015). Hunting, or harvesting, is a pressure on only 28 of the 2,125 threatened species on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*. Still *Aftenposten* uses the series of examples to turn the story of the Red List into a story of hunting. The new generalization provided by the combined excess of all the examples is that hunting is the reason behind the loss of biodiversity.

In addition, several of the species in *Aftenposten* are mentioned as newcomers: “Mountain hare, willow grouse, ptarmigan and eider are newcomers on this

year’s list. All these are species that are hunted.” Even though this does not concern the whole series of species examples, it concerns enough of them to provide a generalization that can be added to the one above: The problem that hunted species end up on the Red List is increasing. The focus on newcomers also seems to indicate to the reader that the changes in the Red List are going on in nature itself, not only in the list.

In both newspaper articles, the examples are rhetorical tools, used in order to point out of the text, towards something both writer and reader are expected to know. This is especially visible when compared to the press release, where the Red List seems to be made up almost solely of numbers. In both articles, however, the combination of examples into a series provides excess of meaning, moving the interpretation of the examples themselves in certain directions. The series of examples induces new conceptions of what being on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* is about. In *Dagbladet*, the story of the Red List becomes a story of climate change. In *Aftenposten*, it becomes a story of hunting.

From Series to Individual

When used inductively, examples depend upon repetition, and both *Dagbladet* and *Aftenposten* base their articles on the presentation of multiple examples. As stated earlier, however, in both newspaper articles the mountain hare (*Lepus timidus*) also function as a single example that stands for many similar cases. In both newspaper articles, a photo of the mountain hare is used as the headlining photo, and the species is discussed both in the

parts of the texts that refer to the new Red List and in the interviews with experts and NGOs.

The mountain hare exists in northern and mountainous parts of Europe and Asia, with isolated populations in Japan and the British Isles. The species is not on the International Red List (Smith & Johnston 2008). It was first placed on the *Norwegian Red List for Species* in 2015, in the category Near Threatened (Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre 2015b). According to the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* fact sheet, the mountain hare inhabits a variety of habitats (forests, semi-natural meadows, moors, fields and cultivated meadows), changes coat from brown in summer to white in winter in areas where snow is regular, and is subject to hunting. A number of factors contribute to the redlisting of the mountain hare: Hunting, competition from local species, predation from local species, pathogens/parasites, climate change and changes in the mountain hare's habitat (Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre 2015b).

The use of the mountain hare as an example that represents many species is most obvious in the *Aftenposten* article. The title of this article is "Hare tider" (Hare times), a pun on "hare" and "hard" in Norwegian, where the words are pronounced in the same way (Mathismoen 2015). Under the headline "Miss Hare struggles" and another photo of a hare (this time a close-up), *Aftenposten* presents the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* in this way:

But now it is also going badly for species that everyone has a relation to. Species that are symbols of Norwegian nature and wilderness, species that characterize folktales and art. And not least,

are central in the Norwegian hunting tradition (Mathismoen 2015).

Although the mountain hare is not the only animal mentioned in connection with this statement, the photos and headlines make it stand out. As part of a series of examples, the article in *Aftenposten* has so far been about the Red List and about hunting threatened animals. In this headline and quotation, however, a lot of additional information is given. First, the mountain hare is a female who is struggling. Second, it is a "symbol of Norwegian nature and wilderness". By this means, the example of the mountain hare is situated. The redlisted hare has been placed in a country (Norway) and it has been placed in a certain kind of nature (wilderness). By being made explicitly Norwegian, it is artificially detached from the fact that it could represent a number of spatial levels, from local places to the whole planet. It is also detached from the fact that it could represent a diverse number of habitats, many of them cultivated by humans. Third, the mountain hare characterizes folk tales and art. The common ground of the writer and reader is not only nature itself, environmental problems or the natural sciences; the common ground is Norwegian traditions and culture. The newspaper article uses the example of the mountain hare to show that not only nature itself is at stake when biodiversity is lost, so are human cultural practices of national character.

When placed in the wilderness and termed a species that characterizes folk tales, the mountain hare brings specific tales and images that the readers are familiar with into the newspaper article by association. Yet the way the newspaper art-

icle describes the hare also moves these associations in specific directions. The “Miss Hare” in the newspaper article is described as a female who is in trouble. Traditionally, however, in Norwegian folk tales, the hare is male, and a lazy and stupid fellow at that.¹⁰ It is therefore quite interesting that the article shows the mountain hare as female. The female version of the hare might have been chosen by the journalist due to the fact that national territory and nature have traditionally been presented as female (Ruud 2012). For the Norwegian reader, however, the mention of “Miss Hare” in the headline points strongly to a well-known children’s song *Helene, Miss Hare* (*Helene Harefrøken*) by the Norwegian author and songwriter Alf Prøysen, although the song itself is not directly mentioned by the journalist.¹¹ The song depicts Helene, a little hare-girl, who has recently changed from winter coat to summer coat. She is on her way to school when a hunter comes for her. She runs for her life, gets tired and lies down on the forest floor. However, since her coat is the same colour as the brown and grey ground, the hunter does not see her, and she survives.

Through such common references among writer and readers, the example of the mountain hare is fleshed out. A whole narrative world is put into play, and the mountain hare now has its own lifespan with a past, present, and future. This makes it possible to ask what would have happened if Miss Hare had not yet changed from winter coat to summer coat, or if there had still been snow on the ground. With photos and headlines, *Aftenposten* converts the story of the mountain

hare threatened by extinction from a number in the press release from the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre to the narrative of an individual mountain hare. The individualization of the hare through the example both underscores and changes what being on the Red List is about. The abstract categories “species” and “Near Threatened” are turned into a young female who risks being shot on her way to school.

Time of Landscape, Time of the Mountain Hare

As a series, the examples mainly point towards climate change and hunting, and show very little temporality, except in their role as newcomers on the list. As an individual example, however, the mountain hare turns the loss of biodiversity into a narrative, and through the narrative structure, a temporal dimension opens in the text: Miss Hare in the *Aftenposten* article has a cyclical time represented through her change of coat, and through the association with the well-known children’s song, also has a life span time and a generational time. By killing Miss Hare, the hunter cuts short the exemplary story of the surviving hare that is able to go to school and grow up, thereby also cutting short her time line, killing her own future chances of becoming a mother of mountain hares. Thus, the example indicates that the consequences of biodiversity loss are not only in the present, but in the future as well. The loss of a species is irreversible.

The mountain hare also contributes to a temporal dimension in the text through another role, namely, that as an exemplar. An exemplar is an individual chosen to

represent the species, in many ways similar to the way examples are artificially made to represent a generalization (Kjus et al. 2011:57). Both in *Aftenposten* and in *Dagbladet* large photos of mountain hares head the articles. The *Dagbladet* article starts with a photo of a hare in white winter coat against a background of brown grass and grey stones, while the *Aftenposten* article starts with a photo of a hare in summer coat against a snowy ground. The hares and the landscape around them are different colours, indicating a discrepancy between the hares and the rest of nature. The photos show strongly that cyclic temporalities that used to be synchronized are now shifting in relation to each other.

In the caption to the photo in *Dagbladet*, this shift is stated explicitly as the cause of the redlisting of the hare:

The hare is now for the first time on the red list. The hare becomes white in winter, which gives good camouflage. But when the snow is absent, the white hare is easily visible and the chance of being caught will increase, according to WWF (Brustad 2015).

Although there is only one mountain hare in the photo, this wrong-coloured hare now represents the whole species. It is not the individual hare, but the whole species that is in trouble because of its wrong colouring. This relationship between the species “mountain hare” on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, the exemplar with wrong colouring and the climate-changed surroundings, does, of course, present a massive simplification. There are year-to-year variations in the timing of snowfalls, and there are individual variations among mountain hares as to the timing and amount of fur coat change.¹² It is therefore only when understood as an

exemplar that the mountain hare in the photo can present us with a discrepancy between the various temporalities of nature.

In *Dagbladet*, the photo of the mountain hare represents the traditional global warming picture; a white animal with too little snow or ice around it. This corresponds well with the fact that the series of examples in this article told biodiversity loss as a story of climate change. *Dagbladet* also presents an interview with the Secretary General of WWF Norway stating that “Climate change makes it necessary for us to take special care in the management of grouse and hare. Several places have already introduced restrictions on hunting” (Brustad 2015). Here, the mountain hare is used to establish and underscore a link between global climate change as an already ongoing problem and the local and national effects it might have, both on Norwegian biodiversity and on local management practices. The mountain hare as exemplar shows that climate change is the reason why nature has gone askew, and in stating this, the example also points towards a future in which there will be more climate changes, and in which measures might be introduced in even more places.

In *Aftenposten*, although the photo conveys the same mismatch between landscape and mountain hare, the colouring is the other way around, with a brown mountain hare on a snow-decked ground, and is not directly indicative of climate change in the form of melting snow/ice. However, the photo is just as indicative of a feeling of wrongness, due to shifts in temporalities between the hare and its surroundings, something that cannot be explained by the

hunting story from the series of examples. Thus, when this sense of temporal wrongness is addressed, *Aftenposten* also turns to climate change. The journalist interviews the Secretary General of WWF Norway, Nina Jensen, who uses almost exactly the same words as in *Dagbladet*:

Several birds living in the mountains have got a worse status on the red list, a sign that a negative climate development is going on in the mountains. The hare is exposed to the same problem, it doesn't adapt fast enough to the changes. The climate changes make it necessary to take extra care in the management of grouse and hare (Mathismoen 2015).

For the Secretary General of WWF Norway, the mountain hare is obviously an example of climate change, and of climate change as the cause of the temporal discrepancies in nature. The reason why hunting is a problem is that the mountain hare is threatened by climate changes. Thus, the *Aftenposten* article, when discussing the mountain hare as an exemplar, ends up with the same generalization as the *Dagbladet* article, namely, climate change.

In *Aftenposten*, the expectation of increasing effects of climate change in the future is underlined to an even larger degree than in *Dagbladet*. The Red List status of the birds living in the mountains is described as “a sign that a negative climate development is going on in the mountains”. Thus, although the birds and the mountain hare are examples of the effects of climate change in the present, they are at the same time signs of the future. Climate change is changing nature fast, and although the hare is usually considered a very fast animal, the Secretary General of WWF Norway, with her asser-

tion that the mountain hare “doesn't adapt fast enough” indicates that climate change is happening even faster.

The Exemplary Future and the Local Story

Although the centre-right newspaper *Aftenposten* focuses mainly on hunting, when presenting the mountain hare as an exemplar, climate change is evoked, in this article as well as in *Dagbladet*, as an additional reason why hunting pressure should be reduced. Thus, the temporalities that are brought into the texts when the mountain hare is presented as an individual example and an exemplar underline a story of climate change in both newspapers. Climate change has made the cyclical temporalities of nature go askew, and the linear temporality brings forth an individual hare, struggling to survive in a landscape that is changing faster than it manages to adapt.

The focus on climate change in the example could be seen as a way of visualizing that climate change is already part of the present, and thus necessitates action. However, the temporalities of biodiversity loss embedded in the Red List itself, as well as the individualization of Miss Hare, both contribute to a slight destabilization of the temporality of the example. The mountain hare shows climate changes that are close to the reader both in place and in time. Still, the example never seems to be happening exactly here or exactly now: In some places (in the mountains or in the wilderness) climate change is already present, in some places measures have already been taken, and sometime soon Miss Hare will probably die. But she is not dead yet. She is only categorized as Near

Threatened on the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*, and the Red List is in itself a prediction of the future.

In an investigation of how newspapers use hurricanes as examples of climate change, Kverndokk (2015) has shown that hurricanes were mostly used as reminders of what to expect in the future rather than as present events. Thus, the hurricanes became experiences of future climate change in the present, rather than experiences of the present itself (Kverndokk 2015:251). The shifting temporalities of the mountain hare indicate that, similar to the hurricanes, it can be seen as a future-in-the-present, a story best understood in the light of an expected future, not in the light of the present itself.

On a spatial scale, the examples highlight a field of tension. In *Aftenposten*, biodiversity loss is presented as a local or national story, with both pressures and consequences placed in Norway, and with hunting as “the bad guy”. This story indicates a close connection between Norwegian art, folk tales and traditions on one hand and Norwegian nature on the other: If the mountain hare goes extinct, one of the bonds between the nation state and nature is severed. In *Dagbladet* the examples present a global story with local consequences, the story about the dangers of global climate change and how these dangers are now reaching Norway. What none of the stories do, however, is place the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* within a story of biodiversity loss per se. There is no talk of mass extinctions, and very little of global species loss, international agreements, or international Red Lists. Instead of underscoring the global nature of biodiversity loss, the examples

of species from the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* are presented as local effects of the global problem of climate change or as local effects of national hunting practices.

Media coverage of climate change has been shown to be systematically higher than media coverage of biodiversity loss in otherwise similar circumstances (Verisimo et al. 2014; Young et al. 2014; Legagneux et al. 2018). One of the reasons proposed for this is that, while climate change is considered a global environmental problem, biodiversity loss is considered a local (and thus less important) problem. Through their choice of examples the journalists writing about the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* wittingly or unwittingly uphold the conception that climate change is global and biodiversity loss is local.

Conclusion

Through three different approaches to examples – the examples as a series, the individual example, and the example as exemplar – I have studied how two of the largest Norwegian newspapers made biodiversity loss temporally, spatially and culturally meaningful when presenting the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species*. The close reading of the examples in the two newspaper articles shows that the way examples illustrate and at the same time pull the understanding of biodiversity loss in new directions is especially noticeable when many examples are combined and presented as a series. In the two newspapers, the combined series of examples made biodiversity loss culturally meaningful in different ways, one by highlighting climate change as the cause of bio-

diversity loss, the other by highlighting hunting. This highlighting of one specific cause of biodiversity through a series of examples also served to minimize the importance of other causes of biodiversity loss, such as changes in land use. There are few indications that the journalists expected either the story of hunting or the story of climate change to be contested by their readers. Rather, the two stories are both acting as common ground. Although *Aftenposten* approaches controversial political ground by mentioning the “big four”, thus referring to four large carnivores of which the management and hunting is actively disputed by Norwegian political parties, the newspaper draws back from it by omitting to mention the large carnivores by species name, choosing the much less controversial mountain hare as its main example.

In his work on medieval exemplum, Larry Scanlon defines the medieval exemplum as “a narrative enactment of cultural authority” (Scanlon 1994:33–34). Although the medieval exemplum was much closer to the Platonic ideal than to the inductive Aristotelian paradigm, examples, through the entanglement between rhetorical illustration and epistemological model, still transfer some form of authority in contemporary texts. While the authority in medieval texts came from the past, however, the authority of the Red Listed mountain hare lies partly in the future. The mountain hare becomes a narrative enactment of the authority of expected climate change, although it also retains part of its authority from the past, as the “hero” of Norwegian art and folk tales. Through a future that is already (and at the same time only almost) present, climate

change carries the cultural authority to retain the plot of both biodiversity loss and hunting within it.

With its numerous species, each with its own connotations, the *2015 Norwegian Red List for Species* provides a rich source of local plots for stories about global biodiversity loss or even mass extinction. Still, the two main Norwegian newspapers frame their local plots within the global story of climate change or within local or national stories of hunting. The example of the mountain hare visualizes to the reader how the effects of climate change could be both global, national and local. It starts as an example of a redlisted species, but at the same time acts as a warning that the effects of climate change are drawing closer in both time and space, even in a country that has so far had few of the disadvantages and many of the benefits from its production of oil and gas. However, the example of the mountain hare does not work the other way around. Biodiversity loss remains a local issue, framed within the more culturally authoritative idea of climate change. Instead of producing two big environmental stories, both global and both important to the future of humanity, the mountain hare with the white coat on a ground without snow acts as a local version of the more generic climate change visualization of a polar bear on a melting ice floe.

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Notes

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- 2 The first IUCN Red List was published in 1964. The first *Norwegian Red List for Species* based on IUCN criteria was published in 2006. However, Norwegian Red Lists based on other sets of criteria than those of IUCN have existed since 1984. See Norwegian Environmental Agency, *Truede arter (Threatened species)*. Retrieved from <http://www.miljostatus.no/Tema/Naturmangfold/Arter/Truede-arter/>.
- 3 According to senior advisor Snorre Henriksen, the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre (personal communication September 2017).
- 4 Norway’s population is about 5.3 million people (2020). The largest Norwegian newspaper, *VG*, did not publish anything on the release of the red list in 2015 (either on paper or on the web).
- 5 *Aftenposten* published a very similar, but less extensive article in the printed edition the day after the Red List was launched. *Dagbladet* did not publish an article on the Red List in its printed edition.
- 6 According to senior advisor Snorre Henriksen from the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre (personal communication September 2017), the website was restructured in 2016, and this page is no longer accessible from artsdatabanken.no.
- 7 According to senior advisor Snorre Henriksen from the Norwegian Biodiversity Information Centre (personal communication September 2017).
- 8 In Norway, these are wolf, brown bear, lynx and wolverine.
- 9 SABIMA (Samarbeidsorganisasjonen for Biologisk Mangfold) is a Norwegian environmental organization working for biodiversity. It is an umbrella organization representing organizations for different species groups like the Norwegian Ornithological Organization, the Norwegian Botanical Organization etc.
- 10 Some examples of Norwegian folk tales about the hare: More cowardly than the hare (AT 70), Too cold for hare to build house in winter (AT 81), When the hare was married (AT 96), Hare and tortoise race: sleeping hare (AT 275A), The animals in night quarters (AT 130). Numbering follows Hodne (1984).
- 11 Alf Prøysen lived from 1914 to 1970. He was both author and songwriter, and wrote for children as well as adults. He also hosted several children’s radio shows. Internationally he is best known as the author of the stories of “Miss Pepperpot” for children. In 2009, the song about Helene Miss Hare was turned into a cartoon along with several of his other children’s songs, available at: <https://tv.nrk.no/serie/alf-proeysens-barnesanger/OBUE14005108/sesong-1/episode-5> [Television series episode].
- 12 In areas with little or no snow covering (like the southwestern parts of Norway), mountain hares do not turn white in winter, but some intermediate colour between brown/grey and white. Mountain hares in such areas are often called “blue hares”.

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Sustainable Living in a Periphery

Interpreting Ways of Rural Mobility in a Low-Carbon World

By Pilvi Hämeenaho & Elisabeth Wollin

You could say that the typical local in this village thinks and acts with the car. Even though public transport does exist to a certain, limited degree, I couldn't imagine [...] that people would take the bus to the town if they were about to do some shopping or visit a restaurant (Swedish man, age 45).

Private driving, for those living in villages far from city centres, is such a common daily task that it goes almost unrecognized in the course of daily life. Adjustment to the local environment and to a society that promotes public transportation only in urban areas makes driving a normal and indeed compulsory part of daily living (Hämeenaho 2014; Wollin Elhouar 2014). However, in our time of increasing debate about climate change mitigation, daily ways of rural mobility seem disturbing and contradictory to the social calls for more sustainable living.

It has been emphasized that the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere has changed the natural processes that keep the globe warm and inhabitable and led to anthropogenic global warming that inflicts irreversible changes on nature and climate (Rockström et al. 2009; Rosa et al. 2015; Lidskog & Waterton 2016).¹ The single most important source of CO₂ is the combustion of fossil fuels, most notably coal and oil. Due to this, the low-carbon goals are firmly aimed at reducing flying and driving with their reliance on fossil fuel engines (e.g. EEA 2019). Altering the ways of being mobile is also seen as one of the main measures that individuals can take in order to slow down global warming. But how are these ideas met in rural peripheries with no alternatives for transportation?

In a globalized world, the objectives and means of climate change mitigation

are mainly determined from the perspective of centres. From this it follows that the way sustainability is interpreted often represents urbanized worldviews and may drastically differ from the perceptions of those living in peripheries and rural areas (Cloke 2003; Wollin Elhouar 2014). The conflicts between macro and micro level understandings of sustainability – between regime and local levels – cannot be studied only from “above”. The meanings ascribed to sustainability emanate from locally-bound everyday life experiences that occur within national and global systems. For this reason, in order to explore how sustainability transitions are understood and responded to in different loci, we need a reciprocal view of marginal daily living environments and lifestyles in relation to national and global systems (also Sassen 1996; Norgaard 2011; Eriksen 2015; Innerarity 2016). Therefore, in this ethnological study, we explore how the ideals of low-carbon societies are lived and interpreted in peripheral areas in Finland and Sweden.

In order to reach an understanding of “peripheral sustainability” we scrutinize how globally given ideas of sustainability and measures to achieve it clash with local ideas and practices at the level of everyday life. How is sustainability understood by people residing in rural areas? How are the ideas of sustainable living given meaning during the daily life course? We will answer these questions by exploring rural residents' relation to sustainability transitions, and analyse how their perceptions and thinking – emerging in and from the physical environment – reflect their relation to the national and global. The chosen viewpoint illuminates the tensions be-

tween system-world and life-world in the context of the rural North.

Towards Low-Carbon Living

The increasing awareness among decision makers of forthcoming problems related to the rise in the temperature of the globe have stimulated the development of substitutive technologies and the search for new solutions to solve problems related to the mobility of people and objects.² Fast solutions have often been sought “from below”. Individuals’ responsibilities have been highlighted and lot of attention has been devoted to citizen education about more sustainable lifestyles and consumption (Stephenson et al. 2010; Evans et al. 2013; Raippalinna 2019; also Erhardt-Martinez et al. 2015). However, it is stated that despite the policy actions and rapid technological advances that spread to the market, progress is too slow to achieve the goals of limiting global warming (Roberts et al. 2018). According to Rosa et al. (2015:1) the core problem lies in cultural, social and economic structures that have been left unaddressed and unexplored in the required depth. Failures in setting or implementing new policies ensue from clashing political, economic and ecological motivations and the lack of joint commitment to environmental goals (Stern 2007; Norgaard 2011; Eriksen 2016; Newman et al. 2018). Instead of mutual understanding of the issue and ways to solve the problems, discussion consists of competing interests and interpretations of the causes and possible outcomes of environmental changes.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2016:152) argues, that the incompatibility of goals, discourses and practices is caused by

clashes between the logics of large-scale systems and local-level orientations. What is considered sustainable from the perspective of mitigating global warming may be socially unsustainable from the perspective of performing daily tasks and duties (also Wollin Elhouar 2014). This study proceeds from the notion that environment and activities of people are indissolubly linked and the environment always includes the social and cultural dimension – the lifestyles, beliefs, ideas and aspirations of people (Häyrynen 2003; Dillon 2015:109; Parra et al. 2018:5). Addressing the social and cultural dimensions of the environment is crucial for studies of sustainability transitions, as the pursued changes will occur in the human realms, at the micro level of everyday life practices as well as in macro scale politics and technologies.

The cultural perspective that explores the meanings and interpretations given to global or daily issues also needs a nuanced definition of *sustainability*. What is meant by sustainability varies between different actors and depends on the socio-political environment where the interpretations are made (also Jamison 2001; Sayer 2013). The concept is also a product of the anthropogenic knowledge regime and immanently carries the idea of the objectification of nature (Brightman & Lewis 2017). In our study, sustainability is not used as a referent to environmental actions only but as a wider lens that also encompasses the social and cultural aspects of being in one’s world. This conceptualization envisions sustainability from a human-centred perspective and as a goal that strives towards a non-destructive balance between people and between humans and

the non-human environment (also Pyykkönen et al. 2009; Murphy & McDonagh 2016; Parra et al. 2018).

Interpretations of Sustainable Living in Rural Peripheries

In recent studies on sustainability transitions Geels et al. (2017:466) have argued that sustainability transitions should lead to “a new regime, which becomes institutionalized and increasingly taken for granted.” This requires new ways of

thinking and doing, as well as normalization of actions and ideas now often considered alternative (Raippalinna 2019; Häyrynen & Hämeenaho 2020). Accordingly, the development should be studied from a multi-level perspective that takes account of complex relations of global and local systems and the dynamic interaction between them (also Eriksen 2015; Geels et al. 2017). It should also address the level of mundane daily actions and explore the complexity of everyday life choices and



Closed grocery store in the village centre.
Photo: P. Hämeenaho.

practices and their impact on sustainability transitions.

The cultural analysis of *everyday life* illuminates the ideas and practices of people who act locally within the global. It explores the conflicting values and beliefs as well as the impact of competing interests, the complexity of social relations and unequal resources on people's choices. It also recognizes people as active agents, who do not only receive influences or carry the ideas present in their socio-cultural environment, but actively interpret, alter and produce culture (Eriksen 2015; Parra et al. 2018; Stephenson 2018). However, capturing "the everyday" is not simple due to its elusiveness. The taken-for-granted nature of the everyday hides ideas and motivations underneath daily practices and thus impedes implementing any changes that are required or hoped for. Everyday living as something "taken for granted" also allows multiple interpretations and conceptualizations occurring simultaneously without being acknowledged (Hämeenaho 2014; Ehn et al. 2016).

Thus, describing how locally formulated responses to global or national requirements are interpreted calls for an understanding of the different ways that everyday life is given meaning to. Mike Michael (2006:23–28; see also Sandberg 2014) has pointed out two different ways in which everyday life is given meaning: the good, which emphasizes the active agency people may have and utilize in their daily living, and the bad, which envisions everyday life as a locus of repetitive, unquestioned actions and stagnation.

It is noteworthy that the imaginary polarization between rural and urban is par-

allel with the polarization attached to everyday living. In urbanized societies, rural areas are often interpreted as a site for "bad" and unsustainable everyday living. According to stereotypes that picture urban as normal and modern, rural areas represent "the other", and are envisioned as a place of backwardness and stagnation rather than progress (Williams 1985; Cloke 2003; Hämeenaho 2018). The visions may also be positive and emphasize a "natural" or "traditional" lifestyle that is lost in urban areas but preserved in the countryside. What is common to both interpretations is that they understand the countryside as an unchanging cultural space. By connecting the countryside to its past, these visions question its significance as a part of modern, urbanized nations and the way of life pursued there (Wollin Elhouar 2014; Hämeenaho 2018).

Research Design

We pose our research questions on the basis of our previous work that we have conducted separately yet on highly similar issues and topics and by utilizing a similar approach and methods. Pilvi Hämeenaho's dissertation study "Everyday Networks of Well-Being in Sparsely Populated Rural Finland" (2014) explored the everyday life practices and perceptions of subjective well-being and the good life of mothers living in sparsely populated rural areas. The focus was on daily mobility and especially accessing public services as a part of the experience of everyday well-being. The research also unravelled cultural stereotypes attached to living in the countryside and how these ideas representing an urban viewpoint were reflected and utilized in identity making by rural

residents. In her dissertation “Do We Belong to the Future of Sweden?” (2014) Elisabeth Wollin Elhouar investigated how social sustainability was constructed, experienced, practised and performed in the tension between local everyday life and political discourses. Empirical themes included mobility and means of transport, work and leisure practices, and experiences of time and tempo. The specific area chosen for understanding “the local” was sparsely populated villages in the northern inland area of Sweden. The main interest was to grasp how political rhetoric about sustainability made or did not make sense to the experience of local everyday life, and how sustainability was understood from the local perspective.

In both studies, everyday actions were studied in relation to life experiences and policy-led rhetoric about well-being and sustainable development. The analyses focused on sustainability policies, environmentalism, and their implications (Wollin Elhouar) and on the provision of public services and on the ways of giving meaning to the home (Hämeenaho) in remote rural areas. As an outcome both studies produced an ethnological description on lifestyle that is strongly affected and given meanings from outside but is interpreted and re-represented by locals in the course of daily living. The results also showed clear gaps between policies and experiences related to sustainability. In order to highlight the complexities between hegemonic discourses and counter-ways of meaning making, between centre and periphery, and between policies and lived experiences, the social dimension of sustainability is stressed in our current research presented here. This emphasis is mainly

intended to draw attention to uneven power relations inscribed in rural-urban and centre-periphery distinctions.

In order to deepen the understanding on the local level and to expose everyday life as a key factor in sustainability transitions, we revisited our data sets and former analyses with the keyword “periphery” and Eriksen’s notion about “clashes of scales” in our minds. With this rereading of our data we aim at contributing to the need for more nuanced and deep-reaching understanding of everyday life in the context of research on sustainability transitions.³ The themes studied are mobility in the rural environment, sustainable lifestyle adjustments and ways of understanding and interpreting periphery in relation to centre.

We explore thinking and practices related to climate change in the Global North. The original data of this study thus consist of two sets of interviews that both comprise transcribed semi-structured interviews with people living in, or near, sparsely populated areas. Both of us made several short visits to the field sites. Hämeenaho conducted her fieldwork during a period of three months, and visited all the villages separately. Wollin Elhouar made two visits to each field site, with some time in between, and stayed in general one week per visit. The fieldwork method can be seen as an alternative fieldwork to the classic long field stay, in the sense of being a kind of yo-yo fieldwork (see Wulff 2002; Karsten 2019).

Hämeenaho conducted fieldwork in 2009 and 2010 in seven villages in three municipalities in central Finland: Multia, Pihtipudas and Saarijärvi. Of her 14 informants, 13 were women and their age ranged from 30 to 55. All informants were

parents and they had experience of living in sparsely populated rural areas with school-age children. Informants were private entrepreneurs, worked in the public sector in social and health care or in schools, or were staying at home with their small children at the time of the interviews. Most of them had also lived in urban areas during their life and five were in-migrants who had been born in cities and moved to rural areas as adults. For all of them, living in the countryside was a considered choice. The empirical data used for Wollin Elhouar's study were collected from two municipalities: Strömsund (in Jämtland County) and Örnköldsvik (in Västernorrland County), mainly in 2007 and 2008.⁴ Apart from written material, the study was based on observations and interviews. Her thirteen main informants – nine women and four men – were all living in sparsely populated parts of the northern inland of Sweden. The interviewees' age ranged between 30 and 73. Several of the interviewees had a long commute between home and work in common. A few worked at home as farmers or near their home place, but had to travel far for services. All of them thus shared the experience of an everyday life marked by long distances.

Creating Peripheries

Rural mobility: exclusion from the low-carbon society?

You know, there is a distance of 50 kilometres to the store. It's a long way to go back and forth if you forgot to buy the milk and have to go back just because of that. And expensive too (Swedish woman, age 45).

In the rural north, daily life practices are moulded by long distances. Home in the

countryside leads to a situation where daily tasks and duties, such as going to work or school, daily consumption and attending social events requires lengthy travels, because the sites of action are mostly situated in nearby cities. Due to lack of public transportation, daily travel primarily takes the form of private driving. The necessity of private driving was illuminated in rural residents' accounts of daily mobility. As one interviewee said: "These distances, you always have to go by car" (Finnish woman, age 43).

When exploring social sustainability in relation to infrastructure and means of transport, it became clear to us that different technologies had different roles to play in making sustainable experiences. Some means of transportation managed to tie people together, others to keep them apart. The bus, for example, appeared restrictive and therefore in that sense, a rather unsustainable means of transport. The bus was seen as inflexible due to few departures and long routes, with no viable alternative. Buses do not always drive to villages and the bus stops were accessible only by car or lengthy walks or bike rides, which was considered impossible because people had to carry groceries or had small children with them. In addition, the bus timetables were unsuitable for the daily needs of residents and only served children going to local schools.

The nearest bus stop is three kilometres away, and during the school year there are two buses to town in the morning, at seven and at nine. And if you want to come back by bus, there is one at two or at five past four. So those who work until four can make it to the bus. But then I would still need to have some means of transport to get home from the village centre where the bus stop is (Finnish woman, age 41).



Peacefulness and privacy was considered as a key element of rural living. Photo: P. Hämeenaho.

When buses are not considered as an option for daily mobility, private driving becomes a norm. In rural areas with long distances, daily scheduling is based on private driving (Hämeenaho 2014). One of the interviewees explained:

I am so used to driving. You can go when you need to and you don't have to wait for the timetable, like "Oh my, the bus is coming in five minutes and I'll miss it". Yes, it's easier to use your own car (Finnish woman, age 36).

Remoteness may be seen as a key signifier of periphery, which is understood in relation and as a counterpoint to centre. Centres are hubs for mobility where activities and sites of action are concentrated and periphery is the remote *other* (cf. Wil-

liams 1985; Cloke 2003). Likewise, ideals of a low-carbon society are mostly established from an urban perspective, and only recognize the problems and solutions relevant in densely populated areas. From this viewpoint, the necessity of private driving and owning a car turns the countryside into an environment where it is seemingly impossible to live according to the current ideals of a sustainable lifestyle. These negative assumptions about the ways of everyday living in rural areas contribute to social remoteness, and the exclusion of rural people from urban-led discourses on sustainability (Hämeenaho 2014; Wollin Elhouar 2014).

Many of the interviewees in the Swe-

dish material voiced experiences of exclusion from the national community. A man in his fifties who worked as a school bus coordinator said, for example: “We always hear this ongoing debate that things are going well for Sweden. Well, what we then wonder, up here, is whether we really do belong to Sweden in that case.” Many also pointed to the fact that local infrastructure was disappearing: “The closest grocery store is now twenty kilometres away. The grocery bus is gone. We used to have grocery store, petrol station, post office. All gone today. One gets a bit bitter” (Swedish man, age 65).

On top of this, in the neo-liberal political climate the responsibility to change one’s lifestyle is often laid on local people – although cutbacks in public transportation and the concentration of services in centres, for example, are not a result of local actions (Evans et al. 2013; Wollin Elhouar 2014; Raippalinna 2019). According to our studies, people in rural areas are well aware of the contested role that the car plays in their daily living, and, on the other hand, in national policies on sustainability. The absolute necessity of having a vehicle or two is clearly tied to experiences of exclusion from the national community and lack of sense of belonging to the nation. In several of the interviews a sense of defending the cars came across more or less explicitly:

I have two cars [...] one is a panel truck, a Berlingo [...] it’s cheaper and more environmentally friendly. And I can load a lot in it. When I was renovating the cottage I needed construction blocks, it was really good, I could load 40 blocks in the truck. You’ll have to buy it 300 kilometres away. That’s why we got these types of cars; to avoid driving back and forth four times. And I think that must be better for the environment (Swedish man, age 60).

When remote location turns to social (and political) exclusion, the value-laden polarizations between rural and urban are strengthened. This kind of attitudes that intertwine with regional policies create rural peripheries, which represent backward local cultures and stagnation to carbon-based, unsustainable lifestyles. Everyday actions are thus interpreted as “bad” and local culture only as permanence and thus as an obstacle in terms of change. However, in order to scrutinize the real dynamics of change, the “good” interpretations of everyday living must also be taken into account.

When we asked rural residents, the idea of local culture as stagnant was modified. People we met during our field trips supported the idea that their living and lifestyle differ from urban life. Yet they did not accept the idea that their ways of living are solely unsustainable; they emphasized counter-viewpoints. Driving may not be a low-carbon practice, but it was emphasized that it cannot be understood only as a choice of individuals. Most of the people were very careful in planning their daily drives. They limited the amount of driving by trying to combine all the daily tasks and duties in commuter travels (Wollin Elhouar 2014; Hämeenaho 2014, 2019).

And quite often we combine the drives, when we have some hobbies [in the town] we go to grocery store at the same time. My husband likes to go jogging, and in wintertime he goes skiing to town because there are lights. Here [in the village] we do not have any streetlights. So, when we go to the town he goes skiing. Doesn’t have to ski in the dark (Finnish woman, age 42).

On top of this, the meaning of private driving is much more multifaceted than

being just about transportation. From a social perspective, the car was the most prominent maker of sustainability for the locals. A private car cannot be considered only as a tool to be mobile with, but in remote areas it also becomes an important space to spend time with other people and offer care for them (Wollin Elhouar 2014; Hämeenaho 2019). Giving rides to family members and other locals formed an important part of local ways of mobility. Car pools and shared rides were common examples of socially sustainable practices related to mobility (Hämeenaho 2014; Wollin Elhouar 2014). We were told about helping elders and other people unable to drive.

I consider this as a strength of a village life, that we have this kind of practices. I give her [an elderly woman in the neighbourhood] a ride to town when she has a doctors' appointment, or take her to shops or something. I may just drive to her house, see if there are lights on and just ask would she like to join me when I go to town (Finnish woman, age 43).

Nobody in the village goes to the store just by herself. We always ask others that are home if they need anything, any groceries. It's the way of doing it, it comes naturally. To go by yourself, without asking, hardly ever happens (Swedish woman, age 56).

On the other hand, a car also serves as a place to rest and as a site of transition between various daily roles and responsibilities. Commuting may thus become a private time to think and may provide a much-needed break between work and family life. One interviewee, a mother with children and a daily job in town, explained:

During the drive you have time to put your mind in a certain mood. When you leave work, you can think through work stuff and then move on to domestic things. And, of course, the same thing in the morning (Finnish woman, age 41).

A big car also provides shelter and ability to withstand car accidents due to snow, slippery roads, long distances, road kills and bad visibility, thus making a car synonymous with safety.



The lengthy rural roads. Frost heave 14 kilometres. Photo: P. Hämeenaho.

Last winter, when our neighbours moved here just before Christmas, they changed their car, bought a four-wheel-drive because they just couldn't get up that road (Finnish woman, age 34).

You would want a big, real car, you want to have a safe car, if something happens, so you don't get smashed immediately (Swedish man, age 60).

Overall, the question of daily mobility in rural areas serves as an example of the otherness of rural in relation to urban areas. From the perspective of daily living in more densely populated areas with possibilities to use public transportation, a private car is often seen as environmental villain number one that should be replaced with other means of mobility. From a rural perspective, however, a private car is a tool that makes it possible to participate in society: to go to work, consume and have a social life outside the immediate home environment. It makes it possible to live in villages and enjoy the rural setting (Hämeenaho 2014; Wollin Elhouar 2014).

Cultural adjustment and the emerge of social sustainability

We always help each other here in the village, we don't just think about ourselves, we think of each other, do you know what I mean? For example, if someone is going to the store to buy something, he or she always asks the neighbours if they need anything, milk or bread or whatever. In the city you don't do that, right?" (Swedish woman, age 55).

Being remote is not just living far from centres and sites of daily activities, but it also encompasses the social and cultural dimensions of local living. Accordingly, periphery is not just about geography but may be understood as a distance from the ideals and mindscapes that represent the urban centres, and which exclude rural

areas from the urban norm (Wollin Elhouar 2014; Häyrynen & Hämeenaho 2020). The remoteness from urban centres thus forms a local environment where peripheral lifestyle emerges.

We were welcomed [to the village] very warmly, there has been such a positive atmosphere everywhere I go here or whichever activity group I want to join. It is so different from the city. And overall, all the people here, I think they really are such people, you know what they say about country people? They are open and warm (Finnish woman age 34).

The interviews also illuminated how a meaningful life is tantamount to a life in the home village and among other locals. In addition to being a site for habitual practices and repetition of mundane actions, everyday life appears as a site for active agency, critical thinking about (urban) norms, resistance and change (see Michael 2006:22). The persistence of daily practices is not a matter of stagnation but a culturally sustainable way of adjusting novelties to established everyday life perceptions and practices (Damsholt & Jespersen 2014:27; also Löfgren & Ehn 2010). In search of a sustainable life balance, adjustment is central and the place-bound lifestyle consists of strategies and practices as well as ideas about good living, which are adjusted to local as well as national and global environment(s).

Adjustment is not only coping with the challenges or responding to requirements determined by outside localities, but it is primarily active being and "living out rurality" (Hämeenaho 2014; Wollin Elhouar 2014). For example, the rural environment and village life were often considered superior to urban life: "If you have a family with small children like I do, living in this village is far better than the city, safer for

the kids, more harmonious” (Swedish woman, age 32). Interviewees also mentioned the impact of being far from cities on the ways of consumption. They emphasized the self-sufficiency of their families, and many told about how they grew their own vegetables, had berry bushes in the garden and baked their own bread.

[Since we moved to live in the country] my life has changed a lot indeed, living here is so different from a city flat. I have started to bake bread in the oven, which I have never done before, and we are building a cellar for potatoes that we are growing in our back yard. We have changed our way of life, and it has been mostly deliberate (Finnish woman, age 34).

Lack of shops in the village did not matter, because people told how they had learned to live outside consumer (urban) culture. One interviewee emphasized as follows the cultural and social distance from the lifestyle considered as urban:

Really, you really do not need so much stuff, maybe it is no wonder that [city dwellers] spend so much money, everything is available there all the time. Shops are always crowded. But here, you just realize how you can cope without buying hardly anything. A month may go by, and we only need to buy toilet paper and detergents. Really, that is all (Finnish woman, age 55).

Everyday living in a rural environment also produces new interpretations of periphery. The core ideas of the polarizing stereotypes of urban and rural are enduring on the one hand yet changing on the other. Raymond Williams (1985:12) has noted how these perceptions are constantly adjusted and re-interpreted to meet the needs and goals of changing topical discourses. In the age of heated discourses on climate change, the images of rural as a place of developmental stagnation has been strengthened once again. At the same time, rural residents,

very much aware of the stereotypes, offer counter-interpretations.

Sustainable ways of living are represented in perceptions of good living. In their narratives, people brought up stereotypes that represent their conception of rural reality in a positive way. For example, lack of jobs is considered as a major problem and a signifier of the decline of rural areas. Though a job was given a natural meaning in the narratives, other domains of the everyday were also given a certain meaning, such as home, family, nature, land, leisure activities and local community (Hämeenaho 2014; Wollin Elhouar 2014). Especially leisure activities played an important role and people accepted the situation caused by lack of workplaces.

If there were enough jobs here, 75 per cent of the people who once moved would be moving back. [...] Maybe people who were born here have other hobbies than people in the city. I mean, here it's all about nature, hunting, fishing, those kind of things... scooter driving in the wintertime. And you cannot really do that if you live in the south or in a big city. When I lived in the south I was all right at first, it was exciting. But after a while I started to miss the lifestyle up here (Swedish man, age 60).

A key feature that was brought up both by Swedish and Finnish informants was the rural environment itself, which was considered to offer a living environment superior to urban areas. “It is so peaceful here, we have this privacy. When I come home after the day at work I can do whatever I want, just be here, and no neighbours watching us” (Finnish woman, age 36). Besides being peaceful and private, the periphery and the lifestyle it entails has its effect on time usage and even more broadly to the tempo of living. Rural areas form their own specific time-space, where environment and geographical distances im-

pace on daily actions and the ways in which people schedule their lives (Wollin Elhouar & Hansen 2011; Hämeenaho 2014, 2019). Rural time-space also differs from its urban counterpart, as the means to be mobile are different even if the reasons for travelling should be similar. Commuting or consuming take more time in remote areas. Rural time-space is also connected to the prevailing negative notions that rural areas are old-fashioned and slow. These ideas also have an influence on local self-images and practices (Wollin Elhouar 2014; Hämeenaho 2014). To objectify time in narratives, people get a possibility to reflect on their everyday life (Wollin Elhouar 2014). A Swedish woman (age 50) who had been moving from Stockholm to a small village in the northern inland said it took her quite a while to get used to the calmness she experienced at first due to the hectic urban tempo she was used to: “I just wanted to sit on a stump in the forest and do nothing, hear nothing.”

The slow pace of rural living is in turn related to modernity’s focus on speed. In the narratives, the interviewees tend to distance themselves from urban time and associate urban speed with disharmony and stress-related issues. Lack of urban facilities, such as shops or services, was not considered significant in terms of everyday well-being. On the contrary, everyday life in rural areas was considered as a major source of private well-being. Informants did not attach much value to the possibilities that urban areas have to offer, such as places for consumption or more options for hobbies and leisure-time activities.

I do not think living in a city would make me happier. Like really, does something like going to the

movies or hanging around in town make a person happier? Or shopping, I do not think I would like to spend too much time shopping anyway (Finnish woman, age 55).

The urban centres were not considered central in one’s living, as the place called home and the surrounding local community were at the heart of everyday life. Remoteness from the major centres supports close social relations with other local residents. Collaboration with others and mutual help were an important part of living in remote areas, as people are bound to similar challenges related to mobility, for example. Living in the rural north leads to a lifestyle that consists of ideas, practices and attitudes that are adjusted both to the local environment and to the conditions established by state policies. These components of rural lifestyle may be interpreted as a cultural capital, a local strength that enables rural residents to adjust their living to the ever-changing political and social environment (Wollin Elhouar 2014). As one interviewee stated:

The countryside is a great place to live as long as you are able to accept the differences [related to urban living]. A person who expects everything to be available right there when you open the door cannot live here. Here you cannot expect services to be available within five minutes, you have to prioritize, you have to think through what the most significant issues in life for you are (Finnish woman, age 55).

When seen from the perspective of those committed to this rural lifestyle, the periphery is everything but stagnant or lagging behind development. It is also closely connected to urban centres as well as the wider environment. The so-called local living is attached to national and global cultural and eco-political spaces.

By taking account of the social and cultural as well as the physical and institutional environment, we have learned about the gaps between regime-level ideals and individual-level actions related to sustainability (also Eriksen 2016). The analysis above also shows how the periphery consists of two dimensions. Firstly, it is attached to geographies and practical ways of dealing with distances that separate it from the centres. At the same time, the periphery occurs in mental landscapes formed by polarizations and meaning-makings (also Norgaard 2011:xix). Locally conducted daily actions, such as using a private car for commuting, occur in this wider environment and illuminate the dynamic relation of everyday living to macro-scale policies.

Everyday rural life is active and people are constantly adjusting and finding novel solutions to address changes, for example, in the service network or in policies that affect their living in far-reaching ways, such as the taxation of fossil fuels. The periphery is constantly influenced by centres and regime-level policies, but the outcomes may differ from those expected or intended by policymakers. Accordingly, the periphery should be understood as a space where values and practices differ from the urban norm and challenge its ideas of sustainability. At the same time, the periphery is a place for active citizens who constantly develop and innovate instead of just reacting.

Conclusions: The Periphery as a Centre for Sustainable Everyday Living

What we have presented here is an ethnological description of rural interpretations

of sustainability and the lifestyle that emerges in a periphery. As pointed out by Eriksen (2016:3) perceptions related to global issues, such as climate change, are constructed and represented at the local level. In this vein we argue that everyday life is a core for transitions towards sustainable lifestyles. By emphasizing the everyday life practices that differ between rural and urban environments, we have aimed to draw attention to uneven power relations inscribed in rural-urban and centre-periphery distinctions. By highlighting the often marginalized perspective of rural residents, we have shed light on the clashes between national and local thinking, and we have shown how ideas of sustainability that are posed from an urban perspective do not always fit rural realms and thus cannot lead to expected outcomes in people's behaviour or thought.

The gaps between ideas and actions in relation to climate change mitigation will not be bridged solely by educating citizens, because daily-level needs and motivations that emerge in certain environments may not equal those of political decision making on a national or global scale (also Evans et al. 2013; Raippalinna 2019). Household recycling, eating more vegetables instead of meat or cutting down holiday flights is relatively easy compared to cutting down one's private driving, especially in sparsely populated countries like Finland or Sweden. In many ways, circumstances other than individual one's control people's daily actions. This can be linked to policies that promote centralization – in the name of climate, economy or services, for example. Based on our studies, we argue that urban time and tempo can be understood as processes that



Just as residents, also rural researcher should remember to fuel her car in a nearby city. Photo: P. Hämeenaho.

have colonized everyday lives, also in the countryside (also Wollin Elhouar 2014). To travel long distances takes time, and this is often experienced as unsustainable. When infrastructure in the rural is scaled down, people have to travel further, which is hardly sustainable from any point of view.

Rural areas may be considered remote from the ideals of a low-carbon society,

but the peripheral lifestyle includes various ways that are sustainable. According to our studies, remoteness as a feature of rural areas was given positive meanings in relation to sustainability by rural residents. For example, the slowness of living, manifesting social capital in the utilization of local networks and consciously created distance from consumerism may be regarded as positive values linked to

sustainability. Sustainability in ways of living was also represented in daily practices such as the methods of being mobile and in consumption habits and, in a way, how work and leisure were valued. The results reveal the vastness of sustainability, how it encompasses social and cultural as well as ecological aspects of daily living (also Parra et al. 2018).

From an urban perspective, however, rural living is sometimes interpreted as a failure in reaching the “commonly shared” sustainability goals (i.e. Wollin Elhouar 2014). For this reason, people living their locally bound life are excluded from the society that offers solutions to global issues – but only from the narrow perspective of urban lifestyles. Our analysis of the outcomes of this exclusion illuminates the difference in how rural living is interpreted at the national and local level. The gaps between local and national understanding make the straightforward implementation of macro-scale ideas at the grass-roots level of everyday life difficult or even impossible. The implementation fails due to mismatches in orientation – global or national ideas are not adjustable to everyday life practices.

Based on our research, we argue that sustainability transformation could be promoted by creating a more dynamic and reciprocal relationship between centres and peripheries. It is noteworthy that the feeling of being different or even excluded from society does not lead to stagnation, but to the creation of locally bound lifestyle and conceptions that promote the centrality of a periphery. Locals and localities do not only adjust, react or respond but also create and innovate from their own perspective and based on their own

daily needs. The sustainable components of rural lifestyle have evolved as responses to requirements and ideas from the regime level. It is thus crucial to understand the “mundane” everyday life as a locus of opportunities, active agencies and change (also Michael 2006).

Keeping in mind Williams’s (1985:12) notion that rural-urban relations are constantly adjusted and reinterpreted, we conclude by emphasizing the need to rethink the ways in which sustainability is understood in relation to differing living environments. On top of this, the notion of periphery should also be understood as a dynamic concept, whose relation to centres or urban norm is not monolithic. To reach a balance with one’s perception of good living and what is good for nature requires steering different ways of interpreting sustainability to meet the hopes and needs attached to it. Lifestyle adjusted to peripheral conditions has features that are sustainable in an ecological, social and cultural sense. When sustainability is understood holistically and as a human-centred goal that strives towards a better human-nature balance, learning from the lifestyles emerging in rural areas may benefit us all.

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Notes

- 1 Also the reports by IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, launched in 1988.
- 2 Global knowledge had been spread in the United Nations led annual Climate Summits and Climate Change Conferences in 1979, 1990 and 2015, for example.
- 3 The current study is part of the project “The Frontier of Sustainability Transitions: Cultural Adaptations of Sustainability Policies in European Peripheral Regions (Academy of Finland 2016–2019).
- 4 The data were produced more than ten years ago. A lot has changed in relation to the sustainability debate since then. One major effect of that, which is worth mentioning here, is that the concept of sustainability has gained in public awareness and understanding. In 2007 the majority of the Swedish informants were not aware of the concept of sustainability to any large extent. Today one can assume that they are, due to public debates and political implementations.

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Fieldwork

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The Swedish data are owned by the author.

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“Just a Bunch of Cells”

The Affordance of Neurons in Neuroscientific Reasoning

By Åsa Alftberg, Kristofer Hansson, Markus Idvall

In 2012 the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded jointly to John B. Gurdon and Shinya Yamanaka for their discovery that mature, differentiated cells can be reprogrammed to a pluripotent stem cell. In medicine this has been seen as a paradigm-shifting discovery which has generated new directions in biomedical research. This kind of discovery can also be seen as something that changes how ethnology may or even should study materiality (Holmberg & Ideland 2012). The biomateriality in the laboratory – like the pluripotent stem cell – is no longer fixed, but negotiable and in constant flux. In this study it takes, mostly, the form of a neuron. Neurons are nerve cells that through electric and chemical signals receive, process and transmit information in a network that is the central nervous system. The central nervous system's primary components are the brain as well as the spinal cord and the peripheral nervous system. So, with mature, differentiated cells, today's biomedical researchers are seeking for possibilities to reprogram these cells to pluripotent stem cells that can be used to repair broken neurons, and to repair our brains. For ethnologists who study biomedicine it is central to ask how this new biomateriality can be studied. Moreover, how can ethnology as discipline learn about materiality by looking at neurons as a form of biomateriality? We want to explore a more relational approach to materiality, and hereby a better understanding of how biomedicine affects contemporary culture, but also how culture affects biomedicine.

Ethnology has an important role to play in relation to emerging biomedical technologies. Not only can ethnology offer the

biomedical researchers a cultural understanding of their work, but it can also give a more reflexive understanding of how biomedical knowledge is constitutive of society. Using ethnological theories about materiality, this study focuses on how mature cells, stem cells, or even brains are a part of organizing and structuring different ways of knowledge in neuroscience, and how neuroscientists are using these neurons to tend, mend and defend their scientific perceptions (cf. Frykman 2006; Holmberg & Ideland 2012; Wiszmege 2016; Hansson 2017). We intend to do this because these scientific perceptions, we argue, in turn organize and structure narratives through which the general public understand the neurons, and in the end the human brain. In short, we will engage in the anthropologist Joseph Dumit's call for an unpacking of the notions that underlie theories of the brain and its cultural implications (Dumit 2004). To succeed with this call, we need to develop new cultural analytical tools to study this groundbreaking biomateriality in biomedicine. The aim of this article is therefore a culture-analytical study of how a group of neuroscientists perceive this biomateriality in constant flux and outline a possible theory of materiality. Central questions are: How are neurons described, interpreted and understood by a group of neuroscientists? How do neuroscientists reason about new bio-scientific perspectives of this biomateriality? How can this reasoning be understood and interpreted using ethnological theories of materiality?

The progress and power of biosciences are today well established, including new or altered perspectives on human biology. The old Western perspective of the body

as an entity is constantly challenged by science and the increasing significance of molecular levels of the body with its cells and genes (Rose 2007; Gottweis 2008). This has been well studied in ethnology over more than two decades.¹ Today, modern neuroscience is one of the scientific disciplines that pushes the boundaries for how to look on the human body, or more specifically the brain, as well as selfhood and identity (Vidal 2009; Dumit 2012). We are here following the history of science scholar Fernando Vidal's concept of *brainhood* and the growing personification of the brain that can be seen in today's society (Vidal 2009). Then, if we as ethnologists turn to a group of neuroscientists and ask them questions about neurons and the brain, what reasoning about new biomateriality will they give us? To answer this question this article will introduce the theoretical concept of *affordance* to better understand the relational approach that people have when interacting with materiality. In the following, neuroscientists reasoning about their research on the brain and the neurons will be elaborated on, by analysing focus group interviews with neuroscientists.²

Cultural Analysis of Neurons

A central method in ethnology has been to study materiality as a shortcut to cultural patterns (Löfgren 1990). But, as Jonas Frykman has pointed out, these cultural patterns are something that ethnologists find neither in the user nor in the materiality itself (Frykman 2006). Instead, the central method is to focus on how culture emerges when the user and the materiality meet. This perspective is also found in the concept of *affordance*, which represents a

relational approach to understand how people interact with materiality. It is a term that we borrow from psychology, defined by psychologist James Gibson in 1977 as the properties of materiality that refer to *all* possible actions that humans can use it for (Gibson 1977). Therefore, it is also a term that can say something about how a user can interact with that specific materiality. We will here explain how.

Even though the material properties are recognized by each person who encounters them, the affordances of that materiality are not. Affordances are unique in the particular ways in which an actor perceives materiality (Leonardi 2011). In our case, focusing on neurons, this materiality is a form of biomateriality (Holmberg & Ideland 2012; Wiszmeg 2016). Paul. M. Leonardi – Professor of Technology Management – developed the concept of affordance to pinpoint the need to focus on the context where the materiality is perceived. He writes:

Materiality exists independent of people, but affordances and constraints do not. Because people come to materiality with diverse goals, they perceive a technology as affording distinct possibilities for action. The perceptions of what functions an artefact affords (or constrains) can change across different contexts even though the artefact's materiality does not (Leonardi 2013:70).

In our study we are interested in developing this kind of affordance to use it as an ethnological theory to analyse the neurons as biomateriality that can invite to conversations between the scientists themselves and between the scientists and the interviewers. We do this by asking: What affordance do scientists perceive in the material properties of neurons? Do these properties afford different abilities for ac-

tions and meaning-making, based on the contexts in which they are used (Leonardi 2011)?

With this perspective biomaterialities are not only shortcuts to cultural patterns, or crucial for culture to emerge (Löfgren 1990; Frykman 2006). They are vital through their materiality. With a very different example – the making of string bags – the anthropologist Tim Ingold has argued for this, saying that abilities “are developed through an active exploration of the possibilities afforded by the environment, in the choice of materials and structural supports, and of bodily capacities of movement, posture, and prehension” (Ingold 2011:359). The affordance should in this perspective be seen as a methodology that is focused on actors in a specific material context. Here, this leads to questions of how we as ethnologists can study knowledge production in the laboratory: What kind of possibilities are afforded by the neuroscientific context – for example the laboratory environment and the biomateriality – to explore new knowledge about the neurons? What can this knowledge say about the perceptions of the different biomaterialities that the researchers work with?

Even though we focus on this microscopic materiality, our research is connected to other ethnological studies that have a cultural-analysis perspective on the brain (Andersen 2013; Hagen 2013), a field that we have contributed to ourselves (Alftberg & Rosenqvist 2017; Hansson & Idvall 2017; Alftberg & Bengtsen 2018; Idvall 2018; Hansson & Suneson 2018). As we have seen, Fernando Vidal (2009) has highlighted this research area with the term *brainhood*. He elaborates on the im-

pact of neurocultural discourses, in particular the significance for personal identity. The view, it seems, is that the brain is the only part of the body we as humans need in order to be ourselves, and that brainhood refers to *being* a brain, rather than simply *having* one. Vidal also discusses the personification of the brain, which he declares is one of the most powerful mechanisms for maintaining the dominance of the concept of brainhood. Personification means that it is the brain that carries human characteristics such as decision-making, learning and loving, and it is brains rather than persons that understand each other. Consequently, this leads to what Dumit refers to as “studies of brains as if they were persons, and studies of persons as if they were brains” (Dumit 2012:233).

Brainhood tends to portray the brain as a whole or an entity, and such representations have similarities to the popular imagination of the brain as a machine, a command centre governing the body (Malabou 2008). In recent years, however, other images have appeared; for example the brain as a dynamic and defragmented network. In the neuroscience of today, the brain is described as a decentralized system with multiple and adaptable structures formed between different locations of the brain (Altermark 2014). Furthermore, contrary to ideas of the brain being fixed and immutable, plasticity has emerged as the distinctive characteristic, where the brain remains malleable during the entire adult life (Rubin 2009). Neuroscientists have argued that thinking may physically change the brain’s structure, which has led to the neuroplasticity mantra that “neurons that fire together wire together” (Lit-

tlefield & Johnson 2012:15). Also, there are cultural metaphors grasping the brain as something authentic, metaphors that are to be found in, for example, popular culture (Bengtson & Suneson 2017). The body is regarded as just a function, while the brain is where the embodied mind, i.e. your self is, which then is a de-embodied self (Lakoff & Johnson 1999).

This kind of new narratives and cultural categorizations of the brain are central when we are studying everyday research practices and how they are described – which we do in this article – even though neuroscience is rarely about studying the whole brain. The research produced rather concerns fragmented parts and locations of the brain and what they consist of (for example neurons, glia cells and proteins), and how they interconnect – something that has been framed as the atomized body by other humanistic researchers (Liljefors et al. 2012). Such circumstances do not make the researchers immune to cultural beliefs about the brain. Instead, we want to stress that working in the laboratory also consists of ideas, notions and theories in which layers of metaphors and implicit cultural beliefs are embedded in many different and changing ways (Knorr Cetina 1999; Latour 1999; Dussauge 2008).

Methods and Material

This article is based on a series of qualitative focus group interviews with neuroscientists, conducted between November 2015 and May 2016, with the aim of understanding the habits and routines of *laboratory life* (Latour & Woolgar 1979).³ These interviews discussed aspects of neuroscientific work, mainly the laboratory procedures that the neuroscientists in

question were performing. The focus was on the participants' perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes concerning their work. The interviews were performed within a research project about the different framings of the human brain that influence neuroscientific work and the connection to wider cultural interpretations of the brain (Hansson & Idvall 2017).

Four focus group interviews with 3–5 participants were conducted, each occasion lasting between one and one and a half hours. The participants were part of two different research groups that work with neurons in a laboratory environment at the same university, one group mainly growing neurons from embryonic stem cells and the other group studying how to re-program cells to become neurons and how neurons communicate with each other. Ultimately, the aspiration of their work is to find treatment for neurodegenerative diseases.

The participating neuroscientists were research leaders or postdoc researchers within this group. There were no PhD students in the interviews. The researchers knew each other well since they had worked together for many years, and some of them had also been PhD colleagues. In this way they shared many cultural views with each other. The postdoc researchers mostly came from abroad and intended to stay in Sweden for a couple of years before moving on to another research group. Quotations from the interviews are presented with fictitious names.

The interviews were treated as conversations where knowledge is co-produced by the interviewers and the participants, which meant reflecting upon the interviewers' contribution to the conversation

and the significance of subjectivity – in what Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann (2009) call reflexive objectivity. Of course, a group discussion also includes the interaction between the participants, and the possibility that the group will aim their discussions towards agreement rather than allowing differences (Gray 2003). This was taken into account by asking supplementary questions and trying to display a permissive and open atmosphere.

An inductive thematic approach was applied to the qualitative analysis process (Riessman 2008). The focus group interviews were taken as a whole and scrutinized repeatedly in order to highlight patterns and identify themes. The interpretations made during the analysis featured a reflexive consideration as well, where understandings and interpretations were critically examined and discussed between the co-authors.

In the following, three themes will be discussed to understand how cells and neurons are described, interpreted and understood by a group of neuroscientists: *Perceiving "a bunch of cells" in the brain*, *Neurons as personified* and *Reprogramming cells – authenticity and identity*. The themes revolve around perceptions of the brain and the neuroscientists' descriptions, interpretations and understandings of the cells and neurons they are working on.

Perceiving "a Bunch of Cells" in the Brain

As pointed out at the beginning, neuroscientific practice concerns not so much the whole brain but parts of it on a molecular level – a form of *atomized brain*

(Liljefors et al. 2012). The cells of the brain are of much more interest for the scientists, and the brain is sometimes looked upon as a distant, overarching system for the cells. The participants were initially asked to describe what a brain is. One of the participants, David, claims that a brain is "a collection of cells, particularly neurons. And other cells." Katherine continues:

The brain is not working as its own organ. It works through what we see, what we feel, what we taste, what we smell. And without that kind of input it's not really; it's nothing, it's just a bunch of cells kind of lying there. (Katherine)

The brain without a body and external stimuli is here described as a collection of cells. The body is necessary in order to see, feel, taste and smell, and the body (and brain) require input to do that. Typically, in neuroscientific practice, the brain's dependence on and interconnections with the body is not in focus. Later on, in the focus group interview, David is elaborating on this when he highlights that: "When you get into your job, as a neuroscientist, you just forget that there is a body attached to this organ. [...] You're looking at [human] behaviour as one hundred per cent brain function." At work in the lab, the brain becomes a separated bi-materiality, even though everyone is well aware of the connection between, for example, body and brain. In a way, it is as Katherine says, "just a bunch of cells".

In previous research this approach to the brain has been pointed out as an increasing orientation towards cerebral issues, transforming all domains of life and knowledge production; the way we humans regard ourselves as human beings, the society around us and our knowledge

of the brain (Vidal 2009; Williams, Katz & Martin 2011; Hansson & Idvall 2017). In other words, neuroscientific researchers like David and Katherine have become part of "an epistemology that both transcends and reinforces thinking about the brain and mind" (Littlefield & Johnson 2012:5). According to Nikolas Rose and Joelle Abi-Rached, the brain has emerged as the essential organ for the existence of a human self, thus making the subject a "cerebral subject". This is a neurobiological self, created by the brain – regardless of its historical and cultural context, only formed by evolution – and human consciousness and the mind appears to be an *effect* of the brain, unable to affect the brain in return (Rose & Abi-Rached 2013).

Neuroscientific practice forms a very specific epistemological perspective that gives the scientists a certain view of the brain. In the focus group interviews this epistemological reasoning becomes something to unite around, but also, probably, something that needs to be explained to outsiders; i.e. to us ethnologists who are researchers from a different discipline. The neurons afford different things, for example in the context of the interview, or in the context where only neuroscientists meet (Leonardi 2013). This means that these neurons have a biomateriality that affords – together with scientific instruments – specific kinds of knowledge. This does not mean that the neurons' materiality changes. This is probably the reason why David, in the following discussion, is trying to explain to us ethnologists how they work with the "brain" in the laboratory, and Robert, Mary and Katherine join the discussion:

David: You don't think that anything has to do with, for example, the muscles. You just think that this is the brain doing different things. [...] We're completely ignorant about... for example, when you are sick, let's say like having the flu, you often also get depressed. So there's a super-tight connection in your everyday life. And then, as soon as you go into the lab you sort of just cut off, you cut off the brain and look at it separately. You just consider the brain function of that aspect and then you just take out the brain and look at that.

Robert: Yeah, but you're bound to simplification. You can't study everything you know.

David: You only consider that the brain is the thing that controls the behaviour.

Mary: It's like impossible to plan an experiment otherwise, yeah.

Katherine: It's very complicated if you have to take into account all the variables...

(Scattered laughter among the participants)

The laughter is of course central because it says something about the obvious, at least for the neuroscientists; it is seemingly absurd to take into account all possible variables. Or in other words, to take into account all the different affordances that can exist in the laboratory. In the focus group interviews, however, the obvious becomes a perspective needing to be explained to non-experts. Nevertheless, the body with its brain is here emerging and is considered to be a variable, too complex to take into account when studying the brain, or rather its neurons. When the participants talk about the brain, it is described as a collection or bunch of cells, just lying there. This is a way of referring to the cells as passive entities. The brain cells are studied, disconnected from the brain and the rest of the body, in the abstract world of the laboratory. These narratives and perspectives have similarities with the descriptions by the sociologist Karin Knorr Cetina of how researchers in

laboratories work with biomateriality, or rather extractions and purified versions of this materiality, which are decontextualized from place and time, i.e. their natural environment and their natural cycles of occurrence (Knorr Cetina 1999:27). With regard to human cells, in the laboratory the cells appear as pure working material with no links to a living context of bodies and persons. They lose all claim to represent individuals and are transformed into chemical biomateriality (Lundin 2012: 30).

Neurons as Personified

However, there are other narratives that interpret the neurons rather as personified. Personified is in particular a public image that the scientists come into contact with through different patient contexts, for example patients who are under treatment with cell transplantation. Susan expands on this in one of the focus group interviews:

I think it's something that some people will ask: what will it do to my brain if I get someone else's cells in there? And then they start thinking about how my brain will function and how these cells will... [...] And in that sense I guess the brain are their thoughts and their minds so they don't want... they want to get the functioning cured but they don't want anyone to meddle with their... [...] "What are they going to do to my brain, are they going to be partly you then?" (Susan)

Robert talks about how patients assume they may receive "someone else's brain information", and Katherine continues: "the patients are thinking, 'Will my thoughts change for instance, because I get other people's cells?'" Susan adds: "And also, 'Am I going to like something that I didn't like before?'" According to the participants, another person's cells are

perceived as threatening to the individual self by the patients involved. This phenomenon has been well described in previous ethnological research. Susanne Lundin found similar conceptions when she interviewed patients with Parkinson's disease and patients with diabetes in the 1990s (Lundin 1999). Her studies concerned cells that were transplanted or were planned to be transplanted from animal to humans. In this type of transplantation – known as xenotransplantation – there were beliefs that the animal's characteristics could be transferred to the patient. Also, the xenotransplant researchers themselves reflected on characteristics – similarities and differences – between the species when conducting their animal studies (Idvall 2003). In the media reports these perspectives were reproduced as funny anecdotes – for example, whether patients would be risking a pigtail after transplantation of porcine cells (Hansson 2011). But it was not simply funny anecdotes: in the media context the animal cells had an affordance that created different imaginaries.

At the same time, it is not only the public or patients' images that cells are bearer of inner thoughts, feelings and personality. The participants from the laboratory draw upon this belief as well, once again it is Susan that develops the argument:

And of course it's not complete nonsense, we don't know what these new cells will do. [...] Probably you will not become a pig if you get some pig cells but... (laughing)... but they transplanted human glial cells into mice, and these mice are smarter. And they call them humanized mice, and say that they are smarter mice. So, I mean it's not completely out of the question that they could do something to your brain. But we don't know and we can never measure it so we

don't want to discuss it. Because scientists are not comfortable discussing things that they don't know. (Susan)

How the neuroscientists perceive the brain cells is also related to the discourse of the atomized body (Liljefors et al. 2012). Other ethnological studies of biomedical research have pointed out that this discourse of the atomized body creates a fragmented, objectified body when focusing on cells and genes (Holmberg & Ide-land 2012). We want to highlight that this is similar to our study, but there is also an interpretation of the neurons as personified, having affordances that transcend the atomized body. While the scientists are not only mapping cells and genes, but also the processes of neurons, proteins and synapses, an important part is the modern technology that continually develops in the microscopic units of the body that seemingly are disconnected from the body as a whole (Franklin 2006). This modern technology also opens up for categorizations and ambivalences that may lead in other directions than objectification; rather, towards agency and subjectivity of the body or parts of the body.⁴ This is something that we will look more closely at in the final empirical section. Here we want to explore how the scientists can develop and change the biomateriality in a manner that also affects the affordance, meaning that it is not only the relation that is central to understand this affordance.

Reprogramming Cells – Authenticity and Identity

The scientists work with both stem cells and somatic cells in order to make them into neurons. Stem cells are cells that can differentiate⁵ to specialized cells. There-

fore, they are perceived as open for change, and with the expansion of biomedical research they are also looked upon as experimental biomateriality (Rubin 2008). Katherine explains their work with stem cells: "We're actually just following the normal developmental path. So, we think, I mean, the cells are authentic as we see them." A normal development seemingly means authenticity; the transformed stem cells are real and satisfactory brain cells or neurons.

On the other hand, somatic cells are looked upon as fixed; they are not really designed to be changed. Katherine describes the transformation as "kind of forcing one type of cell to becoming into something it's not supposed to be, which is called reprogramming". To transform somatic cells into neurons is to force them and perhaps even make them unauthentic. They become something that they were not destined to be. One of the participants expresses how neurons made from somatic cells have been questioned by fellow researchers:

When we started transforming these somatic cells into neurons, suddenly there were questions like, "Is it a real neuron you have made?" When they differentiated stem cells, people presupposed that it was stem cells. But the reprogramming created a lot of... "How do you know that the cells are neurons?" and then we began to discuss what a neuron really is, and what is possible to measure in these cells in order to call them neurons. That's the kind of measurements we make, where you look at, not only if they appear as neurons but function as neurons. (Susan)

The reprogramming process leads to questions about the authenticity of the transformed cells. This in turns leads to actions that measure the cells, especially their function. The researchers become part of

what Tim Ingold would call "an active exploration of the possibilities afforded by" the neurons and the environment – the laboratory – they were working in (Ingold 2011:359). A central question then is: does the new neuron function as a neuron should? The most important function for the cell is to be able to communicate and connect with other cells, as Mary points out:

The cells should send signals to each other, if the reprogrammed cells function as ordinary cells. If they can somehow reset the networks and then in the brain... We don't really know, are they really as they should be? If we take a somatic cell and turn it into a neuron, will it function as well as an ordinary neuron? Because if it won't, there is always a risk; you will end up with side effects and so on. (Mary)

A connecting neuron, i.e. a neuron that signals to other cells, is considered to be a functioning neuron. The neuroscientific emphasis on cell connection could be termed *connectionism*, according to Davi Johnson Thornton (2011), researcher in communication studies. The notion highlights the view of the brain as "an array of dynamic processes or signalling distributed neural pathways" (p. 14). Such a view also supports notions of the brain's potential with regard to plasticity and flexibility. The ability of the brain is dependent on the ability of neurons to connect. But the connecting ability is also a way for the scientists to categorize the transformed cell and ensure it has become a neuron by the way it functions, i.e. connects.

The participants further discuss how the reprogramming of cells is accomplished by using genes to control the cell identity. This is a technology that is now viewed as a well-known procedure, but some cells are easier than others to transform:

They [the cells] are not that predetermined. For example, a neuron, if you give it dopamine it can just ignore... the information is removed somehow. In nearly all reprogramming you add genes that control the cell and where it's going. Basically, nothing can shut down the identity the cell has originally, but the cell does that itself. (Susan)

Going back to affordance, we would argue that the materiality of the cell exists independently of the participants that are part of our study, the neuroscientific researchers, but the cells and the neurons afford differently in relation to diverse contexts in the laboratories (Leonardi 2013). "Nothing can shut down" the cell's identity – materiality – as Susan points out, only the cell itself. In other words, some cells are perceived as having more fleeting identities – they afford differently – than others. In this way, the neuroscientific researchers not only come to the cells and the neurons "with diverse goals" (p. 70), but it seems that also the materiality – "the identity the cell has originally" (Susan) – does something with the way the cells and neurons are perceived.

Some answers can be given if the focus is on how the biomedical researchers talk about the cells' identity. Identity is a common notion in biomedical research, simplistically meaning the predetermined function of different cell types, but as ethnologists we interpret identity as also having contextual connotations to the everyday use of the term. Cells with similar identities (for example cells that belong to comparable body parts or organs) have previously been regarded as easier to reprogram into one another, but according to the participants, their research now indicates that this is not always the case:

Perhaps one shouldn't start with similar [cells], but maybe it's better to start with something com-

pletely different. Even though it should be that a cell that's almost steered towards something would be easier to steer or control just a little bit further, rather than a cell that's completely different. (Susan)

When talking about reprogramming more difficult cells (cells with a more "fixed" identity), Mary says: "You may have to interfere in its natural course in a rather severe way to succeed." It seems that the natural course is given by biology, uninterrupted by human interventions, while the researcher has the ability to interfere and create an unnatural or artificial way. As Susanne Lundin puts it: "created cells are also alien elements; anomalies whose powers ought to be located beyond the individual" (Lundin 2012:33). There is then a tension between the (presumed) natural and the (presumed) artificial in biomedicine, a division that has been well discussed in ethnology (Lundin 1999; Hansson 2011).

Overall, cells are regarded as more mouldable – more plastic – than previously thought. Robert explains that, usually, "cells are never seen as plastic or anything close to plastic" but the reprogramming process has opened up a new field. Katherine continues:

Well, we're more looking at the cell, what's happening in the cell, not so much what's happening in the brain as a whole but each cell, how does each cell work. And how does, if we change it, how does that affect the way it functions. It's very specific. It's very much on a micro-level.... It's a cellular concept. But it absolutely changed the whole field and the concept of what a cell is and how you can change a cell. (Katherine)

The participants seemingly have an ambivalence towards the changing of cells when it comes to agency. The cells are sometimes described as passive, having a

predetermined identity and the reprogramming process forces them to transform. On the other hand, the cell is the active materiality that may shut down the original identity and alter into another form of cell, being able to connect with other cells and being plastic. The reprogramming process seems to change the materiality of the cells, from somatic cells to neurons, but also in terms of authenticity. Does the transformed cell have the same materiality as a true neuron? Or can the materiality change when the neuroscientific researchers are reprogramming the cells and adding genes? Can it be that the authenticity also concerns the tension between the original cell – created by biology through the body – and the transformed cell, created by scientists? These are central questions when we look more closely to the neuron, and how the cells and the neurons afford differently in relation to diverse contexts.

Conclusion

In this article, we have explored how bi-materiality that is in constant flux is described, interpreted and understood by neuroscientists, and their reasoning concerning new bio-scientific perspectives of these materialities. We also wanted to frame this reasoning with ethnological theories about materiality. Since materiality takes many various forms, we have argued for a development of new cultural-analytical tools within ethnology. We suggest that affordance could be such a tool, which emphasizes a relational approach to understand how people interact with materiality, and which refers to all possible interactions based on how an actor perceives this materiality. It is a tool that can

be used to better understand those habits and routines that are part of the *laboratory life* (Latour & Woolgar 1979).

The materiality of the cell exists independently of the neuroscientific researchers, but the cells and the neurons afford differently in relation to diverse contexts in the laboratories, as well as the context of the focus group interview. At work in the lab, the brain is seen as an object with many cells, and the neurons are fragmented parts of an objectified body. In contact with the public or patients, the neurons can be associated with inner thoughts, feelings and personality. At the same time, this is not something that has been developed in this article, which mainly focuses on everyday life in the laboratory. But it is important to stress that new knowledge that is produced within the laboratories also circulates in society at large and affects people's cultural views of what it means to be a human.

However, the scientists can develop and change the biomateriality in a way that also affects the affordance. Reprogrammed cells lead to discussions of authenticity and identity; the cells are sometimes interpreted as passive, at other times as active, altering their forms and being plastic. This is in many ways a new relation to how we as ethnologists can see and study materiality, and therefore also something that we want to highlight as a new task for our subject. The concept of affordance offers a tool to further understand the interaction between humans and materiality that is mouldable and flowing. We also need to find out new theoretical and methodological concepts to better understand the changing world within neuroscience.

In conclusion, we suggest that the neuroscientific work in the laboratory is interwoven with the researchers' perceptions of brains, cells and neurons. The practical dealings with human neuronal cells seemingly create new knowledge of the brain, but also transform the descriptions and understandings of the brain and its molecular components. The cells and neurons are interpreted in shifting ways; from passive, disconnected from brain and body, to active beings with an authentic identity; and from an atomized brain to a brain with selfhood and identity. Altogether this creates what Fernando Vidal (2009) calls brainhood, a neurocultural discourse that changes how we humans relate to the brain. As ethnologists we can talk about a personification of the brain, not simply having one but being one.

Affordance is a central perspective when we follow Joseph Dumit's call for an unpacking of the different discourses that underlie theories of the brain and its implications (Dumit 2004). It gives us ethnologists a possibility to explore different abilities for meaning-making and actions in, for example, the laboratory. But it is also a perspective on biomateriality that seek to reach further than merely seeing objects as shortcuts to cultural patterns, or how they are crucial for culture to emerge. The shifting materiality of the cells and neurons does something with how they are perceived. The concept of affordance may capture the particular interaction that emerges when materiality is fluctuating.

In the article, we have shown how the neuroscientists talk about brains, cells and neurons in different contexts, but this also underlines how the researchers *do* science in the laboratory. Working with cells and

neurons – manipulating and transforming them into different shapes, shifting functions and identities – shows the cultural meaning of affordances. To understand how neuroscience produces new knowledge about our brain, we ethnologists need to look further into the emerging processes in the laboratory and how the scientists strive for new perspectives, something that will also change our culture and what assumptions our culture has when relating to the organ that is, as Katherine says in the focus group interview, “just a bunch of cells”.

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Notes

1 See also Åkesson & Lundin 1996; Lundin & Ideland 1997; Lundin & Åkesson 2002; Ideland 2002; Liljefors et al. 2012; Andersen 2013; Hagen 2013; Wiszmeg 2016. This kind of ethnological research is part of an established research area concerning the cultural and social aspects of what can be called biosciences (see for example Brown & Webster 2004; Franklin 2006; Schmitz 2012; Rose

2013; Pickersgill, Martin & Cunningham-Burley 2015).

- 2 We wish to express our gratitude to all our research colleagues for many enthusiastic discussions. Such collaborations make it possible to share in the everyday life of research laboratories and clinics. We also thank the two anonymous peer reviewers whose comments were of great help during the revision of the text.
- 3 The focus group interviews were conducted by two of the authors – Kristofer Hansson and Markus Idvall – together with the research assistant Ellen Suneson.
- 4 It could be said that subjectivity happens through objectification; i.e. how “objectifying technologies affect human beings in various ways, particularly in how they turn an individual into a particular kind of *subject*” (Ekbia & Nardi 2012:158).
- 5 Differentiation of stem cells means that they undergo a progressive developmental change to a more specialized form or function (Franklin 2005:63).

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Field material

Four focus group interviews (November 2015 – May 2016), 3–5 participants, lasting between one and one and a half hours. Conducted by Kristofer Hansson, Markus Idvall and Ellen Suneson.

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Biographical Notes

Kirsti Mathiesen Hjemdahl, Professor in Kristiansand



The Norwegian ethnologist Kirsti Mathiesen Hjemdahl was appointed Professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Agder, at the beginning of 2019; seven months afterwards she was hired as CEO of the philanthropy fund of Cultiva. Being one of the major player in the region of Agder financing art, cultural and educational institutions and organizations, the fund contributes to innovation and development. Here she found herself in the pre-eminent position of exercising influence over cultural areas that ethnologists usually make part of their research and fieldwork.

The study of innovation and development has been one of the leitmotifs through Mathiesen Hjemdahl's academic career, mostly due to the manifold projects on tourism she has led from her more than a decade long tenure at the research institute of Agderforskning, located in the city of Kristiansand.

Another such motif was laid out when Mathiesen Hjemdahl graduated from the Department of Ethnology at Bergen University in 2002. Her dissertation dealt with Scandinavian theme parks, published a year later with the title: *Tur-retur Temapark*. This built upon her seminal approach to

how to understand festivals and show business, methodologically as well as theoretically. Designed by grownups to amuse the young, they have often been subject to shrewd academic comments upon the "real" intent behind the many seemingly artificial displays. As an ethnologist inspired by a phenomenological approach, she engaged a child as her field assistant. Closely following in his footsteps, she was able to reveal how the materiality was brought to life through play and interaction, a kind of enchantment that is often lost to the educated mind. This focus upon children and objects became a hallmark for a number of studies and publications where museum and cultural heritage were to be explored.

Moving on outside Norway, she started long-term cooperation with colleagues in Croatia and South Africa to study the material manifestations of politicians like Josip Tito and Nelson Mandela. To be a foreigner in the world of children in many regards resembles doing fieldwork in a culture where you have limited access to language and history. Together with students from the University of Zagreb, she initiated a project to study the "almost" theme park of Kumrovec, Tito's birthplace – helped by the insights of local ethnologists. Under the theoretical guidance of Mathiesen Hjemdahl, and in cooperation with scholars from the university, they advanced a model for fieldworking that turned out to be fruitful, using students both as informants and as researchers. Books, publications in international journals, and participation in conferences and seminars home and abroad was the scientific outcome of this cooperation, as well as the South-African project.

Kirsti Mathiesen Hjemdahl is known as a perceptive scholar, always on the lookout for novel ideas and perspectives. To be head-hunted for the demanding job as CEO of a huge fund with the aim of promoting culture and innovation in the region must be seen as a recognition of her capacity to manage projects as well as people who work on them.

Jonas Frykman, Lund

Lars Kaijser, Professor in Stockholm



Lars Kaijser has been affiliated with Stockholm University since 1991, where he has, among other things, served as director of studies and head of ethnology. Kaijser gained his doctorate in ethnology in 1999, and since 2006 he has been a lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Ethnology, History of Religions and Gender Studies (ERG). His dissertation *Lant-handlare: En etnologisk undersökning av en ekonomisk verksamhet* examined present-day country shops. This ethnographic study was based on fieldwork in northern Klarälvsdalen, focusing on how the work of country shopkeepers is constituted in a field of competing notions about retail trade.

Since Lars Kaijser gained the title of docent in 2008, cultural aspects of small business and economic activities are themes that have continued to permeate his research, but he has also explored other fields in greater depth and tackled new ones: popular music and historiography, nature and the environment. He has developed the tradition of ethnography and cultural analysis, often combined with archival studies and written materials.

Lars Kaijser's research profile contains different perspectives on the relationship between large and small processes. His goal is to understand and describe how the global or the national can manifest itself in the local and the everyday. He also has a strong and well-documented interest in understanding how culturally imprinted beliefs constitute various activities and contexts. In the

monograph *Musikens ögonblick: En studie av konsertarrangörer* (2007) he shows how concert arrangers plan, implement, and value their own activities, and how their work is grounded in directives of cultural policy. The overall aim is to understand why the work of the concert arrangers is organized in a particular way, why their work "looks the way it does". By following a chamber music society, a rock club for young people, and a café, Lars Kaijser focuses on the organizers' various practices, and his ethnographic study contributes interesting and in-depth analyses of the processes that have an impact on the different activities.

Kaijser's scholarly works display his strong ethnographic presence and his analytical acuity and profundity. The relationship between popular music and history is a prominent theme of his research. Several of his publications concern a common research question, "how and what is communicated when the history of pop music is portrayed in different forms". As a good writer, Kaijser often chooses to publish his research in the form of edited volumes, a genre in which cultural analysis and ethnographic descriptions can have more space than in a shorter article format. This has been a successful publishing tradition in the humanities. Today we can increasingly see international elements, and Kaijser's list of publications includes two fine contributions to edited volumes: "Swedish Prog Rock and the Search for a Timeless Utopia" (with Sverker Hylltén-Cavallius) in Holt & Antti-Ville (2017) and "Authenticities on Display: Reflections on a Staged Pink Floyd Concert" in Brusila, Johnson & Richardson (2016). Texts like these contribute to the international development of ethnology.

Publications dealing with similar themes are "Allsång på Skansen. Reflektioner kring populärmusik, tradition och immateriellt kulturarv" in *RIG: Kulturhistorisk tidskrift* (2017), "Mångtydiga skrat: Om närhet och distans hos Beatles-entreprenörer i Liverpool" in Jönsson & Fredriksson (2014), and "Beatlesfragment i rörelse: En guidad bussturs narrativa ordnande av tid och rum" in Gustafsson Reinius, Habel & Jülich (2013). The latter is an especially good example of Lars Kaijser's ethnographic rigour and good presentation skills.

Parts of Lars Kaijser's ongoing research can be

found in the volume from 2018, *Djur: Berörande möten och kulturella smärtpunkter*, which he edited together with Simon Ekström. He applies cultural perspectives to animals and plants, specifically how animals and nature are presented in public aquariums. How can scientific knowledge and entertainment be combined in the aquariums' outreach activities? In this volume, eight ethnologists analyse how animals in different ways arouse people's engagement and emotions. Kaijser's article focuses on how sharks are displayed in aquariums, and how they are portrayed in words and pictures. These stagings contain ambivalences and contradictions that also concern the relationship between animals and humans. Other ongoing research proceeds from topical environmental issues, popular culture, citizens' research, as well as invasive species and the various action programmes to manage or impede the spread of certain species.

Lars Kaijser's pedagogical qualifications show a highly developed sensitivity to different target groups and an insight into the importance of variation in pedagogical tools and forms of examination. An important factor is his ability to communicate research findings to students and colleagues, and to society as a whole. The book *Konsumtion* (2010), for example, written together with the business economist Jacob Östberg, functions as an excellent textbook of different perspectives on consumerism as a concept and a social phenomenon. The book problematizes the role of consumption for individuals and society in a fascinating way, and Kaijser focuses specifically on the emergence of the Swedish consumer society and the consumption of popular culture in a historical context.

With Magnus Öhlander, Lars Kaijser has also edited a textbook on fieldwork, which appeared in a second edition in 2011: *Etnologisk fältarbete: En antologi*. Another important pedagogical contribution is the article on methodology in the volume *Nutida etnografi: Reflektioner från medie-*

konsumtionens fält (Gemzöe 2004). His chapter on "When the Structures Emerge" focuses on the combination of ethnographic investigations with archival and media studies. Here Kaijser reflects on his own role as an ethnographer in the research process and shows how the ongoing fieldwork involves constant redefinition of positions and how the policy of a specific activity structures the work of the ethnographer. Kaijser also demonstrates the difficulty of gaining access to an empirical field, in this case retail trade. His understanding of the specific conditions of trade is an important part of his methodological reflection, and the article is a strong pedagogical contribution to contemporary ethnography.

Lars Kaijser is active and well established in the scholarly community, making a solid contribution to the university's shared development work. His many years as director of studies have involved both course development and administration, as well as more general leadership and implementation of changes. As head of ethnology, Kaijser has broad experience of leadership at several levels and in different academic contexts. His collaboration with the surrounding society is well documented, for example, through the educational collaboration "OpenLab" between Stockholm University, the Karolinska Institute, Södertörn University, and the Royal Institute of Technology. Other merits include sitting on the board of the Centre for Maritime Studies (CEMAS) and the Music-Focused Interdisciplinary Research and Analysis Centre (MIRAC), which testifies to an interest in long-term and in-depth interaction between the academy and the surrounding society. Lars Kaijser has also been successful in obtaining external research funding for the subject, allowing long-term investments. Lars Kaijser's collaboration with the University of Illinois has helped to develop international collaborations in the field of ethology at Stockholm University.

Cecilia Fredriksson, Lund/Helsingborg

John Ødemark, Professor in Oslo



John Ødemark was appointed professor of Cultural History at the University of Oslo in 2018. Ødemark defended his doctoral thesis at the University of Oslo in 2010 and he holds two master degrees, in Comparative Literature and in Folklore and Cultural History. He also has a background in anthropology, the history of religion and intellectual history. This interdisciplinary background is deeply reflected in Ødemark's research and publications. He is a cultural historian of the theoretical kind. Most of his work has an explicit epistemological or historical-epistemological purpose and cultural translation is a recurring topic in his writing. His doctoral dissertation examined cultural translation and early modern cultural encounters and was highly praised by the evaluation committee for being "unusually ambitious" and "a first-class piece of work and an important contribution to Cultural History". His postdoctoral project was about the Amazon as a topos in cultural theory, ethno-politics and environmentalism.

His research also emphasizes how intercultural translation is intertwined with other translational processes such as language, text and knowledge. Not least of all, this characterizes his later work

on medical knowledge translation ("from bench to bedside") which explores the entanglements of epistemological, cultural and textual practices in the transmission of medical research evidence into policy-making and clinical decision-making across the globe.

A distinctive feature of Ødemark's research is its multidimensional character. Ødemark never treats a concept like translation as secluded into one single theoretical space but as a "floating signifier" open to divergent meanings. Moreover, he is not satisfied with *applying* a theory to empirical material; he simultaneously *questions* the theory. In this lies a fundamental historical awareness and gaze. A recurring assumption in Ødemark's texts is that the distinction between an empirical and historically situated reality and a theoretical approach that is general and generic is not analytically fruitful and impossible to maintain. Unlike some of the literary and social science researchers he derives his inspiration from, he treats any theoretical concept as a result of complex textual and historical processes. When he draws on theorists such as Latour, Derrida or Viveiros de Castro, it is always *as texts* he considers them, not as emblems of theoretical "frameworks" or systems. Like the empirical texts he analyses – be it indigenous discourse or medical guidelines – he shows how the theoretical texts he analyses them *with* contain a multitude of meanings and are products of complex historical processes. This dual approach makes his analyses original and complex, but also challenging and sometimes difficult to read. Ødemark's research cannot be swallowed easily; you need to slow down to savour the insights generated through his texts.

Ødemark is not only a researcher, but also an experienced university teacher. He is perhaps not the kind of teacher who wins awards for entertainment or for using new and fancy technologies in teaching. But he has an exceptional pedagogical patience and takes a genuine interest in the thoughts of his students. This attitude, combined with his intellect, has made him a highly valued role model and a loyal academic mentor for new generations of intelligent young researchers.

Ødemark is appointed group leader at the Centre for Advanced Studies at the Norwegian Academy for Science and Letters for the aca-

demic year 2019–2020. Through the project “Body in Translation” he investigates ideas and practices of translation in medicine and the humanities with the aim of rethinking the field of the medical humanities as a cross-disciplinary contact zone between the humanities and medicine. Ødemark’s work thus has implications beyond cultural history and even the humanities. Recently, Ødemark has been appointed a member of a WHO expert group commissioned to write a

theoretical book on the topic of cultural context of health and knowledge translation.

With his critical and theoretical mindset combined with his interest in scientific border-crossings, Ødemark represents what I believe are the best parts of both traditional and “new wave” humanities. I am convinced we can look forward to many innovative contributions from him in the future.

Eivind Engebretsen, Oslo

New Dissertations

Presenting Writers and Their Work

Thea Aarbakke, Forfattermuseumsfunksjonene. Musealiserte relasjoner mellom liv og litteratur. En studie av Hamsunsenteret, Bjerkebak – Sigrid Undsets hjem og Hauge-senteret. Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo 2020. 208 pp. Ill. Diss.

■ Thea Aarbakke's dissertation is all about how knowledge of an author's life and works is presented in exhibitions in writers' museums and writers' centres. The ambition is to investigate the exhibition space as an alternative way to understand how authors have been received and assessed. This is accompanied by a focus on exhibition techniques and means of communication such as showcases, timelines, texts, objects, and installations. Aarbakke's premise is that this gives a special understanding that differs from other ways of presenting an author's work, such as biographies in book form or literary chronicles. The background is a desire to test the relatively strong position occupied by the author as subject. The dissertation has an important demarcation: it considers only museums dedicated to a single author, not museums or other institutions devoted to national or more general literature.

The dissertation consists of six chapters. It follows a traditional structure, with an introductory chapter about the subject of the study and previous research, followed by a chapter on theory and method. Then come three empirical chapters and a concluding chapter. The dissertation is written with a sure hand, easy to follow and take in.

Chapter 1, "Authorship in museums", deals with the starting points of the study and presents the three institutions where authors' lives and writings are exhibited and interpreted. The empirical material concerns Sigrid Undset and her home in Bjerkebak, then Knut Hamsun and the Hamsun Centre at Hammarøy in Nordland, and finally Olav H. Hauge and the Hauge Centre in Ulvik. These differ in both content and character. Sigrid Undset's home in Bjerkebak opened to the public in 2007. It had then been in state ownership for ten years and the home that had been in the family's possession since the author's death had then been subjected to inventory, documentation and cataloguing. The museum was based on Undset's belongings and was restored as it

was when the author lived there in the 1930s. An extension for the public, with a café, offices, shop, etc., has also been built. The Hamsun Centre opened in 2009. It is located on the island of Hammarøy, Nordland, where Hamsun grew up with his uncle. The building was designed by the architect Steven Holl and is an interpretation of Hamsun's literature. The centre is also responsible for Hamsun's childhood home, the Hamsun farm, but this is not included in Aarbakke's study. The centre has few original artefacts and has no collection. The Olav H. Hauge Centre, which opened in 2014, is a documentation and mediation centre located in Ulvik (in the old town hall) in Hardanger. The centre has some objects left by Hauge, such as private photographs, original letters, and collections of cuttings. It also has Hauge's book collection (owned by the Hauge Foundation). Furthermore, the centre is part of the museum constellation *Nynorsk Kultursentrum* (The Ivar Aasen Centre for Language and Written Culture), which represents the written language Nynorsk.

Aarbakke provides a meticulous description of the different institutions and how they are organized. This is important background information, which raises questions about the significance of the organization for the design of the exhibitions. There is a detailed discussion of what these institutions should be called: poet's home, writer's museum, or literary centre. Particular attention is paid to the category of museum and whether these three author institutions are or are not museums. Undset's home defines itself as a museum, while the Hamsun Centre more explicitly rejects this term as being too limiting. The Hauge Centre sometimes calls itself a museum, but the question does not seem to be as important for them. I also wonder whether this has any bearing on Aarbakke's dissertation, a question that does not get a clear answer.

In the first chapter, the author also describes three research themes that are relevant to the development of the study. Aarbakke was initially inspired by research that problematizes the significance of an author's biography and how it can be expressed in exhibitions. In addition, studies of place and identity creation are important for discussing how the exhibitions relate to the geographical spaces in which they are located and how they help to pin literature to a specific place. Finally, studies of authenticity and presence have contributed to an understanding

of how the exhibitions are designed. Texts about authenticity by Camilla Mordhorst and Sian Jones have been particularly important.

In chapter 2 of the dissertation, “Relational museology: About theory and method”, Aarbakke describes her dissertation as a contribution to the field of museology and what she perceives as an unexplored area, namely museums devoted to one person, a category of museums which has become much more numerous in recent decades. Inspired by the sociologist John Law, Aarbakke views her study as a contribution to relational museology, which draws its theoretical inspiration from Actor-Network-Theory (ANT). The starting point is that reality is the result of relationships between human and non-human actors, and an important basic assumption here is that entities are understood on the basis of the relationships of which they are part. Equally important is that everything can have materiality (or agency). It is not only visions that create exhibitions; materials, objects, and exhibition technology are also important. Consequently, in this dissertation the gaze is directed towards the materiality that can be found in showcases, timelines, artefacts, installations, and texts.

To answer the questions outlined at the start, Thea Aarbakke chose fieldwork as a method, with a total of eight visits in the field during 2016 and 2017. The fieldwork included observations at the three author institutions, semi-structured interviews with people involved in various ways in the activities at the three selected sites, and studies of documents about each institution. The empirical data thus consists of documentation through notes and photographs of exhibitions and guided tours, along with interviews. Aarbakke has used a method that derives its inspiration from ANT and has searched for things that have an effect on the exhibitions and that influence how the authors and their works are understood. In ANT terms, one can say that the author has studied exhibitions as networks, where the aim has been to identify the actors associated with the exhibition and acting in it. Given the knowledge she seeks to create and the theoretical approach, the method seems well chosen.

Thea Aarbakke has singled out three categories of objects that recur in different ways in the three exhibitions: *window*, *desk*, and *book collection*. These objects constitute the analytical focus of the dissertation and help her to answer the question of

how author museums and literary centres select an author’s oeuvre and biography. These three types of objects have been chosen because they appear in all the exhibitions and they form part of the exhibition where the works and the author’s biography meet. The starting point is that knowledge and ideas about authors and their oeuvre are communicated materially, i.e. not only in text; as objects they are involved in socio-material processes. Windows are treated as exhibition techniques, desks as installations, and book collections are studied to see how they are used and which exhibition techniques are employed to make them accessible.

Chapter 3, “Room with a view: Making a place through windows”, examines the significance of the windows in the different exhibition spaces. It shows how the placing of the windows, the light they admit, and the view they offer also contribute to an understanding of the authors. Through her analysis of the significance of windows, Aarbakke shows how the exhibitions interact with the outside world and how they help visitors to understand the authors’ connection to a place, their inspiration and everyday life. When it comes to windows as an exhibition technique, Aarbakke takes into account how the windows in the various exhibition rooms also help to constitute the exhibitions and how they also add to the narrative. This leads to further discussion about the framing of the exhibitions. She particularly emphasizes how windows, together with other things, are significant for understanding place and how relations between objects contribute to this. With large windows, the world outside becomes part of the exhibition. But it is not a passive world outside. The relational concept of space shows how the placement and use of windows can give a new understanding of the relationships between place, author, and exhibition. Place here is about belonging and everyday life as much as literary inspiration. The big windows on the fifth floor of the Hamsun Centre are associated with Hamsun’s broad perspectives, but also with the ambivalence in the way he is perceived as a person. This is very different from the case of Undset, where the private aspect is highlighted, how she strove to shut out the outside world. Hamsun is held up as a world writer, whereas Bjerkebak helps to demonstrate the author’s attempts to find somewhere quiet to write.

Chapter 4, “Desk installations”, draws attention to how the working methods of Undset, Hamsun,

and Hauge are displayed in the various exhibitions through the way their desks have been reconstructed and arranged. Here the desks serve as an entrance to the authors' working methods but also their lives and the people they surrounded themselves with. Exhibiting a desk is one way in which an exhibition about an author can materialize the actual writing process. This is fascinating and thought-provoking reading. It is a way to show who the author was and how the author worked. On this point the three exhibitions differ slightly. In the exhibitions about Undset, her desk is on show, while in the other two exhibitions other forms of desk can be identified. By thinking in terms of ANT, Aarbakke shows how the desks come into existence through photographs and other things. The things are perceived here, in line with ANT, not as static objects but as co-creators in the imaginary desks. Here the visitor also becomes a co-creator, since the observer is an important part of how installations can be perceived depending on perspective and where in the exhibition space the viewer is located.

The last empirical study, chapter 5, "Book collections", deals with the books on display in the museum and the two writers' centres. Approaching the three book collections turns out to be a fruitful approach. There are great large differences between the different exhibitions. Undset's and Hauge's book collections are huge, containing thousands of books, while the book collection at the Hamsun Centre consists of 58 original editions. The accessibility of the different book collections, how they are exhibited, and how far it is possible to read them creates different networks and relationships with the outside world. The books in the collections were either owned or written by the authors. The study focuses on how different versions of the book collections are made accessible to visitors and how this is linked to the way the book collections are exhibited. In this chapter, the author draws support not only from ANT but also from theorists such as Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes. The books turn out to be flexible aesthetic objects that connect people, ideas, and things in the institutions' buildings, bookshelves, and show-cases. Aarbakke demonstrates how museums exhibit and treat objects created through relationships between documentation managers, exhibition techniques, and existing collections. In the search for book collections, she leaves the exhibition pre-

ises and reaches other parts of the museum such as libraries and databases.

In the final chapter 6 of the dissertation, "The function of an author's museum", the results are summarized, with particular emphasis on how a study of exhibition spaces can serve as an alternative way to respond to the authors' oeuvre and biography.

Thea Aarbakke's dissertation is undoubtedly thought-provoking. The analyses are multi-layered, demonstrating how an exhibition contains so much more than a set of objects presented with accompanying texts. The strength of the dissertation lies in the interpretations of the three selected objects. Here Aarbakke elucidates how both an oeuvre and a biography can be understood in the respective exhibitions. She approaches windows as something other than just light sources, and shows how they interact with the exhibitions. She answers questions such as which places are made visible, what perspectives it adds to the author's works, and how all this interacts with the rest of the exhibitions. Working with windows is also a way of approaching the boundary work that takes place in the studied institutions.

Aarbakke's aims in the creation of knowledge are both reasonable and justified. At the same time, the research problem itself is somewhat vague – not in the sense that it is unclear what is driving Aarbakke, but the problem itself could have been formulated more precisely, and I would have liked to see more detailed discussion of the choices made by the author and the consequences of these. The text tends to report more than to discuss the choices of theory, method, and empirical data that were significant for the implementation of the study. I would have liked to have read in greater depth about the challenges the author faced when writing the dissertation and how she justifies her choice of study objects, method, and theory. It is not that I want a different study, just a more profound consideration of the choice of problem, the selection of authors and specific objects.

The choice of institutions concerning individual authors instead of institutions devoted to national literature or specific periods seems reasonable to me, as a way to examine what relations are established between literature and life. The choice of author institutions is determined by practical considerations, that it must be realistic economically and geographically. This is perfectly reasonable, but an

important question is whether this also has analytical consequences. What is the strength of a national demarcation and what difference does it make? What is the consequence of a practical demarcation? As far as the empirical foundation is concerned, it seemed meagre to me at first glance, and the fieldwork was relatively limited, but the important thing, of course, is what has been collected and how this material is then used. Here Aarbakke has been creative and the collected material is well employed.

When it comes to the choice of the three sites to investigate, Aarbakke, as mentioned earlier, describes how the various institutions position themselves in relation to defining themselves as museums. Here I would have preferred a discussion that takes into account that the study is focused on exhibitions, one or more of which are found in museums. It would be interesting, then, to discuss whether the institutional framework of a museum or a writer's centre has any effect on the design of the exhibition and, above all, the knowledge conveyed about the authors and their works. Such a discussion would also have been in line with the ANT-influenced approach and the discussion of the importance of naming as boundary work. In what way does the definition as a museum give materiality to the presentation of an author's biography and oeuvre? This is something that could well have been taken up in the concluding discussion.

The way Aarbakke has chosen to achieve her aim is original. The three objects – window, desk, book collection – are well chosen and lead to interesting reasoning and insights. But I am curious about how these items were selected. It is possible to perceive the selection of study objects as being, if not haphazard, then at least arbitrary. We are told, for example, that Aarbakke was inspired by a window that was on display at the Dickens Museum in London. Did she consider any other items? Was there anything in these objects that also seemed to capture the more general impressions of visits to the three places? How did Aarbakke go about searching through the materialities that shaped the exhibitions?

Thea Aarbakke's theoretical starting points raise questions about the researcher's own position in the network that is studied and the consequences this has for the results of the study. The author has alternated between being in exhibitions, searching in databases, and studying the contents of books; she has

also thoroughly scrutinized her empirical data and written up her results. It is possible here to conceive of a great variety of networks that shaped the research process and how the three objects – window, desk, and book collection – have been written and interpreted. What does the author's contemplation mean for the analysis? Despite the descriptions of the research process, there is something capricious about Aarbakke's own position. Who is this dissertation writer who interprets book collections and museums? What is the author's own relationship to exhibition production, museums, authors, and literature? I am not calling for a more self-absorbed dissertation writer, but for a framing of the foundation on which the interpretations have been made. How does she draw the boundaries around the network she studies? What is noted and ascribed agency, and what is ignored? An example of this is how the studied objects acquire their status. This is relevant, for example, in the definition of what a desk is. In the case of Hauge it is the dining table that is defined as a desk, and here the author could have reflected on her own naming practice. Does the analysis collapse if it is allowed to be a dining table instead of being identified as a desk? There is no in-depth discussion of the researcher's own significance for the interpretations and understandings of what the exhibitions communicate. Are there alternative interpretations here, and would they have affected the validity of the results?

To continue along the same lines. One of the reasons that Aarbakke chose to use ANT – as I understand it – is that it enables more narratives, that it is possible to think new thoughts about how to understand the authors and their works. Here we are obliged to follow Aarbakke's reading. It would be interesting to see other possible interpretations. Are there alternative narratives and, if so, what are they? Aarbakke has chosen to avoid the visitors' experiences, which is a reasonable demarcation based on the empirical data. But how are the exhibitions constituted in relation to visitors? What effect do they have? While it is certainly possible to think of Aarbakke as a potential visitor, a possible approach would have been to do more detailed ethnography, i.e. describe how the exhibitions are actually used, in relation to Aarbakke's interpretations of them, both to test her own interpretations and to catch sight of other potential perspectives. There is no reason to distrust the interpretations presented in the

dissertation, but the argument would have been reinforced if there had been room for alternative narratives as well.

A discussion of the validity of the results would have been one way to tackle the questions raised above – for example, in relation to the issue of the position of the dissertation author and potential interpretations. The reason for visiting three institutions was to show that there are different ways of exhibiting an author's oeuvre. Is it even interesting to compare the different institutions, and on what basis can such comparisons be made? How can the different interpretations of desks, windows, and book collections be reconciled for the different author institutions? Do they reinforce each other? Can the interpretations of these objects be said to be indicative of how the institutions treat their respective authors, or could they be perceived as some form of counter-narratives?

Overall, Thea Aarbakke's dissertation is a creative and original study. As I have pointed out, it raises questions about demarcations and choices of interpretation. Having said that, there is a great deal to be gained from the dissertation. It displays playfulness as regards the interpretative framework and the way of approaching museums in general and exhibitions in particular. It demonstrates the potential to understand how things and spaces interact in exhibitions and how this affects presentations of writers and their work as a whole.

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Becoming Good Danish Soldiers

Beate Sløk-Andersen, *The Becoming of Good Soldiers. An Ethnographic Exploration of Gender and Other Obstacles in the Military Borderland*. University of Copenhagen, Faculty of Humanities, The Saxo Institute. 235 pp. Ill. Diss.

■ The aim of *The Becoming of Good Soldiers*, a compilation dissertation, is to investigate how being a good soldier is performed in the everyday lives of conscripted soldiers, and how particular understandings of "good" affect the embodied becoming of soldiers. The dissertation is primarily based on ethnographic fieldwork during the initial training of conscripts in contemporary Denmark. The fieldwork also include interviews with conscripted soldiers, sergeants and officers, as well as observations con-

ducted at one recruitment event, along with written sources such as political defence agreements and recruitment materials. Sløk-Andersen's theoretical inspiration comes primarily from the writings of Donna Haraway, Judith Butler and Sarah Ahmed.

As Sløk-Andersen argues, the conscripts are situated in the military borderland between being young adult citizens eligible for military service and "real" soldiers. The notion of Borderland is used in order to stress the ambivalence of the definition of this particular sphere, in which "the good soldier" is constructed and negotiated. This position makes the notion of soldier open and contested, thus relevant to focus in a study of the becoming of "good soldiers". As clearly argued by Sløk-Andersen, there is not one, singular definition of the good soldier; rather it is a multiple, open-ended process of becoming. Becoming is conceptualized in a performative, material-semiotic sense, which emphasizes becoming as a process coordinated with other actors, including non-human ones.

The analytical part of the dissertation consists of four articles. "Researching the Body – The Body in Research: Reflections on a Participatory Fieldwork in the Danish Army" focuses on the (gendered) body as a tool in ethnographic fieldwork. Doing what conscripts do, it is argued, resulted in methodological insights. Drills, physical exercise and exhaustion, marching, and rifle maintenance, among other military routines, did not leave much room or time for taking notes. However, Sløk-Andersen argues, what might have been "lacking in notes [...] I made up in embodied experience and memories of conversations muttered among conscripts lined up for inspection". Sløk-Andersen uses one of the first bodily practices the conscripts were taught – standing at ease and standing to attention – as an example of the gain embodied fieldwork represents. According to Sløk-Andersen, being among the conscripts while such mundane scenarios unfolded "gave insights into the disciplinary mechanisms working among conscripts". It positioned her in places and situations that she otherwise would have been excluded from and enabled "the experience of embodying military ideals". Discussing how to march properly, she even became "so enrolled" in military norms and ideology that she eagerly wanted to perform the role of the good soldier. The latter is defined as a valuable analytical insight: Sløk-Andersen argues that it is impossible to keep a degree of

detachment in a context that requires ideological commitment from its members. The article delivers a convincing analysis of the ways in which embodied routines constitute the military system, the significance of horizontal as well as hierarchical discipline, and how implicit norms of gender and able-bodiedness structure the possibilities of becoming a “good soldier”.

Article two, “Vomit over tears. The performance of will among conscripted soldiers” contributes new knowledge on the cultural complexity of will. Sløk-Andersen argues that will is a material-discursive phenomenon that needs to be performed in certain ways for soldiers to become recognizable as willing. This approach sheds new light on “will”, as most previous research understands will as an inherent or individual quality. From a performative perspective, being a good, willing soldier is not seen as a representation of pre-existing skills, competences, or conditions. Instead the focus is on the “continuous practices that make being good or willing recognizable to oneself as well as others”. Understanding will as a material-discursive phenomenon that needs to be performed fuels a critical question regarding gender and disabilities. Within the dominant discourse of will, all conscripts are assumed to have an equal opportunity to perform as willing, but the article demonstrates that some conscripts experience more obstacles than others in being recognized as good, willing soldiers.

Article three, “The Materiality of Military Becoming”, explores the significance of particular aspects of material culture, and specifically the collective doing of uniforms, for the continuous valuing of good soldiers. Through an emphasis upon the subtle ways in which personal clothing becomes a collective space for action, control and micro-correction, but also highlighting the ways in which uniforms enable particular judgements of distinction to be drawn, the article offers new analytic perspectives upon a fundamental dimension of everyday military life. The analysis of how hierarchy, authority and discipline become entangled with materiality is nuanced, original and convincing. The article also highlights some of the specific ways in which, far from covering over and undoing the significance of gender, uniforms themselves materialize and make gendered difference salient.

Article four, “The Affective Powers of Attunement: The Fear of Being a Killjoy”, sheds new light

upon a phenomenon that has rarely been subject to nuanced empirical analysis: the salience of humour in military cultures. Informed particularly by scholarship on moods and affect, the article offers a new interpretation of the ways in which engagement in banter and the use of humour is an important idiom through which a wider ongoing assessment of collective attunement operates. The article argues that while being able to take a joke is a central part of being recognized as a potential good soldier, not being in the mood for humour is felt as a breach of such wider collective emotional attunement. The article further points to how much humour is entangled with performances of heterosexual potency, which is thereby reiterated as a recognizable dimension of good soldiering. The article insightfully details how the construction of particular moods and emotional choreographies serves to structure the recognition of a good soldier.

The theoretical frame, and the multi-ethnographic approach, makes it possible for Sløk-Andersen to produce new knowledge on, among other things: methodology; the cultural complexity of will; the agency of the uniform; and humour and laughter as important cultural elements in processes of becoming. One of the most impressive things about the thesis is the engagement with a wide range of different disciplinary literature, from feminist science and technology studies, through critical military studies, to ethnographies of everyday life. The literature review is well structured and demonstrates an understanding of a wide range of theoretical material, as well as an appreciation of some of the various limitations of these diverse areas of scholarship. A broad conceptual and analytic vocabulary is organized into a coherent and productive theoretical framework. Each of the articles offers a detailed perspective on a particular dimension of the contingent, multiple and unfinished nature of ongoing recognition as a “good soldier”. Some minor problems or questions do however surface as one advances in the terrain of the dissertation.

Auto-ethnography stands out as an important method and the author’s narrative performance of the method is intriguing: “My body was a vessel for gathering empirical material, picking up affective experiences along the way”; “I have performatively explored this phenomenon by submerging myself in the military setting”. Being submerged seems to have resulted in analytical surprises and valuable

methodological insights: “Ideas of ethnographic consciousness or detachment from the embodied experience turned out not to grasp the entanglement of mind and body that the field configured, yet it enabled me to see some of the mechanisms that work in and through the bodies of soldiers”. One can wonder why Sløk-Andersen was surprised, and if the surprise in itself was a result of a strategic detachment from the military setting. Furthermore, despite being caught up and submerged, Sløk-Andersen produced 15 notebooks full of observations. How was it possible to disentangle the mind from the bodily experiences as the notes were scribbled down? Finally, the dissertation without a doubt presents new knowledge to the transdisciplinary field of military research. However, one cannot help longing for a more elaborate discussion concerning the dissertation’s contribution to Ethnology: Does the dissertation, while focusing on the military setting, provide theoretical/methodological knowledge to Ethnology? These questions, and some others, remain partly unanswered. Beate Sløk-Andersen’s dissertation is nonetheless theoretically sophisticated, methodologically thorough and very well organized and written. Several analyses are developed of diverse material-discursive phenomena and multiple dimensions of becoming a “good soldier”. The analysis is grounded in rich ethnographic detail. In other words, it is a dissertation that signals the becoming of a very promising ethnologist.

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Doing Swedish Hip-hop

Andrea Dankić, Att göra hiphop. En studie av musikpraktiker och sociala positioner. Institutionen för etnologi, religionshistoria och genusvetenskap, Stockholms universitet. Universus Academic Press, Malmö 2019. 205 pp. Diss. ISBN978-91-87439-59-9.

■ There is a profound paradox at the heart of this new and quite interesting dissertation about what its author Andrea Dankić calls hiphop musicking. The research carried out is embedded in a strong effort to show how people in Sweden involved in various types of rap and hiphop making – the two terms rap and hiphop are partly analogous, partly different as to their scope – are all the time negotiating the “true” or “real” or authentic way of doing this kind

of music. Dankić is led to this framework by introducing the sociologist Max Weber’s old concept of ideal types into her research field, which quickly establishes itself as perhaps the leading analytical tool in the whole effort. The other main analytical concept of the thesis is hiphop musicking, the latter word a noun derived of course from the word music which emphasizes music and music making as a process in contrast to music as an object or a finished product. This term was coined by the musicologist Christopher Small, it is a close relative to the anthropologist Ruth Finnegan’s concept of music-making.

The ideal type of hiphop musicking (and also of a hiphop musician) is seen as a constant in the continuous flow which is this urban, often quite tough and hard music. From the point of view of the white middle class in a country such as Sweden, hiphop is often regarded with some scepticism or maybe even in some cases with disrespect. But the hiphop scene at large is one developed in the United States in the 1970s, emerging in troubled inner-city areas such as The Bronx in New York and other similar boroughs in big cities such as Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles. It was and it is a music with roots, a hereditary frame in the Afro-American diaspora, and not least a strong connection to the Caribbean islands, above all Jamaica and its older musical genres such as reggae and dancehall. Of course, r&b, funk and jazz are also important predecessors of this kind of music making. The fact that these rap musicians were troubled males, often with a criminal record, led to the early genre of rap and hiphop (with graffiti being its most important artistic sibling, from a more general artistic genre point of view) being called gangsterrap or gangstarap. From the beginning it mainly had a subcultural resonance, leading – as is usual with new popular cultural forms – to a certain form of moral panic in the mainstream. In America and later also in other western countries the white mainstream initially took quite a moralistic view of the new genre. And incidentally this kind of view has resurfaced in the way a famous African-American jazz musician and cultural figure, Wynton Marsalis, sees the form. Marsalis has not much good to say about the form. In his view it is musically derivative and reproduces quite a negative, mythological stereotype of the African-American male as a pimp, a gangster and a drug dealer.

An interesting thing, which Dankić fails to tackle

in her thesis, is the close interrelation between the ascent of the rap/hiphop scene and these strong opinions or antipathies, of its dangerous and transgressive nature, views cultivated in mainstream society, views which of course earlier on were applied to forms such as the blues, rock'n'roll, rhythm & blues and soul music. Evidently, and at the same time paradoxically, this was part of the appeal of this music, and what drove it into the mainstream. The newness of the rhythms, the ways of saying things differently, with a vocabulary which might have seemed simple, crude and rudimentary from a more established musical and/or literary point of view, instead came to be seen as more contemporary, more relevant to what society looked like, with modernity regarded as a motor for its restless flow forward.

But, as has become quite clear in the first decades of this new millennium, the cultural significance of hiphop and rap is today very much the opposite of what it was when it all started in the Bronx and other similar places in the '70s. Today hiphop and rap is a major popular musical force to be reckoned with, seen from both the angle of what sells records and how it is perceived by the critics. The leading Swedish popular music critic Andres Lokko recently wrote in *Svenska Dagbladet*, citing the American artist and activist Arthur Jafa, that all rock'n'roll is black and that the 2010s was the decade when a whole world came to understand this. This understanding also implies that hiphop is a central part of what Lokko calls black music.

In a study from 2016 on how musicians in January 2007 sorted themselves according to genre the researchers Daniel Silver, Monica Lee and C. Clayton Childress were able to conclude, by looking at musician profiles on MySpace.com, that there are three distinct genre worlds today. These genres are hiphop, rock and niche genres (those which are neither rock nor hiphop).

And whereas the rock world is a complex of multiple interpenetrating sub-communities, surrounded by a strong external boundary with genre mixing across distinct sub-communities being common (genre mixing beyond the limit of the rock world is rare), hiphop largely resides in its own musical world, they note. Hiphop bands are extremely likely to describe their music with only other hiphop genres; they are, like rock musicians, rather unlikely to transcend their musical world. The line between

hiphop and not-hiphop is, the researchers maintain, strong and rarely crossed. Within its bounds, it is a relatively boundless world, as genres mix fluidly, with little discernible internal sub-cultural differentiation.

These findings could be said to corroborate the general presumptions Dankić makes about the strong pull of the ideal typical position as a constant of hiphop musicking also in the Swedish context. But one lingering research question not answered by Dankić is the one about how the concept of the ideal typical position is organized in the first place. Where does it draw its analytical potential from, what are the logics of this concept and how can it be analysed? Being a strictly theoretical, non-empirical model, there is always slack between the concept and that which is the focus of this study, the reality of making hiphop music in different cultural milieus in Sweden in the 2010s.

At the same time, it is not at all clear what the relationship of this ideal type position is to two other important concepts used in the study. The first one is stereotype and the second one authenticity.

It is not difficult to see that the semantic field of Weber's ideal type (or Dankić's ideal type position) is not far from that which also designates it as a cultural stereotype. But there is no discussion about the closeness/distance between these two concepts, which really is a shame because such an omission makes the whole research project run the risk of being too self-contained and redundant in its own analytical framework, and in this way provide less of the analytical explanation it is intended to carry.

This problem is also related to the second of the critical analytical tools used in the study. This one is about authenticity and authenticity constructions, which are seen from the point of view of that which we would have liked to understand more about, namely the ideal typical position of the rapper and the hiphopper (male, black, from an urban, or in the Swedish case a suburban, background, troubled, with a penchant for strong, sub-culturally oriented and transgressive language), a person/position working towards a recognition of one's own manhood, often stigmatized by mainstream society. When the concepts of ideal typical hiphop musicking and attitude are juxtaposed to the concept of authenticity, a sense of redundancy and aporia emerges. Authenticity is quite a double-edged sword in cultural analysis, with its strong sense of self-ref-

erentiality or a swerve between subjective and cultural referentialities. In the thesis a feedback loop is established in which the two concepts of ideal typical position and authenticity are meant to explain one another, but in the process they only tend to reproduce and reinforce their own received meaning. The concept of authenticity tends to collapse into the overarching notion of ideal typical position in hiphop.

And it does not get much better when the conceptual tool of intersectionality is introduced into the analytical framework. This mode of thinking, which is a way of viewing power relations and formations and normative intersections of various cultural designations, is used as a way to deconstruct the subordinations taking place in society. The most common designations applied in intersectional analysis are race, sex/gender, ethnicity, age and place, and these are also namechecked here. An interesting thing about hiphop and intersectionality is that the two cultural phenomena were made relevant at about the same time in history on the eastern seaboard of the United States. Those proposing the first one, hiphop, were black male Americans and those advancing the second one, intersectionality, were black female and lesbian Americans, which from a sociological point of view might point towards a certain parallelism concerning socio-cultural forces and their understanding and explanation, and certain artistic articulations taking place, which can be traced back to a turn towards identity politics and a strong penchant for situatedness/positionality, or as the literary scholar David Simpson has described it in a book-length study: "Why we keep saying where we're coming from."

But the way Dankić applies the intersectional mode into her study does not do enough work in explaining the varying factors and their relative weight in the actual cases and situations she is researching, which makes the intersectionality of the study more of a gesture than an active working tool. To be able to use an intersectional methodological approach one would have to take into account the different cultural and social levels involved in the analysis, e.g. in storytelling constructing place, position and a sense of belonging, such as the one Floya Anthias has used in her studies of these kinds of "narratives of location", often without a beginning, a plot or an ending and with a place in the textual whole which might be surprising and even oxymoronic.

As it stands, the most rewarding thing about this study is its rich empirical field, described in highly illuminating detail. But at the same time this also points towards its aporias, its blind spots: the rather uncritical use of key concepts and the weak implementation of the intersectional approach. There is a strong pull towards an implied critique of the ideal typical position of hiphop, coming to the surface both in the study on the so-called battlerap scene in a Swedish context and also, and perhaps even more strongly, in the case of young females introduced into the world of making hiphop music. But the critique tends to stop before it becomes strong enough to undermine the whole field as it were. For instance, the problem of drugs associated with the American form of this musical field is not addressed at all.

The case of the female side of the Swedish hiphop scene consists of analyses of three music camps for teenage girls, two of which are more long-lasting (Popkollo and one of the Femtastic Camps), and one (also of the Femtastic Camp type) performed in a shorter and more focused way. This bifurcation points to the dilemma which might be seen as internal to the Swedish hiphop scene; the longer-lasting camp being more suited to white middle-class girls and the shorter one more fit for those girls coming from what from an ideal typical hiphop point of view are its main target group in the female side of this musical culture: the girls from something called Orten, or the suburban milieu mostly made up of immigrants.

It is when the notion of modernist American music of this kind hits the shores of Sweden with its own brand of modernity, which in many ways differs from the American kind, that an interesting opposition emerges, something Dankić is aware of. The Swedish context values ideas of equality, communality, a rich tradition of associations and not least a view of the nation of Sweden as being a major cultural player in the global production of popular music ("the Swedish pop miracle"). The discrepancy between these two forms of modernity, the American and the Swedish one, is one of the focal points which generates most new insights in this study, despite the fact that it is performed in a rather general and cursory way. But it points towards the need for further studies of this particular aspect of the research field in question.

Another important feature which Dankić brings

up is the one about the need for more critique, more critical work on change in Swedish hiphop, from the point of view of a need for justice and equality. This is a line of thinking which has a paradoxical relation to the emphasis on identity in today's world, a development building up so much of the cultural energy nowadays with all these crises of identity and identity politics which we are witnessing, and which is quite prominent also in this hiphop study. The question of a need for pedagogy applied to hiphop culture is one of the most interesting ideas put forward by the researcher. It reminds this reviewer of the important work done by the cultural analyst and philosopher Jacques Rancière, who has been both advocating and practising this kind of emancipatory work for a long time in France, often with a historical bent towards cultural empowerment performed in nineteenth-century France among workers and craftsmen. Since an important part of Dankić's study discusses the aspect of skills required in hiphop-making, the notion of pedagogy is of course an implied one in the conception of the field, something which also can be seen as another potentially fruitful way of continuing and expanding this kind of research. So finally, despite the reservations here, this study is still a promising one and a pioneering work in the field of Swedish hiphop studies, paving the way for more research into this particular field. Lastly, the work done by the researcher is commendable when it comes to the empirical side of the study. As already indicated, the thesis has been produced with care and with a strong heart for this kind of music.

Sven-Erik Klinkmann, Vasa

World Heritage Sites in Northern Norway

Knut Fageraas, Verdensarv på Vega – mellom internasjonale konvensjoner, nasjonal politikk og lokale praksiser i et nordnorsk øysamfunn. Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo, Oslo 2019. 226 pp. Ill. Diss.

■ The Norwegian cultural scholar Knut Fageraas has presented a doctoral dissertation in Oslo about the Vega Archipelago in northern Norway, which became a World Heritage site in 2004. One reason for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List was that the women in the fishing community have traditionally collected the down of eider ducks – a

unique livelihood in a global context. The bulk of the dissertation consists of four articles which have previously been published between 2013 and 2018 as chapters in four different edited volumes, one in Norway and three internationally in London and New York. One of the articles is thus in Norwegian and the other three in English. In this compilation thesis the articles are printed without any changes. This means that there are some repetitions of facts and discussions. The opening introduction and the closing chapter are newly written (pp. 7–59 and 175–191 respectively).

The author works at the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research, NIKU. Key research topics there concern how cultural heritage is perceived, managed, and used. One of the main objectives of the thesis has been to study what the new status as a World Heritage site has meant for the local environment on these islands. Before 2004, the archipelago was characterized by stagnation, emigration, and a decline in the eider down harvesting.

Everyday life is at the heart of the thesis. Human-animal relations are another important aspect, as is the increasing cultural tourism. The author's own fieldwork, in the form of interviews conducted during the years 2008–2009, is the primary source material. A total of 16 women and 23 men were interviewed. The interviews yielded information about the informants' experiences and values. Written sources consist of administrative documents from Norwegian authorities and UNESCO, as well as the World Heritage Committee.

As regards the theoretical foundation, the author links to international cultural heritage studies and discourse analysis, with the emphasis on a dominant research trend of critical heritage studies. Laurajane Smith's book *Uses of Heritage* from 2006 and Iain Robertson's *Heritage from Below* from 2012 have been important sources of inspiration for the author's focus on "everyday heritage". Given that the study concerns human relations with birds, in this case eider ducks, international animal studies or human-animal studies have been important reference points. These studies explore how humans understand and interact with animals. The eider down harvesting can be seen as an interplay between culture and nature, although the World Heritage status of the Vega Archipelago attaches the main importance to culture.

The first paper (pp. 61–113), "Verdensarvens

forandringer på Vega” (Changes in the World Heritage on Vega), was published in 2013 by Novus forlag, Oslo. It concentrates on the impact of World Heritage status at the local level. What changes have arisen on these islands in terms of lifeways and ideas? One noticeable effect has been that the down harvesting has been revitalized, having previously been in decline. It has attained a higher status in the local community alongside fishing and agriculture, which used to dominate. In 2016 there were eighteen people collecting eider down, as against only six in 2000. Homes, boathouses, and jetties have also been renovated. Optimism has replaced the previous sense of marginalization. Tourism has been given a noticeable boost and is viewed as a positive resource among the locals. Together with the trade in eider down, it has helped to strengthen the position of women.

The second paper (pp. 115–137), entitled “Everyday Heritage”, was published in 2016 by Ashgate, London. It demonstrates the importance and value that down harvesting has acquired for the women who do it. It is a labour-intensive occupation that is pursued at the outer edge of the archipelago. Small nesting houses are built, usually of wood. The eider ducks can take refuge in these and lay eggs and down during the breeding period. This is a time when the women do not want too many tourists around, so that the birds will not be frightened. About 3,000 nesting houses are put in order every year.

The third paper (pp. 139–158), “Housing Eiders – Making Heritage” from 2016, was published by Routledge, London & New York. It examines how World Heritage status has affected the relationship between humans and animals through the growing eider down trade. Close human–animal relationships arise, hinting at anthropomorphic perceptions.

The fourth paper (pp. 161–173), entitled “World Heritage and Cultural Sustainability”, was published by Routledge, London & New York, in 2018. Co-written with Karoline Daugstad, it elucidates the question of how World Heritage status has affected the practitioners of the main livelihoods – fishing and agriculture – in the Vega Archipelago. How can this newly acquired status contribute to the sustainable economic development of the islands? The author discusses the concept of cultural sustainability based on the book *The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability* by John Hawkes in 2001. On the main island of

Vega there are fishing villages in the north and farms in the south. Agriculture has been successful, and the interviewed farmers expressed their satisfaction that World Heritage status has improved Vega’s reputation. It means that more of the inhabitants want to stay and develop agriculture, combined with the increasing tourism. Fishing, on the other hand, has been on the decline, and the interviewed fishermen said they were dissatisfied that eider down harvesting had gained a higher status than fishing as a result of World Heritage status. They saw no new possibilities for fishing through this new status acquired by the Vega Islands.

In the closing chapter (pp. 175–191) the author sums up the overall findings of the four previously published papers. He has laid the foundation by exploring the significance of newly acquired World Heritage status for a local community. In the analyses the author combines theoretical discussions of cultural heritage and animal studies in a fruitful way with the empirical interview material he collected in the period 2008–2009. A follow-up field study could be valuable to see how the situation developed until the late 2010s, at a greater distance in time from when the archipelago was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2004. That would make for an interesting processual study of any changes that may have occurred between 2008 and 2018.

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Various Meanings of Gentrification

Sara Kohne, Gentrifiseringens flertydighet. En kulturvitenskapelig studie av endringer i to byområder i Berlin og Oslo. Institutt for arkeologi, historie, kultur- og religionsvitenskap, Universitetet i Bergen 2020. 281 pp. Diss.

■ Sara Kohne has taken her doctorate in Cultural Science with a dissertation concerning gentrification processes, using case studies from Berlin and Oslo. Her ambition is to give a more nuanced analysis than earlier scholars’ results, which she criticizes as being either too negative or too positive regarding the physical and social effects of gentrification. Kohne has made observations and interviews during the years 2014 and 2015, with the aim of investigating how local citizens have experienced gentrification in urban areas. The first fieldwork started in

Berlin in a part of Kreuzberg called SO36. She met several people and conducted semi-structured interviews with thirteen persons who have lived or worked there for many years, two of whom own small shops. Most of the informants have some kind of migration background, which also reflects the multi-ethnicity of this neighbourhood. Kreuzberg is an old working-class area, which expanded in the nineteenth century, like the districts of Grønland and Tøyen in central Oslo. These are also areas where many immigrants have settled down and Kohne has interviewed thirteen persons, Norwegians and people with other backgrounds, who have lived or worked there either a few years or up to a quarter of a century.

In the comparison between Kreuzberg and Grønland & Tøyen it is obvious that the gentrification processes to some extent can be related to the same kind of developments. For example, social changes, when the working-class population cannot afford to live in the new exclusive houses and renovated dwellings with high rents. Commercial gentrification is also notable in the both environments. Old small enterprises, pubs and handicraft stores are closing down and trendy cafes and restaurants are opening instead, which the new middle-class inhabitants appreciate. In Kreuzberg, the so-called tourism gentrification has also increased more and more in recent years. Several new restaurants, clubs and shops have been established, and when many tourists visit the place the atmosphere changes. Some inhabitants are annoyed about the noise tourist crowds make during the nights and complain about how difficult it is to find the locals when there are so many pubs to choose between. In the past, when the pubs were fewer, it was easier to meet each other by chance and experience the feeling of belonging to a local community. Anyhow, the informants point out that they still are living in a good neighbourhood where they want to stay. Kohne uses the concept of *Gemeinschaft* to characterize the social networks and the sense of recognition that manifests the inhabitants' local identity.

Grønland and Tøyen have not yet been exposed to any tourism gentrification. However, Kohne discusses the consequences of moving the Munch Museum from Tøyen to the district of Bjørvika near the sea. What kind of loss will it be for the local community in the future? The impact of gentrification from the field of art and culture might decrease.

Even though there are many similarities in the multi-ethnic districts Kohne has studied in Berlin and Oslo, her informants in Grønland and Tøyen do not talk about their neighbourhood in the same way as they do in Kreuzberg. Kohne brings up the concept of *Gesellschaft* in an analysis of attitude differences in Grønland and Tøyen. The community is more diverse, with fewer contacts between different groups. One reason may be that some of her informants could be categorized as victims of gentrification, while others directly or indirectly are participants in the gentrification. In other words, they have moved to the area because of the ongoing gentrification process.

Kohne writes that her purpose was not to make a strict comparison between Kreuzberg and Grønland & Tøyen. However, this turns out to be the weakness of her thesis. The group of informants is more homogeneous in Berlin than in Oslo. There is a lack of informants who have moved to Kreuzberg during the last few years and are involved in gentrification themselves. It is astonishing that she did not try to reach this group during her second fieldwork period, after she had finished the first fieldwork in Oslo and obtained the narratives there. It is also remarkable that her second periods of fieldwork in Berlin and Oslo lasted only one week each. The first periods were 6–8 weeks long, but it is obvious that she would have been more aware of the empirical weaknesses from the first fieldwork before she returned.

Why did Kohne chose to study gentrification? What was her personal agenda for this investigation? Reflexivity is not properly discussed concerning her motivation. She only writes about her background and her up growing in Prenzlauer Berg, which belonged to East Berlin, and her observations of gentrification in this neighbourhood. She also confesses that she did not know very much about Grønland and Tøyen before she started her research there. It seems that she had a hidden agenda about what she would find in Kreuzberg and was too quickly satisfied with the empirical findings. In Grønland and Tøyen she was more open-minded and obtained more results that are contradictory.

From the fieldwork notebook she has selected some thick descriptions of the settings, which are very helpful for readers who are not familiar with these areas before. Nevertheless, it would even have been better to have more illustrations of this kind in the text, as well as a larger number of pictures. Then

the readers could more easily imagine what the areas looked like at the time of the investigations. It is also tricky to get to know the informants because the information about them is very restrictive. The reading would have been more interesting if some kind of contextualized portraits were provided, which would simplify the understanding of the informants' narratives – not only their experiences, but also their motivations to discuss gentrification with a researcher.

The structure of this thesis is very well considered. Kohne has an ambitious way of presenting quotations from the informants and she makes comments after each about the contents, integrating references to other scholars' works. In total, she covers a great number of different aspects of gentrification. She shows that she has acquired a broad knowledge of the research field of gentrification and especially research from Anglo-Saxon contexts. Some references are connected to Norwegian circumstances but astonishingly few from Germany and German ethnologists' works about gentrification in Berlin. For example, Tanja Marquardt, who has written a very interesting thesis, but is not well known among Scandinavian researchers yet. Even though Kohne mentions many British and American scholars, she seldom writes more than a few sentences about each of them. It would have been more instructive if she had been more rigorous about the scholars she highlights. This would have enabled her to deepen the discussion about why and how these scholars have contributed to this research field. There are also very few features to indicate Sara Kohne's own opinions of gentrification. Hardly any statements give readers a clue about her own position. Her main finding is nevertheless that there are many different aspects and that gentrification does not follow a strict pattern with one specific phase succeeding another. How gentrification develops in one place or another depends on different circumstances. And it is not unusual that diverse phenomena of gentrification are ongoing as parallel processes. With the case studies in Berlin and Oslo, Kohne has pointed out both aspects of similarity and specific features which are of great interest for everyone who is working with city renewal and preservation for the future. The strength of this thesis is the importance of nuanced research about gentrification with local inhabitants in focus.

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European Border Practices

Marlene Paulin Kristensen, Relocating Europe. Border Officials and their Everyday Attempts to Stabilise Borders. Faculty of Humanities, The Saxo Institute, University of Copenhagen. 208 pp. Ill. Diss.

■ *Relocating Europe: Border Officials and their Everyday Attempts to Stabilise Borders* explores how mundane practices of border work perform, locate, stabilize, transform, and justify Europe and its borders in complex ways. The overarching argument is that border officials' practices of bordering entail ongoing processes of connecting and disconnecting different spatial and temporal entities, thereby continuously defining, locating, and relocating Europe's borders. Kristensen focuses on border officials at three different border sites: Copenhagen Airport, the border between Germany and Denmark, and the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM). According to Kristensen, the choice of sites and interlocutors makes an "arbitrary Europe" where the sites shed light on each other and jointly make up a particular analytical field with no claims to representing Europe in any entirety.

Kristensen positions the dissertation in relation to the development of the Schengen Agreement (which abolished border control between member states of the EU), and the Dublin Agreement. The latter stipulates that migrants seeking asylum must be registered and dealt with in the first country of entry. Through these agreements, an important distinction between the EU's external and internal borders emerged. In relation to this, Kristensen argues for the need to study the state (or the EU) not as a fixed background, but as mundane and shifting practices and thus a site for hope and transformation as well as a site where the "banality of exclusion" plays out.

The analysis is presented in four chapters. "EU borders for peacetime only? Bridging gaps and making-same as border strategies" focuses on the Moldovan-Ukrainian (and Transnistria) border where EUBAM promotes a particular border method to ensure a good quality border. Kristensen describes how an imperative of cooperation made actors on either side of the border perceive the border in the same way, but also how critical events (the Ukrainian-Russian crisis and the European refugee crisis) unsettled this sameness and made room for a mili-

taristic border approach. Thus the chapter questions whether the EUBAM performance of EU borders is for peacetime only and discusses aberrations from the good border at the edges of Europe.

“In search of excellence: Holding together the ‘borders of Europe’” engages with Frontex and is primarily based on interviews with Danish border officials working towards “excellence” by teaching and implementing Frontex practices. These practices are meant to harmonize border practices across Europe on the basis of human rights. The chapter analyses how the idea of the “the good border” is open and somewhat contested, rather than a fixed, unrealizable ideal.

In “‘Never enough resources’: In search of the sealable border” Kristensen focuses on what is referred to as the fantasy of the sealable border and the responses to this fantasy – mainly by way of resource allocation or complaints about wasted resources. Building on Navaro-Yashin’s work, Kristensen argues that by discussing the porosity of the border in terms of (lacking or wasted) resources, the border officials reinforce the fantasy of the sealable border.

“Re-establishing ‘peace and order’: Reintroducing border control at the Danish border”, describes the re-introduction of border control at the German-Danish border in response to the refugee crisis in 2015/2016. A notion of restoring peace and order is explored as a means to complicate fixed ideas about crisis and normalcy. The chapter compellingly juxtaposes the drama of the crisis with the actual emptiness and absence of refugees experienced by the deployed border guards, who engage in speculations about the future and about Denmark’s relative location within the EU and the moral geography of Europe.

Relocating Europe: Border Officials and their Everyday Attempts to Stabilise Borders provides new insights into contemporary bordering processes and the making of European borders. The dissertation draws on a wide range of theoretical and analytical resources, and yet manages to craft an argument of its own, which is thoroughly discussed and well presented. Kristensen is very well versed in the field of migration and border studies, and convincingly supplements existing analyses by engaging with actors who are often absent from the literature within the field, namely the border police, guards and agents working in the service of states and/or of the EU. Kristensen’s productive use of literature on the

anthropology of global connections, on ambiguous and relative locations, and on composite, incomplete geographies provides a stimulating contribution to the study of bordering. The dissertation also highlights that ethnology offers an important contribution to this field of study.

Some elements of the work, however, could have been elaborated more. The fieldwork was situated in three seemingly disparate places that are as incoherent as the continent itself, as implied in the notion of the “arbitrary Europe”. One wonders how Kristensen critically assesses the “arbitrariness” of fieldwork; how do the sources and materials from those sites add to the strength of the findings? The dissertation would also have benefited from a more sustained methodological reflection on Kristensen’s own participation in the making of borders through arbitrary fieldwork. What, if anything, is the normative project that Kristensen is engaged in? Further, the title of the dissertation indicates that Europe (in all its locations) is a centre of gravity. Nonetheless, the use of the notion of Europe appears strangely under-analysed throughout. When the notion of Europe is used it seems to be conflated with the work and institutions of the EU. One wonders in what ways, then, the dissertation is in fact about the re-location of Europe, as stated in the title. Further, the so-called refugee crisis is a vantage point for the dissertation. The migrants who arrived were to be offered help and protection in the recipient country. This was not just based on EU regulations, but also on what is sometimes referred to as the moral imperative of hospitality: The migrants were guests, and the EU their host. Even though Kristensen’s ambition is to critically examine the banality of exclusion, little is made of the moral and cultural elements of hospitality. Finally, the politics of the dissertation remains slightly vague. In the *Introduction*, the author states that “the decision to locate my study within the infrastructures of border thus balances between the potential hope for other ways of doing things, and a warning against becoming blind to politics disguised as technicalities”. This ambition seems to evaporate along the way. What hopes does Kristensen have for change? Studying the “banality of exclusion” (and the connotations of Nazi regime professionalism that phrase evokes) could potentially be a hurtful matter; some theoretical thoughts on “ethnology that hurts” would have been interesting.

Despite these critical questions, Kristensen's dissertation contributes vitally to the field of border studies and analyses of European identities constantly in the making. A major strength is the way Kristensen brings forth trouble, inconsistency and incompleteness, and further shows how unexpected and often overlooked agents contribute to the making the borders of Europe through mundane yet complex border practices. The dissertation demonstrates solid scholarship in its thorough engagement with relevant literature, its firm and knowledgeable grasp of historical and political shifts in Europe, and not least through the well-conceived analyses of fieldwork experiences, which are combined and discussed in a convincing manner.

Fredrik Nilsson, Åbo (Turku)

Cultural Events from a Dramaturgical Perspective

Anne Meek, Kultursatsing og stedsutvikling. En dramaturgisk analyse av kultursatsinger i tre norske kommuner. Det historisk-filosofiske fakultet, Institutt for arkeologi, historie, kultur- og religionsvitenskap, Universitetet i Bergen 2018. 213 pp. Ill. Diss.

■ The title of this dissertation from the Culture Studies milieu at the University of Bergen could be roughly translated into English as "Cultural event making and place development: A dramaturgical analysis of culture projects in three Norwegian municipalities". The author of the dissertation, Anne Meek, has her background in Culture Studies, but also in Theatre Studies. This is one of the reasons for the dissertation's interesting use of theories from both these academic subjects, leading to a very fruitful interdisciplinary combination of these two fields, as I will illustrate in this review.

The cultural events presented and analysed here can all in some respect be related to the politics of place development, where the idea was to bring new energy to a place or an area through culture and art. The motivation was that this would eventually also bring with it other activities and businesses, contributing to economic growth in the area. Some of the ideas for place development at the turn of the millennium came from optimistic economic and marketing literature, inspiring culture workers, economists, and local politicians in many countries

through the first decade of the twenty-first century. One of the theorists was the American economist Richard Florida and his ideas of "Creative Cities", where he claimed that future enterprises would have to rely on "the creative class" to succeed. To achieve this, they would have to make the cities attractive for precisely this kind of innovative and creative people, through Florida's famous three Ts: Technology, Tolerance, and Talent. This would give places "creative capital" as a prime source of future development. Other important proponents of the idea of linking cultural creativity with economic development were of course the American economists B. J. Pine and J. H. Gilmore, who with their book *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theater and Every Business a Stage* from 1999 established the concept of experience economy as the flowering future of businesses. This was something only attainable through a combination of cultural creativity, art, and commodification, so that enjoying the commodity became one unique experience for the consumers.

Anne Meek, from a theatrical point of view, criticizes the Pine/Gilmore simplistic understanding and use of theatre metaphors. She is also critical of how these dramaturgical understandings later influenced other Scandinavian economists and marketing theorists. With support in Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, she suggests that culture theory should not understand stagings, disseminations, and performances from the classical European or Aristotelian knowledge of dramaturgy. Instead, they should look to dramaturgical theories opposing the text-based, mimetic aesthetics known from classic European theatre, be inspired by for example Brecht's non-Aristotelian theatre, eastern forms of non-mimetic theatre, or modern, contemporary and experimental theatre like Hans-Thies Lehmann's ideas of "post-dramatic theatre". New forms of dramaturgy are processual, post-mimetic and intercultural, and more engaged with relational understandings.

Meek finds that these newer and innovative ideas of the theatre and its dramaturgy also communicate better with contemporary theories of place and place development. She builds on a relational understanding of place. Following Doreen Massey's ideas of places as networks of relations and interactions, that several aspects of a place are at play simultaneously, and that the construction of a place is always an ongoing process. In this sense, places are characterized best as "throwntogetherness", and narratives emerg-

ing from a complex of relations and performances through time.

The author uses three different empirical examples to discuss her understanding of a new dramaturgical turn in culture studies of place development. Each of these examples is broadly contextualized and discussed, and highlights different aspects as well as possibilities and failures in their strivings to succeed as culturally innovative places. She pursues three levels in her description of each of these examples: the material level, the narrative level, and the performative level.

The first example Meek discusses concerns the attempts to transform the city of Larvik from an industrial place to a cultural city. It all started very optimistically, and even Richard Florida himself visited the city and gave advice at a seminar. With the city's long industrial heritage, the project at first tried to connect to this history. The vast industrial spaces were opened up for new use as working spaces for artists and performing theatres. However, the city's history of deep economic and social divisions soon surfaced. The old industrial owners of the buildings found the cultural activities of little profit. The newly rebuilt and reconstructed industrial areas soon became too expensive for the artists and creative people, who now had to move out as the rents increased. The alliance between artists and property developers was not possible, and the old narratives of a divided city, with conflicts between industrial owners and workers only had its new version. The work to establish and construct a new culture palace turns out to benefit the former industrial owners, and neither the culture workers nor the local population of the city had much to gain.

Another example discusses the attempts to develop the small island of Ylvingen on the coast of Helgeland in northern Norway into a tourist destination after the screening in 2008–2010 of the TV series *Himmelblå* (Sky Blue), where the island was the prime location. The series was loosely based on the 2001–2003 BBC series *Two Thousand Acres of Sky*, and became very popular in Norway. The popularity was partly due to images of the beautiful scenery, but even more so to its colourful gallery of local inhabitants, and the portraits of these characters. Turning the filming location into a tourist destination, however, turned out to be much more complicated than expected. In the first place the island was far off the ordinary tourist tracks, and difficult to reach

even by public boat traffic. There was not much infrastructure left on the island for tourist use after the film team had left. In addition, and most important, there was no trace of the colourful inhabitants that had been portrayed in the series. Therefore, it was not possible any more to create a new and similar narrative which tourists would recognize from the TV series. In short, neither the narrative, the actors, nor the dramaturgy from the popular TV series could be re-created as a tourism product.

The Træna Festival, on the other hand, seems to be Anne Meek's favourite example, and quite close to her own model for how a cultural event should be staged, narrated, and performed. Although the island of Træna is located far out in the sea, and certainly not easy to reach by any public transportation, the annual festival has become widely known, visited by famous musicians, and has a large number of participants. Meek herself participated as a volunteer one year at this festival, and was in that way able to have an "insider's" view of the festival's diverse activities. On the whole, participation and being a part of the island community plays a central role during the days of the festival. This is something that brings local inhabitants, organizers, volunteers, performers, and audiences together in a common project. This is done in the way different stages are set up, but also through the narratives that are communicated to the festival's participants. These narratives are connected to local myths and newly invented stories, to the common past of the islanders, and to contemporary life on the island. Through the intense days of the festival, this creates a unique sense of belonging to the place. This is the case not only for the people living all year round on the island of Træna, but also among the people visiting. The multi-voiced narratives, and the simultaneous and relational dramaturgies operating in Træna, give new possibilities for participation as well as interpretation.

It is certainly nothing new that metaphors from the theatre and dramaturgy are used in social science studies and in cultural research, ever since Erving Goffman's influential writings. However, Anne Meek's use of recent theatre theory represents a new and fresh approach, proceeding from traditional uses of drama metaphors that emerged from an Aristotelian and unilineal narrative model. Taking Doreen Massey's theories of place into account, and combining them with newer and more complex under-

standings of dramaturgy, opens up new possibilities for cultural research. The dramaturgic analysis of three examples along these lines of inquiry gives an opportunity to pose new questions in cultural studies. The analysis also challenges the traditional use of dramaturgy, both as a metaphor and as a tool in theories of the experience economy.

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A Worthy Old Age

Anders Møller, De værdige gamle: Om alderdomskonfigurerende praksisser i Danmark omkring år 1900. The Saxo Institute, European Ethnology, Faculty of Humanities, Copenhagen University 2018. 285 pp. Ill. English Summary. Diss.

■ This dissertation by Anders Møller examines the configuration of old age through socio-political, scientific and public practices in Denmark around the year 1900. The point of departure is the Danish law from 1891, the *Law on old age relief for those worthily in need outside of the poverty sector*. The law concerned citizens aged 60 or more who were acknowledged as entitled to support but not comprised in the poverty legislation. The context of the law as well as its effects involve the construction of old age, a construction made by multiple practices which are scrutinized in this dissertation.

The dissertation takes a broad approach to the subject: to describe old age as an evolving historical phenomenon. Old age is a social and cultural process as much as a biological one, and around 1900 political and scientific engagement – power and knowledge – participated and cooperated in establishing old age as a concept. Thus, old age became something society could create knowledge of and interfere in.

Initially, the author introduces Michel Foucault and his theories of politics and genealogy as the framework of the dissertation. Other Foucauldian concepts that are used in the analysis are, for example, problematization and heterotopia. Theories are also retrieved from scholars such as Stephen Katz, researcher in critical gerontology who drew on Foucault, and Ian Hacking's concept the Looping Effect. The dissertation is therefore grounded in different but well-connected theories, with power and categorization as cornerstones. The theories are well

sued to the perspective of cultural history that the dissertation lays down.

The dissertation starts its empirical chapters with the passing of the law in 1891, when older people for the first time were made into a specific social and legal category. Using the parliamentary debates about the bill and the particular formulations of the law, the author shows how *worthiness* became a central concept in creating old age. The law was directed to those in need of support (financial or housing support) but to a particular group of people, citizens who had been productive, independent and willing to support themselves and were thus worthy and deserving. The moral aspects of the law derived from previous poverty investigations, a growing phenomenon in the increasing industrial and urbanized landscape of North Western Europe of that time.

The dissertation continues by examining how the configured category is “populated”. The empiric material is the application forms that older people sent to the municipality and the assessment of the applications. As the author points out, the practices established by the administrative work highlight the constitution of old age in the intersection of lives, law and administration. This requires attention directed towards the content of the documents as well as what the documents *do* as practices configuring old age. There are many actors involved – the applicants, the forms and their sections to be filled in, the information held up as important knowledge about the applicants' situation and other documents, the municipal staff who managed the applications, and the assessments: was the applicant worthy enough? The analysis shows how this process took place, embedded in documents, staff, facilities, meetings and protocols.

The next chapter looks at old age as a scientific object. In connection with the evaluations of the law from 1891, older people came into sight as a population that could be examined through statistics. This is in line with the development in many forthcoming welfare states; an overall fusion between the growth of social policy and a developing social science, using statistics as an established method. The empirical material consists of evaluations and reviews of the law and its effects, here regarded as scientific productions and analysed as practices in the configuration of old age. Also, statistical yearbooks have been used.

The scientific knowledge produced old age as a category and a social problem, separated from other social problems. The knowledge, however, was not definitive; the author shows how it was negotiated in a constant process. Moreover, during the process of negotiation concerning who was worthy enough to receive support and thus belonging to the category, the law also normalized the receipt of public support.

The final empirical chapter draws on documentation of two housing projects that were arranged for older people in Copenhagen around 1900. This is another set of configuring practices that circulate around what kind of institution an older people's home or nursing home should be and for whom, and what "the good life" in old age is supposed to be. The relational quality is emphasized, where the concept of institution is defined as a material relation between the residents and society. The institution both reflected and reformulated the visions and reality of the society.

Ensuring separation from poverty housing was central in the planning and execution of the housing projects. Nevertheless, the author illustrates how the poor house was simultaneously point of departure, inspiration for and deviation from the old people's home. Additionally, the housing projects demonstrate how older people were not regarded as a homogeneous group, but gender, age, health status and need of care were important aspects that created restrictions, manifested in the physical environment of the old people's homes.

Regardless of differences in gender, age and health, the concept of worthiness was vital. A place at the home was only given to those deserving and worthy enough. The aspect of worthiness continued to be strong even as a resident, since there were strict regulations to follow, which included an emphasis on cleanliness and hygiene.

Correspondingly, the architecture was constructed according to the necessity of light, cleanliness and hygiene, and the author makes a point of the material aspects as part of configuring practices. The architecture also reflected care for the older people's bodies through built-in facilities; ramps, lifts, loggias and gardens that were part of the houses. This displays the expected activities for the residents, connected to "a good old age".

In conclusion, the dissertation demonstrates the diverse but assembled practices that created old age

as a problem and a category with a specific population. This was a process without a ready answer; it was not given how old age should be defined and understood and what kind of persons should belong to the category. This complexity, and uncertainty, is distinctly described and analysed throughout the text. Different practices are held forth, but there is no question of how they all are interwoven.

I agree with Anders Møller that the dissertation promotes perspectives of studying the relation between social policy and citizenship. The configuring of old age as a social problem is particularly interesting since the formulation of social problems in that period and context (the industrialization and urbanization of North-Western Europe) originated from concerns of poverty and poverty legislation. As the author shows, older people are distinguished from poverty aid as a new category and population, defined by moral notions of work and citizenship.

But the dissertation is also a contribution to the study of old age in a historical context. Unlike many other studies of old age, the medical perspective and its importance in the period is not prominent in the text. This is a deliberate choice by the author, which works well. The focus on materiality, in particular related to older bodies in the final empirical chapter, highlights the *cultural* in the cultural history perspective. As a reader, one wants more of this; in depth in this specific chapter and perhaps broadly throughout the text. Still, the overall impression is that this is an ambitious and elaborated dissertation, well worth reading.

Åsa Alfberg, Malmö

Contemporary Collecting

Elin Nystrand von Unge, Samla samtid. Insamlingspraktiker och temporalitet på kulturhistoriska museer i Sverige. Department of Ethnology, History of Religion and Gender Studies, Stockholm University 2019. 259 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-89059-30-6.

■ *Samla samtid*, or "Collecting Contemporary" is an empirically based study of contemporary collecting in Swedish museums of cultural history from the 1970s to the present day. Instead of trying to provide a concerted historical survey of the field, Elin Nystrand von Unge has structured her dissertation around three case studies, which facilitates a more

problem-focused approach. The dissertation tackles a tripartite problem which is followed throughout the analyses. The first concerns how the present day is collected, the second asks how the work of collecting is arranged, and the third deals with the knowledge processes in this work.

At the centre of the study is the network and organization Samdok, which was founded in the 1970s. The name was an abbreviation of Swedish words beginning with *sam-* which capture the main activities and goals, namely *samordning* (coordination), *samtid* (contemporary), and *samarbete* (cooperation), combined with documentation. The justification for this emphasis is the great significance that Samdok has had in Swedish museum practice and thinking since its inception in the 1970s. Today Samdok is still the natural point of reference for this type of museum activity, although the network was terminated ten years ago and many of today's museum people are partly critical of the way Samdok worked.

The three case studies, which comprise separate chapters, concern, first of all, the collectors (i.e. Samdok's actors), and then a concrete project directed by Samdok in 1979 whereby a family home in a Stockholm suburb was documented. The third and final case is an analysis of the museum documentation of reactions to the terror attack in Stockholm on 7 April 2017. The central players here were the Stockholm City Museum and Stockholm County Museum. All three cases are based on extensive fieldwork consisting of interviews, observations, and "fieldwork in the archives". In concrete terms this involves observation at meetings of Samdok and its successor DOSS in the years 2011–2017, study of archival material from the Home Survey, preserved in the Nordic Museum Archives, and finally material from the documentation of the reactions to the terror attack in 2017.

While the cases make it possible to examine different themes in depth, they are held together at an overall level by the use of actor-network theory (ANT), as developed by Bruno Latour and more specifically by John Law. To start with, Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's theories of presence and Jan and Aleida Assman's work on cultural memory are presented, with particular emphasis on the relationship between the concepts of canon and archive. Together this constitutes the theoretical framework of the dissertation.

The background material from museum history is presented in Chapter 2 of the dissertation. The intention is to demonstrate how the drive for contemporary documentation from the 1970s onward grew out of older practices at the cultural history museums, while also representing something new and original. This was partly related to the fact that the relics of the old agrarian society that the museums had long been busy rescuing were now disappearing for good. Equally important, however, was a new way of thinking about the place of the museum in society, the museums' responses to the new political and social ideals of the sixties and seventies. It became important to document the cultural forms that the museums had hitherto overlooked: industrial and working-class culture, women's culture, and the present day. In addition, the work on contemporary documentation was part of the professionalization of the museum system. The key elements of Samdok, the division of labour, the cooperation, the networking, and the deliberate methodological development, were important elements of this professionalization.

The chapter on the collectors, which is the first case study, deals with the actors' own understanding of Samdok and the work that was done through this network. The specific starting point is Samdok's last major network meeting in autumn 2011. At this time, the network secretariat at the Nordic Museum was about to be closed. The work was to continue in the form of the looser DOSS network. The analysis concentrates on how the regular meetings served to order both the activities and the participants in it. This in turn was an important contribution to the professional museum development that Samdok represented.

The next case is an in-depth study of a particular Samdok project from 1979, in which a family home was documented in its entirety through a substantial effort by eleven Samdok representatives. The interior of one of the rooms in the home was also acquired by the Nordic Museum. This project has since attained almost iconic status in the understanding of Samdok, for both the method and the organization. The analysis emphasizes how the Samdok work served to organize things: the objects that were found in the documented home, those acquired by the museum, and the objects that the actual work of documentation created in the form of archive cards, photographs, reports, and notes. This extensive work was not done to answer any specific question,

but with a view to future research. The chapter highlights the tension between the strong sense of presence that some of the material evokes – for example a box containing a child’s milk teeth – and on the other hand, the objectifying techniques used in the work, when all the elements in the documented home were treated as equally important. This methodology arose in turn from the principle that all Samdok projects should follow the same template, so that future researchers could treat material from many different studies as basically comparable.

The third and final case starts as an in-depth study of the documentation and collecting that was done in the aftermath of the terrorist attack in Drottninggatan in Stockholm on 7 April 2017. Here the museums were collecting in real time. In that way they had a dual role, simultaneously becoming actors in the mourning and memory processes that took place after the attack. This in turn required new methods and new reflection on the museum work. The analysis emphasizes the differences that the museum actors see between their own work and what they perceive as “classic Samdok work”: a much greater problem orientation with more emphasis on being an actor in society here and now, and a correspondingly weaker belief that the work should primarily serve as a reservoir for future research.

In terms of theory, this analysis particularly links up with Aleida Assman’s concepts of canon and archive, as designations for the two main forms of society’s shared cultural heritage. Whereas the canon is the active and often elevated cultural memory, the archive denotes the passive reservoir of society’s memory. The dissertation argues that the work carried out by the museums and the material that resulted from it do not entirely correspond to either of Assman’s concepts, but at the same time it triggers a kind of circular motion between them. Furthermore, the author identifies two basic ideas for the museum’s contemporary documentation. What she calls “Us studies” can be traced back to the older ethnological disciplinary tradition, with the emphasis on documenting ordinary people’s lives and work. “Them studies”, by contrast, derive from currents in recent research that are critical of power and ideology, involving democracy, minorities, and under-represented groups.

All three cases offer interesting reading and a great many wise and good observations. The theoretical framework functions well, while simultan-

ously allowing diversions to other perspectives that are relevant to the particular case.

The greatest unreleased potential of the dissertation lies in the concept of “contemporary”, which is central both in the title and in the studied problem, and which dominates the text throughout. In spite of this, the dissertation refrains from looking closely at what “contemporary” is, and how the collecting practices that are so thoroughly examined contribute to “producing” the contemporary as a museum category and shaping the understanding of both the museums and the public. The author points out that for the informants, the contemporary is primarily an empirical category, as it also remains for most of the dissertation. It is not until the final chapter that she discusses the concept in more detail, but without utilizing the full analytical potential. The theoretical apparatus of the dissertation and the methodical approach in the form of ANT, with its focus on how knowledge is created through concrete practices, ought to have been very well suited to this analysis. Assman’s theories of cultural memory could also have provided good support for these analyses, but they have not been used to the full.

All in all, the dissertation is nevertheless a solid piece of work. It provides an important and valuable addition to a field in museology about which there has hitherto been a shortage of research-based knowledge. The analyses are grounded in comprehensive and thorough fieldwork that has resulted in a rich array of source material. Through the case-based approach, the dissertation succeeds well in its in-depth examination of selected problems that are highly relevant to the overall goal of the study.

Anne Eriksen, Oslo

Cultural and Social Dimensions of a Clinical Intervention

Marie Haulund Otto, Aldringsførsøg. Kliniske interventioner, aldrende kroppe og hverdagslivets domesticeringer. Afdelingen for Ethnologi, SAXO-instituttet, Humanistisk Fakultet, Københavns Universitet, København 2019. 236 pp. Diss.

■ There is often talk in the media and the social debate today about the ageing population as a growing problem. Who is going to take care of the people

who will live longer, and how much can it cost? In parallel with this political and economic concern for society as a whole, each individual is given increasing responsibility to satisfy the conditions that make it possible to go on living in their own home and avoid the ailments and diseases that old age brings. There are many research projects aimed at influencing the lifestyle of the elderly, and it is one of these that is investigated by the ethnologist Marie Hau- lund Otto in this dissertation, the title of which means “Ageing trials: Clinical interventions, ageing bodies, and the domestication of everyday life”. Otto participated as a Ph.D. student in the project, which was called CALM (Counteracting Age-related Loss of Skeletal Muscle mass), an interdisciplinary project seeking to explore the possibilities of countering the continuous age-related loss of muscle mass, skeletal muscle quality, and muscle function. Through increased physical activity and a high-protein diet, the aim was to prevent health problems and make it possible to go on living at home as long as possible.

The contribution of the ethnological researchers was to study the cultural and social dimensions of the clinical intervention, which consisted of special training programmes and the introduction of a protein drink (the dairy company Arla was one of the project’s sponsors) for selected people over the age of 65. This was done through extensive ethnographic fieldwork and an ethnological analysis of how ageing processes and elderly people’s lives are produced and practised as multifaceted objects of knowledge and intervention. Otto followed the results and the practical implementation of the research project, and more specifically how the everyday lives of the participants and already ongoing ageing studies were related to CALM and vice versa. The dissertation shows how everyday practices and clinical practices co-produce each other. An important insight resulting from the fieldwork was that the ageing bodies recruited as subjects could not be separated from the everyday life in which they lived outside the clinical trials. And it proved equally wrong to regard the everyday life of participants as a stable and autonomous background to the clinical intervention. Domestication, a central concept in the dissertation, is used to capture the ways in which clinical research-based intervention and the everyday life of the elderly subjects constantly co-created each other in a mutual and unfinished process,

which is also coloured by overall bio-political initiatives in the sphere of the elderly, by research in cultural gerontology, and not least of all, by ethnological studies such as Otto’s dissertation.

The overall purpose of the thesis is to show how all these ongoing ageing-related scientific trials crisscross each other through medical, social, material, everyday, and ethnological management and production of specific bodies, subjectivities, and standardized ageing processes. By highlighting the complexity and analytical potential of everyday life, Otto shows that ageing can include and be understood as so much more than a chronologically determined stage in life.

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters along with an introduction and a conclusion. The outline is well considered and the reading is facilitated by a brief introduction and summary in each chapter. The text is reader-friendly and absorbing. In the introduction, Otto positions her dissertation in the research field, specifying Science and Technology Studies (STS), recent materiality studies, performativity, and ethnological studies of everyday life as a starting point for her work. She also describes the political agenda for public health and ageing in Denmark. Chapter 1 examines the theoretical perspectives in greater depth, and clarifies the indispensable role of ethnology in projects like CALM. Chapter 2 presents the ethnographical fieldwork and especially the empirical material, methodological considerations, and ethical dilemmas. The next five chapters depict the ongoing work of the project, the participants’ experiences, and the encounter between the everyday work of the clinical researchers and the domestic conditions and everyday lives of the elderly. The analytical emphasis is on what the trial population actually consisted of, how the ageing bodies were handled, how ageing itself was created, the role played by mealtime routines, and the significance of the home and the making of “home”. The conclusion sums up the discussion that has been conducted throughout the dissertation, using the concept of ageing trials (to which I return below), *who* produces ageing and how research-based interventions relate to the ongoing ways of doing old age in everyday life.

An important act of positioning involves the choice to work with theories that include analyses of materiality and relationships between human and non-human actors. The author does not just want to

reproduce and analyse *narratives* about what it is like to grow old. By examining how bodies are described, managed, and measured, materiality – such as intervention protocols, syringes, muscle samples, and nutritional drinks – can be understood as interventions in the subjects' own ongoing ageing trials and can thus be used as a means to nuance biomedical understandings of ageing. This perspective, Otto argues, has so far been absent in ethnological studies of different ageing-related scientific trials.

The concept of domestication plays an important role in the analysis and in the conclusion. The term refers to collective, distributed, and relational practices of acquisition and taming (as opposed to a more phenomenological understanding where the focus is on the individual's relationship to concrete changes in the home). Domestication can take several courses; it can involve ideological and discursive aspects and both human and non-human actors. It is not just a matter of one-way taming or unequivocal disciplining – several examples of how the subjects avoid or modify certain exercises, dietary recommendations, and rules in their own way are given in the book. But although resistance appears in unexpected places, the dominant narrative of domestication has the strength to arrange and neutralize the world as a defining and powerful epistemology. Domestication should be investigated as processes that do not have a given outcome. They can function as a possible mutual opening towards something else. Clinical intervention practices can very well help to shape ageing bodies and biomedical and political standard values, but ageing bodies and routines can also domesticate clinical practices. The concept is given a solid foundation in other cited studies but is used here in an innovative way. However, it is ascribed a heavy explanatory value which can be difficult to live up to. It may be hoped that the concept will give inspiration and be tested in future studies.

The theory chapter provides an interesting overview of research in cultural and social gerontology, but the dissertation's positioning in relation to the emerging field of *critical age studies* could have been demonstrated with greater clarity.

The well-known line of life-mode analysis in Danish ethnology can be glimpsed here and there in the text, especially in the notes, but it is not used to the full. Otto says that it "could serve as an entrance" but mostly she refrains from using it.

One of the main strengths of the dissertation is the empirical material and the ethnographical approach, along with the high methodological ambition that is displayed in the close link between theory and empirical data. A detailed and interesting discussion about how the field material was acquired and the author's own role in the CALM project provides insights that are useful far beyond this specific study. The empirical material is large in quantity, qualitatively varied, and full of ideas thanks to different collection techniques such as recurrent life-history interviews over a long period of time, ethnographical observation, and informal conversations in the subjects' homes, in the research laboratory, and in the gym – all captured in illustrative field notes and reflections.

The methodology chapter also contains an interesting discussion of the difference between *lifestyle* interviews (as formulated in the original application for funding for the CALM project) and *life-history* interviews. The latter is an established collection technique in ethnology, further developed and critically scrutinized, and the dissertation gives examples of this through a qualified discussion of the interview as a method.

The text includes many illustrative quotations which show that Otto has an ability to detect meaningful elements and important themes and symbolically charged expressions in a large volume of text. The quotations are skilfully selected, showing a good balance between letting readers draw conclusions for themselves from what is quoted, and providing the author's analysis of the quotations. It is an advantage that the quotations from interviews and field notes are allowed to be long, underlining Otto's skill as an interviewer who can gain trust and create good conversations.

Positive, interesting and important for the reliability of the whole dissertation is the fact that both the staff of the CALM project and those targeted by the interventions are studied. However, life-history interviews were conducted only with the trial subjects, not the researchers, which is a pity. Were their previous practices and experiences of no value for the everyday life and forms of practice developed *within* the project?

Otto convinces the reader through her well-wrought analysis of the close link between physiological ageing and cultural, historical, and social understandings of what ageing should and must mean.

The author is critical of dividing the life course into different phases, such as the “third” and the “fourth” age. Instead, she wants to talk about continuous ageing, or continuous life courses. Ageing can always be understood as unpredictable, open, and productive attempts to do old age. The term *aldringsforsøg* or ageing trial is employed to designate the continuous experimentation with old age in a series of co-filtered practices. This is a fruitful and sympathetic outlook, but sometimes it is not entirely clear to the reader when, where, and how “ageing” takes place. Does ageing as a process begin at birth, or after a certain chronological age? Should the reader understand ageing trials as a set of performative practices by which to “do” age, or as conscious and explicit trials referring to certain normative ways of ageing?

The dissertation discusses and demonstrates in a credible way how the success of similar clinical intervention projects depends on a particular type of subject registering their interest in participating. The older person should be active and self-intervening in relation to his or her own life situation and should be positively disposed to the imperative of active ageing. Otto carries on a penetrating discussion of the importance of a discursive unknown “other” elderly person who is a constant contrast to the bio-citizen that the CALM project – like many other similar initiatives – seeks to shape. She makes good use of an established anthropological and ethnological discussion about the construction of “the Other” so that it also concerns the construction of a “we” who do what is expected of us as elderly citizens.

One of the main points of the dissertation is to acknowledge the involvement of ethnologists in research into various ageing trials. It is not only the clinically oriented scientists but also cultural and social science researchers who contribute to an ontology of ageing. It is pleasing that Otto equates different kinds of knowledge production (clinical practices, old people’s everyday lives, and ethnology) to show how ageing is configured as a multifaceted object of knowledge and intervention. But do these different types of knowledge and practices have the same possibility to be heard, the same right of interpretation, and the same influence and power?

Ethnology and the study of everyday life is an important resource, sometimes as a scrutinizing and critical voice in medically oriented interventions. A key conclusion is that ageing trials are going on all

the time, on many different levels, and certainly not exclusively in medical trials. Biomedical interventions can change the everyday life of individuals and turn it into politics by linking it to different norms, expectations, and controversies – but it is important to remember that different everyday lives can react differently and unpredictably to the same interventions. A crucial point is that everyday life – as happens in many clinical intervention studies – should not be regarded as a separate, autonomous, and stable field. On the contrary, it is essential to show how everyday norms, practices, routines, and rhythms continuously produce and are produced in ongoing ageing trials. We are shown a long series of good examples of unexpected factors that can affect how faithfully the exercise programmes are performed; for example, one woman does not want to train when her husband is watching because she feels that she looks silly. This information may seem banal, but in fact it gives important knowledge as to why certain elements of the intervention project are not followed as they should be.

It is the ethnographic investigation that captures the fact that certain bodies are not considered to fit the trial and are sorted out as being either too decrepit or overactive. There is no room for these “deviations” in protocols and questionnaires, but they can be seen in participant observations and interviews. This can help to make it clear that one specific type of ageing trial is encouraged while others are rejected. The nuances of healthy and active ageing can be highlighted to give us a deeper understanding of a fixed ideal of desirable ageing.

One of the main merits of the dissertation is the compelling justification for why, and in what way, ethnologists should have a given role in clinical intervention projects like the CALM project. By demonstrating a good all-round understanding of the long and extensive experience that ethnological research has of problematizing and theorizing the complexity and analytical potential of everyday life, Otto demonstrates that ethnology is indispensable both in clinical medical trials and in broader political initiatives. Through a constructive and generally critical analysis of the CALM project, future projects can be designed differently, and ultimately the policy concerning ageing and the living conditions of elderly people can be improved.

Karin Salomonsson, Lund

Tradition in Questionnaires

Åmund Norum Resløyken, “Ein lut av det nære levande livet.” Tradisjon, tradisjonselementer og tradisjonsforskere. En studie av spørrelisterien *Ord og sed* 1933–1947. Department of Culture Studies, University of Oslo 2018. 203 pp. Ill. Diss.

■ In May 2018 Åmund Norum Resløyken defended his doctoral dissertation at the University of Oslo. The thesis discusses “classical” folkloristic concepts such as folk belief and tradition, and his dissertation is an ambitious and valuable contribution to the history of folklore studies, using contemporary research methods inspired by ANT (Actor Network Theory) and narratology.

The specific theme of the dissertation is to investigate the construction of concepts like “folk culture”, “folk belief” and “objects of tradition” as they were expressed and understood in the questionnaires distributed to a large number of informants through *Ord og sed* during the period 1934–1947. *Ord og sed* was inspired by Wilhelm Mannhardt’s collection from 1860 of customs related to farming. Resløyken demonstrates how Nils Lid, professor of ethnology (*folkelivsgranskning*), formulated the theoretical foundation of the surveys, and how the questionnaires in various ways became an important factor in the construction of the folklore and the folk belief the researchers wanted to collect in line with their theoretical principles. Resløyken’s purpose is to demonstrate how “folklore” was constructed through the ways the questions were constructed, rather than by the answers that were collected.

The writer unites aspects of research history, especially developed in the first three chapters, with a more theoretically founded investigation of the textual construction of categories like “folk belief”, and the material and immaterial objects presented in the surveys. The empirical material is principally the texts collected through the surveys and introductions and questions addressed to the informants. A major question in Resløyken’s study is “what makes certain objects (and not others) into ‘objects of tradition’?”

Further, Resløyken demonstrates that the theoretical and academic frames for this type of academic work were not nationally defined in a narrow way, but were based on broad ideas about “folk belief” as an evolutionistic and anthropological category influenced by the German professor Wilhelm Mannhardt

and partly by the Scottish social anthropologist and folklorist James George Frazer. The aim of the dissertation is to demonstrate how the concept of tradition was perceived, and how “tradition objects” were constructed in the surveys. Through such perspectives Resløyken succeeds in demonstrating new aspects in the history of folklore studies.

Resløyken’s academic skills are well demonstrated in the problem formulation and research questions which are clearly formulated and focused. The application of the empirical investigation is well done, and the organization of the thesis is carefully considered. The analysis of the sources is rich in details and insights, demonstrating that the writer has a comprehensive knowledge of the material. The analytical focus is on how “tradition objects” are created and formulated in the questionnaires conceived as “texts”.

Theoretically and methodically ANT is an inspiration for the empirical analyses. The objects of research in the surveys are considered as actants in a network, and perspectives from ANT are connected to concepts and perspectives in narratology. This connection is partly taken as self-evident in the thesis – explicit justification for this is missing – and so is a clarification of the function of concepts such as “actants”, “actor”, and “narrative”. Other concepts central in the thesis, but not so well-known, such as “focalization” (*fokalisering*), “worldling” (*verdensliggjøring*) and “limit objects” (*grenseobjekter*) could profitably have been more clearly and pedagogically explained. Their theoretical and analytical role is not always self-explanatory, and in some parts it makes the text inaccessible.

In spite of this critique, a consistent theoretical, methodological and compositional grasp gives the thesis a solid framework, but it may also contribute to restricting the perspective and discarding certain aspects of the empirical material. The thesis takes a “deep-dive” into one part of a broader communication process or a more comprehensive circulation (the questionnaires), and the reasons for this are well clarified. However, one objection to such a perspective is that the thesis in a way closes in on itself. As a reader one becomes curious about what the respondents really answered and said, and where the examples and narratives used in the questionnaires stemmed from. There must have been some intertextual relations in these formulations that are now cut off. Yet another question is

to what extent this material has been used by other researchers, since Resløkken seems to conclude that this material was not “scalable” for other purposes: it was not usable for other researchers with other theoretical assumptions and problem formulations. It is unclear what the concept scale and scaling imply in the thesis. However, in spite of such objections, this thesis is a valuable contribution to modern folklore studies and discussions of central concepts within this field.

Torunn Selberg, University of Bergen

Challenged Fishing of the Archipelago Sea

Kirsi Sonck-Rautio, The Fishers of the Archipelago Sea. Resilience, Sustainability, Knowledge and Agency. Turun yliopiston julkaisuja – Annales Universitatis Turkuensis. Sarja – Ser. B, Osa – Tom. 493 | Humaniora | Turku 2019. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-951-29-7824-3.

■ Kirsi Sonck-Rautio’s dissertation for the degree of PhD in ethnology at the University of Turku is a compilation thesis based on four peer-reviewed research articles, three of which were published and one accepted for publishing at the time of the public defence on 23 November 2019. One of the articles is co-authored, but in a separate statement Sonck-Rautio explains the division of labour and her contribution to this specific research. A summary section gives a relatively broad introduction to her theme and proceeds with a somewhat revised analysis of her materials compared to her original research articles. To sum up, the thesis is an original and coherent contribution to political ecology and maritime social sciences, with an emphasis on analysing the overall problematic of cultural change in the fishing livelihood and way of life in the Archipelago Sea of Finland, and especially in the fishing community of Rymättylä. Key concepts in the analysis are marine socio-ecological systems, local ecological knowledge and resilience. The thesis particularly emphasizes the perspectives of professional coastal small-scale fishermen.

Sonck-Rautio’s dissertation is important and timely both nationally and internationally. It concerns the rapid cultural, economic and environmental changes of rural areas worldwide related to dif-

ferent modes of primary production and rural coastal communities in general. However, similar development and decline processes, causes and effects, but also knowledge-related environmental disputes can also be found in many other kinds of communities working with farming and animal husbandry in rural contexts. The analysis also includes comparisons with protection policies and discourses regarding the great land animals in rural areas worldwide. A similar kind of environmental-knowledge dilemma can be found in the disputes related to the impact of predation by grey seals and great cormorants on the coastal fishing livelihood. Based on these similarities, Sonck-Rautio boldly links her findings concerning the historical processes and developments of small-scale fisheries of the Archipelago Sea of Finland to broader, even global, contexts and comparisons, including the impacts of climate change, nature conservation and overall economic development and urbanization on the traditional livelihoods and communities.

The objective of the research is well formulated, as is the logic of her specific research questions. Links to the specific research articles are also clearly presented, and the conclusion nicely sums up the key research results and answers to her research questions. Generally, the summary part and the research articles show Kirsi Sonck-Rautio’s aptitude for a professional academic career. Her development as a researcher can be seen in the published research articles. The first one, published in 2017 and with a particular focus on the animal agency, is the least convincing of the research papers. The concept of agency and especially the agency of fish (e.g. herring, pike-perch) feels like a forced and artificial addition to a topic where the researcher’s own research material is much more clearly about the problems of the agency of small-scale fishermen. However, in the summary part of dissertation, the concept of agency is used in a much better and more coherent way, and in particular it is much more convincingly tied to her own research and materials. By contrast, the next two papers, published in 2018, are solid professional contributions presenting new results and perspectives. The second article focuses on the cultural sustainability of coastal small-scale fishing communities and the third one gives valuable insights into the tacit and often ignored knowledge and roles of women in fishing communities and professional fisheries in general. In addition, the

last research article, published in December 2019 in the journal *Ethnologia Fennica*, “The endangered coastal fishers in the coast of the Archipelago Sea: The environmental conflict in policy-making”, is a mature research contribution and strongest in relation to ethnology as a field of scholarship and in relation to Sonck-Rautio’s own ethnographic research materials. It nicely sums up the whole dissertation process.

The dissertation acknowledges previous research related to her theme and she positions her own research contribution well among the relevant national and international maritime and fishing-related research traditions. However, the research and publication forums to do with fisheries are often multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary, even with trans-disciplinary ambitions, but sometimes dominated by natural sciences, and this combination poses some challenges for Sonck-Rautio’s dissertation. A lot of the concepts she uses have their roots in technical and natural sciences that have a tendency to dominate the discourses, and when this is combined in a compilation thesis, where every published paper must stand on its own, some problems are obvious. Firstly, it results in a lot of repetitions between the articles and the summary. Secondly, research articles have a tendency to live a life of their own, and finally published papers in a particular journal or edited volume may be more connected to the ambitions of editors, the aims of the edited volumes, and also the emphases of certain peer reviewers, rather than to the original intentions and needs of an individual dissertation. In the world of “publish or perish” this easily results in an abundance of theoretical concepts and the utilization of overlapping and even competing definitions, when authors try to get their research published by revising their papers according to instructions received. This easily weakens the coherency, particularly of a compilation thesis as a whole. Naturally, this is general problem and there should be more academic discussions of the contexts in which compilation theses are suitable, especially in the humanities where traditionally a holistic understanding and the coherency of the written outcome tend to be emphasized.

This tension and the resulting variation in published papers can also be found in Kirsi Sonck-Rautio’s research articles, but on the other hand, she successfully limits the conceptual apparatus in her summary part, although with a tendency to lean

more on definitions in other sciences than the definitions originating in ethnology and other related humanistic disciplines, such as cultural anthropology. Again, however, it must be emphasized that this comment is related to a general problem in the human sciences, not just the present dissertation. We have struggled with similar tensions in my home university with every compilation thesis that I have supervised myself. The main point is that there should be more discussion about when compilation theses are suitable in the humanities and how to evaluate them compared to traditional monographs. In many countries compilation theses are rather rarely found in humanistic disciplines, and for good reason. For example, ethnographic contents and details are very limited in compilation theses, but this kind of background is often essential so that the reader can follow the analysis of a specific temporal, spatial and cultural complex. In addition, in compilation theses there is very limited space to cite examples from original materials, such as interviews and field notes, and here the voice of research subjects especially suffers, and the reader has rather little opportunity for reflexive reading, instead having to trust in the author’s interpretations. In this dissertation the reader mostly has to track down examples of ethnographic materials from the attached research papers.

Anyhow, the major weaknesses in Sonck-Rautio’s dissertation can be traced back to these general problems of compilation theses in the human sciences and publishing in multidisciplinary journals, which, taken together, easily results in an abundance of theoretical concepts and overlapping, and at times confusing definitions that vary between published research papers in different publication forums. Even though Sonck-Rautio has done great work in clarifying her conceptual background in the summary, there is still some overlapping, for example in the definitions of adaptation, adaptation capacity, socio-ecological system and concepts of resilience and sustainability. Another serious question is why the author ended up emphasizing definitions of previous concepts in other sciences than, for example, in ethnology. It is revealing that even the definition of culture emphasizes recent definitions in other sciences, although the applied definition reminds the reader of the function-emphasizing definition of culture that was put forward by the scholars that represented the “Stewardian” school of cultural ecology

in the mid-twentieth century in ethnology, anthropology and geography.

As regards methodology, Sonck-Rautio's dissertation is mature piece of research and the assembled research material is very convincing, comprising interviews, field visits and notes, participatory observations in local communities, but also in public policy-related meetings, and additionally following traditional and social media discussions. Unfortunately, in a compilation thesis there is very limited space for presenting interesting ethnographic field materials, but from the attached research papers the reader gets a much better understanding of specific ethnographic histories and processes in the studied areas. Naturally, a problem for reader is that revealing photographs and interview quotations are scattered in different articles, but at least it is possible, with some effort, to find evocative visualizations, interlocutors' voices and definitions in her own words.

Sonck-Rautio presents her main results systematically and emphasizes particularly findings relevant to policy, which strengthens the impression that she is especially concerned that her research can and should have an impact and potentially benefit the studied communities, which is a brave and encouraging aim. Her results emphasize especially the importance of local environmental knowledge and its essential role in developing the fishery management. On the other hand, ethical considerations and reflexive assessments of her own research are modest, but probably limited, again, by the compilation thesis format, which does not give much option because of the limited space available. A salient point is that Sonck-Rautio's main results are discussed more in terms of applied forums and fishery management than participating in academic discussions for example in ethnology and other humanistic research. This strengthens the impression that she is now aiming more at a professional research career in applied sciences and environmental management than in academia, which is a respectable choice and a good option for a young scholar to consider.

To conclude, Sonck-Rautio's dissertation is critical, original and ambitious, and despite all the criticism presented here, it is a coherent piece of research, the weaknesses of which derive from the general problems of the compilation thesis format and publication in highly varying multidisciplinary forums. This research setting probably created pres-

sure to discuss with multiple fields of science and at times, also to apply definitions originating in other sciences even though her own "home" discipline could have offered equally good alternatives. As a humanist myself, I would have expected somewhat more reflexive and transparent thinking about the researcher's own position and treatment of the whole research process, although I admit that the summary is much longer (65 pages) than the instructions of the University of Turku recommend (40 pages). Anyhow, it would have been interesting for the reader to understand better the reasons that led to certain choices, concepts and definitions, and why the selected ones fitted better than, for example, more traditional ones in the humanistic sciences. Also, some sort of feedback discussion vis-à-vis the human sciences would have increased the value of the dissertation in regenerating humanistic traditions and comparing these with processes in other fields of science. Now the results and discussion are aimed more at having an impact on applied sciences and forums of environmental management. For example, the dissertation results include an interesting and novel message to contribute to gender studies because they also touch on women's tacit and often ignored roles in fishing communities, a finding that resonates with multiple previous studies of traditional livelihoods and rural communities worldwide. In general, I can recommend Sonck-Rautio's dissertation to anyone interested in traditional livelihoods, human-environment relations and environmental policies related to everyday practices.

Hannu I. Heikkinen, Oulu

A Finnish Industrial Community

Maria Vanha-Similä, Yhtiöön, yhtiöön! Lapsiperheiden arki Forssan tehdasyhteisössä 1950–1970-luvuilla. (English abstract: Everyday life of families among the textile industrial community.) Kansatieteellinen arkisto 58. Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistys, Helsinki 2017. 248 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-952-6655-05-5.

■ Maria Vanha-Similä's dissertation focuses on the textile industrial community in the small town of Forssa in the south of Finland. It looks especially at the everyday life of families tied to this community, irrespective of which work position they had in the factory. It was fairly common that both parents

worked in the textile factory, particularly those working in production. The period that the thesis covers is mainly from the 1950s to the 1970s. This was a time when Finlayson-Forssa Oy, like other companies in that period, had a paternal workforce policy. This meant that companies were interested in providing social benefits and leisure activities to the employees in order to produce a good, happy and loyal workforce for its factories. For example, Finlayson-Forssa Oy had organized childcare and housing for some, as well as hobby and sport clubs. The company also had common saunas and laundry facilities for the workers to use in a time when not all apartments had washing amenities. Thus the company had a great impact on the everyday life of the employees that was not only limited to the time spent at the workplace.

Vanha-Similä examines how class and gender defined people's lives in the industrial community, where the jobs involved both lower and higher skills, with textile machines, printing, dyeing, plastic finishing and spinning mills in the factory halls, in addition to the administrative and sales jobs. She asks how everyday life differed for men and women. What kind of life did workers live in the factory houses and when taking part in the factory's organized leisure activities, and what was the role of the fathers in family life? Vanha-Similä shows, for example, that fathers in some cases did the traditional women's housework, such as cooking, when both parents were working different shifts in order to make ends meet. On the other hand, women were expected to take care of the homes and children while men were more free to take part in hobby clubs and fishing in their spare time. The community was also hierarchically organized along the lines of the positions people had in the company. For example, some of the leisure clubs were mainly meant for the people working in higher positions in the company. The housing was also organized so that people lived in different areas depending on the position they had in the company. We also see that sometimes there were subtle differences within one class position, so that different occupations and positions on the same production line were valued differently, which then affected the possibilities and resources offered to workers in their everyday life.

The dissertation can be read as a social or cultural historical take on the lives of people in an industrial community organized around a particular textile

company in a particular time frame. Finnish society was recovering from the Second World War and building the social democratic welfare state; this is the background to the research. While the textile industry has undergone great changes, from being a thriving industry that needed quite a large workforce, to deindustrialization and the dismantling of the structures of the industrial community. The focus is on the everyday life of two-parent families with children, but the study also touches on other modes of living, for instance young people without families, divorced and single-parent families. A characteristic feature of Vanha-Similä's research and writing style is that she highlights a variety of experiences and ways people lived and negotiated their lives while dealing with the issues like childcare and housing, but also leisure time and heavy industrial labour. Thus the research succeeds in painting a complex picture of life in a community of people from different backgrounds.

The research is mainly based on interview material assembled by the author as an oral history project of the Forssa museum about working life in the textile mill. However, she has also had a great variety of other source material in order to answer the research questions. For example, she has used oral history interviews gathered from Forssa back in the 1980s by a workers' history project, and she has also had the opportunity to use a selection of documents, pictures and fabric samples gathered from the already closed textile factory. Furthermore, she has had the opportunity to study a wide selection of pictures taken by a variety of people about their lives in Forssa. The pictures run through the thesis and are intended mainly to illustrate. The interview quotations selected for the book also serve mainly as illustration or examples. The thesis has quite a long separate chapter that goes through all the research material; this could have been edited somewhat to reduce the methodological considerations. On the other hand, this chapter could serve a pedagogical purpose in teaching methodological reflexivity.

The book has ten chapters. The book starts with a description of the context, the research task and the research design, followed by a description of the research material and eight empirical chapters. These deal with the experiences of getting a job, as well as the everyday life and hierarchies inside the factory, moving on to how life was organized outside work, dealing with the housing provided by the company

and ending with childcare, which was provided either by mothers, relatives, or the childcare organized by the factory. At the end of the thesis Vanha-Similä writes about social benefits, which included for example financial help on sick days as well as material benefits such as access to cheaper fabric produced in the factory, which had a high value in the wider community. She also touches upon the influence of the workers' union. Furthermore she writes about the company's different clubs, trips and sports activities, which were understood to contribute to a healthy and happy worker. Some of the empirical chapters tend to overlap and this creates a sense of repetition throughout the book. This could have been avoided with more careful editing. However, the reason for the repetitions could be that the dissertation seems to have been written to make it easier to read only parts of the book that give information about an area in which the reader is most interested.

While the dissertation is not very theoretical in the sense that, for example, theories of class and gender could have been applied more in the empirical analysis. It is nevertheless visible throughout the thesis that a wide variety of contextual literature has been read and used in discussing the empirical findings. This thesis is an important addition to ethnological studies of working life and work communities in Finland, while providing empirically oriented research-based knowledge to other interested parties about the grass-roots life of people living in a textile industry community in the mid-twentieth century.

Jenni Rinne, Helsinki

The Culture of Bio-Objects

Andréa Wiszmeg, *Cells in Culture, Cells in Suspense. Practices of Cultural Production in Foetal Cell Research*. Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences, Lund University 2019. 210 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-91-983690-8-3.

■ I am a great believer in monographs, so let me start the review with those words. I much prefer the somewhat longer cohesive scholarly format that is now being abandoned at an alarming rate in favour of shorter articles. I am concerned about that development. But if you are going to write a compilation dissertation, you should do it in the exemplary style that *Andréa Wiszmeg* has achieved. This review of

her dissertation follows the outline of the book, with a mixture of content description and analysis.

The reader's interest is nicely aroused by the introduction to the phenomenon or object that is the focal point of the study: stem cells extracted from aborted fetuses. The reader is then introduced to a multifaceted and multidisciplinary field that has emerged, relating in different ways to the bio-object that the cells can be viewed as. "Bio-object" is a term used to understand biological artefacts that challenge our perceptions of nature/culture, living/dead, created/found, and so on. The meaning of bio-object is fluid, and knowledge about it is changing. It acts as a kind of medium between a wide range of different spheres of society and science. Because the cells have regenerative properties and agency, this also challenges our ideas about what is part and what is whole in a thought-provoking and fascinating way. Not least of all, these objects raise a number of ethical questions. With her choice of focus in the dissertation, *Wismeg* has developed a new way of pursuing research about culture based on the gaps which can be found everywhere but which are often ignored. Not only does she use a mobile searchlight, she also conducts a study of movement and change. The dissertation is not only about a cultural phenomenon, but also generates an understanding of how knowledge comes into being. The aim of the dissertation is to use cultural analysis as an aid in studying the transformation of embryonic cells into therapeutic methods, and how meaning and knowledge arise in that process.

The theories used in the study concern – and were created to tackle – transformation, flexibility, and endurance in different ways. The focus is on boundaries, coming into being, and what happens in between. Bio-objects are a kind of boundary objects. *Wismeg* displays her mature understanding of epistemology and her critical independence by not following any school, instead demonstrating a well-developed ability to work eclectically in the true ethnological spirit. The empirical material for the dissertation was collected using classical ethnological fieldwork methods: interviews (both semi-structured and focus groups) and observations. Laboratory staff, patients, and relatives have been interviewed and observed. Other material consists of documents and guidelines from Sweden and the EU, 250 pages of field notes from observations of work in laboratories and at meetings of various kinds, and

transcriptions of interviews with researchers who work with the stem cells (or bio-objects). The choice of both theory and method reveals a well-developed ability to work in a multidisciplinary way, and by focusing on boundaries and what happens in between, the author creates an understanding of both the possibilities and the limitations of science and of the topic under study. Wiszmeg uses the word “crystallization” to describe her way of working, and I think she succeeds in her ambition to elucidate the inherent differences and diversity of knowledge. Inspired by Donna Haraway and Karen Barad, Wiszmeg has developed a diffractive approach, created in order to capture diversity and describe the openness of the processes by which knowledge is created. The method is described using an apt metaphor: it is like finding your way in a dark room with the help of a cane that you alternately hold with a firm and a loose grip. After the presentation of theory and method there is a section entitled “Ethnographic interlude”. Here the author opens the door to the laboratory world and gives us an informative description – with both words and pictures – of the work that is carried out there. After that, she surveys previous research, both international and Swedish. Wiszmeg shows here that she is well read and capable of moving between different scientific disciplines, yet never losing touch with ethnology, which is the subject in which the dissertation was presented.

The articles are then presented briefly, but they are also reproduced in their entirety later in the book. Article 1 is entitled “Medical need, ethical skepticism: Clashing views on the use of foetuses in Parkinson’s disease research”. It deals with ethical dilemmas associated with the handling of aborted foetuses. Here Wiszmeg introduces the concept of “gut-feeling ethics”, which is the result of analyses of conversations in different focus groups about the ethical dilemmas that the subject gives rise to. It turns out that the researchers, who are not personally affected, proceed from their gut feeling when they think about ethics, more so than the patients who have the disease. Article 2, “Cells in suspense: Unboxing the negotiations of a large-scale cell transplant trial”, focuses on understanding lab culture and how it affects knowledge of the cellular material. It analyses the creation of knowledge and its character of a negotiation between a great many different actors, both human and non-human. Wiszmeg

shows here how the uncertainty that this research inevitably has to deal with, because it is breaking new ground, has led to the development of a kind of choreography that helps to coordinate the actors among whom the new knowledge emerges. The third article is entitled “Transforming trash to treasure: Cultural ambiguity in foetal cell research”. Here the focus is on the researchers’ different ways of dealing with ethical dilemmas raised by working with aborted foetuses and patients with serious neurological diseases, dilemmas which must be tackled on a daily basis in the actual situations where they arise. The scientists who handle the cellular material act in a kind of liminal in-between space, which affects the knowledge that is necessarily based on consensus in practice but at the same time gives rise to cultural ambivalence. Article 4, “Diffractions of the foetal cell suspension: Scientific knowledge and value in laboratory work”, examines different ways of working with biomaterial. Wiszmeg creates an understanding of how scientific knowledge arises in the context of a laboratory by starting from a diffractive perspective instead of a reflective perspective. It is a matter of not taking difference for granted, but of examining *how* and *which* differences are taken into account and which are ignored in the knowledge practice of science. The point is that a researcher with this perspective is involved as a subject in the knowledge process in a completely different way than if knowledge is regarded as something passive waiting to be discovered.

The dissertation ends with a section where the author reflects on what the dissertation contributes to knowledge. This is well worth reading, even for someone who has not read the rest of the book or any of the articles. And this, I think, is what demonstrates the strength of the dissertation. Wiszmeg has not only passed her driving test in research, but also demonstrated creative ability and craft skills by presenting, in a lucid, pedagogical, and well-written manner, a thorough piece of work filled with important and valuable knowledge, not only about the work with foetal cells materials in the lab, but also about the prerequisites for knowledge production in general. With her method and her way of writing and analysing ethnographic material, Wiszmeg exposes the tacit knowledge and the taken-for-granted things that affect all research and all cultural contexts. The perspective applied in the dissertation gives a better understanding of where and how mis-

understandings in the communication of knowledge can arise and how an understanding of science in general can be developed, and also how the problems that often arise in interdisciplinary projects can be better solved, which is particularly necessary in the wake of COVID-19. Knowledge of culture and the ability to deal with diversity and complexity, along with the understanding of changes demonstrated by Wiszmeg in her dissertation, are intellectual qualities that build society and promote sustainability, and thus deserve to be spread beyond the discipline of ethnology.

I have tried to find something to criticize, and there are no doubt things that could have been done better (as there always are), but *Cells in Culture*, *Cells in Suspense*, as I read it, is not a dissertation which claims that research definitely proves something. It is instead a study of the conditions for cul-

tural change and knowledge production *between* different actors and between academia and society, which means that there are no categorical claims that need to be examined. The knowledge conveyed in the dissertation is of a more open and searching nature, which is exactly what is needed to understand and learn how to deal with the complex and rapidly changing world in which we live. I therefore see no reason to search for errors and omissions just for the sake of it. In my view the dissertation is very solid, more than satisfying what can reasonably be demanded of a doctoral student. Wiszmeg moreover reminds us of how useful and important ethnological competence is, both in the academic world and in the society and culture that we all share and are part of.

Eddy Nehls, Lerum

Book Reviews

A Game that Refuses to Die

Torbjörn Andersson, Den döende bandyn? En sär-egen historia om svensk natur, nationalism och nostalgi. Arx Förlag, Malmö 2019. 279 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-8889-309-3.

■ Bandy has been pronounced dead in Sweden for almost a hundred years. However, the bandy has survived all the pitfalls. Not even Ice hockey or floorball have succeeded in displacing it. Nor has the game been destroyed by frost conditions or climate change. In the course of this millennium, the whole of bandy culture has changed. The game has moved from natural ice to indoor halls in a short time.

The elements of this story are Swedish nature, nationalism, nostalgia, which have tied Swedish bandy finals together for over 100 years. The reader is not only reminded of the finals, but is also given an interesting snapshot of Swedish bandy culture, supporters and teams. The point of the book is how bandy has been modernized while preserving traditions.

Torbjörn Andersson's research is the story of bandy and its relation to Swedish sports culture. The author (born 1963) is a historian. He has a PhD from Lund University in 2002 on Swedish football culture from the late nineteenth century to the 1950s. Today he is Assistant Professor of Exercise Science at the University of Malmö.

The book is divided into three identifiable periods. The pioneering phase (1895–1955) is dominated by the emergence of modern sport, which involves the development of rules, conditions and equipment. Until the 1950s, a brief season was played on natural ice. The game was played with a rope ball and the other equipment was still in development. The hallmark of the players was a club hat, a culture which moved to the stands. As with other major sporting events, the finals were broadcast on radio. Bandy was a major competitor in Sweden in the 1920s, when ice hockey was breaking into the public awareness.

The most significant change in the modern era (1956–2003) was the transition to artificial ice, which significantly extended the season. Other innovations included a plastic ball and helmet. Televi-

sion broadcasts began with the men's Swedish championship finals, with the women's finals adding a new dimension to Swedish bandy in 1973 (IK Göta vs. Katrineholms SK).

The foundation of the Federation of International Bandy (FIB) in 1955 and the entry of the Soviet Union into the international bandy community gave birth to the Men's World Cup in 1957. The World Cup was long attended by the traditional founding countries of the International Hockey League: Finland, Sweden, Norway and the Soviet Union. In the 1980s, the United States became the fifth country to join. In 1991 the Netherlands, Hungary and Canada joined. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia and Kazakhstan have participated in the tournament.

The third era is post-modern. Since 2004 bandy has moved to indoor arenas. According to Andersson, a major cultural change took place in 2013 when the finals were played indoors in Stockholm. The venue added the familiar elements of ice hockey: music and the fast cycle of the game. The author claims that something traditional was killed when the supporters became customers. The change saw the Americanization of sport, where everything has been modernized and commercialized. However, the 2013 final commemorates the 25,000 Hammarby supporters who travelled to Stockholm, resulting in the largest single gathering of fans of the same team in Swedish sports history.

Women's bandy was not taken seriously in Sweden until the 2000s, even though the Swedish Championship had been played since the 1970s. The women's finals were featured on television and the FIB included women in the World Championships in 2004. Sweden has the highest number of championships, Russia has regularly been the runner-up and Finland and Norway have won an equal share of bronze medals.

According to Andersson, bandy has strengthened the Swedish community, bringing together different classes of society. The finals gave a nationalist dimension to the game, where the special features of different provinces combined to create a strong national unity. The Swedish culture of bandy was born out of the urban environment, but now the focus has shifted to small towns and the countryside. Unlike most other sports, the culmination of Sweden's national bandy is the national finals and not the World Cup. One explanation for this is that only a handful

of countries play bandy at a high level: Sweden, Russia, Finland, Norway and Kazakhstan.

The national appeal of bandy is guaranteed by the loud crowds of supporters who, from the early twentieth century onwards, have filled the stands on and off the road. Fans have been loyal to their teams. Of course, in the cold stands, the alcohol tastes good. For example, after the 1951 final (Örebro SK vs. Bollnäs GIF), about 6,000 empty bottles were collected from the gallery. Indeed, it seems that the 1950s was a golden time for bandy, with an average of about 24,000 people attending the finals. Nostalgia has long been a hallmark of bandy.

Andersson examines Swedish bandy culture from the perspective of ethnology, mainly through the finals. They have been played since 1907 and that match has retained its status as Sweden's oldest major annual sporting event, in which fan culture plays an important role. Even football has not been able to compete with the number of fans travelling long distances. The author cleverly links how bandy as a sport has constantly navigated between tradition and the present. The book conveys the feeling that Andersson is romanticizing his subjects.

Andersson's most important source is newspaper coverage, backed up by club histories. The research thematically focuses on the annual finals. This raises the question of how well the true essence of bandy can be portrayed through the finals.

Jari Kanerva, Helsinki

Image and Image-Making In and Out of History

Images in History / History in Images. Towards an (AUDIO)VISUAL Historiography. Peter Aronsson, Andrej Slávik & Birgitta Svensson (eds.). Konferens 99. Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien, Stockholm 2020. 277 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-88-763-07-5.

■ Reading the edited volume *Images in History / History in Images: Towards an (AUDIO)VISUAL Historiography*, a strong hesitation grips this reviewer right from the beginning, already here even in trying to name the book and the international and interdisciplinary conference it is based on, held in Stockholm in April 2017. It is the old question about the chicken and the egg, which came first: images in

history or history in images? This question faces the reader from the start, or more specifically: in what order are the articles supposed to be read? The strictly symmetrical design of the book, with one part being *History in Images* and the other *Images in History*, makes it impossible to answer this question in any simple, definite way. The editors of the book have constructed it in a way that makes the choice random, more or less. My guess is that most readers of the volume will start with *Images in History*, the one with a quite striking illustration of a naked giant bent forward, a sketch by the sixteenth-century Mannerist painter Bastianino (Bastiano Filippi) from Ferrara. The other back/front of the book, the one called *History in Images*, has another quite arresting picture as its frontispiece, of African-American refugees in the wake of the Civil War in the United States in the nineteenth century.

This is at least the order in which I read the book, starting with *Images in History*. The underlying assumption in this case was that the *Images in History* part looks more textual, more traditionally "academic", whilst the *History in Images* part has a more "artistic", more pictorial emphasis, or a more experimental one. This way of reading the book is based on the assumption that this is the better way of opening up the book as to its theoretical and practical implications than the other way round. Whether this is actually so is of course impossible to judge after reading it this way. One has to stick with the choice one makes, since the book leaves this entirely up to the reader.

For starters, useful introductions are offered for both parts of the volume, on *Images in History* by the historian Peter Aronsson and the ethnologist Birgitta Svensson and on *History in Images* by the historian Andrej Slávik. And then there might still be another reason for choosing *Images in History* first: the book has a clear inspirational figure, or maybe two, but one more famous in cultural analysis and history writing, namely Carlo Ginzburg, the eminent cultural critic and professor emeritus from the University of Pisa and the University of California, still actively writing and lecturing as an octogenarian, and also one of the contributors to this book's *Images in History* part. The other inspirational voice in the book, whose ideas are also important for the book as a whole, is Professor Ariella Azoulay, who is a curator, filmmaker and theorist of photography, from Brown University.

An odd, short piece called “Imaginary History”, written by one of the editors of the volume, Andrej Slávik, even offers a reading of these two contributors, Ginzburg and Azoulay, as representing something he calls, by way of a mathematical parable, imaginary history. He states that they both operate, Ginzburg with his microhistory and Azoulay with her potential history, somewhere between the rational and the irrational, comprehension and the incomprehensible, restraint and excess. As an exercise in abstract thinking connected to mathematics, the piece by Slávik is in itself quite interesting. As to its explanatory value concerning the historical studies by these two contributors, it might be of slightly less value.

The next question that pops up is what these two titles actually imply and how they differ, if at all, from one other. The introduction in the History of Images section by Andrej Slávik states that Images in History approaches the question from the angle of how pictorial, especially photographic, representations can be and have been understood either as historical artefacts or as sources of knowledge about the past, while History in Images would try to explain how pictorial, especially photographs, representations can themselves be used to convey a new and different understanding of the past.

The strictly symmetrical construction of the book as a collection with some twenty contributors and a theme that is as wide as this double-edged idea of images in history/history in images makes it a daunting task to try to come to grips with the contents and the ideas presented in the dense volume, not least trying to state what in the book might be of special interest in a review in *Ethnologia Scandinavica* (I would say that there is an over-abundance of those possible points of interest!). Although this is a Swedish production, the Swedish content of the book is rather subdued (although a majority of the contributors are from Sweden). There are only a handful of texts which deal more directly with Swedish cases. One is a description of how the Swedish scholar, Börje Hanssen, as part of a project led by the art historian Gregor Paulsson surveying the modernization of Sweden, in 1943 took a series of photographs in the city of Halmstad. He was above all interested in how the old and the new Halmstad as he saw it played out in his pictures. The text by the ethnologist Karin Gustavsson shows how Hanssen’s pictures and text are interesting to ponder

on as part of a historical understanding of how society and its cultural and intellectual elite in the early twentieth century viewed progress and decay in an urban built environment and also how that which was thought to be modern in the 1940s now might be understood when looked upon with a temporal lens almost 80 years later. What is now showing is a certain anachronistic edge to these modernistic aspirations of that time, both the “wild” city planning of Halmstad in the early twentieth century and the later, more modern or modernistic approach which from our point of view might look both a bit “nostalgic” and laden with strong sentimental values.

Another contribution within a Swedish context is the art historian and curator Louise Wolthers’ piece “Displaying science: Photography, ethnography and national history”, which deals with the question of racism and exoticization in depictions of ethnicity, or more precisely photographs of Sami people in the northern parts of Sweden in the nineteenth century. Wolthers focuses especially on a couple of photographs by the famous “mountain photographer” Emil Ragnar Borg Mesch, both of a young Sami girl, Maria Huuva, showing how the object of the photograph is exoticized by the photographer and on the other hand how the subject of the pictures herself indicates by her gaze a certain non-compliance or maybe even a cautious opposition or uninterest in the procedure taking place. Borg Mesch’s pictures were part of an international photographic exhibition in Gothenburg in 1929. Wolthers also shows convincingly how the installation images from the scientific section of the exhibition served as an example of the photographic visualization of ethnography and history. This is possible because photographs were also taken of how the curators worked with their material in the exhibition. Since no details of any textual foundation for the images was provided in this section of the exhibition, an ethnographical and photographic polysemy allowed allusions to a primitive exoticism camouflaged as objective science, Wolthers notes.

The lesson to be learned from this essay is one which holds true for the book as a whole: a photograph – or may one add an image of almost any kind – is through its reproducibility prone to travel and circulate in various contexts, acquiring meaning from these contexts, just as it performs as context and offers meaning to other texts. Its various temporary anchorages are part of the dense context of

the unstable, photographic source, Wolthers states, and adds that the historical potentials of a photograph are almost incomprehensible in so far as its reproducibility allows it to migrate, engage and exchange historical meanings with new networks. I think this is one of the central lessons of this collection, and the lesson is varied in different ways all through the materials showcased in the book: the question of the migration of images. Another example of this – or rather the difficulties of migration in this case – is highlighted in another piece with Swedish underpinnings, when a young girl in Tensta in 2014 borrowed her mother's smartphone and took a photograph of a peculiar cloud in the sky which was interpreted by the girl's mother as an apparition of the Virgin Mary. A few days later, when thousands of people were gathered in the local Syrian Orthodox Church, the church of St Mary, the audience witnessed a second apparition of St Mary, this time of images in the church windows, as reported in the Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter*.

But what the author and artist Magnus Bårtås indicates in his analysis as maybe the most interesting variation in conjunction with these apparitions is the fact that the buzz around them, frequent though they might have been on social media up to a certain point, when seen as a part of something more "official" or general in Swedish contemporary history writing is quite non-existent or without a wider resonance. The whole episode is firmly put under the radar of Swedish public discourse, the only exception being the report in the Swedish daily. Bårtås concludes that the unwillingness and inability to internalize the story of the apparent miracles in Tensta in the Swedish context says something about how questions of micro- and macrohistory are bound to various perspectives and contexts. What in the history-writing of the Syrian Orthodox church now belongs to a category of important moments in history is effectively non-existent even as an event in the history of Sweden. Bårtås concludes by stating that the gap or tension between the life of narratives points to questions of coexistence (or should that be rephrased as questions of non-coexistence!?) in diverse societies: to live in a society where *theoria* (the word used in classical Greek to indicate a report given of important events, such as the Olympics) is deprived of its potential symbolic or metaphoric meaning in society, is according to Bårtås also to live in a society in which *theoria* is unable to form

any basis for action, negotiation, listening to and telling stories.

What this volume can teach someone interested in trying to understand the dynamics of images, pictorial presentations and representations from a historical point of view (which of course is always connected to some now-point or some other plausible temporal point of entry) is the value of practices associated with these kinds of phenomena. Practices discussed in the volume are above all those of curating and editing, both exemplified in several of the contributions.

One striking example is the artist, writer and anthropologist Marcus Banks' research into the world-views of people in the western Indian city of Jamnagar, more specifically people belonging to the Jain religious tradition, a denomination contemporary with Buddhism though perhaps less well known and with fewer adherents than that tradition. Banks is interested in discussing some photographs he took in the 1980s of members of the group and also of some older pictures of the city from the time of a ruler named Ranjiitsihnji, a ruler in the early twentieth century, who was seen by the British as corrupt and not particularly interested in the modernization of the city. To Banks's surprise the pictures of some old buildings raised in this earlier era, an era before most of his respondents were even born, were more interesting to the interviewees than pictures where they themselves were presented. Banks starts from an assumption made by Ariella Azoulay of what she calls the social contract between the photographer and the photographed person, that there is nothing that binds the photographed person to the photographer. Rather the case is, as she notes, that all "signatories" to the photographic act can produce images of each other and can contribute to the invention of images available to all parties. This statement is one that the volume illustrates and verifies in a most striking way in several of the contributions.

One such piece is by the ethnologist and museum curator Helene Larsson Pousette, who presents the ideas from her own experience of contemporary collecting, working mainly from events involving strong pressures morally, ethically and politically, such as layoffs in a Swedish company, the war in Serbia, and questions of ethics concerning work in Sweden for a mining company from South Africa during the apartheid era, and also the controversial

EU summit held in Gothenburg in 2001. What Larson Pousette is able to show is that certain artefacts, objects or even gestures, and indeed the soil itself, might be loaded with extreme iconic power and in this way can be used as a powerful lens to view the history of these events. This is an interesting case leaning towards some earlier attempts by Swedish ethnologists trying to understand the value of what they have called “sensitive objects”, a way of looking at things in history from a phenomenological or even existential point of view, not an easy task but surely an important one.

Curating and editing are at the forefront of several of the most intriguing pieces in this remarkable collection. The space here allows me to only reference them, which by no means is any indication of their lesser value in relation to the texts discussed here. These are contributions by the curator and cinema scholar Sylvie Rollet – “The historical unconscious made visible: Traces or symptoms of ‘the missing People’ (around three films by Sergei Lonitsa)”, by the cinema scholar Jaimie Barron – “Christopher Harris’s experimental audiovisual historiography”, by the cinema scholar Malin Wahlberg – “Memory, history and forgetting: Knowledge production and commemoration in the films of Susana de Sousa Dias”, a monologue by the filmmaker Peter Watkins, and four expositions of stills, by the artist and filmmaker Deimantas Narkevičius, Magnus Bårtås (see above), the artists Lina Selander & Oscar Mangione, and Andrej Slávik, all executed in a most fascinating and thought-provoking way.

To complete the list of contributions to this volume: the text written by the artist, curator and writer Maria Lantz ponders on the phenomenon of so-called mugshots (photographs of persons made by the police after their arrest), while the visual essay “From the plazas and beyond” by the educator, artist and researcher Michelle Teran, discusses the use of ultra-effective imagery (including superheroes) in a political campaign with female candidates in Spain (Madrid and Barcelona) recently. Both these texts are especially valuable for anyone thinking about iconicity, a problematic which this otherwise quite diverse collection of texts is not particularly interested in exploring.

A question lingering in my mind when reading the volume and seeing all the hard work put into these kinds of research is a simple one, but also at the same time quite a difficult one. Which are the

values most highly sought after in these texts and expositions? If it is some form of scientific truth, then what are its contents? Might that which binds this collection together have something to do with questions of fairness and equality, even largesse, friendship, trust, brother/sisterhood, things which we often take for granted but which are, as the volume voices so strongly, often ill-respected or not respected at all. So, in a way, this is a rather paradoxical situation: a “high-value” professional enterprise, indeed a royal one – the volume and conference was organized by the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities (Kungliga Svenska Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien) – is concerned with the poor and the downtrodden, with war victims, slaves and more generally people and individuals put under extreme stress and pressure. They are what history so easily might silence: the subaltern, the people in exile, refugees, and the rights and the dignity of all these people. This is, as far as I can see, the driving force of the volume. But at the same time questions of aesthetics, of metaphor, of the movement and the stasis of the images are under scrutiny here, highlighted not least in the papers by Carlo Ginzburg, Ariella Acoulay and, in a more existential turn, by the philosopher Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback.

What Ginzburg in his paper “On small differences: Ekphrasis and connoisseurship” is concerned with is the line drawn between image and text and the ways in which this line or limit is pushed aside when different actors, in this case art connoisseurs and art historians, engage in their interpretation practices, which here starts from a sketch made by the Mannerist painter Bastianino and lands by way of a digression into the different ways of writing and thinking by these connoisseurs under scrutiny right through to a paradox, namely this one: “Words mediate between painting and experience: visual experiences, social experiences of all kind. We speak about paintings; they resist words; we insist, we speak again. *Parler peinture*, as the French say, is a never-ending activity”.

If Ginzburg stresses the movement of images Azoulay in her text (the longest in the collection) focuses on their arrest, their stasis, in the practices of archives, those which may not always even be working with images *per se*, but with identities, which surely more often than not are connected to images. Her text is, as Andrej Slávik rightly emphasizes, a

contribution which throws down the gauntlet to the historical profession at large. Slávik reads her text as a full-scale attack on the archive as a societal institution. Azoulay regards the archive as a fundamental component of an “imperial regime” wrecking havoc on the cultural worlds that came in the way of what she calls “the relentless pursuit of the new”. In this way her essay concerning not least the slave trade and the exile of marginalized groups in imperial regimes is a strong reminder of the value of multitude, polysemy, roots, cultures of different ages and values, and indeed of difference itself. This is of course also something that could be said of the entire *oeuvre* of Carlo Ginzburg, right from *The Cheese and the Worms* through readings of Bertillon, Conan Doyle and Freud, and all those traces left behind in history, in a history writing which is so deeply personal and at the same time so (what would be the right word?) eminently human in its aspirations.

The philosophical take by Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback on the migration of images is radical in its way of paralleling the movement of the image with the movement of the refugee, something which she reads as happening between the visible and the invisible, the being and the non-being. This text is a wake-up call in our era of image saturation, which also can be viewed as an era when, as she says, everything appears in images and nothing seems to exist without an image. What once was invisible and unseen can now be made visible and exposed for the screen of the world. But on the other hand every image becomes the site of manipulation, exploitation, and simulation. Thus, the same image serves as both evidence and concealment of truth. Her conclusion, early on in the text, is quite striking: “If during past centuries, images have had the double task to render present the absent and to render visible the present, today images render the present void of presence and the exposed visible invisible to itself. Too much imagery of what is being and happening serves to make us blind and eyeless to what is happening.” And then she makes the move from the image to the refugee and in a way makes them parallel “figures”. So, the experience of the image in the situation of migration and exile reveals the image as migration not between realms and worlds but between the visible and the invisible, the touchable and the un-touchable, between being and non-being. And this migration, according to Sá Cavalcante Schuback, is never sequential but rather simultaneous and pluri-

directional insofar as different times and places are always exposed to each other, superposed on each other, running together even in different speeds and intensities. She ends her essay by saying that the urgency is to learn to unlearn, to force existence to strong figurations and to discover the possibility of a-figural images. This statement can be read as an aporia of sorts which can form a kind of, if not a conclusion, then a starting point for further research into the important and difficult field of image and image-making in and out of history.

Sven-Erik Klinkmann, Vasa

Gender in the Museum

Kjønn på museum. Brita Brenna & Marit Anne Hauan (eds.). Museumsforlaget, Trondheim 2018. 228 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-8305-060-8.

■ This edited volume on “Gender in the Museum” begins with the observation that gender is everywhere in museums – in the stores and the exhibitions, in the archives and the communication strategies – yet at the same time it is difficult to detect it. It takes work to catch sight of how gender operates in museums, according to the editors, and it is the ambition of this book to open up museums and exhibitions in order to see how gender is presented and constructed. The volume explores two issues: What do we find when we try to identify gender and gendered practices in museums and exhibitions? Can we find anything that might change not only our perception of what museums are, but also of what museums can become? The editors declare that there is a shortage of research and perspectives that can make us understand better how museums are gendered, and therefore they have asked people associated with museums to tell us, from their own starting point in the museum, about what they have found. Further questions that come in the individual chapters in the book are: What patterns emerge? What pops up? How can we understand the research objects and the day-to-day activities in new ways by asking how we – and they – do gender?

Besides the editors’ introduction, the book contains ten chapters in which a number of scholars explore different aspects of how gender is done in museums. Almost all the authors are in one way or another way associated with Tromsø Museum, but they represent different fields of knowledge.

In the introductory chapter, Brita Brenna and Marit Anne Hauan point out that museums have the power to define norms, but they also observe that this power has very little immediate effect, because the work of museums rarely has a direct impact on political decisions and economic profits. That is why many museum workers, according to Brenna and Hauan, welcome the serious criticism that has been levelled at museums from the 1980s onwards, because this criticism confirms that museums are institutions of power. From that premise, the editors argue that this power can be used to challenge norms and present other realities.

Referring to Wera Grahn (2007), Brenna and Hauan note that we have women's studies, equality studies, feminist studies, queer studies, masculinity studies, and intersectional studies. They emphasize that what all these perspectives have in common is that they aim the searchlight at how gender is linked to power, oppression, and marginalization, and they argue that the concepts and theories that can be used are governed by what is to be achieved. In this way, the editors point out that the authors of the book were free to tackle their material using the perspectives and tools they regarded as most suitable for "the work of catching sight of gender".

Before I started reading, I glanced at the table of contents and saw some headings that seemed to fall within the framework of what can be expected of a book like this, such as "Where were the women?" and "Looking for gender". Other headings are of a more challenging kind, arousing the reader's curiosity, such as "See the cod – as she or he?" and "Roald Amundsen – the housewifely polar hero".

Having read all the chapters, however, I can conclude that although the headings do not all arouse as much curiosity, each chapter presents its own interesting new angle on some type of material. The authors' analyses cover several different layers of how gender is done, both in museum practices and in research practices.

In the chapter "One-sided exhibitions, straight lines, and packed perspectives", Brita Brenna stresses that we have long known about the striking lack of women's lives in collections, research, and exhibitions, and when museums today work with gender it involves, more than anything else, levelling the imbalance in power and visibility between women and men, and the lack of female perspectives. She notes, however, that if all the different

perspectives are to be squeezed into the traditional linear narrative of progress, it will be overcrowded, and therefore museums need to change their practices fundamentally to find new types of narratives, and that is what the chapter explores and discusses.

Some chapters focus on research practices. Marianne Skander examines how the museums produce new knowledge about Norway's prehistory in archaeological reports. What is interesting about this is that they contain two different layers of gendering practices. On the one hand, it is a matter of how archaeological material is interpreted based on present-day values and norms. On the other hand, it depends on who the archaeologist is, what the gender balance looks like in the team, and who the excavation leader is. These two layers are bound together in reports characterized by traditions that determine, for example, the type of pictures that are shown of the excavation site.

From an ethnobotanical point of view, Torbjørn Alm investigates, among other things, how the collection of plants and information about them is steered by the gender of the collector and the informant. Sveinulf Hegstad explores the possibility of searching for gender in digitized archives. Both these chapters are interesting and highly readable.

Several chapters discuss ethnicity and the creation of "the Other". The life of the South Sami woman Margarete Kreutz is examined by Cathrine Baglo from the standpoints of gender, ethnicity, and race in several layers of history as well as in older and recent exhibition productions, and the article challenges previous research presenting the Sami as passive victims. Instead, Baglo highlights Kreutz's agency and energetic activity, which enabled her, for example, to travel and experience places during a time when most people were unable to go on long journeys.

Proceeding from the question "Where were the women?" Trude Fonneland reflects on different ways of staging gender and Sami religion in a comparison between two exhibitions from two different times. Hanne Hammer Stein examines how Russian sailors are portrayed in an exhibition, and concludes that the traditional gender roles are challenged, which she believes may have to do with the fact that Russian sailors may be perceived as "the Others".

Discussions about masculinity are also the focus of a couple of other chapters dealing with exhibitions about polar travel. Lena Aarekol observes that

the Norwegian national icon Roald Amundsen is portrayed in three different exhibitions as an undisputed alpha male. Based on her own studies of extant material, Aarekol disputes that image, arguing instead that the reason why Roald Amundsen succeeded in his expedition to the South Pole was that he had “housewifely” qualities. Polar expeditions are also discussed by Marit Anne Hauan, who stresses that they were largely made possible by women’s work, which is hidden in the history books and exhibition narratives.

The chapter that perhaps takes the “strangest” step “in the work of searching for gender” is about the gender of cod. Anita Maurstad ponders on how the exhibition “See the Cod!” could have been improved by seeing the cod as a number of individuals with gender. Maurstad uncovers several layers of contexts where gender is significant in research, nature, and culture. This article is interesting because it points to the neo-materialistic and post-humanist world view, which is becoming more and more common today in museums.

Kjønn på museum is an easily read book, and although I am not so accustomed to reading Norwegian, I have had no problem following the authors’ reasoning and their work of making gender visible. What bothers me a little, however, is that the references to literature are rather vaguely stated in some of the chapters, some reference lists are not in alphabetical order, and they are not always complete. In one article, several books are missing from the reference list. Finally, one of the authors is omitted from the presentation of the authors. This gives a somewhat careless impression, and in several places I was unable to follow up a book that I thought sounded interesting, because the only information that existed was the surname and the year.

Having said that, my opinion is that, despite these flaws, the book is definitely worth reading, and what is lacking in academic accuracy is compensated by an abundance of engagement and ingenuity in finding new ways to discuss gender in museums. The strength of the book lies in its many and creative approaches that stimulate new thoughts about how gender is done.

Several of the contributions in this book clearly show how important it is to discuss men in terms of gender, justified with reference to Wera Grahn’s observation that men are also subject to gendering. The connection to Grahn is a shared framework that I

think I can see through all the chapters in the book, with greater or lesser clarity. Many of the authors also cast the net wider to include references to other relevant theories and concepts. But there are also some chapters where the authors would have gained from a broader range of research in both museum studies and gender studies.

In conclusion, to return to the introduction to the book, where the editors ask what patterns emerge and what pops up when one asks how we – and they – do gender, my conclusion is that the individual chapters offer many interesting answers that are worth exploring. It has been a voyage of discovery and a great pleasure to read this book, and it gives many new ideas about what the museum and its narratives can become in the future.

Annika Bünz, Gothenburg

Landscape Change and Power Analysis in a Multidimensional Manor Culture

Palle O. Christiansen, En egn bliver til. Magt og mennesker i et sjællandsk godsområde fra 1700-tallet til i dag. Forlaget Hovedland, Gjern 2019. 262 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-7070-656-8.

■ A quarter of a century ago, Palle Ove Christiansen completed his major work on the history of the large estate of Giesegaard in Sjælland and how it changed from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. *A Manorial World: Lord, Peasants and Cultural Distinctions on a Danish Estate, 1750–1980*, was the title of the book he published in English in 1996, based on the weighty doctoral dissertation that Christiansen defended in the mid-1990s. Now he has issued this in abbreviated form in Danish. We have here a much more concentrated account which allows Danes with an interest in local history to learn how an estate landscape was shaped and changed, from the perspective of those who worked the land and the conditions in which they lived. It took time to write the six-hundred-page dissertation, and the fieldwork on which both the dissertation and this book are based was performed by the author half a century ago. But he describes this as an advantage in the opening reflection on the value of his fieldwork. Having gone from house to house back then in the early 1970s, learning how to see all the differences in the landscape, he now sees the things

he only noticed very slowly: the historical dynamics behind the everyday life he experienced. In many ways it is not just a cultural landscape but also a social landscape, created by the people who used it. He wants to give a voice to those who inhabited this landscape by seizing on things that have often been hidden in the archives. The focus is on how a manor landscape changes through the social conditions that lead to changes in the workforce. The *corvée* obligations of freehold farmers (*gårdmandshoveri*) gave way to the work of dependent tenant cottagers (*fæstehusmændene*), after which short-term tenant cottagers (*lejehusmændene*) and then state smallholders or tenants (*statshusmænd, statsfæstere*) gave the manor landscape its character.

Christiansen did not understand at the time how unique this material would turn out to be, in that he then had the opportunity to collect narratives from those who had personal experience of a kind of manorial life that has now completely vanished. During the fieldwork he had the chance to meet the last generation of the old kind of estate people. Today, their houses have completely different inhabitants.

The book does not contain any theoretical or methodological reasoning. It is only through a few notes that the author reveals that the analysis is based on microhistory in the spirit of David Sabeau and Carlo Ginzburg, while Clifford Geertz guided him in his fieldwork descriptions and Tuan in terms of place and space, and Börje Hanssen and Marc Bloch appear to be ever-present.

Good maps, sketches, diagrams, and images in the form of photographs as well as paintings and drawings accompany the text, and sections in a different colour provide graphic in-depth descriptions of the different life-worlds at Giesegaard.

While the book only covers the time up to the fieldwork in the 1970s, today's landscape is visible in several ways. Among other things, pictures show how the landscape has become less open since the 1970s. Christiansen also describes how quiet it has become in the estate landscape, as not so many people live there today. The people living in the houses have also changed from smallholders to commuting engineers and the like.

The book is, on the one hand, a piece of highly detailed local history, but on the other hand, it also gives an interesting understanding of landscape change and an analysis of local environments in general. The aim is to give a voice to all those who

are often hidden in historical accounts by showing us the people who actually farmed the land. He describes it as depicting the man-made differences that exist in the landscape. Power relations based on differences were what tied people together in the old manorial landscape. There was always someone above you and below you in the hierarchy. This local power hierarchy played a role in controlling others and in gaining advantages.

The book is divided into three main parts, the first describing the old world and the villages in the eighteenth century. Then the landscape was divided into the large contiguous lands of the manor itself and the peasants' diversity of small strips of unenclosed land. The story begins with a description of the differences in the eighteenth century between life in the villages and the life of the aristocracy. There are detailed accounts of all the farms that were subject to the manor and, not least of all, the people who lived their everyday lives here. A complex system of obligations and rights between peasant and lord is described in detail. Power was not a simple top-down relationship. There were also opportunities for individual peasants to get help, as it was in the interests of the count to keep the estate strong. However, the peasants also had to do *corvée* on the manor lands. There were many differences between farms, not least in terms of size, but also between the rich and prosperous farmers and those who were sick or weak. The most interesting thing about the way Christiansen describes life here is that he distinguishes between the go-ahead peasants and the fatalists. The descriptions are constantly guided by this distinction. One way to see who was most successful and best placed in the hierarchy was to look at who was asked to be godfather at children's christenings. The richest peasants with the biggest buildings were those who were most often chosen. They were considered most go-ahead people, the "strivers". The fatalists, on the other hand, those who were considered lazy, those who sat in the tavern or liked to get into fights, could even lose their farms if the estate manager considered them workshy. There was also a third group that the author calls "quiet" or "merry". They have left only faint traces in the archival evidence and mostly resembled the fatalist group. There were plenty of antagonisms in the villages, as is clear from the court records. The go-ahead people acquired land or let their pigs into neighbours' fields. They also had

support from above, unlike the quiet ones or the fatalists. But the go-ahead peasants also tended to pay their dues and discharge their obligations to a greater extent in order to be less indebted to the manor and to be able to fend for themselves to a greater extent, while the fatalists became more dependent on the manor and its involvement. They were also much more difficult for the manor to administer. The peasants could certainly be different, but they still stood above the unpropertied people in the same way that the nobility were above the peasants.

With the land apportionment reforms around 1800 the landscape was rearranged, houses were moved out of the villages into the fields, and the state began to interfere in the activities of the manors and the farmers. Population growth and food exports made great demands for better land use. The reforms meant not only new ways of cultivating the land and new locations for the farms, but also changes in relationships between the people who farmed and inhabited the landscape. Everyday life created a new person. The landscape was reshaped and more and more of the soil was cultivated, up to the point that in the 1960s there was virtually no land in eastern Denmark that was not cultivated, which gave rise to the description of the area as a garden landscape.

The second part of the book, which depicts how the landscape changed from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, shows how the state tried in vain to curtail *corvée* at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but this only happened a quarter of a century later. By then the farmers had the opportunity to pay for the freedom to escape this duty. Instead, there was still a form of compulsory tenant labour on the estate.

When *corvée* was abolished, a new division of labour was established to ensure that the necessary work was done on the manor farm. A distinction was made between *fæstehusmænd* (dependent tenant cottagers) and *lejehusmænd* (short-term tenant cottagers) where the work done by the former replaced the *corvée* previously done by the freehold farmers. The latter represented a new, less well-known type of labour organized by the manor; these *lejehusmænd* were housed in groups of cottages with a little land to farm, but so little that they were obliged to work on the manor. The system is still visible today in Nyvang, where the houses remain in the same lo-

cation as when they were established in 1835. The conditions for work on the manor became harsher than they were for the tenant farmers doing *corvée*. Nyvang would later become a place for smallholders and part-time forestry workers, developing a sociocultural form all of its own.

The next step in the method by which the manor ensured a workforce was to provide houses for employees, known as *tyendehus* or servant cottages. The cottagers were replaced by a new kind of labourer between 1850 and 1900. These were hired farmhands who lived in long terraces, usually with dwellings for eight families. The dwelling was a significant part of the wages and that was also why many ended up staying in this work. And although the conditions were similar to those of the old cottagers, they were now perceived as more independent when the dependence was labelled “free housing”. The lack of freedom was seen as more indirect. These houses became a new feature of the landscape, located far away, out of sight of the manor. A new patriarchal relationship began. Now it was the steward who had to supervise these workers, who actually took little interest in their work. The agricultural labourers’ union regarded this as a kind of slave contract and fought for its abolition, but it nevertheless felt more secure for the labourers to accept it rather than engage in conflict. Eventually, however, the farm labourers also ended up living in small houses in surrounding villages which, unlike peasant villages, were called manor villages. Both the emergence of villages like this and the changes in working life are described in great detail. The steward governed by means of strict division of labour and rigid discipline. He made sure that the pace was high and that people did not chat during the work. One labourer described it as having to run like cockroaches. At the same time, people did no more than they were instructed to do. There was no way to influence one’s work situation. Well into the twentieth century, according to Christiansen, the labourers on the estates lived far from the world in which the freehold farmers lived. He paints a very dark picture of how, for example, the children of these families grew up adapting to what he calls a social jungle where violence and drunkenness were common in the home. But there were also those who were more competent, finding extra jobs, abstaining from spirits, and acquiring a couple of pigs and some hens. Here we get to meet some families who

did well for themselves in the 1950s and were able to find a better house with some land where they could grow their own food. But they could still lose everything if the man of the house died. Interestingly, the workers who were most loyal to the estate organization were also those who were active in the labour movement and social democracy. They were thus in opposition to the estate while still remaining loyal to its organization and relations. This section ends with the blunt observation that technology and economies of scale have meant that a great deal has happened in recent years. Today the whole estate is run with just five people and one manager.

In the third part of the book we are taken back to the middle of the nineteenth century when old groupings liberated themselves from the manor, and the state's modernization policy helped free farmers to develop into efficient small producers, which turned Denmark into a farming country.

It was the hard-working farmers who were promoted and became independent farm owners after 1860. It later became possible for tenant farmers to buy their farms, and together with the collective ownership of dairies and slaughterhouses run as cooperatives, farmers had the opportunity to earn good money, which also allowed agriculture to develop to the point that two-thirds of the produce could be exported at the end of the nineteenth century. But the farmers also became dependent on imports of things like fertilizer and breeding stock. Around 1900, almost all the farmers were freeholders and the farmers' movement had given them strong self-esteem. For a long time, life on the farm revolved around the family and was also dependent on the family. But they had also started to hire servants, and as they became more prosperous they also built an extra cottage so that the family could eat separately from the servants. The peasants became cultured and learned self-discipline, duty, and independence, while simultaneously displaying their new position as increasingly bourgeois through cultural profiling. They wallpapered the rooms, sent the children to study at college, and wore town clothes.

During the nineteenth century the number of smallholders tripled. While the manorial estates and the large farms wanted them as labourers, the smallholders tried to make a living as small farmers by combining in local associations. A radical government at the beginning of the twentieth century created the conditions for a land reform that distributed

land according to ideals of equality. The smallholder movement developed very efficiently, but this was for a short time between the 1920s and the 1950s, and in 2003 the organization was discontinued. By then it was no longer possible to make a living on a small farm in Denmark. The towns needed industrial workers, and that was where the workforce went.

The estate constantly developed new working relationships. But what they all had in common was a patron-client relationship, whereby the client received protection but also accepted the dependency that came with it.

In the final chapter Christiansen reflects on old features surviving in today's Denmark.

One can of course wonder who will read this book. In the first place, I believe that it is intended as local history. Those who have some connection to the area will find here a treasure trove of knowledge. But even Danes in general can learn something more about how their agricultural landscape was created. Unfortunately, however, the book is very Danish, as there are no comparative explanations of the different forms of labour. What about the rest of us? I see the book as a kind of classical ethnology that not many ethnologists today are familiar with. The long lines of history give a deeper knowledge and understanding of what can be seen in the landscape. Here we are reminded of Börje Hanssen's importance in ethnology, with his tenacious structures and his distinction between townspeople and farmers. Here we learn of the *Annales* School with its insistence that the analysis must include both continuity and change. Without the one we cannot see the other. But we can also learn something about what the mass of people at the local level, the small perspective, can tell us about the big people. The human landscape contains not one story but many different ones, depending on how you point the searchlight. Cultural encounters take place here at different levels. Small markers and visual expressions can be just as important to consider as broad class perspectives, conflicts, and political manifestations. Finally, we learn that the tenacious structures in the form of old landscape types reflect a continuity that has only been made possible by historical watersheds and incremental changes. The external forms may persist, but the content changes. The present always consists of a number of historical features that we use to understand our everyday lives.

Birgitta Svensson, Stockholm

Integrating Research and Teaching

Videnskabelse på universitetet. Veje til integration af forskning og undervisning. Tine Damsholt, Hanne Nexø Jensen & Camilla Østerberg Rump (eds.). Samfundslitteratur, København 2018. 241 pp. ISBN 978-87-593-3047-0.

■ The book addresses the question of research-based teaching in the university and what it may imply in practice. The diversity of discipline, subject matter, level of study etc. means that there cannot be a common recipe for teaching based on research that suits all teaching situations. *Videnskabelse på universitetet* takes a wider perspective and discusses what the authors call “integration of research and teaching”. They show some of the variation in the forms that such integration can have, in order to thematize existing practices and the ways participants understand them, and to investigate further possibilities. In a period when the conditions for university work are rapidly changing, those who care for Humboldt’s ideal of university education and research should read and use this book. It is useful both in order to increase one’s consciousness about what research-based teaching can be, about the different needs of students in teaching situations, and as a methodological inspiration to make similar investigations in one’s own institution. Not least important is the approach to understanding the diverse attitudes and motivations students have towards education.

The book is the result of a research project at the University of Copenhagen where the researchers (coming from different faculties and disciplines) studied teaching practices which incorporated research in various ways. They observed teaching activities and interviewed students and teachers, or collected information on student opinions by conducting surveys. Some of the investigations also involved students in research activities. Theoretical inspiration was drawn from international literature on research-based education. But the conceptual framework used throughout the presented chapters is developed on the basis of the material collected by the project itself. By this procedure an empirically based understanding of the barriers and possibilities in bringing together teaching and research is constructed.

Two chapters (written by the ethnologists Tine Damsholt and Marie Sandberg of the Saxo Institute) present analyses of how students and teachers un-

derstand and value research–teaching integration. Here they develop the methodology and concepts of the project. On the basis of an extensive investigation of attitudes towards integration of research in teaching among students in natural sciences and the humanities, undertaken by the authors and students in the Department of Ethnology, they analyse differences in students’ motivation for studying. The authors conceptualize the patterns of motivations they find in the material as “rationales”, i.e., ideal types that describe differences regarding motivations for evaluating integration of research in teaching. They identify four different “rationales” among students: (a) they may value progress in the research field they study and see their own role as contributing to it; (b) they may be job-oriented and therefore interested in acquiring the subject’s competence; (c) their motivation may be to acquire the competence necessary to successfully practice their subject in the service of society; or (d) their intention may be to become members of a given profession (pp. 34f.). Based on their orientation, they will value research elements in the teaching activities differently. As ideal types, these concepts do not describe categories of students, but are rather analytical concepts suitable for understanding differences in students’ attitudes to given forms of teaching. Their development is based on the broad empirical material collected in the project.

It is important to remind ourselves as teachers that there will be different rationales among the students in the classroom. Damsholt and Sandberg point out that university education is generally structured with an “implicit ideal student” in mind; a student who values research-based teaching the same way as teachers do. To meet the expectations of all students, however, the teaching must also be meaningful to those with other motivations.

The authors also construct different rationales among teachers. With a similar procedure as in the analysis of students’ motivations, and based on interviews with teaching personnel, four rationales in relation to integration of research in teaching are identified: (a) research and teaching are different practices, an attitude which prevents such integration; (b) the two are part of the same whole; (c) the two are linked in such a way that teaching is a means to achieve research ends; (d) the students’ learning is the end, and research is less important or only a means to this end (p. 62). The perspectives

and motivations of teachers are investigated as a means to understand different approaches to the integration of research, which is then discussed in relation to students' rationales.

Again, these are ideal types developed for analytical purposes. They do not describe what teachers do, only preferences for certain forms of teaching. These forms of teaching may also be abstracted as ideal types, and the authors do this with respect to what is exchanged with students during teaching. These (four) exchange forms range from the case where the teacher presents his/her own research to the case where the teacher and the students work on a joint project which includes research elements. Armed with the three sets of concepts, the benefits and barriers to research-teaching integration are discussed in different settings, such as diversity of subject, study level, the size of student groups etc. The given examples show that even if the conditions for integrating research in teaching differ widely, there are many ways of doing it, also in courses which focus on factual knowledge (such as basic textbook knowledge in a natural science or language skills) and at beginner's level.

The rest of the chapters are case studies discussing different teaching settings. Pernille Götz analyses problems in integrating research in skill-oriented courses like grammar learning or law, where the appropriation of the knowledge content in time for the exam is imperative for (most) students, irrespective of rationales. Introducing open questions may be counterproductive by producing uncertainty. Götz shows that elements from ongoing research may still have a positive effect on learning, by breaking up the monotony of the textbook, and by giving a better understanding of the discipline as based on research. One lesson is that insight into research may function as a motivation to memorize the curriculum. Another case is Dorte Christiansen Elmeskov and Camilla Østerberg Rump's study of a group of newly started students of landscape architecture who were integrated in a research project to observe the changing colours in trees during the year. This was an open project which promised important results useful for the profession, but practical and organizational details posed problems that reduced the benefit that students felt they gained from it.

Other cases concern teaching forms where the research element is more central. Tine Ravnsted-

Larsen Reeh discusses "talent development" as a form of research-teaching integration on the basis of three cases at the Faculty of Theology. The idea is that a group of students is selected to participate in courses tightly integrated with the teachers' research projects. She evaluates problems and positive effects. Hanne Nexø Jensen analyses the potential for integration of research in group supervision. She views the collective processes taking place in such groups as a parallel to the research processes of research groups, and finds that students benefit greatly in the form of understanding of and training in research processes. Perhaps there is also potential for more involvement, and for more effects on teachers' research. But this depends on which rationale they activate. Teachers tend to see group supervision solely as teaching. Lastly, Sebastian Horst discusses the possibilities and problems in establishing reviews for students' research publications. The motivation for this initiative was, among other things, to stimulate students to take part in research processes through writing, editing and peer reviewing, and thereby stimulate their involvement in research, which would contribute to the researcher education. The many arguments for this idea are compelling, but the many barriers make it very difficult to implement in practice, is his conclusion.

The book also includes short "inspirations", which describe teaching courses, forms of teaching or supervising or research methods used in the research project, such as "ethnoraid" – a form of fieldwork carried out by big teams, including students. Here readers who want to carry out similar investigations may be inspired by practical tips.

The case studies offer insights into different aspects of research-teaching integration. Depending on their relations to teaching situations, the different studies may be more or less relevant for readers. But a strength of the book is that all the chapters are informed by the conceptual framework constructed in the first chapters. This contributes to the coherence of the book. It presents a project that is broadly designed, with extensive source material, and empirically based concepts which are then used in the analyses of practical teaching processes. In this it gives an exemplary presentation of a research project. And it gives material for reflection on teaching situations which will probably be valuable for teachers of various university disciplines.

Hans-Jakob Ågotnes, Bergen

Hospitality in the Öresund Region

Fika, Hygge and Hospitality: The Cultural Complexity of Service Organisation in the Öresund Region. Christer Eldh & Fredrik Nilsson (eds.). Centre for Oresund Region Studies 39. Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm in cooperation with Centrum för Öresundsstudier, Lunds universitet 2019. 180 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7061-302-9.

■ Locked down, by government order, alone in my house in Wales, because of coronavirus, I have never written a review in stranger – or more ironic circumstances. For *Fika, Hygge and Hospitality: The Cultural Complexity of Service Organisation in the Öresund Region*, deals with activities presently forbidden to me and many others, some of which may remain impossible in their ‘normal’ form for several years to come. The specific kinds of ‘hospitality’ the volume deals with in its nine chapters range widely. But its main focus is on that oriented towards an economic return. Private, reciprocal hospitality between family and friends isn’t directly considered, although it sometimes provides a kind of reference point.

The opening chapter by Christer Eldh and Fredrik Nilsson adopts the volume’s title. It summarises some of the recent moves, made in the wake of traditional industries’ decline, to integrate and brand Copenhagen, Malmö and their hinterlands as an economically flourishing, transnational, region. These include capitalizing on the Öresund bridge as a symbol of interconnectivity and the Danish concept of *hygge* and Swedish practice of *fika* to market the area as an attractive, world class, tourist destination with a friendly and welcoming Scandinavian vibe. However, their short ‘outline of the volume’ also highlights issues of conflict and exclusion, and they themselves note how the establishment of ‘a system of [paid for] accommodation possibilities’ in medieval Northern Europe, was triggered by the need to prevent aristocratic ‘gate-crashing’ and free-loading. They suggest that even where theoretically advocated, the idea of ‘unconditional hospitality’ is always, in practice, problematic.

Conflict is a key theme of Meged and Zillinger’s ‘Hostessing Tourists as Temporary Locals’. They use a gendered term in their title to signify the activities they depict involve the ‘emotional labour’ typically associated with the female role. Although,

oddly they fail to note the actual gender distribution of their subjects. However, drawing on web-derived material and a limited number of Copenhagen-based interviews, they examine two comparatively new phenomena of the ‘collaborative economy’. These are the private letting of temporary accommodation via websites such as Airbnb. And, secondly, the ‘free’ city guiding of tourists, typically in areas a bit off the beaten track, by persons who, none the less, expect, and engage in various strategies to maximise, their tips.

Two key forms of conflict are discussed. The first emerges from a blurring of the boundary between private and public life. ‘Guests’ are strangers, but like friends, enter what would otherwise be private homes – although ones which the majority of ‘owners’ have at least temporarily vacated. But as importantly, distinctions between private-time and work-time also erode. Hosts, to maintain their ratings, must continually be on call to answer questions, deal with problems and encourage their visitors to write the good reviews which will enable them to attain economically convertible, reputational capital as a ‘super host’. Reviews by guests of hosts and vice versa also act as an important trust-establishing instrument in a situation of transactions between strangers. Similar difficulties face the tour guides, many of whom are in fact relative newcomers to the city, working as independent mini-entrepreneurs for the umbrella organization Copenhagen Free Walking Tours. They too must spend off-duty time promoting their offerings. And may see ‘opening up’ aspects of themselves to their ‘clients’ and extending tours into periods of informal socialization, as ways to engender empathy – and increase their rewards. They are partly selling their personalities and glimpses of their private lives. For guides and hosts there is conflict between nurturing and promoting their ‘micro enterprises’ and maintaining their sense of self. The other arena of discord can be between members of the local community and the visitors anxious to have a real local experience. With Airbnb hosts often absent, Meged and Zillinger describe how non-hosting local residents, neighbours and shop-keepers have to pick up the slack. Tensions in other major cities with a large Airbnb presence are briefly mentioned. But not the major distortions of the rented housing market caused by entrepreneurs buying up multiple ‘do-

mestic' properties to let out to visitors under regulatory regimes less strict than those in the traditional accommodation sector. In many places [but perhaps not Copenhagen?] 'real locals' find it increasingly hard to remain in their own districts.

'Wonderful Copenhagen's promotional literature for the city, suggests that visitors can become 'temporary locals', which raises a further theme – authenticity – shared with other articles. I agree with Meged and Zillinger that 'temporary local' is a contradiction in terms, given real local knowledge takes considerable time to acquire. But I query their suggestion that in trying to feel at home while they are away, the Airbnb-ers and 'free' tour goers are no longer seeking the 'Other'. Rather it seems they want to find, and then become it, for a while. And their quest is nothing new. There have always been those hoping to distinguish themselves by attempting to understand and merge into the 'real' lives of strangers. Though they have often called themselves travelers [or anthropologists] rather than tourists. What *may* be new, is the extent of those with this aspiration for a more immersive, 'authentic' and thus 'distinctive' experience [preferably somewhere bordering a standard tourist zone]. And their belief that it can be achieved without a long period of effort. This chapter shows that, at best, what would be 'temporary locals' are getting, is 'touristic verisimilitude'. Or, we could say, a real *tourist* experience presented as an original, authentic non-tourist one.

'Authenticity' both as 'commodity' and as not quite what it seems, also features in Sjöholm's 'The Significance of Hospitality in Experience-Based shops'. She documents a bakery and a seller of hand-made chocolates in a provincial southern Swedish town. This promotes its centre as containing shops which treat their customers as guests – a suggested elision of the commercial and the more personal that also resonates with Meged and Zillinger's material. Sjöholm's shops are producing an 'experience' to consume, as much as loaves and confectionery. The intriguingly hard-to-find, praline emporium has a feeling of formality, as gloved salespeople pick out purchaser's items in front of the glass pane protecting the white coated staff making the products. In the, in fact newly-established, bakery, employees with well-worn, flour-covered aprons, create the illusion of a time gone by as they collect traditional artisanal bread, made from 'genu-

ine local ingredients,' from the ovens which can be glimpsed behind the counter. Both shops offer customers a 'stage' on which they can acquire and display erudition about the goods on display, and participate in the construction of the hospitality experience, through interacting with each other in the slow-moving queues. Such places are somewhere to buy distinctive and expensive life-style items in contrast to everyday supermarket goods. They are carefully designed to look special and often as if they have been in the same location for generations – 'when the bakery opened it already looked as if it had always been there'. Whether the economics of such an enterprise mean it is likely to have a long future, remains undiscussed.

The issue of the authenticity, in this case of welcome, is central to one of the hotel-related chapters – Eldh's 'Must be in their DNA': Audition, Personality and Creating Meaning of Service Representations in the Hotel Industry'. This examines how contemporary hotels and hotel chains in the Öresund region's 'mature market', attempt to establish distinct 'brands' to favourably distinguish themselves from their competitors. In doing so they haven't emphasised the facilities on which the standard hotel rating systems are based. Instead they try to evoke the distinctive quality of their customer service. Although some might think that the Nordic Choice Hotel chain's promise of 'Active service', Radisson's of 'Helpful service, Elite Hotels of Sweden's of 'Polite service' and First Scandic's 'Customised service' vision, all sound a little similar. Nonetheless we learn that in some instances, customer-facing staff are trained, along American lines, to follow centrally-designed scripts in their dealings with guests. But that, given such pre-determined efforts are often recognized as such, and seen as insincere and inauthentic, many hotels emphasising the quality of their service, now seek to 'audition' for staff who can, within limits, act on their own initiative. One HR manager interviewed was designated 'Passion Manager', presumably to indicate the enthusiasm with which employees were to embrace their roles of serving customers – it 'must be in their DNA'. What these staff seem to be offering their employers is their supposedly innate personality rather other skills which, if necessary, can be taught on the job. But this appearance may need unpacking. Eldh [along with Meged and Zillinger, and Sjöholm] briefly mentions Goffman – an eminently

relevant resource for analysing this kind of context. However, surprisingly, none of them mention his concept of role distance and the related possibility that people may not internally identify with a role they play. Eld's 'passionate' hotel staff may not be following a formal script, but do we know whether they are always *authentically* concerned that guests should receive the best possible experience? Perhaps they are sometimes just *'feigning'* that they are. *Seeming* to comply with management demands [in this case *for* enthusiasm] *with* enthusiasm, has always been one alternative to overt opposition in the workplace. And I'd be surprised if no one ever pursued this strategy here. The structuring of hotel staffs' roles – and their relative remuneration, could be relevant in this context. Interestingly we do learn that chefs are reluctant to place customer opinion first, preferring to seek validation from fellow chefs. But what about chambermaids and other lowly and probably poorly remunerated staff? It's possibly easier to be internally committed and not just externally conforming to one's role if it's a relatively secure and well paid one.

'Vagueness', 'ambivalence' or 'blurring', and the issue of commitment are also central to Cederholm and Hall's 'The Seduction of an Event: Hospitality in the Regional Innovation System'. Their discussion focuses on Skåne's Innovation Week. This hopes to support the area becoming 'the most innovative region in Europe – perhaps the world', by bringing together 'to talk to each other for real', lively minds from a range of sources. Particularly including the oddly named 'Triple Helix' of government agencies, industry and higher education. Such increasingly popular events are typically held in re-purposed, off-beat premises, an 'old factory in an industrial area', a 'refurbished railway station' or, in Malmö, an ex-furniture shop. Such places suggest novel opportunities, particularly when they already 'harbour' representatives of 'the new post-industrial and diverse knowledge sectors'. Mobilising Vic Turner's analysis of ritual [another useful tool for hospitality researchers] the authors argue these innovation events create a space beyond the everyday. Within this liminal setting, boundaries can be blurred, hierarchies downplayed and, in their heightened atmosphere, belief in the efficacy of these kinds of gatherings collectively reinforced. 'In order to create legitimacy, the participants must *believe* in the innovation system', say the authors – although,

once again, we can wonder whether factors such as age and career stage affect participants' susceptibility to such legitimizing endeavours. Nonetheless, Cederholm and Hall convincingly describe how the more formal sessions of Innovation Week are interlaced or elide with opportunities for informal 'mingling' and networking. They interestingly suggest that this 'grey zone between work and leisure' serves both to facilitate the creation of new networks and connections and to sustain faith in their importance. For, in a curious elision, new organizational structures as *means* to enable innovation, tend to become *ends* in themselves. The supposedly prime goal of encouraging the development of new material products and technologies, becomes subordinated to the generation of the kinds of the clusters and networks ostensibly designed to facilitate this. Clusters which also serve to gain EU regional and other funding. We learn that 'the absence of physical expressions or examples of concrete products or service innovations stands out. The speakers advertised will not talk about a new, specific innovation but rather their career choice or life journey. They are presented as 'interesting personalities'.' There is a further, related, dysfunctional side to such events the authors note. They may 'exclude the actors who work with innovations in a more tangible manner, rather than with the organizational conditions for them', because they 'may not be able to identify with the event's spatial symbolism and interactive practice'. Perhaps we are meant to think of the object-oriented research scientist who finds it difficult to interact with strangers. Despite their hospitable emphasis, these events exclude as well as welcome. As with the majority of articles in this volume, Cederholm and Hall discuss a phenomenon which they present as both contemporary and novel. However, they do briefly suggest that what they have described can be compared with an earlier system of Swedish 'meetings, conferences and various forms of events', which actually exhibited concrete technological developments in industry and engineering. Two further contributions take a more sustained historical approach.

Thus Monhardt's 'The Öresund Region as a destination: a reflection from an insider', divides the post-World War Two era into four separate periods, documenting some of the key developments in the hotel industry. Entirely devoid of theoretical pretension, it nonetheless shows how changes in the wider

international context, not least the growth in aviation, and rise of the conference market, have particularly impacted on both the number of visitors using the business-orientated hotel sector and its external and internal structuring. It thus provides useful background contextualization for Eldh's earlier mentioned contribution, and for many hotels' recent shift from an 'industrial business' to 'service-focused' model. It notes 'the failure of American brands to become established on both sides of the Öresund', possibly because of their more centralized corporate culture, and Scandinavia's higher labour costs. It also suggests that Danish/Swedish cultural differences have slowed the establishing of a single organizational model within the region. The reader learning of the 1990s 'crisis' for the hotel sector, following the Swedish banking and property crash, and the travel bans international firms introduced following the US invasion of Iraq, can only wonder whether the impact of corona virus will bring another restructuring in its wake.

Meanwhile, Jan Henrik Nilsson's equally pre-pandemic 'Dining in the Skies: a historical account of hospitality in aviation', has a straightforward but effective 'conceptual' underpinning. It argues that 'technology, institutions, economic conditions, culture and society have together' over the past hundred years or so, 'shaped a material culture which is very particular to aviation'. Thus the character and the cost of air travel is shown to be related to technical changes affecting the size of air vehicles [we have never returned to the spaciousness of the short-lived airship], maximum distancing between refueling, speed and also altitude. Pressurized cabins now allow for swifter flight at higher, less turbulent levels – with implications for both passenger comfort and catering. Initially only affordable by business travelers and wealthy individuals, air-related travel, in the skies and on the ground, was originally associated with luxury and 'class'. Not least this was manifest in high-end catering. Despite the difficulties of serving food [generally cooked elsewhere] in-flight, Nilsson mentions travelers in aviation's 'golden age' [1930s -50s] enjoying 'elaborate dishes based on exclusive ingredients and served with fine wines'. This fits with Monhardt's reference to the 'Escoffier-esque army of kitchen soldiers' preparing food in SAS's Royal Hotel Copenhagen in the 1950s. This was still a period when high demands were made of cabin crew, who in fly-

ing's earliest days were expected to have both medical training and preferably three foreign languages. In line with culturally-given gender roles, airhostesses continued to be required to be both glamorous and caring – and also unmarried. Regulation by national states [running their own prestige-conferring carriers] and institutions like the International Air Transport Association [IATA], contributed to holding back competition and maintaining the elevated prices associated with well-heeled passengers. I enjoyed learning about the 'smørrebrød dispute' caused by American airlines' complaints that offering this Scandinavian delicacy to economy passengers, breached IATA prohibition on serving them proper meals. These claims about unfair competition were ingeniously resolved by ruling that, for this category of fliers, toppings shouldn't touch the corners of the bread! Deregulation in the 1980s 'in line with the international neo-liberal agenda', ended such manoeuvring. The concomitant arrival of tour operators running charter flights, sometimes in conjunction with their own hotels, then opened up a new customer base, putting pressure on the established providers, who had already begun offering cheaper 'tourist class' tickets in the 1950s. This democratizing trend was next fueled by the growth of non-charter, low-cost, no frills carriers with their quite ordinary cabin crew, who now have to sell products rather than serve free, in-flight catering. Though standard carriers attempt to maintain an element of distinction in their first or business class offer of better food and more leg room, for most of today's travelers, flying, as Nilsson puts it, 'in many respects....[now] resembles bus travel'.

Ferry trips between Denmark and Sweden, suggests Raissova, in 'Visually Impaired Customers and [In]hospitable Places', once also symbolised happy breaks from everyday reality. Now, since the Öresund bridge opened, they are viewed with nostalgia, as only the Helsingborg–Helsingør crossing remains. However, it is not the experience of this last ferry's 'ordinary' customers that is her concern. In line with the opening chapter's injunction to 'critically reflect on who are invited and who are excluded', her focus of interest is the blind and visually impaired [VIPs]. Thus she provides some not particularly surprising observations, wrapped in the carapace of a 'time-geography model [framework]' about how her subjects expend time-consuming effort, and mobilise a range

of strategies and tactics, to work around the physical and interactional 'constraints' they face. I would have preferred less theoretical rephrasing of the VIP's real difficulties, and more concrete indication of how they might be eased. I'd also welcome some systematic consideration of how crew cope with the uncertainties and ambiguities involved in dealing with such passengers, when they may not know how much help they need, nor their attitude to being offered it.

The volume's final chapter, 'Yet, they are still humans in need of help', sits a little uneasily with the rest, by taking the issue of who is not fully welcome to a new level. Here Fredrik Nilsson begins by briefly mentioning the 2015 'refugee crisis' when 100,000 migrants arrived in Southern Sweden. After considerable debate, stricter border controls were imposed, which, he suggests, challenged the 'moral imperative of hospitality, to offer help and shelter to strangers in distress'. Presumably it is the contemporary Swedish understanding of moral imperative that he refers to here, for, as he has already shown in the book's introduction, the demand to extend obligation beyond in-group members is culturally-specific. Old and New Testament views on the subject, for example, differ. The recent 'crisis' however is only a framing device for the core of his investigation – the humanitarian 'White Bus' operation, which from March to May 1945 transported around 20,000 liberated concentration camp prisoners to Sweden. Arguing that Sweden's humanitarian efforts were partly motivated by the desire 'to appear as a responsible collaborator after its precarious, pro-German position at the start of the war', he documents the considerable ambiguity that accompanied the mission. In his retrospective depictions, the head of operations, Arnoldsson, stressed the excellence of co-operation with the Allies, and British praise for Swedish organization, equipment and activity – foreshadowing the post war presentation of Swedes as morally superior good Samaritans. However, Arnoldsson's reports at the time, depict a more confused situation and a distinct, possibly racist, ambivalence towards those he was tasked to help. He worried about refugees bringing disease to Sweden, and whether it would be possible, eventually, to get them to return home. At one point he mooted taking them to separate facilities in Germany rather than bringing them to Sweden. Nilsson suggests his case material 'reminds us that hospitality comprises

control and discipline as well as help'. This is something that earlier chapters have also revealed in the far less extreme circumstances of Airbnb providers subjected to the control of on-line reputation management and the Innovation Week's participants trying to shape their collaborative efforts to fit with EU guidelines.

So, I'll conclude by arguing that the apparently disparate examples presented in this book reveal many more overlapping themes than the opening chapter suggests. And I'll also observe that our present peculiar circumstances bring certain issues to the fore. The first is the centrality to all hospitality, of [now often forbidden] co-presence and close physical proximity. The role of queues and confined spaces in creating the atmosphere of the experience-based shops suddenly stands out, as do Cederhom and Hall's many references to 'mingling' at the innovation events, where people continually bump into each other on the crowded floor. And what now happens to Raissova's visually impaired respondents when touch becomes a danger rather than a resource? Secondly, the continuing significance of national policies and boundaries becomes increasingly apparent. How has Öresund regional co-operation been affected by very different Danish and Swedish responses to locking-down their populations? Finally, the importance of hospitality in people's lives is greatly underlined when it can no longer be taken for granted. For many, being unable to engage in the 'private' hospitality of visiting, or being visited by, friends and relations, feels like the denial of an essential and identity-confirming right. The opening chapter's claim that powerfulness of 'the tourism industry' makes it 'almost impossible to talk about hospitality in anything other than a commercial context', now seems more wrong than ever. Underlining the continuing importance of private hospitality, however, isn't to deny the significance of its commercial counterpart. The economic centrality of this sector [disappointingly only hinted at rather than detailed in this volume] is underlined by the daily news reports of how many hospitality-related enterprises now face collapse and how many of its workers will lose their jobs. A follow-up volume investigating 'the cultural complexity of service organisation' in an age of global pandemic would make an interesting read!

Hilary Stanworth, Swansea University

A Reissued Ethnological Classic

Jonas Frykman & Orvar Löfgren, *Den kultiverade människan*. Gleerups Utbildning, Malmö 2019. Second Edition. 262 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-511-0196-5.

■ Is it really necessary to review the second edition of a book in the same journal just thirty-eight years later, one might wonder? When it comes to *Den kultiverade människan*, the answer is a resounding yes. First, the book is an undisputed classic, at least in the field of Scandinavian ethnology. Second, it offers the opportunity to reflect upon how we approach our field of study – everyday life – not only in 1979 when the book was first published, but also today, forty years later, as the authors revisit their work, improving its meaning and strengthening its argument. I am convinced the decision to publish a second edition was the right one, and rereading the book yet again has been both thrilling and comforting, reaffirming my interest in my field of study, inspiring me in my own research and writing, and demonstrating the value of a well-written, easy-to-read text. What more could one ask?

An anecdote from my own teaching further underscores the importance of this book. For the past several years, I have been teaching a course in cultural history within a Danish and European context, covering almost 200 years of people's everyday lives from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present day. Divided into twenty-eight lectures, the course presents the period's main historical events, the structures within which Danes in their various social groups lived their everyday lives, did their daily chores, fought for their political rights, built their families, and defined their values and ideologies. Like decades of Scandinavian ethnologists before them, I ask my students to read *Den kultiverade människan*. Last year, two Chinese exchange students took the course as part of their two-year programme in Danish culture, sent by their country to learn the language and to gain an understanding of our history and culture. When asked to read the Swedish edition of *Den kultiverade människan* (as we Danes do) their otherwise enthusiastic eagerness was sorely challenged by the thought of having to learn yet one more Scandinavian language. But their smiles were brighter a few days later when they asked permission to read *Den kultiverade människan* in their native tongue, after dis-

covering to our mutual surprise that the book had been translated into Chinese! For these Chinese students as for their Danish peers, the book became a key to unlocking their understanding of the way our pre-industrial society's system of values and ideas has transformed and become the foundation of the present one. The book continues to engage students on topics like rural servants and workers, even in a context where the contemporary problems that drive student interest, such as migration, subcultures, and gender troubles, might make the nineteenth-century countryside seem irrelevant.

So, although *Den kultiverade människan* is clearly a classic today, and its style and subject matter fundamental to our understanding of everyday life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the situation was somewhat different in 1981 when the Norwegian professor emerita Brit Berggreen reviewed the book for the first time in this journal. In her review, Berggreen wrote, "Both thematically and methodologically, the book breaks with prevailing style in ethnology. Formalistic critics will be able to find more than enough to latch on to, from misprints to a lack of discussion of concepts and explicit lines of demarcation. The book will probably also be provocative because it gets right to the point in mentioning taboo areas such as sexuality and bodily functions. Certain topics have not been 'researchable' and will give the reader a shock who sees 'dirty words' printed in a scholarly dissertation" (Berggreen 1981:158). As it happens, Berggreen herself followed Löfgren and Frykman's lead ten years later with the publication of *Da kulturen kom til Norge* (1989), as did many others, in particular those informed by scholars linked to the French journal *Annales: Économies, sociétés, civilisations*. Likewise, in Denmark, Palle Ove Christiansen was influenced like Löfgren and Frykman in his pursuit of the ethnologist Börje Hanssen's question regarding the changes in everyday life, as well as whether peasants were determined by nature, or if they could become "cultured". As Christiansen's work shows (in particular the article "Peasant Adaptation to Bourgeois Culture? Class Formation and Cultural Redefinition in the Danish Countryside", printed in *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1978), and as the work presented in *Den kultiverade människan* would show, this transformation was complex, and was not necessarily happening via a single process of homogenization into one middle-class social group.

But whereas Christiansen insist on questioning this transformation (note the question mark in Christiansen's title), along with its implicit adoption by and meaning for peasant society at the end of the nineteenth century, *Den kultiverade människan* would describe the process as if it happened, and in a cogent, pedagogical style explain the before and after, often as a dichotomy, emphasizing the transformations themselves instead of questioning the way they were negotiated. In both the books first and its second editions, we learn how the civilizing process that cultured man during the Victorian (in Sweden, the "Oscarian") era meant learning and adapting to a new sense of time, of nature, of the family, domestic life, cleanliness, and sexuality. New rules of conduct are enforced through discipline, orderliness and obedience. The authors claim that this transformation is based on a game of power, and as they are explicitly influenced by the French thinker Michel Foucault, power is understood here as omnipresent, an arena for conflicts between previous and rising hierarchies and patterns of culture. Although the industrialization of society caused people's work and production to become differentiated and specialized, the way they lived and the things they aspired to became more similar.

To return to my initial question – why review the second edition of the book *Den kultiverade människan?* – there is also a third reason. The new edition appears to have been extended by its revision. Twenty-two pages have been added, and even the cover art has been transformed. The naked man shaped and posing in ways informed by his culture has himself been transformed: into a postcard pinned to the wall, another kind of statement regarding the book's revision. In short, the second edition not only offers the reader an updated writing style, but more importantly, a more transparent and inviting approach to what ethnology is: the study of the everyday, whose purpose is to research and communicate the patterns and characteristics of the everyday in both the past and the present.

The parts that provoked readers in 1979 may seem significantly less provocative today, but it is no less important that new and coming scholars in our field continue to read *Den kultiverade människan*, which in this second edition has cemented its place as a classic among ethnology texts.

Marie Riegels Melchior, *Copenhagen*

Knowledge Production and Tradition Archives

Visions and Traditions. Knowledge Production and Tradition Archives. Lauri Harvilahti, Audun Kjus, Cliona O'Carroll, Susanne Österlund-Pötzsch, Fredrik Skott & Rita Treija (eds.). Academia Scientiarum Fennica, Helsinki 1918. 384 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-951-41-1126-6.

■ *Visions and Traditions. Knowledge Production and Tradition Archives* is a very apt title for this book, which explores the practices – past, present and future – of tradition archives and academics in the fields of folklore, ethnology and related disciplines in constituting their collections and objects of study as fields and forms of knowledge. With Cliona O'Carroll's introduction setting the tone, several contributors implicitly or explicitly emphasize the unique character of tradition archives, encapsulated in their endeavour to document, preserve and share unofficial culture and experience, nowadays in all its living messiness. As Maryna Chernyavska observes in her contribution, this is what makes today's tradition archives an odd bird in relation to other archives such as historical ones, which tend to focus on elites and already "dead" material; ours tends to live on even when we are not there to document it.

While the contemporary ambition might be to produce and share knowledge of the lived experience of many different groups, this has not, as we all know, always been the case. The study objects of folkloristics and ethnology, and the kinds of knowledge about them that were produced have changed over time. In the section "Bringing the Harvest Home – Insights from Past Collection Practice", accounts of past archival and research practices in Estonia, Sweden and Norway drive this point home well. Yet what really strikes me in reading a number of the articles in this section, is how the archival collections were shaped not only by the scientific ideologies of the time or even the idiosyncrasies of individual collectors, which have been highlighted in many earlier studies, but also by the everyday micropractices involved in communicating with respondents.

When interaction between archivists and respondents has been examined before, such as in Agneta Lilja's many excellent publications on this topic, a distinctly top-down practice is described

where the archivists more or less disciplined respondents into becoming good contributors. In Marleen Metslaid's article, it becomes clear that respondents to the Estonian National Museum's archive, while receiving their share of admonitions, also managed to change some of the practices of the institution through the feedback they gave; disciplining could work both ways. Susanne Nylund Skog discusses another process, that of turning personal letters into archival records, and hence into objects of knowledge, in Karl Gösta Gilström's vast collection, and she shows that this could be a dialectical process where the final form of the record was co-produced with the respondent.

Åmund Norum Resløyken examines how the Norwegian Christmas goat was turned into a unified research object in the 1930s and 1940s, whereby divergent phenomena (a mumming tradition, the disguise used in it, and a Christmas cake) were linked and construed as part of the same whole, partly due to the use of the word "goat" to name all of them, partly – and more implicitly – based on connections proposed in Mannhardian theories of the goat as a grain daemon. Resløyken demonstrates that these theories profoundly informed the questionnaires compiled on the topic in this period, especially in establishing connections to wedding customs that few respondents could recognize from their lived experience, and sometimes amounting to verbatim quotations from research literature. Although contemporary questionnaires are theory-driven too in a similar respect, few of us quote our own publications in constructing them.

The politics of documentation, archiving and research is discussed in more detail in several contributions. Ave Goršič outlines the suppression of folk belief research in Estonia under Communism, Agneta Lilja examines the shift in the 1960s and 1970s from a retrospective methodology to an emergent focus on dispersion and diversity at the Institute of Dialect Research in Uppsala, and Alf Arvidsson ponders on the implications, ethical and otherwise, of introducing jazz music as a tradition archive topic. These three papers form a bridge to the next section, entitled "Field of Cultural Identity – Archival and National Policies", which scrutinizes the birth of folklore archives in Finland and Ireland and the production of knowledge in Switzerland.

In a jointly authored piece, Kelly Fitzgerald and Niina Hämäläinen compare developments in Fin-

land and Ireland, where folklore collection was tied to a desire to promote the Finnish and Irish languages respectively constituting the common ground on which the article is based. Despite some similarities in this fundamental respect, there were also obvious differences in how these ambitions played out, especially in terms of publication policy. Hämäläinen discusses a body of material that was simply buried in the archive and never used: Elias Lönnrot's papers related to a new edition of the *Kanteletar*. It remained uncompleted at the time of his death and has not been studied, let alone published. Fitzgerald describes the opposite process in Ireland, where *Conradh na Gaeilge* (The Gaelic League) focused on publishing folkloric material in the Irish language and less on documenting oral tradition and preserving it in archives. Lauri Harvilahti's article which follows, supplies both the prehistory and the sequel to Hämäläinen's case, outlining the process leading up to the establishment of the Folklore Archives of the Finnish Literature Society as an independent unit in 1937.

Konrad J. Kuhn discusses how Swiss *Volkskunde* officially positioned itself in opposition to the ideologized discipline in other German-speaking countries in the 1930s and 1940s, illustrating how Swiss *Volkskunde* reaffirmed the importance of cultural diversity in Switzerland at this time. However, Kuhn demonstrates that Swiss *Volkskunde* in this period – studied through the lens of the work of Richard Weiss – still had its own ideological underpinnings, a crucial element of which was the notion of the Alps as a highly symbolic cultural field. Producing knowledge about life in the Swiss Alps was the focus of most research projects until the 1960s, and Kuhn examines how this knowledge was produced in practice in Weiss's fieldwork: in letters, filing cards and books. The training of students was an integral part of this practice, in which "city kids" could experience the *rite de passage* of fieldwork beyond the pale of civilization. Rituals of masculinity intertwine with the production of the symbolic heartland of the Swiss nation.

The final section of the book is entitled "Seeds for Future Practice – Recent and Future Challenges for the Tradition Archives". The challenges addressed are multifarious, though many of them relate to the use, present and future, of information technology in the archive. Eldar Heide begins with a plea for the continued value of the old archival col-

lections, and points to the difficulties for researchers interested in them in locating material when few are intimately familiar with these collections anymore. He advances digitization, of a simpler or more advanced sort, as a way of improving access to them, even – and more especially – to those aspects that are underrepresented, such as context, performance and “sensitive” topics. Laura Jiga Iliescu ties in with a discussion of just such sensitive topics in Romania, namely stories of supernatural encounters under Communist rule and in a contemporaneous religious setting. She analyses the archival documents produced, the metadata cards in particular, and suggests that also those who are reading and interpreting these documents should add their own layer of metadata to be filed with the recordings and original metadata cards: an interesting suggestion.

Sanita Reinsone initiates the suite of chapters dealing more explicitly with digitization. She describes the successful campaigns of the Archives of Latvian Folklore to crowdsource folklore manuscript transcription, but she also argues that folklorists have actually been working with participatory culture and crowdsourcing, now presented as very new practices, for a long time: it is how the collection of folklore has been carried out in many countries since the late nineteenth century, with people volunteering to contribute to the archives. Catherine Ryan and Críostóir Mac Cárthaigh consider the digitization of the National Folklore Collection in Ireland, especially the development of a thesaurus (controlled vocabulary) based on Seán Ó Súilleabháin’s *Handbook of Folklore* from 1937. The construction of the thesaurus and how it was adapted to folklore content is then outlined.

Fredrik Skott and Cliona O’Carroll both touch on the ethical challenges involved in the digitization of folklore collections. Skott does so from the point of view of protecting the integrity of contributors and third parties vs the hazard of repeating the “white-washing” for which we accuse earlier generations of scholars and archivists. He tentatively proposes a more comprehensive publication of such material on the internet, also explaining how and why the material was collected and not only what was collected. O’Carroll similarly points to the problems involved in mass publication on the internet when the material is oral history interviews. On the one hand, she problematizes the increasing tendency to access material in small chunks, which does not do justice to

the long format of oral history interviews which of course provides a context for the smaller chunks. On the other, she is concerned that the understanding of the oral history interview as a form will be lost, and that interviewees will avoid certain topics if outside access is to be instant, free and totally open. Then some aspects of human experience will likely no longer be documented. However, using her experiences at the Cork Folklore Project, she discusses possible ways of circumventing these problems while providing a window into the archive’s collections.

Closing the book, Audun Kjus presents recent work with digitization at Norwegian Ethnological Research, including the online platform minner.no and its Swedish counterpart minnen.se. When the chapter was written, the platform had not yet been launched, but from my own experience I know it is now up and running. It illustrates one of Kjus’s basic tenets for successful digitization, namely multi-institutional collaboration. Like O’Carroll, he also emphasizes the importance of rich contextualization, preferably reuniting the bits and pieces from the same project that have been scattered in different departments of the archive. Finally, Kjus highlights the problems related to the present Norwegian regime of research ethics, where material that should have been kept has been deleted despite the consent of the contributors to preserving it. He envisions a near future where people will be able to access and regulate the use of their contributions themselves, a situation the current regime is not prepared for but one that would chime well with the current democratization of the archives.

In this review I have opted to do something I otherwise seldom do with an edited volume, namely give an account of all contributions to the book. However, *Visions and Traditions* is unusually cohesive in this regard, and the chapters truly speak to each other in interesting ways. One of them frequently begins where another ends, and struggles with similar issues at different archives are cast into sharper relief when they recur in different chapters. A common emphasis is not to be swept away by “the digital goldrush” as Cliona O’Carroll calls it, but to consider our steps prudently and to preserve the unique characteristics of the material we as folklorists and ethnologists are the only ones to collect. I could not agree more.

Camilla Asplund Ingemark, Visby

Borders and Border Crossings in Cultural Studies

Rajaamatta. Etnologisia keskusteluja [Crossing Borders. Ethnological Conversations]. Hanneleena Hieta, Aila Nieminen, Maija Mäki, Katriina Siivonen & Timo J. Virtanen (eds.). Ethnos ry, Helsinki 2017. 483 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-68509-2-4.

■ The North forms one of the main focus points in Professor Helena Ruotsala's research career, and especially interesting is her way of applying a particular northern gaze instead of looking at northern regions and communities from outside. This gaze and ways of crossing borders materially, socially, symbolically, mentally and scientifically are at the core of the book *Rajaamatta* (Crossing Borders). The title of the book, authored by Helena's colleagues in Finland and abroad, refers to borders and border crossings as concrete materialities but also as entities which are transparent or dismantled and need to be discussed and contemplated over and over again in different temporal and spatial contexts. The idea of a border can also be understood as one of the main aspects or starting points for many ethnological studies, let alone being the basis of the whole discipline in many ways. Despite their existence, borders, as they have been pondered and reflected on in this book, are not seen as something dividing people and cultures but rather presenting the multi-sited and multi-temporal qualities of ethnological and ethnographic research. The book includes articles both in Finnish and in English, which is one kind of border crossing applied in the process of compiling the volume.

The book starts with Johanna Rolshoven's and Justin Winkler's letter to Helena, focusing on the life of a herdsman having left the city for a life in Provence. Through the life story of a woman named Roé, the chapter discusses many relevant topics in ethnological research, such as migration, rural-urban relations, gender roles, livelihoods, human-animal interaction as well as issues relating to time and place. Methodologically the chapter draws attention to the practice of experimenting with special circumstances for ethnographic interviews, which is a special interest the authors have shared with Helena over the years. Instead of seeing themselves as doing participant observation, they use the term "following" instead, referring to accompanying people in their daily activities, which may lead a researcher

to a far more vivid and multidimensional understanding of people's lives than just observing and/or interviewing.

Following the introductory article the book is divided into three topical sections so that the articles in the first one talk about the production and construction of research data and its analysis within cultural studies. Pia Olsson looks at the mechanisms through which differences were created and kept up within the construction of ethnological questionnaires and the following analysis of the data gathered over four decades starting in the 1950s. The questionnaires were planned in a manner that focused on finding social, cultural, ethnic and linguistic differences between the Finns, namely the peasants, and those who are not peasants, and such naturalized classifications were not critically evaluated in an academic context until much later. Hanna Snellman's article talks about imagined reality as a form of cultural knowledge, namely knowledge based on assumptions, which are taken as the truth and acted on accordingly. Snellman examines the idea of "border" as an ethnological paradigm by looking at the project *Migrationen Finland-Sverige* which was initiated by the Nordic Museum in Stockholm and was built upon research material gathered in the 1970s, mainly among the Finns who had migrated to Sweden. The interview material was constructed based on older Finnish ethnological research, which did not especially reflect the lives of the younger Finns living in urban Sweden which was a clear sign of a gradual paradigm change having started to take place in ethnological research. The third article in this section, written by Zsuzsa Szarvas, explores the fragments of rural Hungarian Jewish culture and its relation to – mainly its absence in – Hungarian ethnographical research.

The writings in the second part revolve around borders of different worlds. Matti Kamppinen discusses ubiquitous ethnography and the description of cultural scenes through the works of Durkheim, Malinowski and Evans-Pritchard and within Amazonian folk tradition. In the next article, Pirjo Korhokangas explores multi-sited experiences, above all departures and arrivals, of the children sent from Finland to Sweden during the Second World War based on their personal stories and memories. In Marja-Liisa Honkasalo's article different worlds are studied by analysing the borders and divisions between folk medicine and modern medicine. At times

they have come closer to understanding each other's approaches while at other times the separation has been stricter and folk medicine has clearly been defined as the "other" from the perspective of clinical medicine. The second part of the book covers quite a variety of topics despite a loosely given common theme, which makes it somewhat challenging to read at times, let alone summarize the chapters in a short review.

The book continues with Art Leete's article on animism, the forest and Komi identity, arguing that Komi animism is a product of elaborated hunting practice. As a basis for this argument Leete states that northern conditions have contributed significantly to the survival of Komi hunting and furthermore, the persistence of animistic views even against the powerful intrusion of Christian faith and values. Hunting is also in focus in the next article, in which Teppo Korhonen writes about early forms of civil disobedience in the hunting of large predators and the regulation of hunting practices in Finland. The notion of border or boundary is an important but simultaneously a controversial and heavily disputed concept within the Udmurt worldview. Tatiana Minniyakhmetova's analysis shows that the availability of a number of definitions for the concept of boundary illustrates its heterogeneity, uncertainty and abstractness at the same time. The power and capability of boundary are huge, due to its depth of experience in the micro- and macro-cosmoses and reflected through people's behaviour. The Virgin from the borderland of separate worlds is the topic of Outi Fingerroos's article on the Guadalupe Virgin Mary, which came to be when the old world and the new world met. Guadalupe stands on the borderland in many ways, acting as a protector of Indians and mestizos as well as being a symbol of Catholic faith, struggles for independence and revolution. The cult based on the revelations of Virgin Mary is an integral part of Mexican culture and its power in people's daily lives is tremendous, no matter whether people are religious or not. In the cult of Guadalupe it is possible to see the continuation of the dual nature inherent in the Indian world view, where perfection is understood as two-dimensional with a feminine and a masculine side. In that vein, Guadalupe is a strong symbol of womanhood, and as the first mother she balances the otherwise masculine Latino culture with a total credibility and independence.

The third section of the book, focusing on identities and symbols of identities, begins with Anna Sivula's study of cultural heritage conflict battle as a battle over who has the ownership of cultural memory and gets to decide whose memories count as cultural heritage. Based on debates concerning the plans for a civil war memorial monument, Sivula analyses the dynamic of negative cultural heritage work, namely such a cultural heritage process, which keeps conflicts alive inherent in a community's cultural memory. The Finnish border with Russia, particularly the meaning of the border of the ceded Karelia to the Soviet people, is the topic of Pekka Hankamies's article followed by Ullrich Kockel's writing on building, dwelling and thinking future heritages of a Nordic Scotland. Anna-Maria Åström reflects on how borders have been made, kept up, talked about and studied in urban environments. She discusses the question of borders in relation to historical processes, as markers distinguishing the centre and the periphery or areas understood as urban and those not categorized as urban, borders separating areas based on their residents' social status as well as changes taking place across borders or within certain areas. Ildikó Lehtinen's article is about the question of making distinctions between national costumes and folk costumes or actually more about whether this kind of categorization is possible, let alone relevant. The book ends with Tamara Molotova's writing on a popular holiday of the Mari people, the Semyk, which combined the joy of arriving summer, a celebration of life and the veneration of death.

Besides covering a wide array of topics in temporally, spatially and socially varying contexts, the articles in the book stretch geographically from Lapland to Mari villages and through rural Provence to Mexico, but most of all, while discussing borders and border crossings, they actually show relations and connections between people, places, ideas and cultures.

Tiina-Riitta Lappi, Turku

Jørgen Moe and Folksong

Ørnulf Hodne, Jørgen Moe og folkevisene. Novus forlag, Oslo 2019. 420 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-8390-014-9.

■ The term "Asbjørnsen & Moe" is firmly established as a unit in the literature on folktales. This

can be broken down into Per Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe – editors of the classic collection of Norwegian folktales, *Norske folkeeventyr 1–3* (1841–1844), to which the term actually refers. The two men collected, edited, and published a large number of tales and legends. Their collection was epoch-making, planting a number of folktales in the public consciousness. Moreover, by incorporating elements of dialect, it was also significant for the formation of a Norwegian written language.

As a folklore collector, the clergyman Jørgen Moe (1813–1882) took an interest in more than the folktale tradition. He also collected folksongs, that is to say, he recorded the lyrics, but as far as we know he never noted the tunes of the songs. In 1840 he published *Samling af sange, folkeviser og stev i norske allmuedialekter*, a collection of songs in peasant dialect, but this does not contain very many “real” folksongs. The folklorist Ørnulf Hodne has now written a book about Jørgen Moe as a collector and publisher of folksongs. Hodne took his doctorate in 1976 with a dissertation about Moe and folktales, and he has returned to this important figure over the years. Hodne, in short, knows his topic.

The book is the result of a remarkable event. In the spring of 2018 a find was made in the basement of the Department of Folklore at the University of Oslo, a collection of fair copies of material from what was then Norsk Folkminnesamling, the folklore collection founded in 1914. The material had been recorded by all the famous Norwegian collectors, but also by a great many others. Among the documents were folksongs recorded by Jørgen Moe in the 1840s, which was thus the incentive for this book by Hodne.

This substantial and sumptuously designed book actually consists of three sections. The first one contains Hodne’s insightful account of Moe and his times, his collecting trips, and some of his main informants who have long been well-known names. Jørgen Moe was out collecting ballads in Hardanger in 1846 and in Telemark and Setesdal in 1847. Hodne describes the journeys in detail, but with too many and too long quotations for my taste. The portraits of the singers are especially worth reading. Hodne’s descriptions are mainly based on the Swedish ballad scholar Bengt R. Jonsson’s posthumously published study, *Vil du meg lyde: Balladsångare i Telemark på 1800-talet* (2011). It is just a pity that Hodne has not proofread his Swedish quotations.

The second section of the book deals with the folksongs (*viser*) recorded by Jørgen Moe, arranged according to genre by Hodne, with the ballad and its sub-genres as the obvious classification principle. “With a couple of exceptions, all the ballads presented in this book are previously made fair copies of his [Moe’s] own originals,” writes Hodne (p. 241), which I interpret to refer to parts of the basement find. Many ballad texts, by the way, have been previously printed, several of them two or three times. Other genres are “*Stev*” (single-verse songs), “Other types of folksongs”, and “More modern folksongs of mixed content”, the latter two being remarkably imprecise categories in a scholarly edition.

After the texts of the ballads come the editor’s comments, song by song, expertly executed. Some remarks are drawn from the fair copies of the original recordings, but only those which, according to the editor, “are most important” (p. 241). The archive class mark and, in the case of the ballads, the TSB number as well, is systematically stated. Some summary ballad narratives are directly translated from TSB, *The Types of the Scandinavian Medieval Ballad* (1978). Oddly enough, the songs are numbered in the commentary, but not in the main text, which makes it unnecessarily difficult to move from a comment to the text of the song in question. The opposite path also gives the reader some annoying extra work, although all the songs are listed in the table of contents.

The ballad texts as worded by Moe are interspersed with a dozen works of art inspired by ballads, the oldest from the first years of the twentieth century, the latest from the 1950s. The illustrations show, among other things, how significant folksongs have been as motifs in contemporary Norwegian art.

The third section of the book contains Jørgen Moe’s published texts about folksongs. There are six pieces, reproduced in facsimile from Moe’s *Samlede skrifter* from 1877: the introduction to the 1840 edition of the ballads, the accounts of the collecting journeys in 1846 and 1847, an article about “Hemingsvisene”, a portrait of the informant Blind-Anna, and the article “Visit to a Peasant Wedding”. Once again, the editor has made it laborious to find one’s way in the book, because the table of contents does not specify the individual contributions, stating only that the section contains Moe’s

published works on folksongs. Bewilderingly, the section begins with the table of contents in Moe's collected writings, but the reader is not told which of the listed articles are reproduced in this book.

Today Jørgen Moe's texts about folksongs are primarily of historiographic interest. The greatest benefit for a present-day reader comes from Moe's description of his meeting with the informant Blind-Anna (Anna Ivarsdatter Oppedal) from Oppedal in Hardanger. Through Moe's account we learn something about how her rich repertoire of songs and stories was documented. We can also read about what she was like as a person. Since the songs were for a long time considered more interesting than the singers, Moe's portrait of Blind-Anna is unusual for its time.

With his book, Ørnulf Hodne has erected a monument to Jørgen Moe as a collector of folksong texts. Having access to this reference work it is easy both to survey Moe's contribution as a whole and to find particular details in the material he collected. An index of persons and songs would have made the book even more useful.

Gunnar Ternhag, Falun

Giving Place to National Minorities

Att ge plats. Kulturarvssektorn och de nationella minoriteternas platser. Ingrid Martins Holmberg, Katarina Saltzman & Sarah Andersson. Makadam Förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm & University of Gothenburg, 2018. 97 pp. ISBN 978-91-7061-282-4.

■ This is an intriguing report, starting with the title of the small book which reads as: "To give place", with a subtitle describing the report more unambiguously as the heritage sector and the places of the national minorities (in Sweden). I ponder on the title a bit: what does it actually mean to give place? My first thought would be to think about the expression to give voice to someone. This might have been in the researchers' mind when they gave their book a title. To give voice or place is to let someone without a voice or a place get one. It is a kind of rescue operation, and that is surely what this report – written collectively by heritage scholars Ingrid Martins Holmberg and Katarina Saltzman, with Sarah Andersson functioning as research secretary – tries to undertake in less than 100 pages with all the references. The other connotation the title gives me is the

one often heard from the House of Commons, to give way, which is an expression which underlines the duty of someone speaking to let other voices be heard. That is also a form of meaning which this title might be alluding to. To give way is then a form of generosity, a largess, in this case, so to speak, on behalf of the Swedish majority population, as it lives up to its ethos of inclusiveness, fairness and a general democratic impetus steering not only the political process as such but also the state apparatus with all its officials at different levels of the government, often at the regional or local level in these cases, noting the needs and interests of these minorities. Sweden is, as Kirsten Hastrup, the Danish anthropologist, has written in her extremely useful and thoughtful book on culture (*Kultur: Den flexibla gemenskapen*), an example of the Nordic way of thinking about oneself, seeing oneself collectively, from the vantage point of the people, the common man and woman. This is also and not least valid in the case of heritage studies, of which this particular report is an example, dealing as it does with questions both of material and also to a considerable extent intangible cultural heritage concerning these minorities.

And who are these minorities? The five national minorities in Sweden are the Roma, the Sami, the Swedish Finns, the Tornedalers and the Jews. This could be compared to the national minorities in the neighbouring Nordic countries. In Norway there are five national minorities: the Jews, the Roma, the Romani people, the Kvens/Norwegian Finns and the Forest Finns. In Finland there are six minorities: the Sami, the Roma, the Jews, the Finland-Swedes, the Tatars and the Old Russians. In Denmark there is only one minority, the Germans of Southern Jutland, but there are of course also the Greenlanders and the Faroe Islanders who are not national minorities per se but still form some kind of minorities/marginalities in a general Danish context. And the comparison with Sweden is more complicated than this short list implies. In Norway there are two national languages, Norwegian and Sami. The Sami are also given status as Indigenous people, something they don't have in Sweden or Finland. And in Finland the situation of the Finland-Swedes is a peculiar one, Swedish being alongside Finnish one of the two national languages in that country. In this context, then, both the Sami in Norway and the Finland-Swedes in Finland are something of an oddity; the

group is a national minority but at the same time the language they mostly speak is a national language, theoretically on par with the dominating language.

The case of the Finland-Swedes is also in the context of Sweden quite an interesting one (which is not mentioned in this report at all). Their organization FRIS (The Finland-Swedes in Sweden) have been pushing to make the group (some 60,000 individuals in a very rough estimate) into a national minority of Sweden, since their culture and background in certain ways differ from that of mainstream Swedish culture and they, just like the other minorities in Sweden, have their own historical places, meeting places and so on with a history of their own. But the Swedish parliament voted in 2017 that the minority can't be given national minority status. The reason for the decision was that this minority is too young historically to qualify, the expert in question arguing that the minority of Finland-Swedes originally came into being only in the 1910s in Finland and thus can't qualify for minority status in Sweden. But since Sweden and Finland parted ways after the war in 1808–1809 there was of course, already in the nineteenth century a Swedish-speaking minority in Finland distinct both from the Finns in Finland and from the Swedes in Sweden. But since the group which in the 1910s started to call themselves *finlandssvenskar* (which can be translated as either Finland-Swedes or Swedish-speaking Finns) speaks Swedish, one supposes this is the real explanation for the denial of national minority status to this group in Sweden. They are simply not marginal enough to be reckoned as a national minority.

What is interesting to note in the report is that the four minorities discussed (the Roma have been subject of earlier, more thorough research) are quite different as to their inner workings and subject positions in Swedish society. The study was done as a survey with officials in the national heritage sector, on a regional but also in some cases a local level, and also with representatives of the minorities themselves, mostly done as telephone interviews with some additional e-mailing taking place.

Concerning a rather short survey of this kind the end result must of necessity, as the researchers also note themselves, be rather meagre, general and abstract as to their findings. But this does not mean that the report is uninteresting, actually quite the contrary. It is an intriguing piece of "evidence" as to

how the Swedish discourse on minority and marginality in questions of ethnic historical groups is seen from the point of view of both the researching field (the two researchers are from the Department of Conservation at Gothenburg University) and more generally the Swedish state. One indication which can be picked up from the report is that the question of which places these minorities might claim to be of central value to themselves from a historical point of view is far from easy to put into a formula. This of course has to do with the starkly different positions of the minorities and their status in the larger Swedish context. For instance the case of Sami proves that a rather small minority (20,000–35,000 people) still has a strong position from a cultural heritage point of view. Their visibility is strong and this applies also to some extent to questions of politics/policy. On the other hand, the places which are important to this group might not be that easy to investigate, partly because the more general cultural and indeed mythological subtexts of these sites and places might be complicated by the fact the Sami in some cases do not want these places to be known at all. There might be bad psychic energy associated with certain places, e.g. some mountains, and other places might not be well served as regards the livelihood of the Sami if they are overexposed.

In the case of the Tornedalers and a group which is named just once but not explained at all in the report – the group called Lantalaiset – other quite intriguing questions are raised. The Tornedalers do not have many specific places geographically to report, but of course they have a kind of "homeland" or home region in the Torneå river basin, the border region between Sweden and Finland, and they have a language, *meänkieli*, which in Finland has been seen as a Finnish dialect, but which the Tornedalers themselves see as a unique language, a kind of linguistic cousin to Finnish (and the two are of course on the whole mutually understandable). And then the question of the Kvens is, as the report also notes, one which further complicates the cultural and linguistic map up north (this being the case both in Sweden and Norway and to a certain extent also in Finland). The Kvens are a group of people in these northern regions speaking a form of Finnish, related to the one spoken in Tornedalen. So, to make this picture more distinct, there would be a case for an excursus on the Lantalaiset, and the region Lantamaa in the upper parts of northern Norrland around

Jukkasjärvi and Kiruna. The Lantalaiset are also a group with a Finnish core, but obviously more of the Kven variety than the Tornedalers. And to complicate this geographical and cultural map further, in these same areas in which these Fenno-Ugric groups are located, the Sami have also a strong presence, as the researchers note. But what to my mind is missing from the survey, in which this situation up north is the most pressing one when the aim is to obtain more information and understanding concerning the peoples there, is the simple fact that the whole region north of the Lule river was, at the time when the Finnish war was lost by the Swedish-Finnish army in 1809, culturally and linguistically Finnish and Sami. Obviously it was this painful loss which started the Swedification in earnest of this whole region, something which had repercussions for how these minorities were treated by the majority, perhaps to a certain point even down to this day.

Flagrant racism and intense Swedification were a direct result of these policies. By engaging in further studies of the complicated relations between these groups which seem to be dispersed rather like an archipelago in the majority sea, and also concerning their claims for dignity in the world today there would be a need for further study on these matters. This also holds for the other groups considered in the report. Both the Forest Finns in Värmland, Dalarna and Jämtland, who up till now have been rather neglected as to their cultural heritage, and the Jews who have quite a different position in the eography, both imaginary and real, would be well served by further research. The Jews of Sweden are largely an urban population. The question of religion seems to be a more central concern for them than the question of language, though a small group of the Jews still speak Yiddish, the language dominant in the Ashkenazi Jewish world of Eastern Europe before the deluge caused by the Nazis. Their places are thus mainly associated with religious observance, but not wholly. Since Jews also have made a strong impact on business and trade there are other places and sites of interest, also architectural ones.

The researchers state that at this point the question of knowledge is the central one, to acquire more knowledge of these heredity places, questions of which, what, who, why in connection with these places. At the same time the research must be made with the utmost sensitivity since this is a highly contested field. These minorities have been victimized,

ostracized in the history of Sweden. Their points of view might not always be easy to put alongside a modernist Swedish viewpoint. And the lesson which resonates most strongly in this research field is that these questions can never be answered to the full. Any such attempt fails to do full justice to the task in the first place. There is a kind of algebra here, the researchers maintain, an equation which is stated as: place = space + meaning. But the question of what is worth considering a heritage and what is not will never be neutral. It will always be up for negotiation, since the question of cultural memory and of culture as such is, as Kirsten Hastrup has noted, always one involving strong ethical urges. We are finally back to the question of home, of feeling at home and of feelings of homelessness, feelings of nostalgia, questions of repression, of openings and closings of the cultural mindset itself.

This report is well written and, as already noted, at the same time somewhat tentative as to the results it offers, with perhaps more questions than answers, which is just fine since the field is such a difficult one. It also works as a strong case for more extended research on these matters.

Sven-Erik Klinkmann, Vasa

The Dream of the Cabin

Marianne E. Lien & Simone Abram, Hytta. Fire vegger rundt en drøm. Kagge Forlag, Oslo 2019. 205 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-489-2328-2.

■ The social anthropologists Marianne E. Lien and Simone Abram, who work at Oslo University, have published a rich and beautifully illustrated contemporary study of life in cabins and ideas about cabins, scattered from north to south in Norway. The study is an outcome of the research project: "Materializations of Kinship: The Life Cycle in Norwegian Cabins". The construction of cabins gained momentum in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of new laws on paid holidays, and because the Norwegian economy had recovered after the downturn caused by the German occupation. It now became possible to acquire a car of one's own when the rationing of cars ceased in Norway in 1960. That was when "the cabin became everyman's property and Norwegians became cabin people" (p. 18). Almost half of the Norwegian population have access to at least one cabin. There are now nearly half a million cabins in Norway. They have

been considered not only from the point of view of social community, but also from a national aspect, with the feeling that they are typically Norwegian. The word rendered here as “cabin”, *hytte*, is difficult to convey in other languages. It is like a weekend cottage, a summer home, similar to the Swedish *stuga* and the Danish *sommerhus*.

The fieldwork has involved visits by the authors, with their observations of cabins along with the photographer Haakon Harriss. Interviews have been conducted with the owners and users of cabins in different generations. An important source in the documentation of life in the cabins is the “cabin books” that people have kept. These books are emotionally important to current owners, keeping alive the memories of life in the cabin in previous years.

The people and their memories, rather than the buildings themselves, are the main interest in the survey. Cabins play a major role in the families, used for recreation and for unifying the family, but inheritance disputes can also arise when a younger generation takes over the ownership after the parents. Then the symbolic and sentimental value of the cabin, its social significance, is clearly seen in addition to the economic value. One possibility that is exploited in many cases is co-ownership between different families. Then the larger kin can be held together over several generations. People can draw up fixed rules for the cabin, for example, concerning refuse collection and the distribution of practical tasks in the form of painting, mowing the lawn, and so on, and sharing the overheads and maintenance costs. Almost half of today’s cabins have been passed on from one generation to the next. Cabins are also lent to relatives. On the other hand, only six per cent say that they rent out their cabins. There are also examples of inheritance disputes that have led siblings to become enemies for life.

Many cabin owners want to mark the difference in comfort between the home and the cabin. The older generation did not want to install running water or electricity, but nowadays this is more common. Among today’s cabin owners there are many who reject novelties such as television and broadband. To be able to relax and enjoy freedom, they feel a need to shield themselves from the technical facilities of modern society. Being close to nature is perceived as important.

Through its solid empirical foundation and its analytical reasoning, the book is an important contem-

porary contribution to the research on Nordic tourism that has intensified in recent years. It led in 2015 to the formation of the Nordic Network for the History of Tourism and in 2018 to the publication of the edited volume *Turismhistoria i Norden*, published by the historian Wiebke Kolbe in collaboration with myself. The book reviewed here is written as popular scholarship and can therefore be recommended to a broad audience not only in Norway but throughout Scandinavia. Cabin owners can read about how other families live in and feel about their cabins.

Anders Gustavsson, University of Oslo/Henån

Girls’ Races and Gender Equality

Karin S. Lindelöf & Annie Woube, I tjejers spår – för framtidens segrar. Om tjejlopp och villkor för tjejers motionsidrottande. Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm 2019. 253 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7061-287-9.

■ Why are there keep-fit races specifically for women? How were they established and why are they so popular? Are girls’ races good or bad if the goal is greater equality in sport? With this book, Karin S. Lindelöf and Annie Woube (both ethnologists working at the Centre for Gender Studies, Uppsala University) shed new light on girls’ races and their participants.

The history of sport shows how women have been excluded from major keep-fit events for paternalistic, sexist, and downright idiotic reasons. The pictures of Kathrine Switzer, who was forced to defend herself against an attack by a functionary to be able to finish the Boston Marathon in 1967, are iconic. In Sweden we have several examples of women who defied the ban on participating in the Vasaloppet ski race. Girls’ races (*tjejlopp*) should be understood in the light of this historical heritage – they are a response to exclusion mechanisms that were at first highly concrete, but they have additionally had a more subtle impact on the culture of keep-fit sporting events. Here, as in sport in general, men have often been the norm. In the girls’ races, it is the other way around. As Lindelöf and Woube ably demonstrate, this entails both a liberating element and a limiting image of women doing sports. I shall return to this ambivalence at the end of the review.

The introduction describes the methodology, the theory, and the empirical data. The aim is to study women’s keep-fit races as a cultural phenomenon,

both historically and in the present. Four races – Tjejvasan, Tjejevättern, Tjejmilen, and Våruset – are analysed with material that is both rich and varied. Participants' narratives, observations, auto-ethnography, archival material, newspaper cuttings, and interviews are just some examples. The sources of theoretical inspiration include Michel Foucault, Chantal Mouffe, and Ernesto Laclau. In the authors' own words, the framework is "discourse theoretical, post-structuralist, and feminist" (p. 21), which does not prevent them from also referring to relevant sports research.

The first of the seven chapters focuses on the participants in the girls' races. Who are they? Where do they come from? It soon emerges that the women in the races are largely white Swedish middle-class from the metropolitan regions, an imbalance that recurs in other high-profile keep-fit races. Health is often cited as the motive for participating, and the race acts as a stimulus to train during the rest of the year. This too can be recognized from gender-mixed keep-fit races.

Chapter 2 examines the history of girls' races. Several of the races studied here were established in the 1980s, in parallel with the jogging trend and the increasing individualization in society, which was also reflected in sport. Why was there no room in the existing events for the growing numbers of women interested in recreational sports? According to Lindelöf and Woube (p. 98), part of the explanation can be found in the lack of equality in society, where women's opportunities are restricted by their disproportionate responsibility for children, the home, and social relations, and this in turn is reflected in the training opportunities.

Chapter 3 deals with the format of the races. Here the girls' races clearly differ from other races by virtue of their stronger emphasis on the event, the festivity, and the "girliness". Participation becomes a kind of manifestation of responsibility for one's own health, often packaged in a stereotypical way that risks concealing the empowering potential of the physical performance (pp. 128–129).

The fourth chapter analyses the girls' races as a gateway to other (often longer and more male-dominated) keep-fit races. The girls' races thus seem to function in recreational sport in much the same way as cannabis does in the drug scene, although the comparison stops there. At the same time, this image risks reinforcing the view of girls' races as a "chicken" variant of the original (p. 234). As I read

Lindelöf and Woube, races like Tjejvasan and Tjejevättern have played an important role in getting more women to participate in keep-fit races. In that way the races have had an emancipatory function, by gradually changing the gender coding of events like Vasaloppet and Vätternrundan and paving the way for increased female participation in the original races as well. At the same time, in some cases the girls' races have had a slightly stereotypical image of their target audience, where classically female attributes are highlighted and the serious competition and training are toned down in favour of participation as a goal in itself (p. 68).

Chapter 5 highlights the girls' races as an arena for community, both on a small scale, with friends or workmates, and on a large scale, as a community comprising all the participants in the race. There is also the new community that can arise in the actual race, such as being part of a cluster in Tjejevättern. As in team sports like football, which largely served as an outlet for already existing social communities in factories and other workplaces, the girls' races have served as an arena for existing social communities (mother and daughter, groups of friends, colleagues, and the like). Here, however, it is not entirely clear how these motives and practices differ from those of male counterparts, although references to previous research suggest that women attach a greater value to social aspects (p. 182).

The sixth chapter analyses the names of the girls' races. The word for girl, *tjej*, "signals that one is youthful, active, independent, and modern" (p. 199). When linked to the girls' races, the word *tjej* is relatively age-neutral – all the women who participate are in some sense girls. The ambivalence seen in previous chapters recurs, among both the participants in the races and the authors of this book. On the one hand, the girls' races signal a playfulness that undermines the seriousness of the participants and takes the emphasis away from their sporting performance. On the other hand, it is precisely this playfulness that can challenge established (male) norms and structures dictating how keep-fit sports should be practised.

The seventh and last chapter summarizes the results. Lindelöf and Woube clearly show how idealistic motives about gender equality and public health have been combined with more commercial purposes. This could be contradictory, but in fact this development fits well in a broader analysis of how

sport has changed over time. The sportification model, with its criteria for the development of sport, holds up specialization, for instance, as a central feature. The girls' races can be regarded as examples of this: by adapting the distances and the framing to suit different target groups, more people can be enticed to take part. I would have liked to see the authors elaborate on how the intrinsic logic of sport affects the girls' races – and vice versa.

The gender division is interesting in relation to the Swedish Sports Federation, which has refused to admit the Sami sports federation on the grounds it is only open to ethnic Sami. This rule is regarded as a breach of the Federation's principle that sport should be open to everyone. The girls' races, with their explicit exclusion of male participants, challenge a fundamental principle in Swedish sport – the right of everyone to take part. At the same time, this idea has clearly not been put into practice, as women were excluded from a wide range of sporting events, and indeed from certain sports, for much of the twentieth century. And in competitive sport, the traditional gender separation has been maintained as a central principle, as evidenced by the ongoing dispute about female athletes with high testosterone levels.

Returning to the reasoning in chapter 2 about the girls' races as a response to the unequal allocation of training time between men and women, I think that this is a relatively good measure of the zeitgeist and yet another example of how sport can give new perspectives on larger phenomena in society. Women who want and demand time for serious and purposeful training have helped to redefine the gender coding in several sports, such as football, where players on the pioneering Öxabäck team in the early 1970s had to explain to the press that their husbands could actually take care of the children while the women's team was engaged in matches and training sessions.

It is no coincidence, according to the authors, that it is in running that women have taken their place because, in comparison with skiing and cycling, it is a more efficient use of time and requires less in terms of equipment and technology (that too a classic male domain). It is a convincing argument, but the claim that “conditions for women's and men's keep-fit sport, and the everyday conditions that regulate and determine them, have not changed much” (p. 98) would require more empirical evidence than is presented here. In fact, the increasing

popularity of major events, and not least of all Lindelöf's and Woube's own research, suggests that women are increasingly visible in mixed races. That is not to say that equality has been achieved. As Öxabäck's May Lindgren put it when she was asked in 1975 whether there was greater equality in sport? “Yes, definitely. But it's still not good.”

Can the “pink” framing of the girls' races risk reinforcing the image that men need to train seriously for serious tests of strength, while women are mostly expected just to reach the finish and have a good time? I view this as one of the book's central questions. Lindelöf and Woube have made an important contribution to sports research by showing how women's races can function both as an instrument for achieving equality and as a way to cement traditional notions of men's and women's sports. The crucial factor is which part of the events is emphasized. If the focus is on the social community and the nice framing, it disarms the political potential and the participants risk being reduced to passive consumers of a traditionally packaged experience. But if the physical effort is at the centre, it challenges classic ideas about gender and femininity (p. 234). A woman doing sport then stands out as a subject, and the aesthetic aspect is subordinate to the performance. In this way the image of the girls' races can change, being acknowledged as more of a physical achievement, which is what the participants themselves demand. Could this acknowledgement lead to shifts in the valuation not only of keep-fit races but also of training in general? It may sound naive, but in that case sport could contribute to increased equality, one hour of training at a time. Regardless of such hopes, this book exposes the duality of girls' races in a lucid and well-grounded manner, providing a better foundation of knowledge for the effort to achieve greater inclusion in tomorrow's (keep-fit) sport.

Daniel Svensson, Gothenburg

Materiality and Learning

Materialitet og læring. Marie Martinussen & Kristian Larsen (eds.). Hans Reitzels forlag, København 2018. 338 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-41270-41-8.

■ Materiality in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century has become a research field that has expanded the perception of people's relationship with

their surroundings and the impact of the surroundings on people. In several different disciplines, materiality is now emerging both as an analytical concept and as a research field of its own. In this edited volume on “Materiality and Learning”, the concept of materiality and its implications for learning processes is explored by researchers from different subjects in the humanities and social sciences, including ethnology, psychology, anthropology, education, and sociology. In twelve chapters, a total of sixteen authors, all working at Danish universities, analyse various aspects of how learning in a broad sense – socialization, assimilation, knowledge production, and knowledge communication – are related to the material environment. The book is divided into four thematic sections with three chapters each, where the different themes are based on the authors’ theoretical standpoints.

The case studies on which the chapters draw come from different settings in Denmark, both public institutions (such as schools, kindergartens, universities, and hospitals) and private companies – and even a fishing boat. Materiality is defined both as objects that are handled by people and as spaces, whether rooms or city spaces. The premise that holds the book together is that materiality affects people and is thus an instrument of power that can be handled in different ways, but that people also affect how objects and spaces are shaped and used.

The studies in the book are mostly based on fieldwork, and the authors have used different methods to investigate their respective problem areas. Qualitative methods are employed throughout, linked to fieldwork practices such as interviews and participant observation. One author claims to be a “non-observing participant” in a study of how socialization and learning to become a fisherman takes place, with a case study conducted aboard a Danish trawler. The clear descriptions of methods in each chapter display a wide range of ethnographical approaches. Both those who seek inspiration for teaching ethnographic methods and those who wish to develop their own research methods have much to gain from the book.

Similarly, the theoretical breadth is impressive, and it is on the basis of the theoretical perspectives that the editors have sorted the studies into four themes, instead of grouping them according to the studied topic, which would also have been a possibility. This way of arranging the articles in the book demonstrates how different theoretical angles can

help to illuminate the same phenomena in different ways, such as how architecture and space affect a teaching situation. This also clearly shows the importance of theoretical approaches for the resulting knowledge, which makes the book useful in teaching the importance of scholarly theories.

The various articles present current research on several important areas of society, such as children’s preschool environments, the spatial organization of hospitals, and the right to influence planning and construction processes. Although the case studies are based on Danish situations, the articles are highly relevant to many other countries. All the authors in the book demonstrate the importance of humanist research and the perspective of the humanities in areas which are otherwise dominated by technical perspectives and quantitative methods.

This book can be used for teaching in a wide range of disciplines and can also serve as inspiration for further research in many fields. The studies presented in the book are all of a contemporary character, in that none of them attempt any comparison with phenomena in the distant past. The opening article on the topic of “Offices of the Future” is based on fieldwork conducted shortly after the turn of the millennium, and in another study, on physical and temporal breaks in the school setting, the author has done two periods of fieldwork with six years in between. What would be interesting would be a study with an even greater time span, where the importance of materiality over time is analysed. Would it be possible to understand socialization and learning in the past, with a focus on materiality, and changes in these processes over time? Some of the articles contain images, which not only serve as illustrations of the text but also present content that the authors analyse. The book has an index of the subjects and people mentioned in the various texts, which further increases its usefulness.

Karin Gustavsson, Lund

A Method Cookbook

Metodekøgebogen: 130 analysemetoder fra humaniora og samfundsvidenskab. Mie Femø Nielsen & Svend Skriver (eds.). U Press, København 2019. 440 pp. ISBN 978-87-9306-081-4.

■ “The Method Cookbook: 130 Methods of Analysis from the Humanities and Social Sciences” is an

interesting experiment. The editors' aim has been to provide a systematically formatted presentation of a wide range of analytical methods relevant for the humanities and social sciences. Their point of departure is that "method" is "a systematic way of approaching something in order to achieve something" (p. 11), and the focus of their collection of methods will be on how you can actually work, step by step, in order to get an overview of, or discern patterns or connections in, a particular set or sample of material. The editors state in the preface that the task of collecting material is covered very well in teaching, but when it comes to actually working with the material, students are often at a loss. The book intends to mend this gap by presenting various methods of analysis in a practical, hands-on perspective.

There are 12 chapters in the book, covering 130 entries, or descriptions of particular methods. Each chapter presents methods that are suitable for dealing with a particular area or phenomenon. Their connections to various academic disciplines are deliberately under-communicated, and in the same vein they are not presented as tied up with particular categories of empirical material (such as novels or interviews, cf. p. 12). The ambition, on the contrary, is to isolate methods as procedures in their own right and make the reader aware of a wide variety of options.

According to the editors, the chapters are presented in an order ranging from "analysis of larger social structures" to "analysis of materiality and the agency of the body" (p. 12). In my impression, though, the chapters seem also to be divided into two parts based on quite different categories of topics. Chapters 1–6 focus on theoretical themes or concepts, such as strategies and activities (1), social systems and cultures (2), processes, development and change (3), behaviour (4), identity (5) and interaction (6). Chapters 7–11, on the other hand, deal with generic categories of material, such as large sets of data (7), text in context (8), texts (9), in-depth analysis of texts (10), and the pictures, sound and video (11).

The last chapter addresses the analysis of space, place and materiality, and one might wonder why it has been located at the end of the book, and not in conjunction with the first set of six.

Seventy-six authors have been involved in the production of the book. All of them were given instructions to write their short texts in a similar strait-

jacket format, in order to facilitate the readers' use of the book. Consequently, each entry contains the same sections: What constitutes the method? Who developed it? Ingredients (or what are you supposed to put into the analytical model?); To do, step by step; What can the method achieve, and for what is it unfit? Examples of uses; What other methods can this method be combined with? Disagreements about the method (what does its critics have to say?), and, finally, Further reading. In addition, each method is marked on two scales: how time-consuming is it, and how difficult?

The methods included in chapters 1–6 display a palpable variation as to scope and ambitions. Some stand out as particular large-scale enterprises, such as Ethnographic analysis (pp. 53–55) and Cultural analysis (pp. 63–67). The step-by-step description of the first of these two includes as its first three steps actions that are actually preparatory: decide what you would like to know, and why; get acquainted with previous research; get access – and, as step no. 4, perform the fieldwork (by observing, interviewing, and reflecting). No doubt this is an adequate description of an ethnographer's initial work. But it is at odds with the collection's ambition of focussing on how one can actually work with a collection of material. As step no. 8 in the description of ethnographic analysis, we find the task "analyse your data" – by means of e.g. discourse analysis or the hermeneutical circle, described in other parts of the book. In a similar vein, cultural analysis is described as a field of research requiring several methods, including, among others, ethnographic analysis. At the opposite end of the scale, we find approaches and procedures that are considerably narrower, such as the Goffman-Garfinkel-inspired method of analysing norms and routines through breaching experiments (pp. 116–117), or the method "Ask why five times" (pp. 118–119), which consists of not ceasing to ask why (in a polite and kind manner) until no new information comes up. (As for this method, no disagreement is reported, and the stated reason for this is that it is so insignificant that it does not provoke any criticism.) Other methods may be more multifaceted, but with a restricted scope, such as e.g. Wardrobe Studies, intended to understand the meaning of personal style and dressing (pp. 174–176). Wardrobe Studies is presented in the chapter dealing with methods of analysing identity, which seems very reasonable. A little harder to un-

derstand, for this reader, is the location in the same chapter of the next entry, which deals with a set of psycho-physiological methods for registering psychological processes by measuring physiological activities (e.g. activities in the brain, or electrical activity in the skin). However interesting these methods are, it is not clear how they contribute to the understanding of identity.

As the example above indicates, the logic of the internal composition of the chapters is not always easy to understand. But since the book, no doubt, is not intended to be read from beginning to end, this is not a very big problem. Worse, to this reader's mind, is that far from all entries get as much "hands-on" as the preface has promised. Many of them have a considerably larger scope than one could have expected after reading the preface, and as a rule then, when it comes to the step "analyse your material", the reader is referred to methods described elsewhere in the book.

To my mind, the volume is at its best when the entries focus on methods of a more restricted kind. "Ask why five times" could be an apt example (though one might ponder whether "why" is always the best word to use). There is also a text about measuring (pp. 129–134) that may be very instructive, at least to those of us who are not very much into measuring, and the entry Source Criticism (pp. 268–270) seems valuable as well – to mention just two of many entries that might be of interest to readers of this journal. In the preface, the editors foresee that they will amend the volume in the years to come, in dialogue with their readers. Based on the reflections above, I would suggest that they shrink the scope rather than expand it, and concentrate entirely on methods on the narrow edge of the scale.

Barbro Blehr, Stockholm

Meanings and Practices of Consumer Culture

Konsumtionskultur. Innebörder och praktiker. En vänbok till Helene Brembeck. Magdalena Pettersson McIntyre, Barbro Johansson & Niklas Sörum (eds.). Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm 2019. 279 pp. Ill. 978-91-7061-301-2.

■ "Tell me who your friends are, and I'll tell you who you are." This is one version of a saying attri-

buted to the ancient Greek playwright Euripides. In this book entitled, in translation "Consumer Culture: Meanings and Practices", we meet many friends of Professor Emerita Helen Brembeck, to whom the volume is dedicated. The writers are all colleagues and friends who, in their own studies in the field of consumer culture, have been inspired by Brembeck's research career. And what a career! The book spans a wide range of subjects linked to consumer culture and the practices surrounding consumption today. The 14 papers discuss and problematize topics from luxury ice creams and gender, crafts, flea markets, cosy Fridays, and other food consumption, to lifestyle blogs that shape markets for domestic life, alternative shopping places, garden plants, homes and furnishings of various kinds. The reader also becomes acquainted with the discussion about the function and shape of women's football outfits, thoughts about sustainability, how homeowners create contemporary history through their purchases, and the marketing of in-store music. This solid package is framed by a preface, an introduction that shows the breadth of Brembeck's research, and a conclusion that ties the previous contributions together and points the way forward.

Helen Brembeck has been head of the Centre for Consumer Studies at the University of Gothenburg and professor of ethnology. During her long career she has been active in a number of different projects related to consumption. With a broad interest in consumer culture, she has immersed herself in several aspects of what it means to be a consumer and she has elaborated a great variety of ways to approach the subject as a researcher. Through her many research projects, Brembeck has broadened our understanding of the concept of consumption to include more than just the purchase of a commodity. She has also shown, for instance, how consumption follows us through all stages of life and thus is a part of everyday existence for young and old alike. It is from the results of these many research projects that the authors of the articles proceed, all in their own way. Most of the contributors are ethnologists, but the volume also includes essays by scholars in subjects such as domestic science, marketing, economics, and business administration. The background of the authors in different disciplines shows how broad Brembeck's research work is and how she has inspired others by successfully combining different

perspectives. Because of my own background as a historian, I especially looked for other historians in the list of authors, but there were none. However, some of the articles describe changes over time, which a reader with an interest in history can seize on. For example, Kerstin Gunnemark, in her essay about new inhabitants of the old residential block of Ekebo in Gothenburg, highlights differences between how we view the residents today and a hundred years ago. Similarly, Barbara Czarniawska, in her article on hoarding, compares and intertwines past and present. Czarniawska is the only author here who compares Sweden with another country to any extent; in the other texts the focus is mainly on Swedish conditions. The importance of a historical perspective and the importance of analyses of changes over time is also highlighted by Orvar Löfgren in the final chapter.

The subtitle of the book, “Meanings and Practices”, illustrates the questions that the authors have chosen to answer. Practices are examined, for instance, in Maria Fuente’s article where, by analysing posts in two of Sweden’s biggest lifestyle blogs, she shows how these create and shape markets for home life. Practices are also considered in the article by Katarina Saltzman and Carina Sjöholm about the sharing economy in the garden. The essay problematizes the sharing of garden plants with friends and acquaintances, an intrinsically everyday act. The authors claim that gardeners who give their plants to others simultaneously create different values and relationships. I found the article about garden plants particularly fascinating, partly because of the (for me) somewhat unexpected choice of topic, partly because of the authors’ ability to study an everyday act and place it in a broader context.

Another rewarding article was Karin Salomonsson’s, in which she wonders what is what in a collaborative consumer culture where libraries, banks, and shops have merged together. Sustainability is an increasingly important key word today, and as a result new forms of consumption have seen the light of day. When new forms of commodity circulation arise, for example in the form of leisure banks and lending shops, these must be organized in practice. Salomonsson approaches this new way of circulating goods from the point of view of both customers and staff, and shows how these arrive by discussion at the rules to apply to loans and swaps. The name of the activity also has to be approved

and established among staff and customers alike. The article is a concrete illustration of how new forms of consumer culture require new practices. Ideas about sustainability are also included in the informants’ narratives in Cecilia Fredriksson’s article about the trade in used goods in physical charity shops. This article sticks out because it is illustrated with watercolours that fit the topic, and Cecilia Fredriksson is also responsible for the fine cover picture.

The varying backgrounds of the authors influence their choice of materials, methods, and theories. Several of the articles are based on material collected for other projects, and on research that has been carried out over a long period of time. For instance, Viveka Torell, who has studied how clothes have been used in women’s football to create an image for the sport, conducted her interviews with informants who were active in the top national division of Swedish women’s football ten years ago. Interviews are also used by Olle Stenbäck, who discusses how, if at all, in-store music can affect customers, but also how customers can choose to be affected by the music. Other contributions are based on close-up reading of different texts, websites, and questionnaire responses, as well as ethnographic observations. We also find analyses of advertisements, in the form of Magdalena Petersson McIntyre’s informative article about how luxury has been portrayed in a number of advertising campaigns for Magnum ice cream.

During her time as an active researcher Helen Brembeck has studied consumers of different ages, and this is also reflected in the essays in the book. Lena Hansson, Ulrika Holmberg, and Anna Post, for example, analyse possibilities and limitations in older people’s grocery purchases, and the actors and networks this involves. One of their questions concerns digitization; although this offers new opportunities, one may wonder how well older food buyers have embraced innovation and what practices their shopping follows. We meet younger consumers in Sandra Hillén’s article on families with children as cultural consumers in museums of cultural history. Her aim is to analyse museums as an alternative for these families’ cultural consumption, in competition with places like zoos or fairgrounds, examining how different families have reasoned about their choices. Children are also at the centre in Barbro Johansson’s interesting article about chil-

dren's food consumption and their participation in decisions about food.

The expansion of the concept of consumption has had the consequence that there is a considerable amount of research on different aspects of the subject. Yet there is room for more, and this book gives the reader many new insights into everyday phenomena and problematizes things that we often take for granted. The example studied in Susanna Rolfsdotter Eliasson's article is a holiday home and the strategies that the owners of the house use to achieve what they want with their consumption, both dreams and concrete objects. Concrete objects are also included in Anneli Palmsköld's article about craft practitioners as consumers. Palmsköld discusses contemporary knitting culture and the discussions of consumption that take place in a digital meeting place devoted to knitting. The craft enthusiasts who meet on this website engage in a special form of consumption, "prosumption". Through their knitting, they consume and produce at the same time.

The individual contributions are bookended by articles which place them in the general context of Helen Brembeck's research, and unite the various questions into a larger whole. The preface is written by Ulla Ericsson-Zetterqvist, and it is followed by an introduction by Magdalena Petersson McIntyre, Barbro Johansson, and Niklas Sörum, who also edited the volume. The final article is by Orvar Löfgren. The introduction relates the different essays to Brembeck's previous research in the field of consumer culture, while Löfgren in the concluding article entitled "What Can Consumption Be?" also looks forward and reflects on what can still be done in research on consumer culture. In this way, the final chapter has an important role for the volume as a whole, not just because it gathers together the threads discussed in the other texts, but it also points to new challenges and opportunities. Today, for example, sustainability is a very topical theme, which gives us a greater interest in the life span and life story of objects. A focus on sustainability also broadens our understanding of the concept of consumption so that it is not only a matter of buying or consuming, but also of swapping, borrowing, and sharing.

The attitude towards consumption and ownership has varied considerably in different times. Consumption is not just about luxury and abundance,

but has become part of everyday life for both young and old. At the same time, the conditions for our consumption are constantly changing, and new times present us with new challenges and possibilities. It therefore seems natural to pay attention to the subject of consumer culture in many disciplines. According to the blurb, the book *Konsumtionskultur: Innebörder och praktiker* can benefit the scholarly community but can also be read by interested general readers. I can only agree. The content is so broad that any reader can recognize themselves or people around them in one way or another, and gain greater insight into their own and other people's consumption. Since this is an edited volume, the texts are freestanding, but there is plenty of good reading because the variety of subject matter and perspectives means that all the articles contribute something new to the whole. The book could also be used in teaching, as the various essays together act as an introduction to the research field. The editors have done a good job in the arrangement of the book, and the different perspectives follow nicely on each other. Many other topics could have been addressed on the basis of Helen Brembeck's diverse research. Yet this approach feels very well balanced and sufficiently comprehensive. Some, but far from all, of the articles are illustrated with photographs or illustrations appropriate to the theme. The result is an informative book that stimulates many new thoughts and illuminates the theme of consumption from several different perspectives. The reader comes away with a better understanding of how broad the subject of consumption culture today can be, and an awareness of the challenges facing today's consumers. The book adds a great deal both to those who are already familiar with the research done by Helen Brembeck and her friends, but also for those who wish to learn more about current research on consumer culture, or simply want to read something thought-provoking.

Anna Sundelin, Åbo (Turku)

Highly Educated Migrants in Sweden

Högutbildade migranter i Sverige. Maja Povrzanovic Frykman & Magnus Ölander (eds.). Arkiv förlag, Lund 2018. 231 pp. ISBN 978-91-7924-308-1.

■ This collection of studies on the theme of "Highly educated migrants in Sweden" is edited by Maja

Povrzanovic Frykman and Magnus Ölander. The central topics are “cultural encounters” and “inter-cultural relations”. The aim of the book is to provide a more comprehensive picture of ongoing research in the field of migration studies and cultural encounters. The authors range from recent graduates to more well-established researchers in the field of culture. The book is meant to be read by people other than researchers, for example, students, journalists, politicians, and anyone with an interest in the field. Many of the research findings have previously been presented in English, but this is the first time they have appeared in Swedish. About half of the authors are migrants themselves, which makes the book especially relevant at this time. In addition, the topic is highly skilled migrants, who do not belong to the group that gets most attention in the news media when the subject is migration and the challenges that many see that it can entail. We have here, thus, a new voice in the debate on migration.

Some of the concepts which are discussed in the book and which the authors try to nuance, are “refugees” (*flyktingar*) and “immigrants” (*invandrare, immigranter*). These concepts are often used synonymously in the public debate, and in the individual chapters they try to identify how the shades of meaning differ between these terms, pointing out why it is important to distinguish between them. The book suggests the word “migrant” as a more neutral term that can include the other concepts and designations. Therefore, the term “migrant” is used in the title. However, the notion of migrant can also be understood as something which is associated, in politics and in the media, with challenges and problems, and therefore it is further modified by the description “highly educated” to capture the specific group with which the studies here are concerned.

The reason the authors have found it relevant to write a book about highly educated migrants is that the international labour market is increasingly competing for highly skilled people. It is argued that the availability of a well-educated workforce can be crucial for maintaining the welfare system and the economy of Sweden (and other Scandinavian countries). Highly educated migrants are often viewed as an unproblematic group as regards economy and integration, but research shows that they also have special social and career challenges as a consequence of having a non-Swedish background. The

book seeks to discuss the encounter of highly educated migrants with Sweden, not only in terms of economy, the labour market, and working life, but also taking cultural aspects into account.

The authors distinguish between highly educated and poorly educated migrants and their challenges with integration and working life in Sweden, and here it is the highly educated migrants they discuss. They point out, however, that it may also be problematic to make this distinction. What one faces as an immigrant has more to do with migration and the majority society and less to do with the level of education. And, as the authors state, the highly educated are not a homogeneous group. This is an important point, and because the authors draw attention to it, readers can accept the choices that the authors make in relation to the arguments they have for writing a book about highly educated migrants.

There is a wide range of topics: policies on labour migration, a survey of the representation of highly educated migrants on the Swedish labour market, Swedish integration policy, intercultural communication between foreign doctors and Swedish patients, the importance of having friends, and the migrants’ experience of having to adapt to Sweden, on both a professional and a personal level.

The book is an important contribution to the discussion that is taking place in Sweden and other countries about integration, intercultural processes, and the everyday life of migrants. Many of the challenges facing migrants are similar, and both highly educated and low-skilled migrants have much the same experiences here, as the authors of the book point out, with a measure of self-criticism for concentrating on highly educated people. Nevertheless, it makes sense to write specifically about highly educated migrants, because, besides being immigrants, they also have different experiences from the low-skilled (and vice versa), and the many articles in this book provide a multifaceted discussion of experiences, often from the migrants’ point of view, as many of the studies use a qualitative method.

The book is a successful contribution to the discussion of migration, and it will be relevant for teaching purposes in high school and tertiary education. It will also be relevant for readers with a general interest in the migration debate, as well as for journalists, opinion formers, and politicians.

Vibeke Andersson, Aalborg

Remembering the Deceased

Å minnes de døde. Døden og de døde efter reformasjonen [Remembering the Deceased. Death and the Deceased after the Reformation]. Tarald Rasmussen (ed.) Cappelen Damm akademisk, Oslo 2019. 263 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-02-51549-2.

■ When the Nordic countries embraced Lutheranism in the sixteenth century, old vessels were only partly filled with new wine. Only gradually did “pure” Lutheranism dominate along with the growing custom of sending students of theology abroad, above all to Wittenberg, Saxony, in order to participate in higher education at the local university.

This book concentrates on how the ceremonies around the belief in death changed from the ruling Catholic belief in the efficiency of requiem masses, indulgences, purgatory, penance, and personal actions for a successful death and a good afterlife into a piety centred around individual belief only. The book consists of several articles in which the authors regard the Reformation as a cultural process. The experts represent church history, art history, and cultural history, particularly folkloristics. The investigations are based on contemporary theological literature, administrative regulations, legal records, funeral sermons, images, sepulchral tablets, and grave texts. The eleven chapters concern Norwegian material but also touch on Danish sources, for until 1814 the two countries were a united monarchy.

It turns out that dying is not easy. There were particular conditions for both the dying persons and the people around them to fulfil. The *ars moriendi* (art of dying) was something everybody always had to bear in mind and constantly repeat in order to live in the right way and then die properly. Handbooks in how to die correctly helped humans to see that everybody had to take the step from life into death and that they should adjust to their individual future. The dance of death painted on church walls, also in the Nordic countries, illustrate how death reaches all social groups. However, Lutherans and Catholics, and of course other people, cannot lead their lives uninfluenced by sin, as the articles very clearly demonstrate. The only way to a peaceful afterlife, according to Lutheranism, is a firm belief in God. No actions whatsoever are efficient. This was made clear by the Reformation. Here I miss some short paragraphs from folklore about the destiny of the deceased without

peace, to demonstrate what happened to those who did not fulfil the demands.

The content of the book is arranged according to the social classes in Norwegian society. The higher the rank of people in society when they passed away, the more detailed were the prescriptions and regulations for what was accepted, rejected or even demanded at their funeral. The structure of these chapters is very clear, which makes it easy to see the difference between the time before and after the Reformation. The correct way to remember the king starts the series. The king was regarded as representing both mundane and celestial power. After the royal people come the noble men and women, who are said to take the place of the Catholic saints. In every respect they were supposed to live as models for the people. Even more closely observed was the priest, for he had, so to speak, one foot in the world and the other one in the sacred regions. In Lutheran effigies the priest carried a book, a link to one of Martin Luther’s main thoughts, i.e., that the word and the belief in this word should be crucial in Christianity. In the images the priest is often surrounded by his wife and children, both alive and dead members. This demonstrates what an important role the family played in Luther’s theology.

It is clear that the predominant difference between men and women is that the men are said to having *brought about* something, whereas the women *were* “this and that”, i.e., the texts describe the women’s characters whereas they tell about the men’s actions. It would probably be fruitful to analyse the concept of fidelity, which is central in Lutheranism, in the contexts of gender. Perhaps the concept does not mean the same thing for men and women. To the women faithfulness was, without doubt, directed to her family.

There is comparatively little evidence left concerning the lower classes of society, such as farmers and poor people. However, the authors of these articles are extremely skilful in finding details that make the reading of these chapters very fascinating. A separate chapter is devoted to women – how they grieved and how others mourned for dead women – and it is obvious that the particularly feminine death in childbirth was regarded as a virtue. Probably this interpretation was created to console her husband. Fortunately, this way of thinking was erased in modern times. Also, children and people without reputation are the subject of entire and detailed por-

tions in this book. It is clear that, until the end of the eighteenth century, Lutheran belief from the time of the Reformation in Denmark–Norway was strict, austere, and abstract in comparison to Catholicism.

Today, when the assortment of belief is huge, even fewer people stick to Lutheranism. Consequently, I recommend this book as an important introduction to Lutheran belief, particularly the belief in death. I do so not only because it gives a good overview of the issue, but also because it is a functional model for how to compare systems of belief. Moreover, Lutheran believers would also do well to read it in order to refresh forgotten knowledge, but also as a repetition of how to deal with an issue that affects all of us. Norwegians in former times knew how to show their tribulations, virtues, and hope for life after death in various ways. Corresponding vital conditions also touch modern humans.

The contributors to this book are Arne Bugge Amundsen, Eivor Andersen Oftestad, Tarald Rasmussen and Kristin Bliksrud Aavitsland.

Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Åbo (Turku)

Garden Cities in Denmark

Helle Ravn & Peter Dragsbo, Havebyen. Havebyer i Danmark, England og Tyskland før, nu – og i fremtiden? Historika, Copenhagen 2017. 304 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-93229-69-3.

■ Helle Ravn has served as curator at Langeland Museum and has done considerable research on the cultural history of gardens. Her findings have served as a basis for museum exhibitions, but she has also written articles and books on the history of residential gardens, for example, *Havetid: den almindelige danske have – kulturhistorisk set* (2000), *Gulerødder, græs eller granit: danske parcelhushaver 1950–2008* (2011). Together with Peter Dragsbo, also an ethnologist and previously working at Museum Sønderjylland, Ravn tackled the task of filling a gap in research on the history of Danish gardens. They believe they have now accomplished this with the publication in 2017 of this book, the title of which means “The garden city: Garden cities in Denmark, England, and Germany past, present – and in the future?” Here they have complemented each other by combining Ravn’s expertise in garden history with Dragsbo’s knowledge of urban and architectural matters.

Havebyn, or The Garden City, can be said to be an effect of the Arts and Crafts movement in England, which spread quickly to the rest of Europe and came to Denmark in the early twentieth century. This movement, or these currents, came as a reaction to the overcrowded, filthy, and unhealthy cities of England, which had grown as a result of the industrial revolution. In Sweden the term we use is *trädgårdsstaden*.

Ravn and Dragsbo’s book begins with a presentation of the English social debater Ebenezer Howard, who outlined his ideas about the garden city in *To-morrow, A Peaceful Path To Real Reform* (1898), best known under its later title, *Garden Cities of To-morrow*. He wanted to create an independent and self-sufficient city outside the city. It would be cheap to live there, there would be jobs, cultural attractions, and good access to both nature and culture. In this way, the best of the city and the countryside could be combined, and common ownership would do away with land speculation.

Ravn and Dragsbo describe the history of garden cities in Denmark through 25 Danish examples. They do so by first describing how Howard’s idea of the garden city was expressed in Denmark and then very briefly describe how the same thing happened in the other Nordic countries. Much of the book is devoted to the history of the 25 Danish garden cities, beginning in 1911 with Grøndalsvænge in Copenhagen. Then almost as many pages are devoted to garden cities in England and Germany, before the final discussion of similarities and differences and reflections on what we can learn from these narratives.

It is a large, heavy book, richly illustrated with recent photographs and historical images, along with original drawings and some maps. It is a popular survey that can be read by anyone who is not yet familiar with *havebyer*, garden cities, *Gartenstädte*, or *trädgårdsstäder*. The authors believe that relatively few Danes know about this, in contrast to people in England, Germany, and Sweden, and they show in the text how these political and social reforms and currents took shape in the Danish garden cities.

The book is described as a debating piece in that it makes comparisons between past and present, and through this the authors want to make people think about what we can learn from the ambitions that existed in the past so that we can create future cities

where green is acknowledged as important. What can we learn from past ideas? Can they be used as models for green urban construction? There is a newfound interest in the traditional neighbourhood structure, as the ideas about the garden city were formulated, but also because in recent boom years we have been faced with the development of large and completely new areas on the outskirts of cities.

According to the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, most of Sweden's population in 2050 will live in the four metropolitan regions, especially in the Öresund region (Boverket 2012). Segregation is a serious risk. How can we work to end that today? Ravn and Dragsbo note, for example, that the people living in the houses of garden cities belong to a different category from the group they were built for.

According to Statistics Sweden (scb.se), the green spaces in Swedish cities have not become more numerous or larger even though the number of buildings and people has grown. Nowadays there is a great deal of talk about the importance of green: green creates structure, different kinds of values, identity, it embodies cultural heritage, it compensates for climate change, it is a land resource, it stands for biodiversity in some cases, and it provides a space for people to live and meet. If these discussions are linked to those about the densification of cities and experiences of urban space, then it is yet another important reason for discussing thoughts about our living environments and the way they are used. But this should not be done uncritically. The cities' green spaces are often portrayed as harmonious and uncontroversial meeting places. This is an image that is too seldom problematized, although it is difficult to argue against it. In official documents, but also in research about the importance of green spaces, there is an agenda highlighting the function of green spaces for health and recreation, making it appear almost morally irreproachable. Who has access to the city's green spaces? There are often more or less explicit rules for who can or may use them, but also how they are used.

As a debating piece, the book *Havebyen* is even more interesting. There are, quite simply, many arguments in the original ideas of the garden city that may be important to relate to today: we need to densify, and over a hundred years ago density was an argument for sustainable construction, as was small-scale building, mixing different functions,

emphasizing the value of green spaces and generally trying to create more long-term living environments where the crucial adjectives were social, green, and sustainable. It is certainly no coincidence that Ravn and Dragsbo felt the need to fill what they saw as a knowledge gap in Denmark, and in Sweden too we can now see a renewed interest in bygone ideas about urban development, such as those expounded by Jane Jacobs in the now classic *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* from 1961 (published in Swedish in 2005 as *Den amerikanska storstadens liv och förfall*).

Carina Sjöholm, Lund

The Magic Mirror

Leif Runefelt, *Den magiska spegeln: Kvinnan och varan i pressens annonser 1870–1914*. Nordic Academic Press, Lund 2019. 352 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-88661-89-0.

■ Anyone who has ever looked at women's magazines from the turn of the 20th century has without doubt noticed the black and white advertisements representing women and the various consumer goods considered of interest to them (sewing machines, soap, shoe polish, toothpaste, underwear, gloves, hats, etc.). These magazines were filled with such advertisements, crammed into pages already packed with text in very tiny print; one may well wonder how men and women were able to read and absorb the content of these pages at all without a magnifying glass. However, it is the deeper meaning of these images and their commercial aims that Leif Runefelt has chosen to explore in *The Magic Mirror*. His work has resulted in a fascinating book that examines this segment of the visual culture of commodity goods through the lens of a historian of ideas. The book offers an insightful analysis challenging the general perception of capitalist ideology, the ideology of domesticity, and the role of women in the period in question.

Runefelt has based his extensive analysis on more than 10,000 advertisements in newspapers, weekly journals and women's magazines drawn from Swedish publications such as *Aftonbladet*, *Dagens Nyheter*, *Svenska Dagbladet*, *Stockholms-Tidningen*, *Kalmar*, *Norrköpings Tidning*, *Göteborgs Aftonblad*, *Arbetet*, *Dagny*, *Idun*, *Svensk Damtidning*, *Hvar 8 dag*, *Allers Familj-Journal*, *Svalan*,

Svea, Victoria, Hemmet, and Mitt hem. Two characteristics informed the selection and interpretation of the advertisements under study: they should contain images (drawings or photographs) of women, and they should be read as producers of ideology. In other words, Runefelt is interested neither in the marketing perspective of the advertisements, nor in the economic history of the consumer goods themselves. Rather, the analysis seeks to develop an understanding of the meaning of these advertisements with respect to how those who viewed and read them may have been affected by what they saw.

The book is divided into five chapters, reflecting what Runefelt identifies as the key topics across the vast numbers of advertisements he has studied. A reader looking for a thorough discussion of theories of consumption or consumption critique is likely to be disappointed, however. Runefelt writes frankly that the reader seeking analysis of news media advertisements in the light of consumer critics such as Marx, Simmel, Freud, Benjamin, Adorno, Baudrillard, Bourdieu and Baumann, “has to write their own book” (p. 30). Unfortunately, the motivation behind this rather eyebrow-raising comment is not further explained. Nevertheless, it was refreshing to be able to forgo the consumption critique canon and proceed directly to reading the empirical material and placing it in its context of Swedish commodity and visual culture.

Chapter One articulates the empirical background for reading the advertisements. The reader learns about the history of these mass produced images and how this history is entangled with that of women and modern consumer culture. It is argued that mass production is a consequence of the developments of consumer culture, and not the other way around.

Chapter Two examines how the targets of the advertisements change over time. At first they are aimed at the bourgeois woman building and managing her family home: specifically, a home in which she must manage household servants in a so-called two-class family society (the bourgeois family and their servants) ruled by the ideology of domesticity. Later, they are aimed at a much broader range of bourgeois women and their families, now including those without servants and even those with a paid job outside the home. The point Runefelt makes in this chapter is that around 1900, one can see in the advertisements under study how the ideology of domesticity comes under attack by capitalist ideology,

since the masses hold greater potential for increased sales and profits. By this time, both the bourgeois woman of status as well as those aspiring to join the middle class were recognized as the ideal consumers. By contrast, commodity producers and their marketers realised that the ideology of domesticity was anti-consumerist and not conducive to developing their target audience. The domestic values of thrift, do-it-yourself and moderation that represented a civilized way of living in control stood in opposition to the desire to consume. This confrontation of ideologies is identified in the visual composition of the advertisements, which evolved from representing servants and housewives to depicting (and addressing) the modern woman working outside the home, in order to demonstrate how the consumer market ought to expand.

Chapter Three looks in particular at advertisements for the beauty industry. Here, we see how the chemical industry presents its innovations via visual culture to sell female beauty in service of male enjoyment. The advertisements depict the bourgeois housewife as the ideal, and her beauty as among her best assets on the marriage market.

In Chapters Four and Five, the focus turns to advertisements from the fashion industry. Chapter Four shows how fashion contributes to the representation of the conventional bourgeois woman. Beginning at the turn of the 20th century, however, advertisements seek to democratize this look to include the majority of women, with a view to expanding the markets of the products for sale. Runefelt argues that it is the market – that is, capitalist ideology – that drives the democratization of fashion during this period, and not the dress reformers of the time (e.g. activists in the health and women’s movements), as has been contended in popular discourse.

Chapter Five looks specifically at the corset, telling the story of how an unseen object could be transformed into both a fashion item and a consumer good, visually represented in the public and an indicator of the heterosexual, binary sexism built into capitalist ideology. The corseted woman in advertisements aimed at women is an eroticized woman, presented via the male gaze. The images Runefelt highlights show women made confident through the wearing of modern underwear and the knowledge that they are therefore attractive to and loveable by a man. In other words, these advertisements were in-

tended to be seen by women, but were created as if they were targeting men. The visual culture of modern consumerism is a culture in which the privilege of looking belongs to men.

In reading this book, it becomes clear how advertisements are a medium of capitalism and how capitalist ideology forms the ideal middle-class consumer and consumer culture. The values embedded in capitalist ideology are enacted when consuming and hereby make a confession to consumer culture. What Runefelt makes clear is that the *spending woman* is among the ideals of capitalist ideology, one that originated around the turn of the century and contributed to creating the consumer culture of today. By that time, women were addressed both as consumers and as objects of consumption in the advertisements the book scrutinizes. Runefelt hereby draws attention to the fact that not much has changed with respect to visual culture in advertisements between then and now. Advertisements proclaim the law of the middle class and teach people what the good middle-class life should look like. This makes perfect sense in the historical context of the period, in which a growing number of people were becoming part of and identifying with the so-called middle class. Clearly, the middle class is the most attractive target group if the goal is to expand the market for certain consumer goods, whether household appliances or fashion. Even today, the middle class is still where the money is! And, even today, Runefelt concludes somewhat depressingly, as they live out their roles as female consumers trying to live the good life as defined by capitalist ideology, many women continue to reinforce their subordinate position with respect to men via their consumption and committed aspiration to membership in the middle class.

The 'magic mirror' of the book's title refers to the way advertisements allow the viewer to look at the ideal middle class life produced by capitalist ideology. Runefelt's book is a valuable contribution to the fields of consumption history, fashion history, and even Swedish cultural history due to the specificity of his source material from Swedish newspapers and women's magazines. The book's frank and subjective style is both provocative and refreshing, challenging the genre of the academic book as well as the idea of theoretical transparency. By the first or second chapter, the reader of an academic book typically knows what values and worldviews inform

the scholarly author and his or her analysis. Here things are not that clear, though it seems to me that Runefelt uses an analysis of power to drive his argument, suggesting hereby a belief in a kind of Foucauldian idea about the omnipresent power that structures life, daily activities and practices. That said, the book's frank tone makes it all the more fun to read. Runefelt brings the reader straight to the empirical material in order to embark upon the journey of its analysis. The transparency lies at another level. In the course of the analysis, Runefelt weaves in present-day discourses and shows how his interests and analytical tendencies are informed by the influences and thoughts he confronts at the beginning of the 21st century, as a scholar with an expansive body of work about Swedish elites in the early modern period that enables him to reflect about these advertisements in a broader historical context.

Marie Riegels Melchior, Copenhagen

The Cultural Meaning of Ownership

Mitt och ditt. Etnologiska perspektiv på ägandets kulturella betydelse. Karin Salomonsson (ed.). Lund Studies in Arts and Cultural Sciences 17. Lund University 2019. 236 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-983690-5-2.

■ When I was young, I felt extremely uneasy when my parents told people trespassing on our family farm to respect their private ownership of the land by not crossing fields and forest areas except in the designated areas accessible to the public under Danish law. Seven years ago, I became the owner of that farm, and I find myself acting just like my parents, protecting and caring for the property I own. Now I am the one communicating – whether in person, on signs, on websites, or in the local newspaper – the rules and regulations regarding my property, the land I own! This peculiar psychological and cultural transformation has been given new salience for me by reading Karin Salomonsson's edited book *Mitt och ditt: Etnologiska perspektiv på ägandets kulturella betydelse*. It has been a welcome opportunity to reflect on the topic of ownership, which is so central to Western history and everyday life – as a right, a pleasure and a struggle.

Salomonsson has selected contributions that survey the cultural meaning of ownership, or, as the

title would have it, what is mine and what is yours. This concept can of course be interpreted in various subjective ways and depends on elusive boundaries blurred by emotions and personal ideas.

The book comprises ten contributions from ethnologists from the universities of Lund, Malmö and Gothenburg. The contributions encompass a good selection of areas under this broad theme, but also leave room for further studies for those who might be interested. The essays shed light on ownership in private homes, when eating family meals, donating organs, ownership of bodies, ownership in situations of divorce, and what ownership means in the context of a garden, where plants and seeds disseminate naturally and do not respect the legal boundaries between properties.

The study of ethnology can be said to be the study of both the routines and practices of everyday life and the legal, societal premises for that everyday life. Keeping a balance between those two dimensions – often framed as the actions and the structures – in ethnological studies is not an easy task. In the book's introductory chapter, Karin Salomonsson discusses the premises and context for understanding the cultural meaning of ownership. She points to substantial elements of ownership – owning and wanting to own through small actions (personalizing a bicycle basket and the like). These practices and feelings of ownership are necessary in order to desire to own from a cultural perspective. Salomonsson also introduces the tendency *not* to own, but instead to share, including the phenomenon of the sharing economy, popularized in mainly urban contexts as a way to become involved in changing societal norms and finding collective ways to consume and own. She points to the American scholar Russell Belk's idea that the old saying, "you are what you own" is changing to "you are what you share". According to Belk, we are presently living in a society that is increasingly characterized by *post-ownership*; however, many of the studies in the book would seem to indicate that although lots of us want to share with others, most are not ready to support it entirely, and the cultural importance of ownership persists. This is very interesting to read and makes it clear how essential ownership and private economy are to our current capitalist society, and how changes to societal norms have wider consequences than merely the money involved, since they influence the moral standards of what is mine and

what is yours. Ownership has become part of our DNA, as Salomonsson writes.

Following the introduction, Orvar Löfgren writes in the first chapter about the moral economy of the home, and how we learn as part of a household to manage and negotiate what is mine or yours, and what has become ours, over the course of time. In particular, Löfgren highlights the tension between what is mine and ours, and how difficult this tension can be in light of the way our modern Western society praises the individual. The chapter makes for stimulating reading, pointing to existing Swedish and international literature on the topic, and showcasing how a cultural analysis of the topic could be developed through the observations he has made over a lifetime of research and cultural analysis.

The subsequent chapter by Katarina Saltzman and Carina Sjöholm, about biosocial border negotiations in suburbia, implicitly demonstrates how essential an awareness of one's ownership is. The chapter is about how plants and gardening materialize and challenge ownership and the sense of what is mine or yours. Many lives are lived in people's front and back yards, and much time is spent in the garden with neighbours around, but time is also spent demarcating and negotiating ownership of both the people and the plants domesticating the garden area.

In chapter four, the theme is meals, and how sharing a meal together is a high priority for most people, despite a growing tendency towards both single-person households and an increasing individuality in household activities. According to Håkan Jönsson, sharing meals is still prioritized because it is seen as placing a high cultural value on the communion of family life.

Gabriella Nilsson changes the subject somewhat in her chapter, focusing on the female body and the question of who "owns" it, especially with respect to the illegal use of power in cases of rape.

In chapter six, Kristofer Hansson looks at divorce and the challenges involved as the individual comes to terms with a new extended "we" while negotiating their new distinct identity.

Markus Idvall contributes a chapter on organ donation, looking at how body parts change ownership and are installed in new identities; and, in the case of a live donor, how the former identity of the selfless gift-giver may need to be accommodated as well. New medical solutions are forcing us to confront new situations and feelings about bodies and

ownership. In the same vein is Åsa Alfberg's study, in chapter eight, about elderly people's use of and access to medicine, and how their bodily rights are diminished and changed when they are no longer deemed capable of handling themselves.

As a whole, these chapters all demonstrate how ownership is a transformative process, creating and re-creating meaning and values.

But the nature of sharing and the so-called "sharing economy" is what Karin Salomonsson writes about in her own chapter nine. The idea that you don't need to own in order to share seems to be what will propel the future of the sharing economy, even as it may also have the strongest impact on the positive cultural meaning of ownership.

The final chapter, by Jonas Frykman, reminds us how inheritance often projects the emotions of those involved. He compares the situation of taking over a property in the early 1900s and in the modern social democratic welfare state almost a century later. Here it should be noted that ownership and the feelings

associated with it are not presented in the book as being universal. In point of fact, the book has a very local scope, with ownership situated in explicitly Swedish contexts, which is both a strength and a weakness. The cases described might seem trivial, but the authors' ways of putting their analyses from pen to paper help the reader reflect more deeply about the emotions and cultural norms surrounding ownership.

More insights about the context and legal frameworks for understanding ownership, both historically and in the present, could have informed the case studies better and expanded the cultural analysis in ways that might have stimulated further critical reflection.

Having said this, Salomonsson's edited book is an important ethnological contribution at a time when both the sharing economy and consumer society are expanding rapidly, and we are owning and experiencing the feeling of ownership as never before.

Marie Riegels Melchior, Copenhagen

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Articles should be sent by e-mail. Manuscripts should preferably be in English, although German may be accepted; language will be reviewed and edited by the journal. Articles will undergo peer review. We reserve the right to revise and cut the texts, and to ask authors to make revisions.

Articles should not be longer than about 20 pages of typewritten text with 1.5 line spacing, approx. 50,000 characters. Please aim for clear, concise language, remembering that you are writing for a non-Scandinavian audience. Quotations should not be too numerous nor too long.

Legends should be written on a separate paper and clearly numbered. The illustrations – photographs, drawings, and tables – should be clearly numbered. Credits (archives, photographers, etc.) should be stated at the end of the legend. Figures should be referred to by their number, not “the table below” or “the photograph above”. The placing of the figures in relation to the text should be clearly marked. Figures should be submitted along with the manuscript.

Notes should be avoided as far as possible. References to authors or book titles should be included in parentheses at the relevant point in the text. Notes should only be used for clarification or discussion.

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Balle-Pedersen, Margaretha 1981: The Holy Danes. *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 11.

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Löfgren, Orvar 1992: Landskapet. In *Den nordiske verden I*, ed. Kirsten Hastrup. København: Gyldendal.

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