ARV

Nordic Yearbook of Folklore

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On the Romani Origins of "Captain Elin's Idol"

Egil Asprem & Sebastian Casinge

Abstract
At the centre of this article stands a striking but poorly understood artefact held at the Nordic Museum in Stockholm (NM.0159389): A piece of bovine leg bone carved in the likeness of a human skull. Traditionally described as an "idol", the artefact belongs to a bundle of "witchcraft tools" (trolltyg) that have been attributed to the legendary witch, "captain Elin", loosely built on the historical person Elin Eriksdotter from Mofikerud, who was tried in a late witch trial in Näs, Värmland, in 1720. Scholars have long known that the attribution of the skull figure and most of the other items to Elin is false. In this article, we first describe how the association with "captain Elin" arose, shedding new light on the creation of the legend and its association with the "witchcraft tools". Secondly, we present new archival evidence that suggests an entirely different context for the bone artefact, namely in the encounters between Romani people and the majority population at the end of the Swedish Great Power era. We discuss the significance of this new context for the cultural memory of magic and witchcraft in Sweden, and for our understanding of the Romani minority's place in early-modern society.

Keywords: Captain Elin; witchcraft; Nordic Museum; Romani people; Göta Court of Appeal; Gunnar Olof Hyltén-Cavallius; Anna Maria Adamsdotter

Introduction: Material Memories of Witchcraft in the Nordic Museum

On the third floor of the Nordic Museum in Stockholm sits a display case containing a collection of items meant to illustrate folklore about witchcraft and the Swedish witch trials. The items include a horn supposed to have contained flying ointment and a short oak rod with a piece of skin described as a "milk hare",[1] but the most conspicuous item is an artefact made of bone and resembling a human skull (Figure 1). This small artefact measures 5 cm in length and 3.5 cm across; an osteological analysis has shown that it was carved from the joint or articular capsule of a bovine leg bone (Höök 2015).

The milk hare, ointment horn, and skull figure are part of a collection of six objects that have formed an important part of the material memory of witchcraft in Sweden. They are collectively known as "captain Elin's

Item 0159389 in the Nordic museum catalogue. Photo: Ulf Berger.

witchcraft tools", associated with a legendary figure loosely based on Elin in Mofikerud, who was tried in one of Sweden's last witch trials, in Värmland in 1720 (Höök 2014; cf. Schön 1998; Skott 1999).[2] Captain Elin was a recurring character in nineteenth-century folklore about witches (Schön 1998:78–79); together with written accounts and oral traditions, these objects have been instrumental in shaping the legend and keeping it alive. But the objects are also used to construct memories of witchcraft in the present. Their place in the Nordic Museum's permanent exhibition on "Traditions", where they have been displayed since 1995, connect them in an associative manner to the witchcraft and witch trials of the olden days. The objects appear in a display case dominated by a life-size tableau portraying the torture of Elin Andersdotter,[3] who together with her husband (absent from the exhibition materials) was executed for witchcraft in 1671 due to Elin's rumoured ability to cure – and therefore also potentially cause – sickness by magical means (Schön 1991:11–20). The objects accompany the tableau without any contextualizing information, inviting visitors to associate them with the torture and execution of Elin Andersdotter who, by association with the objects themselves, is also cast as a practitioner of witchcraft. The display case is meant to provide a background to the modern tradition in which children dress up as "Easter hags" (*påskkärringar*) on Dowry Thursday, creating a sharp contrast between the cruelty and superstition of the past and the harmless fun of the present.[4]

Despite a long-standing fascination on the part of ethnologists, museums, and the wider public, the "witchcraft tools" and the legend of captain Elin itself have received surprisingly little attention in modern scholarship (see Schön 1998; Skott 1999). It is well known that the items once belonged to the archives of the Göta Court of Appeal (Göta hovrätt) in Jönköping, which at least from the mid-eighteenth century held a collection of objects used in

various crimes and that had been sent to the court in appeal processes.[5] In 1864, the state antiquarian B. E. Hildebrand ordered the Göta court to transfer the witchcraft instruments, by then already associated with captain Elin, to the State Historical Museum in Stockholm, where they were to illustrate "mysticism and superstition" in Sweden (see Bringéus 1966:289–290). The Nordic Museum finally acquired the items in 1926. The museum's annual report presented it as the most notable acquisition of the year, securing a "particularly rich" development of the museum's section for folklore and ancient beliefs (*forntro*). To exemplify the exploits the report included a photograph of the skull figure, described as "Captain Elin's so-called idol" (Fataburen 1927:28).

Scholars have known since the late 1990s that only one of the objects in the collection (the horn) matches an item described in the trial against Elin in Mofikerud (see Schön 1998, 90–91; Skott 1999); the others, we can be sure, have nothing to do with her. The circumstances of how the collection came to be associated with captain Elin, and whether a more exact provenance of the other striking objects can be established have not been probed. In the present article we address these issues in three separate movements, seeking to deepen the "social biography" (Gustafsson Reinius 2009) of the so-called witchcraft tools. Loosely inspired by Hayden White's (1974) metahistorical approach, we show how the objects have been inscribed in competing narratives of "witchcraft", "superstition", and "idolatry", and argue that the different plot structures that imbue the objects with meaning must be related to the socio-political positioning of the narrators.

In the first part, we consider both the origins of the captain Elin legend and the formation of "captain Elin's witchcraft tools" as a collection of its own. We argue that the legend and the collection emerged in tandem, in a very specific context: in a socio-politically liberal milieu surrounding the Göta Court of Appeal in Jönköping in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. While the legend would eventually become a stock item of witchcraft folklore across the country, we show that its original impetus was as a triumphalist narrative of liberal progress, from a dark age of superstition to the light of reason and justice. In the second part, we turn to the first interpretations of the "witchcraft tools" on the part of academics, more specifically to the founder of Swedish ethnology Gunnar Olof Hyltén-Cavallius' interpretation of the skull figure, which he saw as an "idol" and a "fetish". Here the object is inscribed in a completely different narrative of witchcraft, replacing the liberal story of progress with a conservative and organicist story that links witchcraft to the idolatry of foreign tribes and the competition between races and cultures.

In the third and final part, we turn to the provenance of the so-called idol. Given that we first encounter the "witchcraft tools" in the Göta Court of Appeal's archive of trial materials, it has been assumed that they derive not

from a single event, but rather from a number of different trials involving "magic" at local courts. Per Sörlin (1993) identified no less than 353 cases involving magic submitted to the Göta Court of Appeal between 1635 and 1754. We provide archival evidence from one of these local trials, which was held at Karlskrona in the winter of 1709 and tried by the Göta appeal court in spring, featuring an artefact made from bone, carved with eyes, teeth, and a nose, and at a size fitting in the palm of a hand.[6] This evidence places the object in a completely new context. Rather than belonging to a rural woman accused of witchcraft by her fellow parishioners, we show that the skull figure was confiscated from a peripatetic Romani woman by the name of Anna Maria Adamsdotter, who by her own account used it to trick the majority settled population into believing that she possessed magical powers – including the ability to break curses and defend against witchcraft. The trial against this woman casts light on the socioeconomic conditions of the early Scandinavian Romani community, its survival strategies, and relationships with the majority population and the law. Moreover, we adduce comparative evidence suggesting that the practices described by Anna Maria, including how the skull figure was used, were part a broader tradition that survived in certain Romani contexts at least into the mid-twentieth century.

This new context makes for a radical departure from previous interpretations of captain Elin's "idol". The collection has historically served to prop up mnemohistorical narratives of witchcraft that were tightly connected with the construction of national identity, whether by contrasting it with the witchcraft of the unenlightened past (the liberal narrative) or the idolatry of foreign tribes (the conservative narrative). The trial of Anna Maria Adamsdotter presents us with a deeper narrative layer provided by a rare subaltern narrator position, which forces us to read the later re-narrations of the skull figure ironically. For its user, the object was in a certain sense related both to ethnic competition and to ridiculing superstitions: the use of the skull figure demonstrated the rational and enlightened nature of the Romani minority, who could skilfully reveal and exploit the "superstitious" witchcraft beliefs of the majority population.

The Magic Chamber: Origins of the Captain Elin Legend in Jönköping

For more than a century, the archive of the Göta Court of Appeal in Jönköping hosted a showroom of objects collected from trial materials sent to the court as part of appeal processes. Murder weapons, tools for illegal coining, and the belongings of infamous criminals were displayed to curious visitors. These trophies of the justice system also included numerous objects related to the practice of witchcraft, divination, and sorcery. Our earliest source for

the court's collection of magical objects is Carl von Linné's (1745) diary of his journey to Öland and Gotland, which took him through Småland and Jönköping in 1741:

> Aug 19 [1741], Smoland. *Jönköpings Stad* …
>
> The Göta Court of Appeal was situated in the middle of the square, in which we witnessed a large collection of witchcraft instruments [*hexerie-instrumenter*], such as black books, which we read and found full of frivolity and vanity, of old and false recipes, of Idolatry, of superstitious prayers and prayers to devils … . Here was also seen other artistic pieces of tied knots of threads, silk, horsehair. We blew on the holy horn, without any devils appearing, and milked the milk staff, without getting milk. Here were seen magical hairballs, made neither by witches (*trollkäringar*) nor devils, but by the third stomach of a ruminant creature (Linné 1745:330–331).

Linné's sarcastic comments are representative of an Enlightenment attitude to magic that does not only display contempt for the follies of superstition, but also an obvious fascination; seeing these "witchcraft instruments" was the only thing he found worth reporting from his stay in Jönköping. It has been suggested that some of the items Linné described, at least the "milk staff", refer to items now in the Nordic Museum (e.g. Gadelius 1913, 286; Bringéus 1966, 289; Schön 1998, 91–92; Skott 1999, 111). The other items specifically mentioned were all common to early modern folk magic, and not necessarily connected with "witchcraft". Black books were well-known elements of Scandinavian (e.g. Wikman ed. 1957; af Klintberg 1965; Grambo 1979; Johannsen 2018) and wider North-European (e.g. Davies 2009) folk magic, and magic knots for healing, love, protection, and divination have been attested world-wide (Day 1967), including among Swedish cunning folk as late as the twentieth century (Hammarstedt 1920:49–51).

Except a short notice in Samuel Rogberg and Eric Ruda's *Historisk Beskrifning om Småland* (1770:514-515), we do not hear about the collection in Jönköping again until the early nineteenth century. By this time, the court's magical objects had apparently been assembled in a special section on the archival floor, which was regularly shown to visitors, apparently with a guide (Scheutz 1841; "Onkel Adam" [Wetterbergh] 1851). Moreover, it had now been explicitly connected with the legend of captain Elin.

In fact, the captain Elin legend seems to have developed in Jönköping in the early 1800s, in close connection with the exhibition of magical items at the Göta Court of Appeal. The background for the legend was a late witchcraft trial involving a number of women and a handful of men in Södra Ny, Värmland, in 1720–1721. One of the women involved in the case, Elin Eriksdotter, of Mofikerud torp, was accused of being the leader of the pack, and was for this called "captain". The trial and its eventual outcomes have been thoroughly covered by Fredrik Skott (1999), and need not concern us in detail here. Two points should nevertheless be mentioned: First, that

contrary to the legend material, none of the accused were sentenced to death. Elin Eriksdotter together with Lisbet Hansdotter were given the harshest sentences, namely a beating followed by church duty and banishment (Skott 1999:132). Second, that the case was effectively prevented from blowing up thanks to the higher instances in the justice system, notably the governor (*landshövding*) Conrad Ribbing and the Göta Court of Appeal, which handled the case with an active scepticism towards accusations of travels to Blåkulla and pacts with the devil.[7]

However, unofficial accounts of the first hearings in the case, before higher instances were involved, appear to have spread to a wider public early on. An account by Johan Råbock (1685–1752; also rendered as Jöns Råbeck), a county clerk who attended the first special court hearing in August 1720, described the events of the trial in his own words, sometimes in greater detail than the official protocol. Central to this early hearing was the witness of a young girl, Britta Persdotter, probably just ten at the time of the trial (see Skott 1999:116), who introduced all of the most fantastical elements of the story, including the nocturnal flight with the devil. Råbock's account of these proceedings seems to have circulated widely in the following years, since several copies of it have survived. One is kept in Värmlands arkiv, another was cited by Bengt Ankarloo (1977), and we have come into possession of a third copy, dated 1733.[8]

Seeing that the Råbock account included the fantastical elements of a nightly journey to Blåkulla, encounters with the devil, and Elin Eriksdotter as the "captain" of the witches, it is possible that oral traditions surrounding "captain Elin" began with its circulation and copying. It is, however, in Jönköping in the early 1800s that we first find evidence of a fully-fledged legend that is distributed more widely, through print media, and oral tradition with reference to material objects.

Previous research identifies a popular chapbook on captain Elin first published 1815 as the main source of the captain Elin legend. However, it appears that this booklet was an expanded and only slightly edited version of an earlier source: an article published on 9 April 1800, on Long Friday, in the short-lived newspaper *Jönköpings Allahanda*. Published weekly between January 1797 and December 1803, *Jönköpings Allahanda* was the nave in Jönköping's liberal public sphere until it was shut down by the state in 1803 due to an article that offended Gustav IV's censorious regime (cf. Lundstedt 1969 [1903]). The paper had close ties to the Göta court: its editor was the publicist, author, and painter Anders Johan Wetterbergh (1769–1840), who would later become a senior judge at the court. The article that concerns us here, published in the opening editorial column and probably penned by Wetterbergh himself, was intended to "amuse a large part of the public" (*roga en stor del af Allmänheten*) by letting them "read during Easter weekend a faithful account of the famous witch Captain Elin's supposed

№ 29.

Jönköpings Allahanda.

Onsdagen, den 9 April 1800.

The first page of *Jönköpings Allahanda*, April 9, 1800.

journeys to Blåkulla" (*den ryktbara Trollbackans Capten Elins förmenta resor til Blåkulla*). The text of the newspaper article contained an excerpt of trial records kept at the Göta Court of Appeal's archives, published, as the editor stated, "under the assumption that each and every one clearly sees that this whole strange event did not happen for any other reason than the past's ignorance and superstition".[9] The entire case was, the author reminds us, based on the sole witness of the child Britta Persdotter. Britta's account from the special court hearing in August 1720, before the higher instances got involved in the case, was then cited in full.

That the newspaper refers to captain Elin as "famous" (*ryktbar*) may indicate that oral traditions were already well established in Jönköping in 1800. The assumption that debunking its superstitious foundations will amuse the public, along with the direct and self-explanatory reference to the archives of the city's court, further testifies to a widely shared oral memory. That the story was told in the service of a liberal, enlightened narrative, ironizing over the ignorance of the past, is particularly noteworthy, not least because this previously unnoticed newspaper publication appears to be the opening salvo in the developing captain Elin legend.

Fifteen years later, the very same account would surface again in the chapbook entitled *Tillförlitlig Berättelse, om Den Ryktbara Trollpackan Kapten Elins förmenta Resa till Blåkulla, och Bekantskap med Djefwulen* (1815), this time reaching a much larger audience. Bror Gadelius (1913:278) observed that twelve editions of the chapbook had been published around the country by 1858; it was thus instrumental in spreading the legend of captain Elin on a national level. Later authors have repeated Gadelius' assessment

(e.g. Skott 1999). The book had become significant enough that it was listed in Per Bäckström's *Svenska folkböcker* under the category "stories about magic" (*trolldomshistorier*) in 1848 (Bäckström 1848:116). While we still do not know who compiled it, nobody seems to have noticed the importance of the fact that the chapbook, too, was first printed in Jönköping, and seems to have emerged from popular lore about captain Elin taking root in that town.

The long title of the 1815 chapbook already demonstrates that the text relied on the publication in *Jönköpings Allahanda* fifteen years earlier, as it reproduces almost verbatim a sentence from the newspaper's introduction. The chapbook also reproduces the same court materials, though in a more complete version, with a slightly revamped opening and a new closing statement. The opening materials are again based on the article of Easter 1800, beginning with the same declaration that the story is published on the assumption that readers will find the explanation for the events in the superstitions and ignorance of the past.

The most notable addition is that the chapbook contained the court's final statement, disappointing though it was from a dramatic point of view: no sentences were passed, the court instead promising that further investigations were to take place. This anti-climax did not stop the compiler of the chapbook from inventing a dramatic ending of their own:

> a special commission was thereafter appointed to, after further investigations, try this case, and following the sentence in accordance with the law, captain Elin and some of her other accomplices were executed and burned on the pyre (anon. 1815, 41).[10]

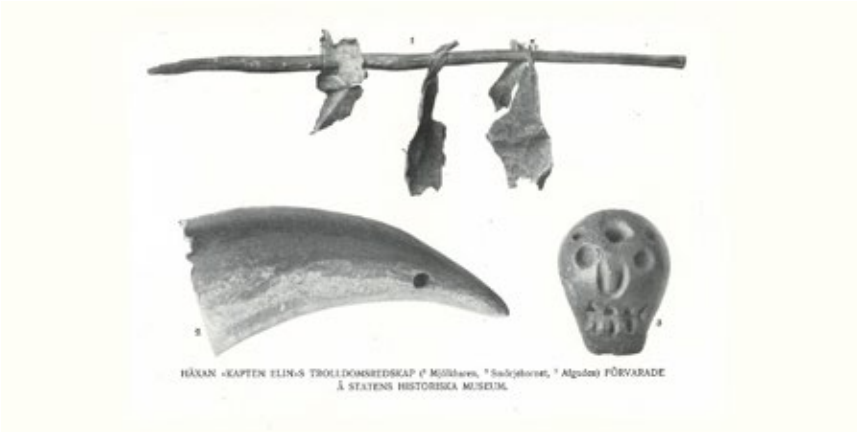
With the chapbook, a legend expressing the liberal cultural memory of witchcraft and witch-hunts had reached completion, with invented death sentences at the stake as the logical conclusion of the past's superstitions.

By describing the narrative as "liberal", we are not just highlighting its progressive assumptions, satirical emplotment and negational mode of framing the described events (cf. White 1974); we also point to the socioeconomic and political milieu in which it was narrated. The captain Elin legend was formed in a milieu of liberal, Enlightenment publicists in Jönköping with tight connections to emerging industry and the courthouse, with the intention of showcasing how far society had come on the path from the darkness of superstition to the light of reason. The chapbook did not only plagiarize the earlier account by the liberal publicist Wetterbergh, it was also printed by Johan Peter/Pehr Lundström (1783–1868), who in 1806 had bought the town's printing press, Marquardska tryckeriet, which had been shut down by the government in the censorship crackdown on *Jönköpings Allahanda* three years earlier (Klemming & Nordin 1883:490–491; Täckmark 1982–1984). Lundström, who was the father of Johan Edvard Lundström who

invented the mass-production of safety matches that became Jönköping's industrial backbone in the second half of the century, came to dominate the printing business in the region. His production sought to educate and enlighten the broader public, for example by printing cheap dime publications (*skillingtryck*) as well as a massive production of so-called *kistebrev*, cards with colourful images and an explanatory text, often with religious, historical, or humorous themes (Täckmark 1982–1984; Bringéus 1999:15–21).[11] As Hanna Enefalk (2013) has shown, these kinds of printed materials emerged together with the establishment of liberal newspapers across Sweden in the nineteenth century, often reproducing already existing materials (Enefalk 2013:75–80). Lundström's chapbook on captain Elin fits these patterns well; it continued the purpose of the *Jönköpings Allahanda*'s editorial of amusing its reader while enlightening them.

We will now argue that another important component – and the reason why all of this happened in Jönköping – was that the legend had already been connected with the material objects displayed at the courthouse. Two sources point us in this direction. The first is a work of historical fiction – a serialized novel published in the newspaper *Aftonbladet* in 1841 – and centred on a location described as the "Magic Chamber" (*trollkammaren*) in the archives of the Göta courthouse. The second is a memoir published 1851 in *Dalslands nya tidning*. While the genres and time of publication indicate that the facticity of these sources can be questioned, they were both penned by people who had grown up in and around the same liberal publicist milieu in Jönköping that produced the chapbook. They thus provide hints of how the magic items were perceived, certainly at the time the accounts were penned, but likely much earlier than that.

The first evidence is a serialized novella published in *Aftonbladet* in five parts in 1841. Set in the first decade of Gustav III's government, the late 1770s, it is a mix of gothic romance, courtroom drama, and political satire. We follow the young notary Fabian Alfors who spends late nights by candlelight in the archives of the Göta Court of Appeal, crouching over old witchcraft protocols, while dreaming up cheap poetry to the girl he has dear. In an early scene, Fabian hears a noise from the big archive room, and rushes out to find a mysterious, barefooted girl by the "magic chamber", where captain Elin's witchcraft tools are displayed. She takes the milk hare and cuts off some of its woollen threads with a scissor, puts them in a pocket, and, following a kerfuffle with Fabian as he tries to stop her, manages to escape. It later emerges that the girl is Fabian's secret love interest, the upper-class miss von Halders, and that she has followed instructions from a cunning woman to take the belongings of a witch – at night on the new moon, barefooted and without saying a word – so that its magic powers could be used to revive her sister who had fallen into a mysterious mesmeric sleep.



The "milk hare," "ointment horn," and "idol" while still in the State Historical Museum. Photograph published in Gadelius 1913: 288-289.

The memory of captain Elin plays an important role in the story, and is first evoked when the room with magical instruments is described:

> The room was at that time generally known in the town under the name of the magic chamber, and comprised the inner and most holy of the court's archival rooms, which covered that whole floor. It had gained its name because several witchcraft tools were stored there, among them a veritable ointment horn, a magical whistle pipe produced from an eagle's claw, and a so called milk hare, which far from looking like a hare or other creature, was simply made from the warp beam of a loom with some dark red wool threads, but was said to have the beneficial property for its owner that she only needed to hang it over her milk staff in order to lure from its threads the milk of any cow in the whole world. These mysterious items belonged to an estate that the court had inherited from the, during Carl XI's time,[12] famous "captain Elin", the officer of her time's travels to Blåkulla. When some stranger would explore the town's notable sites and visit the courthouse, there was always a caretaker present to show him the magic chamber's treasures … (Scheutz 1841:1).[13]

As the story progresses, we learn that Fabian Alfors' mission in the archive is to provide evidence of the cruelty and injustice caused by the irrational witchcraft trials of the past, in order to convince king and parliament to repeal the witchcraft legislation. This, of course, happened in 1779; in the story, Fabian is rewarded with a promotion at the court, and also wins his true love's hand in marriage. In the final scene, the story turns into courtroom drama (or farce), when a zealot of a prosecutor who has not accepted the new legislation wants the cunning woman whom we met earlier executed for witchcraft. The prosecutor's evidence features a pair of scissors found on the cunning woman, which the prosecutor claims had belonged to captain Elin who was executed "four hundred years ago". The young

attorney Alfors turns the case by dismantling the captain Elin story, showing that the scissors were modern, and in fact engraved with the date 1777 and the initials of miss von Halders, Alfors' now wife, who had simply "misplaced" them *(Aftonbladet* no. 200, Aug. 21, 1841, p. 3).

While hardly a literary masterpiece, this short story is significant as our earliest known evidence of the captain Elin legend being connected directly to the collection in the Göta Court of Appeal. Like the earlier chapbook and newspaper article, the legend is used primarily as a way to ironize over the ignorance of those who believe in witchcraft. The courtroom scene makes this plainly evident; the prosecutor makes a fool of himself not only by associating just about anything with captain Elin, but also by hyperbolically and erroneously placing Elin four hundred years in the past. It should be noted that the frame story, too, had Elin misplaced, locating her in the reign of Carl XI in the 1660s-1690s, at the peak of the Swedish witch hunts (see e.g. Ankarloo 2010).

The story of Fabian Alfors and the magic chamber would have been of little historical relevance were it not for its author. It was written by Per Georg Scheutz (1785–1873), yet another liberal author with a strong connection to the Jönköping courthouse, working as a notary and inventor (Burius 2000–2002:533). Best known for having invented an early calculator, Scheutz had worked at the Göta Court of Appeal for five years between 1805 and 1809 – that is to say in the period between the first publication of record transcripts in *Jönköpings Allahanda* and the 1815 chapbook. His experiences at the court makes it tempting to read his descriptions of the magic chamber as carrying some factual force. It adds credence to the idea that the witchcraft items were proudly displayed to visitors from out of town, that a caretaker employed by the court would act as guide, and that the items were orally connected to captain Elin. If this was indeed the case before 1809, when Scheutz worked at the courthouse, a thicker picture of the chapbook starts to emerge. A local oral tradition is kept alive in the court building at the town's central square, used to amaze visitors but which townspeople knew not to take too seriously.

This picture is corroborated in a memoir by the author, physician, and graphic artist Carl Anton Wetterbergh, published under the signature "Onkel Adam" in *Dalslands nya tidning* in 1851 (see *Nordisk familjebok* [1921], vol. 32, 138–139; Lundberg 1943). Wetterbergh was the son of the previously mentioned Anders Johan Wetterbergh, the editor of *Jönköpings Allahanda* and later judge who is our most likely suspect for penning the article that was later expanded into the chapbook. Carl Anton thus grew up in the same progressive milieu around the Göta court that gave us the captain Elin story. Politically, too, the younger Wetterbergh was involved in liberal causes, including the failed 1848 uprising for democratic reform and abolition of the Riksdag of the Estates (Lundberg 1943:36–39).

Speaking of the Jönköping courthouse, and echoing both Linné and Scheutz, but in his own words and with further details added, Wetterbergh recalls that:

> In a corner of these catacombs of justice there was a table which contained its very own collection. It was comprised of several artistic and natural items that had been used in the commitment of crimes. Big sticks with brass coating, picks, knives, scythes, vials with poison, rocks, false coin stamps, false keys, magic horns, ointment jars … but the most curious was captain Elin's milk hare, a contraption put together by the warp beam of a loom (*wäfspån*) and some rags, and about which old caretaker Bogren told, how historically accurate I do not know, that it had been used by captain Elin, the well-known witch (*trollqwinnan*), to milk the cows of others[14] (Onkel Adam 1851:1).

According to Wetterbergh, the rumour that the court's magical tools had belonged to captain Elin were regularly told by a named individual, caretaker Bogren. A search of the church books of Jönköping Kristina parish reveals that this individual was likely Peter Bogren (1762–1834), who appears there as "Hofrätts Vaktmästare" (caretaker of the appeal court).[15] A "hofrättswachtmästare Bogren" is also frequently mentioned in local newspaper notices in Jönköping from 1812 to the 1830s, painting the picture of a central and well-known individual in Jönköping's everyday cultural and economic life – even though locals took his stories of captain Elin's witchcraft tools with a pinch of salt.

The argument so far can be summarized in the following three points. First, that the archival rooms of the Göta Court of Appeal functioned as a kind of legal history museum, perhaps as early as 1741 when Linné visited Jönköping, but certainly by the early nineteenth century. A collection of supposed witchcraft instruments was part of this exhibition; at least by the early nineteenth century, caretakers of the court, like Peter Bogren, would communicate a connection between these items and the captain Elin legend to visitors. Second, the legend of captain Elin was enshrined in written memory when a group of liberal publicists, jurists and industrialists with a connection to the court found parts of the original protocol at the Göta court and published it in 1800, later expanded in the 1815 chapbook. The purpose of these publications was to ridicule the belief in witchcraft and celebrate the advances of a rational and modern justice system. We do not know for sure whether the oral memory connecting Elin to the items kept at the courthouse predated the publication of the trial records, or the other way around. Written testimony from the trial of Elin in Mofikerud had circulated since the 1720s in manuscript form, which could have given rise to oral traditions to which the publications of 1800 and 1815 reacted. But it is equally plausible that the Elin legend became a frame story for the items at the court after the publications. At any rate, and this is our third point, the citizens of Jönköping appear not to have taken the connection between Elin and the items too seriously.

Tales of Trolls and Witches: The Idol in Early Ethnology

The interpretation of the witchcraft instruments at the Göta Court of Appeal was about to undergo a big shift, not just in terms of how they were interpreted, but by whom and in what context. In the middle of the nineteenth century the court's collection started to attract the attention of academics, and by the 1860s, two of the founding fathers of Swedish ethnology had published their own interpretations of some of the items: L. F. Rääf in 1856, and Gunnar Hyltén-Cavallius in 1864. As a result of this new attention, in print and with illustrations of some of the items, the Swedish state antiquary, pursuing a policy of centralization and state ownership of antiquities,[16] would soon demand that the collection was moved from Jönköping to the State Historical Museum in Stockholm (cf. Bringéus 1966:289–290). The correspondence between the state antiquary B. E. Hildebrand and the Göta Court of Appeal in 1864 provides some further clues to how the collection was viewed in Jönköping. Regarding the attribution to captain Elin, the court pointed out that "most of it is only based in tradition and that to verify this tradition would require a much too time-consuming and also likely fruitless search in the Royal Court of Appeal's acts and protocols."[17]

The result of this chain of events – the interest of ethnological experts and relocation to the capital – was a loss of the local oral memories surrounding these items, which had contained a stance of incredulity and scepticism regarding their attribution. The erasure of this local oral tradition created room for new interpretations, which would lead to the items being inscribed in a different narrative tradition with a strong conservative and nationalistic bent.

It was also in this chain of events that attention was for the first time drawn to the skull figure, which has been conspicuously absent from all the sources on the Jönköping collection we have considered so far. The paper trail produced by the relocation of the collection contains a hint to why the skull figure did not appear earlier. According to the Göta court's inventory list, the skull figure had been kept in a tin box together with the bird's claw and cranium piece "since time immemorial" (*från urminnes tider*), and they had no idea whether this box, too, had been ascribed to Elin.[18] In fact, the court archivists did not seem too interested in the skull figure: misidentifying its material, the inventory describes it neutrally as "a piece of wood with carvings, picturing a face". A later hand, probably by antiquarians in Stockholm, corrected the misidentification of the material by adding "of bone" in parenthesis. The Stockholm antiquarians were notably more excited about the item, describing it as "a bone *barbarically* carved as a human face".[19]

The academic interest in the collection that eventually led to its relocation seems to have begun with Gunnar Olof Hyltén-Cavallius (1818–1889),

who first saw the items in 1834, while sheltering from a cholera epidemic at the home of the Göta court judge C. A. Björkman's home (see Bringéus 1966:289). He was apparently intrigued by the captain Elin legends he heard there; while travelling through Jönköping five years later, in 1839, he did some research on a "magic book" that was alleged to have been hers, finding that it was not a book of magic at all but rather the accounting books of a fifteenth-century estate (Bringéus 1966:344). Another four years later, in 1843, we find Hyltén-Cavallius writing to Leonhard Fredrik Rääf (1786–1872), the conservative nobleman and collector of folklore, tipping him that the Göta Court of Appeal holds captain Elin's milk hare in its collection.

Rääf was apparently researching the subject of "milk hares" for what would become the first volume of his *Samlingar och anteckningar till en beskrifning öfver Ydre härad i Östergöthland*, published 1856. Contrary to tradition, however, Rääf described milk hares as a sort of magical creatures – an actual hare that the witch would summon to steal a cow's milk. Consequently, Rääf got the local traditions confused when he described captain Elin's milk hare: "The famous witch [*den ryktbara trollpackan*] from Wermland, Captain Elin's, milk hare," Rääf tells us, is "made of a bone joint, carved into the likeness of a hare's head," and "is kept at Göta Court of Appeal together with several of her tools" (Rääf 1856:83). What Rääf describes is of course not the milk hare, which everyone in Jönköping knew was a piece of wood with woollen threads; instead it is the first description of the skull figure in the folkloristic literature.[20]

It would not be the last. Eight years later, Hyltén-Cavallius published a drawing of the object together with his own interpretation in the first volume of his *Wärend och Wirdarne* (1863). Often seen as the foundational work of Swedish ethnology, it is a fantastical reconstruction of an imagined Swedish prehistory through the local folklore of Värend in Småland, in two thick volumes.[21] As Bringéus (1966:152) aptly puts it, the work is premised on interpreting folk tales ethnologically rather than mythologically – in euhemeristic fashion, creatures such as "trolls" and "giants" appearing in folk tales are interpreted as referring to different "races" or "tribes" that had migrated to these lands at different times and largely supplanted each other. Obscure artefacts, structures, and folk traditions were interpreted in light of this grand narrative of the racial elements making up the Swedish "folk".

The euhemeristic use of trolls and giants as signifying different groups of peoples was far from original to Hyltén-Cavallius,[22] but he was the first to turn this interpretive lens to the materials from the Göta Court of Appeal. While Hyltén-Cavallius retained the "traditional" attribution of the objects to the "witch" (*trollpackan*) captain Elin, he added a narrative layer borrowed wholesale from then popular Gothicist theories of how Sweden had been populated through consecutive waves of migrations of different

peoples. Magic, in the sense of *trolldom*, had a special place in this story. According to Hyltén-Cavallius,

> the indigenous people of Wärend, and of the larger part of Göta kingdom, consisted of Trolls, which already from the earliest prehistory followed a wild nature life as hunters and fishermen in the land's ancient forests and waterways. On the intrusion of younger farming tribes this indigenous people was partially enslaved, partially also displaced (Hyltén-Cavallius 1863:82).

From contemporary folktales about trolls he concluded that this ancient people "had been viewed as a foreign tribe, which was not counted as 'people', 'Christian people', and which ethnic name, Troll, did not even have a grammatical gender. We must from this reach the conclusion that the trolls were of a different nationality than our ancestors, with foreign appearances, language, ways of life and customs" (Hyltén-Cavallius 1863:84). To this story of racial domination, segregation, and eventual displacement of the trolls is added a racialized explanation of magic and sorcery. The Swedish word "trolldom" (sorcery, witchcraft, magic) was, according to Hyltén-Cavallius, originally a word used for the religion of the trolls:

> their religious practice and ideas … were seen by the new tribes with the utmost disgust and in language summarized under the name *Trolldom* – a word which have been coined from the ethnonym Troll, and in accordance with its origins denotes this people's customs, practices and being in general. … Sorcery [*Trolldomen*], such as it is encountered in witch trials [*trollransakningar*] and in the older and younger folklore, is therefore to our mind a continuous tradition from the ancient people, the trolls (Hyltén-Cavallius 1863:84–85).

Sorcery is a survival of the religious practices of a foreign race, now mostly but not entirely supplanted. Some trolls have survived in remote areas, and it is clear that Hyltén-Cavallius thinks of the Sami and the Forest-Finns, whose relation to the ancient tribe of trolls, as he would have it, explains their associations with magic.[23] By contrast, sorcery is alien to the majority population of Hyltén-Cavallius' Sweden. Ordinary Swedes, he insisted, are descended not from trolls but from the interbreeding of giants with later gothic tribes.

This racially disenchanted fairytale determines Hyltén-Cavallius' interpretation of the skull figure, which to him was a material witness of the ancient "fetishism" of the trolls:

> There are even traces of the fetish worship of the Trolls. Among magical tools from the witch trials, a fetish is still preserved at Göta hofrätt, made from the leg bone joint of some larger animal, and formed in the likeness of a grotesque head in accordance with the adjoining drawing. This gross fetish shall, according to legends, have been worshipped by one among the younger witches as an idol, and it is likely that she, in this as in other superstition, simply followed those practices which once were common among her ancestors, of the old south-Swedish troll people (Hyltén-Cavallius 1863:93).

Drawing of the "idol" published by Gunnar Olof Hyltén-Cavallius.

Hyltén-Cavallius' work is characteristic for inscribing the memory of magic in the folklore-inspired nationalistic narratives that dominated Swedish ethnology and folklore well into the twentieth century. Similar to the historical imagination of Enlightenment liberals, magic is a negative but fascinating other, which the majority of the population has long since discarded. But there are two main differences, both of which are tied to what early folklorists and ethnologists tried to achieve, not just in Sweden but internationally.

The first is the notion that folk traditions are windows to a people's soul: elements of "magic" attested in modern folklore and various ritualistic customs in the countryside are survivals from the deep past, and hold insights about early society that can be decoded by the ethnologist possessing the right hermeneutic key. The second is that this interpretive key lies in a historiographic mode that narrates history as made by the competition of various races or "tribes" with different essential characteristics in culture as well as biology. Magic, Hyltén-Cavallius insists, is really the degenerated religion of the trolls, a race of primitive hunter-gatherers who were enslaved and displaced by more advanced farming tribes. In line with strong diffusionist notions of language, culture, and people popular at the time, he could not avoid imagining that modern practitioners of witchcraft or sorcery were the biological descendants of trolls. To Hyltén-Cavallius, the witchcraft tools of captain Elin bore witness to the continued presence of alien racial elements in Swedish society. This conclusion, of course, was derived solely from his own narrative ambitions, showing no interest whatsoever in what was known, even in his own time, about the historical Elin of Mofikerud or the witchcraft trials more broadly. He had created an entirely new cultural memory – in writing, and in the service of Sweden's newfound, post-imperial nationalism – supplanting the older oral memories that had emerged in Jönköping.

A New Context: The Entrepreneurial Magic of Early-Modern Roma

Despite his careless mode of interpreting culture, Hyltén-Cavallius was accidentally right about one thing: that the skull figure had belonged to a member of one of Sweden's ethnic minorities. Rather than the Sami or the Finns, however, it appears to have belonged to the Romani woman Anna Maria Adamsdotter, who was part of a network of Roma families that started establishing themselves in Scandinavia around 1700 and whose descendants include the Swedish and Norwegian Travelers, or *resandefolket*, and probably also the related Finnish *kaale* Roma.[24]

We know quite a bit about Anna Maria Adamsdotter, since she appears in a number of trial records all over Sweden and Finland in the period 1702 to 1731.[25] In all trials in which she appears she is described as a "Gypsy" ("*zigenare*", "*tartarska*"), an ascription that she sometimes appears to approve and confirm with pride.[26] She was probably born around 1680 on the Continent, perhaps in Frankfurt am Main,[27] and appears in the sources speaking Swedish,[28] French, German, and "her own language" or "the language of her ancestors", sometimes described as "Gypsy" ("*Tartarsk*"). Five sentences and one free-standing word in this language were transcribed in the same 1709 court records in which the skull figure is described, and have been identified as a dialect of Romani.[29] This is currently the earliest known sample of written Romani in the Nordic countries.[30]

We frequently find Anna Maria Adamsdotter associating with well-known ancestors of contemporary Swedish Travelers (*resande*), demonstrating that she was part of the network of Romani extended families that had ties to the Continent and which established themselves in the Nordic countries during the 1600–1700s (see e.g. Etzler 1944; Minken 2007; now also Lindqvist 2022). From her many trials we learn that she had at least three romantic partners, one born in Germany, one in Denmark, and one in Finland; like most "Gypsy" men in Sweden during this period, they all worked for some time in the military.[31] We also find evidence in this material that the early-modern Roma could trade with the Sami, selling tin and buying handicrafts that could then be sold elsewhere. In one trial, Anna Maria's family got into trouble when travelling with a Sami girl (*lappiga*); Anna Maria's son had apparently warned against bringing the Sami along, because "she is white and we are black".[32]

Anna Maria's run-ins with the law were rewarded with no less than three death sentences: in 1709, 1711, and 1724.[33] As was common in the period, these sentences were all overturned by a higher court. Like many of her associates Anna Maria also experienced being deported from Sweden, first to Norway from where she soon returned, and then to Russia to which she never arrived, settling in Finland with her family before reaching the

border. All these connections, events, and complicated relationships with the majority population and with the state places Anna Maria Adamsdotter at the heart of Swedish Romani culture at the waning of the Great Power era. It is in this context, and particularly in the interactions between Roma and the majority society, that we locate the skull figure.

The new evidence of the skull figure's context contradicts most of the things that have been said about it. It was not an "idol", it was not used for witchcraft, and, crucially, it does not attest to the "superstitions" of a foreign people to be contrasted with the good common sense of the majority Swedish population. The owner's explanations of how the skull figure was used instead point us to the pragmatic and economic dimensions of "folk magic", and the skilful monetization of the majority population's own prejudices and demand for magic.

From Sock Thief to Gypsy Sorceress: The Trial of Anna Maria Adamsdotter

On Christmas Eve 1708, at the onset of an exceptionally cold winter that would later be known as the "Great Frost", the merchant and councilman Christopher Diderik Österman in the southern Swedish town of Karlskrona noticed that seven pairs of socks had gone missing from his stall. He must soon have singled out the "gypsy woman" Anna Maria Adamsdotter, who stayed in the town with her two daughters and her companion, Bartolomeus Ludwig, who served as a military drummer in the local regiment, for on January 11, 1709, the court met to try her for theft. In her initial testimony, Anna Maria confirmed that she had been in possession of the socks, but explained that she had been given them as payment from "a girl in a blue sweater", who had come up to her on Christmas Eve asking to have her fortunes told and get some help with finding a husband. Asked by the court how she could help the girl find a man, Anna Maria answered that she had given her a piece of a root, which should be tied into a cloth. By hitting a man over the back with the cloth he would be so kindled with love for her that he could not get any rest whether day or night. Anna Maria was careful to add that she did not mean to imply any superstition on her own part: it was just a trick that she did to make a living, and she said that she had been doing this and other forms of trickery all over Sweden and Denmark since her teens, as her mother had taught her.

Anna Maria Adamsdotter's explanation did not placate the court, which eventually found her guilty of theft and sentenced her to pay a fine worth three times the value of the seven socks. In addition, the testimony triggered the court to initiate a separate investigation into Anna Maria's "fortune telling, sorcery and fraudulent arts" (*spådom, signeri och bedrägeliga konster*). Eventually, the Karlskrona court would pass a death sentence, finding support for this in the 1662 royal placard that ordered "gypsies" (*tartare och*

zigeuner) to be deported from the country or, if they had committed a crime, executed without trial. This is the first occasion we know of in which the explicitly anti-Gypsy legislation was used to issue a death sentence. As was customary for capital punishment, however, the sentence was passed on to the Göta Court of Appeal which, on May 15, overturned and replaced it with a milder sentence of corporal punishment and Christian education.

Secrets of the Trade

During the twelve days in court that the two trials took, we learn a considerable bit about what services Anna Maria offered, her intentions in practicing them, how she performed them, for whom, and with what materials. Besides fortune-telling and love magic, she listed six other specific tricks, describing them in some detail and insisting that they were all based on illusions and trickery rather than "the devil's work" (*diewullskonst*). Whether the task was to break curses, find a thief, or drive away rodents (a trick she claimed to use mostly on "rich farmers and priests"), she claimed no wrongdoing: anyone "stands free to let himself be fooled, who believes in it" ("*står den fritt att låta nara sig, som sätter troo dertill*").

A number of material objects were described as Anna Maria sought to convince the court that her tricks were designed to create the illusion of powerful magic and thereby establish credibility with her "simple-minded" (*enfaldiga*) customers. It is clear from the record that some of these items, like the previously mentioned root and a doll she referred to as "Little Satan", were physically present and displayed in the courtroom. The root is described by the court as dried, diced, and stringed on a thread. When pressed to identify it, Anna Maria says that it is called *Candajas* "in the language of her ancestors", which the court identifies as "Gypsy" (*Tartarsk*).[34] As for "Little Satan", the court described it as made from an old dark grey sock, with a piece of darkened wood as head, lead for eyes, bird's claws for horns, and hen's claws for hands. Later in the trial (25 Feb. 1709) she would explain that the doll had nothing to do with her magic; it belonged to her husband, the military drummer Bartolomeus Ludwig, who would use it to perform all sorts of jugglery and comedy puppet plays ("allehanda giörckelwärk och pollicinell spehl") in order to make some money on his travels.[35] Anna Maria showed them many other objects, the court noted, but none of "such cruel and horrible shape" as Little Satan.

It is among these other objects described in the trial records that we find an item matching the skull figure that would later wind up in the Göta Court's collection and eventually the Nordic Museum. When the court had asked what other arts she knew, Anna Maria said that she "takes a bone, which she carves with eyes, teeth and nose, as well as fastens hair onto it with pitch."[36] Unlike "Little Satan", this object was used as a prop in at least three different magic services that Anna Maria went on to describe in some detail: one for

lifting curses, one for divining misfortune, and one for compelling a thief to return with stolen goods. In the first trick, she would go to a stable or a barn when nobody was watching and burry the skull figure by the entrance. Playing on widespread beliefs about witchcraft, she would then approach the farmer to warn that he had been cursed by his neighbours, and that his livestock was in danger. After agreeing a price for lifting the witch's curse, she would take the farmer in broad daylight to the place where the skull figure had been buried. When they had dug it up and seen it for themselves they would, as she put it, be "strengthened in their belief" (*styrckta i sin troo*).

In a second trick, the bone appears as part of a service promising the recovery of lost property. In the opening act, Anna Maria says that she can conjure the shape of the thief from a bedsheet, in which she will have secretly hidden the skull figure beforehand. When the figure falls out during the procedure that follows, and the grim face of the thief is revealed, she offers for considerable payment to use similarly powerful arts to compel the thief to return with the stolen goods.

Finally, the skull figure is used in a ritual to divine whether misfortune is ahead. The procedure, which involved some deft sleight of hand, also gives us an idea of the object's size. Anna Maria would first ask the farmer or his wife to hold an egg in the palm of their hand and tell them that if there is misfortune, there will be "a devil in the egg". She would place the skull figure under her own left thumb, hold her hand over the egg, say a few words "in her language" over it, and then smash the egg, revealing the skull-shaped figure. The revelation of the devil in the egg would create a demand for further occult services.

The devil in the egg trick is of particular significance because of its explicit Romani connections. First there is the "reading". When the court asked Anna Maria what this reading consisted in, she explained that it contained nothing blasphemous, just some "vain and indecent words in her language, which are without meaning" and only used to create a "reputation" or "prestige" (*anseende*) for herself and her arts in the eyes of the "simple-minded".[37] She initially refused to recite and translate the words because it would embarrass the court, but eventually gave in. As a result, five sentences in Romani have been preserved in the record. The notary, however, chose to omit the translation: it had "such an indecent and foul meaning, that for the sake of modesty and decency one will not cite it here."[38] For the time being we will continue to spare readers from the details; it suffices to say that Anna Maria opened with insults of a sexually explicit nature.[39]

Moreover, there is comparative evidence suggesting that the egg trick was part of a wider tradition among early-modern Roma which has in fact survived into modern times. In 1863, Richard Liebich, a judge in Gera, Thuringia, published a collection of "observations" he had made from encounters and conversations with "gypsies" in Germany during his thirty years in the justice system. In one passage about how "gypsies" trick "naïve

farmers" by feigning magic powers, he describes a procedure that is astonishingly similar to Anna Maria's egg trick. The "gypsies" would do all sorts of tricks to demonstrate their capacity for magic, Liebich wrote, "for example, that the gypsy removes an egg from under the wings of a brooding hen, opens it, and with sleight of hand pulls out a skull-shaped [*todtenkopfähnliches*] or other strange figure" (Liebich 1863:67).[40] Another striking account is found as late as the mid-twentieth century in Poland in the ethnographic account by author and poet Jerzy Ficowski.[41] Ficowski explains that the *Polska Roma* that he lived with while hiding from the secret police in the late 1940s and 1950s would produce "small figurines and objects known as 'little devils', 'little corpses', 'cubes' and 'hairy crosses', which are made of wax, or are compositions from bones, hair etc." (Ficowski 1989:97–98). Romani women would use these to make money from "the skilful exploitation of the superstitious beliefs of the non-Gypsy population," Ficowski noted, adding that the "little devils", called *bengoro* in Romani, were "not images of any Gypsy demons," but purely intended for "external consumption" (Ficowski 1989:97–98). Among the uses for these little devils he listed "finding" the objects under the threshold of a house or in bedsheets, but he also described a version of the egg trick:

> if she [the Romani woman] has an impression that something is going wrong at some farm or another (illness, fowl pest, crop failure), she will ask the peasant woman for a hen's egg, and wrap it in her shawl, placing it alongside the "little devil" which had been hidden there while the peasant woman was not looking. She asks her client to break the egg, and then unwinds the shawl and takes out of the shell the malevolent little figure. The Gypsy woman will then explain the seriousness of the danger – there is a devil living in the egg (Ficowski 1989:98).

Reading these nineteenth- and twentieth-century accounts in parallel with Anna Maria Adamsdotter's testimony of 1709 suggests that we are dealing with a specific slight-of-hand trick passed on among some Roma in Northern and Central Europe for centuries. The Polish evidence is particularly striking, as it preserves almost verbatim the same language that Anna Maria used 250 years earlier in Sweden ("little Satan"/*bengoro*,[42] there is a "devil in the egg"), and lists variations (hiding the object under a threshold or in a bedsheet) that fit the practices she described. If the *bengoro* really was part of a resilient tradition, more examples might emerge from European archives, or from previously misinterpreted objects in collections on magic and witchcraft. To our knowledge, the Nordic Museum's skull figure is currently the oldest identifiable *bengoro* to have survived.

How certain can we be that Anna Maria's item is identical with the one now in the Nordic Museum? The description of the skull figure in the trial record focuses on how Anna Maria *produces* the artefact; it is written in the present tense ("she takes a bone and carves it"), indicating that making them

was a recurring practice. The record is not explicit that an example of the skull figure was among the many objects shown to the court, but the fact that the court returned to it several times over, and at separate occasions, may indicate that it was physically present. One detail in the description of Anna Maria's artefact strengthens the identification, namely that she would attach hair on its head with pitch. This might explain the cavities on the top of the artefact in the Nordic Museum, which could have functioned as artificial "hair sacks", making the pitch and hairs stay on top of the head. It also fits the later Polish evidence that a *bengoro* could be composed from bone and hair.

If a specimen was present in the court in 1709, it would have been part of the trial materials passed on to the Göta Court of Appeal when they tried and overruled the local court's death sentence. In other words, we have a clear trajectory of how it would have ended up in the Jönköping collection. Since we have seen that the Göta court archives had "since time immemorial" kept the skull figure in a tin box together with another piece of bone and what they identified as a bird's foot – an item that does explicitly show up in the records in connection with the "little Satan" doll – it is tempting to speculate that the box itself and all its contents derived from the case against Anna Maria. Whatever the case may be, as long as we know of no other descriptions of a similar object Anna Maria Adamsdotter is the most plausible person to have produced, owned, and used the skull figure now preserved in the Nordic Museum. If this interpretation is correct, the skull figure is to our knowledge the earliest known artefact, not just in Sweden but anywhere in the world, that can be connected to a named Romani individual performing and explaining a known cultural practice among North European Roma – that of producing and using *bengoro* to trick "superstitious" peasants. That it appears together with the first known occurrence of recorded Romani in the Nordic countries makes it an object of considerable significance to cultural history.

Conclusion: Anna Maria's Final Trick

What does this new context mean for the artefact's position in narratives about magic in Sweden, and what does it tell us about the position of the Roma? Most strikingly, it represents a radical departure from interpretations casting the artefact as evidence of a practiced witchcraft (the captain Elin legend) or the "idolatrous" ways of a minority population (Hyltén-Cavallius). It is worth mentioning that while the Roma had been associated with "magic" in western Europe since the very first mentions in the early fifteenth century,[43] they were never particularly associated with the category of witchcraft or harmful magic (*maleficium*) and they do not figure among the victims of the European witch trials. Instead, it was with the categories of fortune-telling (*sortilegium*) and divination (*divinatio*), as

well as healing, love magic, improvement of riches, and *protection against* harmful magic, that they were most associated (Asprem 2022; cf. Davies 1999:258–265). Their occult niche overlapped with that of village cunning folk (cf. Davies 2003); however, authorities frequently suspected that these practices were fraudulent rather than diabolical.[44]

The role that the skull figure plays in Anna Maria Adamsdotter's testimony is entirely in line with this broader picture. In all of the "magical" procedures where the skull figure appears, it is used with deception and ingenuity as a credibility-enhancing device. Building on the majority population's widespread fear of witchcraft – and expectations that "gypsies" could foretell the future and ward off evil – the skull figure was deployed in order to strengthen the customer's perception that Anna Maria possessed magical powers that could help them.[45] We have no evidence that the figure had any other internal uses in her community, or that it was connected to an indigenous ritual practice that insiders held to be efficacious. The point was rather to play on the widespread "superstitions" of the majority-population Swedes, whom Anna Maria mockingly described as credulous and "simple-minded". By speaking a verse in Romani during the operations she also exploited stereotypes about "enchanted gypsies;" as Anna Maria herself put it, the "vain" and "indecent" words spoken in Romani were yet another way to play on the locals' expectations on the exotic other.[46]

While one could suspect this framing of being a legal strategy for avoiding a sorcery charge, the lengths to which Anna Maria goes to describe exactly how she creates the illusion of magical power through dexterity, deception, sleight-of-hand, and both cold and hot reading, combined with her gleeful stories of how farmers and priests fall for her tricks, all suggest sincerity. As K. Rob. W. Wikman (1946:31) noted with reference to Johan J. Törner's eighteenth-century collection of "superstitions", the sorts of beliefs, expectations, and practices that were officially derided and even criminalized as being superstitious were rife in eighteenth-century Sweden, and they existed in all layers of society, from the peasantry to the priesthood to the nobility. The skull figure and its associated ritualizations helped Anna Maria monetize on these widespread expectations.

While we have no evidence to suggest that Anna Maria or her community considered the practices efficacious, they were still clearly part of a tradition. As we have noted, the specific art of producing a skull-shaped bone figure or *bengoro* from an egg appears to have been a widespread tradition surviving at least in German and Polish lands as late as the mid-twentieth century. These traditions are also clearly related to women. Anna Maria claimed to have learned all her tricks from her mother, and in the 1709 trial record we see that her oldest daughter, Dorothea, had already learned some of them, notably to "tell fortunes in hands" and to "read planets" – although Dorothea, too, insisted that she only really assessed the person's character

and made vague guesses that were likely to impress the client. In an earlier trial, in Karlshamn in 1702, Anna Maria said that her paternal grandmother had owned a "book wherein was nothing but mutilated bodies, of all figures"; given that this obscure statement is made in the context of magic, it could refer to a book on chiromancy or physiognomy rather than anatomy (on "gypsies" and physiognomy, see especially Porter 2005:120–171).

We are aware of several other eighteenth-century Swedish cases where women with a Romani connection provide similar services and explain them in similar ways. These practices form a tradition that, we suggest, must be interpreted from a wider socioeconomic perspective. To Anna Maria and other Romani women, magical services were one among a number of different ways to survive and make a living in a precarious environment. Helped by the expectations that the majority population had on "gypsies" as carriers of magic powers, offering "magical" services could add to other sources of income, such as from trade in handicrafts and horses, or the men's military salaries. The tradition may also have had a cultural function: not as an "exotic" indigenous form of "efficacious rituals" that could be shared with outsiders, but as small acts of resistance and resilience, demonstrating the ingroup's shrewdness and the outgroup's gullibility. In this way, the early-modern Swedish Roma adopted a similar attitude against "superstitious others" as the learned elite was starting to take in the eighteenth century (cf. Oja 2000:292–295). We get a sense of confidence and pride from Anna Maria's triumphal exposés of her exploits.

The skull figure was designed to evoke an aura of magic in the eyes of the *buro*. In this, Anna Maria Adamsdotter was certainly successful: not only did her clients fall for her tricks, but nineteenth- and twentieth-century folklorists would as well. Just as the skull figure had triggered eighteenth-century farmers' imaginations into believing that they had been bewitched, scholarly prejudices about witchcraft, primitive religion, and fetishism were projected onto the object as soon as it surfaced from the Göta court archives. These imaginings remain in force. Through the skull figure's continued association with witchcraft and the captain Elin legend in the Nordic Museum, Anna Maria's trick still works its magic on Swedish perceptions of a bewitched past.

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[1] Swedish "mjölkhare"; believed to have been used by witches to steal milk from cows at a distance.

[2] For the collective listing of the items in the digital catalogue, see https://digitaltmuseum.se/021016536877/kapten-elins-trolltyg-som-bestar-av-en-mjolkhare-ett-kohorn-en-honklo-en?fbclid=IwAR2gnp3WHpqqsAghNCOnl6ywXUVVWPD_NoXx2JqiUcdtHmTndwEbb-6Cp-ko.

[3] Not to be confused with Elin of Mofikerud, or the legendary captain Elin.

[4] A guidebook to the exhibition written for teachers of Swedish for immigrants reinforces this sharp contrast, with an emphasis on modern, secular identity: "Nobody believes in witches in Sweden today, right?" (Nordiska museet 2006:27).

[5] Until 1820, it was the appeal court of the entire southern and western parts of Sweden.

[6] The identification was first made by Sebastian Casinge. See Casinge 2020a; 2020b: 11–12.

[7] The trial began with rumours that led to formal accusations at a local parish council (*sockenstämma*) on 25 July 1720, which became the grounds for a special court hearing (*extraordinarie ting*) held on 19–23 August. Transcripts from this court hearing, which included the ten-year-old girl Britta Persdotter's lengthy and detailed witness of diabolical communion, formed the basis of later legends (see below). The governor, baron Conrad Ribbing, received the prisoners after the court hearing, was appalled by the process and tried to limit the damage by having the Göta Court of Appeal and the Judiciary inspection (*Justitierevisionen*) compose a special appeal court (Kommissorialrätt) to try the case. As Skott has shown, the proceedings at the different levels of the judiciary show that the courts were still uncertain whether to see fantastical stories of witchcraft as illusions (whether diabolic or natural) or as real events.

[8] Based on Ankarloo's partial reproduction of the manuscript he cited, we can establish intertextual differences that show these are three separate copies, probably relating to a common source which has not been located. The copy in Värmland, which Skott consulted, was also published in *Karlstadtidningen* on May 6, 1903.

[9] "under förmodan, at hwar och en tydeligen inser, at hela denna förunderliga händelse icke ägdt annan grund, än i forntidens okunnighet och widskeppelse." *Jönköpings Allahanda*, 9 April 1800, p. 1.

[10] "En serskild commission blef derefter förordnad att efter närmare undersökning pröfwa detta Mål, och i följe af i Laga ordning fastställd Dom, blefwo kapten Elin samt några af hennes medbrottslige aflifwade och å bål brände."

[11] According to Bringéus (1998:1), no less than one million *kistebrev* were produced in Jönköping between the early 1800s and 1860; they could be found in just about every Swedish home, having a massive impact on popular culture. Based on preserved materials in the Uppsala University Library, historian Hanna Enefalk has estimated that Lundström's in Jönköping was among the top five printers of this kind of material up until 1875 (Enefalk 2013:72–73).

[12] Carl XI was king in the 1660s-1690s, at the height of the witch hunts in Sweden. As we have seen, the historical Elin was tried several decades after the hunts had ceased, in 1720.

[13] "Rummet var nemligen på den tiden allmänt bekant i orten under namn af trollkammarn, och utgjorde den innersta och aldraheligaste af hofrättens arkifsalar, hvilka intogo hela den våningen. Den hade fått sitt namn deraf, att der förvarades åtskilliga hexredskap, bland annat ett veritabelt smörjhorn, en magisk hvisselpipa, förfärdigad af en örnklo, och en så kallad mjölkhare, som långt ifrån att likna en hare eller annan skapad varelse, blott bestod af ett väfsolf med några mörkröda ylletrådar, men påstods hafva haft den förmånliga egenskapen för solfvets egarinna, att hon endast behöfde hänga det öfver sin mjölkstäfva, för att deri ur trådarne locka mjölken från hvilken ko som heldst i hela verlden. Dessa mystiska småsaker tillhörde en qvarlåtenskap, som hofrätten hade fått i arf efter den, på Carl XI:s tid, ryktbara "kapten Elin", anförarinnan för sin tids blåkullafärder. När någon främling tog stadens märkvärdigheter i ögonsigte och tillika besökte hofrättshuset, stod alltid en vaktmästare tillreds att visa honom dessa trollkammarens dyrbarheter … ."

[14] "I en wrå af dessa rättwisans katakomber befann sig ett bord, som innehöll en alldeles egen samling. Den bestod nemligen af åtskilliga konst- och naturföremål, som warit begagnade wid brottsbegående. Stora käppar med messingsbeslag, hackor, knifwar, yror, liar, droppflaskor med gift uti, stenar, falska myntstämplar, falska nycklar, trollhorn, smörjburkar … men det alldra kuriösaste war kapten Elins mjölkhare, en anstalt hopsatt af wässpån och några trasor, och om hwilken gamle waktmästaren Bogren berättade, huru historiskt wist känner jag icke, att den blifwit nyttjad af kapten Elin, den namnkunniga trollqwinnan, för att mjölka andras kor."

[15] Husförhörslängd, Jönköpings Kristina AI:19, p. 289, row 1.

[16] On the attitudes of state antiquaries Bror Emil Hildebrand and Hans Hildebrand (father and son), in office 1837–1879 and 1879–1907 respectively, see Grandien 1987:65–66. As Grandien has shown, the centralization policy was met with resistance from several researchers active in

the districts, including Hyltén-Cavallius.

[17] "…det mesta enda grunda sig på tradition [och] att för denna traditions beriktigande skola erfordras en alltför tidsödande och dessutom antagligen fruktlös efterforskning i Kongl Hofrättens akter och protokollböcker." SHM inv.nr. 3240, del B.

[18] SHM inv.nr. 3240, del B.

[19] SHM inv.nr. 3240, del A. Italics added.

[20] Rääf's misidentification indicates that he probably never visited the collection first hand, but rather relied on descriptions provided him by others.

[21] The second volume was published in 1868.

[22] Euhemerism had been a standard interpretive method since the Middle Ages; Snorri's notion that the Æsir of Old Norse mythology were really an Asian people who had fought in the Trojan war is a classic example (e.g. Baetke 1950). Euhemeristic readings of folklore and mythology as evidencing the migration of different peoples to Sweden was popular in the Gothicist movement of the early nineteenth century, and ethnic readings of "trolls", "dwarves", and "giants" were even taught in textbooks used in the folk schools at the time (see Wickström 2008:294). The specific schema that Hyltén-Cavallius followed was heavily indebted to the archaeologist Sven Nilsson, who had attempted to reconstruct migrations to Scandinavia in part by measuring and comparing the skulls of human remains, and used a schema of dwarfs/trolls, giants, goths, and Æsir to name the main groups and identify their traces in Swedish culture (cf. Grandien 1986:67–70). The resulting ethnological-folkloristic model that we find in Hyltén-Cavallius also has parallels elsewhere, notably in the "fairy euhemerism" of British folklore, exemplified by Scottish scholars John Francis Campbell (1821–1885) and David MacRitchie (1851–1925), who saw notions of fairies as having evolved from memories of the Picts. As historians Henderson and Cowan noted with reference to this interpretive tradition in Britain, "[o]ver-enthusiastic antiquaries were capable of the wildest fantasies beside which the supposed ignorant superstitions of the folk pale into insignificance" (Henderson & Cowan 2001:22).

[23] Precisely the "trolldom" or magic of the "trolls" led Hyltén-Cavallius to suggest that the ancient trolls must have been related to "Chudic tribes" (*tshudiska stammer*), by which he meant something like "Ural-Altaic" and "Finno-Ugric". His reasoning is worth quoting in full: "Om vi nu ingå i en undersökning, Hos hvilken historiskt känd folkstam återfinnas den grundstämning, de karakters-egenskaper och de egendomliga magiska bruk, som vi funnit för det gamla sydsvenska trollfolket utmärkande, så hänvisar oss etnologien på det allra bestämdaste till de i östra och norra Europa af ålder bosatta folken av Tshudisk härkomst. Alla dessa folk karakteriseras nemligen genom ett grundlynne, som träder i skarpaste motsatts till den gotiskskandinaviska stammens, genom sin djupt melankoliska och inåtgående riktning. Hos dessa folk har således handlings-kraften icke varit skattad såsom menniskans högsta, utan den makt som ligger i visdomen, i det högre vetandet, i sången och siareförmågan. … Hos tshudiska stammar, mer än hos andra kända folk, hafva derfäre af ålder uppträdt Schamaner, Tadiber, sångsmeder, visa, siare och spåmän, hvilka genom runor eller sånger, utsagda under en stark sinneshäfning, eller genom en viljekraftens högsta spänning medan kroppen ligger i en slags spontant-magnetisk hvila, och eljest genom iakttagande af vissa hemlighetsfulla bruk, trott sig kunna befalla öfver vindarne, elden, hafvet, leda naturens makter och andar, likasom menniskornas håg och djurens böjelser, låta sin själ färdas till långt aflägsna ställen och se hvad der tilldrager sig, genom en inre klarsyn förutse och förutsäga framtidens hemligheter, och framför allt dräpa eller förgöra sina egna och sitt folks fiender. De tshudiska stammarnes uråldriga magiska bruk, sådana de än i dag förekomma hos Lappar, Finnar och andra nordliga folk, äro således i allo likartade med dem, som under namn af trolldom en gång öfvades af de gamla trollen i Wärend och Göta rike." Hyltén-Cavallius 1863: I, 89–90).

[24] Our use of the terms "Roma" and "*resande*" deserves a brief explanation. Since the late twentieth century, "Roma" denotes (1) a juridical concept used to organize parts of the minority politics of the European Union and its various member states, and (2) an ethnic self-desig-

nation of some but far from all of the groups covered by those policies. The Swedish state currently recognizes the Roma as one of its five national minorities, and includes *resande* and Finnish *kaale* as two of the subgroups of Roma. The rationale for introducing the term Roma was a desire to get rid of derogatory labels in various European languages, such as "gypsy", "Zigeuner", and "tattare", which have historically been used for these different groups that share a common migration to Europe in the late Middle Ages with roots stretching back to India (see Fraser 1992). In Sweden, the terms "zigenare" and "tattare" were used interchangeably to refer to some of the ancestors of *resande*, who were the targets of the country's anti-gypsy legislation. The nomenclature goes back to the first Roma presence recorded in Sweden, in 1512. While it is often assumed that these first arrivals (who had been expelled from Scotland by way of Denmark) are the earliest Roma ancestors of Swedish *resande*, it is also clear that new Romani families kept immigrating from the Continent over the centuries. Genealogical research has so far only been able to trace resande ancestors to the late seventeenth-century "gypsy" families that concern us here. Finally, it is worth noting that the two terms "zigenare" and "tattare" became differentiated in Swedish in the 1870s: the older Romani population of resande were now referred to as "tattare", while the term "zigenare" was reserved for the more exotic-looking Kalderasha group of Roma, which started arriving in Sweden at this time. Through the combined evidence of linguistics, genealogy, history, and more recently DNA studies, we know with a degree of certainty that these *resande* ancestors belonged to the wider Romani speaking minorities of early-modern Europe.

[25] See e.g. Göta hovrätt, advokatfiskalens arkiv, Karlshamns kämnärsrätt (den 20–21 juni) 1702, EVIIBAA:702; Göta hovrätt, advokatfiskalens arkiv, Karlskrona rådhusrätt 1709, EVIIBAA:974–75; Göteborgs rådhusrätt, dombok (den 12 sept) 1711, AIa:48; Svea hovrätt, advokatfiskalens arkiv, Falu kämnärsrätt 1722, EXIe:2804. Svea hovrätt, advokatfiskalens arkiv, Segerstads häradsrätt (den 9 sept) and Hanebo häradsrätt 1723, EXIIe:3217; Jämtlands domsaga, Sunne häradsrätt och Ovikens häradsrätt 1724, AI:45; Svea hovrätt, advokatfiskalens arkiv, Segerstads tingslag (den 27 aug) 1724, EXIIe:3219; Gävle rådhusrätt, (dombok den 15 juli, 4 nov) 1724, AII:49; Gävleborgs landskansli, brev 1727–28, AIIIb:31–32; Gävleborgs landskansli, landshövdingsskrivelser 1728, DIIIaa:18; Kungliga Maj:t, kollegiers mfl skrivelser, överståthållarens skrivelser 1728, vol 23; Nylands och Tavastehus landskansli, ankomna brev (den 20 nov) 1731, Ea12, fol. 648 among others.

[26] This is especially clear in a series of trials in 1723–1724, in which the court probes the unconventional sexual relationships among Anna Maria's group of companions. Characteristic of these trials is that Anna Maria refers to "us Tartare", and defends a liberal view on taking new partners outside the institution of marriage by saying that "we tartare" live "like a free people".

[27] Anna Maria names Frankfurt as her place of birth on two separate occasions, in 1709 and 1722. See Göta hovrätt, advokatfiskalens arkiv, städernas renoverade domböcker, Carlskrona KR, 1709; Svea hovrätt, renoverade domböcker, Kopparbergs län, Falu kämnarsrätt, 1722. On one occasion, in 1724, she claims to have been born "in France", but the other details she presents about her background in that trial (e.g. that her mother was a "Madamme Brussela" from Brussels) suggest she was making it up. See Jämtlands domsagas häradsrätt, 1724. Several other Roma that we encounter in sources from this time, and with whom Adamsdotter was associated, also claimed at various occasions to have been born in Frankfurt am Main.

[28] It can be noted that in the many records in which she appears we never see the court commenting on her Swedish having an accent. Such comments were otherwise common; one associate, for example, was said to speak "Norwegian with an accent of German". Anna Maria's apparent fluency may indicate that she had older connections to Sweden than the evidence can currently verify.

[29] Bakker, Casinge, & Pettersson 2017; cf. Bakker 2020.

[30] Previously, the oldest known evidence of Romani in Scandinavia was the short glossary included in Samuel P. Björckman's *Dissertatio academica de Cingaris*, defended in Uppsala in 1730. The sample was collected from the former soldier and then prisoner, Jakob Helsing,

arrested with his family after the women had been accused of tricking a rich widow in Uppsala with "superstitions". Helsing, who would later be deported to Pomerania, has also been shown to be an ancestor of Swedish *resande*. Björckman's list was created by asking Helsing for the "gypsy" translation of 47 words that can be found in the early (1597) glossary provided by the Dutch philologist Vulcanius. Björckman's dissertation also noted that "today's gypsies" know a number of European languages, such as Swedish, French, and German (see Hagberg ed. 2016:41–42). The earliest recorded sentence in Romani until now appeared three decades later, in the trial of a group of "tartare" in Rönneberga in 1764. One of the accused in that trial, Kristian Lind, may have been a half-brother of Anna Maria Adamsdotter's companion in 1709, Bartolomeus Ludwig. See also Bakker, Casinge, & Pettersson 2017.

[31] Etzler 1944; Minken 2007. Several of these men seem to have started their military careers for other powers on the continent. For German Sinti/Roma in military service in the seventeenth- and eighteenth centuries, see Opferman 2007:223–248.

[32] Svea hovrätt, advokatfiskalens arkiv, Falu kämnärsrätt 1722.

[33] Göta hovrätt, Advokatfiskalen Blekinge län, Karlskrona rådhusrätt 1709; Göteborgs rådhusrätt 1712; Gävle rådhusrätt 1724.

[34] Possibly from Romani *khand*, "to stink", which goes back to Sanskrit, *gandha*, "smell, odour". The word *kàndra*, *kànja*, "to ooze, smell bad", is among the old Romani words that have survived in the para-Romani dialect of Swedish and Norwegian Travelers. See Carling, Lindell, and Ambrazaitis 2014. That Anna Maria Adamsdotter associated with the ancestors of Swedish Travelers, who must have passed the word down to be recorded in more recent word lists (e.g. Sundt 1850; Etzler 1944; Johansson 1977), supports this interpretation. The linguist Peter Bakker has suggested to us that the particles *aj* + *as* might indicate the third person past tense; thus, Anna Maria is not naming the root as much as describing it: "it stank."

[35] Anna Maria's reference to the Neapolitan comedy character Policinella should here be taken as a reference to comedic puppet play, in which the character had by this time become a recurring character. In Swedish the term "policinelleater" came to signify marionette theatre in general. See SAOB, "Polichinell".

[36] "hon tager ett ben, det gräfwer hon ut med ögon, tänder och näsa, jämbwäll hår der på de hon fäster med bäck".

[37] "Det är intet som ohelgar Guds nampn utan allenast några fåfänga och ohöfwiska ord uti dess språk, som äro utan grund eller mening, dhe hon allenast bruker hoos dhe enfadliga giöra sig och dess konster anseende med."

[38] "…hwilka ord hon förswänskade och en så ohöflig och fuul betydning hafwa, att för modestie och höfligheet skulld man samma här ej anföra will."

[39] A full discussion of the language sample is being prepared by linguist Peter Bakker; we do not want to anticipate his results by publishing our own interpretation here. Interpreting the verse is complicated by the phonetic mediation of the eighteenth-century Swedish notary, including the partitioning of words, as well as by the question of the inflection patterns of Anna Maria's Romani. Many of the words are easily recognizable as old Romani words that have survived in some form in later Scandoromani (e.g. *dakri* = mom; *dad* = father; *minsj* = vulva; *ka* = eat; *ful* = excrement, dirt; *nikli* = down, away). Others can possibly be inferred as attempts to render Romani words in eighteenth-century Swedish (e.g. "tiawa" = *tjávo* = boy). Cf. Carling, Lindell and Ambrazaitis 2014.

[40] "… z. B. dadurch, daß der Zigeuner ein Ei unter den Flügeln der brütenden Henne hinwegnimmt, es öffnet und mit Taschenspielergewandtheit ein todtenkopfähnliches oder ein anderes fremdartiges Gebilde aus demselben hervorzieht …".

[41] We are grateful to Professor Lech Trzcionkowski for guiding us to this source, and for checking the English translation against the Polish original.

[42] Ficowski's account suggests that a *bengoro* could be made in many different ways, including stitched dolls with hen's claws and chicken eyes, not unlike the doll that Anna Maria explicitly called "little Satan". As in other dialects of Romani, the word *beng* (prob. from Sanskrit *vyāñ-*

ga, "deformed", "monstrous") is preserved in Scandoromani with the core meaning of "devil" or "Satan", with the adjective *béngalo* taking on a wider range of meanings, from "devilish" and "ungodly" to "mad" and "crazy".

[43] The very first note on Romani women practicing fortune-telling appears to be in a city chronicle in Colmar, France, on August 10, 1418. This is less than a year after the large-scale immigration to north-western Europe. See Gilsenbach 1997:54.

[44] This was the case with the Spanish inquisition, which in the seventeenth- and eighteenth centuries brought a number of "gypsies" in front of the tribunals accused of sorcery. In these cases, as Richard Pym has shown, the inquisitors were well aware that the practices in question were designed "to exploit the gullibility or wishful thinking of those sufficiently naïve or desperate to allow themselves to be duped." An eighteenth-century instruction for inquisitors even ordered that the practices of "gypsy women" were generally to be regarded as fraudulent rather than demonic. Pym moreover notes that the sentences given to gypsies in the inquisition tribunals were generally milder than what they could have expected in secular courts of law. Pym 2007:108, 111.

[45] For the persistence of beliefs in witchcraft and the demand for magical interventions in early-modern Sweden, see Oja 1999.

[46] "… några fåfänga och ohöfwiska ord uti dess språk, som äro utan grund eller mening, dhe hon allenast bruker hoos dhe enfadliga giöra sig och dess konster anseende med."

"The Money Chest Lay by His Head"

The Narration of a Ghost Story from Troms

Randi Hege Skjelmo & Liv Helene Willumsen

Abstract
This article deals with two versions of a ghost story from Skittenelv in Troms, written down around 1700. Located at the farm of the magistrate Søren Bogø, a ghost apparently was heard disturbing the people at the farm. The earlier version of the story is down-written in 1695 by the magistrate Søren Bogø and was published in transcribed form by Håvard Dahl Bratrein in 2016. The later version is down-written in 1716 by Isaac Olsen and is part of his copybook, which is preserved in the original form. By using narratology as a methodological approach, the article offers an interpretation of the ghost story with emphasis of the function of the narrator. Also, attention is paid to changes in the story's content occurring during a time span of 20 years. Contextualization of the ghost story is paid attention to.

Keywords: Ghost story, 18th century, Northern Norway, Isaac Olsen, Scribe Søren Bogø, Bailiff Henrik Riber

Introduction

This article is about a ghost story from around 1700, which exists in two original versions. The earlier version was put down in writing by Søren Pedersen Bogø, a magistrate, in 1695, and published by Håvard Dahl Bratrein in 2016 (Bratrein 2016, 426–434).[1] The more recent of the two versions was recorded in Isaac Olsen's copybook in 1716,[2] and has never been published. The existence of two different written versions is a unique coincidence since this relates to the early days of written records in Norway. Having two original sources means we can compare two documents from around 1700. This in turn enables an analysis using a narratological approach based on close reading of the two versions, an interpretation of people's conceptualizations of supernatural phenomena in Troms (a former Norwegian county), and a reflection on further contextualization. The article's textual analysis is broadened to include local factual history as well as the wider historical perspectives on mentalities.

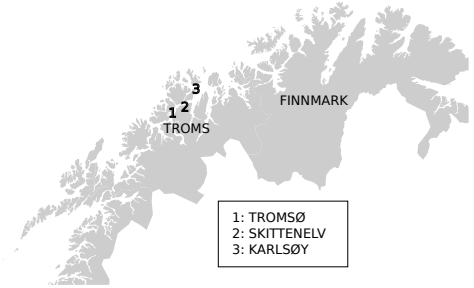

Figure 1. Map of Troms and Finnmark with Tromsø, Skittenelv and Karlsøy marked. Made by Johannes and Tomas Willumsen Vassdal.

A ghost story is an oral or written text about a ghost. The conceptualization of "the haunted" is linked to the ghost, and the supernatural elements relate to places, objects or individuals, as in legends (Schweitzer 2005:338–340).[3] Legends can be categorized as historical legends, origin legends, supranormal or mythical legends; the latter referring to "gnome-type creatures that live underground (*underjordiske*), the water spirit (*nøkken*), the revenants of the sea (*draugen*), gnomes (*nisser*) and all the other creatures who invisibly surround humans, but who only make themselves known in special situations" (Hauan & Skjelbred 1995:11).[4] Revenge is a clear motive in these stories. The protagonists are given the opportunity to express themselves through dialogue, and the context is recognisable. The content is characterized by mysterious, spooky events.

Both versions of the story have narrative structures, which enables an analysis of how the story is told and a discussion of elements of the content. Changes in the narrator's position from the earlier version to the later version throw up interesting perspectives in terms of interpretation. Contextualization through factual historical information is essential given that the texts are sourced from historical documents.

About the Two Versions

Søren Pedersen Bogø was a magistrate from 1690 to 1707. He lived in the rural Norwegian village of Skittenelv, north of Tromsøya, an island in the municipality of Tromsø. The earlier version of the ghost story was authenticated by the magistrate's son, Antoni Willhelm, whereupon it was sent to the Bishop of Nidaros, Peder Krog. This source is one of the ecclesiastical history documents that were collected by Johan Ernst Gunnerus.[5] Antoni took over the farm from his father in 1707, but was never a magistrate (Hasselberg & Dahl 1999:53–54). Why this document has ended up in a church archive as opposed to a secular one – like that of the magistrate or

the bailiff – is an interesting question. Krog was bishop from 1689 to 1731. He made a number of official visits to the north of the country during which he may have met the magistrate who then recounted the ghost story to him. Storytelling was a common form of entertainment at the farms of high-ranking officials. It is also possible that Bogø met the bishop in Trondheim. Krog may have heard about the ghost story and wanted to obtain a written copy.

The later version of the ghost story is written in ink by Isaac Olsen in his copybook. Olsen was probably from Trøndelag, born around 1680. After dropping out of the cathedral school in Trondheim, he worked as a teacher and catechist in Finnmark from just after 1700 until 1716. Olsen got to know the Sámi population and learned to speak the Sámi language shortly after his arrival in Finnmark. He met the missionary Thomas von Westen during the latter's first missionary journey north, and accompanied him back to Trondheim, where he became a teacher and translator at von Westen's mission seminars. The ghost story from Skittenelv is dated "*Thromsen ind Augusto 1716*".

Isaac Olsen's copybook is a compilation of different types of texts from the period 1703–1717, all of which are linked to the originator of the book. The term "copybook" is most commonly used in archival contexts to refer

Figure 2. The beginning of the ghost story written by Isaac Olsen in his copy-book. Photo Liv Helene Willumsen.

to a collection of copies of outgoing correspondence. Copybooks as a genre were intended to document public office activities; they became part of society's archival memory and were a key element in the desire to form a well-documented bureaucracy in the eighteenth century. However, Isaac Olsen's copybook is something different. First, he himself has selected the texts for inclusion. Secondly, Olsen's copybook includes a wide range of genres, not just letters. Thirdly, the texts all have a personal connection to Olsen.

The content of the copybook is varied, and includes texts used in teaching – Olsen was an itinerant teacher and catechist. In addition, Isaac Olsen is the first person in history to record Sámi place names connected to ethnic religious practices, such as Sámi sacrificial sites and sacred places. These records form the basis for all subsequent research related to the Sámi ethnic religion in northern Norway. The copybook also consists of official documents related to Olsen's work, including a letter of appointment from Bishop Krog in 1708. The very first translation of a Danish hymn into Sámi is also included, as well as documents relating to popular culture; "letters from heaven", moral tales, riddles, calendars and recipes for natural stimulants. The ghost story is also included here.

Figure 3. The end of the ghost story written by Isaac Olsen in his copybook. Photo Liv Helene Willumsen.

The Earlier Version

The earlier version of the ghost story is a detailed account of events that took place in October and November 1695 at the magistrate's farm in Skittenelv. The plot revolves around the activities of a ghost over a number of days. The ice has destroyed a dam and the farmhands are dispatched to repair it. Two days later, in the evening, they hear noises coming from outside. It starts on 18 October with a tapping sound and escalates to banging on the wall in the farmhands' living quarters. One of the farmhands, Rasmus Jonssen, goes to fetch the magistrate, who had retired for the evening. The magistrate goes with Rasmus to the farmhands' quarters, where he tries in vain to engage the ghost in conversation. In the hope of making the ghost stop banging on the wall, they sing the hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God". They go outside to look for the ghost, but don't find anything. The magistrate goes back inside, invokes God and urges the farmhands not to be afraid, as the ghost does not have the power to harm them. The next day, 19 October, the banging is so loud that it drowns out the voices of 11 worshipers singing their praises to God. So the magistrate takes his rifle, loads it with bullets and pellets before handing it to Rasmus. The farmhand fires a hole in the wall, exactly where the banging emanated from. When they hear further banging below the bullet hole, he fires into it in the hope of scaring off or hitting the ghost. A loud boom is heard from outside the wall, like a galloping horse setting off with its legs attached to two or three timbers. The ghost is only heard a few more times that evening before going on his way. The next evening, 20 October, banging and scratching can be heard on the wall of the farmhands' quarters at 9 o'clock. Noises are heard almost daily, always at the same time – 9 o'clock. This continues until 2 November. Then follow two days of silence, but on 5 November at the usual time, banging, whinnying and bellowing can be heard. The farmhands are terrified and go down to the kitchen. All this takes place while magistrate Bogø is on the island of Karlsøy to register the estate of the deceased bailiff, Henrik Riber. Before he left, Bogø had asked his wife if the farmhands could sleep in the loft room by the parlour. This was agreed, but the ghost immediately started banging on the wall there too. The next day, the farmhands were asked to move back to their own quarters. The ghost then stops its banging in the parlour, but continues where the farmhands are, every night until 10 November. On the last night, the ghost continues right through until the morning. In the hope of making the ghost disappear, a farmhand named Peder sings the Danish hymn "*Den signede dag som vi nu ser*", which makes mention of the Holy Cross. The ghost then screams three times before disappearing.

On 11 November, the magistrate returns from Karlsøy. That same night, the ghostly banging and voices start up again. Just after midnight, the ghost lets out five terrifying screams, and is not heard again that night. The

next day, the farmhand Søren says that the ghost will not be back until 13 November. He knows this because the ghost told him so in a dream. It also told him that they have "hacked one of his animals to death" (Bratrein 2016:430). This apparently took place when they were up by the dam digging the ground. They had also ripped the entire roof off his house. He therefore sent his farmhand to make a racket as revenge for the damage they had caused. His own farmhand was apparently shot at from the farmhands' quarters, something the ghost had a hard time believing. He therefore wanted to investigate for himself. The ghost is then asked if his farmhand was afraid when the shot was fired, which he answers in the affirmative. Then the ghost is asked if he is now afraid of gunshots. The answer is no, he would know how to take the right precautions. The farmhands ask the ghost how often he plans to return. He says he will come back once more and then cause no more trouble. Søren thinks that the ghost looks like a middle-aged man dressed in a black linen kirtle,[6] black linen trousers and a black hat. After this apparition and conversation, the ghost disappears.

On 15 November, following holy worship in the farmhands' quarters, Christen Jørgensen, the magistrate's deputy, remains there. He wants to "sense" whether the ghost plans to return as indicated by Søren. Jørgensen is knowledgeable and speaks several languages. He sits smoking a tobacco pipe, while the farmhands lie on the bed smoking. They have extinguished the light, because they know that the ghost will not appear if it continues to burn. A faint tapping noise is then heard, and it sounds like the ghost is also smoking tobacco. When the farmhands spit, the ghost does likewise. At the same moment, it starts howling and making animal sounds. The dogs start barking and try to locate the ghost. Just as the dogs seem to have worked themselves into a frenzy, the ghost stops. When Christen Jørgensen then hears that the ghost is talking, he asks it what is wrong, if there is something that it regrets or if someone has gotten too close. The ghost repeats Christen's words. In the hope of making it disappear, Christen tells the ghost that God has banished it to hell and that it has no business interfering with God's children. "You're wrong, you're wrong" is the response. Christen then starts reading the Lord's Prayer in Danish, Latin and German, which the ghost repeats word for word. When he is finished, Christen scolds the ghost, only to be subjected to the same reprimand in return. Christen continues to question the ghost about various things, including Christen's family. It stops mimicking him and answers all his questions, indicating that it knows Christen is married, that his wife is in Copenhagen and that he has four children.

Christen Jørgensen introduces a new topic; the bailiff Henrik Riber, who drowned in a shipwreck during an official trip off the coast of Karlsøy. When asked if the bailiff had drifted ashore, the ghost answers that he lies in the fjord. It does not mention either God or the Devil, but when the subject

of the bailiff comes up, it raises the ghost's hackles. Christen then asks if any of Riber's possessions have been found. The ghost informs him that the boat has been found across the fjord. When asked if the boat is intact, the ghost responds, "No, it came asunder." (Bratrein 2016:432) Christen enquires as to whether they have found anything else, and is told that three bottles of spirits, half a barrel of malt and two bottles of beer[7] have been found, but that "the butter still drifts on the sea". (Bratrein 2016:432)

The farmhands take over the questioning. They ask if the ghost gets angry when they are praying for God's mercy. The answer is no, they are free to worship and get along with one another, whatever their status, and they should never lie, never steal, and never feed their cattle too late at night. Then the farmhands ask if any of the ghost's people have been out fishing on this day. The ghost answers in the affirmative, whereupon he is asked if they have caught any fish. They have. The farmhands say they did not catch anything, and the ghost laughs. The farmhands prompt the ghost to tell them where there are good fishing spots. The ghost tells them that they row to the same place as his people. "Do you have many farmhands rowing?" Eight, and two boats, comes the response. The farmhands then ask if the ghost lives there. The ghost says he does, and that his father had also lived there. The next questions relate to whose boat the ghost uses to send his fish to market, to which he responds "I had two men aboard Hans Morttens's boat the last time he set out, who lay starboard." When asked how many children he has, he says four. The ghost is then asked if he is responsible for the noises at the boathouse. "Yes, what of it?", comes the response.[8] The farmhands then ask if he wants them to organize a boat for him, if he wants to ship fish to Bergen the next time they head south and if he plans to sail with Hans Mortensen. The ghost responds in the affirmative to all of these questions. The farmhands become interested in finding out which of them would be sailing to Bergen. It was great to have the opportunity to take part in the trip to Bergen, and not only that – they got the chance to sail with a learned skipper who had studied in Copenhagen (Bratrein 1989:536). Several of the farmhands' names are mentioned, and the ghost answers their questions, but they eventually grow bored of the conversation with the ghost. Jørgensen heads towards the door as he wants to leave the farmhands' quarters and go to bed. The ghost says: "I have to scream before I leave, but I'll be back." Christen asks when the ghost will return. He says he doesn't want to disclose that yet, but will now let out three screams, each louder than the other. They then hear that the ghost is departing.

A few days later, on 20 November, Elias Kjedelflicker [Elias the pot tinkerer] is at the magistrate's farm, tinkering with some pots before evening worship. He hears a tapping sound on the wall of the farmhands' quarters, where the farmhand Jan Hollender [Jan the Dutchman] is mending a pair of shoes. "Who's knocking?" asks Jan. The ghost then asks him what he is

doing. Jan replies that he is stitching shoes, to which the ghost responds: "Aye, pray be told, pray be told, and stitch shoes, stitch shoes." It then asks Jan to tell whoever is tinkering with the pots that he must not make so much noise at this time of night. Jan makes his way to the brewhouse where Elias is. He passes on the message and Elias stops his banging noises. That same night, the ghost knocks on the outside wall where Elias is sleeping, and gives the occasional cough, just as Elias is doing on the inside of the building. On 29 November, the farmhand Peder is grinding malt in the mill in the farmhands' quarters following his evening meal. He hears scratching on the wall outside where he is standing, and instantly stops grinding. That is the last time they hear from the ghost.

The Later Version

The later version must have been written shortly after Olsen heard the ghost story, which means there is a twenty-year gap between this and the earlier version. This newer version is more mysterious, and starts with Bogø the magistrate building a new house on an undeveloped piece of land. As soon as he moves in, the ghostly events begin, first with shouting – so loud that it reverberates throughout the mountains. The ghost sounds like a human being when it talks, its shadows are visible, but it remains unseen. It smokes tobacco in the farmhands' quarters, and they see the smoke and the flame as he lights his pipe.

After a while, the ghost asks if it is okay to shout. The farm people's response is "shout till you embarrass yourself." It then shouts so loudly that everyone's hair stands on end. Someone comments that the ghost does not shout enough, that it must shout more, and it answers: "The big man forbids me from shouting louder, I must bang on the wall." To which they respond: "Bang away, till you embarrass yourself." The ghost bangs so hard that the moss flies off the walls. They ask the ghost to bang more and it responds: "No, the big man does not want me to do any more banging." They ask it to "Put your lips there and there." It answers: "Put your own lips there." They enquire further as to whether anyone has been out fishing on this day, to which the ghost answers in the affirmative. He itemizes the boats and fishermen that were out, and how much fish they caught. "If you find it hard to believe, he said, then go over and see for yourself." The ghost answers all their questions, but when they enquire about the bailiff, he responds that he "didn't dare because the big man wouldn't want him to".

The ghost then announces that "the bailiff had remained, and he lays [in] the water with the money chest by his head." The farmhands ask the ghost why he is so ugly, to which he replies that when the brother lying in the boathouse rises, he is much uglier, bigger and stronger. They then ask the ghost why he comes here. He tells them that they are building too close to

him and spoiling his sleep; the river ran red for two or three days, which the ghost claims was the blood of his sheep.

The magistrate starts to avoid all worship and public gatherings. He wants to fear God alone and once said that "he had heard something from the spirit that he would not reveal or say to any man other than a man of the highest standing, but he never found that man and never talked to him before death came." In conclusion, it is said that twelve years have passed since these events, and that there are still people alive today who saw and heard the ghost. The story is about a god-fearing and sensible man who changes in the latter years of his life.

Methodology

A narratological approach has been used to analyse the text, especially the following works by Gérard Genette: *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method* (1983) and *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (1990). Genette defines narratology as the study of narrative structures, an exploration of the narrator's function (Genette 1990:101). By the term modern narratology, Rolf Gaasland understands the relationship between "*historie og fortelling*" as well as the act of narration (Gaasland 1995:49). The focus of a narratological analysis is on narrative technique and composition (Kittang 2001:77–78), and the aim is to investigate both *what* a text means and *how* it means (Fludernik 1993:13). In this article, both structure and content will be analysed (Willumsen 2006:40). The narrative technique will highlight the content.

Narratology encompasses a number of categories,[9] and the main one used in this article is *voice*. It is possible to listen to the *voice* in written historical sources of a narrative nature (Simonsen 2017:17). The category of *voice* consists of the narrator's voice and the character voice. It is always the former that has the most authority in the textual universe. Character voice is heard when one of the characters in the story acts as narrator (Willumsen 2006:43). Various examples of how voice is delegated from the narrator to character are given in the analyses below. These character voices have their own nuance in embedded narratives. Narratology can be used in the analysis of all historical sources structured as narratives (Genette 1993:55–56). Genette emphasizes that it is important to incorporate the context into the analysis of historical sources (Genette 1993:57).

The Narrator of the Earlier Version

In the earlier version, we have first-person narration from the magistrate, who writes about his personal experiences. It is clear from his writing style that he is a professional writer who is used to expressing himself in a sober fashion.

His writing follows a timeline, almost like a diary. When you consider that the magistrate's job entails taking minutes from court meetings and writing other documents in accordance with a formal standard, penning a ghost story must be far removed from the parameters of his professional role. The clear linear characteristics found in his narration – exact dates, times, time of day, before and after activities such as evening worship, supper and specific chores – add a robustness to the storyline and strengthen its substance and reliability. The timeline applies both in the narrator's voice and the character voice. We can follow the development of the ghost's antics from day to day. Before each departure there is a powerful marking, "I have to scream before I leave."

The narrator delegates voice to several characters: the farmhands Søren, Rasmus, Peder, Jan Hollender and Lille-Jan [Little Jan], as well as Elias the pot tinkerer and the magistrate's deputy, Christen Jørgensen. The narrator makes a clear distinction in the rendering of his own experiences versus those of others by naming the people who speak. During conversations with the ghost, the questions as well as the answers are conveyed. The narrator also describes the days he is not present at the farm, when he is reliant on the others' explanations of what has taken place.

Another feature of the narrative structure is the use of repetition. This sometimes take the form of words linked by a conjunction and, for example, "firmer and firmer", or certain expressions such as "piercing"; the first time "piercing and terrifying", the next time "piercing and terrible" about the way the ghost screams. Other repetitions are found in the variation of how many times the ghost screams; "screams for the 3rd time", "screamed 5 times". The range of words used to describe the ghost's antics also varies; banging, scratching, tapping, bellowing and whinnying. Images are carefully painted in words in a way that enhances and clarifies the text, and the magistrate constantly uses the introductory term "like": "like a smithing hammer", "like with claws", "like a horse". This parallel qualifier improves the visual and audible qualities of the story.

The narrator implicitly makes use of elements that are typical of legends and fairy tales. From legends, we recognize the practice of dating events by specifying the year and day, the naming of individuals and the linking of the narrative to specific historic events. Examples of the latter include the drowning of the bailiff. Fairy tale elements include short, succinct phrases, like "Who's knocking, said Jaen?" Orality elements are also prominent, for example "Aye, pray be told, pray be told and stitching shoes, stitching shoes, said the ghost." Orality elements are largely reserved for character voices, like the farmhands' or the ghost's. Rhythm and rhyme emphasize the oral character, and in the above example, repetition is used to reinforce the rhythm and sound of the statement. The narrator's voice rarely uses elements of orality, but when it does, this highlights the narrator's own behaviour and decisiveness: "I then arose immediately."

The narrator vouches for the tale and appears to believe in various individuals, even what the farmhand, Søren, saw and heard in his dream. The narrator's attitude towards the told is an accepting one. However, he knows his authority as a scribe; he is the one in charge of the narrative. We see this for example when he claims a mandate to restrict the scope of the story: "to avoid being longwinded it cannot all be included". By doing so the narrator shows that he is in control of the story. Another example is the narrator's comment about the farmhands' questioning of the ghost. This starts reflectively: "We can thus sense" [*Heraf kand fornæmmes*].

The Narrator of the Later Version

The later version of the ghost story is a third-person narrative. The narrator writes down a story he has heard, as opposed to the earlier version where the narrator writes about a personal experience. In the later version, the narrator is not identified. The different narrative styles are also clearly seen at the end of the story. In the later version, the magistrate is involved as a third person, i.e. a character or participant. In other words, the first-person narrator of the earlier version has now become "him", "the man", and "the magistrate".

We do not know who recounted the story to Isaac Olsen. However, because Olsen writes it down, he can influence the text. The narrator establishes a clear timeline in that the story starts when the magistrate builds his farm and ends when the magistrate dies. The timespan is linked to a specific part of the magistrate's life through words and phrases such as "immediately", "at the very beginning", "for two or three days" and "twelve years have now past since these events took place".

The narrator of the later version delegates voice to the farmhands and to the ghost, but none of the farmhands are mentioned by name, nor is the bailiff. The personification of the earlier version has disappeared. The bailiff has been anonymized, and the farmhands are referred to as "some" and "they". Delegation of character voice is achieved through direct speech and by referring to indirect speech statements made by the farmhands. Voice has thus not only been delegated to the ghost, but to the farmhands. In the later version, the conversation between the farmhands and the ghost accounts for almost half the story. The narrative category of frequency is reflected in repetitions, which is used by the narrator to add potency to the account; the ghost's shouting "grew louder and louder"; the ghost asked "may I bang the wall", "they said to bang it harder". The description of the magistrate as a "sensible man" is also repeated.

The oral nature of the account is also seen in imagery and exaggerations. The ghost shouted so loudly that the sound "reverberated throughout the mountains", "he banged so hard that the moss flew off the walls" and he shouted so loudly "that their hair stood on end".

Voice is clearly delegated to several characters. The ghost's answers are sometimes marked *Res:*, [responded] and this is italicized in the source because the word is of Latin origin. Examples of orality in the character voice delegated to the residents on the farm include "shout till you embarrass yourself", "just put your lips there and there, and he said to put your own lips there". The ghost's voice is also heard: "If you find it hard to believe, he said, then go over and see for yourself." In this version, the character voice encourages the ghost to be more active, like shouting louder and banging harder. The activity is described as an increase in volume, the sound is getting near and nearer. They can see his shadow, but not him.

The narrator's voice brings in the magistrate at the start of the story and right at the very end. The narrator describes the magistrate's last years as being mysterious. Towards the end of the narrative, unanswered questions about the magistrate are pointed out in a style typical of the legend genre: "there are still people alive today who witnessed it". Echoes of fairy tales are heard in expressions like "why he was so ugly". The ghost replies that the brother who is lying in the boatshed, is "far uglier, bigger and stronger".

In terms of the way that the two versions are narrated, the later version uses much stronger words, greater drama, more severe threats, and has a stronger element of orality. We have attributed this to Isaac Olsen, whose written style tends to feature larger gestures and ornate descriptions. He was a lively narrator, very different to the level-headed magistrate of the earlier version.

Similarities of Content

The two versions are set in the same location.[10] In both instances, the ghost is a poltergeist (Espeland 2002:57). Another similarity of content is the damage caused to the ghost's home by those currently living on the magistrate's farm, and the killing of one of the ghost's animals. In both versions, the ghost is questioned about taking the boat out to go fishing, how many boats and fishermen were on the water and how much fish they caught. The plot is driven by dialogue for the purpose of learning more about the ghost, but also to elicit answers about matters that the questioners believe the ghost is knowledgeable about and they are not. They hope the conversation will reveal to them what will happen in the future. The description of the ghost is not unequivocally negative and frightening. On the one hand, the ghost comes across as a scary creature in both versions. On the other hand, the people on the farm consider it to be some kind of an oracle.

Both versions have a core element whose textual scope is limited, but which in terms of content is highly significant. This is connected to the drowning of the bailiff. The similarity is that in both versions the ghost responds that the bailiff is in the sea. Both versions use the expression "big man".[11] In the earlier version, the ghost says: "The fjord became his final

path; he earnt himself the big man's wrath." The rhythm and rhyme make this a strong sentence, but it also carries a powerful message that lends itself to being passed on through oral storytelling. While the later version explains where in the sea the bailiff is located in a more succinct way, this nevertheless suggests that this particular element has been passed on by word of mouth in popular tradition and has even been elaborated on with the introduction of the money chest. What emerges is that the people on the farm are keen to learn more about the bailiff, but also that this is information the ghost is reluctant to part with. The emphasis on this in both versions reflects the serious nature of the event. The accident must have caused alarm in the community and given rise to questions and speculations.

Differences of Content

There are several differences between the two versions. In the later version, the geographic location is described in terms of diocese, parish and congregation. This suggests an ecclesiastical framing, while the magistrate of the earlier version accentuates the judicial district, which seems reasonable considering his profession.

Another difference is the reason why the ghost appears on the magistrate's farm. In the earlier version, the explanation is that they have ripped the roof off the ghost's house and killed one of his animals. In the later version, it is because the farm was built on a site too close to the ghost, and that it is therefore "disturbing his sleep".

A further difference is the way the ghost materializes. In the later version, its first manifestation is in the form of loud shouting that reverberates throughout the mountains. The shouting increases in volume and gradually comes closer. The ghost talks like a human being but only its shadow can be seen. It smokes tobacco in the farmhands' quarters, and they can see the smoke and the lighting of his pipe. This manifestation is unlike that described in the earlier version, where the ghost's farmhand announces his arrival by tapping and knocking on the wall. Later on, the ghost goes to the farmhands' quarters in person, in order to contact the people there. Here we are also given a description of what the ghost looks like, as he appeared to Søren, the farmhand, in a dream; like a farmer fisherman.

The earlier version includes clear dates and times, and it is longer and richer in detail than the later version. Consequently, it also contains more information. However, the later version is the most dramatic in that it features the narrator's accentuation of spooky and mysterious elements. Differences of content are also found in respect of what objects are salvaged from the bailiff's shipwreck. The earlier version talks about finding the boat, clothing and bottles, while the later version introduces the bailiff's money chest and its location in the water, next to his head.

In both versions the ghost is asked if he took the boat out to go fishing. In the later version, the ghost's answer is affirmative and includes an account of the number of boats, how many fishermen were there and how much fish they caught. In the earlier version, the ghost has also been fishing. Unlike the residents on the farm, who only caught three small fish, the ghost caught quite a few. When asked where the good fishing ground is, the ghost laughingly replies: same place where the farmhands go fishing.

Only the earlier version makes it clear that the magistrate's farmhands are trying to find out from the ghost who will be joining the magistrate on the next boat trip to Bergen. The farmhands get their answers.

The change from the earlier version's personification of the farmhands and the bailiff to the later version's anonymization introduces a distance. The sense of being close to the characters is diminished. "The bailiff" is now more of a concept than a person, and "some farmhands" is a characterization of a group. The weaker link to specific individuals after two decades of passing on the story by word of mouth, suggests that people now only refer to Riber by his professional title and to the farmhands without any individual characteristics. This is reflected in the narrator's voice, which fails to mention any names, and in the character voice, where all turns of phrase associated with specific individuals have disappeared.

The later version introduces a new element concerning the magistrate's final years. Through oral recounting over time, the ghost story has acquired an epilogue. In the most recent version, the once strong first-person narrator has the same standing in the story as the other third-person characters: he no longer carries authority and has no narrative decision-making capacity. This is a better fit for the description of the magistrate in the last years of his life, when he had undergone a change of character and was living in isolation. The wording here suggests that he was carrying a dark secret that he may have wanted to confess to a specific person – someone he could trust and who may have been in a position to help him. He never got the chance to do so.

Shifts of Content

The two versions were written more than 20 years apart. This gives us an insight into the way that elements of content can shift in oral tradition. The earlier version was written more or less at the time the ghost appeared, which enabled a very detailed description of the events. Such richness can only be found in documents where the sequence of events is concurrent with the time of writing. The writer has first-hand knowledge of the names of the characters, life on the farm, the buildings there and the general surroundings. The writer is close to the alleged events, and the characters have access to the person writing up the story. Because the writer is recording

his own experiences, he is unable to maintain a distance to the time and space of the narrative. His horizon of understanding lacks the illuminating potential of distance, but it does guarantee immediacy in what is recorded. The later version was recounted to Isaac Olsen by one person. It is this one person who tells the entire story. The writer is reliant on what he is told.

In the earlier version, telling a captivating story was not the magistrate's main objective. The reason why he recorded the events was probably that he found them mystifying. Nevertheless, he believed they had happened.

Olsen's version is a shining example of his storyteller talent. After hearing the story, he writes down an inspired version of it, in which the dramatic content is supported by a combination of verbal exchanges, dialectal words and repetitions. The narrative is characterized by abrupt linguistic constellations, ambiguous phrases and a clear textual rhythm. It highlights a genre that is well suited for entertainment because the story is considered spooky and scary.

There are a number of shifts of content, both in respect of the information about why the ghost appears and the way that this happens. We can also see a shift in the ghost's behaviour. In the time lapse between the earlier and the later version, various elements of content have been shaved off the story. Nevertheless, it is the later version that gives the more dramatic and intense account. Mention of the bailiff's money chest is also entirely new. This can be seen as a shift of content in the sense that just after the boat perished, people were keen to establish what cargo might still be salvaged, particularly any valuable items. After a period of 20 years, the bailiff's body had still not been found. As the years have passed, the interest has shifted to whether the bailiff may have been carrying money aboard the boat. He was a tax collector, so this was a reasonable idea, as was the possibility of finding the money chest.

The introduction of the money chest suggests another possible interpretation of the ghost. Bratrein unequivocally interprets the ghost as an underground gnome-type creature who lived below the farm. In folklore, this creature's world was structured in a way similar to the human world. Subterranean gnomes of this type would rarely allow themselves to be seen by people. However, a ghost can also be interpreted as a restless soul who has failed to find peace in the afterlife. This type of ghost struggles with its conscience. In the earlier version, the ghost is described by Søren, based on his dream, as a middle-aged man dressed in black. This may be a representation of a person who has not found peace because he has committed a crime. It is also possible that the ghost is the bailiff himself, and that he holds a dark secret that makes him haunt the place. If so, his secret is at the heart of this ghost story and may explain why the sentence about the bailiff is included in both versions, while the money chest is only included in the later one.

Factual Local History

Ghost stories fascinate thanks to their mixture of fantasy and realism. They are categorized as "true stories" (Aukrust 2013:258). In both versions of the ghost story, the historical facts are clear. Both also have unmistakable characteristics of the legend genre, where place and time are invariably specified. Both are associated with Skittenelv. The earlier version was written up in the autumn of 1695 and was authenticated a few years later. The later version can be dated to Olsen's recording of it in August 1716. Although the narratives were written down at different times, the events have been set in the same timeframe.

Søren Pedersen Bogø took up office in 1689 and settled at Skittenelv in 1692. He was married with four children, and his two oldest sons were educated at Bergen Cathedral School. Søren Bogø remained in office until his death in 1707. He was the last magistrate in Helgøy judicial district (Bratrein 1989:436).[12] At the time, even high-ranking officials had to arrange for their own leaseholds and build their own properties. The office of magistrate was introduced in 1591 (Næss 1991). The intention was to provide assistance for the bailiffs. Magistrates came from a variety of different educational backgrounds and we have no information about Bogø's. At the time, a magistrate's status was more modest than that of a bailiff's, both financially and socially (Bratrein 1989:434). Although he was a sensible man, the magistrate took the account of the ghost very seriously. He listened to what the farmhands told him and wanted to investigate the matter for himself. He must have considered the ghost's conduct to be credible. Besides, he sent his deputy along to try to speak to the ghost, a man who probably had more authority than the farmhands.

In the later version, the story has gained an epilogue where Bogø, the magistrate, appears as a changed man who withdrew from public life in the years before he died in 1707. The epilogue raises questions relating to this change in Bogø's behaviour. Timewise, this coincides with the year that he registered the estate of the deceased bailiff, Riber. The changes that are introduced between the earlier and the later versions give rise to several potential interpretations. For instance, the magistrate may have uncovered something illegal when he registered Riber's estate which he ought to have reported. The estate was registered with Søren Mortensen Hegelund, who was the sheriff of Helgøy judicial district from 1694 to 1698. He was a skipper and resided at Nord-Grunnfjord (Bratrein 1989:517). Hegelund had been the bailiff's assistant, and in 1694 had received remuneration for journeys undertaken to collect taxes on the bailiff's behalf (Bratrein 1989:436).

Riber was in considerable debt. He was also known for his shoddy account-keeping and is likely to have been suspended from office for a while (Bratrein 1989:433). Riber's accounts disappeared when he drowned. At the

time, there was little cash in circulation, and if any monies existed it was considered easy enough to keep this concealed during probate settlements. Our suggestion of possible illegalities in Riber's financial affairs is based on the introduction of the money chest. When the box makes an appearance in the ghost story after 20 years, this indicates that Riber's death is linked to money in oral accounts. Finding the money chest may have been an incentive.

Other possible explanations could be that Bogø had uncovered a serious crime, and that Riber's drowning accident was a covert murder. If so, there must have been one or more culprits. Failing to report a murder would have been a sin of omission. This interpretation is based on the magistrate's behaviour change once probate had been granted. According to the later version, the secret became an increasingly onerous burden for the magistrate as the years went by.

One of the people the magistrate may have confessed to was the curate at Karlsøy, Michael Jensen Hegelund (1694–1729). He had married into money when he tied the knot with Rebekka Elisabeth Myhlenport of Kristiansund in 1696.[13] In 1703, he was suspended from office, and in 1704 he lost his job following a court decision. We do not know whether a replacement curate was found during Hegelund's suspension. In 1706–07, he was reinstated after winning his appeal. Tradition has it that it was his wife who travelled to Copenhagen and sorted things out with the help of rich relatives at the royal court (Erlandsen 1857:173). Curate Hegelund is said to have constantly been at odds with the bailiff because he refused to pay taxes on Vannstua farm.[14]

The second person it would have been natural for the magistrate to confess to was Ole Audunsen, the vicar and dean of Tromsø. He took office in 1697 after having served as curate to his predecessor Nils Bredal for 25 years. Audunsen was also a skipper. He had a new church erected in Tromsø in the period 1708–10, which was subsequently consecrated by Bishop Krog in 1711 (Ytreberg 1946:145). Bogø and Audunsen knew one another as they both signed the census of 1702 (Ytreberg 1946:64–68ff). Audunsen must have been a very busy man when Bogø was nearing the end of his life, and Bogø may therefore have been reluctant to inconvenience him.

The third person who may have been a likely confessor was Bishop Krog. It was he who took receipt of the earlier manuscript from Bogø's son. Krog visited the north on several occasions while the magistrate was in office, in 1696, 1699 and 1705 (Skjelmo & Willumsen 2017:132). Bogø may have considered the matter to be so serious that he wanted to confess to the highest-ranking clergy in the diocese. We believe that Bogø would have been seeking peace of mind and therefore may have wanted to confess to a gentleman of the cloth, rather than to a public official. An additional concern would have been the new magistrate or bailiff getting wind of his neglect of duty.

Henrik Riber is another central character. He held the office of bailiff from 1689 to 1695, and was married to Anna, the sister of Rebekka, the curate's wife. Riber lived with his family on the island of Karlsøy. The probate shows that there were 15 buildings on his well-equipped farm, plus fixtures and fittings, clothing and jewellery. There was also a good deal of merchandize (Bratrein 1989:521, 540, 543, 545f). The farm inventory listed 66 barrels of rye meal, 115 lbs of tobacco, 7 barrels of malt, 200 ft of wadmal, canvas cloth and other fabrics. A further 430 lbs of fish, fleeces and wool were stored for export. The bailiff also owned a boat, but this had been damaged on a journey north from Bergen in 1695, before he himself was shipwrecked. It was the bailiff who was responsible for ensuring that correct accounting records were kept and submitted to the authorities. When Riber drowned, he was travelling with his wife and his accounts in the boat [*speilbåt*] that came with his office. His wife also died in the accident, but there is no information about the fate of the crew.

Both versions of the story retain the mystery surrounding the shipwreck. In the earlier version, the rhyme and rhythm of the sentence about the bailiff add a linguistic vigour that has made it easy to pass on of this detail. While this suggests that the shipwreck is considered important, it can also be a hint that the man described as a ghost is in fact the bailiff. There are unanswered questions in connection with the shipwreck, which keeps the notion alive that something is being concealed and that the circumstances are mysterious.

Further Contextualization

This ghost story can shed light on the wider historical context of mentalities around the year 1700. It gives an insight into people's perspectives at a time of great change, when higher powers played an influential role in people's lives. Stories about supernatural phenomena helped people understand their surroundings and the forces they experienced. This also included how encounters with "the world beyond", the world we do not see, manifested themselves. In both versions of the ghost story, the ideas that are expressed by the narrator are linked to traditional material passed down through the generations. This constituted knowledge was known to the common man and passed on by word of mouth – associated with fear, anxiety, the whims of nature, human evil and desire, a punishing destiny; the sombre palette of a human life. These were all incomprehensible matters for which explanations were nevertheless sought through storytelling. This is a general phenomenon that covers people's perception of mysterious matters and the need for explanations around the year 1700 and later.

However, both versions demonstrate acceptance of a world of ideas where invisible forces held a key position (Alver 2014:15, 38f, 58–62).

Thus, we see how a specific story sheds light on a more general pattern in that the explanatory potential of legends appears in the considerably more comprehensive context that is the history of mentalities.

Conclusion

The two versions of the story that have been analysed here demonstrate how a detailed narrative becomes more generalized over time. The original personified features of the magistrate's accurate writing style in the earlier version have been converted by Isaac Olsen to a legend-type story; the narrative extent has been compressed while the main content is retained. The language used by the narrator of the later version eliminates the close association with the characters. Stylistically, the recorder's pen can be seen in both versions; the magistrate's somewhat muted, detailed account in contrast to Isaac Olsen's penchant for a lively narrative with linguistic embellishments.

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Appendix: The Two Versions of the Ghost Story

A true story about what strangely has happened at Bogøenæs in Helgøe Court District Anno 1695

By Søren Pedersen Bogøe

On the 15th of October, it rained. There was some ice above the dam that I had built between the little hill upon which my houses were positioned and the small river above. The rain had melted the ice such that pieces of it began drifting with the water towards the little hill, eroding it. The following day, which was the 16th of October, the hired hands[15] went out to repair the bridge again[16] with trees, stones, sand and rope, with which they cut, hacked, and dug out at the river. They finished repairing the bridge on the 17th of October. That same evening, when it was about 9 o'clock, a gentle knocking began, first slowly on the wall of the servants' house,[17] and later louder and louder, as if being done with a large blacksmith's hammer. A scratching noise also began along the wall, as though with claws, between the knocking – it continued to over midnight, so that those in the servants' house did not get enough peace to sleep because of this knocking and scratching.

On the evening of the 18th of the same month, the ghost came back, much as before. The hired hand Rasmus Jonssen came to me in the living room where I had gone to bed to sleep, and let me – according to my own command – know about this commotion I rose immediately, went with the boy to the servants' house to see if the hired hand had told the truth. After I had been sitting for a little while, it started to knock slowly on the wall, in the same place as before, then becoming louder and louder. I stood up and turned towards the place where it knocked, because I wanted to speak to the ghost. As soon as I rose, it stopped knocking; but as soon as I sat down, it continued as before. Finally, I stood up and spoke to it, but it paid no attention to me. I also sang with the hired hands "Vor Gud hand er saa fast en borg"[18] etc., etc. However, it continued to knock. I went with the hired hands out to the field, thinking we might see the ghost, but we saw nothing, nor did we hear anything while we were outside. But as soon as we came inside again, it started up in the same way, whereupon I made my way down to the living room again, left the matter in God's hand, and told the hired hands that they should not fear because it had no power to harm them in any way.

On the evening of the 19th of the same month, it started up as before. It was notable that the ghost usually started to knock when the people started their evening devotion in the servants' room – it often knocked so loudly that it almost drowned out the song being sung by 11 people. Then I took a gun and loaded it with bullets and shot, which I gave to the hired hand Rasmus, ordering him to make a hole in the wall in the spot where it always knocked. And when he judged that it was knocking just below the hole, he held the gun to the hole and shot, hoping to either scare or hit the ghost. When it was shot by the gun, it [the ghost] ran outside the wall with such a rumble, as if a horse was running with two or three canes striking his legs. Later, it knocked only a few times that evening, and went on its way.

On the 20th ditto[19] it came back again, at the same time – at 9 o'clock in the evening, just like before – and in this way the knocking and scraping on the wall of the servants' house continued until the 2nd of November. It then went away for two evenings, at which time nothing was heard from the ghost, so everyone was glad and thought that its absence would continue.

However, on the 5th of November, it came again at its original time, and [unclear word][20] knocking, then with running, shouting, whinnying, sometimes as a horse which neighed, sometimes mooing as a cow, sometimes as another creature – in sum, in several ways. At this point, the hired hands were terrified, and then it moved from the hired hands' living room, down to the kitchen. I was not at home at that time but in Carlsøen, in order to register the property with bailiff Riberg, so I asked permission from my beloved one for the hired hands to sleep in the attic next to the living room, which was permitted. The ghost immediately came and knocked on the wall outside the attic, where the hired hands lay until morning.

The next evening, which was the 7th of November, the hired hands had to move back to the servants' room to sleep, so that one could have peace in the living room. The ghost did not come down there anymore, but stayed upstairs, occupied with knocking, and sometimes talked – however with such a thick voice that nobody could understand it. But whatever the hired hands said in their living room, the ghost repeated outside. It continued like so every evening until the 10th ditto, when it stayed all night until dawn, after all of the hired hands had risen. Then the hired hand Peder sang, including "Dend signede dag som vi nu see",[21] and he reached the part of the hymn with the verse "Det kors vor Herre hand baer for os for vore synder og iche for sine, det setter jeg idag mellem djævelen og mig, jeg meener Guds værdige piine"[22] etc., etc. Then the ghost shouted 3 times loudly and terrifyingly, and without delay it went away.

On the 11th ditto, I returned home from Karlsøy.[23] That same evening it came like before, and knocked gently for a while, and thereafter talked quietly to itself – however, in such a thick voice that nobody could understand it. When it now passed midnight, it shouted 5 times loudly and terrifyingly, after which it was not heard that night.

On the 12th ditto in the evening, I told the hired hands that they should let me know when the ghost came again, but the hired hand Søren said that it would not come that evening – which it did not. But he said that it would come back the next evening, which was the 13th ditto, and that later it would not come so often, which also happened. I asked him why he knew it, whether he had had any conversation or association with the ghost, and that if so he should tell the truth. To which the hired hand answered, no, absolutely not, God protect him from that, but that it had come to him as in a dream the night before Sunday, which was the 12th ditto, so that it was like he both slept and not slept, and told him that they had cut one of his creatures to death when they were digging in the ground and improving the little hill by the river, and that they had torn the roof of his whole house.

He had therefore sent his hired hand down in order to cause unrest because of the damage they had caused him. He also said that when they had shot at his hired hand – which he could not believe – he wanted to go himself. My hired hand [Søren] asked him, like in a dream, whether his hired hand was not afraid of being shot. "Yes, a bit", answered the ghost. The hired hand then thought that he said to the ghost: "What about you?" "No, no, I shall be careful", it answered. The hired hand then thought that he asked the ghost whether it should haunt still for a long time,[24] to which it answered him: every other night for 2 evenings. "Will you not return several times?" the hired hand asked. "No, not more for a while", it answered, "except one time". Later, he would not more often come to make unrest for anybody, only glide between the hired hands, and the hired hand Søren thought that the ghost looked for him in his sleep like a middle-aged man with a black linen shirt,[25] and black linen trousers, and a black hat. Just as he thought he had seen the ghost, and also talked with it, it disappeared.

On Wednesday evening, which was the 15th ditto, after I had gone to bed and a couple of hours after the hired hands had held prayers,[26] Christen Jørgensen remained in the servants' house, and could sense whether the ghost came back, according to Søren's account. But only when he sat and smoked a pipe of tobacco, and switched off the light – the other hired hands lay in their beds and smoked tobacco – because the ghost would not speak as long as the light burned. Then it started first gently picking[27] at the wall, and it sounded just like the ghost was also smoking tobacco; when the hired hands spat, it did likewise; when they, with shame to say, in order to fix it,[28] passed gas,[29] the ghost did likewise, and at the same time started to howl, and copied several creatures' voices. Then the dogs started to bark, as if they wanted to seek it, and when the dogs were at their loudest, it stopped again. Then the hired hands said between themselves, "Watch whether it not makes the dogs stand still",[30] as it had done previously. "Stand still, stand still", the ghost answered outside, and when Christen Jørgensen sensed that it got voice and would talk, he asked it what was wrong,[31] whether it regretted anything or whether anybody had come too close to him. It then repeated the words they spoke – just like Christen spoke.

Then Christen Jørgensen said to the ghost: "You are expelled from God to Hell to stay there eternally, and you are a hellish fellow, and have nothing to do with God's children." "No, no", said the ghost, and as he [Christen] noticed that it disputed everything and copied what he said, he now started to read the Lord's Prayer in Danish, Latin, and German, which the ghost did likewise, word by word. Afterwards, he scolded the ghost for several things, which scolding it returned. When he then tried to ask it several things, it stopped copying as before, and answered everything he asked. He asked it in this way: "Can you tell me whether I am married?" Then it answered: "Yes, of course you are married". Then, "Where is my wife?" he asked. "In Copenhagen", it answered. "How many children do I have?" he then said. "Three and one out at sea",[32] it answered. "When will he come back, the one who is out at sea?" asked Christen. "In the spring", the ghost answered. He also asked how he fared. "Quite well", it answered. He then asked the ghost: "Do you know whether the bailiff Hindrich R. has drifted ashore any place?" It answered: "No, in the middle of the firth he lies, the Big Man was angry with him". The ghost did not want to mention neither God nor the devil. But when they mentioned this to the ghost, it acted as if it was angry.

He asked further whether any of the bailiff's things had been found. "The boat", it said, "can be found across the firth". "Is it whole?" he asked. "No, somewhat damaged", it answered. "Have they found anything more?" asked Christen. "Yes, the booze, with three bottles of brandy and two bottles of beer, and a half barrel of malt, but the butter still drifts on the sea", it answered. And then everything that he asked, it answered immediately, without making any fuss about it[33] doing something special. Then it said that it would not tell him now, and several things more he asked it, which in the interest of time cannot all be listed here. And when the ghost perceived that they did not fully understand what it said, he repeated the words 2 or 3 times, because its voice was thick and hollow.

The other hired hands said to the ghost: "Was it you that knocked the very first time we heard it on the wall of the servants' room?" It answered: "No, it was one of my boys that I had sent out to disturb you". "Why?" said the hired hands. "Because you have killed one of my animals", he said. "Do you have one animal left?" they said. "No, no", it said. From this it can be noticed that what had come to the hired hand Søren in a dream was just as he had said. "Maybe you are angry. We read, and hold prayers, and ask God for grace". – "No, no, you might well read", it said, "and

be on good terms,[34] the big with the small and the small with the big. Not lie, not steal", it said. "And you shall not give the animals food in the evening", he said. The hired hands then asked it: "Were your people out fishing today?" The ghost answered: "Yes, sure". "Did they get any fish?" the hired hands asked. "Yes, sure", it answered. "We did not get anything", answered the hired hands – which was also true, as they did not get more than three small fish – "HA, ha, ha", said the ghost, as though it was laughing because they did not get any fish. "Tell us some good fishing places where you use to row", said the hired hands. "You go fishing in the same place as we", it said. "Do you have many boys that row?" they said. "Eight boys", it answered, "with two boats". "Do you live here?" asked the hired hands. "Yes, sure, my father also lived here", it answered. "With whom do you ship your fish?" "I had two men who brought the fish with Hans Mortensen's fishing boat's[35] last trading trip – they lay on the starboard side of the boat", it said.

"Do you have many children?" asked the hired hands. "Four", it answered. "Is it you who makes noise with our boats in the boathouse?" "Yes, what about it?"[36] it answered. "Shall we keep your boat?" asked the hired hands. "You may well do so", said the ghost. "Are you going to bring any fish to Bergen for the first trade gathering?" asked the hired hand Rasmus. "Yes, sure, one man's load",[37] it said. "Will you still sail with Hans Mortensen?" the hired hands asked. "Yes, sure", it answered. Now the hired hands wanted to know who of them should sail to the first trade gathering, if I shipped any fish to Bergen, so they asked the ghost. "Who shall sail for master[38] to the first trade gathering?", a hired hand named Peder, asked. "Shall I sail?" he asked. "It shall hold true", the ghost said. Then the hired hand Rasmus said: "What about Jaen, shall he sail, Jan Hollender?"[39] "What, ask him", it said. The other hired hand, Little Jan, said, "What about me? Are you angry with me?" "Ha, ha, ugly man, ugly man", it answered quickly, as if it was angry with him. And since by then they were bored and did not want to speak more to it, Christen Jørgensen went to the door in order to leave the servants' house to go to bed, the ghost said: "I have to cry before I go away, but I will return once more", it said. "How soon will you come back?" said Christen Jørgensen. "I do not tell it now", it answered, and started at once with three cries – one louder than the first, very ugly. They could hear at the same time that it went its way.

On the 20th of November, when Elias the pot tinkerer was staying with me at the farm, mending some kettles – in the evening, but before we held the prayers – it came again, knocking gently at the wall of the servants' room. The hired hand Jaen Hollender was inside, mending a pair of shoes. 'Who is knocking?' said Jaen. 'What are you doing?', asked the ghost. "Stitching shoes", said Jaen. "Aye, pray be told,[40] and stitch shoes, stitch shoes", said the ghost, and told Jaen to say to the kettle mender that he should [not][41] knock so late in the evenings. Jaen did this – went straight away to the brewer's house where the kettle mender sat, and said what he had heard from the ghost, whereupon the kettle mender stopped his knocking.

That same night, the ghost knocked for a while outside where the kettle mender slept, and sometimes coughed, like the kettle mender did inside. On the 29th of November, one of the hired hands, named Peder, stood at the mill in the servants' house in order to grind malt, after they had eaten supper. Then a gentle knocking and scraping on the wall outside began, whereupon the hired hand immediately stopped grinding. Afterwards it was never heard again.

This, truthfully, took place in this way.

Testified[42] by me, A[ntoni] W[illhelm] Bogøe

About the Ghost in Troms Parish at the Magistrate's House[43]

By Isaac Olsen

In the Troms deanery at Skittenelv,[44] in the parish of *Kalsöe*, magistrate Sören Bogoen[45] – a brave,[46] sensible[47] man – built a house on a parcel of land on which no house had previously been built. As soon as he had set his dwelling place and chamber,[48] immediately a ghost started, first with shouting out in the yard, so terribly that it echoed //[49] in the mountains, and increased when it came closer and closer. It spoke like a human being, but one saw the shadow and not himself. He also smoked tobacco in the servants room,[50] so that they saw the smoke from him, and that he lit the fire,[51] and said now and then, "May I shout?" They answered "Shout till you embarrass yourself", then he shouted so terribly that everyone's hair stood on end.[52]

Sometimes some people said, "You did not shout enough, shout more". He said, "The Big Man forbid me, that I must not shout louder". "May I knock on the wall?" And they said, namely the people, "Knock till you embarrass yourself." He knocked so that the moss // fell down inside the walls. They said, "Knock more." He said, "No, the Big Man does not want me to knock more." They said to him, "Kiss there and there." He answered, "Kiss yourself." They asked, "Have you been going fishing today?" He said "Yes", and enumerated how many boats there were, and fishermen, and how much fish they had got. "And if you do not believe", he said, "just go there to see".

And he had all types of talk before him, [53] but when they wanted anything too loud from him, *Res*: he did not dare because of the Big Man, because the Big Man, he did not want this. // He announced[54] then that the bailiff had drowned, where he lay in the sea and that the money chest lay by his head. They asked him sometimes why he was so ugly. He said when his brother who lies in the boathouse arises, he is much bigger and stronger.

They asked him why he haunts here, *Res*: that they have built too near to him and caused damage to his sleep. The river was quite red for two days, this he said came from his sheep's blood. For two years he walked around, this man, even if he was a God-fearing and sensible man, // there was a change in his nature; he avoided all devotions and public assemblies and wanted to fear God alone.

He also said once that he had heard something from the spirit which he would not reveal nor say to any human being except for one man alone, however this man never found him or spoke with him before death came. The magistrate died the 4th year thereafter. Since this happened now 12 years ago, there still live people who saw and heard this.

Troms, August 1716.[55]

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[1] The Regional State Archives in Trondheim, Bishop Gunnerus' collection of ecclesiastical history documents (fol. 185a–186a), here cited from Bratrein 2016.

[2] The Museum of Cultural History, Oslo, Isaac Olsen's copybook. The article authors photographed part of the copybook in the period 2014–2016. The copybook is not in folio format.

The book is divided into three parts: pages 1–264 make up part 1. Pagination restarts at part 2, which is made up of pages 1–573. Part 3 consists of approximately 100 pages. The reference to the ghost story is pp. 531–535.

[3] Schweitzer 2005.

[4] Hauan & Skjelbred 1995:11.

[5] Johan Ernst Gunnerus (1718–1773), theologian and natural scientist, bishop of Trondheim 1758, founded Det Trondhjemske Selskab (The Trondheim Society) in 1760, renamed Det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab (The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters) in 1767.

[6] A slip worn under the outer garment or gown/surcoat. https://www.arkivverket.no/utforsk-arkivene/kulturarvaret-2018/romlingenes-klesdrakter

[7] Bratrein writes elsewhere that there were 12 bottles of beer. Bratrein 1989:549.

[8] This is written in a phonetically dialectical form: *qva daa*, meaning *kva då*.

[9] The categories are: order, speed, frequency, focalization and voice. Genette 1983:35, 87–88, 113, 186; Genette 1990:161-162.

[10] Bogøenæs, Skittenelv. The current placename is Vågnes.

[11] Bogø: *Dend store mand*; Isaac Olsen: *den store mand*.

[12] Bratrein 1989:436. Later magistrates were stationed either in Senjens bailiwick or in Troms parish.

[13] Rebekka was the sister of the bailiff's wife, Anna. Bratrein 1989:434.

[14] Today named Vannvåg.

[15] Orig. *drengene*.

[16] Orig. *flie broen til rette igjen*.

[17] Orig. *Borgerstue* In modern Norwegian *bårstue*, servants' house.

[18] A hymn by Martin Luther from the late 1520s, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott".

[19] In the same way.

[20] Possibly *Sned?*

[21] Anonymous author.

[22] In English: "The cross our Lord he carried for us for our sins and not for his, I place it today between the devil and me, I mean God's dignified pain."

[23] Orig. *Carlsøe*.

[24] Orig. *endda gaae længe*.

[25] Orig. *en sordt lærris kjole*.

[26] Orig. *holdt chor*.

[27] Orig. *smaa piche*.

[28] Orig. *til at fixere det*, meaning fasten the ghost so that it could not move.

[29] Orig. *loed deres rompee gaae*.

[30] Orig. *klomser hundene*.

[31] Orig. *hvad det skadede*.

[32] Orig. *til skibs*.

[33] Orig. *uden det var noget synderligt*.

[34] Orig. *forliiges vel*.

[35] Orig. *jægt.*

[36] Orig. *Ja, qva daa*.

[37] Orig. *een mands førning*.

[38] Orig. *fader*.

[39] Hollender means Dutch.

[40] Orig. *bededø*, in modern Norwegian *betterdø*.

[41] [not] inserted to get the correct meaning.

[42] Orig. *Testeres*.

[43] Orig. *Om det spøgelse i Tromsens Præste gield hos sorren skriveren*.

[44] Orig. *J Thromssens Prousti paa skietten Elff*.

[45] Magistrate Søffren Pederssen Bogø was born in Bergen and received the commission for his position in the Tromsø magistrate district 7 December 1689. He is mentioned as magistrate in a testimony dated 7 August 1694 and in the census of 1701. He died while still in office in 1706. On 19 October 1686, he was appointed as mediator for the French, English, Scottish and Irish tradesmen in Bergen. In the census of 1701, he lived at Skittenelv and was 44 years old at the time. He was married twice. After his death, the division of his estate was held in Tromsø on 23 May 1707; his property (556 *riksdaler*) was shared between his widow and their three children. Antoni Willhelm was the eldest son, and he was 25 years old in 1707. Ref. Hasselberg & Dahl 1999:53–54.
[46] Orig. *braf*.
[47] Orig. *for numstigen* sensible.
[48] Orig. *boe og Værelse*.
[49] // denotes page shift.
[50] Orig. *Borstuen*, modern Norwegian, *bårstue*.
[51] Orig. *at hand slog Jld*.
[52] Orig. *over ende*.
[53] Orig. *alle haande snack for sig*.
[54] Orig. *Kunde giorde*.
[55] IO copy book, Part II, pp. 531–535.

The Quantitative Scope of Witchcraft Trials in Norwegian Bohuslen 1587–1658

A Survey Based on Primary Sources

Ellen Alm

Abstract

Bohuslen belonged to Norway until 18 March 1658, when the county was ceded to the Swedes as a result of the Peace of Roskilde. This area has fallen between two stools when it comes to documenting Norwegian witchcraft trials. Swedish historians have regarded the area as Norwegian and Norwegian historians have considered it as Swedish. Until now, this area has not been investigated with regard to Norwegian witchcraft trials. This article aims to chart the quantitative scope of witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen through an empirical study of primary sources. The fluctuation and severity of the witchcraft trials will be examined, especially in comparison to witchcraft trials in Jutland and Eastern Norway

Keywords: Witchcraft trials, Bohuslen, primary sources, court records, fiscal records, Sweden, Denmark, Norway

Norwegian Bohuslen

Since historical research on Norwegian matters tends to follow today's national boundaries, the witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen have been in the shade of history. The current national border between Sweden and Norway was established in 1751. Before that time, the boundary between Norway and Sweden was more fluid, running somewhere along the Keel, the mountain range between the two countries. In Finnmark, which was close to both Sweden and Russia, the borders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were more diffuse than further south. At that time Swedish, Russian and Danish-Norwegian authorities were all active in the same territory. This was fertile ground for conflict, being one of the reasons for the Kalmar War of 1611–1613. The border situation was probably not as unclear in Bohuslen. The roughly 150 kilometre long coastline between Svinesund and the mouth of the Göta River was called Viken in ancient times. It was a troubled area, but it had belonged to Norway ever since the reign of Harald Fairhair (c. 865-930 AD). In the Middle Ages the area was an important centre for the Union Kings of Sweden-Norway. When

Norway became part of Denmark, the area was still a theatre of war, now as a result of rivalries between the royal houses of Sweden and Denmark-Norway. Bohuslen remained a Norwegian county until the Peace of Roskilde, apart from a Swedish intermezzo in the years 1523–1532. The *len* (a "fief", roughly equivalent to a county) was named Bohuslen (Bohuslän in Swedish) after Bohus Castle. The fortress, which began contruction in 1308 by the Norwegian king Håkon V Magnusson, was expanded several times developments until it was ceded to Sweden in 1658. The fortress still dominates the town of Kungelv (Kungälv in Swedish). It is located on the northern arm of the Göta River where it divides before flowing into the sea. The southern arm of the river led into what was Swedish territory. Bohus Castle was the residence of the feudal overlord, marking Norway's south-eastern outpost towards Sweden. In seventeenth-century sources the fife is termed "Bohus & Viken", with Bohus referring to the southern part and Viken the northern part. People generally spoke Norwegian, had Norwegian names, and were subject to Norwegian law. Only after the county fell to Sweden was the population Swedified (Holmberg 1963). Like the other counties in Norway, it was governed from Copenhagen via lords of Danish descent. This means that witchcraft trials before 1658 in this area can be counted among the Norwegian witchcraft trials.

Swedish Witchcraft Trials

Swedish historians have mainly studied the violent Blåkulla trials that took place in central Sweden in the years 1668–1676. The source material for these and later trials has been investigated from different points of view and covering different time spans (Ankarloo 1984; Lagerlöf-Génetay 1990; Sörlin 1993; Oja 1999; Östling 2002). The Blåkulla trials started in Älvdalen in the north and spread like wildfire through Sweden. The trials came to an end in Stockholm, by this time about 300 people had been executed.

For the witchcraft trials in Bohuslen, the years 1669–1672 have been thoroughly studied. The area had by then become Swedish but was still subject to Norwegian law.[1] The first study elucidating the witchcraft trials in Bohuslen 1669–1672 came as early as 1918. Through extensive archival studies, the professor of church history Emanuel Linderholm gave a detailed account of the course of the witchcraft trials during this period (Linderholm 1918). After Linderholm, relevant court records from the same trials were edited by the local historian Lars Manfred Svenungsson in a comprehensive source publication (Svenungsson 1970).[2] More recently, the historian Göran Malmstedt studied the material again from the perspective of the history of mentalities (Malmstedt 2018). He has focused on the underlying conceptual world and the perception of reality that made the witchcraft trials possible.[3]

The Witchcraft Trials in Bohuslen under Swedish Rule 1669–1672

The wave of witchcraft trials that swept over Bohuslen from 1669 to 1672 was extremely brutal. It is still shocking reading to see a judicial system on the wrong ideological track. The order to eliminate witches in Bohuslen was issued in August 1669 by Queen Eleonora's regency government during the minority of Carl XI. The governor of Bohuslen, Harald Stake, ordered his officers to intervene against crimes of witchcraft in the region (Svenungsson 1970:13). In the style familiar from the Blåkulla trials, and unlike the Norwegian approach to witchcraft trials, itinerant commissions of inquiry were set up, involving the active participation of local bailiffs, judges, and clergymen. The eradication of witches in Bohuslen in 1669–1672 is a horrific example of a judicial system that uncritically, even by the legal standards of the time, gave credence to accusations provoked by groundless rumours, gossip, and quarrels in local communities. The representatives of the court worked with devastating efficiency. There was extensive use of pressure, coercion, trial by water, torture, and feigned executions.

Vague suspicions and formal accusations from local people concerning *maleficium* were quickly transformed in court into accusations of devil worship. The result was chain trials with many people charged and resulting in many deaths. Malmstedt shows a total of 63 people who were brought to court. Only 7 or 8 people were formally accused by locals. The rest entered the judicial system as a consequence of charges pursued by the authorities (Malmstedt 2018:47–49). When this wave was over, 28 people had been executed and 17 died as a result of their treatment in prison. The rest received other penalties and only 12 were acquitted (Svenungsson 1970:327–329; Malmstedt 2018:43, 47, 52–53, 205–206).[4] The historian Per Sörlin has suggested that the harsh intervention can be explained as an overreaction precisely because of the county's newly acquired status as Swedish (Sörlin 2006:135). At the same time, it is natural to think that the action against witches in Bohuslen may have been stimulated by the ongoing Blåkulla trials in central Sweden. Based on individual statements that were heard during these trials, several Swedish historians have assumed that witchcraft trials had also taken place in the area before this. However, the number and form of these have been uncertain.

Assumptions about Witchcraft Trials in Norwegian Bohuslen

The only study seeking to concretize witchcraft trials in Bohuslen under Norwegian rule is a popular article from 2021 by the historian Helene Carlsson on the website of Bohusläns Museum.[5] She refers to specific pages from the court records in Kungelv. She has also had access to transcripts of the county fiscal records in private ownership.[6] In the Norwegian era she

writes about four witchcraft trials in 1629 and notes that at least 13 witchcraft trials were held in the 1620s, without further specification. Three of the four witches from 1629 are widely known because of information in the court records from 1669–1672. Two of these were witches who were executed in Kungelv in 1669 whose mothers had been burned at the stake forty years previously for witchcraft in the same place. A third who was also executed in Kungelv in 1669, had a mother or grandmother or aunt in Marstrand who had previously been executed for sorcery. The date of that execution is unknown (Svenungsson 1970:91).[7] On adjacent pages in the judgement book for the year 1629 a fourth woman appears. These four witches are the subject of an exhibition in the tower "Father's Hat" in Bohuslen Fortress.[8] The court records from 1669–1672 also mention that some of those accused of witchcraft in Marstrand who were now in their fifties, sixties, or seventies had parents and ancestors who were either suspected of or burned for witchcraft (Svenungsson 1970:19). These ancestors are so far anonymous, but it is hoped that they will be identified through this study.

Did Witchcraft Trials Fluctuate in Norwegian Bohuslen as Witchcraft Trials Did in Jutland and Eastern Norway?

When witchcraft cases from the Norwegian era point to events in the 1620s, it has been speculated that the witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen may have followed a pattern of fluctuation similar to that seen in Jutland and Eastern Norway. It is natural to envisage some connection in view of the geographical proximity of the areas to each other and the extensive mobility that existed through fishery, trade, and military activities (Johnsen 1905; Holmberg 1963). In Jutland and Eastern Norway, witchcraft trials were concentrated in the years 1617/19–1625 (Johansen 1991:41; Knutsen 1998:29). This was then followed by a sharp fall in the number of trials, which remained low for the rest of the century, with the exception of a few brief clusters after mid-century. It was also during this spesific period that mortality was highest in connection with the witchcraft trials. The historian Jens Christian V. Johansen has shown that 60 per cent of the death sentences in Jutland came in the years 1617–1625 (Johansen 1991:41–46). Similarly, the historian Gunnar W. Knutsen has found that 67 per cent of the death sentences in Eastern Norway fell within the period 1619–1625 (Knutsen 1998:29). The accumulation of witchcraft trials in the early 1620s is viewed by both historians as a result of the implementation of the new witchcraft decree of 12 October 1617. The decree, which was applied throughout the Danish-Norwegian kingdom, emphasized that sorcery was a diabolical crime. It ordered the authorities to be vigilant in prosecuting such offences. It remains to be seen whether the witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen show a similar pattern of development.

Problems concerning the Sources

The statistics for witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen that will be presented here are inextricably linked to the nature of the sources. Since witchcraft trials were formal court cases, it is natural to seek information about them in documents that produce this type of information, namely the county's fiscal records and court records.[9] In the accounts there is an entry labelled *sakefall*. Under this heading the bailiffs had to list revenue from fines and income from the sale of property confiscated from criminals. Also listed here are expenses in connection with court cases, imprisonment, and execution. The court records should ideally document everything that took place in court. If the series of court records and accounts were complete, we would have a very reliable survey of witchcraft trials. This is rarely the case.

Fiscal Records for Bohuslen before 1658

The physical account books for the county of Bohus and Viken are kept in the National Archives in Copenhagen (Rigsarkivet, RAK) but can be read online.[10] They cover the entire county and are grouped together to cover two or three years at a time, for example "Baahus og Vigen 1619–1622". The fiscal records have been given new covers by the National Archives and the covers are numbered as "books". Some of the combined accounts may nevertheless have two covers with the same book number. The series of accounts up to 1658 consists of 35 book numbers, but in practice they consist of far more "books".[11] Although the fiscal records for the county start in 1587, there are large gaps up to 1601. We have records of income and expenditure for court cases for the years 1601–1605, but then there is a lacuna until 1609. From that year, the records appear to be largely continuous. An impressive number of appendices have been preserved. Appendices provide somewhat more detailed information about the reason for a fiscal transaction than the brief notices in the entry itself. For some convicted witches, however, the appendices are missing. It turns out that the entries for fines are not always consistent in documenting witchcraft cases. Witches who are not mentioned here have been found as indirect information in the feudal lord's own accounts for Bohus Castle. The information is recorded under the heading "Uncertain expenses in several respects" and was entered when the bailiffs demanded reimbursement for expenses they had incurred in connection with imprisonment and executions. Why witchcraft trials are sometimes not recorded as expenditure under the case accounts is uncertain. The accounts for Bohuslen tend to give an idea of witchcraft cases that entailed considerable expenses for the bailiffs, often the costly cases that involved flogging or the death penalty. The less serious cases that involved more modest expenses, as for instance when witches were chased out of the town, those who were shamed in church and publicly, or those who were

acquitted, will thus not be found here. But both the serious and the minor witchcraft cases ought to be captured in the court records as long as they were brought to trial. But are they?

The Court Records for Bohuslen before 1658

While the fiscal records may appear to be fairly well preserved, the situation for the court records is the reverse. Only two judgement books survived. They are from the town court and municipal authority of Kungelv. The town court (*rådhusretten*) was the court of first instance in a town.[12] There were otherwise five jurisdictional districts connected to the lower courts (*sorenskriveri*) in Bohuslen, in addition to the market towns of Marstrand (the largest), Kungelv, and Uddevalla, which were separate jurisdictions (Linderholm 1918:75; Johnsen 1905:195, 246). This means that we lack court records from the judicial administration in the rest of the county. Nor are any records from the court of appeal (*lagting*) preserved. There were two courts of appeal, Bohus and Viken, which were served by the same judge (*lagmann*) (Linderholm 1918:75). The witchcraft trials attested in court records therefore only reflect trials in the town of Kungelv. The different preservation situation for the fiscal accounts and the court records may be due to the fact that accounts were sent to Copenhagen for audit and remained there. The court's judgement books were archived in the feudal lord's castle or by local recorders (Thime 2019: 32ff). It may be that the county's court records were already lost during the Norwegian evacuation in 1658, when the entire castle archive was torched and burned down.[13]

Fortunately, the two preserved court books cover a longer period of time, 1615–1629 and 1629–1651.[14] The original books are stored in the Regional Archives in Gothenburg.[15] They are digitally accessible through a paywall at "ArkivDigital" to be read online.[16] Both books were restored in 1991.[17] The restoration appears to have been carried out in the old-fashioned way by taking the pages apart. They were then cleaned, cut and patched with washi paper. Then they were bound again and given new running pagination with modern stamps on each odd-numbered page. Since the original pagination has been cut away, it is impossible to detect lacunae by following the page numbers. The content can only be checked by reading it. It was probably in the binding process that, for example, a witchcraft case from 1629 ended up in the year 1618, but for the most part the dates in the books follow the correct chronological order. The first book from 1615 to 1629 appears to have documented the town's weekly court sessions for each year. The second book for 1629–1651 is deficient. From about 1638 there are gaps of weeks and months. Later, the records for each year consist of just 1–10 written pages concerning a small number of cases. The last entry is for 10 February 1651. It must be assumed that the judgement book is bound

from the fragments that have been preserved.

Several aspects of the court records are problematic. The books from the Kungelv court are written in a steady, clear Gothic hand. There is exceptionally generous space between the cases that are recorded. There are few crossings-out, corrections, or additions. This neatness arouses suspicion. Court proceedings (interrogation, presentation of evidence, summary points) noted down *in situ* often tend to be written in haste, with words crossed out and inserted. In 1633 the authorities felt obliged to curb the practice by which recorders first wrote on loose sheets during the actual court proceedings and then entered the information neatly into the judgement book. Judges and recorders were ordered to keep a numbered court book "and in it write all the business that is conducted, judgements, testimonies and other court proceedings, and not write in court on other or loose paper and then make a fair copy at home".[18] The bad habit of writing on loose sheets persisted. The law remained, in 1687 with the addition that "the sheets and pages shall also be filled, and no space shall be left vacant in which anything might be added".[19] In connection with the study of witchcraft cases in Finnmark, several notes have been found with detailed information from court proceedings written on loose sheets (Hagen & Sparboe 1998:37–40). The loose sheets and judgement books belong to different archives.[20] When the records on loose sheets and the books were compared, it turned out that the recorders did not consistently enter all the cases noted on loose sheets into the book. The scribe thus made a selection of which cases to enter into the judgement book. The historian Per Sörlin assumes that a similar practice also applies to the court records for Härjedalen and Jämtland, but there the preliminary notes are lost (Sörlin 2016:XXXIV). Judging by the neat script and the ample space between the entries in the Kungelv court books, there is reason to believe that these too were copied from loose first-hand notes and not written *in situ.* An indication in the same direction is that there are other types of court cases where the first record already notes the decision of the court that occurred up to two months later.[21] This is done in continuous text, not as an inserted addition. The scribe thus knew the outcome of the case when he first entered it into the judgement book. If it is correct to assume that the judgement book for Kungelv was written on the basis of loose notes, it may mean that some witchcraft cases may for one reason or another have been omitted by the scribe.

Another aspect of the judgement books is the quality of their records of the witchcraft cases that have been entered. They appear highly summary in form, with nowhere near the wealth of information in the records of the witchcraft trials of 1669–1672. In some instances it is impossible to obtain a clear idea of what the alleged crime involved, how the trial proceeded, and the identity and number of the people accused. This problem applies in particular to the serious witchcraft cases, where there must originally have

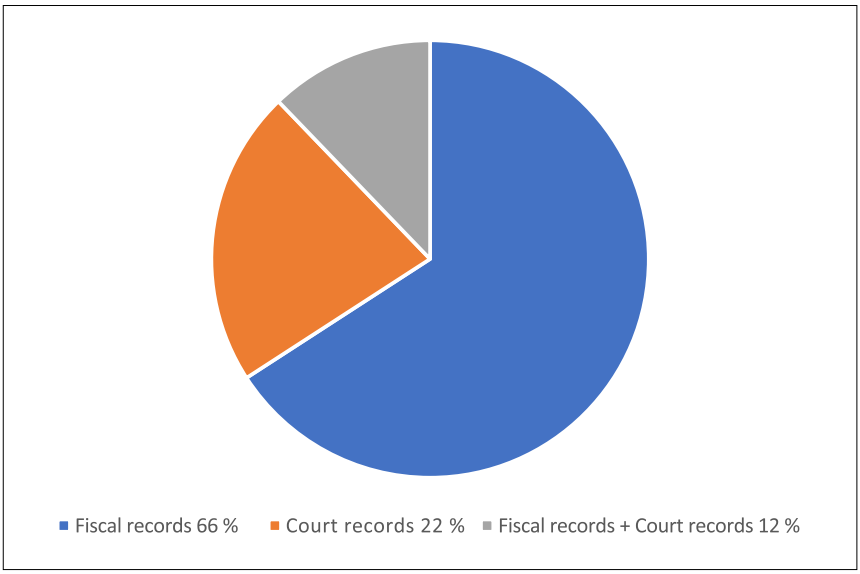

Figure 1. Witchcraft trials in Bohuslen documented in court records and fiscal records 1587–1658, broken down by the different types of sources.

been long texts recording the court proceedings. We are thus faced with a situation where it must be assumed that the scribe in Kungelv not only made a selection of which cases to enter into the judgement book, but also a selection of how much information was to be included. From this we know that the judgement books have certain weaknesses that affect their reliability in documenting witchcraft cases.

How Reliable are the Sources in Documenting the Number of Trials?

We have documentation of 41 witchcraft trials in Bohuslen, as listed at the end of this article. The witchcraft trials are broken down by the different types of sources in Figure 1.

The chart shows that it is the fiscal sources that, naturally, record the most cases. They cover the entire course of the trials and they capture witchcraft cases from the whole county. How reliable are the fiscal sources in providing a good picture of the number of cases? Would the number of witchcraft trials be increased if more court records were preserved? Witchcraft trials in Kungelv from 1615–1651 (1655[22]) may be suitable as a basis for comparison. From this town there are preserved court records and fiscal records. In Kungelv a total of 16 witchcraft trials can be documented, distributed among the different source types as shown in Figure 2.

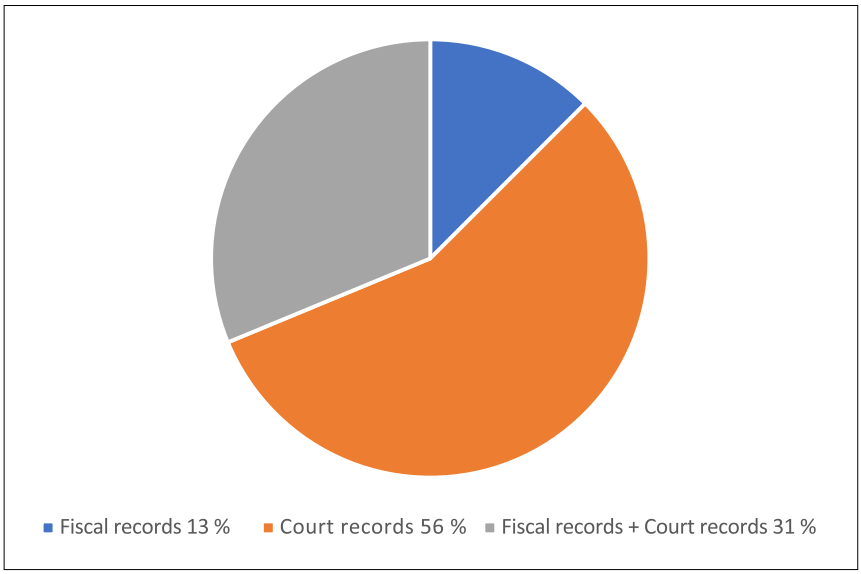

Figure 2. Witchcraft trials in Kungelv, percentages attested in court records and accounts 1615–1651 (and from 1655 in a unique extract in a Swedish judgement book).

In the town of Kungelv, nine cases can be found only in the court records, two cases can be found only in the fiscal records, and five cases are documented in both fiscal records and court records. Now the distribution of the witchcraft trials in the sources is the reverse of what we saw in Figure 1. It is the court records that document the most witchcraft cases, including acquittals, people who fled justice, and people who were given non-capital punishments. In Kungelv all the serious cases were included in both the fiscal and the court records, apart from one execution that is found only in the fiscal records (in 1630).[23] We may therefore assume that if the court records from the whole county had been preserved, we would have been able to document more witchcraft cases in Bohuslen. It is especially the less serious cases that we lack when there are no court records. This means that the sources that have been preserved are unlikely to give us the full picture of the quantitative scope of the witchcraft trials. The number presented here must be regarded as a minimum figure. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that the sources show a tendency in development of the trials that can serve as a starting point for further examination.

The Fluctuation of Witchcraft Trials in Bohuslen 1587–1658

One question of interest is whether the 41 witchcraft trials in Bohuslen followed a pattern of fluctuation similar to that in Jutland and Eastern Norway.

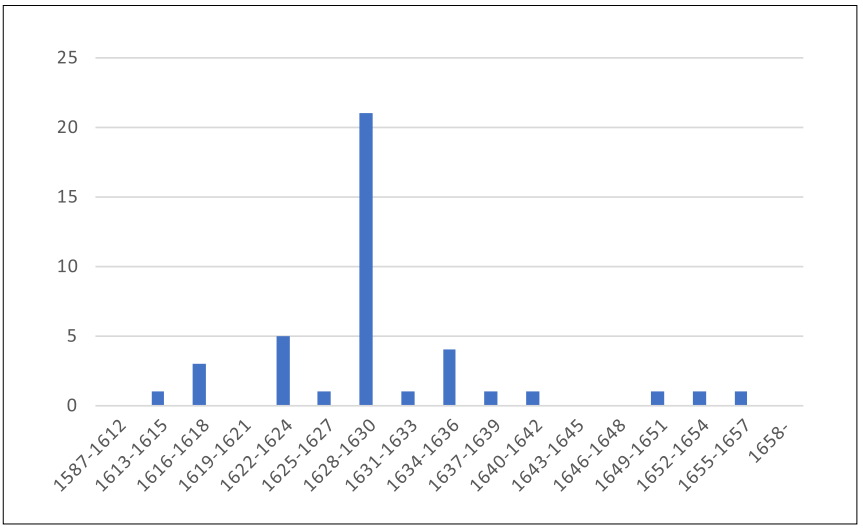

Figure 3. Fluctuation in witchcraft trials in Bohuslen by three-year intervals.

Did the 1617 decree lead to a rapid increase in the number of trials, as observed in Jutland and Eastern Norway? It is clear from the court records for Kungelv that the 1617 decree was proclaimed at the court on 12 May 1618.[24] It was probably spread to the rest of the county at about the same time. The fluctuation of witchcraft trials in Bohuslen is shown in Figure 3.

Although we have sources from 1587 onwards, the first witchcraft trial does not occur until 1615. From that year until 1617 there were four witchcraft trials at different places in the county. From the proclamation of the witchcraft decree in Bohuslen in 1618 until 1625, five trials for witchcraft were held. They took place in Marstrand, concentrated in the years 1623–1624. They probably concern the ancestors of the aforementioned witches in Marstrand, who were in their fifties, sixties, or seventies during the Swedish trials in 1669–1672. It is possible that the witchcraft decree may have played a role in this local prosecution of witches in the market town of Marstrand. But the time span from 1618 to 1623 may seem somewhat long. The trials in Marstrand may also have been a contagious reaction to ongoing witchcraft trials in Jutland and Eastern Norway, which were now in their most intensive phase. However, what we see is not an immediate and striking increase in the number of witchcraft trials after the issuance of the witchcraft decree, of the kind observed in Jutland and Eastern Norway.

The great concentration of witchcraft trials in Bohuslen occurs somewhat later, more specifically in the years 1628–1630. In these three years alone, 21 out of 41 witchcraft cases were tried. They make up 51 per cent of the trial material. Ten of these cases took place in Kungelv, while the rest occurred

in different places in the county. This may suggest that we are dealing with a general escalation of witchcraft trials in Bohuslen. Subsequently, the number of trials falls rapidly and levels out during the rest of the studied period. The ten witchcraft trials that took place after 1630 seem like isolated events. For much of the 1640s, for example, there were no trials. We know, however, that this levelling of the curve was not constant. Another huge wave of witchcraft trials came in 1669–1672, but this time under Swedish rule.

The Bohuslen witchcraft trials do not follow the same pattern of development as those in Jutland and Eastern Norway. One exception is the local trials in Marstrand, which fall within the same period as those in Jutland and Eastern Norway. It is a later development in Bohuslen with a high concentration in the years 1628–1630. However, there is a common denominator in that all three areas witnessed numerous witchcraft trials in the 1620s. The period from the implementation of the witchcraft decree in Bohuslen in 1618 to the high-intensity phase in 1628 seems in every respect to have been too long for the proclamation of the decree itself to explain this development. The explanation should probably be sought elsewhere in the historical context. However, the fluctuation pattern in Bohuslen shows yet another similarity to the trials in Jutland and Eastern Norway. There is a prolonged levelling off after the high-intensity phase.

The Proportion of Serious Cases

The fluctuation in the frequency of witchcraft trials nevertheless does not show how dangerous it was to be accused of witchcraft in Bohuslen. The word "dangerous" here means the willingness of the court to impose the death penalty for witchcraft. The investigation can document 24 people who lost their lives due to witchcraft charges, either as a result of legitimate judicial proceedings or as a result of torture and/or suicide before the trial ended. The 24 dead include one person who received a death sentence but died before the execution could take place, and three people who hanged themselves in prison. The four who died before the trial was over were subjected to torture.[25] In connection with the witchcraft trials, expenses were listed for the purchase of a rack, shears, and twine to be used to torture the accused. This information can be found in the accounts for 1623 in Marstrand[26] and 1629 in Kungelv.[27] Table 1 is a specification of the outcome of the witchcraft trials.

Outcome	**Number**
Executed/Burned	20
Died in prison	1
Suicide in prison	3
Outlawed	1
Banished and/or whipped	6
Other, non-capital punishment	1
Fine	5
Acquitted	3
Escaped from prison	1
Total	41

Table 1. Outcomes of witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen.

The 24 deaths correspond to 58.5

per cent of the accused. If the four unfinished cases are excluded, the 20 executions make up 49 per cent of the accused. This seems like an unusually high death rate. In reality, it was probably not so high because the less serious cases are under-represented in the source material from Bohuslen. The witchcraft trials in Eastern Norway have been studied on the basis of fairly similar sources, mainly fiscal records and fragments of court records (Næss 1982:28–30; Knutsen 1998:6). The death rate among those accused in Eastern Norway is estimated at 36.5 per cent (Knutsen 1998:22). Yet the Eastern Norwegian material is subject to the same reservation that the less serious cases may be under-represented, and that this estimate may be too high. In Jutland the witchcraft trials have been studied on the basis of much richer source material (court records) than those in Bohuslen. The Jutland material provides a better basis for reliable figures for the number of people who were executed and how many received other punishments or were acquitted. Johansen has found that 49.6 per cent of the accused were executed (Johansen 1991:15, 43). The nature of the sources in Bohuslen makes it difficult to arrive at a reliable estimate of how many death sentences were passed in relation to milder sentences. The figure is probably somewhere between the percentage estimated here and Næss's calculation. Næss believes that about 20–25 per cent of those accused of witchcraft in Norway were executed (Næss 1982:372).

Because the sources tend to show only the serious cases, however, we can say something about *when* it was most dangerous to be accused of witchcraft in Bohuslen. Do the years 1617/19–1625 stand out as particularly dangerous, as in Jutland and Eastern Norway? The outcome of the trials in Bohuslen as distributed over time is shown in Figure 4.

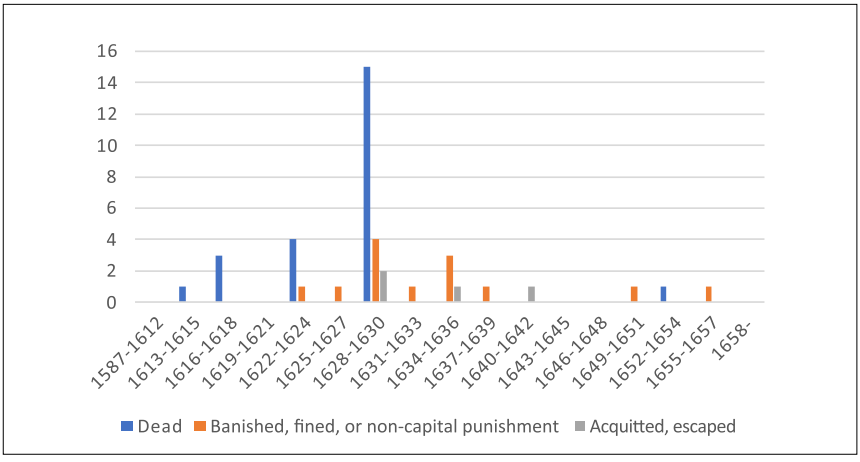

Figure 4. Outcomes of witchcraft trials in Bohuslen by three-year intervals. Blue: Died.

The sources show that virtually all death sentences were passed before 1631. That year marks a watershed between the serious and the less serious witchcraft cases. Executions appear in the sources from 1615. The first death sentences were passed at various places in the county. From the year 1615 there is therefore reason to believe that the judicial system took the crime of witchcraft seriously. Those executed in the years 1623–1624 concern the aforementioned witches in Marstrand. By far the most intensive phase in which witchcraft trials led to death sentences came in 1628–1630. It was during this short period of time that 62.5 per cent of witchcraft trials with fatal outcomes took place (15 out of 24). The many executions in 1628–1630 occurred both in Kungelv and elsewhere in the county. Several accused people from out of town were also transported to Bohus Castle to be interrogated and executed. As we have seen, instruments of torture were purchased for this purpose. Overall, this may indicate that we are dealing with a witchcraft panic that erupted at several places in the county in 1628–1630, but with a particular concentration around the town of Kungelv and Bohus Castle. In any case, it can be concluded that when it comes to serious witchcraft cases, we once again see a delayed development in Bohuslen in relation to Jutland and Eastern Norway.

A Distinct Watershed in 1631

Another striking observation arises from the material. There is a great difference in the types of cases that came before the court before and after 1631. The cases before 1631 mostly concerned *trolldom* or sorcery. The cases after 1631 was all about *signeri* or the use of non-harmful "white magic". White magic concerned use of popular healing, divination, love-magic and involved incantations and the recitation of Christian-like prayers. The 1617 decree prescribed the death penalty for *rette trollfolk*, "proper sorcerers" while white magicians were to be banished and their clients fined. Only one witchcraft case after 1631 concerned both white magic and sorcery and the man responsible was executed.[28] When we find that virtually all the serious cases occurred before 1631, it cannot be ruled out that the issuance of the witchcraft decree led the courts to pass harsher sentences for crimes of sorcery throughout the 1620s. At the same time, we have seen that this was a

Bohus Castle, where the accused witches were imprisoned and several of them committed suicide during the trials in 1629.

trend that started as early as 1615, before the proclamation of the witchcraft decree in the county.

The type of trials seen in the source material after 1631, and the levelling off in the frequency of trials is distinctive. It leads us to wonder why no more serious cases occurred in the county. Belief in the evil forces of sorcery was far from abandoned. In a legal sense, there was no reason why the court should take witchcraft any less seriously than before. The witchcraft decree of 1617 was highly effective. In a witchcraft trial in 1636 the decree was read aloud in full to a woman who was banished for using white magic.[29] The decree was even published in revised language in Christian IV's great resolution (*recess*) of 1643.[30] The reasons for the milder character of witchcraft trials after 1631 deserve further study. A sheer guess, based on statements recorded in disputes brought before the Kungelv court in 1629, could be that far more than the documented sorcerers were charged with witchcraft, even including people with ample resources.[31] It has previously been shown that when witchcraft charges were levelled against the better-off, it could trigger troublesome counter-suits in the form of charges of defamation and legal criticism of the procedural methods that had allowed innocent people to be accused of witchcraft. If the criticism prevailed, it could have led the court to exercise more caution when dealing with crimes of witchcraft. Serious witchcraft trials could even cease, either permanently or temporarily (Alm 2014).

Conclusion

This study has sought to document the quantitative extent of witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen, based on a study of primary sources. The investigation has found that 41 people were accused of witchcraft. Certain weaknesses in the source material are problematized, which means that this number must be regarded as a minimum figure. The sources tend to record the serious witchcraft cases while the less serious ones are probably under-represented. The documentation may nevertheless show a tendency in the material analysed here. A key question has been whether the overall trend of the trials followed the fluctuation pattern observed in Jutland and Eastern Norway. The investigation has found that there are certain similarities to Jutland and Eastern Norway. Among other things, most of the witchcraft trials took place in the 1620s, followed by a steep drop throughout the time Bohuslen belonged to Norway. Nevertheless, the development in Bohuslen lagged behind Jutland and Eastern Norway. Witchcraft trials were at their most intense and most severe in Jutland and in Eastern Norway between 1617/19 and 1625, whereas in Bohuslen the years 1628–1630 stand out with their high concentration of witchcraft trials and serious outcomes. The witchcraft decree of 1617 was proclaimed in Bohuslen in May 1618.

The long-time span between 1618 and 1628 makes it difficult to see the period with a high concentration of witchcraft trials in Bohuslen as being directly related to the implementation of the decree. A possible exception is the small cluster of local witchcraft cases in the market town of Marstrand in the years 1623–1624. These witchcraft trials may also have been a contagious reaction to the witchcraft trials in Jutland and Eastern Norway, which were in their most intensive phase at that time. It was most dangerous to be accused of witchcraft in Bohuslen before 1631. Virtually all the death sentences came before that year. The year 1631 marks a distinct watershed in other respects. Witchcraft trials before 1631 mostly concerned "sorcery." Witchcraft trials after 1631 concerned the use of white magic, which did not carry a death penalty.

The investigation shows that the brutal Swedish witchcraft trials in the years 1669–1672 were not unique events in this part of the country. It has provided concrete answers to speculation about Norwegian witchcraft trials arising from the material on the Swedish cases. Despite the answers that have emerged here, other questions remain unanswered. If the witchcraft trials were scarcely a direct result of the witchcraft decree of 1617, other explanations should be sought in the historical context. The different records and their interrelationships should also be studied in more detail. The aim of this study can nevertheless be said to have been accomplished. We now know that there were more than four plus thirteen witchcraft trials in Norwegian Bohuslen. The witches have been identified. The witchcraft cases displayed some similarities to the trend in trials in Jutland and Eastern Norway, but were also different in that they were a later development.

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Appendix: Documented Witches in Bohuslen 1587–1658

1. Nordvigen 1615: A prisoner (man). Crime: not stated. Burnt. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1614–1616 book 4. Bohus Castle accounts. Fiscal year 1614–1615. Appendix 27 (missing).
2. Søndervigen 1616: Oste Johannes. Crime: sorcery. Burnt. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1614–1616 book 4. Bohus Castle accounts. Fiscal year 1615–1616. Appendix 47, 48.

3. Indland 1616–1617: A prisoner (woman). Crime: sorcery. Burnt. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1616–1619 book 5[a]. Bohus Castle accounts. Fiscal year 1616–1617.
4. Søndervigen 1616–1617: Karin of Ormdal. Crime: sorcery. Executed. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1616–1619 book 5[b]. Fiscal year 1616–1617. Appendix 2 under item E.
5. Marstrand 1623: A woman. Crime: sorcery. Burnt. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1622–1625 book 7. Bohus Castle accounts. Fiscal year 1623–1624. Appendix 55 (missing).
6. Marstrand 1623: Ragnhild. Crime: sorcery. Banished. Source: same as above.
7. Marstrand 1624: One of "two female persons". Crime: sorcery. Burnt. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1622–1625 book 7. Bohus Castle accounts. Fiscal year 1623–1624. Appendix 64 (missing).
8. Marstrand 1624: The second of "two female persons". Crime: sorcery. Burnt. Source: same as above.
9. Marstrand 1624: Maren Ole Samveigs. Crime: sorcery. Burnt. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1622–1625 book 7. Fiscal year 1623–1624. Appendix 98 (missing).
10. Nordvigen bailiwick 1626: Oluf of Hofferød. Crime: white magic. Property confiscated, outlawed. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1625–1627 book 8[a], fiscal year 1626–1627. Appendices 7 and 8.
11. Søndervigen, Ryer parish 1628: Birgit Tordsdatter. Crime: sorcery. Executed and burned at Bohus Castle. Source: (RAK) Lr. B. & V. 1627–1629 book 9[a]: Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1628–1629. Appendix 62.
12. Søndervigen, Sundenes 1628: Karen Gundelle. Crime: sorcery. Executed and burned at Bohus Castle. Source: same as above.
13. Søndervigen, Sundenes 1628: Engelbrett Svendsen. Crime: sorcery. Executed and burned at Bohus Castle. Source: same as above.
14. Søndervigen, Sundenes 1628: Engelbrett Svendsen's wife Eline. Crime: sorcery. Hanged herself in captivity. Source: same as above.
15. Søndervigen, Sundenes 1628: Engelbrett Svendsen and his wife Eline's daughter Merete. Crime: sorcery. Executed and burned at Bohus Castle. Source: same as above.
16. Søndervigen, Sundenes 1628: Gundelle of Hjellemseng. Crime: sorcery. Executed and burned at Bohus Castle. Source: same as above.
17. Kungelv 1629: Gundelle Andersens. Crime: sorcery. Hanged herself in captivity at Bohus Castle. Burned *post mortem*. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1629–1630. Appendix 80. TB AIa:1a: 561, 563.
18. Kungelv 1629: Eline Svend Lerris. Crime: sorcery. Acquitted. Source: TB AIa:1a: 568; TB AIa:1b: 571.
19. Kungelv 1629: Marit Folkvord. Crime: sorcery. She died the day she was to be executed. Burned *post mortem* Bohus Castle. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1629–1630. Appendix 80. TB AIa:1a: 563.
20. Kungelv 1629: Birgitte Gabriels. Crime: white magic. Fine. Source: TB AIa:1a:99–100, 569–670; TB AIa: 1b: 571–572.
21. Kungelv 1629: Marit Smeds. Crime: sorcery. Hanged herself in captivity. Burned *post mortem* Bohus Castle. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1629–1630. Appendix 80. TB AIa: 1b: 571.

22. Kungelv 1629: Marte Møgs. Crime: sorcery. Burned at Bohus Castle. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1629–1630. Appendix 80. TB AIa: 1b:572. See also bailiff's demand for settlement for the four women TB AIa: 1b: 600.
23. Kungelv 1629: Helge Claus Povelsen. Crime: sorcery. Swore innocence. Acquitted. Source: TB AIa: 1b: 580, 582, 686, 602.
24. Hisingen 1629: Gunnele Halvordsdatter. Crime: sorcery. Burnt. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1629–1630. Appendix 81.
25. Uddevalla 1629: "Yet another sorceress". Crime: sorcery. Executed. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1629–1630.
26. Indland 1629: One of "some sorceresses". Crime: sorcery. Executed. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1630–1631. Appendix 71 (missing).
27. Indland 1629: The second of "some sorceresses". Crime: sorcery. Executed. Source: same as above.
28. Kungelv 1630: A sorceress. Crime: sorcery. Executed. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1630–1631. Appendix 90 (missing).
29. Kungelv 1630: Claus the weaver. Crime: sorcery. Had to burn his spell knots. Source: TB AIa: 1b:594.
30. Kungelv 1630: Torann Sven Lossis. Crime: white magic. Banished. Source: TB AIa: 1b:596–600, 615.
31. Nordvigen, Kville 1630: Simen of Brekke. Crime: complicity. Having unlawfully housed a white magician (woman). Having purchased white magic services. Fine. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1629–1631 book 10[a]. Fiscal year 1630–1631.
32. Indland, Laksestad parish 1632–1633: Hogen the sexton. Crime: white magic. Sentenced to confiscation of property and banishment. Negotiated and bought his freedom for 50 dalers. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1631–1633 book 11[b]. Fiscal year 1632–1633.
33. Kungelv 1634: Ingrid Ingmannsdatter, a Swedish woman. Crime: white magic. Broke out of prison and escaped. Source: TB AIa: 1b: 709.
34. Indland, Solberg and Sundø district court 1634–1635: Merete Pedersdatter of Kjelsby. Crime: white magic. Fine. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1633–1636 Book 12[a]. Fiscal year 1634–1635.
35. Kungelv 1634: Maria, a German woman. Crime: white magic. Banished. Source: TB AIa: 1b: 714.
36. Kungelv 1636: Marian. Crime: white magic. Banished. Source: TB AIa: 1b: 766–767, 768.
37. Kungelv 1638: Svend the glover. Crime: complicity. Having unlawfully housed a white magician (woman). Fine. Source: TB AIa: 1b: 829.
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40. Nordvigen, Vette Herred 1653: Ole Hofferød from the farm of Hofferød. Crime: white magic and sorcery. Executed. Source: (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1652–1654 book 19[a]. Fiscal year 1653–1654. Unum. appendix in B. Bohus Castle accounts. Fiscal year 1653–1654. Appendix 26.
41. Kungelv 1655: Dorotea Jonsdatter "Bryngelsdatter", a Swedish woman. Crime: white magic. Whipped and banished. Source: P. Sörlin 1988: 265–266, 282. Extract from the Kungelv Town Court records 27/2 1655 in Halmstad Town Court records 1663. (RAK) Lr. B and V. 1654–1656 book 20. Bohus Castle accounts, fiscal year 1654–1655. Appendix 8.

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[1] Norwegian law was maintained until 1680 as agreed in the Peace Treaty of 1658.

[2] Malmstedt (2018:26) nevertheless points out that the source has some inaccuracies in that the author in some places switches from verbatim rendering to reporting, and sometimes interrupts the presentation with his own comments.

[3] The historian Per Sörlin has also mentioned the witchcraft trials in Bohuslen in his doctoral dissertation (1993) without analysing the topic in any depth. He is also responsible for a summary of the Bohuslen witchcraft trials in *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft*, 2006, Vol. 1:135–136.

[4] Malmstedt has corrected the number of people executed from 29 to 28 because one woman actually survived the flogging. Malmstedt and Svenungsson have different figures for this trial material. Svenungsson cites a total of 101 accused where Malmstedt has 63. Malmstedt has only included people who were actually brought to court. Svenungsson has also included accused persons who, for various reasons, were never brought to court.

[5] https://www.bohuslansmuseum.se/kunskapsbanken/anklagad-och-oskyldigt-domd/ (20 October 2022).

[6] Transcripts by Folke Almegeus, Orust. These transcripts are supposed to have been made

"roughly" 30 years ago. Personal communication.
[7] Her relative is referred to in the source alternately as mother, grandmother, and maternal aunt.
[8] Visited by the author in the summer of 2022.
[9] There may be more material of interest that needs to be read in analog form in the Rigsarkivet in Copenhagen (RAK) which has not been examined. See e.g. official correspondence in *Norske henlagte saker vedr. Bohuslen 1588–1660*: M-45327, M-45328, and *Byfogdregnskaper 1588–1672*, innholder Bohuslen 1608–1624: Pakke S-1046. There may also be information in clerical archives. This study has one example showing that there may be retrospective information about witchcraft trials in Bohuslen recorded in witchcraft cases that were tried in Sweden, case 41.
[10] *Regnskaber 1559-1660, Lensregnskaber: A. Regnskaber Øvrige len uden for det nuværende Danmark 1587–. A. Bo(å)hus og Vigen*: Arkivalieronline (sa.dk) (14 October 2022). Anyone interested in medieval fragments can see that a number of accounts are bound together from whole and/or partial medieval fragments. Often such fragments are discarded Catholic missals and breviaries. The accounts do not appear to have undergone any mechanical conservation.
[11] In this work, books that have the same number but two covers are cited as book number + [a] or [b].
[12] The town court was presided over by the leading burghers who constituted the magistrature, titled as presidents and councillors.
[13] See the entry for Bohuslän in Wikipedia (21 October 2022).
[14] Kungälv town halls and magistrat AIa:1a and Ala:1b. The next book, Ala:2, concerns the years 1658–1674 and falls outside the scope of this study.
[15] https://sok.riksarkivet.se/?postid=ArkisRef+SE/GLA/11935 (13 October 2022).
[16] https://app.arkivdigital.se/ (10 September 2022).
[17] Cf. the conservator's stamp.
[18] Decree of 15 March 1633 § 3 relating to judges, bailiffs, etc. The decree remained valid as C4 recess 1643 3–19 (p. 337).
[19] C5 NL 1687 1–8–3 (p. 36).
[20] The court records are in the archive *Sorenskriveren i Finnmark*. The draft sheets are in the archive *Fylkesmannen i Finnmark*, or the "county governor's archives" (*amtmannsarkivet*) as it is also called. Both archives are stored in the National Archives in Tromsø.
[21] For example, in Ala:1b: 763. One case was up in court on 29 August 1636. In consecutive paragraphs it is recorded that reconciliation was reached on 31 October the same year. Then the book continues with the next court session on 31 August. There is a similar example in the same book, p. 657.
[22] See Sörlin 1988:265–266 for a witchcraft case in Kungelv that has come to light via the records of the Halmstad town court for 1663. The Halmstad records contain an extract from a lost judgement book for 1655 from Kungelv. It concerned a Swedish woman who was whipped and banished in Kungelv. She was subsequently executed in Sweden. Based on the information in this extract, she is probably one of two anonymous Swedish women recorded in the fiscal accounts for 1655 as having been whipped.
[23] Case 28.
[24] Ala:1a: 107.
[25] Cases 14, 17, 19, 21.
[26] Case 5.
[27] Case 17.
[28] Case 40.
[29] Case 36.
[20] C4 1643 2–28.
[31] Indirect information in cases 19 and 20 as well as dispute case TB AIa: 1b: 615–616.

Migrating with Movement Expressions

Egil Bakka

Abstract

This article portrays how a selection of Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants to Norway deal with their movement practices in the new country, compared to what they did in their country of origin. Movement practices include dancing, ways of greeting people, and religious worship. The immigrants each give per-sonal accounts of their life experiences in such fields through open, informal interviews. Their stories illustrate in vernacular language how dance is situated in their home country in relation to religion and ethnicity. The author did not select particularly eager dancers for the interviews, seeking instead to work with non-experts. Commenting on the stories, the author proposes some factors influencing the position of dance in the immigrants' new lives, such as the conditions offered by the authorities, the general climate of immigration among the general public, and the immigrants' own expectations.

Keywords: Immigration, worship, movement practices, liturgy, dance, religion, integration, non-dancers

Individuals absorb movement practices[1] from their environment, may they be deep and basic, or simple and changeable. Dance and related expressive movement genres are part of such practices. When individuals and groups change their environment, they may leave or lose, continue or keep the practices, and migration is a particularly dramatic change of environment. This article will tell and discuss individual stories of immigrants from Ethiopia and Eritrea to Norway.[2] The stories are mostly based on interviews but will also refer to the author's impressions and observations from other kinds of interaction with immigrants, as well as to a short visit he made to Ethiopia's capital city Addis Ababa in November 2016.[3]

The aim is to investigate how the migration influenced each individual's use of movement practices, and examples of such are dancing, ways of greeting people and religious worship. In a modest work like this it was not possible to approach questions about the movement structures; the concrete content of the practices. It would of course be interesting to survey movement characteristics and the changes that may occur in the movement contents. Within the scope of this work, and due to lack of personal competence in North-East African movement practices, I could only discuss what place

the individuals portrayed felt that different movement practices had in their lives before and after emigrating.

Does the individual see the changing or continuation of movement as something that he or she wished for and made efforts to achieve? Did it result from personal choices or was it something that "just happened"? Was it caused by external circumstances, restricting or enabling the possibilities? Dance and similar movement expressions are in focus, but only as general activities and actions and not as concrete movement structures.

The basic idea here is to investigate processes from an individual's point of view in terms of the concrete practicalities at play as well the individuals' understanding of it. This approach may result in common-sense descriptions and interpretations from the individual point of view. It does not mean that the individual is not seen as a member of a group, but that such memberships are used to discuss and cautiously interpret the story of the individual rather than to build a discussion about a group and its characteristics. It may, however, question if a researcher's often more generalised descriptions and interpretations necessarily are always more valid and useful than anecdotical and individual stories. They will, of course, both of them be a researcher's construction, only based on different approaches to the material.

Studying individuals is a well-known format in dance research, particularly in theatrical dance, and has often taken the shape of "chronicles of stars". The point has been to portray the important contributions of the individual. Mark Franko's recent work on Serge Lifar (2020) where societal and artistic trends are portrayed through one of its leading personalities, may serve as an example of recent, advanced research centred on an individual. In ethnochoreology and traditional dance the impressive Hungarian monograph about one dancer's repertoire is another outstanding example (Martin, Felföldi & Karácsony 2004). These kinds of works can hardly be compared to the approaches in this article.

An approach more similar to mine is to let ordinary people speak to topics but then the author gives them the floor to speak, often in short quotations on one topic at a time. The author then supplies a general text where pieces from interviews are presented as supporting evidence for the author's descriptive text. Mats Nilsson's thesis on dance in Gothenburg is a typical example (Nilsson 1998:200). In other dissertations we may find interview transcripts made available as appendices. The difference here is that I mostly let my interviewees speak uninterrupted in the main text and concentrate my comments and contextualizations before or after the story part.

The article will approach the question of immigrant integration by discussing how a small selection of immigrants from Ethiopia and Eritrea to Norway have experienced their situation when it comes to how much and in which context they used certain kinds of movement practices. It will also touch upon the concept of habitus when looking at the individuals'

relationship to available options in their new habitat (Sholten 2011:43). What barriers are created by a deeply rooted fear of getting into water, or what do deeply rooted taboos against showing or seeing naked or scantily dressed bodies do to an immigrant's possibility to feel all right in a public bath or on a beach? This again opens the question of which options an average immigrant realistically can relate to when his or her habitus seems to block them.

Ethiopia is a multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-faith country with just under 80 ethnic groups, speaking twice as many dialects and languages. It is the second largest country in Africa in terms of population. Major ethnic groups are the Oromo, the Amhara, the Somali and the Tigray, which each have their important language and a broad spectrum of differences in cultural heritage, such as dance. The religions do not follow the ethnic divides, and the three most significant ones are the Orthodox, the Muslims and the Protestants, but there are also Roman Catholics and local indigenous religions (Fessha 2013:151).

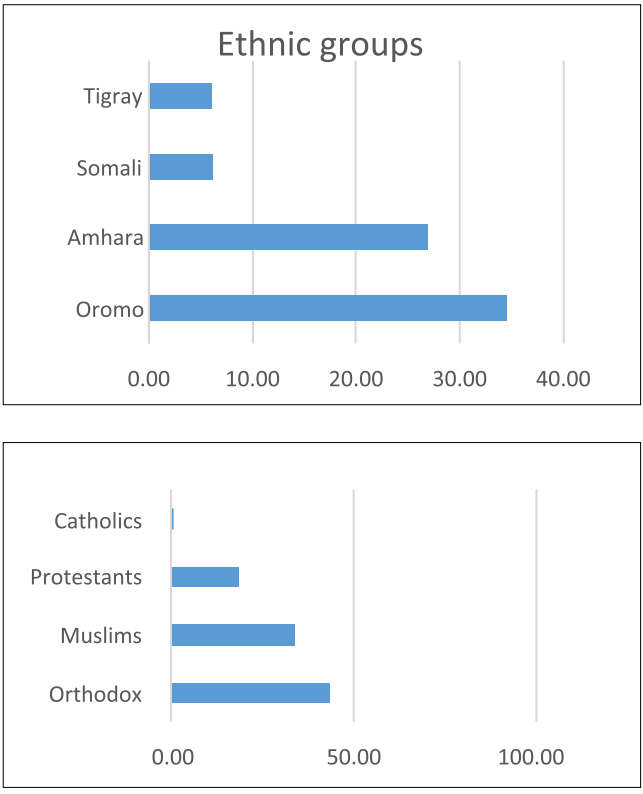

Figure 1. These tables are based upon information from Fessha about the main ethnic groups and the main religious affiliations in Ethiopia.

Ethiopians were ruled under a feudalist-imperial monarchy until 1974 and then by a socialist dictatorship until 1991 (Tronvoll & Hagmann 2011:11). From 1991 the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) ruled, institutionalizing political power on the basis of ethnicity through the country's new administrative regions (its nine regional states) corresponding to putative ethnic homelands. Each region has its own legislative, executive and judicial branches. This has favoured northern highland groups such as the Orthodox Amhara and Tigrayans and marginalized the Oromo and other groups in the southern lowlands, some of which are also Muslims.

In the 2015 parliamentary elections, EPRDF claimed to have won every seat in parliament; not one opposition or independent parliamentarian sits in the 547-seat House of People's Representatives, which confirms that authoritarian rule will persist in the country for the foreseeable future. The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) formed the EPRDF as a coalition in order to transform itself from a rebel movement into a national government. TPLF facilitated the establishment of parties for the Amhara, the Oromo and Southern Ethiopians so that they could function as constituent parties of the EPRDF in the country's three largest regions. The EPRDF considers these parties to be affiliates, and they have no representation in the EPRDF's Executive Committee, the most important decision-making body in Ethiopia, leaving the TPLF as the dominant party (Arriola & Lyons 2016:77). In the time since the interviews for this article were conducted and the article written, there have been dramatic political events, changes in power relationships, and even war. I do not find it relevant to portray this since the interviews reflect the situation before the changes.

Telling the Histories of Immigrants

In 2014, there were 7,807 Ethiopians in Norway, which is the fourth largest group from any African country (Kommuneprofilen 2017). The political and religious situation in Ethiopia will shine through in the account. It was of course also why they left Ethiopia, but this issue is for obvious reasons not addressed here. I did attempt to make a selection of interviewees where the largest ethnic groups and the most significant religious groups were represented, and in one case one interviewee was selected because of his knowledge of dance. There is still no representative selection, so I only have stories from individuals that do not lend themselves to many generalizations. Their individual short stories below are based on separate video-recorded interviews with seven persons. The interviews were not based on questionnaires, and the topics covered evolved in the meetings between the interviewer and the interviewees. This is the methodology of Oral History or Cultural Memory Studies (Erll, Nünning & Young 2010).

Memory studies will be a relevant methodological framework from which to take inspiration. Olick and Robbins

> […] refer to "social memory studies" as a general rubric for inquiry into the varieties of forms through which we are shaped by the past, conscious and unconscious, public and private, material and communicative, consensual and challenged. We refer to distinct sets of mnemonic practices in various social sites, rather than to collective memory as a thing. This approach, we argue, enables us to identify ways in which past and present are intertwined without reifying a mystical group mind and without including absolutely everything in the enterprise (Olick & Robbins 1998:11).

Dance and movement did not play any important part in the lives of my interviewees, and I will look at what a few individuals say about this topic. I do not look at broad life histories. The basis for generalizations is very modest, and the individual stories only exemplify the enormous span in differences played out in the countries of origin and in the new country. The interviewees are young people in their twenties or thirties, so the timespan of the past is modest.

Individual Stories

The individuals selected for interview are some friends and connections, and some individuals who were proposed by my friends in order to have the main ethnic groups and religions represented. Working with people whom I knew and who trusted me, and people to whom my friends introduced me was helpful. Personal stories are delicate matters for all immigrants,[3] and even more in the vulnerable situation as a refugee. It is crucial for me to keep away from any information or issue that might influence their future chances or options. Immigrant authorities are reported to advise refugees to keep their stories to themselves. Therefore, their status and their reasons for staying in Norway are not discussed, and I have anonymized them. The problem with this is of course that the accounts avoid all descriptions of or references to the whole complex of persecution, danger, fear and discrimination that may be the black and scary backdrop for many of the individuals. There is, therefore, a reason why the stories will be falsely idyllic.

When the interviewees spoke English better than or equally well as Norwegian, I interviewed in English, but some interviewees preferred Norwegian. I have transcribed the interviews and then taken out what I considered the most relevant points and condensed each interview into a short account. I have tried as much as possible to keep the wording of the interviewee but have omitted my own questions. Since the interviews had a factual tone, not aiming primarily at exposing feelings, value judgements or attitudes, I have not found it purposeful to present accurate quotations with all the technicalities that requires. Therefore, the text contains largely

the wording of the interviewee, including also formulations or value judgments, that do not fit in an academic text, and for that reason, I should rather have quoted precisely. In order to be able to adjust to the flow of written language, I have still chosen the technique of paraphrasing, or perhaps better reporting what the interviewee said, presenting his/her words in third person to signal that it is not a transcript, and to sometimes report on the impression of the interviewee's attitude. In some places I also had to search and supply information from other sources about topics not familiar to non-Ethiopians. When information about the same phenomenon comes at different places in one interview, it has often been combined or merged, and the pieces do not always come in the order found in the transcribed interview. All the content is therefore taken from interview transcripts, with a few exceptions for comments and external information that I have added. The order of the elements is in some cases reorganized, and the wording is transformed into my reporting in the third person to offer easily readable texts.

This kind of interviewing, remaining on a factual and superficial level, poses questions about what you really get to know. First, there is the tension between what is assumed to be usual; what the general discourse claims is the custom, as opposed to what happened in a singular event. The question whether Eritreans use their traditional clothes from their home country at weddings in Norway may be answered yes, whereas the question whether the interviewee ever did so may be no. The two answers may, of course, be compatible, but the two pieces of information are situated in two different epistemological spheres.

An Ethiopian Protestant Oromo Man from the Capital City: Abraham

Abraham was born and raised in the Baptist missionary compound in Ethiopia's capital city Addis Ababa. His mother is a preacher, and his father worked with economic matters in the compound's office. Three families were living inside the compound, in each their little flat, but close together. The children went to ordinary public school outside the compound, but most of the social life of the families took place inside, in the apartment or festivities with a bonfire in the courtyard. Social life had religious worship as a core. As a young man, he had a good network of friends also outside the compound, and he met them, hanging out in the city, mostly at cafes. His friends did not all belong to his religious community. His parents wished him to keep away from the plentiful nightclubs and discos, and he felt that was not safe, and never went there due to his personal conviction. Asked about memories of dance from Ethiopia, he recalls having been at a big festival of traditional dance and music with people from rural regions. He found the festival a positive experience, and his parents did not have

anything against it. This was a one-time experience of cultural dance, even if this kind of dancing was a generally known phenomenon in Ethiopia. Then he left his country around the age of 22.

Abraham came to Norway and had been there, mostly in Trondheim, for five years when he gave the interview. When asked about dance, he pointed to the worship movement *Shibsheba* to his mind as somehow connected to dance, even though the people back home might not consider it as dance in their understanding, due to the secularity of the word. Having arrived in Trondheim, he found an Ethiopian Baptist community where he could continue his worship practice. The small community does not have specialized leaders nor musicians to accompany the worship, so it does not have the same intensity as he experienced in Ethiopia, but he still finds it rewarding. He also attends the general services of his congregation, where a standard Norwegian service is given to some few Norwegians and immigrants from many different countries. It is evident that Shibsheba is an essential expression for him, because everyone else does it.

Film 1. Protestant Shibsheba.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCZRmZS2HXE.

The Shibsheba has been seen as going back the famous Saint Yared (505–571). He was a legendary Ethiopian musician credited with inventing the sacred music tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Ethiopia's system of musical notation. He is also said to have combined spiritual singing with dancing, known locally as Shibsheba. If true, this would be a striking continuity. After a history of some 1,500 years in the Orthodox Church, a small minority of Protestants have adopted the practice, and Ethiopians of different Christian groups have then brought the practice along into diasporic communities. Western scholars, however, have other opinions about the age of the Ethiopian liturgy (Chaillot (2006:146).

Abraham still follows the practice from home, not going to discos, dance places or nightclubs. He does not feel safe and does not like to be around where people drink alcohol or use drugs, which keeps him away from the predominant kinds of social life among young people. By chance, he has participated a little in the folk dance of another immigrant group, which he found rewarding and might have continued if it had not stopped.

An Ethiopian Protestant Oromo Man from the Countryside: Eba

Eba grew up in the western part of Ethiopia, in a small town with 15,000–16,000 inhabitants. His father worked in the city administration, but also

moved around with his work, so the family lived in several places, even in the countryside. The townspeople were predominantly Protestants, but the rural population around were Muslims. Eba's father used to go to the Orthodox Church, but changed, and started to go to Protestant church. The Orthodox Church was preaching in the old church language Ge'ez, and according to Eba it was very old-fashioned, whereas the Protestant church used Oromo and was modern. The Orthodox Church also promoted the Amharic identity as being the Ethiopian identity and left out Oromo identity. This made large numbers of Oromos change to the Protestant church.

Eba remembers a romantic dance performed on the eve of weddings. Boys and girls line up in two rows and are showing off and competing in dance, and then at the end of the dance they kiss each other. His older sisters went to such an event, and he sneaked out and followed them to watch. He was too young to join in, and his parents did not like him to go to such places. The people who had such weddings were not very religious. Those who were would not allow these secular songs, replacing the secular content with religious content to make them gospel songs. He also thinks alcohol played a role for Protestant scepticism; alcohol gives the people the courage to do what they would not do otherwise.

After he entered high school, he made more of his own decisions and could participate in dancing at school. Dances could be taught as part of musical education, particularly cultural dances. The cultural dances were still also functioning in the celebrations of ordinary people, and the teaching at school did not need to be that systematic. Eba has the impression that people who are convinced Protestants are against dance, but many Orthodox are not actively religious and do not mind. Those who are really into the religion, also on the orthodox side, do not dance much. He thinks the Muslims are even stricter in the faith and do not dance so much, but some of them do.

Eba moved to university, took his bachelor's degree in 2005 and after working a couple of years he started his master's studies. In 2010, he won a scholarship to study performing arts in Germany and Denmark. When he came back to Ethiopia, he had problems with the security police, escaped, and came to Norway in 2013.

He says he is into Shagoye, and when he was in Germany he tried to show his friends how Shagoye is performed. He gives the Jiman and Shouwan Oromo dance some of the same credit, but says that he is not really into the dances of Wallaga where he comes from.

In Frankfurt and Copenhagen, they had to do the tango and used it on stage. The tango here and in Addis is almost the same. In 2014 he did the tango in Norway too – for performance – when there was a cultural day in Molde, not for the sake of social dancing. In addition, he coordinated dancing with a few Oromos. This is the only time he danced in Norway. He does

not go to clubs. He does not drink, and he says that if you go to clubs, you have to drink. Also in Addis, young people dance a lot and get drunk in clubs.

When asked about Shibsheba, Eba explains that it is a religious dance, originally orthodox, and it is used for worship. The movement is particularly done with the hands, but also with the legs, bending down, mostly dancing on the spot but even sometimes backwards and forwards. Nowadays the Protestants also use Shibsheba. There is a big drum made of skin that is carried to accompany the worship; the drummer dances and jumps as well. The Orthodox Church also use music composed by Jared, he received the composition from God, and it is different from the Protestants' music for Shibsheba.

In Stavanger where lives now, there are no services of this kind, but in Oslo there are events where people do the dances. When he goes to Protestant services in Oslo, he joins in with the worship song and then there are also dances or movement in certain ways. These movements are more or less the secular dance movements from back home. When people come together, they invite singers, and they dance. This does not happen frequently, maybe two or three times a year, but in churches; they do the songs and the movements more often.

He appreciates that the Oromo people maintain the movements in the church, which means a lot for him. Eba feels that the Oromos have been treated as evil and backward in the Orthodox Church in the past, so the fact that the Protestant church managed to use traditional dances in their religious life is truly marvellous. Personally, however, he has his own opinion as to how the church employs the cultural dances during worship. When you use dance in church for worship, you need to adapt the form, because of the change of purpose. Eba does not agree with the use of the exact same dance from the cultural setting, believing they have to be adapted for the worship.

The use of cultural dances in the churches started some five or six years ago. The Oromo nationalists criticize the Protestants for being against the Oromo culture. In Eba's opinion, it is a false criticism. The Protestants have even supported the Oromo language and translated the Bible into Oromo. The Protestant religion has done very much for Oromo culture, but due to the criticism, activists in the church have started to adopt Oromo culture in the church, and also the dances – they use the cultural dress, cultural dances and cultural music in response to the nationalist criticism.

There are two national-scale calendar events in Ethiopia. One is called Epiphany (Christ's baptism). It is a religious event, but the songs and dances are entirely secular, you go there to see people dancing, and you do some movements. Many Oromos come to Addis during Epiphany. A group of people from Shewa Oromo have a powerful dance called Ichesa, which is believed to come out of horse-riding. In Achaba, situated in the centre of Addis, you see a lot of Shewa dance at Epiphany, and when you look at it you also do some movements, it is inevitable.

The other occasion is the Meskel, the cross-celebration. They believe that the cross on which Christ was crucified was lost and Mary managed to find it on this day. At this time, you see the grand, grand, full-fledged performance of the Shibsheba in Addis and Nanibala. People travel to central places to celebrate.

Film 2. Flames, singing, dancing in Addis Ababa: Orthodox Meskel festival.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peAoQQkoruo.

The dances have come down from generation to generation. You follow the steps. Nowadays when the cultural dances are staged and televised, and used in a competition environment, there are a lot of changes. They now mix the cultural dances with the modern type of moves, and different types are introduced into the original types of movements. In addition, if this trend continues, we will not have pure cultural dances in a few years. Yes, the televised versions, the one which they perform for commercial purposes, they are improved forms of the cultural dances, a kind of hybrid, because they try to modernize, make it appeal to the eyes of the new generation. Therefore, competition forms are entirely different from those that are performed in the countryside.

Outside Ethiopia, the church has been the very stronghold for cultural practices. Now there is also the Oromo media network. It is a new institution formed two years ago, bringing people together for fundraising and discussions of progress. Before that, we had the Oromo Liberation Front in western European countries, which has been so strong during the 1990s and early 2000s. It was the only institution in the west that brought Oromos together and helped them do their cultural practices. Some Oromo singers also had to leave the country, and having left, they are also out of the art.

However, in places like smaller cities where there are not many in the community, the chance to practice anything is limited. So, in the small towns people integrate more in a shorter time because they are obliged to. Few people to talk to in your language, you cannot go to worship in your own language – all kinds of practices. Cultural events at change of season become very different here because of varying weather. Irrecha is a Thanksgiving in September, after the difficult summer season, when flowers are starting to bloom. Here in Europe, the weather is totally different. The celebration is not natural.

Film 3. Irreechaafi Waaqeffannaa, the traditional Ethiopian Thanksgiving Day in the traditional religion of Oromyia (Ta'a 2012). Posted by Daniel Areri.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcPzAqH3C78.

Eba feels that people do not greet much here. In Ethiopia, people shake hands and they hug, and in rural areas people even kiss each other on the

forehead. Here it is different if one wants to greet people, it is only a nod or a hi, and for an Ethiopian this is a shock. When he came to Molde, he shook hands and then tried to hug people, but they did not want to. They believed he might be a homo. There is no visible homosexual culture in Ethiopia, so this was a shock, and embarrassing.

In the same way, there are practices here that shock an Ethiopian; for instance, they kiss each other in public spaces. In Eba's culture, people do not do that. It took him some time to get used to this, and on the spot, it feels embarrassing when he wants to shake hands or hug and the greeting is refused. If you do not greet, you stop people from being social with you; it seems unfriendly. When Eba lived in Molde, he did not see much of his neighbours. One day he met an Ethiopian who also lived there. He asked Eba, "why don't you greet us and talk to us, in Ethiopia you have to be friendly and greet people and talk to them".

An Eritrean Orthodox Man from the Capital City: Simon

Simon is from Asmara, the capital city of Eritrea. His family is Christian Orthodox and they speak Tigrigna. His family had no objection to dancing, even if they did not consider music or dance to be good professions.

He sometimes went to Tigrigna outdoor concerts and dances at a place called the Expo. They were mainly for young people, and there could be small concerts for some 200 people, and sometimes festivals where 2,000 people could attend. There was an entrance fee, there was a stage for the singers, and down in front of the scene there was the Expo, a big compound which also contained indoors night clubs.

Film 4. Eritrean Festival 2014. Zoba Debub performance of Gayle, a traditional Eritrean music festival at the Expo. Posted by Deki Enganna. The performers come from villages.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqWm5VdK0mM.

There are nine ethnic groups in Eritrea, each with its traditional dances. The best-known Tigrinya dance would be Gayle, but there is also Kouda, Cherauata, and there is Aulo, which is not exactly a dance. He does do not consider himself to be a good dancer, but he can do the dances of his ethnic group. When he goes to a concert with friends, he would have to dance.

His family was Christian Orthodox, and they would not object to him dancing. In this culture, to be a dancer or singer is not a good profession, it is forbidden by God. However, to dance in general is not a problem. Older people dance as well, only being a singer, doing it for money, was not good.

Expo is where festivals take place; there are also small nightclubs and concerts. The nightclubs have mostly English music. He could go to Expo maybe one a month or every other month.

In Norway, he danced for instance at last New Year. He was also at the wedding of his niece in Oslo where there were mostly Eritreans, and almost everyone joined in the dancing, but he has not danced in Norway on other occasions.

Film 5. Tigrigna dance. The Eritrean community in Sioux Falls celebrated their independence day on 24 May 2015. Posted by Hagos Haile.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgJyB4d2q18.

He likes to dance, and he likes music, and in his country, he used it, but not here, perhaps because he feels like a stranger; maybe he will dance more in the future. He likes both kinds of dance, the Eritrean cultural dance as well as the English dance, there is no difference, and drinking at dance places does not bother him. They drink a lot in his country as well.

He says he has an interest in learning new things. In the *mottak* (a centre where asylum seekers are kept until their case has been tried),[4] there were many activities, and he missed them after moving out. When he settled outside,[5] he could still go to swimming and football. Now he lives with a group of other people and keeps in contact with them.

When a group of musicians hold a weekend concert, they bring 2–3 girls and 2–3 boys who are professional dancers and who receive money for the job.[6] At weddings you do not need dancers; only a wealthy person rents them because at a wedding the guests dance themselves. The dancers at concerts dress in particular cultural dress, boys in *kedan hawisha* and girls in *kamish shuria*, belonging to Tigrinya.

Eritrean people also wear such clothes during baptisms and weddings; here it can be seen in the churches. However, Eba did not wear it at his niece's wedding in Oslo but at that time he wore a regular suit because he doesn't have such clothes here, only back in Eritrea.

An Ethiopian Orthodox, Amharic Man from the Wollo Province of Caleb

Caleb was born in Wollo, the Amhara region, but grew up in different places. He has been in Oromia, Amhara region, and in Addis Ababa, so he feels that at least he knows different cultures. His father passed away when he was in high school. He was working for non-governmental organizations, such as the Red Cross in the transportation sector. They are a family of Christian Orthodox religion, speaking Amharic as their mother tongue, but honestly he believes he belongs to all groups, enjoying all types of culture. He listens to all music and likes all kinds of dance.

When he was young, he really danced a lot; he remembers when he was in grade 1 and grade 2 he was the best dancer in the family. He won some

awards, and all the people looked at him. However, as time went on, he got involved in education and football and totally disengaged with dance. His family danced at weddings and on such occasions, but at home not very much.

At Epiphany, in the morning of 11 January according to the Ethiopian calendar, people will all be in and around the church. At that celebration, all people dance together, old people and young people, even if people also make groups according to age. In the morning, kids dressed smartly, and that day many kids were given new clothes. Then they got some money and went to buy sweets. Outside the sphere of the church there are different kinds of singing and dancing. Some people promise that if God helps them in the coming year, they will dance in front of people or something like that. They had different systems. People played various games and competitions. The elders followed the church stuff because they are closer to religion and understand what that means. The kids just want to play different games and dance.

The young people, the adults, were trying to find some girl or some partner. If a boy wants a certain girl, he will buy a lemon to throw at her, meaning that he likes her, and if she picks up the lemon, that is good. All went to the place where they hold the church ceremony.

From each church, they took the church ceremony stuff to one large field and all the church members would come to this common place. Dancing could start with small, small kids, but all the people join in, and it becomes larger and larger and larger. It is attractive, and you can see some men who dance very nicely or something special. If one is not interested in that group, one goes to another one. There are different cultural affinities, but in the dance at Epiphany one could find Oromia, Tigrinya, Amharic and Southern.

They stay one night, and on the next day there would be some prayers, and holy water and everybody would fight for that, to be blessed. Then people would accompany the stuff from the churches back to its places; there were churches for St Gabriel, St Mary, St George and so on. Caleb preferred to accompany St Mary.

When Caleb was a kid in Wollo, the majority there were Amharic, but still people were really free to dance their own dance, and yet they got some appreciation in that company. For instance, in Wollo some part of the population are Oromia people, no problem, and for example, some people sing Tigrinya, no problem people will enjoy that. Even the Muslims watched, but you know, Epiphany is for Christians. Muslims and Christians really grew up together, Muslims also celebrated Christian holidays and Christians celebrated their holidays. Usually the Muslims may not dance because of their religion, but they enjoyed just coming to look. Especially at home they will call even their Christian neighbours, and all will go and sit together. The Muslims have some singing with some drums, especially

when they go to the prayers; of course, they have their own expression. Instead of dance, they clap their hands they sing, they have drums. But it is difficult to say that it is dance.

In the imperial and the Derg period, there was a certain mistrust of the Protestants. Why do they bring religion from outside? Now the Protestants are accepted, and they have their halls and perform the worship like anyone else.

The parents would not have any scepticism about their children's dancing. If Caleb said that he would go to music dance with his friends his father would not care. Even the majority of Ethiopians do not care. But what they care about is religion, they are afraid of their kids taking on a new religion. If children go to a party or wedding and they dance, the father will be happy, but if they go to a religious place that is different, the challenge is religion.

Film 6. Orthodox mass/Divine Liturgy at Lalibela, Ethiopia.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x62gdMHS4QQ.

An Ethiopian Muslim Oromo married couple from Moyale/ Nekemte: Fahrida and Mubarak

Fahrida, the wife, is 26 years old and grew up in a Muslim family in Moyale,[7] South Ethiopia on the border with Kenya. The only one in her family she saw dancing was her mother's mother. Mubarak, the husband, is 35 years old and grew up in a Muslim family in the town of Nekemte.[8] It was quite usual that the children sang and danced different songs, but he does not remember so much of them anymore, but he did participate. In weddings, it was usual to dance and sing, but he did not see his parents dance. Muslims are not allowed to dance, but they had to be together with other Oromo who were not Muslims, but Christians, and then all of them would dance.

Mubarak did not see his parents dance, they were adults, but perhaps they danced when they were young. He and the other children danced at that time, but not so much as adults. When there was a wedding Fahrida could go and look, there had to be dancing and singing in a wedding whether the family was Muslim or not. There was no dancing connected to Ramadan, but Oromo youth went from house to house at New Year to collect money or sweets, which they could share among themselves afterwards.

Mubarak first lived two hours away from the town of Nekemte. There were no mosques and no other Muslims there, so they prayed at home. They had a farm where they grew coffee and different vegetables. Then they moved to the town, and there were two mosques quite nearby. Fahrida's family lived quite near the mosque, and they went there almost every day and especially Fridays.

Mubarak says that it was forbidden to sing and perform movements in the mosque, even to speak too loudly. Everyone came there every Friday, that was compulsory. They arrived at the same time, and there was perhaps some chatting in the beginning, but no movement, nothing. They just came in and sat down quietly. They listened if someone was giving some speech, then everyone prayed at the same time. Then it finished and people left. Even the leader did not do any movement; everyone just prayed with him. When he said "Allah Akbar", so did everyone else and bowed. Other things were not said out loud, but only to oneself. Fahrida said that men and women entered the mosque, each going to their place, and women did the same as the men at the same time. They also heard what the leader said, but the women could not say "Allah Akbar" out loud, only to themselves. Mubarak remembers some songs and dances that were used at Muslim weddings, but not so well. Men and women did not sing the same. The men sang (he quotes a song text) and moved around. The women had their own, but sometimes men and women mixed.

Fahrida says that sometimes there were women's songs that only the girls sang. Sometimes women and men each formed a line. Perhaps six or ten in each line, and they sang and answered each other. Such dances could also be used on cultural days; She remembers attending such days twice when she was little. All the different cultures (ethnic and religious groups) who lived in the place came. They wore their traditional clothes and met each other in a huge field, dancing and interacting in different groups around the field. Sometimes one person sang first and others repeated, or a line of men and a line of women sang to each other.

Mubarak says that they have attended Oromo cultural events in Norway where there has been singing and where everyone danced, even Muslims. One cannot sit still when there is singing and music, even if one may be religious. Fahrida attended a wedding where they put on even American music, mixing it with the Ethiopian music, and people danced both kinds. She also saw Oromo dancing at a wedding and at a cultural evening in Norway. There were a lot of people, and she was a bit scared, and it was not only girls dancing, so she did not join in, but enjoyed looking at it.

Mubarak also experienced Ethiopian dancing at a cultural evening and participated in the dancing. As long as he was single, he also went to discos with friends and danced there, but now he does not want to go there anymore. Most of his Muslim friends say that they go to discos to see and even dance.

Discussions and Reflections

The people interviewed for this article were selected without consideration for their relationship to dance. A central point was to look at the role of dance in their lives, whatever it might be, and therefore a non-dancer's

perspective is equally interesting as that of a good dancer. By writing this, I also challenge the conventional use of "dancer". The term is mostly understood as a professional, but we also need a way of referring to practitioners in general, and then the term "good dancer" might work, based on the individual's understanding of his or her competence for any kind of dance.

To establish the role of dance in a community it is necessary to work with a representative selection of the population. From published work, including my own, it seems that the most accomplished and knowledgeable dancers are considered to be most interesting as interviewees for dance researchers. By concentrating only on them, however, we will miss the perspectives of non-dancers and individuals less active in dance. This seems to be the case in most ethnographic works about dance. Studies explicitly including non-dancers mostly compare the abilities and skills of dancers and non-dancers to say something about the (positive) effect of dance (e.g. Kapur & Rawat 2016:96), or they discuss the use of "non-dancers" in contemporary dance productions (Damkjaer 2016:17). In both cases, the focus is on the dancers rather than on the non-dancers, and hardly at all on different relationships to dancing in the community. In this study, the interviewees considered themselves to have varying degrees of skills and different degrees of interest in dancing. The intensity of dancing in their communities of origin also seemed to be very different, ranging from something in which their families never engaged to something loved and ever present in daily life.

A question is how the different backgrounds they have from their home countries influenced their relationship to dance in Norway. The interviews give the impression that there is, in general, a good and relaxed relationship between ethnic groups and people with different religions on an individual level. When I talked to four men in their twenties at a restaurant in Addis Ababa, asking about this, they also stressed the same. They turned out to be from different ethnic groups and religions and said that there was no problem having friends with different backgrounds and hanging out together, and they by no means saw themselves as exceptions. On the other hand, there were serious conflicts between parts of the Oromo and the authorities during my visit to Addis Ababa in November – December 2016. They were so severe, that the authorities declared an emergency situation and blocked the Internet and social media. As foreign guests in the capital city, we only noticed certain restrictions on social media, but from all kinds of reports and news it is clear that there are serious conflicts and lasting political tensions, as discussed above. The political tensions between different groups that can be seen, for instance, in the many political parties in Ethiopia are also mirrored abroad.

I learned from my own experience that Ethiopians abroad do not interact much across ethnic and religious divides. There are groups for opposing

political views and aims that do not seem to interact or cooperate much, even whether individuals know about each other and may interact a little in a small place such as Trondheim. These groups may arrange seminars or parties where singers may be brought in from other cities, and where there may be a performance of cultural dances and perhaps even social dance. There are also the complexities of religious adherence. The Muslims meet at their mosque, the Protestants have a church with Oromo or Amharic services and the Orthodox also have services, most often in cooperation with immigrants from other countries where the Orthodox Church is strong. My impression is that these religious services are what constitute much of the basis for friendships and contacts among Ethiopians in Trondheim, but mainly among those who frequented the same services.

This also become important because of the strong and ancient music and movement practice established by the Orthodox church through Yared. There are the huge and colourful ceremonies and liturgies that are the core of the Ethiopian Orthodox church, which are also brought out of the churches on specific days to huge mass celebrations. In the Orthodox Church, it is the church staff of clergy and musicians who perform these expressions. This is particularly demanding for small diasporic congregations outside the country.

It is interesting to note how the Protestants have taken up this music and movement expression of the Orthodox church and adapted it in the twentieth century to some of the old principles of the Reformation. The ancient church language Gez, parallel to Latin, is replaced by modern language, may be particularly Oromo, and the liturgy is performed by the whole congregation, and also modernized.

For this reason, the tension between religions is perhaps strongest between the Orthodox and the Protestant churches because the "foreign" modern Protestants have been particularly recruiting young Oromos and Southerns. The Protestants are also easier able to recreate services in their Ethiopian style and form abroad. Therefore, their services seem to be a particularly important outlet for music and movement expressions from the home country.

I believe that one important factor for how immigrants integrate is the conditions offered in the new country by the authorities, another is the general climate of immigration among the general public, and their expectations. In the following I will try to situate Norway's policy of integration. I will illustrate the main principles of integration policies through examples of opposing systems in two European countries and then situate the Norwegian situation in comparison to these.

Peter Scholten gives an informative description of the Dutch multicultural model of integration (Scholten 2011:16):

In both national and international literature, there is a prevailing description of the Dutch approach in terms of a national "multicultural model". This model is characterised by a tendency to institutionalise cultural pluralism in the belief that the cultural emancipation of immigrant minorities is the key to their integration into Dutch society. It is frequently connected to the Netherlands' history of pillarisation,[9] which yielded an institutional differentiation of large sections of society into different national minorities (Catholics, Protestants, socialists, liberals).

Scholten characterizes the French policy as more assimilationist, and Schnapper, Krief and Peignard (2003:15) describe it in more detail:

In France […] there is a tradition of so-called "assimilation" policy with regards to foreign migrants. […] The nation has been historically constructed through the "assimilation" of populations from various regions (Burgundy, Brittany, Provence, for instance). All these populations had their own cultural identities and in some cases, religious identities as well as traditional dress codes and languages. The pattern of integration has always been founded on the "assimilation" of such populations by transforming them into French citizens, as opposed to promoting regional identity.

So, how is Norway situated compared with French assimilation or transforming local identities into a strictly national one or with the Dutch pillarization into identity groups? In Norway regional and local differences have been appreciated, the multitude of dialects spoken, and the steadily growing acceptance of them for instance on television is a good example. This means that, whereas there are two versions of Norwegian as written language, there is no authorized standard for Norwegian spoken language, as all the dialects are equally acceptable as spoken language. This is an attitude in clear opposition to the French assimilation. There were, however, vigorous attempts to assimilate minority groups such as the Sami people up until the 1970s, when this policy was abandoned and later condemned (Eriksen 2013:3). In my understanding Norway also does not have any pillarization. Issues of religion or language, for instance, do not to any strong degree decide one's political affiliation. Sholten juxtaposes pillarization with multiculturalism, which "tends to lock migrant ethnics into their separate worlds, whereas the goal of civic integration is migrants' participation in mainstream institutions" (Joppke 2007:249 in Scholten 2011:68).

The lack of assimilation expectations in the French sense and the pillarization as in the Netherlands might be interpreted as a "mild climate" for integration. It is my impression as regards dancing that immigrants to Norway have found ways of participating in mainstream popular, competitive as well as theatrical dance, although I have not noticed Ethiopians in such contexts. My impression is that multicultural tendencies among Ethiopians are mostly found connected to religion and politics, and less to dancing. One might have expected Ethiopian folk dance groups, but I have not heard of any.

None of our informants seem to have had dance as an essential part of their lives, be it in Ethiopia or in Norway. As children, their relation to dance varied. The strictly religious families tried to keep their children away from dancing as much as possible. Some families did not care whether their children danced or not, and none seemed really to consider dance an essential value of their communities. Several of the interviewees felt a firm push from their parents towards education. The parents did not want them to concentrate on anything else, which was also given as a reason for the few possibilities for dancing. There is a clear agenda against drinking and clubbing among the Protestant interviewees, which makes disco dancing and the like uncomfortable and not compatible with their habitus, it seems. Among the interviewees here, the Muslims were less opposed to discos, but that may just be individual differences rather something based on religious background.

Concluding Remarks

An aim of this article was to look at the consequences of migration processes for movement expressions. The tool was a set of simple factual interviews with migrants who have moved from Ethiopia and Eritrea to Norway in recent decades. The idea was to stress the importance of singular events and the importance of understanding the singularity of an individual and his or her account. Singular events make up the flow of life and history, and a look at the individuals account may bring out understandings that advanced interpretations may hide. The problem is, of course, that much of the interviewee's report does not refer to singular events. Instead they give their understanding of usual patterns of life, perhaps based more on the general discourse of their society that on their personal experience. We have seen the stories of a few migrants from their home countries and from their years in Norway in terms of relation to dance. It is not a very rich body of material since it is not based upon a researcher's observation or analysis of dance processes. Still, I hope it contributes to the understanding of the singular, and that it also questions the portrayal of dance and community by concentrating on the most active dancers only.

Dance has not been a vital component throughout the lives of any of the interviewees. Most of them enjoyed dancing as children or adolescents back in their countries of origin, and dance, celebrations and ceremonies seem to have been vital for cohesion, particularly in rural society in a country divided into many groups.

Dance does not seem to have been a vital factor for integration in the new country, although some interviewees reported that they went to discos a little. None of them went to discos often, and some of them did not want to go there at all.

Dance could be a factor in weddings and Ethiopian cultural events in the new country, but neither weddings nor cultural events happen frequently. The one clearly most important kind of event seems to be the Orthodox and the Protestant Oromo services where the congregation engaged in the Shibsheba, and Ethiopians meet at the Protestant church nearly every weekend.

A typical enterprise in strong diasporic communities has been to set up groups for cultivating folk dances, or to use the customary English term in many African countries, cultural dances.

The scene for Norwegian folk dance has slowed down considerably during the last few decades, and therefore not been there as a force to inspire immigrants to form their own groups, nor to invite them to a Norwegian group. One of my Ethiopian friends pointed just to this. He felt that a stronger presence and use of Norwegian folk dances might have been able to interact with immigrant groups and inspire them to use their dances in similar ways, thereby also creating interaction between such groups and possibilities for learning from each other. From the world of sports, we see examples where immigrants have been integrated through targeted recruitment efforts. In short, the Norwegian scene of social dancing does not seem to have contributed much to the integration of immigrants, even if one might think there is potential.[10]

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[1] I use the term here to mean actions that people do following established norm or conventions, such as dancing a dance, baking bread or shaking hands.

[2] The term immigrant is used to mean any person who has come to Norway and intends to stay for a longer period. It includes people who came as students, who came to take up a job and people who came as refugees.

[3] I would like to thank my interviewees for their important contribution, and also some of my other Ethiopian friends; Dr Alemu Belay for generous help with proofreading and ideas and Samuel Yadeta for helping with contacts. The interviews for this article were conducted in the winter of 2015–16 and the article was finished in 2017. Since then, there have been important political developments in Ethiopia, but the interviews reflect the earlier situation and the later developments are therefore not relevant.

[4] He uses the Norwegian term for the refugee reception centre.

[5] When refugees are accepted and given the right to stay in Norway a municipality gives each of them a place to stay, sometimes in individual small flats, sometimes in places where they share kitchen and bathroom, for instance.

[6] This information came up when we looked at some clips on the Internet and the interviewer saw a group that the interviewee identified as professional dancers at the Hedemo nightclub inside the Expo.

[7] The place is located in Oromia, some 800 km south of Addis Ababa.

[8] The place is located in Oromia, some 300 km west of Addis Ababa.

[9] The separation of a society into groups by religion and associated political beliefs.

[10] Fargespill is a project to create stage performances for children merging expressions from different cultures.

The Consequences of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Norwegian/Swedish National Border

Anders Gustavsson

Abstract

This study investigates how the Covid-19 pandemic affected the daily lives of individuals on both sides of the southern part of the Swedish-Norwegian border. Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, passing the border without any major regulations from the authorities was the norm. The studied border area is unique, partly through extensive Norwegian border trade to Sweden and partly through significant tourism from Norway. Commuting, on the other hand, has primarily gone in the opposite direction from Sweden to Norway.

Norway closed the border for entry on 17 March 2020. The short time intervals of the Norwegian restrictions 2020–2022 created uncertainty and anxiety among the border people. When Norwegian border trade and tourism ceased, it had tangible negative consequences for the economy and jobs on the Swedish side. Social contacts across the border suffered. There was negative rumour-spreading between Norwegians and Swedes. All Norwegian restrictions were lifted on 12 February 2022.

The main source for this investigation are reports from local newspapers near the border. They have published reports with interviews and photos featuring opinions from individuals. This study can form the basis for further discussions on approaches and preparations to better cope with future crisis situations.

Keywords: Covid-19, pandemic, closed border, infectivity, vaccination, commuters, tourism, cultural contacts

Introduction

In February 2022 Sweden and Norway lifted the declaration of a two-year long Covid-19 pandemic until further notice. The pandemic had caused severe, far-reaching restrictions on people's daily social life since March 2020. This involved washing your hands, keeping a distance, avoiding crowds, using face masks and visors etc. Sweden lifted all restrictions on 9 February 2022 and Norway did the same on 12 February.

In April 2020, Strömstad Academy started working on an interdisciplinary anthology focussing on the current Covid-19 as well as on previous

large pandemics all the way back to ancient time and the time of the Old Testament. In Sweden there was the early eighteenth-century plague, the nineteenth-century cholera, and the Spanish Flu during and right after the First World War. The anthology on the pandemics was published one year later in April 2021 (Gustavsson & Olivestam, 2021).

In the present study, I aim at doing a follow-up to look at how an individual's daily social life was affected during the two year long Covid-19 pandemic. Focus will be on individuals living in the immediate Strömstad area and surroundings, as well as on Norwegians living on the other side of the country border. Prior to the outbreak of the pandemic, passing the border back and forth on a regular basis without any major regulations from the authorities was the norm. The mandatory presenting of a passport when crossing the border between Norway and Sweden was lifted in 1952.

In the academic field of ethnology where I belong, investigations on the Covid-19 pandemic were performed in the Scandinavian countries already during the ongoing pandemic. The issue was about how the pandemic affected people's everyday life. Because the restrictions differed between the Scandinavian countries, different praxis and approach between countries evolved both on an individual and a collective level. There was also criticism against the restrictions. In Norway this was studied by the cultural scientist Tove Fjell in the city of Bergen (Fjell, 2021). Investigations

1. Map showing the southern border between Norway and Sweden. Computer-aided drawing by Torill Sand, Oslo.

performed in the Nordic countries have been based on answers to lists of questions being mailed out, diaries, and material from the media. Results have been published in the Norwegian journal *Tidsskrift for kulturforskning*, 2021 no. 1 and in the Swedish online journal *Kulturella perspektiv*, volume 30, 2021.

My study differs from the investigations mentioned above in that my main focus is on how the Covid-19 pandemic affected the lives of individuals living on both sides of the Swedish-Norwegian border in the Strömstad area. That way I elaborate further on my previous investigations about the history of cultural contacts across this particular part of the border. This part of the border has also historically on several earlier occasions been closed down in a similar way as was done during the Covid-19 pandemic. For example this was the case during the time of the Norwegian alcohol prohibition 1916–1927. The border was also completely closed down to prevent Norwegians from leaving the country during the German Nazi occupation of Norway during the second world war 1940–1945 (Gustavsson, 2019).

The Strömstad municipality stands out in that there has been extensive Norwegian trading over the border from 1990 and on, with focus on large shopping malls and business centres located close to the border. An increasingly stronger Norwegian economy and pricing differences between Swedish and Norwegian goods and products have been the reason for this extensive trading, in particular regarding meat products, goodies/sweets and alcohol (Gustavsson, 1999 and 2019).

Furthermore, there has been an extensive tourism from Norway starting around Easter Holidays and running well into the autumn. The relatively short distance from the Strömstad area to the densely populated metropolitan Oslo area is a decisive factor here. The Norwegians have arrived by boat filling up the Strömstad harbour during the summer season. There has also been extensive Norwegian camping activities. In addition, the Norwegians started buying an increasing number of vacation homes in the northern parts of Bohuslän from 1990 and on. These homes have been used on a regular basis during summer, but also in the autumn and spring. That way the tourist season gets extended in Sweden (Gustavsson, 2013).

As trading across the border and tourism primarily applies to the Norwegians, the opposite is true for work commuting since the 1990s. There the activity has been from Sweden to Norway. Swedish men have primarily been working in construction businesses, where work opportunities have been abundant in the greater Oslo area. Young Swedish females have found jobs in retail business, and in the hotel and restaurant business, also in the Oslo area. Also, Swedish females commuting on a daily or weekly basis are those working in healthcare occupations. Healthcare workers have been in great demand in Norway. Swedish nurses have also enjoyed higher salaries, lower taxes and more staff colleagues at work in Norwegian hospitals

2. Kalnes hospital. Photo Ulf Blomgren.

(Gustavsson, 1999). The opening in 2015 of Kalnes hospital, a regional hospital for Østfold, had a great impact on work commuting. The hospital is located in the outskirts of Sarpsborg, a couple of Swedish miles from the Swedish border. A collaboration between Norway and Sweden has, up to the outbreak of Covid-19, been able to give pregnant women and acutely ill individuals from the Strömstad area the opportunity to go to Kalnes instead of having to go to the regional hospital NÄL outside Trollhättan located nine Swedish miles away.

The main source for the present investigation are reports from *Strömstads Tidning* (abbrev ST), that was founded in 1866. This newspaper covers the municipalities of Strömstad and Tanum in the northern parts of Bohuslän. It is published three days a week: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. During the two year pandemic there have been Covid-related articles and reports basically on a daily basis. Many reports with interviews and photos featuring opinions from individuals from both sides of the border have been published. Sometimes there have been posts on the 'letter to the Editor' page. When nothing else is stated in figure texts, photos presented in the present investigation are taken by journalists working at *Strömstads Tidning*.

The advantage for scientists in ethnology having access to local newspapers is that these newspapers aim at carefully reflect what is going on in the local area and document this day by day. Aided by this documentation, the scientist can study cultural processes going on over time. My investigation can be considered a cultural process study in real time based on material from local media. I have earlier used material from *Strömstads Tidning* for other process studies at the Norwegian/Swedish border. Among others documenting the smuggling of alcohol using boats in the Strömstad area during the time of alcohol prohibition 1916–1927 (Gustavsson, 2019).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, *Strömstads Tidning* not only covered events on the Swedish side of the border but also events on the Norwegian side. The main source has been *Halden Arbeiderblad*, which collaborated with *Strömstads Tidning* for information. I have been able to gather a substantial amount of material. *Strömstads Tidning* has, basically on a daily basis over two years, presented various aspects on Covid-19 with focus on the Strömstad and Tanum municipalities and the closed Norwegian border.

The present investigation focuses only on the impact of the corona pandemic on contacts across the border. Therefore, internal living conditions in Strömstad are not covered unless they are related to individuals on the other

side of the border. This includes distance education in schools, face masks, visors, keeping distance in stores and public places, voluntary aid work, change of procedures in the libraries, live broadcasting of church services, marriages and funerals, the situation at retirement homes, loneliness, close-down of cultural and athletic activities and post-Covid problems.

The Various Phases of Infectivity in Sweden

As a basis for the many border restrictions and their various phases during the Covid-19 pandemic are the various phases of infectivity. Their ups and downs replacing each other. Changes were followed in detail by the governments and Public Health Agencies of Norway and Sweden. *Strömstads Tidning* also reported continuously with updates on the current infectivity situation both in Norway and Sweden. Infectivity in Strömstad was in particular related to the Västra Götaland region and the close by located Viken region in Norway.

The Covid virus was first mentioned in *Strömstads Tidning* on 20 February 2020. At that time no one was yet reported infected in the Västra Götaland region (ST 20 Feb 2020). The first discovered case of infection in Sweden was a young woman in the city of Jönköping in late January. Thereafter, the Västra Götaland region started working on establishing new protocols for managing a potential upcoming wave of infections. On 6 February the first case was reported in the Västra Götaland region. After that, health care centres in Strömstad started preparing for a potential spread of infection (ST 29 Feb 2020). On 5 March two more corona cases in the region were reported. Those infected had been returning from travel in Iran and Italy (ST 5 Mar 2020). On 10 March the number of infected individuals was up to 32, on 12 March to 48, on 28 March to 297, and on 2 April to 399. The infection was mainly brought into the country via travel from other countries (ST 10 Mar, 12 Mar, 28 Mar and 2 Apr 2020).

The first person infected in Strömstad was Sara (assumed name). She believed she contracted the virus at a hotel in Gothenburg. She was quarantined in her home. "We all need to take responsibility for limiting the contagion, that's what saves lives", she stated on the phone with *Strömstads Tidning* (ST 26 Mar 2020).

On 9 May there were 14 cases in the municipality of Tanum and less than 10 in the municipality of Strömstad (ST 9 May and 16 May). On 9 June the number of infected was up to 19 in Tanum, while in Strömstad the number remained under 10. "Strömstad currently has the least number of infected in the west", *Strömstads Tidning* reported. Only five municipalities in the region remained having less than 10 cases (ST 9 Jun 2020).

On 15 June one child and one caregiver at the Mellegården School in Strömstad had become infected (ST 18 Jun 2020). On 30 June the number

of infected was 30 in Tanum and 17 in Strömstad. With 13 cases per 10,000 inhabitants, Strömstad was the only municipality in the region having this low spread of infection. On 18 July the number was up to 22 cases per 10,000 inhabitants and on 8 August the number was up to 27, compared with 48 cases in the municipality of Tanum. On 8 August the total number of infected was 36 in Strömstad (ST 18 Jul, 25 Jul, 1 Aug and 8 Aug). One could wonder about the significance of the closed border to Norway regarding the low number of infected. The number of travellers/tourists during the spring and summer had been extremely limited and from Norway next to no one. That Tanum had a larger number of infected could be explained by the fact that more Swedes are visiting during summer holidays there, while Strömstad mainly gets visitors/tourists from Norway.

Further into August there was an increased spread of infection in particular in the municipality of Tanum. This was true to a high degree in the coastal city of Grebbestad, with many tourists in crowded spaces. Thus, the infection control doctor Eva Lindhusen Lindhé from the Västra Götaland region stated: "We are seeing a large spread of infection in Grebbestad. We have not been observing the crowding protocols during the summer holidays, at least not in Grebbestad. We have three 'hot spots' in the coastal area and these are the cities of Lysekil, Smögen and Grebbestad. There has been a lot of crowding on the bridge decks." (ST 15 Aug 2020).

From mid-August the spread of infection increased also in Strömstad while it started to go down in the municipality of Tanum (ST 29 Aug 2020). However, on 5 September *Strömstads Tidning* reported on a "50% decrease of infected in Strömstad". Eight cases in week 34 was down to 4 cases in week 35. The total number of infected was at this point 63 while in Tanum 73 (ST 5 Sep 2020).

On 19 September four students at the Strömstiernaskolan were reported infected. The infection control doctor Eva Lindhusen Lindhé urged everyone in Strömstad to be careful in their contacts with other individuals. "Strömstad is currently standing out statistically". Five cases in week 36 were up to ten in week 37. Regarding cases per capita, Strömstad was now on top in the region (ST 19 Sep 2020). In Tanum on the other hand, the infectivity was down to a minimum (ST 26 Sep 2020).

In mid-October the trend turned to only one new case a week in Strömstad. Tanum didn't have any new cases in two consecutive weeks (ST 17 Oct 2020). On the other hand, the infectivity was up in the region (ST 29 Oct 2020). In Strömstad and Tanum, however, the spread of the disease was low compared with the regional situation (ST 14 Nov 2020).

By the end of November, levels of infectivity sky-rocketed in the region. Strömstad, however, had a decrease in cases from 13 cases in week 46 to 7 in week 47 (ST 28 Nov 2020). On 5 and 12 December *Strömstads Tidning* reported that "Strömstad has the lowest spread of virus in the region".

This was per capita (ST 5 Dec and 12 Dec 2020). There were more Covid patients in the hospitals in the region than ever earlier during the pandemic (ST 17 Dec 2020).

From mid-January 2021, infectivity in Strömstad increased. It was now the highest in the region per capita with 46 new cases per week and per 10,000 inhabitants. The infectivity was largest among people aged 20–59. The infection control doctor Thomas Wahlberg urged everybody in Strömstad to follow active restrictions, keep a distance not getting together and meeting with new individuals (ST 30 Jan and 4 Feb 2021). At this point in time vaccination had just started in the retirement homes.

High levels of infectivity remained in Strömstad throughout February 2021. The number of 80 cases per 10,000 inhabitants in the beginning of February was the absolute highest in the region. In Tanum the viral spread was lower with 39 cases per 10,000 inhabitants (ST 6 Feb 2021). The total number of deaths in Covid-19 was very low in February with 5 deceased in Strömstad and 8 in Tanum (ST 13 Feb 2021).

By the end of February, infectivity went down in Strömstad to 19 cases in week 7 compared with 47 cases in week 6. In Tanum the trend was the opposite during those same weeks. There the number of infected increased from 54 to 65. For Strömstad this meant 14 cases per 10,000 inhabitants, and in Tanum an increase to 51 cases (ST 27 Feb 2021).

In March the number of corona cases went down generally in the region (ST 11 Mar 2021). Then there was a strong increase in Strömstad by the end of April. In one week the number of infected was up from 17 to 37. Tanum had over the same time period a certain decrease from the high number of 65 per week (ST 24 Apr 2021).

Then the trend turned again. In mid-May there was talk about a decrease in cases in the northern parts of Bohuslän in particular in Strömstad where it first went from 34 to 25 per week and thereafter down to 15 cases per week (ST 15 May 2021). By the end of May, the number of new corona cases were at its lowest in 6 months (ST 29 May 2021). On 5 June infectivity was reported to have been steadily going down over the last weeks. The last weeks Strömstad only had two new cases and Tanum five. The local recommendations that had been in effect in the Västra Götaland region since 17 February was lifted on 12 June (ST 5 Jun 2021). On 17 June Strömstad and Tanum reported no new cases in the last week. Charlotte Ericsson at the Bohuslinden health centre in

3. Corona-shed for testing behind the Bohuslinden health centre in Strömstad, February 2021. Photo Jakob Simonsson.

Strömstad reported that "during the winter and early spring we had a lot of cases for a while, but then it tapered off and now we are down to zero" (ST 19 Jun 2021). Zero new cases were also reported during the second half of June (ST 29 Jun 2021). On 5 July Norway declared the Västra Götaland region a green zone and opened up the border. This caused more people to move around in Strömstad. However, on 17 July the number of cases was still zero in Strömstad and two cases in Tanum (ST 17 Jul 2021).

In August the trend turned and the infectivity increased again. In the first week of the month six new cases were reported in Strömstad and four in Tanum. Those infected were primarily 20–49 years old (ST 14 Aug 2021). On 21 August the infection control doctor Thomas Wahlberg stated that there had been an increase in infectivity of 41 per cent totally in the region over one week. Strömstad was still at six cases as in the previous week, though. At the same time, infectivity in Norway amounted to 25 per cent. Many also tested positive for corona at the border in Svinesund. In one week there were 67 cases primarily 0–18 years of age (ST 21 Aug 2021). By the end of August, Strömstad and the Öckerö municipality in the northern archipelago of Gothenburg had the highest number of infected per capita in the region. The municipal commissioner Kent Hansson thought the increase made sense "considering how many people that had visited the city lately. There have been a whole lot of people in the restaurants" (ST 28 Aug 2021).

Due to the increased infectivity, the Norwegian government decided to declare all of Sweden a red zone on 27 August, and to close down the border for all individuals not fully vaccinated or not been infected with Covid-19 during the last six months.

In the beginning of September infectivity went down again significantly. Eight cases in week 34 was followed by four cases in week 35 in Strömstad and only one case in week 36. In Tanum there was only one case per week during this time period (ST 5 Sep and 18 Sep 2021). In the region as a whole infectivity was up by 34 per cent over two weeks in early September, though (ST 18 Sep 2021). On 27 September Norway lifted some travel restrictions, but not for the Västra Götaland region that remained labelled a red zone (ST 25 Sep 2021).

In the beginning of October, infectivity in the region went down (ST 7 Oct 2021), and on 11 October Norway changed the region's status to orange zone. This meant that travel registration no longer was needed when entering Norway, nor was testing at the border, or quarantine when entering, needed.

In early October infectivity in Strömstad and Tanum still remained low with four cases in Strömstad and two in Tanum in week 41 (ST 23 Oct 2021). On 30 October the situation was changed and *Strömstads Tidning* had the following headline "Strömstad has the highest infectivity in the

region". This was per capita. Tanum remained at a lower number (ST 30 Oct 2021). On 20 November Strömstad still had the highest number of infected individuals in the region. Tanum, on the other hand, had only one case the week prior to this (ST 20 Nov 2021). By the end of November, Strömstad had the second highest status of corona infected individuals per capita in the region. Those infected were mostly primary and middle school children (ST 27 Nov 2021).

On 26 November Norway intensified travel restrictions for entering the country for all individuals over 16 years of age. The reason for this was the soaring infectivity in Norway. The infection control doctor Eva Lindhusen Lindhé pointed out that Strömstad being so close to the Norwegian border could have played a role for the high infectivity in Strömstad. "It is a very porous border being crossed daily in both directions by many individuals. And when infectivity is high on the Norwegian side, as it has been lately, the municipalities close to the border can easily bring the infection into Sweden. And Strömstad is the municipality in the country most likely to receive most individuals crossing the Norwegian border," she stated (ST 27 Nov 2021).

High degree of infectivity continued to be the case in Strömstad in the beginning of December, although it had been going down somewhat so that now the municipality was ranking number six per capita from the bottom in the region. Tanum, on the other hand, had almost no spreading at all of the virus. On 3 December Norway established even tougher roles for entering the country introducing a demand for testing at the border (ST 4 Dec 2021). The infectivity remained high on the Norwegian side of the border throughout December.

The infectivity among primary and middle school children in Strömstad stayed high in December. Some hard hit classes started practising distance teaching (ST 11 Dec 2021). This could be explained by the fact that not many children aged 12–15 were vaccinated. Only 50 per cent were vaccinated in mid-December, being the lowest number in the region. In Tanum, being better off infectivity-wise, the number of vaccinated were 61 per cent among those aged 12–15 (ST 18 Dec 2021).

In mid-January 2022 it was reported that the number of infected in the Västra Götaland region was up by 40 per cent over the last weeks. 300 individuals were hospitalized (ST 18 Jan 2022). One week later there was an even higher infectivity. At that point in time 44,791 cases were reported in the region. This being the highest weekly number since the beginning of the pandemic (ST 27 Jan 2022).

In mid-January the infectivity in Strömstad was as alarming as in the whole region. 144 new cases in week 1 showed a per capita increase of 350 per cent. And with 106 new cases in Tanum, the increase was even greater. It amounted to 600 per cent compared with the status at the end of

December. This high numbers had never before been reported throughout the whole span of the pandemic (ST 15 Jan 2022). Those high weekly numbers increased even more throughout the rest of January. In week 3, 360 new cases were reported in Strömstad, almost twice as many as in week 2 that had 188 new cases (ST 29 Jan 2022). This happened almost just right before all Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in Sweden on 9 February 2022. It makes sense to ask oneself if this was not a somewhat daring step by the Swedish government considering the infectivity numbers still remaining that high.

From this point in time and on reports on infectivity has been low in *Strömstads Tidning*. Press conferences on a regular basis about the infectivity status ended in the beginning of March 2022 (ST 10 Mar 2022). As in Norway, there was a certain corona increase noted in the summer of 2022 in the Västra Götaland region. The last part of July had an increase of 10 per cent compared to the previous week. There were "somewhat more cases along the coastline of Bohuslän" according to the infection control doctor Leif Dotevall. Thus, tourists in the coastal areas may have played a role here. In the beginning of summer 2022, the very contagious BA.5 variant was very dominant, according to the infection control doctor (ST 30 Jul 2022).

The Various Phases of Infectivity in Norway

Thanks to contacts with Norwegian newspapers, mostly *Halden Arbeiderblad*, *Strömstads Tidning* was able to follow the infectivity on the Norwegian side of the border on a continuous basis. On several occasions it showed a different profile from what was observed in the Strömstad area. Infectivity outbreaks close to the border have been followed carefully raising concerns in Strömstad as well as in Norway.

On 27 February 2020, three individuals in Halden were suspected to have contracted the virus during a trip abroad (ST 29 Feb 2020). Later test results showed that they were not infected, though (ST 5 Mar 2020). On 19 March 2020 eight Covid-19 patients were reported hospitalized in Sykehus Østfold (ST 19 Mar 2020). Because of this development in infectivity, the Halden municipality set up a crisis management group (ST 14 Mar 2020). At the same point in time, also the Strömstad municipality formed a crisis management group expected to start working should the contagion reach Strömstad (ST 14 Mar 2020).

At the end of July 2020, a large outbreak of infectivity in Norway was reported with 24 confirmed cases in the Moss municipality eight Swedish miles north of Strömstad. The source of the infection was said to be a wedding party with around hundred guests in the border city of Sarpsborg (ST 1 Aug 2020). In the city of Fredrikstad, 32 new cases were confirmed within a couple of days at the turn of the months August/September (ST 3 Sep 2020).

In the beginning of 2021, it was obvious that the mutated and more contagious omicron virus from Great Britain had reached the Norwegian border regions close to Strömstad (ST 26 Jan 2021). From 1 February 2021, an extensive close-down of social activities in the Halden area was reported. There had been a rapid spread of infection in the municipality. On 31 January there were 23 new cases reported, which was the highest number reported in one single day during the pandemic so far. The outbreak was primarily related to the Halden ice rink and the hockey team Comet (ST 2 Feb 2021). Already on 17 February, however, the Norwegian government lifted the tough restrictions in Halden and Sarpsborg, while they remained in place in Fredrikstad and on the islands in the Hvaler municipality right outside Strömstad (ST 18 Feb 2021).

A new outbreak of infectivity occurred in the city of Halden in August 2021. On 12 August twelve individuals were reported infected in one single day, which was the highest number since April 2021. Ten out of these twelve cases were caused by the infection being 'imported' via travellers coming to Norway via Svinesundsbron (ST 14 Aug 2021). In mid-December 2021, a record number of Covid patients were hospitalized in the Kalnes hospital (ST 16 Dec 2021). Never before during the pandemic had the number been this high. And half of these individuals were not vaccinated. In Halden, 144 individuals tested positive for the corona virus in one week in mid-December. 55 of those were children under the age of 12 (ST 23 Dec 2021). At the same time, Fredrikstad had its highest number of confirmed Covid-19 cases at over 700 individuals in one week (ST 16 Dec 2021). In mid-January 2022, infectivity was up in Halden with 337 new cases in one week (ST 15 Jan 2022). This was right before the Norwegian Covid-19 restrictions were terminated on 12 February 2022.

As in Sweden, infectivity did not end by this. Over the first weeks after 12 February, around 1000 individuals died and over 3300 needed hospital care. Prior to 12 February, 1667 individuals had died in Norway. The additional number of 1000 individuals over a short time period right after this date was disastrous. It was the contagious omicron variant that was getting around. The main part of the deceased were individuals in retirement homes as was also earlier the case in Sweden (ST 16 Apr 2022). A new wave of Covid in Norway was reported by the end of June 2022. There was a 130 per cent increase over four weeks. The reason for this was the very contagious BA.5-variant, stated the Norwegian Public Health Agency. In Sweden no similar increase was observed (ST 30 Jun 2022).

Overall infectivity had been going up and down several times very close to the city of Strömstad area. Those were waves that were difficult to anticipate. Considering this fact, the short time intervals the Norwegian government applied as to how long the border should be closed, when it could possibly open up and to what extent are understandable. This caused significant

insecurity but also irritation among for example Norwegian owners of summer houses in Bohuslän, but also in the Swedish border trading community (please see below).

Norwegian Border Control Following Close-Down

On 17 March 2020 Norway closed the border for Norwegians to enter after being abroad. Freight traffic was exempt from the close-down. The exemption also included daily commuters working in areas important to society. The goal with these tough border restrictions was to prevent infectivity being brought into the country from abroad. Norwegians coming back from visiting places abroad had to be quarantined for fourteen days when coming back home. According to Helsenorge.no, someone being quarantined was not allowed to visit workplaces, schools or preschools, make domestic trips or receive visits at home. The individual was only allowed to go shopping or go to the pharmacy if no one else could do this for him/her (ST 21 Aug 2021). Anyone who was found breaking the quarantine regulations received a NOK 20,000 fine. If refusing to pay you could expect an indictment (ST 23 Jan 2021). On 8 May 2020, the quarantine time decreased from fourteen to ten days. From this same date, it was also decided that Norwegians could be exempt from quarantine for six months if they could prove that they had been infected with Covid-19 and had recovered (ST 12 May 2020).

Easing of the Norwegian border restrictions was done a couple of times over this particular two year time period. This was primarily so in the summer, when infectivity was lower compared with in the autumn, winter and spring, but restrictions were then upgraded again. The short time intervals for restrictions contributed to create insecurity and concerns. *Strömstads Tidning* speculated every time right before an upcoming expiry of restrictions. What next? More lax or tougher restrictions? Because of the short time frames, it became almost impossible to make future plans for businesses as well as for groups and individuals,

4. The Norwegian border control station at Svinesund on 17 March 2020, the same day that Norway closed the border for immigration into the country. Photo Marita Adamsson.

Whenever there was a decision made about border close-down in Norway or Sweden, the countries needed to establish control measures. This has been particularly true with Norway where the border has been closed for entry much longer than in Sweden. One way of preventing the crossing of the border was using physical barriers. At

5. Minor border passages in Håvedalen and Vassbotten were totally closed in the beginning of October 2021. Photo Thomas Bennelind.

minor place passages Norway has stacked tires in high piles. This way absolute close-down was accomplished (2 Oct 2021). This could not be done at the main passage on the new Svinesundsbron. There, freight traffic as well as daily commuters working in areas important to society were allowed to cross. On this bridge, customs and police authorities, aided by military and national guards, could carry out controls regarding Covid-19 testing etc. All minor border passages did not have physical barriers though. Instead control of individuals was done by police, customs, soldiers and the national guard. There was a large sign stating: "Förbjuden inresa. Entry prohibited www.polisen.se" (ST 11 Feb 2021).

The prohibition also applied to naval passages. The customs vessel Havørn in Fredrikstad started to patrol the border area between the Norwegian Hvaler islands and the Swedish Koster territory outside of Strömstad right after the Norwegian prohibition on 17 March 2020 (ST 31 Mar 2020). This prevented the Norwegian boat tourists from visiting the Strömstad harbour.

Already in late March 2020 many Norwegian cars were pulled over by Norwegian police when trying to go shopping across the border to Sweden by crossing minor border roads (ST 26 Mar 2020). Fourteen days of quarantine followed in Norway. In mid-April 2020, 2,300 Norwegians were quarantined after being over shopping on the Swedish side (ST 18 Apr 2020). The border control in Svinesund also detected some smuggling activity across the border to Norway. Confiscation of aquavit holding more than 60 per cent alcohol was in June 2020 up by 390 per cent compared with before the pandemic outbreak (ST 30 Jun 2020).

6. A minor border passage has a large sign showing that entering Norway is prohibited in February 2021. Photo Thomas Örn.

On 12 August 2020 a car with six individuals from Sarpsborg, that had been crossing the border for shopping in Sweden, was pulled over by the police. They were imposed a ten day quarantine (ST 13 Aug 2020). Further into August 2020 the Norwegian police controlling Norwegians coming back from Sweden ended. The quarantine time of ten days remained in place but with no official control (ST 20 Aug 2020).

On 9 November 2020 Norway again reinstated the police- and national guard control at minor border passages. The ten day quarantine remained in place. In the Sarpsborg Quality Hotel a 'quarantine room' was set up at a daily price of NOK 500 (ST 21 Nov 2020). This also normally applied to Norwegian citizens. For daily commuters to Norway, the rule of testing every seventh day remained in place (ST 12 Nov 2020).

On 2 January 2021 Norway closed the old Svinesundsbron physically as well as other minor border passages, to prevent the spread of the new mutated omicron virus. Piles of stacked car tires made crossing the bridge impossible. A road sign stated: "Riksgrensen stengt/Norwegian Border closed. Bruk grenseovergang/use E6 Svinesund" (ST 9 Jan and 8 Jul 2021). This in turn led to extremely long lines piling up at the toll gate in Svinesund (12 Jan 2021). Sixty Norwegian soldiers and national guards were called in to carry out the mandatory corona testing. On 18 January a requirement was imposed for all travellers into Norway to be tested at the border instead of after entering the country. On 19 January the border opened up for freight transport, travellers having occupations important to society, Saami people with private businesses, and individuals with special family needs (ST 21 Jan 2021).

Beginning on 11 June 2021, fully vaccinated Norwegians, or those that had been infected with Covid-19 in the last six months, were exempt from quarantine when coming back home after travelling to Sweden. At the border they had to show a corona certificate and an entry schedule. This made the lines at the border increase significantly which was a huge disadvantage for Swedish border commuters. The old Svinesundsbron was at this point in time only open for those with occupations important to society and those holding a Norwegian passport. On 17 June, however, the bridge opened up for all border commuters (ST 17 Jun and 19 Jun 2021).

On 5 July 2021 the Västra Götaland region was declared a green zone by the Norwegian government (ST 29 Jul 2021). This meant a great number of Norwegian visits in Strömstad during the summer 2021. On 6 July *Strömstads Tidning* stated: "The Norwegians are back in Strömstad: a 'day of happiness' " (ST 7 Jun 2021). After this, those travelling into Norway had to fill out a registration form and have a corona test taken (ST 8 Jul 2021). Norwegians and Swedes, that were fully vaccinated and could present a corona pass at the border, were exempt from filling out a registration form and have a corona test taken (ST 15 Jul 2021).

7. Physical close-down of the border passage to Norway on the old Svinesundsbron in January 2021. Photo Marita Adamsson.

On 9 August new restrictions with mandatory quarantine following a visit to the Västra Götaland region, were instated if you were not fully vaccinated (ST 10 Aug 2021). On 27 August the infectivity was up again and the Norwegian government decided to consider all of Sweden a red zone. This meant quarantine for all entries from Sweden by those not fully vaccinated or could show that they had been infected with Covid-19 some time during the last six months. At the time, the old Svinesundsbron was opened for those with a Covid pass and for those that could present a certificate showing that they had been infected with Covid-19 some time during the last six months (ST 28 Aug 2021). On 27 September Norway lifted some of the restrictions for entry but not for the Västra Götaland region that remained a red zone (ST 25 Sep 2021). On 11 October this status was changed to an orange zone. This meant that an entry registration to Norway, testing at the border, or quarantine following entry was no longer needed.

On 26 November Norway again intensified the entry restrictions for everyone over 16 years of age. Those not vaccinated again had to be quarantined for ten days. All travellers to Norway had to register with the entrynorway.no. The reason was the soaring infectivity in Norway. On 16 November, 2,552 new Covid-19 cases were registered and this was the highest per day number since the beginning of the pandemic (ST 20 Nov 2021). On 3 December Norway imposed even stronger rules for entering the country with mandatory testing at the border (4 Dec 2021).

On 1 February 2022, Norwegians no longer had to be tested when coming back home (ST 2 Mar 2022). Not long thereafter, on 12 February, all Norwegian restrictions were lifted.

Swedish Border Control Following Close-Down

Unlike Norway, Sweden long opted not to close the border for entry. On 25 January 2021, also Sweden closed the main border passages on the new Svinesundsbron and in the Dalsland Nössemark, though. Minor passages were already closed by Norway. The reason for the border close-down for entry to Sweden was an increased spread of the contagious omicron variant. Exempt from entry ban were freight transport, and people living and working in Sweden having a residence permit in good standing. The border police, aided by the military, handled the supervision of the border to Norway (ST 26 Jan and 4 Feb 2021). The Swedish border police officer Mikael Holmgren stated that "this is the greatest challenge we have faced since the second world war" (ST 28 Jan 2021).

A new Swedish border close-down was instated on 28 December 2021 staying in effect until 21 January 2022. To enter Sweden, foreign citizens over 12 years of age needed to present a negative Covid-19 test performed

8. Swedish border control at Svinesund had to turn away 350 individuals coming from Norway on the first day of close-down, 28 December 2020**.** Photo Fredrik Hagen.

9. Karin Stahre and Rasmus Nilsson, group leaders for the 'corona hosts' in Strömstad in the summer of 2020. Photo Linda Smith.

in the last 48 hours. Exempt from this rule were border commuters and those nationally registered in Sweden. Only on the first day of close-down, the Swedish police had to turn away 350 individuals coming from Norway. It was mostly travellers on buses (ST 30 Dec 2021). On 9 February 2022, all Swedish restrictions were lifted.

To prevent crowds from being formed outside, Strömstad municipality hired eight 'corona hosts' with yellow waistcoats from the beginning of June to 31 August 2020. They were in particular positioned to guard the dockside for steam vessels to control the lines of people and prevent crowding at the ferries to the Koster islands. They have been acting as advisors but not taking physical action. When necessary, police and guards have been standing by to step in (ST 20 Aug 2020).

The Role of Norwegian and Swedish Governments

How were people and local authorities on both sides of the border able to influence the situation with a closed border? One player here was the regional border Norwegian-Swedish collaborative committee, Svinesundskommittén, that was established in 1980, and is composed of municipality politicians and civil servants from Sarpsborg, Halden, Strömstad and the Dalsland city of Bengtsfors. Working with this committee are also representatives from the Västra Götaland region and Viken region in Norway (ST 3 Nov 2020). The committee is supposed to work for the strengthening of the development along the border and for exchange between the countries https://svinesundskommitten.com/. The Committee was for the first time writing to the governments both in Norway and Sweden in June 2020, with the objective to safeguard "safe and free mobility across the border" and to eliminate various forms of border obstacles (ST 23 Jul 2020). Meetings with the Border Committee have been possible to carry out on the middle of the old Svinesundsbron as was the case in September 2020 (please see below) (ST 8 Dec 2020). At this occasion,

a joint message was conveyed pointing out the need for collaboration instead of blaming each other, as was perceived by the working commuters. Before Christmas 2020 the Svinesund committee dropped a press release stating: "We respect each others situations and it is of utmost importance that the trust and faith between border populations remain intact and that we also continue to be able to work together in order to strengthen various areas of development in our common region" (ST 8 Dec 2020).

In February 2021, the Svinesund committee sent a second letter to ministers in charge in Sweden and Norway. They pointed out how a long-standing and well functioning cross-border labour market was about to be brought down because of the pandemic restrictions (ST 20 Feb 2021). The Committee had received several emails "from devastated work commuters living in Sweden". A new letter was sent to the Norwegian government in August 2021 (ST 28 Aug 2021). Yet another letter was sent to the Norwegian and Swedish prime ministers in the beginning of December 2021. This was when Norway, effective on 3 December, intensified entry restrictions deciding that both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals again should be tested at the border. According to this letter, the economic effects were tough on work commuters, employees and businesses. In addition, there were negative social effects when families and friends were forced apart. "The Nordic cross-border freedom on which we have been building our societies disappeared" (ST 9 Dec 2021).

In the beginning of April 2020, the Västra Götaland region and governor Anders Danielsson wrote a letter to the Swedish government asking for a financial support package for those particularly vulnerable businesses in trade and tourism in Strömstad (ST 11 Apr 2020). At the end of May 2020, the municipality director in Halden sent a letter to the Norwegian Public Health Agency in Norway. He asked for the inhabitants in Norwegian border municipalities to be exempt from quarantine regulations after visiting Sweden. The request was, however, turned down by the Norwegian Health and Care Minister Bernt Høie (ST 28 May 2020).

In July 2020, representatives for the Strömstad municipality and the local business sector met with Foreign Trade Minister Anna Hallberg on video link (ST 11 Jul 2020). She was considering a special solution for the Norwegian-Swedish border, but the proposal was not accepted in Norway (ST 27 Aug 2020). Parliament politicians from various parties visited Strömstad during the summer and autumn of 2020 to get an idea of the dire situation in the municipality.

In November 2020, some municipality politicians and business leaders again met with Foreign Trade Minister Anna Hallberg in a digital meeting, explaining to the government the terribly dire situation the labour market was experiencing. The Minister was impressed by the collaboration in Strömstad to handle the severe crisis. She promised to work for the border

to be opened "but having said that I don't want to raise false hopes" (ST 14 Nov 2020). On 8 December the situation in Strömstad was debated in the Parliament as a response to a question posed by the Moderate politician Johan Hultberg living in Fjällbacka, Tanum municipality (ST 12 Dec 2020).

On 29 January 2021 the Norwegian government prevented Swedish daily commuters from going to work in Norway and they did not get their salary or other reimbursement benefits. They were offered to use their vacation time in February 2021. This caused enormous protests from members of Parliament living in Bohuslän and from the Strömstad municipal commissioner Kent Hansson, but also from the Swedish Labour Market Minister Eva Nordmark and Foreign Trade Minister Anna Hallberg (ST 23 Feb and 25 Feb 2021). On 26 February the Norwegian government decided to make an exception for all Swedish and Finnish daily commuters effective on 1 March (ST 27 Feb 2021).

At the end of July 2021, the municipal commissioner and several business leaders in Strömstad met with the Chairman of the Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee Kenneth G. Forslund to reach a solution to open the old Svinesundsbron for all fully vaccinated. Forslund promised to initiate increased discussions with Norway on this issue (ST 31 Jul and 5 Aug 2021). On 2 August the Halden politician Linn Laupsa sent a letter to the Norwegian prime minister Erna Solberg on a similar note asking the government to find solutions for the situation with lines at the border crossing in Svinesund (ST 12 Aug 2021). The political pressures both from the Swedish and the Norwegian side eventually were successful as the old Svinesundsbron at the end of August was opened for everyone with a corona pass and not only for border commuters (ST 7 Sep 2021). Vaccination against the pandemic virus had over the summer of 2021 added to a positive situation compared with previous summer.

On 19 October 2021, Labour Market Minister Eva Nordmark visited Strömstad and was fascinated over how the dire labour market crisis had been handled. "I can see an adaptation where individuals in professional training really has increased. That residents in mid-working life can adapt and take the opportunity to get an education" (ST 21 Oct 2021).

Following the termination of the pandemic restrictions in February 2022, the Svinesund committee and five other Norwegian/Swedish border committees wrote a letter in the beginning of April 2022 to the Norwegian and Swedish prime ministers. In the letter they asked for the countries to start a collaboration to enable the reaching of common measures to block future contagions (ST 2 Apr 2022). In the summer of 2022, the eight Nordic Ministers for Collaboration met in Halden stating in a common declaration that the pandemic had made them realize the importance of a strengthened Nordic future collaboration. "When facing national decisions affecting the

free mobility across our borders, we need to talk to each other more efficiently" (ST 5 Jul 2022).

Swedish Work Commuters

When the Norwegian border closed down on 17 March 2020, Swedish nursing staff continued to commute to their workplaces in Norway. From 26 March and on, they had to present passport and employer certificate. However, they were not required to quarantine themselves in their time off, as were the Norwegian work commuters to Sweden. This difference made Norwegians wonder (ST 28 Apr 2020). Norwegian nursing staff working in Norway were not allowed travelling abroad in order not to be infected and so not being able to work (ST 14 Mar 2020).

In mid-September 2020, Norway imposed a rule that Swedish border commuters had to do a corona test, meaning that they would be nasal swabbed by a nurse every seventh day. The informant, with the assumed name Anna, was commuting every day across the border. She complained about not being informed in advance about the new corona testing rule. On top of that, the woman testing her had a cold, which Anna pointed out to her. Anna concluded saying "I feel discriminated against and lawless. It feels very strange to be ordered to be exposed to this quite unpleasant test once a week" (ST 26 Sep 2020). The assistant nurse Zanna Kummel Ohlsson, on the other hand, was grateful to receive the test as often as once a week, since she was working close to corona patients (ST 3 Oct 2020).

In October 2020, Swedish nursing staff at the Kalnes hospital had to wear masks when waiting for their result after corona testing if they had been in Sweden more than 10 days when off duty. Swedish daily commuters, on the other hand, did not have to wear masks, nor did the Norwegian nursing staff (ST 3 Oct 2020). It should be pointed out that at the Kalnes hospital there are around 140 Swedes working, most of them living in Strömstad (ST 14 Aug 2021).

Another Swedish woman, with the assumed name Christina, has been working at a smaller care giving business in Norway, where she was the only Swede working. In September 2020, she had to report herself sick due to stress and concerns because of changed working conditions. Being Swedish, she has felt herself singled out as someone possibly spreading infection in Norway (ST 1 Oct 2020). The

10. Corona testing by nasal swabbing. Photo Stefan Bennhage.

assistant nurse at Kalnes, with the assumed name Maria, experienced what she perceived as a "witch hunt against us Swedes", referring to the, to her unpleasant, nasal swabbing once a week (ST 8 Oct 2020).

As opposed to previously presented informants, Karin Stacke has not asked the newspaper for her to be anonymous. She was a biomedical analyst at Kalnes, and in the beginning of October 2020 she filed a notification to the union regarding the working conditions with special treatment of Swedish citizens. She objected to the requirement of testing every week: "this all feels very political". At the same time, she felt like the hospital management at Kalnes were in support for the Swedish employees (ST 8 Oct 2020). At some point into October the Norwegian Public Health Agency changed their position and allowed testing samples to be taken from the throat instead of the nasal way (ST 24 Oct 2020).

The weekly testing procedure hit a road bump, though, when the testing station in Svinesund was closed down on 15 November 2020. Employees then had to get tested in the Norwegian municipality where they were working (ST 24 Oct 2020).

On 2 January 2021 Norway closed down the border passages at the old Svinesundsbron and at other minor passages for entry. This led to increased commuting time for many border commuters. Katarina Johansson living in Bullaren could no longer cross the border at a close by minor passage in Vassbotten. Instead she had to leave home four hours, as opposed to previously two hours, before her work shift started at a business in Fredrikstad making plasterboards. The extended travelling time was mainly caused by long lines at the new Svinesundsbron (ST 14 Jan 2021). Further into January 2021, the old Svinesundsbron was again opened for traffic (ST 28 Jan 2021).

On 29 January 2021 the Norwegian government blocked Swedish daily commuters that did not have socially important professions from going to work in Norway and they did not receive their salary or other reimbursement. They were asked to use their vacation time in February 2021. Socially important professions included nursing staff and freight transports. A border commuter, who wants to remain anonymous, immediately crossed the border on 28 January with a caravan, when finding out about the decision. She had not been working very long in Norway and therefore had no vacation time to use (ST 30 Jan 2021). Following the Norwegian decision on 29 January, Christian Perman, living in Strömstad and commuting on a daily basis to Norway as an assembler, felt that "it was tough to be forced to stay at home. Not knowing how long it was going to stay that way was taxing. I started looking for a new job. It was not that I did not like the job, but you can't go indefinitely without a salary. You start to feel almost desperate for money, it is hard when your safety net goes away." (ST 11 Mar 2021).

The closed border for Swedish work commuters had negative consequences for Norwegian businesses in Halden that had many Swedish employees.

The factory Nexans in Halden making electric power cables, was considering a close-down of production in the beginning of February, if the border would not be opened for border commuters momentarily (ST 2 Feb 2021). Both the LO district and the Trade Union in West Sweden were complaining and demanded to the Norwegian and Swedish governments that the border should be opened for border commuters (ST 18 Feb 2021). The Norwegian Parliament Stortinget voted 'no' on 18 February to a proposal that Swedish work commuters should be financially compensated from Norway (ST 20 Feb 2021). On 9 March, however, there was a response from the Norwegian government that border commuters should be retroactively compensated for income lost after 29 January. They would be getting 70 per cent of their sickness benefits, which roughly corresponded to the reimbursement they would have received had they been laid off. The Norwegian prime minister Erna Solberg stated: "I am happy that we found a solution that will ease up the situation for those many Swedes working in Norway" (ST 11 Mar 2021).

On 26 February the Norwegian government decided to make an exception for all Swedish and Finnish daily commuters becoming effective on 1 March. They needed to present a negative corona test no more than seven days of date at the border. This was mandatory even if they had been infected with Covid-19 some time during the last 6 months (ST 11 Mar 2021). Weekly commuters not having socially important professions were not included in the new decision and could therefore not cross the border (ST 27 Feb 2021).

When fully vaccinated Norwegians, as of 11 June 2021, no longer needed to stay quarantined coming back from travel to Sweden, lines at the border increased significantly. This meant a great disadvantage for the Swedish daily commuters. Thus, the old Svinesundsbron was then open only to those holding socially important professions and those with a Norwegian passport (ST 17 Jun 2021). The Swedish border commuter Frida Cederbratt stated: "In one work week, I have spent a total of eleven hours in line. Pretty soon I will not have any free time left". She called for a separate line for border commuters (ST 5 Jun and 17 Jun 2021). On 17 June the old Svinesundsbron was opened up to all daily commuters to decrease the lines (ST 19 Jun 2021).

Biomedical analyst Karin Stacke at the Kalnes hospital felt in November 2021 that she had enough of the Norwegian border restrictions that had been going on for a long time. She had experienced stress and felt singled out being a Swede. She therefore quit her job at Kalnes, having worked there for nine years, and started working in Sweden. She emphasized that "I felt that I could no longer stay loyal to Norway and I stopped trusting the country". She was relieved getting a job in Sweden (ST 11 Nov 2021).

Norwegian Work Commuters

Following the Norwegian border close-down on 17 March 2020, Norwegian

work commuters with jobs in Sweden had to be quarantined when at home off work (ST 4 Feb 2020). Belinda Klicline Abbot runs 'Belinda's Cafe' ten Swedish meters in on the Swedish side of the border and lives close by on the Norwegian side. In June 2020 she felt that "there is like an invisible wall against Sweden in the middle of the border bridge. To me it feels like East- and West Germany". She could not even go to pick up her mail on the Swedish side without having to stay quarantined in Norway afterwards. To avoid for the cafe to go bankrupt, she started working extra hours at a pharmacy in Norway (ST 4 Jun 2020).

An additional problem for Norwegian border commuters emerged when Sweden closed the border for entry on 25 January 2021 due to concerns about the new omicron variant that had been identified in Norway (ST 26 Jan 2021).

When Norway lifted the restrictions for fully vaccinated Norwegians on 11 June 2021, this caused increased lines not only for Swedish but also for Norwegian daily commuters in Sweden. Maral Dabirian lives in Sarpsborg but works as a dentist and is also heading the clinic at Folktandvården in Strömstad. She belongs to the minority of individuals commuting for work in Sweden while most individuals are going the opposite way. As a daily commuter she has been stuck in lines and border controls and finds that "things have been taken to the extreme, border commuters have been caught in the middle". In her car she needed to keep passport, working permit and a copy of her population registration at all times. Every day she also had to fill out an entry form posted on the Norwegian government website. She was allowed to cross the old Svinesundsbron since her profession was considered socially important (ST 19 Jun 2021).

When new Norwegian restrictions were imposed on 9 August 2021, unvaccinated Norwegian work commuters in Sweden again had to stay quarantined at home in Norway. A Norwegian work commuter stated: "Because you cannot socialize with other individuals and have to keep to yourself with your own imposed rules, it feels as if you have the plague and cholera. Doctor's offices don't really want you coming in when you are quarantined". Another Norwegian border commuter stated: "I have never cried so much as I have done this last year" (ST 21 Aug 2021).

Norwegian Border Trading

When Norway closed the border on 17 March 2020, it was devastating for border trade from Norway in the Strömstad area. 54 per cent of all Norwegian cross-border trade took place at Svinesund, the nearby Nordby shopping centre and Strömstad. At Nordby before the pandemic, 90 per cent of all customer visits were by Norwegians (ST 14 Mar 2020). Groceries accounted for the bulk of purchases. 90 per cent of alcohol purchases in Strömstad were made by Norwegians (ST 5 Mar 2020; cf. Guttormsson &

Trolldal, 2020). On 19 March 2020, *Strömstads Tidning* announced: "No Norwegians – drastic difference in customer flow". The brothers Arne and Even Hole from Halden took the opportunity to shop at Nordby just before the border close-down went into force. They thought it was "good that Norway is taking proper measures to reduce the spread of the coronavirus" (ST 19 Mar 2020). On 24 March *Strömstads Tidning* reported that Swedish stores were not allowed to deliver goods across the border to Norwegian customers. It was prevented by the Norwegian customs and police authorities (ST 24 Mar 2020).

When Norwegian border trade in Sweden ceased, it soon had positive effects on grocery shopping in Norwegian border areas. Store manager Carina Andresen in Sarpsborg stated at the beginning of April 2020 that sales of groceries had increased by almost 60 per cent compared to the corresponding period in the prior year (ST 4 Apr 2020). At Nordby shopping centre, sales had decreased by 95 per cent in the first week of April compared with the previous year (ST 4 Apr 2020). As a result, by mid-April, many stores there had closed down and others had introduced shorter opening hours (ST 16 Apr 2020). At the end of March, the tapas restaurant Toro in Strömstad reported a 95 per cent loss of customers (ST 28 Mar 2020). Since the advance warnings of Norwegian border closings were constantly very close to the imposition and was renewed at short intervals, it created both uncertainty and anxiety among Swedish border stores. It was impossible to plan ahead, something that they pointed out in several interviews conducted by *Strömstads Tidning*.

For the Norwegian brothers Orvelin, who own about thirty stores on the Swedish side of the border, sales by the end of June 2020 had decreased by 95 per cent (ST 27 Jun 2020). In October, grocery sales in the Strömstad area had decreased by a total of 82 per cent (ST 24 Oct 2020).

Grocery stores in Norway were not alone in making large profits after the border closure. Vinmonopolet, which corresponds to the Swedish Systembolaget, also made gains. In October 2020, alcohol sales in Sarpsborg had increased by 189 per cent and in Fredrikstad by 140 per cent (ST 3 Dec 2020). In Halden, the increase was over 200 per cent (ST 8 Dec 2020). One year after the border closure, Vinmonopolet stated that it had increased its turnover by NOK 3.24 billion (ST 18 Mar 2021).

From 11 June 2021, fully vaccinated Norwegians or those who had had Covid-19 during the last

11. The parking lot at Nordby shopping centre almost completely empty of cars in October 2020. Photo Marita Adamsson.

12. Faiza Ali from Norwegian Moss loaded the shopping cart full of groceries in mid-June 2021. "I feel somewhat nervous to be back because it's been a year and a half since I was last here." Photo Arvid Brandström.

six months escaped quarantine after travelling to Sweden. After a further easing of Norwegian border restrictions on 5 July 2021, a lot of Norwegian customers returned to Sweden. On 8 July *Strömstad Tidning* wrote: "The Norwegian customers are back in Strömstad – fantastic". The newspaper had met several satisfied Norwegian customers who had not shopped cross-border since March 2020. Erik Karlstad-Solberg from Sarpsborg had bought meat, pork, bacon and moist snuff at Nordby (ST 8 Jul 2021). Merete Welke from Fredrikstad loaded lots of soft drinks into her car: "Today, I paid SEK 59 for a 24-pack, in Norway I would have had to pay more than double. Then you will understand why I hoard" (ST 6 Jul 2021). In addition to lower prices, Norwegian customers have also mentioned that in Sweden there is a wider range of groceries compared to Norway (ST 22 Jun 2021).

Stricter Norwegian border restrictions with quarantine requirements for entry into Norway were introduced for the Västra Götaland region on Monday 9 August excepting only those who were fully vaccinated. The weekend before 9 August, *Strömstad Tidning* stated that "Norwegians bunkered cheap goods at the Swedish border – with kilometre-long lines as a result". The purchases were mostly alcohol, tobacco, meat and sweets. "What we have in common is that there were large volumes" (ST 10 Aug 2021).

In October 2021, the border was reopened when the Västra Götaland region became an orange zone instead of a red. Several store owners in Strömstad immediately expressed relief and joy about this (ST 12 Oct and 14 Oct 2021). However, the joy did not last long when Norway reintroduced stricter entry rules on 26 November and even more so on 3 December 2021 (ST 7 Dec 2021). It became even worse when Sweden also decided on a border closure from 28 December 2021 to 21 January 2022 (ST 25 Jan 2022).

Norwegian Holiday Home Owners in Sweden

From the 1990s and onwards, more and more Norwegians from the Oslo region bought holiday homes in northern Bohuslän, particularly in the Strömstad area (Gustavsson, 2013). When the border was closed on 17 March 2020, however, it was not possible to go to these houses by car, since when the homeowners returned to Norway, they faced a ten days quarantine. Norwegians were only allowed to visit and check on their holiday

homes during the day but not to stay overnight or shop in Sweden if they wanted to avoid quarantine.

In May 2020, a digital petition was initiated among these holiday home owners demanding that the Norwegian government allow overnight stays in Sweden (ST 5 May 2020, cf. Fjell, 2021). "The group named, 'for us who own holiday homes in Sweden' " on Facebook had about 8,000 members in 2020 (ST 8 Oct 2020). More than 1,000 of them filed a lawsuit against the Norwegian state with the District Court in Oslo. On 5 February 2021, this court followed the complainants' line. It was established that the requirement for quarantine after an overnight stay in a holiday home in Sweden was an interference with people's freedom of movement and their right of consideration for home and family life. The Norwegian state decided to appeal the decision, however (ST 9 Feb and 16 Feb 2021). In June 2021, the state won the dispute in Borgarting lagmansrätt (equivalent to court of appeal in Sweden). The Norwegian holiday home owners appealed to the Supreme Court (ST 24 Aug 2021) where the state won again in 2022. The court ruled that while the rights of the cottage owners had been restricted, they were not violated. Instead, the quarantine regulations were justified (*Aftenposten* 7 Apr 2022).

Estate agents in Strömstad have stated that during the early phase of the pandemic, holiday home prices were kept high because some Norwegians bought houses without having personally been on site to look them over. They were content to see the houses digitally (ST 16 Jul 2020). However, in the autumn of 2020, the Norwegians' interest in buying holiday homes in Sweden disappeared (ST 13 Oct 2020). After the lifting of the Swedish and Norwegian corona restrictions on 9 and 12 February 2022, demand and prices for holiday homes in Strömstad started to rise again (ST 31 Mar 2022).

Tourism Facilities without Norwegians

The Norwegian tourist season begins in the week before Easter. Unlike in Sweden, Maundy Thursday is a public holiday in Norway. During the 2000s, many Norwegian tourists have taken holidays on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Easter week. Since the 1900s, Norwegian youngsters have come to Strömstad with caravans of vintage cars during Maundy Thursday. A popular term for this is 'gutter day'. It has been a pleasure ride with a considerable consumption of alcohol and extensive policing. Some young people have been apprehended by the police due to too much drinking (Gustavsson, 2019). This tradition came to an abrupt end in 2020 and 2021. As a compensation for the missing Norwegian youth, a vintage car association and some entrepreneurs in Strömstad conducted a car caravan through the city streets during Maundy Thursday 2020. There was no need

for enhanced policing. *Strömstads Tidning* stated: "The initiative means that Swedish 70-plus people will take over the tradition from Norwegian youth this Easter" and "there will be no beer drinking" (ST 9 Apr 2020).

The consequences of the lack of Norwegian tourists were felt in several areas in the Strömstad area. The guest harbour staff in Strömstad experienced this clearly during the summer of 2020. There were about 70 per cent fewer overnight harbour guests compared to the summer of 2019. As a result, port revenues decreased to the same extent. During the pre-season from Easter to midsummer, operations were down in the port, as about 95 per cent of visitors during that time had previously consisted of Norwegian boats (ST 3 Sep 2020). Another consequence of the absence of Norwegian tourist boats was that the maritime accidents in which the Sea Rescue Society had to intervene decreased significantly during the summer. This was not because Norwegians were inferior boaters but because of their reduced number (ST 11 Jul 2020).

Later in the summer of 2020, new Swedish tourist boats arrived at the port of Strömstad but this did not compensate for the loss of Norwegian boats. Guest harbour manager David Nikkinen Gravander stated that he "heard several visitors say that they took the opportunity to spend the holiday in northern Bohuslän this year, as there are not as many Norwegians and thus not as large crowds" (ST 18 Jul 2020). In the summer of 2021, a lot of Norwegian boaters returned as a result of the Norwegian government easing border restrictions on 5 July (ST 13 Jul 2021). Between 5 July and 12 July the number of guest nights rose from around 1,000 to 2,000. The Norwegians Anne and Ivan Jensen were happy that they could again dock in the guest harbour in Strömstad after two lost years. "The Swedish archipelago is fantastic, so we have missed it" (ST 29 Jul 2021) Another boater who had returned was Sveinung Skjelstad who had previously visited Strömstad for twenty years. He said that "the entire Swedish coast is so nice because it is not as privatized as the Norwegian coast. Here you can go ashore almost everywhere" (ST 13 Jul 2021). On the other hand, port manager David Nikkinen Gravander was disappointed that Swedish tourist boats were largely absent compared to the summer of 2020. "I had hoped for a nice mix in the guest harbour with Norwegians and the Swedes from last year who realized that it is quite nice in Strömstad" (ST 13 Jul 2021).

Like the guest harbours, the campsites had a lower occupancy due to the lack of Norwegians. Grebbestadfjordens camping noticed this already during Easter 2020. Revenues amounted to only about one sixth compared to previous years (ST 11 Jun 2020). Lökholmens camping in Strömstad and Daftö Resort camping had similar problems in the summer of 2020 in that they were about 90 per cent dependent on Norwegian visitors (ST 25 Jul 2020). Like Norwegian boaters, some Norwegian camping guests returned in the summer of 2021, but not to the same extent as before the pandemic (ST 13 Jul 2021).

13. Guest harbour manager David Nikkinen Gravander points to the increased number of Norwegian boaters in the port of Strömstad at the beginning of July 2021. Photo Victoria Petersson.

The hotels also experienced cancelled overnight stays and conferences early on (ST 14 Mar 2020). Newly arrived Swedish tourists did not come close to replace the missed Norwegian guests (ST 22 Oct 2020). Tanum municipality has found it easier to attract Swedish tourists than Strömstad municipality. One idea among Swedes had been that Strömstad is overcrowded with Norwegians. Swedish tourists have been reluctant to go there in the summer. Dan Järbyn, who is the director of Fjällbacka camping in Tanum municipality, has experienced such a perception (ST 25 Jul 2020). At the campsite on the island of Nordkoster, west of Strömstad, however, the owners managed, even without marketing, to partially replace the missing Norwegians with new Swedish visitors (ST 1 Aug 2020).

Cultural Activities without Norwegians

Cultural activities were imposed many restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Several events were cancelled and some were broadcast digitally. This applied to the Strömstad Film Festival between 29 January and 8 February 2021 (ST 30 Jan 2021). The storefront walk on a Sunday in Advent 2020 with a fifty year history went digital (ST 28 Nov 2020). There have been concerts outside nursing homes to counteract the loneliness of the residents (ST 12 May 2020). Singer Thomas Flodin, who lives in Strömstad, has long belonged to the Oslo Opera, whose choir had to close down its activities in March 2020. For him, that meant a part-time furlough, first at 70 per cent and then at 50 per cent. He had to train by himself at home in Strömstad, among other things, with appearances in the church (ST 14 Mar and 14 May 2020). Digital opera in Norway has been followed from Strömstad. When Opera Østfold had its first performance in the autumn of 2020 in Halden with about forty physical participants, Strömstad residents could enjoy this via the opera's Facebook page. Strömstad Tidning wrote: "Halden sends opera across the closed border". Sparebank 1 Østfold Akershus had allocated funds for digitization so that the opera could reach a larger audience (ST 22 Oct 2020). Digital broadcasts also went the other way from Sweden to Norway. Two of the three musicians in the trio Doggerland who were to perform at the traditional Christmas concert North Sea Christmas in Fredrikstad in 2020, were Swedes who could not cross the

14. Swedish and Norwegian dancers met in Lurs bygdegård in Tanum in October 2021 after a year and a half break. Photo Thomas Bennelind.

border. They made a recording of two songs instead and broadcast them across the border via screen. *Strömstads Tidning* wrote: "North Sea Christmas overcomes the border barriers with film greetings" (ST 12 Dec 2020).

Border restrictions were partially eased in June 2021. Cultural activities could then start again to some extent after being closed since March 2020. In Lokstallet in Strömstad, the dance spectacle Mykorrhiza could be performed for the first time in just over a year in front of an audience. Choreographer Ina Dokmo said that "it feels great, almost a little surreal" (ST 15 Jun 2021). The fortieth anniversary for the association Tanums Gammeldansare was able to resume its activities in Lurs bygdegård in the autumn of 2021 after a year and a half. Friends and members of the association came from Halden. Liv Thomassen Moen told that "I have been dancing here for many years. It feels great to see everyone again. Now I'm really eager to dance. I prefer old-time dancing and bug" (ST 2 Oct 2021).

Sports without Norwegians

Summer sports competitions between Norwegians and Swedes have been a tradition for many years. This applies to the Shrimp Tennis in July. In the summer of 2020, it had to be carried out without Norwegians. "We usually have a lot of Norwegian players," the competition director said. Over a hundred players were registered in 2020 and they came from many parts of Sweden. Some were on holiday and others came solely to participate in the competition (ST 23 Jul 2020). The Exercise Race Strömstadsmilen was arranged virtually in July 2020. The runners could participate no matter where they lived. The idea, the race management said, was that "we want people out on the move". This would be done without participants being exposed to the risk of infection. What was missed was the festival in connection with the race (ST 30 May 2020). The field shooting competition Nolhotten, where almost half of the participants used to come from Norway, had to be cancelled at Easter 2020 for the first time in fifty years. The loss in the club coffers was big (ST 9 Apr 2020). Strömstads Badanstalt stopped all indoor training in March 2020. "Above all, we don't have our Norwegian friends, it's sad," said CEO Marcus Palm (ST 19 Mar 2020). In Strömstad Golf Club, about two thirds of the approximately 900 members

came from Norway. In Dynekilen's Golf Club with 400 members, about half came from Norway. In the spring, about 90 per cent of the players used to be Norwegians. Track owner Kenneth Isaksson pointed out that "this time of the year, the parking lot outside the clubhouse is usually almost full of Norwegian cars" (ST 25 Apr 2020). By and large, many of these golf clubs had to close down from the spring of 2020. The financial loss was extensive, and this meant that staff had to be laid off. Living in Strömstad, the coach of the Norwegian national rowing team since 2013, Johan Flodin, had to switch to digital meetings with the national team players in 2020. "We work primarily to plan and to make assessments of what has happened" (ST 23 May 2020).

Layoffs

A report in April 2020 showed that Strömstad municipality topped the list of the most crisis-affected municipalities in Sweden. Tanum municipality was in fifth place (ST 16 Apr 2020). In June 2020, it was reported that in Strömstad, unemployment had increased more than in any other municipality in the Västra Götaland region. In Strömstad, the unemployment rate in June was 8.5 per cent, compared with 5.7 per cent in February 2020, and in Tanum 6.5 per cent (ST 13 Jun 2020). In October 2020, the figure for Strömstad had risen to 9.5 per cent (ST 12 Nov 2020) and to 10.6 per cent in December 2020 (ST 19 Jan 2021) and in April 2021 to 11.4 per cent (ST 20 Apr 2021). After that, the trend turned and by October 2021, the unemployment figure had fallen to 7.4 per cent (ST 27 Jan 2021).

The Norwegian border closing from 17 March 2020 soon led to short-term layoffs on the Swedish side with an emphasis on cross-border trade and later in the spring of 2020 also in the tourism sector. In March 2020, Sweden introduced the possibility of six months short-term layoffs, with the possibility of a three-month extension. The longest lay-off period would thus expire on 30 November 2020. It was later extended to apply also in the first half of 2021 (ST 12 Nov 2020). As early as 24 March 2020, CEO Mathias Dalnoki at hotel Laholmen stated that "we have virtually no turnover". Short-term layoffs of all sixty employees were introduced (ST 24 Mar 2020). The worst situation was for temporary employees who were not covered by the lay-off rules (ST 26 Mar 2020). By August 2020, around 1,500 employees in Strömstad stores had been laid off. At the same time, 250 people had been laid off in Norwegian-owned Grensemat stores and 96 were given notice of dismissal as of 1 October (ST 13 Aug 2020 and ST 24 Sep 2020). At the end of October, an additional 200 employees were given notice of dismissal. Then there would only be 50 employees left in Grensemat (ST 26 Sep 2020). However, shortly before Christmas 2020, these termination notices were withdrawn as operations manager Göran

Lundgren expected an opening of the border between April and June 2021 (ST 24 Dec 2020). He pointed to the impending vaccination as a light in the pitch-dark tunnel of 2020 (ST 31 Dec 2020). Restaurants had also tried to keep fighting and believe in the future instead of closing down the business. Restaurant owner Daniel Olofsson, who has been active in the trade since the early 1990s, stated at Christmas time 2020 that "we can't lie down and die. I go to work every day with the attitude that we're going to make it" (ST 29 Dec 2020). Despite the difficult work situation, few bankruptcies and company closures were mentioned in Strömstad. One of them concerned the store Skopiraten. It filed for bankruptcy in August 2020 as a result of the reduced customer influx after eleven years of operation (ST 22 Aug 2020).

Something that could counteract layoffs was investment in e-commerce. Under Reinert Sörensson's leadership, the store chain Sportshopen, with its head office in Grebbestad in Tanum municipality, had to lay off 80 per cent of its staff after the Norwegian border closure. Sörensson then started trying to attract Norwegian customers with his e-commerce, which he started in 2017. During the autumn of 2020, things had gone surprisingly well. In Grebbestad's online shopping, there were more Norwegian customers than Swedish ones in October 2020 (ST 15 Oct 2020). On 4 November 2020, 25 employees were considered supernumerary, but eleven of them were able to be reassigned to online shopping positions (ST 5 Nov 2020). In 2021, eight new e-commerce stores were opened in Strömstad. This contributed to the city rising from place 116 to place 9 on the list of Sweden's best e-commerce municipalities this year. The investment in Norwegian customers had made this possible (ST 14 May 2022).

The closing of the sea border with Norway affected Norwegian boaters who usually frequent the Strömstad's guest harbour. Through the pandemic, Norwegian boats disappeared, and this contributed to a significant loss of income for the port and consequent layoffs of staff.

Public boat traffic between Norway and Sweden was affected. The daily car ferry lines ColorLine and FjordLine, which are Norwegian-owned and operate on the Strömstad-Sandefjord route on the west side of the Oslofjord, had to suspend operations when the Norwegian border was closed. Strömstad municipality lost an estimated SEK 30 million in port revenue. Service resumed only on 5 July 2021, much to the delight of the shipping company and crew. The Norwegian travel restrictions were removed for the Västra Götaland region (ST 29 Jun 2021). The staff, meanwhile, had been laid off but had now returned. For infection control reasons, ferry lines initially made a 50 per cent cut in the number of passengers accepted. In October 2021, the number of ferry departures per day doubled. ColorLine then had four daily departures and FjordLine two (ST 30 Oct 2021).

When Norway introduced stricter entry requirements on 3 December 2021, ferry departures were again reduced by half as a result of a reduced

passenger base. One hundred employees were given notice (ST 14 Dec and 30 Dec 2021). Further restrictions had to take place when, on 28 December 2021, Sweden introduced new entry restrictions with requirements for corona passports or a negative corona test for foreign citizens. Traffic could be normalized in February 2022 when both the Swedish and Norwegian restrictions ended (ST 5 Feb 2022). All remaining furloughs then ceased.

15. The car ferry ColorLine in June 2021. Photo Thomas Bennelind.

Crisis Support for Companies

At an extraordinary meeting at the end of March 2020, Tanum municipality decided to establish a support package for local companies (ST 24 Mar 2020). In March 2020, the Swedish government introduced a furlough subsidy for vulnerable companies (ST 10 Nov 2021). In March and April 2020, companies that had lost at least 30 per cent of their turnover could apply for state adjustment support. In May, the loss ceiling was raised to 40 per cent and in June and July to 50 per cent (ST 8 Sep 2020). On 1 February 2021, Strömstad municipality was able to start a transition office with the help of a state support of SEK 3.5 million to help both vulnerable companies and the unemployed. State adjustment support was granted until 30 September 2021. A new adjustment support was introduced on 1 December 2021 in light of Norway's reintroduction of stricter entry restrictions (ST 18 Dec 2021). The candy company Gottebiten AB received a total of SEK 28 million in support, that being the highest sum among the companies in Strömstad. Next up was Maximat at Nordby shopping centre with SEK 22 million in support. Laholmen hotel received a SEK four million support (ST 4 Nov 2021).

Schooling

The closed border has had an impact on school education when students had studied on the other side of the border. It affected sixteen-year-old Gio Kraghe Storgärds in Strömstad, who in August 2020 started attending a high school course in Halden for music, dance and drama. She only had time to spend a week in her new school before the Norwegian infection control announced that no Swedish students or athletes were allowed to enter Norway. She found it sad to be hit by the border closure. For seven weeks, she had to stay at home in Strömstad, participating in digital teaching. "I had to record dancing

and send movies, but it's not that easy." "I can't handle some subjects from home … When we have choir singing, it doesn't work from home at all." The same applies when it comes to staging plays. In October 2020, the Norwegian restrictions were changed so that Swedish school students were put on equal footing with commuters and could thus again participate in schooling on site (ST 24 Oct 2020). At the beginning of 2021, the Norwegian students were also suspended from in-person teaching for a short time (ST 4 Feb 2021). On 15 February 2021 the Norwegian government reopened the border for Swedish school students in Norway (ST 16 Feb 2021).

Finding New Professions as a Result of the Pandemic

When the extensive cross-border trade with Norway largely ceased on 17 March 2020, many store employees, who were often young, were laid off and became unemployed. The prospects were uncertain, as it was not clear when the border could be reopened. This uncertainty was amplified by the fact that the timing of closures and openings was frequently changed without warning. In that situation, some former trade employees started to have second thoughts about their future work situation. One way was to train for a profession that did not depend on the Norwegian border. Such examples have been highlighted in several reports in *Strömstads Tidning*.

In the autumn of 2020, 25-year-old Emma Thyft was given notice of dismissal from her work in the retail sector. She expressed her experiences as follows: "It came as a shock when the border closed, but you had to accept the situation and I thought that this should not ruin my life". In January 2021 she began training as a dental nurse (ST 11 Feb 2021). In May 2022, she had almost completed her education and had already received a permanent job as of June at a dental clinic in Strömstad (ST 10 May 2022).

On 13 June 2022 Carl Fredrik Lensnäs, 28, and Ulrika Källsvik, 46, completed their education as assistant nurses at the adult education school in Strömstad (ST 16 Jun 2022). Jennie Bergström, 31, who had worked eleven years in a clothing store, found a new job in the customs service without extra training. This was the new Brexit department in Strömstad, which worked with customs declarations of goods going to or coming from the UK (ST 15 May 2021).

16. Emma Thyft was able to immediately start working at Granit Hoti's dental clinic in Strömstad when she finished her new education in June 2022. Photo Victoria Petersson.

Some laid-off persons set up their own enterprises. Turgay Akin, with a background in the restaurant

trade, started a company on 17 July 2020 that delivers food from restaurants to customers in the Strömstad area. He decided to start this new project on 10 July (ST 11 Aug 2020). Border trader and restaurant owner Jaana Eriksson decided to invest in her interest in horses. She switched to selling accessories for horses such as bridles, halters and saddle girdles. She successfully turned to a Swedish market in Bohuslän in trotting and equestrian sports (ST 6 Feb 2022).

The Effects of Losing Contacts across the Border

The closed border has meant that relatives and close friends on both sides of the border have not been able to meet. It has been perceived as a loss, and *Strömstads Tidning* has met this in nursing homes. These accommodations survived for an unusually long time without any Covid-19 cases. They imposed a restraining order indoors but not outdoors as early as 19 March 2020. From the beginning of June, plexiglass was introduced on the tables to shield residents from visitors (ST 1 Sep 2020).

At the end of October 2020, the first cases of infection were confirmed at the Solbogården nursing home, while the other nursing homes escaped (ST 12 Dec 2020). The nursing homes in Tanum municipality avoided Covid infection in 2020 (ST 7 Nov 2020), but some cases were detected in January 2021. That month, individuals living in all nursing homes in Strömstad and Tanum received their first vaccine shots (ST 16 Jan 2021).

The couple Aud, 83, and Milard Andresen, 87, who have been married for 58 years, live at the Hunter nursing home. Their two children and grandchildren live in Norway. In October 2020, Aud remembered: "They have visited us outdoors in the spring, but then they have to quarantine themselves when they get back home". After one daughter had visited, Aud exclaimed, "It's hard not being able to hug. We're very cuddly, but we'll have to make up for that later." Aud and Milard also have digital contact on Skype with the children and they send pictures to each other on Facebook. "It's great to be able to follow their lives," Aud said (ST 17 Oct 2020).

Several informants that *Strömstads Tidning* has spoken with have talked about difficulties in not being able to meet close relatives who have been seriously ill on the other side of the border. It has caused both discomfort and dissatisfaction. Aina Mittet lives in Strömstad and has four children and grandchildren

17. Plexiglass outdoors at a nursing home in Strömstad in the summer of 2020. Photo Victoria Petersson.

18. Aud and Milard Andresen at the nursing home Jägaren in Strömstad 2020. Photo Victoria Petersson.

in Norway. Due to new Norwegian restrictions that came into force on 9 November 2021, she must show a negative corona test that was no older than 72 hours when visiting these relatives (ST 12 Nov 2020).

Paramedics in the Strömstad area have felt greater stress when, after 17 March 2020, they were not allowed to transport emergency patients to Kalnes Hospital, which is twenty minutes away. Instead, they had to make a blue lights trip 90 kilometres long to the regional hospital NÄL in Trollhättan. This is 64 kilometres more than to Kalnes. Pregnant women had been able to turn to Kalnes for delivery – but no more. Heavily pregnant Petra Hedström in Strömstad had a planned caesarean section at Kalnes on 17 March 2021, but she was told the same morning by phone that she was not allowed to come. The hospital regretted that they could no longer receive Swedish patients. "It was like they were pulling the rug out from under my feet. I just cried so it was my husband who had to call NÄL" (ST 19 Mar 2020). One can speak of quick and inconsistent decisions in Norway that drastically affected Swedish border residents who needed urgent care. Ambulance driver Johan Andersson emphasized that "it becomes an ethical dilemma and a stress you have" (ST 9 Jan 2021).

Border Meetings on the Old Svinesundsbron

When the national border was closed, people on both sides of the border could arrange meetings on the centre line of the old Svinesundsbron. These meetings included weddings, music events, family meetings, local politicians' meetings, journalist meetings, but also ordinary personal meetings. The middle-aged identical twins Pontus and Ola Berglund belonged to the last category. They met every Saturday from April 2020 until the end of the pandemic restrictions. Pontus lives in the Swedish border parish of Lommeland and Ola in Halden, Norway. They have been very close throughout their lives and therefore felt a strong need for recurring personal meetings even when the national border was closed. *Strömstads Tidning* has made several extensive reports with pictures and texts about the brothers' meetings. The first time was on 7 April 2020 (ST 7 Apr 2020). The newspaper wrote: "Each bringing his own coffee, they would sit down and start talking". In October 2021, Norwegian television NRK filmed the two brothers (ST 5 Oct 2021). French journalists have also visited them. At the last

newspaper report on 30 December 2021, the brothers were depicted with Santa hats. They had also each put up a national flag on the bridge deck (ST 30 Dec 2021).

In early August 2020, Norwegian-born Heidi Caroline Nyström and Swedish-born Willy Lysell got married in the middle of the old Svinesundsbron through a civil marriage ceremony. The bride and groom live in Strömstad where they run the store 'Ditt och datt' which is very focused on Norwegian customers. Heidi is chairman of the Merchants' Association in Strömstad and wanted to send a message to the Norwegian government through the wedding in the middle of the bridge that the border should be opened. This wedding actually became an international novelty. French news agency AFP, the French morning newspaper Le Figaro, the French weekly Paris Match, tv station TVA Nouvelles in Canada, as well as the German morning newspaper Bild, which is the best-selling newspaper in Germany, wrote about this ceremony. It was perceived as a unique event (ST 13 Aug 2020).

A close collaboration during the pandemic between *Strömstads Tidning* and *Halden Arbeiderblad* was symbolically illustrated by journalists from the two newspapers meeting at the centre line of the old Svinesundsbron in early December 2020. Norwegian journalist Kristian Bjørneby stated: "For us in Halden, Svinesund and Strömstad are not another country.

19. Twin brothers Pontus and Ola Berglund have coffee together in the middle of the old Svinesundsbron on 3 April 2020. Photo Hannah Palmhagen.

20. Twin brothers Pontus and Ola Berglund with Santa hats and each national flag in the middle of the old Svinesundsbron between Christmas and New Year 2021. Photo Arvid Brandström.

21. Heidi Caroline Nyström and Willy Lysell give each other a wedding kiss in the middle of the old Svinesundsbron after the wedding ceremony in August 2020. Photo Thomas Bennelind.

22. Journalists at *Halden Arbeiderblad* and *Strömstad Tidning* met on the old Svinesundsbron in December 2020 to talk about the situation with the closed border. Photo Trine Bakke Eidissen, *Halden Arbeiderblad*.

23. The Working Committee of the Svinesund Committee gathered on the old Svinesundsbron in September 2020. Photo the Svinesund Committee.

For us, it's part of our neighbourhood." Swedish journalist Marita Adamsson replied: "How happy I am when I hear that" (ST 5 Dec 2020).

In September 2020, the Norwegian-Swedish Svinesund Committee's working group met at the border line on the bridge. They wanted to send a visible message about the need for cooperation across the border instead of Norwegians and Swedes blaming each other during the pandemic (ST 8 Dec 2020).

The Strömstad choir Tontämjarna had difficulties when they could not meet their Norwegian choir leader Martin Rasten, who lives in Moss, Norway, because of the border closure. After a long break, the choir and its leader met in the middle of the old Svinesundsbron on 18 May 2020. The choir director was on the Norwegian side and the choir on the Swedish side. Martin Rasten stated that the choir "wanted to manifest the ties between Sweden and Norway". Norwegian TV covered this unusual event (ST 23 May 2020).

The dance students in Strömstad's cultural school and in Halden Danseskole met in the middle of the bridge on 24 October 2020. Journalist Marita Adamsson, who followed the dance performance, commented afterwards: "We have just experienced a manifestation of why borders should be open, neighbours in border areas should not be separated. I have seen longing, sorrow and hope and I remain totally convinced that we must take care of our unique community here around the border. Maybe even a little more firmly convinced" than before the dance performance (ST 27 Oct 2020).

Negative Rumours Spread as a Result of the Closed Border

When the border for entry into Norway was closed for a long period as of 17 March 2020, frictions arose between residents on both sides of the border. It took the form of rumour-mongering. This has been mentioned several times

24. Choir leader Martin Rasten conducted Strömstad choir Tontämjarna in the middle of the old Svinesundsbron on 18 May 2020. Photo Marita Adamsson.

25. Dance students in Strömstad's cultural school and in Halden Danseskole met in the middle of the old Svinesundsbron on 24 October 2020. Photo Marita Adamsson.

in *Strömstads Tidning*. Obviously, Swedish commuters suffered the worst consequences. Journalist Marita Adamsson wrote on 10 October 2020 about "a strange blaming tactic where it sometimes sounds as if only Norwegians spread infection, sometimes as if only Swedes do. An unpleasant way to unload anxiety through attack. But it doesn't stop at being rude. It's dangerous." She continued: "The contradictions seem to have become more deeply rooted, more serious." It has become an "us and them thinking" (ST 10 Oct 2020).

On the same day, 10 October, *Strömstads Tidning*'s editor-in-chief Gunilla Håkansson wrote: "I have heard stories from both Swedish and Norwegian readers who describe a harsher tone between former friends, where Norwegians accuse Swedes of being irresponsible and only caring about the money in the border trade, and Norwegians being told to their faces that they 'chickened out'" (ST 10 Oct 2020).

On the Norwegian side of the border, there have been stories about negative statements about people on the other side of the border. A former municipal councillor in Halden, Thor Edqvist, stated in February 2021 that "the border closures have led to a lot of throwing shit at our neighbours in the east, and that makes me sad. I think it will take a lot of time to rebuild a good neighbourly relationship after this" (ST 20 Feb 2021).

Vaccination

The first vaccination dose was given on 27 December 2020 in Sweden (ST 29 Dec 2020). In Strömstad and Tanum municipalities, vaccination on a large scale started in nursing homes and in home care in early January 2021. Each care recipient would receive two doses with an interval of three weeks (ST 9 Jan 2021). At the nursing home Beatebergsgården in Strömstad, 72-year-old Håkan Wikström was the first to receive the vaccine. He stated

that "this might save the world. I myself have worked in the research world and know how difficult it is". What he was most looking forward to was the car ride with his wife and hugging three children and four grandchildren (ST 5 Jan 2021). The vast majority of those in nursing homes accepted vaccines, although no one in Sweden can be forced to do so (ST 9 Jan and 16 Jan 2021).

When the first vaccinations were completed in nursing homes and in home health care, recipients of home care were next in line (ST 14 Jan 2021). Health care staff in Strömstad received their first dose on 11 February 2021 (ST 13 Feb 2021). About three hundred people were vaccinated on 11 February. Everyone had been given a specific time to arrive, so that not too many people would appear at the same time (ST 16 Feb 2021). The health care staff received their second dose on 22 May. Summer substitutes in elderly care also received a dose in May. One of them was 25-year-old Emma Thyft who was just then training to be a dental nurse (ST 29 May 2021).

In May 2021, Tanum municipality was in fifth place in the Västra Götaland region with 52 per cent in terms of how many people had received the first vaccine dose. Strömstad was significantly lower at 37 per cent. The higher figure for the Tanum municipality may be due to the fact that there are many elderly people in the population (ST 27 May 2021). In September 2021, 82 per cent of the adult population over the age of sixteen in Strömstad and 96 per cent of those over the age of 70 had received at least one dose. 72.8 per cent were fully vaccinated (ST 7 Sep and 18 Sep 2021). Tanum was slightly higher with 87.5 per cent with dose one, and 79.6 per cent who were fully vaccinated (ST 09/30, 2021). In several editorials the editor-in-chief of *Strömstads Tidning* has pointed out the importance of the newspaper's readers getting vaccinated. This would promote contacts between people on both sides of the national border.

26. Håkan Wikström was the first to receive the vaccine in Strömstad at Beatebergsgården nursing home at the turn of the year 2020/2021. Photo Arvid Brandström.

27. Care staff in Strömstad received their first vaccine shot on 11 February 2021. Photo Victoria Petersson.

By comparison, three out of four Norwegians over the age of 18 had received at least one vaccine dose and 39 per cent their second dose in July 2021 (ST 24 Jul 2021). Vaccination became extra important for Norwegians when, on 28 December 2021, Sweden started requiring vaccine certificates or negative Covid-19 tests, taken within the last 48 hours, for arrivals from the Nordic countries.

28. Emma Thyft received her first vaccine dose in May 2021 before she was a summer substitute in elderly care. Photo Victoria Petersson.

Returnees

As the Covid-19 pandemic brought teleworking in many occupational categories, many employees were able to carry out their tasks elsewhere, for example in their holiday homes. This led to some added permanent housing in the Strömstad area. The large majority of all these immigrants have had roots in this area and can therefore be described as returnees. In March 2022, *Strömstads Tidning* published a series of articles headlined "Returning home" based on interviews with these permanent immigrants. Until August 2022, 353 people had moved to the Strömstad municipality (ST 20 Aug 2022). This new immigration had a positive effect, contributing to increased tax revenues and a larger base for trade in the Strömstad municipality when Norwegians could no longer cross the border and spend money in the municipality.

Ingela Kvist, 60, was able to move from Gothenburg after 36 years, returning to her childhood home in Strömstad (ST 12 Mar 2022). Mathias and Anniken Persson Ölander, aged 41 and 40 respectively, have swapped Stockholm for Strömstad. For Mathias, that meant returning to the place where he grew up. He can now do his work in the IT sector from home (ST 1 Mar 2022). Ida Stålvall, 36, with roots in Strömstad and her husband Andreas Stålvall, 41, still have their jobs in Gothenburg but work from home after moving to Strömstad. Sometimes they need to go to Gothenburg (ST 10 Mar 2022).

Estate agents in Strömstad have noticed increased buying pressure from returnees where at least one party has roots in Strömstad. They feel that they get more living space for their money than in the big cities (ST 3 Mar 2022). Journalist Victoria Petersson was responsible for the article series "Returning home" and conducted the interviews. She noted afterwards that "reasons for 'moving home' have varied. Some, who have children, want to live closer to their family, for others it is the dream of a big house that

29. For Mathias and Anniken Persson Ölander, it became practically possible in the summer of 2020 to fulfill a longing to move from Stockholm to the West Coast and Strömstad. Photo Victoria Petersson.

can actually become a reality in Strömstad when in a larger city it was just a dream". According to all interviewees, the permanent relocation would not have been possible without the pandemic that allowed remote work (ST 26 Mar 2022).

Border Contacts after the Pandemic

Sweden opened the border three days earlier than Norway, on 9 February 2022. However, special recommendations to avoid crowding and large crowds remained in place for the unvaccinated. Test results from the public health agency were not reported anymore. From 1 April 2022, Covid-19 ceased to be classified as generally and socially hazardous in Sweden (ST 2 Apr 2022). After 12 March 2022, this disease has only been mentioned occasionally in *Strömstads Tidning* describing how Norwegians were returning to Strömstad when the border had finally been opened. When Norway removed all border restrictions on Saturday 12 February 2022, it had an immediate impact on border trade in Sweden. On 15 February the parking lots were filled the very same day by Norwegian-registered cars. The manager at Nordby business centre Ståle Løvheim stated: "It was the best sight I have seen in 23 months" (ST 15 Feb 2022). Systembolaget in Strömstad gained an increased customer influx right away. On 18 February the Norwegian newspaper VG (*Verdens Gang*) interviewed satisfied Norwegian border traders in the Strömstad area. The newspaper's headline read: "Enjoying the opened border to Sweden – fantastic!" (VG 18 Feb 2022). On 9 February ColorLine began operating the Strömstad-Sandefjord route, but with only two departures per day at the beginning. At the same time, it was "a struggle to find people" for the ferry lines after a two-year hiatus. The old employees had disappeared (ST 2 Aug 2022).

At Easter in mid-April 2022, the presence of Norwegians once again became very noticeable after a two-year pause. Maximat got ready in advance by hiring 50 people. The recruitment of new staff was successful quite rapidly after advertising in both Halden and Strömstad. Store manager Ole Jørgen Lind emphasized that "everything happened so fast, it went from completely closed to completely open in a very short time" (ST 9 Apr 2022). Restaurants had a lot of trouble, however, in finding qualified personnel. Heidi Ljungdahl at Backlund's restaurant in Strömstad stated on 5 April that the restaurant was "looking everywhere for trained staff". Bakers, chefs and pastry chefs must be qualified (ST 5 Apr 2022).

During Easter, Norwegian tourism also made its presence felt on the Koster boats that had to schedule extra trips (ST 21 Apr 2022). Norwegian boats dominated in the guest harbour in Strömstad. Port manager David Nikkinen Gravander stated that "Boats from Norway dominated with only occasional Swedish boats." The number of paid guest nights increased sharply to the great benefit of the port treasury (ST 23 Apr 2022).

Norwegian youth celebrated Maundy Thursday in Strömstad in 2022. *Strömstads Tidning* had a headline entitled "Norwegians filled the city with cars and motorcycles". A new feature was that Systembolaget dared to be open on this day after having been closed during the years before the pandemic (ST 16 Apr 2022; Gustavsson, 2019). About twenty Norwegian youths were taken into police custody for excessive alcohol use. Some Strömstad residents, who were interviewed by the newspaper, were pleased that the Norwegian young people had returned to their car and motorcycle driving. Nineteen-year-old Smilla Samuelsson emphasized that "this is a great tradition". Since she was three years old, she had been with her mother "watching the spectacle every Maundy Thursday" (ST 16 Apr 2022).

Even during the Norwegian national day on 17 May many Norwegians made a border trade visit to Strömstad. In several cases women were dressed in bunad (national costume). The Norwegian newspaper VG had a big report in Strömstad that day and wrote: "No day is holy for Swedish border commerce. Norwegians go to Sweden to buy cheap barbecue food on the national day, many in their best dresses". Outside Systembolaget in Strömstad the parking lot was full of Norwegian-registered cars. Kim Moen from Halden carried two crates of beer and stated: "When the beer costs half as much, it is no stress to make a shopping trip to Sweden on our National Day." (VG 17 May 2022).

During the summer of 2022, the manager Ståle Løvheim at Nordby shopping centre noticed that the majority of customers came from the immediate area on the Norwegian side while the long-distance customers were gone compared to 2019. This may be because the higher fuel prices in 2022 affected those who live further away. At the same time, Oslo resident Jan Granås pointed out in early August 2022 that he was putting up with the increased fuel prices. He noticed that "here the petrol is four Swedish crowns cheaper than in Norway, so I will take the opportunity to fill my tank". Maximat at Nordby had its best sales figures

30. Norwegian youths Tuva Opstad and Bror Harnes Sheide were pleased to be able to visit Maundy Thursday in Strömstad on 14 April 2022 after a two-year break. Photo by Moah Gustafsson.

ever. According to store manager, Alexander Johansson, there were as many customers at Systembolaget in Strömstad as in 2019 (ST 4 Aug 2022).

At the same time, the increase in Norwegian border trade in Sweden after 12 February led to a decline in grocery trade in Norway. It had increased by about twenty per cent during the pandemic. According to the Norwegian Central Statistical Office, Norwegians reportedly traded for over two billion kronor in Sweden from February to May 2022. This has led the Norwegian business community to put forward proposals for regulations to reduce this trade leakage to Sweden. In May 2022, the government stated that it wanted to take immediate action (ST 31 May 2022).

During the summer of 2022, the Norwegian tourist pressure became very strong. In the guest harbour in Strömstad, the Norwegian flags were flying again on the boats. Guest harbour manager David Gravander Nikkinen said: "It's great that people are here again". Line Nilsen from Fredrikstad has been a regular boat guest in Strömstad harbour and stated: "I love this place! People are so nice in Strömstad. The archipelago is fantastic" (ST 14 Jul 2022).

In the summer of 2022, campsites in Strömstad could rejoice, seeing Norwegians return but also in the fact that Swedes who had arrived there during the previous two years returned in 2022. "The Norwegians have come back and the Swedes have stayed." The camp sites were fully booked. At the same time, it had been a struggle "to rebuild the workforce". It's been "harder than usual to find summer staff this year... Serving and kitchen staff have been most difficult", said Lena Kempe CEO of Daftö Resort (ST 2 Jun and 12 Jul 2022).

Among the Norwegian-Swedish sports events that resumed in the summer of 2022 is the Grenserittet bicycling competition on 20 August between Strömstad and Halden. It had 1,100 participants, most of whom came from Norway. It has been running annually since 1999, but had to take a two-year pause during the Covid-19 pandemic (ST 20 Aug and 22 Aug 2022).

31. The Norwegian boaters Tom Tevit and Gunnar Bjørnstad in the guest harbour in Strömstad in mid-July 2022. They have often visited this port during previous holidays. Photo By Moah Gustafsson.

Interest in Swedish commuting to Norway, which slowed down during the pandemic, increased again in the spring of 2022. At the same time, there remained a hesitation or caution after the difficulties that occurred during the pandemic. Kikki Lindset is an information officer at Grensetjänst Norge-Sverige and answers questions every day about working in Norway. Many people

who have called her want to work in Norway for the first time. They haven't had the experiences that former employees had during the pandemic. According to Kikki Lindset, the Swedes who stopped working in Norway often said that they "would never again work in Norway" (ST 21 May 2022).

32. Border Race 2022. Photo Thomas Bennelind.

The new cross-border trade, border tourism and commuting to Norway have contributed together to a marked drop in unemployment in 2022. The top level of 11.4 per cent unemployment was reached in April 2021, while it had more than halved to 5.3 per cent in July 2022. As a result, unemployment had decreased more in Strömstad municipality compared to other municipalities in the Västra Götaland region (ST 09/03, 2022).

After a two-and-a-half-year pause, on 1 September 2022, the Kalnes Hospital again offered care for Swedish women in the Strömstad area during their pregnancy and delivery. Swedish women are offered ultrasound in the eighteenth week of pregnancy and then delivery at the hospital's state-of-the-art maternity ward. This long-awaited decision was greeted with relief and great joy on the Swedish side of the border. Travel time was reduced from just over an hour and a half to the regional hospital NÄL in Trollhättan to about 20 minutes to Kalnes (ST 09/01, 2022).

Several politicians in the Strömstad area have made a critical evaluation of the situation in Strömstad and Tanum municipalities during the pandemic. Social Democratic municipal counsellor Kent Hansson raised this issue in his maiden speech in 2022. He said that "no municipality in Sweden was as hard hit as Strömstad". In addition, Nordic cooperation had "been freezing cold during the pandemic". Hansson said that "Nordic cooperation needs a totally new start" (ST 3 May 2022). Moderate Member of Parliament Johan Hultberg from Fjällbacka in Tanum municipality had the same opinion when he raised the issue of Nordic cooperation in June 2022 in an interpellation debate in the Swedish Parliament. "We have to learn from the crisis," he said (ST 14 Jun 2022). The chairman of the Green Party in Strömstad, David Nikkinen Gravander, emphasized that "Strömstad needs more jobs that are not border trade" (ST 23 Jul 2022).

Cecilia Nilsson is CEO of the politically appointed Norwegian-Swedish Svinesund Committee. She said that Sweden's and Norway's governments both tended to overlook the border regions. "Now we must get the public health authorities in Norway and Sweden to work more closely together, to plan and to think about consequences for border residents" (ST 14 Jun 2022).

Summary

This study has investigated how people's social day-to-day lives on both sides of the southern part of the Norwegian-Swedish national border were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic during 2020–2022. Norway closed the border for entry on 17 March 2020. Restrictions issued by the Norwegian government were occasionally relaxed during the summer and later upgraded again. The short time intervals of the restrictions helped to create uncertainty and anxiety among the people affected. The short time between changes made it difficult to plan ahead. This applied to companies as well as to groups and individuals. All Norwegian restrictions were not lifted until 12 February 2022. Sweden closed the border only over a couple of shorter periods in early 2021 and 2022 and removed all restrictions on 9 February 2022.

In recent years, the Strömstad area is unique, partly through extensive Norwegian border trade and partly through significant tourism from Norway. Commuting, on the other hand, has primarily gone in the opposite direction from Sweden to Norway.

The main source for this investigation consists of extensive reports about the pandemic on both sides of the border in *Strömstads Tidning*, which also collaborated with Norwegian newspapers on the other side of the border.

The survey begins by following the various ups and downs of the spread of infection in Norway and Sweden and the restrictions that have been imposed at border crossings primarily to Norway. Swedish commuters to Norway have experienced significant difficulties with Covid testing and other restrictions at workplaces and at border crossings.

When Norwegian border trade and tourism ceased, it had tangible negative consequences for the economy and in terms of jobs on the Swedish side of the border. Extensive layoffs and notices of dismissals resulted. Social contacts between loved ones across the border suffered. There was negative rumour-spreading between Norwegians and Swedes. The infection situation improved more and more in 2021 in line with increasing vaccinations on both sides of the border. However, Norwegian cross-border trade and tourism as well as commuting to work were still negatively affected during that year.

When the Norwegian and Swedish border restrictions ended in February 2022, border contacts gradually increased, and they have increasingly begun to resemble the situation before the pandemic. At the same time, politicians in Norway and Sweden have recognized that lessons for the future must be taken from the special difficulties that arose in border areas during the two-year pandemic. This study can form the basis for further discussions on approaches and preparations to better cope with future crisis situations.

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Newspapers

Aftenposten

Halden Arbeiderblad

Strömstads Tidning (ST)

Verdens Gang (VG)

Book Reviews

Folk Belief as an Animated World
Folktro. En besjälad värld. Kurt Almqvist & Lotta Gröning (eds.). Bokförlaget Stolpe, Stockholm 2022. 230 pp. Ill.

The issue of enchantment seems to arouse interest in Swedish investigations of belief. Not so long ago, Fredrik Skott published his detailed and popular book about everyday superstition, and now another book about vernacular religion, published by Bokförlaget Stolpe in Stockholm has appeared. The editors are Kurt Almqvist and Lotta Gröning, who have collected thirteen articles about folk belief or, perhaps better in English, vernacular religion.

The concept of folk religion, in Swedish *folktro*, is complicated and difficult to capture. Students of religion have seen many efforts to define it, but since religion is not an unambiguous phenomenon its "derivative" cannot possibly be clear-cut. This may be the explanation why the editors avoid dictating how each of the contributors should grasp and handle their scholarly material. One reader might give up trying to understand why a specific kind of religious belief is "folk", but another might not. It is better to concentrate on the subtitle of the book, which expresses the idea of folk belief or vernacular religion as an expression of thoughts about an animated (*besjälad*) world. Soon, I hope, we will see the time when the difference between religion and folk belief, folk religion, and other categorizing and evaluative contrasting concepts will be erased from scholarly terminology. Whatever the believing human regards as a trustworthy contact with supranormal powers, the scholar studying religion should regard it as an expression of religion. From the "objective" scholarly perspective, there cannot possibly be anything right or wrong in the belief of individuals. In research, taking a standpoint about correct or incorrect belief involves uttering a qualitative opinion, which does not suit scholars. Today, religious studies frequently concentrate on the believing human, not on the interpretation of texts.

The second main issue in this book concerns the soul. This is connected to the nowadays so beloved theme of enchanting, disenchanting, and re-enchanting. Weber's idea that the world is regarded and understood in a completely scientific, materialistic, and objective way, because of the positivistic ways of conducting science in the aftermath of the Enlightenment, has proved to be wrong. Seldom have we seen such a rise in the search for something to believe in as today, be it thoughts from New Age, influences from Eastern religions or from mysticism, and ideas of an animated macrocosm. Certainly, the modern Western world has been re-enchanted, as some of the articles prove clearly.

This well illustrated book is a mixture of more or less scholarly articles and quite a lot of pictures. It is divided into five groups: "The disenchantment of the world", "Folk belief in ancient India and Egypt", "Folk belief during Antiquity", "Folk belief in the Nordic countries", and "Folk belief yesterday and today".

In the first section, Kristina Ekero Eriksson introduces us to a summarized

narrative about what the Swedish religious centre might have looked like in ancient Uppsala during the Viking Age. An essential article by Joel Halldorf discusses how important it is for the student of religion to reckon with entities that do not really fit into the realm of science in the classical notion of that word. In religious studies it is not possible to weigh, count, or measure very much, but still the experience of harmony, peace, or beauty is central in human life and, above all, an aspect of religious life worthy of an investigator's efforts. Then, in the second and third sections, we are presented with an overview of the ancient Greek, Roman, Norse, and Egyptian pantheons, written by Jerker and Karin Blomquist, Gabriella Beer, Lars Lönnroth, and Andreas Winkler respectively. Indian folk belief likewise finds a place in this book in Per-Johan Norelius's effort to demonstrate the position of the human self, the soul, and *brahman* in relationship to the macrocosm during the time of the Veda texts. "Folk" seems to mean all those people who are not religious experts of some kind, whereas in Britt-Mari Näsström's article about the cult of Mithras, concerning the time around the beginning of our era, "folk" is clearly defined as a masculine religion for soldiers and merchants.

The fourth section concerns the nineteenth-century Swedish folk belief. Lars Lönnroth and Tora Wall show us how nature outside the fences of a farm was once seen as a dangerous place. This is in contrast to the perspective today, when nature has no negative characteristics at all. For quite a long time, supernatural beings were regarded as guardians of their special topographic places, such as the forest, the water, the farm, or the mines. Humans were expected to behave in a proper way in order not to be punished by the guardians. Tommy Kuusela also shows that animals belonged to Nordic folk belief, many of them being different from natural animals as regards to their skills and appearances. Their position in folk belief has to do with their abnormality: A wolf with three legs, and the fourth stretched out like a tail, and found to contain a human being if shot, cannot possibly be a normal creature. Quite a lot of the articles refer to feasts and celebrations in which customs with religious undertones play an important part. Lena Kättström Höök writes about Easter and Christmas, among other feasts.

The fifth section of this book brings the reader to contemporary thinking about nature. The Enlightenment and the scientific revolution have changed the conditions in which the modern and post-modern human beings relate to nature. Once nature was dangerous, it was "another world" from which humans had to stay away unless it was necessary to visit it for some reason. Camilla Asplund Ingemark reminds us that, today, it is a place of recreation and joy. However, it is still dangerous, but not because of its own qualities. Instead, man is the reason for nature's dangerous potentials. Man has not behaved properly and, consequently, nature is said to take the lead. According to David Thurfjell, the scholarly concept of animism in the twentieth century was appropriate for describing a primitive feature. Today, however, animism is increasingly employed in efforts to understand why scientific ways of thinking do not dominate contemporary ideas about nature. When analysed with the help of cognitive psychology, it becomes possible to prove that the secularized European has been able for a long time to keep company with non-real, non-materialistic figures such as God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit and that this model of communication also works with non-human figures such as, for instance, trees.

Actor-Network Theory could be a good starting point for analysing the relationship between man and the environment, but this theory is only mentioned in one of the articles, as far as I can see. What is also not mentioned in the book is that not only the natural world has become animated, but aliens, androids, and machines are likewise

regarded as reacting like humans. Many families give a name to their robot lawnmower or vacuum cleaner. People speak to their coffee machine as if it can understand what they say. That then extends to the question "Who are you? Do you have a soul? Are you a human? Who, then, am I?"

This book is a good introduction to the knowledge about religions around the world and over thousands of years. The illustrations are beautiful and inspiring. To my mind, the most rewarding reads are the articles about the religious behaviour of humans since the industrial revolution, and texts containing parallels and contrasts between ways of thinking in a rural society and today.

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Aspects of Oral Storytelling

Det berättas…! Muntligt berättande som självförståelse, estradkonst och kulturarv. Alf Arvidsson & Katarzyna Wolanik Boström. Umeå universitet, Umeå 2022. Etnologiska skrifter 71. 127 pp.

I am sitting upstairs in a café in central Jakobstad trying to gather my thoughts about this book, where the blurb on the back cover begins with "People tell stories everywhere!" The book is about everyday storytelling in a time when experience-based narration is gaining attention in many different ways, as something one can have special competence in, as something one can also learn and become better at, and which is sometimes practised by specialized storytellers in more or less staged contexts. I read about storytelling described as something fundamentally human, something used to communicate, reflect, and make the world comprehensible to oneself and others. The book has four chapters, the first of which is an orientation or "Lägesbeskrivning", providing a detailed research background to the topic. This is followed by two more empirical chapters: one about storytelling on stage in Västerbotten, one about people who teach life-story telling. The concluding chapter of the book should be read as an essay on storytelling as cultural heritage in cultural policy, with the stated intention of also providing a basis for further ethnological research on the subject. Of these four chapters, Alf Arvidsson is the author of three. Katarzyna Wolanik Boström is responsible for the chapter "Promoting, Evoking, and Shaping Life-Story Telling" which strikes me as a thematic rendition of interviews with people who teach storytelling. In the introduction we learn that the two researchers have been involved in the project *Oral Storytelling as Cultural Heritage and a Force in Society.*

In the introductory overview, which fills about a third of the total page count, Arvidsson undertakes the task of summarizing research on storytelling, and more specifically, the storytelling movement. The field is a particularly large one, since different scholarly disciplines have taken an interest in storytelling, the scholarly ambition in the published works varies, and the endocentric perspective is sometimes combined with the exocentric perspective in individuals who are both skilled storytellers and eminent researchers. The questions explored obviously vary according to these parameters, which further complicates any attempt at a general survey. Arvidsson skilfully places the emergence of the Swedish storytelling movement in a historical and international context, discussing genres, performances, and actors involved in this – all this is manna for a Finland-Swedish folklorist. It is instructive and interesting to follow this exposé of how a movement has emerged. The survey goes on to discuss storytelling as a part of public discourses in society: the presentation of history at the local level, autobiographical writing as storytelling, narrative ecosystems, the role of schools and teachers, and storytelling in relation to cultural heritage.

Arvidsson highlights important things, but I feel that much gets lost in the mass, and that a book like this is not really able to achieve the visibility that the subject deserves. I myself would have liked to have read a whole book about what is covered just in this survey.

As I flip through the book to remind myself of what I have read before, I listen rather casually to what is going on at the table next to mine. Many ethnologists and folklorists who have engaged in narrative research will have experienced moments when they have eavesdropped on conversations conducted in public places but not intended for anyone other than the interlocutors; whether it be loud phone calls or several speakers present in the same place, you sometimes get clear insight into people's everyday lives. At the table next to me there are five young women who seem to know each other well. They are chatting over a cup of coffee and the conversation could be entitled "A Day at Work". One of the women is particularly dominant in the conversation. She works at a filling station that serves food and sells groceries, and at least some of the other women have done similar work. The dominant woman is adept at storytelling, and I get to hear her experiences, feelings, and fears in a working day. She talks about the great responsibility that the cashier girls have, dealing with direct customer contact and simultaneously keeping an eye on the screen showing what the surveillance cameras see. She tells her friends (and me) with dismay about the quantities of sweets and other small things that disappear into customers' bags and pockets with no payment. She tells of a time when a woman had difficulty with her debit card when trying to pay for a large amount of goods, but the situation was saved by another customer who paid for her. She talks about how unpleasant it can feel and how frightened she has sometimes been when the evening shift is over and she has to switch on the alarm. Once the lock on one of the men's toilets was red but no one came out even though she waited a long time and knocked on the door – what if there was a dead man in the toilet?! Her stories are received sympathetically by her friends, who back her up with little laughs and nods of agreement, and examples of their own stressful days with minimal breaks and a never-ending flow of customers to smile at. Every single day.

The cashier from the filling station in Jakobstad could have served as an example of *authenticity* in the storytelling situation and in the storyteller, which Arvidsson analyses in the section "An Everyday Stage Art". In many parts of today's storytelling movement in Västerbotten, from which Arvidsson takes his examples, the stories told over a cup of coffee can be a basic trope for the unpretentious storytelling with physical proximity between the narrator and the audience, and as such, the relaxed coffee drinking serves as a model for how a storytelling event should be presented. Several contexts actually go under the designation "storytelling café", often with coffee drinking as an activity for the audience during the performance. As Arvidsson so aptly puts it, the re-creation or staging of this everyday situation becomes "an imagined antithesis of a fragmented, mass-mediated, age-segregated, impersonal, alienated present-day normality". In other words, assembling around coffee cups has become a new variant of the trope of gathering by the fireside, as so often encountered in contexts where people tell fairy tales or talk about supernatural beings. The storytelling café is not alien to me because I use a similar concept to collect material for books on local history – this cannot be done without a cup of coffee. And a cup of coffee even adorns the cover of a book about memorable people and events in Esse in Pedersöre municipality. In other words, I have an emic understanding of a branch of the contemporary storytelling movement, and this is my first contact with a text about an activity in which I am a co-actor. In that role I

derive the greatest benefit from what Arvidsson writes in his introductory survey of how the storytelling movement has emerged in Sweden. If, on the other hand, I wanted condensed and impactful course material that explains intangible cultural heritage in relation to folklore, I would definitely recommend a careful reading of the concluding essay.

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Norwegian Studies of Broadside Ballads

Skillingsvisene i Norge 1550–1950. Studier i en forsømt kulturarv. Siv Gøril Brandtzæg & Karin Strand (eds.). Scandinavian Academic Press, Oslo 2021. 672 pp.

Arven fra skillingsvisene. Fra en sal på hospitalet til en sofa fra IKEA. Siv Gøril Brandtzæg & Bjarne Markussen (eds.). Scandinavian Academic Press, Oslo 2021. 454 pp.

These two edited volumes are the result of a research project on Norwegian broadside ballads. The project has been led by Siv Gøril Brandtzæg and Karin Strand, who also edited the first book together. Twenty-five articles by seventeen different scholars present various aspects of the history of broadside ballads in Norway. The researchers come from different fields, such as literature, linguistics, musicology, history of ideas, and library studies. This is thus a broad interdisciplinary study presented in two volumes. The two books are intended to complement each other, with a historical perspective in the first volume and a description of the use of broadside ballads in the twentieth century and down to our own time in the second. In the introduction to the first volume, Brandtzæg describes her mission as an action to save an important genre from oblivion and extinction, and to demonstrate the diversity of the broadside ballads. Despite the large amount of preserved material, with more than a thousand different broadside ballads in Norwegian archives, this material has still gained little attention in research. In practical terms, Brandtzæg also emphasizes the importance of digitization in making the comprehensive material available.

An interesting problem for research on broadside ballads is the fundamental question of how a broadside ballad should be defined. The simplest and most common definition, "printed rhymed verses intended to be sung" is not as exhaustive as one might first think, and the definition of broadside ballad is therefore discussed at length in the introduction to the first volume. Here it is emphasized that *skillingstrykk* is the printed medium itself, the broadside or broadsheet, while *skillingsvise* is the ballad or song printed on it. But one difficulty with this definition is that it does not take into account that the broadside ballad exists in both a written and an oral tradition. The volume therefore argues that the topics of the songs must also be taken into account in the definition, and above all the connection of the songs to contemporary events and news is emphasized as important for what is perceived as a broadside ballad. It is this broad definition of broadside ballad that is the foundation for the entire research project.

The first volume, "Broadside Ballads in Norway 1550–1950", is divided into two parts. The first consists of articles that primarily deal with the texts of the ballads and the second is devoted to the context of the ballads. The eight articles dealing with the ballad texts together present a wide selection and provide interesting examples of the breadth of the material. In each of the articles, a couple of ballads are selected for close reading, with a particular focus on the content of the text. There is a study of "Ridder Brynning", a narrative comprising about 105 verses. It was spread from

about 1700 until 1900 in many places all over the Nordic countries. An overall question for the study is why this ballad achieved such popularity. Another ballad, from 1865, where a man sings about how his three children have died within a relatively short period of time, serves as an example of a song about death and mourning, in an article based on studies of about seventy songs of grief. All the selected ballads are about close relationships, often with a faith in salvation. A popular motif in broadside ballads from the nineteenth century is shipwrecks. One of the ballads subjected to a close reading is the story of a shipwreck in 1842, related in 31 verses. This was a major event at the time, and the ballad both informed about what had happened and expressed thoughts about mankind's struggle against superior powers. One chapter is devoted to broadside ballads about natural disasters. Singing about such events was a way of processing the emotions they aroused, and the ballads were widely spread thanks to their important dual function of warning against sin and providing comfort in grief. Similarly, stories about comets and other celestial phenomena could appear in broadside ballads from the late sixteenth century to the 1770s. Interest in dramatic events is also expressed in nineteenth-century ballads about criminals, where the offender is allowed to express his perception of himself. Purely linguistic matters are also discussed, as in the article based on an early twentieth-century navvy ballad. The study focuses on three different broadsides, primarily examining the variation between Danish-Norwegian on the one hand and Swedish on the other. Finally, an article focuses on portrayals of "the Other" in broadside ballads. Here it is mainly texts about "Turks" and "Jews" from the end of the eighteenth century onwards that are of concern, as well as examples of how whiteness as an ideal is also depicted in a large number of ballad texts.

The second part of the first volume deals with the context of the ballads. The publisher and printer Peter T. Malling of Christiania (Oslo) is the subject of one article. His activities from the 1840s onwards are discussed in detail, as regards economic aspects, licences, and sales methods. A specific broadside from 1697, which deals with dramatic events in Hamburg and which was spread in Stockholm, is the focus of one article. Knowledge of broadside ballads from earlier times is limited, not least when it comes to the actual production and sale of the sheets. For this selected broadside ballad, however, some legal documents are preserved, which tell us both who bought the broadside and who produced it. One article discusses a number of examples of how ballad sellers were portrayed in literature from the early eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century. Another article considers pictures in early broadside ballads, that is, from the end of the eighteenth century. A number of general questions are raised, such as the problem of interpretation when many images were reused for different broadside ballads. Natural disasters and "monsters" have at times been popular motifs in the broadside ballads, and a number of examples of this are shown in the chapter and discussed in terms of contemporary religious and political aspects. The collector's perspective is treated in one article, based on a special collection from the nineteenth century with over 750 broadside ballads. Finally, an article discusses the work of today's libraries to preserve the collections of broadside ballads and make them easily available.

The second volume, "The Heritage of the Broadside Ballads", gives a number of examples of how the old ballads were used in the twentieth century and performed again in new media, for example on revue stages and in recorded versions. There is a discussion about the possibility of using the term *skillingsvise* despite the fact that the selected songs were not all disseminated via printed sheets, which is otherwise regarded as an important criterion for broadside

ballads, but via stage performances and phonograms. The editors believe that criteria other than the medium of dissemination are also relevant to the definition of broadside ballads in the twentieth century. It is highlighted here that the common denominator of the material is that it enjoyed a wide spread among the less well-off in society, because the price was low. In addition, aesthetic aspects must also be included in the criteria for a broadside ballad. This possibly becomes even more important in the twentieth century, when earlier functions, such as songs in work situations or ballads as the only news outlet, disappeared. A distinction is also made with respect to the "folk ballad", in that broadside ballads often have an individual author, whereas folk ballads are said to have been collectively composed. Broadside ballads are also primarily written products, while the repertoire of folk ballads has for the most part been orally transmitted. Finally, the texts of the broadside ballads are clearly related to contemporary events. Taken together, all these aspects make it possible to demarcate a repertoire of broadside ballads, even though they do not occur in print in the same way as the broadside ballads of previous centuries.

Three parts are devoted to different aspects of broadside ballads during the twentieth century. In the first part, the focus is on the broadside ballad as a "tradition bearer". One chapter has a detailed and interesting account of Alf Prøysen's great importance for the collecting and archiving of ballads, for a knowledge of the context and the dissemination of this repertoire. This particularly highlights the social origin of the ballads among the less well-off, as well as the importance of the story and the drama in the ballads, as expressed in Prøysen's definition of the genre as *almuens opera*, "the opera of the common people".

Special categories such as *rallarviser* (navvy songs) and *tattarviser* (tinker songs) are covered in one article each. A long article is devoted to *Sinclarvisan*, with its roots in the eighteenth century and in widespread use until our time. The author discusses how the ballad has been linked to different political contexts through the ages.

Part two, "The Transformations of the Broadside Ballad", contains close readings of a cabaret song from the 1920s, as well as a number of songs released on disc in the 1970s. Both articles highlight the great popularity and spread of the songs, which has resulted in a great many variants and performances. This part also discusses practical aspects of performances today. The third part studies contemporary political songs and their connection to the broadside tradition, with a couple of examples from Norwegian media, as well as from Anglo-American tradition with examples from Bob Dylan's repertoire.

In recent years the scholarly study of broadside ballads has increased in Sweden, for instance with studies by Eva Danielson, Hanna Enefalk, Märta Ramsten, and Karin Strand. It is interesting and valuable that such an extensive research effort as the one reviewed here has now been carried out using material from Norwegian archives. The broad approach, which has been fundamental to the project, clearly shows the wealth of the studied material. The study declares that this is the first major research project on Norwegian broadside ballads, which perhaps also explains why a descriptive perspective predominates in both volumes. The articles are well-written and informative throughout.

The first part of the first volume, which deals with the texts of the broadside ballads, reveals a large number of texts expressing views about morals, values, and political opinions. The focus in the study on the texts of the ballads is reasonable, since they are narrative songs, where the events in the text have to be presented and conveyed to the listeners. The project's claims about the broadside ballads as comments on

contemporary events and conditions are well substantiated. The close contact with the material resulting from the close reading is important, but it also means that each article is a stand-alone study, and although it is good that the articles can be read independently of each other, it makes it difficult for the reader to form an idea of what is shared and what is distinctive in the different types of ballads considered. The extensive presentation of the project (the two books together comprise just over 1,100 pages) is detailed and thorough. Let us hope that this project will serve as a basis for future studies also focusing more on structural, overarching perspectives, for instance elaborating on the ideas about the social affiliation of broadside ballads or their importance for the dissemination of knowledge in society.

The second part, with its focus on the context of the ballads, gives interesting examples from a more general perspective, although the dividing line between the first and the second parts is not so easy to draw, as is also emphasized in the introduction to the book. There is nevertheless a clear difference in that the articles in the second part look beyond the individual ballads and ask questions about the material other than those concerning the textual content and the popularity of the selected ballads. In particular, the questions about publication and dissemination are of general interest. Here the article about publishing operations in the nineteenth century and the article based on legal documents from the late 1690s are interesting for research on musical life in general and not just relevant for research on broadside ballads.

The starting point for the project as a whole is the Norwegian archival material that has so far seen little research. The focus on Norwegian matters is therefore a given. Some articles relate briefly to international research in the field, but this does not happen generally throughout the volumes. Linking up with international studies and relevant research in the field would have been desirable, for example in an introductory or concluding article.

The second volume deviates from the earlier definition of broadside ballads by arguing that ballads not disseminated via print can also be broadside ballads. Both aesthetic and thematic criteria are also significant for the definition, as it is argued in the introduction to the volume. A distinction is made between the broadside ballad and the folk ballad with the claim that the latter is a collective creation, unlike the former, which often has a known author. The argument about a collective origin is scarcely valid today, nor are the aesthetic criteria for what should count as a broadside ballad really clarified. On this point the discussion could have been expanded. The practice of using borrowed tunes for the lyrics, which also usually counts as an important criterion for broadside ballads, is only briefly touched upon, but in my opinion it would also have been worth a more detailed discussion.

The articles in the second volume clearly illustrate how the studied ballads belong to the repertoire that Alf Prøysen called "the opera of the common people". The connection between repertoire and performance situations is highlighted from a societal perspective, which is positive. One article also focuses on practical performance, thereby emphasizing the importance of the music. The latter is important not least in view of the significance that the tunes have had for the performance of the lyrics.

All in all, these two volumes report on impressive research work. The articles are consistently well written and grounded in archival material. Although the references to previous research are often brief, there are extensive bibliographies which put the studies in a broader context. The ambition to bring this repertoire out of the archives and into the light is laudable, and it must be said that the authors have succeeded. With their focus on the texts of the ballads, the authors have shown the important uses

of the ballads and their ability to survive through the ages.

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Early Modern Handwritten Newspapers

Handwritten Newspapers. An Alternative Medium during the Early Modern and Modern Periods. Ed. by Heiko Droste, Kirsti Salmi-Niklander. Studia Fennica Historica 26. Helsinki Finnish Literary Society, SKS 2019. 223 pp. [DOI: https://doi.org/10.21435/sfh.26]

It is a commonplace to state that the late medieval and early modern change of media, i.e. the invention and circulation of print, did not lead to an immediate replacement of the old media with the new one, or the sudden death in the production and dissemination of manuscripts. Quite the opposite, the simultaneity of the handwritten and the printed media, one of the results of Gutenberg's innovation, continued to exist for many centuries. This is neatly illustrated in the present book, the result of a workshop held in Uppsala in 2015. As its title indicates, the volume curated by Heiko Droste and Kirsti Salmi-Niklander focuses on the specific genre of handwritten newspapers in the early modern as well as in the modern periods. The book analyses this kind of manuscripts with regard to the concept of their being an alternative to early printed newspapers, an immensely widespread and prolific new genre in sixteenth-, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. The ten articles cover quite a wide range of themes and methodological approaches and geographical regions, from Europe to the United States and the Caribbean, and chronological periods, from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. In their highly informative introduction "Handwritten Newspapers: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on a Social Practice" (pp. 7–26), the editors propose cushioning the heterogeneity by pointing out both the importance of pragmatic aspects in the specific social and cultural practice of writing journals by hand and the necessity of contextualizing the material. In the list of research questions they suggest treating issues such as definitions and descriptions of sources, early modern and modern public spheres and markets for news, economic aspects, the political participation of the lower classes, but also recent and future research fields figure prominently. It is remarkable to note that especially Finnish and German scholars are at the forefront of research in this field.

In the first section three articles are assembled around the topic of "Print, publicness, and the state". "How Public Was the News in Early Modern Times?" (pp. 29–44), by the co-editor Heiko Droste, starts off with a programmatic discussion of the characteristics of early modern news as a public phenomenon. One of his observations is that "the handwritten newspaper as exclusive medium had the potential to be used as a non-public medium as well […] However, the medium's social function remained at its core" (p. 41). Michał Salamonik in "New Times Bring New Practices: Girolamo Pinocci and the *Merkuriusz Polski*" (pp. 45–59) presents a case study of the first (short-lived) printed newspaper in Poland in 1661 and its handwritten predecessor; the author is primarily interested in the interplay and the transition from manuscript to printed newspapers. Fredrik Thomasson, "*Gustavia Free Press?* Handwritten and Printed Newspapers in the Swedish Colony Saint Barthélemy" (pp. 60–77), analyses an instance of political censorship on the Swedish-owned Caribbean island of St Barthélemy in the early 1830s, which scrutinizes the role of two unofficial handwritten newspapers and the official printed newspaper, all of them written in English.

Section II deals with "Material aspects and intermediality" of the topic. Mark

Alan Mattes' contribution "The Intermedial Politics of Handwritten Newspapers in the 19th-Century U.S." (pp. 81–97) discusses the "importance of print's aesthetic dimensions" (p. 94) and focuses on the interaction of handwritten newspapers with other media of communication as intermedial literacy. The corpus of Mary Isbell's "Diplomatic Editions of a Handwritten Shipboard Newspaper" (pp. 98–114) is the handwritten weekly shipboard newspaper, *The Young Idea*, edited by a clerk aboard a ship of the Royal British Navy in the 1850s, an intriguing alternative to professional print media and as such another specific part of the 19th-century media landscape. Klimis Mastoridis in "On the Graphic Language of the Handwritten Greek *Ephemeris*" (pp. 115–127) provides an overview of the handwritten newspapers in Greece, whose history started in the 1820s, the background being the Greek revolution against the Ottoman Empire, and continued up to the twentieth century; a special focus is laid on the development of the function of the graphic layout.

The third and final section directs our attention to "Social practices and in-group communication". Christian Berrenberg's and co-editor Kirsti Salmi-Niklander's joint paper concerns "Handwritten Newspapers and Community Identity in Finnish and Norwegian Student Societies and Popular Movements" (pp. 131–146). It presents handwritten newspapers as "a hybrid medium of print, manuscripts and oral communication" (p. 131) and uses the concept of "social authorship" as coined by Margaret Ezell. Their material consists of university students' and young workers' manuscript newspapers written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which they understand as "a significant […] part of the media history of the long 19th century" (p. 143). Also Hrafnkell Lárusson's "Handwritten Journals in 19th- and Early 20th-Century Iceland" (pp. 147–169) concentrates on the same period and contextualizes the material within the socio-cultural framework of a society that was still largely influenced by manuscript transmission in which handwritten texts played an important role. Risto Turunen, in his close reading of a handwritten union newspaper, the organ of the cotton workers at a Tampere firm, "From the Object to the Subject of History: Writing Factory Workers in Finland in the Early 20th Century" (pp. 170–192), analyses the link between the growth of handwritten newspapers and the political awakening of the working people that ultimately led to the abolition of the paternalistic ideology. Emese Ilyefalvi's contribution, "Further Contexts of a Writing Practice: Alternative Protestant Newspaper Culture in Transylvania in the First Third of the 20th Century" (pp. 193–213), deals with another set of handwritten newspapers and gives detailed insights into, e.g., the production of a Calvinist minister who between 1932 and 1935 wrote newsletters to his Hungarian-speaking congregation and duplicated them manually by hectograph in approximately 100 copies!

A "List of Contributors", an "Abstract", an "Index of Names", and a "Thematic Index" conclude this publication which lays the ground for further studies in an emerging field with strong interdisciplinary potential. *Handwritten Newspapers* is another interesting, substantial, and handsome contribution to the Finnish Literature Society's *Studia Fennica Historica* series.

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Exhibiting Death at Sea

Simon Ekström: Sjödränkt. Spektakulär materialitet från havet. Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm 2021. 271 pp. Ill.

Simon Ekström is Professor of Ethnology with a double connection to Stock-

holm University and Swedish National Maritime and Transport Museums. This connection to both an academic institution and a group of museums is central for the origin and the character of his book *Sjödränkt: Spektakulär materialitet från havet* ("Drowned at Sea: Spectacular Materiality from the Ocean"). The aim of the book is to examine how a couple of museums approach and relate to the presence of death in their collections and exhibitions, more precisely death by sea. It discusses death as a cultural heritage and the musealization of disasters at sea, as well as the more general theme of exhibitions as media forms with their own history. The book thus focusses on *deathscapes*, the different kinds of staging of the presence of death – sometimes, death is demonstratively placed in the foreground, sometimes, it is discreetly moved away from the scene it has been offered (pp. 16–17, 21). The motto of the book, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's words that "Exhibitions are fundamentally theatrical", is illustrative of its focus.

In his selection, Ekström mainly focusses on Swedish cases – the only exception is the *Titanic*. The target group is defined as students, scholars, museum staff at maritime museums, as well as everyone interested in the topic (p. 10). It is clear that he intends to write both for an academic audience and for people working with exhibitions at museums.

The first case study of the book (chapter 2) discusses the sinking of the steamer *Per Brahe* in 1918, when twenty-four people died, and its salvage in 1922. At several points it works as a type-case, since many themes which recur in the later chapters are introduced here. One such theme is the ethical discussion of exhibiting a ship which in practice had been the place of death and the grave for many people. Ekström quotes contemporary voices from the newspapers after the salvage, when the exhibition of the wreck was often condemned as profiting from people's death, and where the exhibition was described as a disgusting public entertainment (pp. 43–45). Another topic also recurring in the following chapters is the use of specific objects to represent the disaster in the exhibition. In the case of Per Brahe, one of the few objects which is now in a museum is a sewing machine from the ship. It is charged with meaning, not least since the judicial investigation after the disaster showed that the steamer had been overloaded, and a large number of sewing machines was especially mentioned in this connection; parts of these sewing machines were also sold as souvenirs after the salvage, something specifically mentioned by the critical newspapers in 1922. The sewing machine in the museum is thus connected both directly with the cause of the disaster and with the contemporary ethical debate (pp. 58–59; also 42–43).

A part of the chapter concerns the collective memory of the *Per Brahe* shipwreck. Among the victims of the disaster were the young artist John Bauer and his family. This fact formed a subordinate part of the contemporary reports of the disaster. In his lifetime, Bauer was certainly a popular artist, but he had not gained the position he later achieved as one of the most famous Swedish artists. Ekström convincingly shows that one reason the *Per Brahe* disaster survived in the collective memory is that it is so closely connected with Bauer's death, which in our time has become the famous fact of the disaster, and that the fame of Bauer has also increased because of the tragic death of the young artist and his family (pp. 51–57, 60).

At the end of the chapter Ekström notes one important difference between the exhibition of the *Per Brahe* in 1922 and museum exhibitions of today: a remarkably short time had passed since the disaster (p. 62). This aspect of temporal distance is followed up in several of the following chapters.

The exhibitions at the Vasa Museum have a special status in this context, since they belong to the most popular museum in Sweden, whose exhibitions

reach more people than any others. The background is well-known: the large warship *Vasa* sank in Stockholm in 1628 and was salvaged in 1961. Ekström's focus in chapter 3 is on the museum's treatment of the actual remains of the dead sailors, which are exhibited in the museum. The aim of the chapter is to discuss "what kind of meeting between the visitor, history and the remains" is arranged by the museum (p. 65). The exhibition of the skeletons from the ship is staged in a way different from the rest of the museum. It is found on a separate floor, with dimmed lighting; the skeletons are placed in coffin-like showcases, without any written text. On the opposite wall, the dead are presented by (invented) names and with information about them; some of the faces of the dead have also been sculptured in a way that makes them look alive. The atmosphere created by this staging is characterized by dignity and respect.

The rest of the chapter problematizes this exhibition of skeletons. Ekström notes that the authenticity of the real bones makes them more attractive than, for instance, photographs or copies of them. However, he also notes that human remains constitute a very special type of museum material. He places this particular case in the context of the current ethical discussion about human remains at anatomic and ethnographic museums (p. 75–76, 85–87). He notes that the view of what is ethically acceptable regarding native Swedish bones has changed over time. When the ship was salvaged in the 1960s, the skeletons were actually buried in a real grave, but later they were taken up and made part of the museum's exhibition. The former taboo of exhibiting "Christian bones" had lost its power during this period (76–77). The museum had, however, long internal discussions regarding the ethical problems. The solution was to exhibit the skeletons in the special atmosphere presented above, together with texts which clarified the scientific information they provide. This would make clear that the museum did not want to use the dead for an entertaining spectacle (p. 78). Ekström notes that the combination of skeletons and realistic reconstructions of individual faces minimizes the emotional distance to the dead, but also activates the ethical problems that were so central in the debate about the collections of the ethnographic museums (pp. 86–87).

In 1945 the Swedish submarine *Ulven* sank after a collision with a mine. Twenty-three people died. Later the same year the entire boat was salvaged with all the dead bodies. This disaster is the subject of chapter 4 of the book. The special theme of the chapter is the fact that the *Ulven* disaster resulted in exhibitions at two different museums, one in Stockholm (2002) and another in Karlskrona (2014). Ekström tries to identify the distinctive characteristics of these two exhibitions in comparison to each other. The exhibition in Karlskrona does indeed include objects from the wreck itself – such as the flag and the metal wolf symbolizing the boat – which directly represent this particular boat itself and at the same time the Swedish navy. But the exhibition also showed a different type of objects: some personal belongings of one of the boat's engineers, Gustav Roslund, such as his wallet and his driver's licence. The – earlier – exhibition in Stockholm showed primarily objects with a direct connection with the boat and the disaster – such as a lifebuoy with the name *Ulven* etc. – all clear metonyms for the boat and the disaster. Personal objects are lacking. Ekström argues that this is a fundamental difference between the two types of objects: objects belonging to a crew member mark the individual, while the objects belonging to the boat represent the Swedish navy, military forces, and nation (p. 105). In Karlskrona, both types of objects are exhibited, and the visitor can choose to identify with one or the other; in Stockholm, only the latter option is possible. Ekström argues that the difference represents a change over time: the earlier (2002) Stockholm exhi-

bition promotes ideas about the nation and its military forces, while the later (2014) Karlskrona exhibition moves towards a framing of the individual, the family, and the loss (pp. 109–110).

The chapter on the *Titanic* discusses an international exhibition, arranged by a Spanish event enterprise, which came to Gothenburg in 2019. In the opening part, Ekström provides a number of reflections concerning the always relevant issue of authenticity. He notes that "Titanic" usually refers to the disaster rather than the ship, with the consequence for an exhibition that it seems to matter if an object from the ship is from before or after the disaster: the ship that was built in Belfast is not exactly the same as the one which sank a few months later in the North Atlantic (pp. 116–117). Many of the objects in this particular exhibition are quite trivial in themselves, such as a blanket and a pair of a child's boots, but since they were used during the shipwreck, they carry a strong authenticity. This type of objects provides the exhibition with a personal dimension of the same kind as Gustav Roslund's wallet in the *Ulven* exhibition (pp. 121–123). Ekström also identifies a clear message of the exhibition: it was human hubris, a modern version of the Tower of Babel, that caused the disaster.

The *Estonia* disaster in 1994 is still a trauma in Sweden (as well as in Estonia, it may be added). Many people have strong personal relations to it. Chapter 6 focuses on the special challenges for Sjöhistoriska Museet in Stockholm when they opened an exhibition on the *Estonia* only eleven years after the disaster. Ekström reflects on the importance of the short time between disaster and exhibition and contrasts it at this point to the *Vasa* and *Ulven* exhibitions (pp. 140–141). With the help of a number of internal documents from the planning of the exhibition, Ekström follows and analyses the precautions taken by the museum to avoid potential criticism. There was free entrance to the exhibition and no *Estonia* souvenirs were sold in the shop (p. 140). By such decisions, the exhibitions could avoid the accusations of making profit and public entertainment of human disaster, as occurred frequently in the *Per Brahe* case. The short time since the disaster also gave the exhibition a therapeutic effect. In his analysis, Ekström pays special attention to the "White Room" for contemplation, which formed an important part of the exhibition. Ekström reflects on the "different versions of death" presented by the exhibition, the particular death of people in the stormy sea during the *Estonia* shipwreck and the existential death, concerning everybody, which were combined by the creation of the White Room (pp. 147–149). The chapter also connects with the previous discussion of authentic objects from the disaster: the bow visor from the *Estonia* has a uniqueness that authentic objects from the other ships in the book lack, since the damage (and loss) of this particular object was the direct cause of the shipwreck (pp. 160–162). Another interesting reflection is that the Estonia exhibition chose to focus on the survivors, rather than the dead, which is in contrast to the focus in the *Titanic* exhibition, and again Ekström connects this with the short time that had passed between disaster and exhibition.

In 1952 a Swedish DC 3 was shot down by the Soviet air force. In 2003, its wreckage was found at the bottom of the Baltic Sea, and the following year it was salvaged. The chapter in the book on this case discusses an exhibition in 2010. The exhibition focussed on the political context: leading politicians lied or misled the Swedish people regarding the military mission of the DC 3 and Swedish security policy in general. Ekström is, as usual, primarily interested in the fact that the wreckage shown at the exhibition was also a grave for several humans for many years. Just as in the *Ulven* exhibition in Karlskrona, this exhibition showed some personal belongings of the dead. But Ekström notes a difference: in the *Ulven* exhibi-

tion, this served to enhance the personal, individual aspect, while the DC 3 exhibition rather focusses on the dead crew as a collective (p. 174). The chapter concludes with reflection on the use of life jackets as symbols of disasters.

The last chapter, "Dark Matter", provides synthesizing reflections on some of the topics discussed in the book: the problems connected with the fact that museums contain human remains, the relationship between experience and knowledge, and the importance of the material objects for the human death which the museums aim to communicate (pp. 189–215).

Now some comments on the book as a whole. It is clear that the different chapters all differ partly in their focus and main questions. The distinctive character of each case has governed both the analysis and the structure of them. However, there are recurring themes in all the individual studies: the ethical aspects of exhibitions connected with human death, including the importance of the degree of distance in time, the staging of the "deathscape", and the handling of the potential accusation of making entertainment and profit out of human death; the choice of objects to show, including the focus on individual belongings or objects directly connected with the disaster; the importance of authenticity; the choice of focus or the message of the exhibition.

The analyses of the different exhibitions might be described as reflecting discussions rather than scholarly inquiry: they are neither rooted in strict theoretical models – although theoretical concepts are sometimes used – nor in clearly defined criteria or categories. It is more an essay than an academic study, despite the theoretical introduction and the extensive footnote references. But this is only an advantage. While theoretical models in much recent scholarship are short-lived fads which often lead the scholar to press the material into frames where it does not work, Ekström's relatively impressionistic observations and reflections are probably more sustainable over time. They increase our understanding of both the collective memory of specific traumatic events and our understanding of what museums aim at and succeed with in connection with the delicate phenomenon of *deathscape*. The theoretical concepts which in fact are mentioned are all used in the concrete analyses, supporting the argument. They shed light on the material – in far too many cases in recent academic works the opposite is the case, and the material is just a means for the scholar to show his knowledge of the most fashionable theory. Here, Ekström instead provides a good example of how theory in academic studies should work. My general conclusion is that Ekström's book is a valuable work which deserves a large audience among academic scholars as well as everybody working with museum exhibitions.

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Life with the Radio

Elin Franzén: Radio. Vardagsliv tillsammans med ett massmedium. Institutionen för etnologi, religionshistoria och genusvetenskap, Stockholm 2021. (Mediehistoriskt arkiv 51.) 310 pp. Ill. Diss.

"It's a totally lonely world, I don't share this world with *anyone*," says Lars, one of the radio listeners interviewed by Elin Franzén during her work on this dissertation, the title of which means "Radio: Everyday Life Together with a Mass Medium". The worlds that Lars and the other listeners shape are at once solitary and shared by millions. The same programme can have many listeners, but listeners do not listen to the same combination of programmes. Each has a unique radio world, and the author's ambition has been to gain insight into this. It is

people's experiences of radio that are at the centre of the dissertation, whose purpose is to "examine encounters between the individual and the mass medium in order to understand how radio takes shape as a perceived phenomenon" (p. 10). It is thus not *what* people listen to but *how* listening shapes their relationship with the radio medium that is in focus for Franzén. However, the concept of radio is not uniform; it can accommodate different formats. One is traditional linear radio, live radio and the like, that is to say, radio in the form of broadcasts at fixed times. Here, listening must be adapted to a schedule set by others. The other is the podcast format, which means that the listener chooses when and how to listen. Here it is the listener who is in control and decides when a programme should start and finish, with the ability to pause, skip, and listen again. The two formats make listening different. This creates different relationships to radio as a mass medium. The people who participate in Franzén's research in different ways include those who only listen to one of the formats and those who listen to a mixture of the two.

The introductory chapter, as custom prescribes, presents the purpose, theory, method, and material. The theoretical starting point for the dissertation is phenomenology. Franzén stresses that both in the work of formulating her perspectives and questions and during the analysis phase, the idea of intentionality was central because it drew her attention to the components that shape people's relationships with the medium. She writes: "The phenomenon of radio includes, on the one hand, the medium with its objective, constitutive properties and, on the other hand, how these characteristics are experienced in the contexts of specific individuals" (p. 14). Radio is certainly all about sound, which can be considered something intangible. But listening cannot take place without some kind of apparatus, which means that radio also involves material things. The listener relates to objects and technology and the listening is done in a physical place. In addition, there is also a temporal aspect: the structures of the medium, such as technical formats and broadcast times, affect the experience of time. Space and time are central concepts that are problematized with the help of scholars such as Tim Cresswell, Michel de Certeau, and Yi-Fu Tuan.

The material for the dissertation consists of responses to two open-ended questionnaires and interviews with radio listeners. The first of the questionnaires was distributed by Nordiska Museet in 1967, while the second was sent between 2017 and 2019 to the networks of permanent informants linked to the Institute for Language and Folklore in Gothenburg and Nordiska Museet. It was also published in the form of appeals on the institutions' websites and Facebook pages. The interviews, which were conducted with a total of 17 people, were based on three themes: listening situations, radio content, and memories. In advance of the interviews, the participants had been asked to keep a diary of their listening, which made it possible during the interview to talk about concrete radio situations.

After the introduction comes chapter 2, "Orientation in the History of Radio", which begins with the observation that "The kind of phenomenon that radio is varies depending on when the question is asked" (p. 69). Here we follow the development of the radio medium from the crystal receivers of the 1920s to today's smartphones with apps allowing different types of listening. The technology has of course changed very much during these hundred years, but this applies at least as much to the range of programmes, the forms of financing, and the place of listening. The older questionnaire material is used here to shed light on the earliest period, while the empirical material for the next three chapters mainly consists of the interviews and answers to the new questionnaire. Each of these chapters is based on a specific theme: 3) "Apparatus", 4) "Content", and 5) "Time".

In the first of these, the focus is on materiality. The informants describe radio sets that they have used at different times in their lives and the kind of listening that they associate with them. The oldest informants remember a "box," the stationary electron tube receiver in their childhood home. Others remember the shape and colour of the first transistor radio that they owned, and the change it meant to have a portable radio. Memories of the summer holiday serial are associated with the physical apparatus and hearing the title song of the Beatles LP *Sgt. Pepper* for the first time, and with the tent on the lawn where the transistor was placed. It is very different from today, when many people have the radio in their phones and often do not even own a separate radio set. Radio technology has undergone a "quotidianization", as is evident from the narratives.

The next chapter is about content. This is examined from two aspects: the content of radio as a range of programmes on offer, and the content as an object of listening. The range and the sound are considered as different forms in which the medium appears and are examined from the same perspective as the technical apparatus in the previous chapter. Based on interviews and questionnaire responses, the author analyses preferences, habits, and memories linked to particular features or programmes. Being able to do other things while listening, along with the ability to conjure up one's own pictures, is something that many highlight as unique and positive characteristics of the radio medium.

After apparatus and content, in the following chapter the focus shifts to time. Different listening formats and their meanings for the experience of being in the present moment, everyday routines and radio as a phenomenon throughout life constitute temporal dimensions. This is investigated with the help of interviews and questionnaire responses, as well as radio diaries. Listening to a live broadcast means that one's own time is synchronized with that of others, which is different from listening afterwards through a podcast. If the latter means freedom of choice, the former can contribute to a sense of community. One informant describes how she sometimes wants to listen live, "to know that right now there are millions of other people listening to the same thing" (p. 228). How, when, and what you listen to is different for different people, but it also differs between weekdays and weekends, mornings and evenings. The dissertation then concludes with a sixth chapter in which the study and its results are summarized and highlighted.

Elin Franzén has written an interesting and exciting dissertation. The study is ably conducted, the book is well structured, and the language is clear. The division into three chapters focusing, in turn, on apparatus, content, and time is excellent. This clarifies how radio is a medium that can be both understood and used in different ways and from different perspectives. The combination of interviews and questionnaires works well. However, I question the selection of the literature on which the discussion of questionnaires is based. This relies entirely on the edited volume *Frågelist och berättarglädje: Om frågelistor som forskningsmetod och folklig genre*, published in 2003. There is much more literature than this, and more recent works, from Sweden and the other Nordic countries, that could have been profitably used to problematize the method and the material. The composition of interviewees, or rather how this is handled, can also be questioned. Among the seventeen people interviewed, there is one who grew up in Switzerland but was studying in Sweden at the time of the interview. Having your radio background in another country and having relatively short experience of using radio in Sweden ought surely to be of some significance in this context. Yet this is not touched upon at all in the analysis. That is a shame, because it could have added further perspective and

greater depth. Despite these objections, Elin Franzén's dissertation has many good qualities. Through her emphasis on radio use as an everyday practice, and with her sharp ethnological gaze, she brings new and important perspectives to research in both the interdisciplinary field of radio studies and media research.

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Folklore as Social Critique

Maria Hansson: Osynliga band. Folktro som medel för social kritik i Victoria Benedictssons, Anne Charlotte Lefflers och Selma Lagerlöfs författarskap. Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm 2021. 285 pp. Ill. Diss.

Maria Hansson is a lecturer in Swedish and researcher in literature in the Faculty of Nordic Studies at the Sorbonne in Paris. This is her doctoral dissertation about three women in the modern literary breakthrough – Victoria Benedictsson, Anne Charlotte Leffler, and Selma Lagerlöf, all of them active in Sweden in the 1880s – and how they used supernatural elements in their works at a time that celebrated social realism. Maria Hansson asks how we should understand this. The writers of the modern breakthrough sought to build a future and more liberated society and condemned conservatism in whatever form. In parallel with this, women's issues were also being increasingly highlighted. The questions discussed concerned marriage and the possibility of divorce, equality between the sexes, morality, eroticism, and the problematic relationship between man and woman. These matters were debated in literature by both female and male writers in Scandinavia, but it is among the women writers that folklore motifs found a very special use. The supernatural elements acted as a mask behind which the women could articulate their social criticism and challenge the oppressive social structures under which they lived. They demanded education, reform of marriage, an end to double standards in sex, and economic independence. However, female authors could not discuss these issues openly, and if they did they were questioned. Their works were disparagingly called "literature of indignation." Hansson's purpose is to show that the women could employ folkloristic motifs as indirect criticism of prevailing norms, without provoking the male-dominated society. Folklore is interpreted here as a weapon in the struggle for new ideas of an equal society. By this means, the author finds, literature contributed to female emancipation while becoming a strategy for seemingly conforming to the norms of society while conveying a female utopian vision.

Maria Hansson proceeds from a selection of texts by the three authors in which they let folklore illustrate some female issue. In the selected works we encounter supernatural (male) beings such as the *näck*, the *lindworm*, the *ghost*, the *devil*, the *man of the sea*, and the *troll*. Hansson provides a detailed survey of how folk beliefs and the storytelling tradition were used in literature and art throughout the nineteenth century. The many collections of traditional oral fairy tales published in that century were a major source of inspiration for writers and artists. The supernatural beings that the authors incorporate in their texts were therefore well known to contemporaries, making it possible to charge them with new meaning.

The author derives her knowledge of "the supernatural cultural heritage" from modern folkloristic research. Several well-known folklorists have contributed texts about different beings in folklore, their function and significance, such as Louise Hagberg (belief in ghosts), Herman Tillhagen (aquatic beings), Ebbe Schön (forest beings), Camilla Asplund Ingemark (trolls), to name just a few. Furthermore, the author

refers to the French work on trolls by Virginie Amilien from 1996, focusing on symbolism and the roots of folklore in older Norse beliefs about death, and to John Lindow's *Trolls: An Unnatural History* (2014), a cultural history of trolls. Scandinavian folktale research is not explicitly discussed, but it is clear that Hansson has drawn inspiration primarily from the psychoanalytic research tradition. Maria Hansson makes no distinction between different genres of folk poetry and uses the terms folk belief, folk tale, legend, myth, and folk song almost synonymously, which ought to make a traditionally schooled folklorist shudder. In my opinion, however, it turns out that the perspective applied by Hansson has no need for a folkloristic discussion or differentiation of genres. The female authors use the supernatural to present their critical view of society symbolically and allegorically, not, as in folkloristic research, in relation to aspects of belief and truth. In Hansson's analysis of the role of folklore in the texts, it is mainly the "functions" of folk belief – erotic, admonitory, and social – that are discussed in the folkloristic research to which she refers.

Maria Hansson's analysis is fascinating and creative, but not always easy to follow. There are many digressions, which repeatedly break up the overall structure of the dissertation, where the individual supernatural beings are the basis for the analysis of the concealed messages. Hansson undertakes a close reading of the texts in relation to the authors' social, cultural, and historical contexts and their own life and experience, the women's issues of the time, and the placing of the supernatural elements in the plot (the epic context). The analysis is performed at several levels in the works, which complicates matters for readers who are not familiar with the content of the texts or with literary research. The author does outline in relative detail the plot of each work and her train of thought, which in some cases facilitates an understanding, but in other cases it actually complicates things through the wealth of detail.

The *lindworm* is portrayed by Victoria Benedictsson in her novel *Pengar* ("Money", 1885). In her analysis Hansson proceeds from two different versions of the folktale, one taken from Svend Grundtvig's Danish collection *Gamle danske minder i folkemunde* (1854), the other from *Norske folkeeventyr* (1844), Norwegian folktales collected by P. C. Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe. In the novel, the lindworm contributes two elements, the motif of metamorphosis along with phallic symbolism. The lindworm appears in the middle of the novel when the main character Selma is told that she must marry an older man. Referring to Bruno Bettelheim's psychological studies of fairy tales, in which the tales are a response to children's anxiety, Benedictsson uses the lindworm as an allegory to explain and comes to terms with the protagonist's sexual anxiety. With the help of the tale of the lindworm, Selma can give vent to her anxiety as well as the disgust provoked by the wedding night and the man she is to marry. Hansson reads phallic symbolism into the description of the sleeping husband the morning after, when he is perceived as a monster with scaly skin and can be compared to a monstrous penis. Selma symbolically expresses her sexual aversion to a repulsive husband and uses the fairy tale to understand and accept the reality that, until the wedding night, had been alien to her. Hansson's conclusion is that Benedictsson uses the tale of the lindworm to present a veiled critique of child marriage and the lack of sex education for women.

The *näck* or water sprite also appears in *Pengar,* but in the form of a painting of the sprite that Selma looks at, which prompts her to reflect on being forced to marry and thus lose her independence. The näck is portrayed above all in Anne Charlotte Leffler's *En sommarsaga* ("A Summer's Tale", 1886). He manifests himself in both works when marriage issues are raised and, accord-

ing to Hansson, he has an admonitory function. In her interpretation of the two texts, she draws on the research of the historian Mikael Häll, who believes that folk beings are used as a way of positioning oneself against a certain social order. In Leffler's story, the näck appears throughout the first part, before the main character, Ulla, chooses love at the expense of her professional career. Ulla falls in love with a handsome elementary school teacher, Ralf, whom she compares to the näck, influenced by several romantic Swedish poems. She perceives Ralf as a personification of nature and as an erotic being. Through the näck, Leffler criticizes the puritanical society and its conventions, using the näck to warn readers about what happens after one affirms sexuality, that is to say, accepting marriage and sacrificing one's own interests. The function of the näck is thus to warn of the various dangers of marriage – being forced to abstain from a professional career as in Leffler's case or drawing attention to discriminatory legislation as in Benedictsson's case. The erotic function ascribed to the näck, as an alluring creature dangerous to women, is toned down by the authors in these texts and he is de-eroticized and transformed instead into a warning against marriage.

A *ghost* appears in Selma Lagerlöf's short story "Spökhanden" ("The Ghost Hand", 1898). The ghost appears in the story when the orphaned heroine writes "my beloved" to a man she does not love, in order to escape from her controlling guardians. The ghost, or rather the ghost hand, is used to criticize marriage as the only way for young women of the higher bourgeoisie to support themselves. Hansson analyses the story parallel to an earlier short story by Lagerlöf, "Riddardottern och havsmannen" ("The Knight's Daughter and the Man of the Sea", 1892) with the same message – condemning the fact that marriage is the only livelihood for a woman. The story about the knight's daughter Kristin Thott and the *havsman* or man of the sea is set in fourteenth-century Sweden. The man of the sea is a strange, almost supernatural figure who is described as half water sprite, half human and is not strictly a being from folklore, but he is given a symbolic role in the plot. Before the wedding that she is forced into, the knight's daughter sees him as an attractive and enchanting man of the sea, but he transforms after marriage into a sea monster, a symbol of alluring eroticism. His fish-like body suggests a phallus, in Hansson's interpretation, a symbol of eroticism but also of patriarchal society. In both Lagerlöf's short stories, the men threaten and force the women to marry them by intimidating them. It was the husband's task in turn-of-the-century Sweden to keep a woman in the place assigned to her by her husband.

The *devil* is represented by the works owner Sintram and his devil's pact with the pensioners in Selma Lagerlöf's *Gösta Berlings saga* (1891). Through this pact Lagerlöf seeks to demonstrate the legislation that discriminated against women. The life of the young women in the novel – Anna, Marianne, and Elisabeth – is constrained by the law. The novel thus alludes to women's social issues.

The *troll*, finally, in his capacity as the Mountain King, occurs in Victoria Benedictsson's prose story *Den bergtagna* ("Lured into the Mountain", 1888); as a source, Hansson refers to the ballad "Den bergtagna" in *Sveriges medeltida ballader* (vol. 1, version Ba). The heroine of the story identifies with the maiden in the ballad, as a critique of free love. The action takes place among a group of Nordic artists in Paris in the late nineteenth century. At the centre is a sculptor, Alland, and two women: Erna, who has previously been his mistress, and Louise, who loves him passionately. The sculptor is courting Louise to get her to agree to his terms: free love without demands or rights. He manipulates her in the same way that the troll in the ballad manipulates the maiden who eventually drinks poison as the troll tries to take her back by force. Louise likewise commits

suicide. Free love was not an option for a woman, as it was for a man; instead it left her more vulnerable. Therefore, she chooses to take her own life.

Maria Hansson's analysis is, as I said, fascinating – and rather impenetrable in places – but it is also credible in the light of the reality in which the three authors lived and which they struggled to change, each in her own way. Hansson provides an exhaustive and insightful description of the historical, social, and cultural context in which Benedictsson, Leffler, and Lagerlöf worked and how their own lives were affected. The way they chose to present their social criticism – through traditional folk beings – must be seen as ingenious. Hansson concludes in the final chapter, "Female Emancipation through Folk Belief?", that the greatest Swedish women writers enlisted "living folklore in the service of progressive ideals and women's issues".

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Catching Border Pop-ups in Historic and Contemporary Everyday Life in Åland

Ida Hughes Tidlund: Autonomous Åland. A Hundred Years of Borderwork in the Baltic Sea. Department of Ethnology, History of Religions and Gender Studies, Stockholm University 2021. 219 pp. Ill. Diss.

In her doctoral dissertation in ethnology, Ida Hughes Tidlund approaches borders as a phenomenon that requires and causes actions. Her work is based on material concerning Åland, which has a status in-between a region and a state. This betwixt status challenges clear definitions in many ways, borders being dispersed here and there, ordering the daily life of Ålanders. The aim of the thesis is to explore the related borderwork and the various ways borders have affected historic and contemporary everyday life on both micro and macro levels. Borders are approached both as object of actions, constituted by activity, and as a source of actions, shaping what one does and how.

Throughout the book, Hughes Tidlund sheds light on different aspects of the historical process leading up to the present situation in Åland. In the aftermath of the First World War and a tense conflict between Finland and Sweden, the League of Nations decided in 1921 that the group of islands in the Baltic Sea, known as Åland, would constitute an autonomous and demilitarized province within Finland. Åland was granted autonomy, with a so-called Guarantee Law to ensure that the rights of minority were maintained. The language, culture and traditions of the island population were to be protected and preserved and land was to remain in the hands of legally domiciled islanders. The Autonomy Act, which has been thoroughly revised twice, had three keystones: regional autonomy with a provincial government and considerable home-rule; the demilitarization and neutralization of the province's; and Finnish sovereignty that overrules autonomy in some cases. There is also a regional citizenship called the "right of domicile", regulating the purchase of land, voting and standing in local elections, and pursuing trade.

The solution suggested by the League of Nations was not exactly what the Ålanders themselves were hoping for: their delegation had been campaigning to join Sweden, a nation they felt they had more ties to. However, as an outcome of their position as a protected minority and local efforts, Åland has been described as most Swedish-speaking region in the world. The Åland example is known globally as a precedent for settlements of territorial disputes and conflict resolution. However, it should be noted that Åland is not unique only because of its special status, but also because of its maritime landscape. Defining and main-

taining borders on a maritime surface is demanding, since the sea challenges delimitation and makes borders more negotiable.

In her study Hughes Tidlund asks what a border does, instead of what it is. She studies borders both as making things happen and as objects in the making, in the need for maintenance, making use of Sartre's concept of practico-inert. Stasis (*inert*) is seen as constituted by actions (*practico*). Border has often been practised to such a degree that it seems stable, but it still requires continuing maintenance, namely borderwork.

As Hughes Tidlund states, her study is based on three pillars: Åland as a society, phenomenology as an approach, and borders as research objects. The phenomenological perspective here indicates that the focus is on the relation between structures and individuals, bringing out the very vagueness of borders. The study concentrates on situations when a border suddenly materializes, when it is somehow activated. When a border pops up, it demands action, the nature of which depends on what one wants to achieve. The focus in the study is on small incidents of everyday life, and the individual agency as part of "hodological navigation". The borders popping up in daily life are not understood as strict linear entities, but rather as margins, which leave room also for manoeuvres.

To capture border pop-ups in whatever shape they appear, Hughes Tidlund applies the method of close reading. The material used has been chosen following the understanding of border as sanctioned by authority and handled by individuals. To understand the institutional borderwork, the author has explored the demarcation documents, legislation and maps. Individual accounts, on the other hand, are studied through archived ethnological interviews (recorded between 1952 and 2015) and interviews and participant observation conducted by the author herself. The material used is quite diverse, enabling the author to shed light on the different angles of the borderwork taking place in Åland, but occasionally also requiring extra effort from the reader to comprehend all the different aspects of borderwork analysed.

The dissertation consists of a prologue and seven chapters. In the introductory chapter, Hughes Tidlund introduces Åland as a field of research and the starting points of the study. This is followed by five empirical chapters and a concluding chapter, "After a Hundred Years of Borderwork". The empirical chapters analyse both borderwork done by authorities, intending to bring clarity, and individual border navigations.

Chapter 2, "Negotiating Laws of Autonomy", explores Åland's betwixt nature with regard to law. After outlining the legal framework of the Autonomy Act and its revisions, the chapter turns to practical situations and tensions related to the legal betwixtness in people's everyday life. Betwixtness gives room to manoeuvre and negotiate, but legal ambiguities and situationality can be also wearing for local authorities and residents. The interviews show that, for example, the customs border popped up repeatedly as a paramount aspect of everyday life causing confusion. The case of the customs border exemplifies how borders require observation, but not necessarily adherence. Law violations such as small-scale smuggling are part of everyday life and a theme often encountered in both historical and contemporary materials. This is a sign of a pragmatic attitude towards borders, which was valued also in the little rocky island of Märket, divided between three jurisdictional areas: Finnish, Ålandic and Swedish. In addition to law, the maritime landscape is also ruled by the weather, and a set of laws presented by nature must also be observed; they cannot be changed by humans.

In chapter 3, "Settling the Maritime Borders", the author uses archival documents and field notes to explore the process of making the limits of Åland's territory clear. As the League of Nations

was to decide where the future state borders of Finland and Sweden would be, it strove to find an easily defended natural border line. Once defined, however, borders also need updates and maintenance. Through the case of Märket and sea borders, the author explores the challenges nature poses to borderwork. Maritime borders are understood to disturb common definitions of borders, since sea as a surface that is always on the move tends to resist categorization and require careful maintenance, in order not to come adrift.

Chapter 4, "Navigating Waters and Borders", continues the discussion of maritime borders, from the perspective of individuals manoeuvring the territory. In this chapter, borders appear rather stationary, as an object people need to observe. Applying the concept of hodological navigation, the author shows the ways people assess the conditions necessary to consider in relation to one's intention to move. Both archived and contemporary interviews confirm the importance of experience as a navigational tool, be it personal or others' experience acquired through stories.

The fifth chapter, titled "In the Hands of the Islanders", concentrates on the borderwork falling under the power of autonomy: the process of defining the local, Ålandic specificity that was to be maintained. Based on published sources and archived interviews, the chapter demonstrates how Ålanders were involved in creating a community and sense of belonging. This borderwork included the creation of detailed maps and school curricula, implementing the idea of Åland as distinctly different in its own right. The chapter also discusses the ways local leaders acted as "myth-makers", giving Ålanders a shared past. Efforts to collect and document people's memories and life stories had the same aim: to define traditions that were part of local specificity. However, it becomes evident that occasionally the past as remembered did not mirror the rather romantic idea interviewers had about it. Through these different cases, the author shows how the specificity of Åland was achieved through a polarized relation with Finland: Ålanders rarely oppose themselves to Sweden.

The last empirical chapter, "Our Land, Our Way", pays attention to the protection of culture by legislation and the ways in which minority protection regime falls into people's laps. Based on interviews, law texts and newspaper articles, the chapter provides examples of border consciousness slipping into everyday situations. The interviewees describe how almost anything can activate an underlying friction and result in remarks about the disturbing presence of Finnishness in Åland. A local specificity is pivotal to Åland's existence and appears to be less open to pragmatic approaches, especially in contemporary material.

The chapter elaborates the theme of relative distances touched earlier in the book, making use of the concept of elastic remoteness to describe Åland's relation to Finland. Following the anthropologist Edwin Ardener, remoteness is here understood to be conceptual rather than a matter of geographical distance. The interviews indicate that there is a knowledge gap on both sides: Finns and Ålanders do not know each other very well, which increases border consciousness and anxiety. The chapter analyses not only the position of Ålanders as a first minority in relation to Finland, but also that of Finnish-speaking Finns as a so-called second order minority in Åland. How to find a good balance of rights between these different minorities?

Similarly to researchers studying transnational fields, Hughes Tidlund has been compelled to navigate different laws regarding research ethics. She conducted the research in Finland being based in a Swedish university, and there was thus a need to apply two different ethical frameworks. In addition, Åland as a field of research shaped the process and the questions she could explore.

According to her, one needs to understand that peaceful is not equal to conflict-free, and living in Åland can require navigation not only of borders, but also of tensions and emotions. Indeed, borders are sites of indignation and irritation, also forming a line between legal and illegal activity. In her text, Hughes Tidlund has decided to omit or obscure details about the participants' age, gender, profession, home town and family situation in order to guarantee their anonymity. Participants were also not given pseudonyms, because combined quotes could more easily reveal identities. Hughes Tidlund explains that, in a tight-knit community like Åland, this strategy seemed necessary to enable anonymization: "The short distances between people required a longer distance between the field and the text." The study thus attempts to keep an intentional distance to the research participants, both living and deceased, and writing in English also contributed to this. Translation can be seen to detach stories and experiences from the source to some extent.

Another related theme, which left more questions unanswered, was Hughes Tidlund's relation to Åland. This is what all the participants in the field also inquired about: how was she related to Åland, "whose side" was she on. One of the research participants pointed out that one is always a part of one's family in Åland, with the implication that there is a need to think about the reputation of one's family for generations ahead. This view took the author by surprise, running contrary to seeing herself as an individual, responsible only for her own choices and actions. Hughes Tidlund admits to being intrigued about the familiarity of Åland, its similarity to Sweden, being at the same time dissimilar in ways that really made a difference. She states that she has applied a one-sided view of the border relation that has two sides, concentrating on Åland, Finland being nearby throughout the study. What I missed somewhat was a discussion of Åland's relation and ties to Sweden and Swedishness, but maybe this is the topic of yet another study. All in all, the thesis surely has succeeded in the aim of taking a close look at what has been taken for granted or said in the margins of stories, making the familiarity of borders strange again.

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A Norwegian Pioneer

Ernst Håkon Jahr: Nybrottsmannen Andreas Faye. Med bibliografi og ikonografi ved Jan Faye Braadland. Novus forlag, Oslo 2021. 1021 pp. Ill.

The legend collector Andreas Faye (1802–1869) published the first book of Norwegian folklore in 1833. It was entitled *Norske Sagn* and it was a pioneering work. However, his retelling of these "Norwegian Legends" was mercilessly criticized by P. A. Munch, as a result of which Faye has been discredited in academic circles almost up to the present day. In recent years, however, many have called for the rehabilitation of Faye and his efforts, pleading that he should be granted the recognition he rightfully deserves. Ernst Håkon Jahr's recently published biography of this pioneer, *Nybrottsmannen Andreas Faye*, is by far the weightiest and most comprehensive work in this connection. It is a magnificent and monumental volume of some 800 pages, and in addition the book includes a thorough bibliography and iconography of just under 200 pages, compiled by Jan Faye Braadland. Faye's large and all-embracing activity, including both his academic work and his social commitment, has never before been treated in its entirety. The book also brings out several unknown aspects of Faye's life and work.

It is somewhat original that Jahr has two introductions to the book. In the first he describes Faye's meeting with Goethe

in Weimar in 1831, while the second considers the writing process if Faye's first book, *Norges Historie* ("The History of Norway"), published the same year, the reception of the book, and his appointment as member of the Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters. Jahr uses this second introduction as a stepping stone to the biography as a whole. Here he asks questions about Faye's background, education, and the circumstances that enabled him to become a pioneer.

The first chapter of the book deals with Faye's childhood and schooling. Here Jahr gives an account of Andreas Faye's birth, family background, schooling, and upbringing in Drammen, putting this into a historical-social context. The Faye family belonged to the city's commercial and business elite, and thus the city's top social stratum. This, of course, was significant for the education Andreas received and the social circle in which he moved. At the age of eight he was sent to a private school to be taught by the fabled rector of the parish of Røyken, Christian Holst. It was here his interest in history was aroused, and this was where he also heard fairy tales and legends. He later attended *borgerskole* and *latinskole*. At the latter school Andreas became friends with the brothers Nicolai and Jørgen Aall, sons of the theologian, businessman, ironworks owner, and politician Jacob Aall of Nes in Holt near Tvedestrand. This friendship would be crucial for the future course of Andreas's life.

In the next chapter Jahr describes in detail Faye's encounter with the University of Kristiania and his educational path to a degree in theology. In addition to the professors of theology, Faye came into contact with the history professor Cornelius Enevold Steenbloch. Faye also attended his lectures in history, and developed a close relationship when Steenbloch acted as his tutor throughout his studies. Steenbloch would be an important inspiration for Faye's interest in history. During his student years Faye undertook several walking tours in the region around Oslo and acquired a comprehensive knowledge of nature, culture, and history. Shortly after completing his university studies, he travelled to Copenhagen where he met and established contact with a network of key scholars, such as Peter Erasmus Müller and Adam Oehlenschläger. It was Jacob Aall who opened the doors for Faye to this academic community in Copenhagen.

After graduating in theology in 1828, Faye left Oslo to take up a teaching position at Arendal Middle School. The third chapter of the book is about Faye's teaching and life in Arendal. It was during his time here that Faye finished the textbook *Norges Historie til Brug ved Ungdommens Underviisning* ("A History of Norway for Use in the Teaching of Young People"). It is obvious that Faye wanted to expand his knowledge and improve his teaching qualifications. The fourth chapter of the book deals with Faye's educational journey in southern Europe in 1831. His first prolonged stop on the tour was in Copenhagen, where he contacted the professional network he had previously established. During this stay in Copenhagen, P. E. Müller strongly urged Faye to publish his own collection of Norwegian legends. On his continued journey southwards, Faye met Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Ludwig Tieck.

The fifth chapter of the book covers Faye's involvement in the local community after he returned from the long trip abroad. Here Jahr describes Faye's role in the establishment of a printing press, newspaper, library, and museum in Arendal. It is clear that Faye, inspired by his tour, was a central figure in this. Furthermore, Faye took up the position of rector in Holt and thus also gained a central function in the local community.

While the structure of the first five chapters is predominantly chronological, the structure of the subsequent chapters becomes more thematical-chronological. In chapter six the author concentrates on the theme of Faye as a historian and on the histories he wrote. Jahr claims in that chapter that Faye was the

foremost national historian in the early 1830s. The chapter discusses how he came to write the textbook *Norges Historie* from 1831 and publish the second edition of *Udtog af Norges Riges Historie* from 1834. Jahr additionally compares the content of these two editions. Jahr points out that the historical events that Faye selected for the textbook have been repeated in later history textbooks. In this way, Jahr gives Faye the credit for the national narratives from our earliest history.

In the seventh chapter Jahr provides a very detailed account of Faye's work on the collection of legends, *Norske Sagn*, from 1833, its publication and reception. In this chapter, Jahr writes about Faye's sources of inspiration and contributors. He goes on to cite P. A. Munch's harsh assessment of the book, a review that Jahr characterizes as academically weak. Jahr devotes a great deal of space to refuting Munch's critique, and summarizes the entire debate about the principles for rendering folklore that arose in its wake. In Jahr's opinion, the reason Munch wrote such a negative critique is that he wanted to position himself for an appointment at the university by discrediting Faye, whom he perceived as a strong competitor. Jahr further specifies that Munch based his critical argumentation on the views of Albert Ludwig Grimm. According to Jahr, this has later been mistakenly understood as a reference to the brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. In this same chapter Jahr also goes into more detail about Faye's relationship with P. Chr. Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe. Whereas Faye comes across as an amiable and helpful man, Jørgen Moe's behaviour is seen in a somewhat unflattering light. The chapter ends with Faye's efforts for the preservation of the material cultural heritage, in the form of his collaboration with J. C. Dahl to preserve the stave churches and to found the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments.

The development of a separate Norwegian written language was central to the work of creating a distinct Norwegian identity. This was another project that Faye was engaged in, noting down a number of dialect words. In the eighth chapter of the book, Jahr examines this in more detail, comparing Faye's style and language in *Norske Sagn* from 1833 and the second edition of *Norske Folke-Sagn* from 1844. Jahr argues that the changes to Faye's language in the two collections of legends anticipated the language reforms of 1862, 1907, and 1917. Furthermore, Jahr asserts that Ivar Aasen received input from Faye regarding his language project; there is no unambiguous evidence for this, but it appears to be a reasonable conclusion. As for Faye's contribution to the development of the written Norwegian language, it may be that Jahr gives Faye slightly too much credit.

The following chapter deals with Faye's work as a clergyman in Holt and Faye as a family man and his personal family tragedies. Despite great strain, he continued his work tirelessly and with great dedication. In the two following chapters, Jahr deals with Faye's social engagement and his work in organizations and politics. We learn about Faye's efforts to reduce alcohol abuse, to strengthen agriculture, to build hospitals, and to establish an agricultural college. In other words, as a theologian Andreas Faye was concerned not exclusively with the spiritual status of his flock, but also with their material conditions. In this respect he is reminiscent of Hans Nielsen Hauge. As a politician and member of parliament, Faye was involved in the repeal in 1842 of the ordinance governing religious assembly, and he was one of those who voted to have the Jewish clause in the Constitution amended the same year, although a majority voted against this.

Another important field in which Faye worked was the teacher seminary in Holt, and this is the subject of the thirteenth chapter. He was given the task of organizing and directing the teacher training college. Jahr describes Faye as an edu-

cational pioneer. The following chapter gives an account of Faye as a church politician and his participation in Scandinavian synods in the years around 1860.

Faye moved away from Holt and started his ministry in Sande in 1861. The last years of his life in Sande were a productive period in terms of writing historical works, including the books *Norge i 1814* and *Christianssands Stifts Bispe- og Stiftshistorie*. This chapter on the years in Sande is followed by the concluding chapter where Jahr summarizes the main lines and holds up Faye as a pioneer.

Jahr has given us a voluminous and comprehensive biography, one that shows the versatility of Andreas Faye – his professional and scholarly activities, his work as both a theologian and an educator, and his involvement in social issues. A clear strength of the biography is that Jahr puts Faye's life and work into a larger historical context. The book is closely written and packed with information and details; it is thorough and exhaustive, and it therefore also works very well as a biographic reference work. Sometimes, however, the presentation sticks close to the sources, merely citing the empirical evidence. As a biography the book would probably have benefited if the source material had been more successfully sifted, allowing the analytical perspective to stand out more clearly.

The level of detail in the book can sometimes provide interesting supplementary information, but at times it becomes excessive when all the minutiae interrupt the presentation and feel like digressions. This happens, for example, at places in the book where new contacts and acquaintances of Faye are introduced. The copious details can weigh down the presentation and are surely superfluous in several cases. Moreover, all the particulars sometimes have the result that the main point is not always clearly stated. The use of notes to provide the supplementary information would probably have improved the rigour of the presentation.

A biography is always intended to convey a person's special contribution in one or more fields, and the author of a biography will necessarily develop a close relationship with the person portrayed. This may mean that the author is not always objective in his or her assessments, with the risk of overestimating the importance of the subject. Overall, I would argue that Jahr manages the balance relatively well, but there are some assessments that can be discussed. Jahr claims that the collection *Norske Sagn* is close to a doctoral dissertation. Although Faye paints the historical/cultural-historical background to the legends and supplies comparative information from other European countries, Jahr makes rather too bold a claim. *Norske Sagn* is primarily a collection of traditions. Similarly, it is also debatable whether Faye was the foremost national historian of his time. In the university environment there were the history professors Rudolf Keyser and the previously mentioned P. A. Munch. The latter spent many years writing the eight-volume opus *Det norske Folks Historie*. Whether P. Chr. Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe were pupils or disciples of Faye must surely also be questioned.

For several of the quotations in the text, Jahr refers to a secondary source. It would have been preferable to use the primary sources in these cases since they are not difficult to access. Material on Faye can be found in several central Norwegian public archives. Jahr does not mention this until the very end. Perhaps he could have stated that there is also source material related to Faye in the National Library's manuscript collection. As it is, the biography is highly exhaustive, with an expanded and annotated bibliography and iconography, but perhaps there could also have been a list of archival material associated with Faye in the various archives. This would have been of great assistance to scholars in future research on Faye.

Jahr's biography of Faye will serve as a lasting standard reference work,

indispensable for all future researchers. It grants Andreas Faye the honour he rightfully deserves. Although I have some minor criticisms, they do not overshadow the fact that Jahr has given us a very valuable and interesting work.

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Prisoners of tradition

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir: Fangar hefðarinnar: konur og kvenleiki í íslenskum þjóðsögum. Trapped within Tradition Women: Femininity and Gendered Power Relations in Icelandic Folk Legends. Faculty of Sociology, Anthropology and Folkloristics (School of Social Sciences). The University of Iceland, Reykjavik 2022. 249 pp. Diss.

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir presents an important addition to our understanding of the role of legend in negotiating aspects of cultural ideology (norms, beliefs, values) in the context of the rapidly changing, largely rural Icelandic society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Of particular importance is the careful attention she pays to gender and gendered performance, providing an important and necessary perspective on two often overlooked aspects of legend tradition: (i) the construction of and representation of gendered interactions within stories and (ii) the role of women in the storytelling tradition of Iceland.

Although the dissertation consists of eight chapters, the main body of the work, like many Icelandic dissertations, is based on a series of previously published articles. The five brief lead-in chapters, however, provide important context as well as an overarching framework that allows one to read these articles in concert with one another. The result is a far-more nuanced exploration of the representation of women in legend than one would get from reading each of the articles separately. Indeed, it is the integration of the articles with this historical, theoretical and methodological framework that brings to the fore their interdependence.

After an introductory chapter, Dagrún moves on to "The Nature of Legends." In this chapter, she offers a strong, careful and thorough grounding of legend research. She situates her discussions of genre in a broader, historically-informed, theoretical context providing a thorough overview of the field of legend study and the collection of folklore, particularly in Iceland. She also offers a clear motivation for the study of legend as part of a socio-ethnographic exploration of the dynamic change associated with the role of women in Icelandic society, particularly as aspects of the predominantly rural society experienced significant change.

In a section entitled "Legends and Women", Dagrún situates her study in the context of the performance turn in folkloristics (1970–1980s) and the importance this turn had for folklorists in considering gendered aspects of performance. The section presents a clear theoretical line, situating the current study in the context of more recent work such as that of Júlíana Þóra Magnúsdóttir, Helga Kress, Rósa Þorsteinsdóttir, Jeana Jörgensen, Ruth Bottigheimer, and Maria Tatar.

A final section, entitled "Gender", provides an excellent summary of a broad range of gender studies, particularly inflected for the purposes of this study. This is no mean feat, and readers will find here a useful distillation of extremely broad and complex theory into a working model for the study of gender and legend.

The rest of the book rests on the four previously published articles noted above. The first is an intriguing study of women who are presented as behaving as men in Icelandic legend. The finding that this positionality is praiseworthy for women who only do so temporarily but a matter of approbation for women who

do so more persistently is fascinating, and provides some intriguing insight into gendered behavior not only in the Icelandic legend tradition, but also on some of the evaluations of women in the Icelandic family saga. Dagrún's conclusion of the narrow path that limited women's behavior is well-supported by her research, and is one that might be tested in other Nordic tradition groups. It would also be interesting to see if this conclusion also holds true for contemporary Icelandic informal expressive culture.

The second article offers an important examination of violence directed against women in the study corpus. Although, as Dagrún notes, gender-based violence is not highly represented, it might be that this relative absence makes those episodes of such violence that one does encounter worth critical attention. Dagrún does just that in this chapter. Her conclusion of the role these stories likely played in the normalization of violence against women is sobering.

A third article explores women who reject motherhood, either by remaining childless or exposing their infants. She situates her discussion well in the context of such classic works as Pentikäinen's *Nordic Dead Child Tradition*, updating this discussion of útburðir (exposure) with the very large Icelandic legend corpus. It does make one wonder the extent to which útburðir continue to be a trope in contemporary legend telling and popular media such as film. That women who refuse/reject motherhood in Iceland are treated more sympathetically than their Nordic counterparts is likely a productive avenue for future research.

In the final article, Dagrún considers the threat of the supernatural female, the potential strategies for dealing with such a threat, and the results of those actions. The distinction she makes between troll women and the overly sexualized female, and the hidden woman, and the insufficiently masculine man (redolent of accusations of "unmanliness" discussed by, among others, Preben M. Sørensen) is intriguing. It is well worth exploring whether this is consistent across the Nordic region or perhaps more accentuated in Iceland.

In her concluding chapter, Dagrún notes that, "those women who contest the dominating hegemonic ideas concerning femininity in Iceland regularly tend to be presented as threats to the social order" (201). Her application of intersectionality to the understanding of the myriad representations of women in legends provides nuanced readings that are not solely along this binary axis. Her final appeal to continue to (re)consider the archive from new, critical perspectives is one worth heeding.

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Mournable Lives

Kim Silow Kallenberg: Sörjbara liv. Universus Academic Press, Malmö 2021. 226 pp.

The ethnologist Kim Silow Kallenberg's book concerns the "mournability" of human lives – that is, whether the dead, while alive, had value. A "mournable" person, in contrast to a "non-mournable", is someone who was worth loving, who is worth grieving over and thus whose death causes legitimate grief.

Who is mournable and who is not, concerns power, and questions raised on this matter have not been raised many times before within ethnology as far as I know. The project is inspired by, amongst others, Judith Butler and Sara Ahmed.

Kallenberg presents two lives that for some could be considered non-mournable. They are Marcus and Noel, who grew up with the author. Both faced challenges with drug abuse and mental health and both died young.

The research material consists of field notes and reflections that the author had on the two men's lives and deaths, such

as: "… both of them also had so many good sides. That it is easy to imagine an alternative future. Which was possible, but is not anymore" (p. 79). The author has also used interviews, especially with the young men's mothers, but also with friends and other relatives. The interviews were conducted over four years, from 2016 to 2020. Readers are presented with long, transcribed extracts from the research material.

Of particular interest is the author's choice of an autoethnographic approach, where her thoughts and fears claim considerable place. This choice is made because the author approaches the topic from the position of being a childhood friend of Marcus and Noel. Without this experience, a research project on mournable and non-mournable lives would probably have been planned and completed in a very different way. She emphasizes that autoethnography must be seen as a continuation of the many academic debates from the 1980s onwards: about the researcher as a creator of the material, a consciousness of one's own influence and self-reflection as necessary elements of a research process.

An autoethnographic approach may be viewed as theorized self-reflexivity, de-emphasizing the binary nature of the researcher and the object of research, and between the subjective and the objective: recognizing and acknowledging subjective experiences and emotions, and using them, rather than hiding them in analyses (p. 194). The autoethnographic method emphasizes living the story, embodying the narrative, rather than telling it (ibid.).

Sörjbara liv is a well-written book, but an unusual academic text. I found reading it quite demanding, not only because of the content, but also due to the autoethnographic method. I only managed to piece together *Sörjbara liv* as an academic text after reading the last 20 pages, where I was presented with the project's research context, academic goals, research questions, and reflections on methodology and research ethical challenges. Personally, I would have preferred to have this framework presented first. This would have given a clearer context to the author's detailed narratives about, and portrayals of Marcus and Noel, and the sometimes introverted thoughts the author communicates.

This criticism aside, *Sörjbara liv* discusses a topic not often found in our field of research and the author experiments with the methodology. For these two reasons, I believe *Sörjbara liv* will have a large audience.

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Finno-Karelian Communicative Incantations

Tuukka Karlsson: "Come Here, You Are Needed": Registers in Viena Karelian Communicative Incantations. Faculty of Arts, University of Helsinki 2022.155 pp. Abstracts in Finnish and English. Diss.

The command or plea "Come here, you are needed" references instances of direct address incorporated into incantations (loitsut), collected from Viena (Archangelsk) Karelian informants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and preserved in the folklore archives of the Finnish Literature Society (Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura). The thousands of collected incantations eventually became published along with other recordings of trochaic tetrameter folksong in the twentieth century in the 34-volume anthology *Suomen Kansan Vanhat Runot* (SKVR) [Ancient Poems of the Finnish Nation]. They are today available as a searchable digitized corpus (skvr.fi). In an "article dissertation" based on three previously published articles, Karlsson seeks to characterize the formal features of Viena Karelian incantations containing direct address,

termed "communicative" incantations, since they contain lines that address, command, or seek to persuade the beings they invoke. In contrast, "non-communicative" incantations, i.e., those containing narratives or descriptions of beings or phenomena without instances of direct address fall mostly outside of the dissertation's analysis.

The dissertation's first article "Register Features in Kalevala-metric Incantations" first appeared in the journal *Language & Communication* (2021). In it, Karlsson looks at 46 recordings of the incantation known as *Tulen synty* (the birth, or origin, of fire), collected between 1829 and 1915 and ranging in length from 22 to 216 lines. In addition to recounting the mythic origin of the first fire, the incantation may include addresses to beings such as the Virgin Mary (Neitsyt Maria), an icy maiden (hyinen tyttö jäänen neiti) and/or a honeybee (mehiläinen), imploring or commanding their assistance in providing objects or actions needed for healing. Other entities, such as fire (tuli) are also addressed, with the performer commanding them to leave or take their unwanted effects away. Karlsson tabulates instances of verbs in the imperative or optative, with or without additional intensifying or mollifying particles *-pa/pä* and *-s*. He notes the addition of attributes or address forms that characterize addressees in positive, negative, or ambivalent terms. Sometimes incantations contain "justifications," explanations of why the commanded or requested action needs to take place. Karlsson finds that these occur somewhat more frequently when the addressee is described as a supportive being likely to assist in the healing (e.g., the Virgin Mary, the honeybee). But justifications may also occur in addresses directed at adversarial entities, like fire. To the extent possible using archival materials, Karlsson addresses the murky issue of whether certain elements of lines (for example, the inclusion of the enclitic particle *-pa/pä)* may arise as simple responses to metrical needs or may carry deeper rhetorical meaning.

The dissertation's second article "Discursive Registers in Finno-Karelian Communicative Incantations" appeared in the journal *Signs and Society* (2021). It takes up the notion of justification identified in the previous article and seeks to further characterize its occurrence and possible rhetorical functions within the corpus of Viena Karelian communicative incantations. Karlsson finds that the formal features of justifications vary according to whether the being addressed is portrayed as supportive or adversarial. Karlsson limits his focus to some one thousand communicative incantations collected from informants in the parishes of Jyskyjärvi, Kieretti, Kiestinki, Kontokki, and Uhtua, but excluding the parish of Vuokkiniemi, where incantations abounded. He further limits this corpus to some 515 incantations by excluding incantations which recount narrative events alone (i.e., noncommunicative incantations). The resulting corpus consists exclusively of incantations which contain instances of direct address. They range in length from four to 212 lines. Karlsson notes that incantations can name their addressee vocatively, note their past, present, or typical actions, and command, cajole, or entreat them to take certain actions needed for the healing. Added justifications occur in some 152 incantations, and appear roughly twice as often in conjunction with direct address toward beings considered supportive of the desire healing, such as the Virgin Mary, than in addresses directed at either adversaries or beings of an ambivalent nature. When justifications are directed toward positive entities, they often seek to underscore the positive purpose of the desired action or moderate the force of the directive. Ukko kultanen kuningas (Ukko/old man/God golden king), for example, is called upon to build a fence to guard against noian nuolet (the witch's arrows, i.e., disease). When directed toward negative entities, justifications tend

to note benefits which the adversarial being will gain by following the directive: in returning to the otherworld from which it came, for example, the being will be reunited with its awaiting mother or return home to an ample feast. When directed toward ambivalent entities, the justifications suggest benefits that will accrue to both the addressee and the performer: in choosing to heed the command to leave, for example, the bear, along with the performer, will achieve a desired state of peace.

The dissertation's third article "The Connection of Viena Karelian Ritual Specialists to Communicative and Origin Incantations" was accepted for publication in the journal *Folklore* at the time of the publication of the dissertation (2022). It again looks at Viena Karelian incantations, but now in connection with a long-held hypothesis that communicative incantations were typically performed by ritual specialists (tietäjät, "knowers"), engaged in healing or luck-related rituals, while noncommunicative incantations were the province of a wider set of performers. Noncommunicative incantations, folklorists have long posited, derive their efficacy from the words or knowledge contained in the incantation, and were thus believed to take effect regardless of performer, provided the incantation be recited in a complete and accurate manner. Communicative incantations, in contrast, were seen to depend on the powers of the ritual specialist performing them as part of a negotiation with potentially supportive or hostile external beings, i.e., the objects of the incantations' instances of direct address. Such dialogue was initiated by ritual specialists known as tietäjät or patvaskat in order to accomplish goals like healing, providing magical protection, causing harm, performing divination, or officiating at key life-cycle events like weddings (the latter the province of patvaskat in particular).

Karlsson seeks to test this longstanding assumption by analyzing the formal features of communicative and healing-related origin incantations performed by Viena Karelian informants identified as tietäjät as compared with those performed by informants who did not play such roles in their communities. For identification of probable tietäjät in the corpus, Karlsson relies on Einar Niemi's 1921 tabulation of informant identity and ethnographic details contained in the fourth published volume of SKVR, a compendium which lists the names and locations of all Viena Karelian informants whose songs were collected over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as any observations past fieldworkers made regarding their ritual activities.

Niemi's index notes some 545 distinct informants for the area of Viena Karelia, 315 of whom furnished renditions of incantations. Some 78 of the total 545 informants were identified as tietäjät to one degree or another: some were described as openly and emphatically recognized practitioners, while others were simply rumored to engage in some magical activities, possibly only within their own households. Of these 78 identified individuals, twelve furnished no incantations of any kind to fieldworkers, possibly out of concerns for weakening their efficacy or exposing themselves to censure. Some 58 of the remaining informants (74%) furnished communicative incantations, while origin incantations (like *Tulen synty)* were furnished by 39 (50%). Of the 467 informants not identified as tietäjät, 315 (58%) furnished incantations, with 183 (58%) of these providing communicative incantations and 42 (13%) providing origin incantations. Thus, communicative incantations were only somewhat more common among recognized tietäjät than among other informants (74% compared with 58%). In contrast, the performance of an origin incantation seems to have been markedly more common among tietäjät than among non-tietäjät (50% vs. 13%). Karlsson notes the abundant ambiguities of the data: not all persons who possessed the skills of a tietäjä may

have been recognized as such in Niemi's index, and informants who did possess pieces of occult knowledge may have been hesitant or unwilling to share them with fieldworkers. Nineteenth-century fieldworkers did not in general engage in extensive interviewing or contextualization when collecting but rather focused on producing plentiful transcriptions of performed materials, sometimes with only the barest notations of singer and locale, making judgments regarding the ritual activities of performers difficult to definitively ascertain.

These considerations notwithstanding, the clear correlation of origin incantations with the tietäjä role in the corpus of Viena Karelian incantations examined in Karlsson's study appears beyond doubt and can provide, as Karlsson notes, a useful foundation for further research. In a tradition in which incantation and prayer strongly overlapped, and in which nonhuman interlocutors could include God and the Virgin Mary, it would be surprising *not* to find direct address in the incantations of both tietäjät and those who lacked such skills or recognition. Yet the apparent strong association of origin incantations with tietäjät adds credence to the longstanding assumption of folklorists that such narratives of mythic origins may have been regarded as magically efficacious in and of themselves. Understanding the origins of another being, be it fire, a disease, the bear, or some other entity afforded opportunities for controlling or negotiating with it in the many ways Viena Karelian incantations illustrate. Karlsson's study demonstrates the opportunities for quantitative analysis afforded by processes of digitization that initially aimed primarily at preservation rather than analysis of recorded materials. It also illustrates the value of using such analysis to test the assumptions and hypotheses of past folklorists in ways that would have been difficult prior to the development of digital corpora.

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Stories about the Corona Pandemic in Norway

Virus. Historier fra koronapandemien. Audun Kjus & Cathrine Hasselberg (eds.). Spartacus Forlag AS/Scandinavian Academic Press, Oslo 2022. 304 pp. Ill.

When the corona pandemic hit Norway in March 2020, the Norwegian government introduced severe restrictions that would greatly affect the whole population in their everyday lives and on special occasions. The switch to a completely new social life was abrupt. Right from the beginning, ethnological researchers and archives in Norway and the other Nordic countries began to take an interest in collecting data on how people's lives were affected and how they perceived the completely new situation. The Norwegian journal *Tidsskrift for kulturforskning* 2021:1 published a theme issue entitled "Corona Culture", with contributions from several different Nordic researchers. For Norway, Tove Fjell of Bergen wrote about counter-narratives in relation to the corona restrictions. She based the study on information in newspapers and social media. Critical opinions among Norwegians concerned the requirement to wear face masks and also the offer of vaccination. The freedom of the individual, according to the critics, was ignored by the authorities.

I myself have investigated how the corona pandemic affected the social life of people living on either side of the Norwegian-Swedish border. Border people were particularly affected when the Norwegian government closed the border on 17 March 2020. It was not completely opened again until 12 February 2022. Before then it was very difficult to get across, as controls were very strict for almost two years. On the Swedish side this had a negative impact on the previously extensive Norwegian border trade and Norwegian tourism in Sweden, and it affected Swedes commuting to work in Norway (see my contribution to this volume of *Arv*).

The book reviewed here is a publication of source material based on narratives that were collected starting in March 2020. The editors are Audun Kjus, who works at the archive *Norsk etnologisk gransking* at the Norwegian Folk Museum in Oslo, and Cathrine Hasselberg, who works at *Memoar*, an organization for oral history in Norway. *Norsk etnologisk gransking* collects material through written appeals, with the informants themselves writing their own recollections and experiences. The material is available digitally at minner.no. Hasselberg has conducted online interviews where the informants talk about their experiences. The volume is published as number 177 in the *Norsk Folkeminnelag* publication series.

The book reproduces a selection of narratives from both *Norsk etnologisk gransking* and Hasselberg's online interviews. The narrators come from different parts of Norway, both town and country. They represent different age categories, from schoolchildren up to seniors, and different social categories. Healthcare personnel have also been interviewed. The narrators are listed by name and the date when the narratives were collected, spanning the time from March 2020 to Christmas 2021. All the respondents have consented to have their accounts published in printed form. The narratives differ in length. The shortest ones cover less than one page. The online interviews are consistently longer than the written responses. Very few linguistic corrections have been made for publication. The editors have tried to present the original narratives as close to life as possible.

The book has a great deal of pictorial material illustrating the consequences of the restrictions. The photo editor is Aurora Hannisdal. Keep-fit activities had to be performed outdoors, even in winter, and the same applied to church services, Lucia celebrations, and visits to the cinema. People had to keep a wide distance in parades on 17 May, Norway's national holiday. Sports events had to be held without spectators. Contacts with family and friends took place digitally or behind plexiglass. Used face masks filled waste bins and littered the ground around them. Containers of hand sanitizer were placed everywhere. On ferries, trains, and in restaurants, there had to be ample space between seats. The number of customers allowed inside shops at the same time was limited. Information about this was posted in notices. There were sheets of plexiglass in front of cash registers. A round stone found on a path on 2 April 2020 bore the inscription "Everything will be fine!"

The editors have had the aim of presenting source material and therefore have not undertaken any scholarly analysis of the narratives. There is nevertheless some sorting under various subheadings. These concern family life, working life with home offices, as well as furloughs and unemployment, school with distance learning, but also increased drug use. Seasons are also featured, such as celebrations of Christmas, New Year, Easter, and 17 May, and topics such as infection, illness, vaccination, etc. There was no question of any Christmas concerts or Christmas buffets before Christmas. Some city dwellers moved out to a cottage in the countryside to be less exposed to infection. Something that recurs in many narratives is either trust in or criticism of the government's restrictions. Gratitude for the possibility of vaccination is expressed several times. There are also people who deliberately opted out of being vaccinated, with reference to possible side effects but also to the fact that vaccination rates were so incredibly low in African countries. There was also a fair amount of humour on social media during the lockdown.

The merit of this book is that it publishes a large body of source material collected during the corona pandemic. These are not retrospective stories like those that I have studied on the subject of cholera pandemics in the nineteenth century. The collected corona material

can be of great benefit for future cultural studies analysing what happened and people's experiences of the two-year pandemic with particularly rigorous restrictions in Norway, at least in comparison to Sweden.

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Analysing Father's Tomfooleries
Barbro Klein: I tosaforornas värld. Gustav berättar. Carlssons Bokförlag, Stockholm 2021. 463 pp. Ill.

Recently, for the first time in my life, I attended an Orthodox funeral. The service was celebrated in the premises of the Baptist congregation, as the deceased belonged to both congregations. "In eternal remembrance" is the phrase uttered to the soul of the dead person and to the bereaved relatives. Why this talk about death in a review of a book about oral storytelling? It is because the author of the book, Professor Barbro Klein, was taken by death before she had completed her book about her father Gustav's storytelling. She had worked on it for forty years – the many recordings with Gustav, his wife and sister were made between 1977 and 1984, almost until her father's death in 1985. Although the most intense writing period began in 2014, the recordings and the analyses and interpretations of them had been going on for a long time parallel to other research commitments.

Barbro Klein passed away in January 2018 after a brief illness, active to the very last. Several of her friends, former students and later colleagues, were well aware of her major project on her father's storytelling and had been following the work over the years. The manuscript of the book was almost finished when Georg Drakos and Marie-Christine Skuncke, assisted by Jonas Engman and Lotten Gustafsson Reinius, assumed the task of publishing the book posthumously – in itself a huge undertaking that became an act of love for a dear friend and appreciated colleague. Through death, one is affected by life, and in this case many people can now learn about Gustav's life in rural Småland and the people whose memory he kept alive through his often comic and sometimes burlesque stories about them. At the same time, we learn about Barbro Klein's life, especially her life as a folklorist through what she writes about her father. Through his *tosaforor* – roughly "tomfooleries", unpretentious tales about high and low – her own family history is replayed.

As Marie-Christine Skuncke notes in the nicely summed up epilogue, many people will have a sense of recognition as they read this book. And this recognition can function at many levels: stories about people in the countryside, valiant attempts to keep track of all the individuals in the stories one hears, a second-generation existence with a sense of shame about parents whose Otherness suddenly shines through the veneer, one's own upward mobility and the fear of appearing self-important in front of relatives. But also how, as a researcher, one grapples with deep-seated questions about *why* someone tells stories the way they do, and a sense of discomfort about what you understand when you put your ear to someone's heart and really listen.

When I was asked to review Barbro Klein's posthumously published book, I could not imagine that life and death would affect me through it. Nor did I know how to review a book written by the person who laid the foundation for performance studies in Swedish ethnology, thus contributing to the renewal of folkloristics. And initially, I actually tried to repress my knowledge of the existence of the carefully transcribed and rendered conversations, which I find alienating even though the intent is the opposite. I flipped through the book, saw the transcriptions, and put the book

to one side. Then I picked it up again, read the preface and the epilogue, and Barbro Klein's own introduction – and I was hooked. In the introduction we are given a survey of performance research, and the author's experiences of swimming against the stream as her talk of transcription as an analytical act initially fell on deaf ears. As I read on, it became clear to me that any ethical stance one takes is also an analytical act at the same fundamental level. In my hand I thus had a brief overview of the growth of interview studies in ethnology and an explanation of the importance of carefully reflecting on one's own choices and one's own presence in research. This is something that should permeate one's entire research and be seen in the works one publishes. After this, I read the book at one stretch, and saw how the author exposes her own anguish over family stories and family silences – this was not an emotionless performance analysis. It felt like a thoroughly honest account of the fieldwork and the subsequent process of analysis. Throughout the book, we follow the seasoned ethnographer's accurate gaze while at the same time we follow the emotional reactions of Barbro the daughter as she listens repeatedly to the cassettes she recorded. Every time she listens, she delves deeper into the family secrets, deeper into her understanding of her father – an understanding that should not be confused with acceptance, as she herself also stresses and discusses. And at the same time, her understanding of herself is deepened through her ethnographic work.

One has often been advised to learn how to skim through books, to quickly sift out nuggets that can then be used – not very many of the books that are included in reference lists have been read from cover to cover. But this is a book that needs to be read from beginning to end because the author is able to transform emotional anguish, warm-heartedness and tomfooleries into pure wisdom. In my hand I hold a future classic, which, like Mozart's Requiem, was completed by others. To anyone about read Barbro Klein's book *I tosaforornas värld*, I can say, in the words of the Orthodox priest before he reads the sacred texts: "Wisdom – stand in awe!"

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Folktales from Bohuslän

*Sagor från Bohuslän. Upptecknin*gar *i urval och med kommentar av Bengt af Klintberg. (Svenska sagor och sägner 13.) Uppsala 2022. Ill. 170 pp.*

Since 1937, the Royal Gustavus Adolphus Academy for Swedish Folk Culture has published fairy tales and legends recorded in different provinces in Sweden. Most of the publication took place during the 1940s and 1950s. After that it was not until 2011 that the folklorist Bengt af Klintberg published an edition of fairy tales from Södermanland.

This thirteenth volume in the series *Svenska sagor och sägner* appeared in 2022. Here Bengt af Klintberg has published a selection of 117 folktales, together with detailed comments, chosen from the rich treasury of tales collected during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the western Swedish province of Bohuslän. There are wonder tales, animal tales, jocular tales, and tales resembling nursery rhymes. The dialect texts have been discreetly normalized into standard language. Some important dialectal words are retained, along with a translation. In the detailed commentary there is information about whether the tales have been printed before. For texts representing the types in Hans-Jörg Uther's *The Types of International Folktales*, type numbers are given. At the end of the book there is a list of all the storytellers.

Storytelling survived some time into the twentieth century in Bohuslän, longer than in other provinces of Swe-

den. Given that Bohuslän is a coastal landscape, a recurrent feature of the folktales has been the sea and the sailor's life. The earliest collection in the late 1800s was carried out by students of Scandinavian languages at Gothenburg University College. They recorded dialects using the phonetic dialect alphabet (Landsmålsalfabetet) created in Uppsala in 1879 by Johan August Lundell. Two assiduous collectors were Rudolf Lundquist and Arthur Jonsson. They worked during the summers of 1897–1901 on the island of Orust in central Bohuslän and 1900–1901 in the Bullaren district in northern Bohuslän. In the Dialect, Place Name and Folklore Archive in Gothenburg, I found, among other things, material recorded in 1899 by Rudolf Lundquist from my great-grandfather, the farmer Johan Pettersson on the farm of Kärra on Orust.

The folklore collector David Arill continued collecting throughout the 1910s and 1920s. He was one of the initiators of *Västsvenska folkminnesföreningen* (VFF, the West Swedish Folklore Association) in 1919. The year 1926 saw the foundation of *Institutet för folkminnesforskning vid Göteborgs högskola* (IFGH, the Institute for Folklore Research at Gothenburg University College). Working there was Waldemar Liungman, who, with the help of appeals in Swedish newspapers, undertook a nationwide collection of folktales in the 1920s. Bohuslän is richly represented in the material, which reinforces the image that storytelling lived on especially long in the province. The oldest storyteller was born in 1818 and the youngest in 1890. The number of male and female storytellers is approximately equal. The men tend to have mostly told their stories to an adult audience while the women apparently told some stories to children and adolescents. One question that has been difficult for the editor to answer is the extent to which storytellers read tales printed in broadsheet format in the nineteenth century.

Some storytellers are particularly prominent in this volume. The foremost of them is the fisherman and shop assistant August Jakobsson (1844–1930) of Tanum in northern Bohuslän. He is represented with thirteen tales in the book. David Arill visited him in 1919 and 1920 and wrote of his storytelling style: "He tells stories without gestures, with exceedingly few facial expressions other than a pious smile. He plays with his eyes: the smile and the gaze fill out the tale" (p. 16). His central role as a storyteller is illustrated by the fact that his photograph adorns the front cover of the book. A prominent female storyteller was Anna Långström (1820–1905) of the Bullaren district. She put her personal stamp on classical fairy tales and is represented with seven tales in the book.

Most of the storytellers were elderly when their tales were recorded. One exception was Anna Gustavsson of Forshälla parish, who was only thirty-seven when she answered Waldemar Liungman's appeal for folktales in 1924. She told stories that she remembered from her childhood, as told by her parents and siblings. Nine of her tales are featured in the book.

Several storytellers lived on Orust, which is also my home island. One of them was the farmer August Jönsson (1825–1899) of Morlanda, who has thirteen tales in the book. He told stories with humour and exaggerated details in dialect. Another prominent storyteller was the farmer and municipal official Samuel Jakobsson (1879–1954) of Tegneby, who has seven tales in the book. I remember him as a school councillor when he came to inspect the teacher's tuition and the pupils when we were in the second grade in 1948. It was a big day for the teacher when she announced that Samuel Jakobsson the inspector would be coming to visit. His repertoire consists mainly of jocular stories that he learned as a child from his uncle Petter Olsson. The stories were recorded in dialect during the 1920s.

This book is an important contribution to future research on folktales. It

is particularly valuable that the editor Bengt af Klintberg gives such a thorough account of each storyteller and places each individual fairy tale in relation to previous publications and research on folktales.

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Predators and Humans in Historical-Ethnological Light

Teppo Korhonen: Karhuverkosta susipantaan. Karhun ja suden pyynti keskiajalta 2000-luvulle. Summary: From bear net to wolf collar. The hunting of the bear and the wolf from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the 21st century. Kansatieteellinen Arkisto 62. Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistys, Helsinki 2020, 392 pp.

For some fifty years now, Teppo Korhonen, associate professor of ethnology, senior lecturer in Helsinki, has covered many different sectors of Finnish folk culture as a museum researcher, teacher, and author. He combines a careful presentation of historical sources, records in folklore archives, and objects in museums with cultural-analytical aspects of the role of traditions in social change.

He has a great many interesting things to say. The focus is on everyday culture and customs from a functional point of view, but he also considers ideas with a magical and religious background. The historical-comparative method also provides perspectives on present-day culture through the study of various rural themes, such as landscape and ecology, economics, technology and tools, building practices and housing, hunting and trapping culture, but also rituals such as greeting ceremonies. Above all, Korhonen can provide an analysis of the traditions underlying conflicts and decision-making processes where folk customs meet societal practices in a legal and ethical context.

One such topic is the hunting of the large predators in Finland: bear and wolf, lynx, fox, and wolverine. The hunting of these animals is still highly topical today. This is especially true of wolf hunting, which has become a highly politicized and emotional issue, where economics and nature conservation are opposed to each other. The time covered ranges from the Middle Ages to the present, and Korhonen also looks beyond Finland to the rest of Scandinavia and Europe.

In this new book on bear and wolf hunting, Korhonen has structured and analysed a body of material that has been collected over a long time. To some extent that sets its stamp on the book. The study begins as a classic historical ethnography, a rather comprehensive description of the origin and biological context of hunting, the age and spread of hunting methods. It develops into an analysis of the human-animal relationship in contemporary material and mental contexts. Bear and wolf are described here in parallel.

Five themes are highlighted: the character of traditional hunting, the motives for hunting, individual hunting, collective hunting, and the conditions for coexistence between big game animals and humans. The parallel Nordic perspective enriches the text.

There is no shortage of data from earlier times, Korhonen has combed parish histories, statistics, reports, newspapers, oral traditions and folklore, taking in the period from about 1500 to the late nineteenth century. Fictional texts in particular, from fairy tales to novels, could offer material for a separate analysis of how truth, horror, and fantasy are combined. In folk belief, human characteristics are often attributed to animals, as naming practices testify. Hunting stories are a classic literary genre.

The predators are pests that have been a constant nuisance both for rural people and for the local and state power. Known examples of the issue can be

found as far back as the royal hunting rights, as in King Kristoffer's national law of 1442, in other legal documents such as court records, in Olaus Magnus's *Historia* from 1555 and Johannes Schefferus's *Lapponia* from 1678. For the first Finnish ethnographic researchers, with names such as Theodor Schvindt and U. T. Sirelius, hunting was a natural topic. This research led to the definition of active and passive trapping methods, and generated representative museum collections.

The book contains a wealth of details that can make the reading laborious, but it is possible to discern specific lines in the development. The important role of implements and the continuous improvement of techniques, hunting as a male achievement, and the struggle between animals and humans are recurring themes. Korhonen describes nine different hunting methods, from stabbing and slashing weapons to firearms and traps, to poisoning and surrounding.

Another cultural field opened by the book is hunting as a manifestation of power. The social significance and organization of hunting reveals an extensive pattern of state regulations challenged by inherited folk customs and habits. On the question of compensation for losses and bounty payments, the state and local authorities are confronted with the individual hunter and the hunting team as a collective. Hunting as a hierarchical order and folk customs as practice in wild nature are examples of the two different ways in which power is portrayed: the institutionalized legal system and the symbolism of male achievement. Women have not participated in hunting in the Nordic countries; their task has been to take care of the quarry and prepare the food. On the other hand, teenage children of both sexes have played an important role in herding domesticated animals, a task that has heightened the image of dangerous predators.

In a broader perspective, the struggle for territory stands out as the central theme. Here the animals become a danger to man. Throughout the book there are examples of boundaries between the physical and the mental territory. This also reveals profound mechanisms in the relationship between nature and culture. In ancient times, predators were able to displace entire settlements. In agrarian society, however, the beasts of prey were primarily a danger to cattle, as a map of the amount of cattle killed in 1878 shows (p. 42). In pre-industrial times, people viewed the predators as an inevitable part of the forces of nature that simply had to be accepted. The bear has been regarded as an equal of mankind, and thus viewed more positively than the wolf. Yet the bounty paid for killing bear was larger than that for wolf. It was especially in the latter part of the nineteenth century that people began to see the wolf as a danger to man, an attitude that has created wolf hysteria in modern times. One reason is the articles in the early newspapers about attacks by wolves and accounts of wolves abducting children, narratives in which the wolf takes on almost mythical forms.

In the concluding chapter Korhonen looks at how attitudes towards predators in the twentieth century affected legislation and the discussion of coexistence with nature. The large regional differences in Finland have made the relationship between hunting and nature conservation more problematic. The first hunting ordinance was issued in 1898. A new hunting act came into force in 1934, when biological environmental issues were already being raised. Bear hunting was banned in 1962 and bear become a protected species in 1981. Wolf became a partially protected species in 1974. A new hunting act was passed in 1993 and adapted to EU directives in 1995. Today's issues concern the conservation and regulation of animal populations, hunters' interests, and tourism as a source of livelihood in rural areas. The number of hunters in Finland is about 300,000, or 6% of the population, and about 18,000 of them are under

18. Hunting is still a test of masculinity. Boundaries show the gap between urban and rural; the fear of the bear is greatest in the densely inhabited south-western Finland, smallest in eastern and northern Finland. The place of predators in the material and mental culture has not disappeared, and shifts in the semantic field offer new challenges for ethnological research. The knowledge conveyed by Teppo Korhonen's book provides a stable foundation.

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"Compulsory Swedish" and Online Hate

Karin Sandell: Parasiter och "bättre folk". Affekt, performans och performativitet i näthat mot det svenska i Finland. Åbo Akademi, Åbo 2022. 198 pp. Diss.

Finland Swedes, the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland, have often been the subject of criticism from the Finnish-speaking Finns. The rhetoric of hatred against Swedishness in Finland is based on intolerance. Recently, an increasing share of the hate speech against the Swedish-speaking people has moved to the Internet. Hate speech has also become increasingly common with today's digitalization. Hatred is encountered in social media and discussion forums, but also in the comments section of online newspapers – and unfortunately still in face-to-face interaction. Online hatred in particular is a growing phenomenon that is, for good reason, even feared as a threat to democracy as a whole.

It is important to do research on phenomena such as online hate, which has a fundamental effect on our everyday life and social debate. In general, hate speech and especially online hate is a subject of increasing study. There is already quite a lot of research in social psychology, concentrating on the people who produce or receive online hate. Many of these studies are quantitative and they use large amounts of survey data; there are also comparative studies of different European countries. Through interdisciplinary studies combining social sciences and humanities with computational research, it is possible to analyse online hate with greater nuance and also focus on different types of online hate and on how the hate functions.

In this book Karin Sandell takes a new and welcome approach to online hate. Sandell's dissertation is the first study that specifically looks at hate speech directed at linguistic minorities, and especially the Swedish speakers in Finland. It is also – as far as I know – the first study in folkloristics to deal with online hate. "Parasites and 'Better People': Affect in Online Hate of Swedishness in Finland" examines online hate rhetoric and its affective features. The dissertation analyses how online hate directed at Finland Swedes is expressed in public discussion forums such as the Internet.

Sandell has chosen a limited Internet forum, Suomi24, to analyse online hate speech against the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland. The research material was compiled from this discussion forum during the years 2015–2017 and consists of approximately 350 comments; in addition, articles and other texts from various media have been used, but less systematically. The material is not large, but it is appropriate as regards quality and quantity and it is well demarcated. Through a close reading of the articles published on the Suomi24 online forum, the author provides observations and interpretations about online hatred directed against the Finland Swedes and their typical features. At the same time, the research is also a contribution to the study of hate speech in general.

Sandell has chosen to use the term *näthat*, meaning "net hate, online hate", rather than *hatretorik*, literally "hate

rhetoric". The term *näthat* has been used for less than ten years. It is not an academic term and it is not defined in law – just like the concept of *hatretorik*, which has no specific definition in Finnish law, and which is a controversial and thought-provoking concept. Hate speech occurs in places other than the Internet, but the Internet cannot be separated from "life outside the net". The Internet is a tangible part of our life, whether we like it or not. It is therefore justified to study "online hate", which also covers other forms of communication than just speech: much online communication is not exclusively verbal; visuality also has an important role, for example, in videos, memes, and emojis.

Sandell employs the concepts of *genre* and *performance*, which are widely used in the discipline of folkloristics. A crucial purpose of this dissertation is to investigate online hate as a genre. The study has a strong theoretical base in folkloristics, but it is also of general importance. The discussion of genre, which is at the heart of folkloristics, is an excellent complement to the interdisciplinary research on hate speech.

The dissertation examines expressions of hate speech and its effects. Since it is more of a folkloristic analysis of texts in a particular genre than the effects of online hate, the latter goal is less prominent in the study, since the effects of hate comments have not been studied empirically (e.g., through interviews). Sandell nevertheless considers the consequences of online hate when discussing performativity.

Focusing on the discursive level, on performance and performativity, is a happy choice in this empirical investigation. Through these concepts, Sandell looks at emotionally charged material online. She analyses how online hatred of Swedish-speakers is expressed (performance) and the consequences it has (performativity). The author's training as a folklorist is also reflected in the way she handles emic and etic perspectives as well as the forms and processes of the online hate genre. Online hate as a folkloristic genre is also discussed using the concept of intertextuality and "the intertextual gap". Online hate as a genre is examined in a convincing manner. Overall, the folkloristic perspective on hate speech is welcome, and this dissertation offers genuinely new knowledge for interdisciplinary studies of online hate and hate speech in general.

Online hate is explored with the focus on affect. Specifically, Sandell studies affect and emotion with the help of Sara Ahmed's and Margaret Wetherell's theories, which means concentrating on what the affect *does* rather than what it *is*. It is essential to consider emotions as cultural rather than reflecting the psychological state of the individual. For Ahmed, affect is something close to the concept of feeling or emotion. Ahmed makes no distinction (nor does Sandell) between affect and emotion and does not believe that affect is primary or something manifested rather than culturally mediated emotions. Wetherell, on the other hand, emphasizes affective practices – and online hate is one such affective practice.

The theoretical starting points are presented expertly throughout and the concepts are defined and examined in a relevant and lucid manner. Sandell further describes her position as a researcher in a commendable way, but she also declares that, as a Swedish-speaking journalist and web content producer, she is able to view her research topic from the inside. This positioning strengthens rather than weakens the researcher's credibility, especially when she describes her ability to distance herself using her theoretical premises and analytical tools.

The dissertation is methodologically ground-breaking. Based on the affect theory, she develops her own "affective tools", the four components of which are metaphors, words for emotions, emotive expressions, and orthographic methods. This method works well in the analysis of hate material on the net, and it is a methodical innovation that will surely be applicable to other research as well.

Another theoretical concept that Sandell applies as an analytical tool is intersectionality. In particular, she uses four intersectional positions – class, gender, language, and ethnicity – in the analysis. Language, of course, intersects all the other positions – and the other positions also intersect each other. Sandell treats sexuality as part of gender, which may not be very precise, and from a gender-studies perspective it is even somewhat questionable. It would have been preferable if sexual orientation had been treated as a fifth category. Nevertheless, the methods used are well justified and appropriate for the purpose, and the inventive way they are used is consistent and insightful.

The research results are presented clearly and logically. The analysis is vividly written, with descriptive headings and rich language. Reading Sandell's interpretations arouses one's interest even though the topic is dreadful! The analysis is filled with important and interesting observations about online hatred, based on delusions that are expressed in metaphors, emotion words, emotive expressions, and orthographic practices. On the other hand: the performativity of online hatred includes the reproduction of history (reference is made here to the dispute between the Fennomans and the Svecomans), dehumanization (Swedish speakers are called parasites), heteronormative and conservative values (Swedish speakers are said to be homosexuals, and the talk about homosexuals is derogatory).

The chosen theoretical-methodological perspective – affect, performance and performativity – along with the examination of intersectional categories – gender, language, class, and ethnicity – works well in the analysis of online hate. The dissertation is innovative especially in terms of methodology, as Sandell develops and applies in practice her affective tool and thereby arrives at new knowledge. An important result is the observation that Swedish speakers in Finland are performatively constructed as "the others" and portrayed as an "inner enemy" in online hate speech.

Apart from a brief summary of the results, there is no general discussion to expand on the results of the analysis. The question of power, of power hierarchies and their relation to different groups of people who are marginalized, is of great importance in intersectional perspectives, but there is little consideration of that in the dissertation. The relationship between the majority and the minority, or "we" and "the others" is not analysed in any great depth. Since this is a dissertation in folkloristics, it is perhaps understandable that instead of looking at how the power hierarchies are produced, it focuses on online hatred as text and as genre. Yet even in this respect, it would have been interesting to consider, even briefly, the relationship between language and power in connection with hate speech.

A reflection on the broader social performative effects of hate speech is also lacking. The general importance of the dissertation would have been strengthened by a discussion of the social context; then the significance of the dissertation would have grown from a presentation of precise research findings to a broader social debate. Although Sandell presents her fine observations and examples of the performativity of online hate, one can still ask: So what? What does it mean to write about history in relation to hate speech? Has online hatred had any consequences for attitudes towards the Finland-Swedes? Can anything be done about the hate? Should anything be done? I would have liked to read the researcher's own bold interpretations.

Although the dissertation shows a certain lack of courage, I hope that it will interest social scientists. Online hatred directed against Swedish speakers in Finland has many links to right-wing populism and extreme right ideology. A central feature of both is the question of belonging: who can belong to Finland, who is a real Finnish citizen? The division into 'us' (Finnish-speak-

ing or "real" Finns) and "the others" (Swedish-speaking) is repeated in the same way as nostalgia: the longing for an (imagined) time that was not ruined by feminists, homosexuals, and other unsuitable people. Yet Sandell does not discuss right-wing populism apart from a brief mention at the beginning of the dissertation.

The dissertation as a whole is logically structured, the language is neat, and the style is vibrant and enjoyable. The interpretations in the study are consistent throughout. The researcher demonstrates an ability to think critically and creatively, and the dissertation exhibits original and independent scholarly research. Among its merits, the study updates the notion of what can be studied in folkloristics, showing that it is important to study the Internet. The second observation is the contribution of the dissertation to the study of hate speech. This is considerable – not least because it offers a new and useful method of analysis. And the third is that this research is also highly relevant for society, as always but especially right now, when "compulsory Swedish", the obligation for Finnish speakers to study Swedish in school, has once again been a topic of heated debate with the coming parliamentary elections in Finland.

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Stories of Danish Song

Kirsten Sass Bak under medvirken af Lene Halskov Hansen: Ballader, skæmt og skillingstryk. Fortællinger om dansk sanghistorie frem til 1900. Videncenter for sang, Herning 2022. 298 pp. Ill., music examples.

How far back in history have people sung? The most likely answer is: as long as humans have existed. Singing is a fundamental human activity; so close to speech, to breathing, emotions, and the existential need to share experiences and stories. Singing has also been a given element in a wide range of social situations and ceremonies through the centuries; at the cradle, by the grave, in work with animals and handicrafts, at sea, on the way to the battlefield, and at feasts.

The desire to sing *together* is probably a universal phenomenon too. In a Swedish context, the popular singalong television programme *Allsång på Skansen* is an example of the forms that this can take in our mass-media era. However, the Swedes' taste for singing together can scarcely match the Danes' love of community singing, *fællessang*. This is particularly evident from the songbook of the folk high schools, *Højskolesangbogen*, which has been published since 1894 in a steady stream of revised editions, most recently in 2020. The repertoire of more than 600 songs is a broad combination of tradition and new additions, with the ambition both to illuminate the country's singing history and to reflect the present day. Nowadays, the songbook is also published on the web along with articles about the background to each song, in the true spirit of popular enlightenment. As a dynamic canon project, *Højskolesangbogen* is thus still relevant in Danish cultural life. Yet the support for this authorized song treasure, as it may be described, has a possible downside: that singing traditions preceding and transcending the genres of community singing risk falling into oblivion.

Against this background, it is precisely these singing traditions – and singing situations – that the musicologist Kirsten Sass Bak seeks to elucidate from the perspective of the history of song. In this book, she studies the motley diversity that is summed up here in the term *visesang* (derived from the Scandinavian genre term *vise/visa* for which there is no easy English translation): medieval ballads, jocular ballads, and a large group of "younger songs" in *skilling prints* and handwritten song-

books, including the lyrical love song. The common denominator of this flora is that the songs have primarily served as solo songs, that is, typically sung by one singer to a (larger or smaller) group of listeners. There is evidence of this division of roles between the performer and the audience ever since the market singers of the Middle Ages and, as we know, it still dominates in the arenas of popular music.

The studies, or "stories" as they are more modestly called in the subtitle of the book, cover a rather dizzying span of time, stopping at various points to focus on the folk singing traditions that are most prominent in Danish song before 1900. With the support of other scholars' research and the author's own, the ambition is to put these worlds of text and melody in context and trace the long lines – a broad approach that is particularly pleasing since it concerns song genres, transmission routes, and media that are usually studied separately.

After a prologue discussing humans as singing and storytelling beings, with flashbacks to the archaic poetry that preceded the more epic-lyrical modes, Sass Bak deals with the different song genres in separate chapters. The longest part, occupying half the book, is devoted to the older epic song with its roots in the Middle Ages: the ballad. The medieval ballad in its Danish form is examined here in breadth and depth. On the one hand, the author describes the characteristic features of the ballad as both literature and music – the music, as she points out, has received too little attention in text-dominated research – and on the other hand, she sheds light on the transmission processes of the ballads and the settings where they occurred. An interesting section considers of the history of ballad collecting in Denmark, with special focus on the leading nineteenth-century collectors and publishers. These include Rasmus Nyerup, Evald Tang Kristensen, and Andreas Peter Berggren, who have all in different ways set their stamp on the image of the folk ballad. In some case studies of a selection of ballad types, the reader also learns about the inner universe of the ballads, including the formulaic language, the textual motifs, and the underlying mental world with its roots in a feudal, patriarchal society. In this chapter the folklorist Lene Halskov Hansen also contributes two texts that provide important complementary perspectives on the histography of the ballads: one concerns the changing views on the origin of the ballads in research, while the other clarifies the extent to which the ballads were actually accompanied by dance in Denmark.

In the second part of the study, the author tackles the jocular songs that have been a vital element of folk song, and like the other ballads have been part of a culture that crossed class barriers. However, the jocular songs were almost exclusively passed on orally. That they were never, in principle, included in printed editions of folk songs in the nineteenth century was probably out of consideration for (bourgeois) morality: carnivalesque features predominate in these songs; the grotesque, sexuality, and the tension between human drives and social conventions. The first step towards the recognition of these jocular Danish ballads as cultural heritage was taken with Tang Kristensen's *Et hundrede gamle danske skjæmteviser efter nutidssang* (1901, 2nd edition with an appendix of tunes 1903). Together with examples of the genre in other Scandinavian countries, the jocular ballads would later be rehabilitated – in the catalogue *The Types of the Scandinavian Medieval Ballads* (1978) they constitute a category of their own – but such outward- and forward-looking views are not considered in this study.

The third chapter in the book is devoted to a large number of categories that are assembled under the heading "Younger Songs". The smallest common denominator for these songs is that they are not ballads, although it is not always possible to draw a sharp boundary. Like

the ballads, they functioned as solo songs rather than for community singing, and like the ballads, they were very popular with the common singing people. Many songs have lived in both oral and written tradition from the sixteenth century until the present day – the earliest attested examples are in manuscripts belonging to the nobility – and therefore they often exist in several variants. This broad category comprises songs of both epic and lyrical nature, both spiritual and secular. For nineteenth-century collectors as well as for recent scholars, they have long been in the shadow of the ballads, and much therefore remains to be investigated.

Sass Bak approaches this wide repertoire based on case studies in different print media: printed songbooks, skilling prints, and handwritten songbooks. One of the largest categories is the traditional lyrical love song, a genre so broad that it can be hard to grasp, but it is well described here by the author. These are love songs that originated in rural society and were extremely widespread throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The songs are lyrical in the sense that they lack any external action; the subject is instead (unrequited) love, with facets such as longing, falseness, and betrayal. Only a few songs of this kind have survived into modern times, but these have gained all the greater classic status, a prime example being *Det var en lørdag aften*. Interestingly, despite the fact that these are anonymous songs with a long life in the tradition, they are probably not purely traditional, either being based on a literary model or having undergone literary treatment so that they could be published in songbooks. The fact that the genre is fundamentally written explains the regular metrics that fit tunes of a "newer" kind than those that can be linked to the traditional epic folk ballads. Another fascinating example of the "younger songs" is the horror ballad, a poetic genre that arose in Germany at the end of the eighteenth century and spread to Scandinavia in skilling prints, or *flyveblad* as these broadsides are also called in Danish.

As for skilling prints as a medium, Sass Bak devotes an entire chapter to them, presenting some important collections in Denmark, with an overview of prominent subject categories and melodic worlds as they have been published over time. She also discusses the role of the prints as a commodity. There is a detailed account of Julius Strandberg (1834–1903), the producer who enjoyed sole domination in the publication of *viser* in Denmark during the last decades of the nineteenth century. As an example of the news orientation of songs in the 1800s, Sass Bak undertakes a case study of songs published in connection with the Schleswig War (1848–50). In the collections of Aarhus City Library she finds 225 songs printed in those years which relate in various ways to the ongoing hostilities. These refer to no less than 125 different tunes from many cultural spheres, including hymns, patriotic songs, traditional songs, and songs from the theatre. The case study provides insights both into how songs in skilling prints can reflect their own time and into the multifaceted semantic networks contained in the tune references of the nineteenth century. This chapter as a whole is also a welcome contribution to Scandinavian research on skilling prints, which in recent years has been dominated by Norwegian and Swedish studies.

Another type of source material that is examined is the handwritten songbooks, i.e. private collections of song lyrics. Writing down and collecting songs in this way is a practice with its roots in the aristocracy of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which spread to broader classes during the nineteenth century. Sass Bak exemplifies the material with a collection in Dansk Folkemindesamling consisting of 150 songbooks (of which only 13 of which were in female hands), written between 1778 and 1915. As for the repertoire,

these are traditional or semi-literary songs, the dominant genres being love songs and soldier's and sailor's songs. Unlike the repertoire of skilling prints, which increasingly concerned the news – songs about current affairs and sensations – during the nineteenth century, the handwritten songbooks during the same period deal with more timeless and universal human themes. This difference in content between a (produced) range of commercial offerings and (personal) writing raises interesting questions about mediation, popularity, and sensibility that deserve further investigation.

After covering the various traditions of *visesang,* Sass Bak finally turns to a song world that in itself illustrates the tug-of-war between solo singing and congregational singing: the folk choral tradition known in Denmark as *Kingosang* (after Thomas Kingo's hymnbook from 1699). As in other Protestant countries, a tension arose in Denmark after the Reformation between two musical norms: the church's endeavour for unison hymn singing in the mother tongue and the common people's own singing style with its individual variations. Despite great efforts – in which the church organ played an important role – to make congregational singing unison, the folk practice of the *Kingosang* lived on in many rural parishes well into the nineteenth century. This shows how long the traditional musical understanding of *visesang* survived among the singing people. A marked period of transition for singing came in the mid-nineteenth century when the new community singing emerged both in bourgeois circles and among craftsmen and students, in associations and schools. Just as the organ was crucial in making church singing uniform, it was above all the piano that would make community singing unison. That development, however, belongs in the song history of the twentieth century, after this study ends.

In summary, Kirsten Sass Bak gives a solid orientation in the prominent folk genres in the history of Danish song and the forms in which they were disseminated. A particular strength is that she treats the *viser* as *songs*, taking into account both the lyrics and the tunes, and their different transmission conditions. The many music examples and illustrations also bring the presentation to life. The way the material is brought together makes the book accessible to a wider readership, not just specialists, and at the same time there is a great deal that will be of interest to researchers with different orientations.

As a scholarly text, however, the book has its flaws. References to current research are generally sparse, but most conspicuous is the absence of studies from outside Denmark of these pan-Scandinavian traditions. The last decade's research on Norwegian and Swedish ballads, skilling prints, and folk melodies, which could have added perspective to the stories about the history of Danish song, seems to have escaped Sass Bak's notice.

Another weakness concerns the editing of the book. It is one matter that the different chapters can be perceived as stand-alone texts, and function as such – often, for example, there is no comment on the change from one topic to the next – but there are also autonomous texts *within* the different chapters. This is most palpable when it comes to Halskov Hansen's pithy contributions under her own name, which seem to hover by themselves in the middle of a presentation of ballads. Another peculiarity is the "mini-excursuses" about certain songs that are highlighted in schoolbook manner, on toned pages, detached from of the main text instead of being integrated in the account. What the reader misses most, however, is a summarizing discussion to bring together the many threads of the study and distil the conclusions.

That being said, Sass Bak's stories of Danish song history fill a void in the literature on folk singing. The method of alternating between an overall view and a focus on individual case studies is a good way to fulfil the ambition to show

both the contexts and the long lines in the historical genres of *visesang*, and at the same time it provides thought-provoking perspectives on today's singing cultures.

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Affects on Tapes

Viliina Silvonen: Apeus arkistoäänitteellä. Äänellä itkeminen performanssina ja affektiivisena käytäntönä Aunuksen Karjalassa / Affectivity and emotion in the archival tapes: Lamenting as performance and affective practice in Olonets Karelia. Faculty of Arts, University of Helsinki 2022. 159 pp., appendix, three articles. Diss.

In January 2022, the folklorist and ethnomusicologist Viliina Silvonen defended her thesis as part of the doctoral programme in history and cultural heritage at the University of Helsinki. The dissertation treats the emotions of laments and the affectivity of lamenting in the context of the Olonets Karelian tradition. Silvonen's thesis elevates the research on Karelian laments to a new level, demonstrating how empathetic close listening and contextualization of historical archival audio recordings may reveal information contained in the laments and convey their performative power and affectivity to today's audiences. The dissertation is an essential contribution to lament research in general and to the disciplines of folkloristics and ethnomusicology in particular, but also adds to the broader interdisciplinary study of emotion and affectivity. Viliina Silvonen's doctoral thesis consists of three articles and an extensive introductory chapter. Two of the articles have been published in prestigious academic article collections in English and the third, in Finnish, was issued in a specialized high-level folklore journal. The dissertation is an innovative piece of original research, elegantly demonstrating the author's excellent command of the subject matter as well as an awareness of the current debates and methodologies in contemporary folkloristics and related disciplines.

The first part of the title of Silvonen's thesis, "Affectivity and Emotion in the Archival Tapes", informs us that the study specifically pertains to archival recordings and the affects and emotions that they may trigger. (In Finnish, Silvonen has used the emic term *apeus* to denote affectivity and emotion, but the word may also stand for sorrow, depressed or bad mood, angst, sadness, worry, bitterness, yearning, etc.) The second part of title, "Lamenting as Performance and Affective Practice in Olonets Karelia", leads us temporally and spatially further from the recordings that can still be listened to in the archives – namely, to Olonets Karelia and the lament singers in the area. This very involvement in historical recordings, in the way they have reached us, and the archaic lamenting tradition, in its performative and affective practices, is one of the main appeals and contributions of this study. Among the most intriguing questions that the thesis seeks to answer is how well, or in what way, a historical audio recording could convey or represent a past performance.

The author approaches lamenting as a ritual oral tradition, a performance and affective practice. The fact that the studied material had been recorded by someone else, perhaps for an entirely different purpose (textual or linguistic research, etc.), makes the study of performance and its affectivity challenging. The lament corpus reveals that archival metadata on the performers of the laments is often incomplete; for example, only an initial may have been provided instead of the singer's name, not to mention the lack of any additional information about the singer's life. Folklorists today are dependent on the choices of researchers and collectors

before them. Once the pause button of a recorder was pressed, there was no trace left of the conversation that followed. Historically, folklorists have been interested in the text, rather than the performance and the emotions experienced by the performer or the listener. Silvonen argues that archival material is always an inadequate reflection of the actual performance. It is worth reflecting upon what to do with these vast historical text or audio recording corpora collected in the archives, as the study of the performance and emotions seems far more relevant these days or when a researcher wishes to revisit the material to seek answers to the questions that are not based on text. It is possible, however, as Silvonen also suggests in her thesis, that an em-pathic close reading (listening) of the texts (recordings) and surrounding these with as rich a context as possible may take a researcher further than the text-based archives seem to allow. At the same time, Silvonen views her sources critically, and examines how and why have laments made their way to the archives and in which performance situations the recordings have been made. To her credit, the author does not attempt to exoticize or mythologize the material too much, as has occasionally been the case in the study of laments connected with rituals and religion.

The terminology used in the thesis is not specific to folkloristics, but is largely interdisciplinary and borrowed, which means that Silvonen has had to adapt and critically revise the meaning and appropriateness of the terms. Indeed, the very extensive sections of the umbrella chapter set out to define the terms and introduce their history, but also reflect on how one term or another is appropriate for the study at hand and what they are supposed to mean. In her thesis, Silvonen, among other things, employs the concept "empathic listening". Empathy is an essential quality for a folklorist; however, the anthropologist Amy Shuman has also warned about the hazards of empathy. An imbalanced situation where a researcher in a position of power comments on the subject of research and claims to have been empathic towards him or her is very dangerous.

Viliina Silvonen has collected a corpus of more than 460 recorded lament performances for her doctoral thesis. This is complemented by transcripts of lament texts and recordings of interviews accompanying the performances, researchers' field notes, etc. Thus, the thesis covers an enormous thick corpus. Finnish folklorists are accustomed to using huge archives and this is an asset and an opportunity, but also, as it were, an obligation. At the same time, the applied research method is clearly qualitative rather than quantitative. Obviously, the thesis could be based on laments from a single village, or those sung within a single family, or even by a single lamenter. As much as I am impressed by the thorough archival investigation and condensed corpus, I cannot help but throw out a provocative question – in the light of this method and tools, what has been gained by using a corpus this large that a deliberately more limited material would not have provided?

It is very commendable and politically and academically entirely correct that Viliina Silvonen has focused on the analysis of laments collected from a specific region in Karelia (Aunus, or Olonets). Comparative studies are certainly important but it feels peculiar and unjustified when oral tradition from linguistically and culturally different regions (e.g., Finland, Ingria, Izhoria, Karelia, etc.) is viewed in conflation without hesitation. Since so much folklore has been collected from different areas of Karelia throughout history, as is evidenced by Silvonen's thesis, there is no reason to fear that the sources remain insufficient. Researchers could rather benefit from limiting their source material, for example, the selection of laments studied by Silvonen has been made based on their performance and the recording method (recorded and vocal lamenting), but also on the accessibility of archives (Finnish

archives vs. Petroskoi archives). When discussing the folklore of Karelian areas, it is perhaps worth keeping in mind the terms research fatigue and over-researched community, i.e. a critical view of the sources from these aspects would be useful.

The first article of the thesis, "Formulaic Expression in Olonets Karelian Laments: Textual and Musical Structures of the Composition of Non-metrical Oral Poetry", conventionally observes the traditions of folkloristics and ethnomusicology in its range of topics and style of approach. This article explores the formulae found in text and music, and the extent to which they influence each other. As such, the paper discusses the underlying structures that begin to produce affect in the listeners in an emotional performance. While the article may seem traditional and conservative in its choice of topics, the author, in several passages, enters a critical dialogue with the previous studies on laments. Silvonen's huge corpus, for example, demonstrates that the assertion made in earlier Baltic-Finnic lament research that each lamenter uses a personal idiosyncratic melody to sing all of her laments does not hold true: "The material I analysed does not directly confirm this, as melodies can vary even within the repertoire of a single lamenter." One of the reasons for that is definitely the fact that Viliina Silvonen has been far more detail-oriented and thorough than previous scholars, and is probably able to detect variation in smaller details than her predecessors. Silvonen also demonstrates that the relationship between text and music is considerably more complex than previous research has shown.

The author appropriately engages in dialogue with scholars in the past, but doesn't shy away from expressing criticism and making changes based on the lament material that she is studying (for example, abandoning the established categorization of laments). Relying on the extensive lament corpus, Viliina Silvonen has revised several of the claims made by previous researchers and confirmed the validity or applicability of these to her material. At first glance, the riskiest part of the thesis is the classification of the embodiment of emotions based on their appearance into intentionally produced signs or emblems and those that are based on bodily, sensory experiences (in the second and particularly third article). The author even admits that this is often a fine line (at least as far as listening to recorded material is concerned) and one can easily transform into another. In many lament traditions, it has been a common practice to lament on behalf of someone else (e.g., also in Karelian bridal laments), so that emulating an emotion and the feeling emanating from affects are both traditional ways of performing a lamenting ritual. The author concludes that *apeus* is not transmitted from the lament that mimics emotion on to the listener who is unfamiliar with the lament culture, which is a rather unexpected and surprising outcome. The third paper "Apeus välittyvänä, kuunneltuna ja koettuna: Affektiiviset kehät ja itkuvirsien tunteiden ilmeneminen arkistoäänitteillä" is an engagingly written and informative study with exceptional results and a bold experimental component.

Silvonen emphasizes that she studies lament as a combination of text, music and emotions. The dissertation's specific focus on *apeus* is emphatic and considerate of the emic perspective. Since *apeus* has been so important for the lamenters and the ritual quality and impact of a lament performance has been assessed based on whether the lamenter and other participants have experienced *apeus* or not, focusing on it is inherently vital to understanding laments. Aili Nenola, an eminent scholar of Finnic lament, has regarded lament as an explicitly women's genre and has explored in great detail what this gender polarization means for the genre. While Viliina Silvonen does mention in her thesis on a number of occasions that laments were performed by women, she does not reflect

on whether there is any significance to the fact that laments were performed specifically by women. Lamenting has provided women an outlet to express themselves in a way that would have been impossible using ordinary speech and outside a ritual situation. For example, bridal laments allowed the lamenter to voice criticism of her family or future husband, to express despair and sorrow. Does the despair expressed in laments have gender? Is there something specific in the text, the performance or affects evoked by the laments of Olonets Karelia that speaks about these women and their gender. The thesis does not explicitly seek to answer these questions.

Viliina Silvonen is appropriately reflexive and candid about her position as a researcher. As a result, these parts of the thesis that can be categorized as historical ethnography are particularly inspiring and original. Some chapters are more autoethnographic than others and emphasize the researcher's participation as a recipient of lament. The author highlights her own listening experience, which she considers as participation in the performance: even though the only thing that connects the participants, who are so distant in time and space, is a voice on the recording, it can also be viewed as an emotional contact or a meaningful encounter. One of the greatest successes of the thesis, in my view, is the dialogue with the old archival recordings and conveying of the critical and empathic listening experience. Fortunately, it does not get into esotericism or mystify the researcher's experience, but remains suitably critical, thus eliciting new insights about laments that we did not have before.

When dealing with historical audio recordings, especially those of religious laments, the researcher is inevitably confronted with ethical dilemmas. Recording a lament is a complex task. People recording laments have usually been aware that performing, for example, a funeral lament outside of its appropriate context could harm the singer. It is also known that making a person cry is physically and mentally draining. Still, laments have been collected. Working with historical recordings also means that one must come to terms with the fact that the rules for recording these were different from those today. A performer may not know exactly what is being done with her recorded lament. Also, it was not customary to sign contracts between the parties in the past either. Silvonen, however, is appropriately critical of the recording situations in the past and also reflective enough to explain the choices she has made in her thesis.

Viliina Silvonen's doctoral thesis is a charming attempt to explore affectivity and performance through decontextualized historical recordings. Silvonen has successfully demonstrated in an original way how decontextualized text-based archival collections can provide answers to issues related to emotions and even bodily experiences. The impressively large sample material and in-depth analytical and empathic listening, the exciting contemporary research questions, and the convincing and thoughtfully considered manner of presenting the material make this doctoral dissertation a highly creditable academic contribution to folkloristics and ethnomusicology.

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A Popular Encyclopaedia of Everyday Superstition

Fredrik Skott: Vardagsskrock. Från abrakadabra till önskebrunn. Polaris fakta, Malmö 2021. 318 pp. Ill.

How does the tradition of shaving off your beard after an exam relate to the custom of growing a beard for the playoffs in ice hockey? Both are examples of everyday magical thinking where beard

growth becomes a way of trying to control the outcome of an important event, such as a tournament or an exam. In this encyclopaedic work by Fredrik Skott, "Everyday Superstition: From Abracadabra to Wishing Wells" (2021), one can read more about ideas of this type and their possible origins. There is a separate entry for "beard", along with articles about "studies" (exam beards) and "sport" (winning) which tie the different folk beliefs together. Here you can find everything from the perhaps more obvious entries such as "horseshoe", "touch wood", and "thirteen at table", to others that may be more unexpected, such as "lamp post", "wood anemone", and "nut". The articles include cross-references (although even more could have been given), which makes it easy for readers to jump from one article to another in order to find out more.

Skott works at the Institute for Language and Folklore in Gothenburg, and it is evident that he has a great knowledge of his source material, especially the rich archival documentation. The text is generally clear and instructive, and the introduction about everyday superstition as a phenomenon presents different ways of looking at quotidian magical rituals. Skott discusses the extent to which people believe in these magical acts and the different forms of rituals that occur in today's Sweden, also with sidelights on Swedish-speaking Finland and other parts of the world. The concept of *halvtro* or "half-belief" does not strike me as being entirely convincing, even though the term dates back to the 1950s. But what do we gain by calling it half-belief? The aspect of belief is strong in this case, but at the same time it is unclear. Is it important to know whether someone believes in everyday superstition? Is it not more interesting to see how everyday superstition has affected and continues to affect our thoughts and actions without attributing aspects such as belief, half-belief, and non-belief to people. It is commendable, however, that Skott ponders on the relationship of everyday superstition to other concepts, such as magic and religion, so that the reader can see it in a contextual whole. Otherwise, everyday superstition sometimes tends to be perceived as something individual and different, clearly detached from the rest of everyday life; the many examples in the book clearly demonstrate that this is not the case.

The rest of the book is designed as an encyclopaedia with alphabetical order as the organizing principle. Unfortunately, this means that the individual entries sometimes feel rather too short. The best entries are those where the text is allowed to stretch over more than one page and is not entirely dominated by empirical examples, although these too can be very rewarding. Nothing new emerges; instead we get a glimpse of what it could mean. It can also be difficult for the uninitiated to understand everyday magic in its context. How is it possible to grasp, for example, the very short (one third of a page) account of the term hocus-pocus as an act or practice of everyday magic?

The leaps through time are intended to demonstrate continuity and show how traditions can be traced far back in time, but sometimes the distance between the examples is too long in time and the connection feels far-fetched. I have no doubt that there is a connection, or that two similar traditions have common factors, but this is not always presented convincingly.

One of the nice things about Skott's book is the lavish and beautiful design, the high-quality paper and the fine illustrations, which, despite the total absence of captions or comments, often give the reader a foothold in everyday life. For example, there are several postcards with motifs related to the various beliefs.

Popular scholarship is a difficult genre: it must not get too complicated for the uninformed reader, but there must be a degree of source criticism if it is to be perceived as scientific. Here, unfortunately, something is lacking in Skott's

presentation. As an active researcher and teacher at university, I would have liked to have seen that the book, since it gives references to sources, could be used as a first step for students in their work, for example. But although each article has its own reference list, it is usually impossible to know which part of the text comes from which source, and sometimes it is even hard to see the relevance of the sources. Sometimes they are more in the form of tips for further reading rather than actual sources.

Skott's book will find a place primarily as an enjoyable encyclopaedia for those who are fascinated by the wealth of everyday superstition that, despite all odds, survives in various forms. The attention that the work has received in the media also shows how interested the general public is in this particular type of everyday phenomenon, and that it pays for us ethnologists and folklorists to popularize both our source material and our analyses of it.

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