

New Dissertations

Stave Churches in the History of Knowledge

Sine Halkjelsvik Bjordal, “Om denne havestet mærkværdigt”. En tekst- og kunnskapshistorisk studie av stavkirkene på 1700- og 1800-tallet. Institutt for kulturstudier og orientalske språk. Det humanistiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo 2021. 409 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss.

■ Stave churches are among the most central icons of Norwegian national identity. Over the years they have also been the subject of several studies in the history of buildings and architecture. Sine Halkjelsvik Bjordal applies a new approach and a new perspective to the stave churches in her PhD dissertation. This in itself is highly commendable, as it reveals a great deal of new knowledge about the past interest in the stave churches, how they were viewed and perceived.

The main title of the dissertation is a quotation meaning “There is nothing strange about this”. As subtitle indicates, Bjordal’s study investigates texts about stave churches in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from the point of view of the history of knowledge. What actually constitutes the history of knowledge is still being discussed in academic circles, where there is no clear and unambiguous definition of the subject. Bjordal herself says that she is inscribing herself “in this still quite open and undefined academic ‘conversation’ [...] about knowledge, history, and knowledge in history, and I do so through a study of stave churches as objects of knowledge, as they appear in text.” The purpose of the dissertation, as Bjordal has formulated it, is primarily “to understand the many circulating texts in which stave churches occur, in order to also understand the knowledge about them that was produced and circulated through these texts.” In addition to defining the concepts and the research question, the first chapter of the dissertation also includes a review of relevant previous research, the sources used, and a clarification of the theoret-

ical premises. Bjordal draws on a very large body of source material, and this is undoubtedly one of the strengths of the dissertation. She uses both published and archival material. As regards the archival material, Bjordal has gone through several private archives at key Norwegian archival institutions. Among the published material used, we find reports, topographical literature, travel descriptions, books of plates, newspaper articles, opinion pieces, illustrated magazines, yearbooks, scholarly works, poems, landscape paintings, prospectuses, and travel guides. In other words, the dissertation is based on broad source pluralism. I would particularly highlight the way Bjordal includes pictorial sources in her analysis. It should also be noted that the extensive source material in the dissertation is a product of the digital search tools now available, making the dissertation an illustrative example of the benefits that research can have from all the digitization that has been done, with the rich opportunities it affords.

In the second chapter of the dissertation, Bjordal discusses in detail what was written about stave churches in topographical writings and natural history texts. The survey starts with responses to a questionnaire posted to the Danish Chancellery by officials in Norway in 1743. In addition, Bjordal draws on topographical texts by Johan Michael Lund, Hans Strøm, and Gerhard Schøning, among others. The eighteenth century, Bjordal emphasizes, was the time when stave churches were registered. She further presents evidence that knowledge of the stave churches at this time primarily concerned the churches as ecclesiastic buildings. But Bjordal also demonstrates in this chapter that stave churches began to be regarded as “the building art of the ancients”. These two perceptions did not exclude each other; they lived side by side, often in the same text.

The following chapter is entitled “Collections, History, Monuments, and Architecture”. Here the author explains how the stave churches were increasingly being understood as architecture in the first decades of the nineteenth century, while they also become more relevant for the study of history. In several texts, the stave churches were

categorized as ancient monuments. Artists, historians, and also the clergy played key roles in this phase in the history of knowledge. The churches were both monumentalized and romanticized through this. Furthermore, Bjordal draws parallels between the stave churches and her various perspectives, with the emerging interest in collecting and registering antiquities and monuments in general, thereby contextualizing the interest in stave churches.

In the fourth chapter, which Bjordal has called “Stave Churches in the World and the World in the Stave Churches”, she provides an exhaustive description of J. C. Dahl’s work *Denkmale*. This is a book of plates illustrating Norwegian stave churches, published in 1836–1837, its full title being *Denkmale einer sehr ausgebildeten Holzbaukunst aus den frühesten Jahrhunderten in den innern Landschaften Norwegens*. Through this publication, knowledge of the Norwegian stave churches became available to the intellectual elite of Europe. This in turn led to Norwegian stave churches being mentioned in other international publications, and knowledge about them thus came into circulation. In the nineteenth century a new generation of churches was built in Norway, and Bjordal ends this chapter by examining how the interest in the medieval stave churches inspired the architecture of the new churches. This was accompanied by a greater interest in the fragments of art in the stave churches.

In chapter five, Bjordal goes on to treat “Knowledge of Stave Churches in the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments and the Life of the Stave Churches in the Public Sphere”. Here she gives an account of the foundation of the Society in 1844 as an extension of J. C. Dahl’s involvement with stave churches. With the work of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments, which was particularly anxious to preserve stave churches, new types of knowledge about the stave churches were put into circulation. This was primarily knowledge of the construction of the churches, but also knowledge of the ground plans and the wood carvings in the churches. The establishment of the Society must be seen in the

context of the nation-building project in which stave churches were nationalized. A key concern during this period was to communicate knowledge about national matters to the inhabitants of Norway. Bjordal also gives a detailed account of the various ways in which this was done, through channels such as newspaper articles, debates, poetry, school textbooks, historical works, books of plates, and magazines.

In the final chapter, which Bjordal calls the conclusion, she asks whether knowledge of the stave churches stopped accumulating at the end of the nineteenth century. From that time on, the stave churches became more of a tourist attraction. Some of the stave churches became museum exhibits, while others were preserved *in situ* as monuments from the Middle Ages.

Through her dissertation, Bjordal has succeeded in demonstrating that the stave churches have multiple meanings in the history of knowledge. She also shows how they were discovered and registered, and how, as cultural monuments, they became objects worthy of preservation, national monuments.

Bjordal has written a very interesting dissertation, and as noted above, its crucial strength lies in the amount of source material and the source work on which it is based. Nevertheless, from the perspective of a historian it would have been desirable to see closer criticism of the various sources and a discussion of their value as sources. In particular, it would have been useful to learn more about how the sources came into being, not least of all the purposes and motives of the people who created them. This could have had an effect on the conclusions drawn, or it might have strengthened the validity of the conclusions presented by Bjordal.

The diverse source material can offer many interesting texts and associated interpretations. Sometimes, however, the presentation just sticks closely to the sources, summarizing them in detail, and it is occasionally difficult to understand where the author wants to take us and why the sources are cited to such an extent. It would probably have been easier for the reader to follow the

development and also the reasoning if the chapters and sections had been prefaced to a greater extent with a few sentences stating the main concern of the following text and the author's purpose in writing the chapter. True, Bjordal has helpful summaries at the end of the chapters that help to clarify matters, but it would have been easier to understand if there had been some clearer clues in the introduction.

In addition, since this is a historical study, the presentation would have benefited from a clearer time dimension. Bjordal demonstrates a development in the focus of knowledge about the stave churches, but it is sometimes a struggle for the reader find any dating for the prevalent types of knowledge and when the changes occurred.

In general, Bjordal is verbose, and it might have been desirable if the presentation had at times been more concise. Despite this and my other criticisms, there is no doubt that Bjordal has delivered a very readable and interesting dissertation with a new perspective. The many illustrations also help to enhance the reading experience. With some adjustment and pruning of the text, this is definitely a dissertation I hope to see in book form.

Herleik Baklid, Bø

Dis/ability in the Changing Welfare State

Christine Bylund, Anakrona livsvillkor. En studie av funktionalitet, möjligheter och begär i den föränderliga svenska välfärdsstaten. Institutionen för kultur- och medievvetenskaper, Umeå universitet, Umeå 2022. 267 (+ 8) pp. English summary. ISBN 978-91-7855-793-6.

■ In her thesis, “Anachronistic Living Conditions: Dis/ability, Possibility and Desire in the Changeable Swedish Welfare State”, the ethnologist Christine Bylund unveils how a new neoliberal austerity policy in the last ten or fifteen years has changed the foundations of the Swedish welfare systems regarding the possibilities to receive support and service for individuals with dis/ability. The Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan)

and Swedish municipalities nowadays judge applications for personal assistance and support at home much harder than in the pioneer years of the 1990s and early 2000s when the legal reforms were introduced (Socialtjänstlagen and LSS or Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade). As a consequence, many dis/abled individuals, as their support or service has been reduced or even taken away all together, now experience how their possibilities of living a life that is normal and equal with others are impeded. In *Anakrona livsvillkor* three generations of individuals with dis/ability are interviewed about their different experiences of this change in the welfare conditions. Together the three generations represent how the norms have changed chronologically during the development of the modern welfare state. The oldest generation, between 55 and 80 years old when interviewed by Bylund in 2017, grew up during a period from the 1940s to the 1960s when the Swedish welfare state was established. An ideal was to keep dis/abled individuals at big institutions and let them be separated from the rest of society. The middle generation, between 40 and 50 years when Bylund met them for interview, were, as young adults, affected by the reforms that closed the big institutions from the 1960s to the 1990s and simultaneously shaped a new system which made dis/abled individuals more and more independent in their way of life vis-à-vis family members, friends and society as a whole. However, the youngest generation of the interviewees, which includes individuals between 20 and 35, now experience how these welfare reforms are dismantled by the new neoliberal ideology and how bureaucracy becomes more and more restrictive in relation to dis/abled persons' possibilities to receive personal assistance and support at home. In *Anakrona livsvillkor* Bylund exhibits how what she calls an anachronism, something belonging to the past and negatively influencing individuals' possibilities to live an independent adult life, takes hold of dis/abled people's life conditions in contemporary Sweden.

In chapter 1, “Background and Starting Points”, Bylund presents her aim with the study,

her research questions, previous research and theoretical concepts. The aim of the study is described as twofold. Firstly, she wants to investigate, on the basis of her interviews with the three generations of dis/abled, how these informants, having lived with dis/ability in different phases of the welfare state, understand and reflect on their opportunities for realizing relationships and family life in the context of the changing welfare conditions. A crucial research question is how these lived and described intimate relationships connect to changes in the welfare system. And what kinds of cultural images of dis/ability are expressed in these settings? Secondly, defining herself as a researcher with dis/ability and also sharing many experiences with her interview persons, Bylund wants to unfold an autoethnographic approach in her investigation. By doing so she intends to analyse her life conditions as a researcher with dis/ability and discuss the conditions and possibilities for this kind of research.

In the sections on previous research Bylund connects to both Swedish ethnology and critical dis/ability studies. Swedish ethnology lacks a distinct research field of dis/ability studies and therefore the presentation is more of a mixture of different research focuses. Here are some dis/ability studies such as Claes G. Olsson's *Omsorg och kontroll* from 2010, but also studies which are more linked to a broad field of cultural perspectives on health and medicine, such as Georg Drakos's *Makt över kropp och hälsa* from 2005, Helena Hörnfeldt's *Prima barn, helt u.a.* from 2009 and Signe Bremer's *Kroppslinjer* from 2011. Regarding the cross-disciplinary field of critical dis/ability studies, Bylund is inspired by studies on gender, sexuality, everyday life and bureaucracy. We find, for example, references to gender studies that highlight how the making of gender is biased by an ableism based on understandings of norm-breaking dis/ability as deviant. Women with norm-breaking dis/ability are as a consequence seen as not real women. Also, when it comes to sexuality, Bylund relates to studies on how individuals with norm-breaking dis/ability often become de-sexualized and lose their right to sexuality.

Bylund talks about the necessity of theory. She refers to the feminist bell hooks who sees the search for theory as a way of healing the kind of pain one feels when subjected to power orders such as racism or ableism. In this case Bylund describes her starting point as crip theoretical. This crip theory involves an interest of how norm-following and norm-breaking abilities are created and changed in processes that are viewed in a post-structural perspective. An important part of the theory is to discuss and challenge different images and imaginations of abled-bodiedness. In this discussion of what crip theory is, Bylund includes two major themes: one on power relations and power order, and a second one on phenomenology and normative lifelines. As regards power and power orders, Bylund is inspired by Michel Foucault's concept of hegemonic discourses and counter-discourses. These different types of discourses are normative as they lead to a striving for abled-bodiedness and social categorizations of norm-following and norm-breaking subjects. In her discussion of individuals' lifelines Bylund develops her phenomenological perspective by relating to Sara Ahmed's queer phenomenology. Through this viewpoint Bylund directs attention to bodies that are norm-breaking in relation to hegemonic representations of heteronormative conditions.

Connected to her theoretical framework is also her understanding of dis/ability as primarily a social rather than a medical phenomenon. In the social model that Bylund proposes, dis/ability is a socio-political issue concerning power and resources. The medical model, in contrast views dis/ability as a deficiency and as something that can be healed or overcome by training or medical improvement. Here Bylund's discussion clearly illustrates how the frame of her own investigation represents a critical polarization of two different epistemological positions rather than a social scientist's invitation to dialogue with the medical model. In the presentation of the medical model it is somewhat conspicuous that there are no references to examples of research based on the medical model. The only reference where I can read

further about the medical model is to a dis/ability studies reader originating in the social sciences. In contrast, the presentation of the social model is thoroughly anchored in legitimating reference work that includes different proponents of the social model.

In chapter 2, “Methodology, Method and Material”, Bylund presents her empirical work, based on semi-structured interviews with 13 individuals and on autoethnographic writing. The interviews were conducted in 2017 both face-to-face and through Skype videos and telephone. Four men and nine women living in different parts of Sweden were interviewed. A principle of “cross-disability” was followed when the interview persons were selected. This means that the interview persons who participated in the research did not have a common diagnosis but represented different dis/abilities, comprising physical and cognitive or neuropsychiatric dis/abilities. The autoethnographic material in the form of notes and commenting text was created in parallel with the interview-based fieldwork. Below I will come back to the autoethnography.

The analysis of the research material takes place in chapters 3 to 7. In chapter 3, “Phases of the Swedish Welfare State”, Bylund, on the basis of her analysis of the interviews, discusses the socio-political and historical context of the relationship between the Swedish welfare system and the dis/abled. Discourses on security and control play a central role in these processes. As described above, the establishment of the welfare state started with a great wave of institutionalization and with dis/abled people being separated from society as a whole. Later on, individuals with dis/ability were talked about as “people like anyone else”. They were now expected to leave the institutions and live in society. Later still, the idea of personal assistance was formed, with increased possibilities to live an independent and more normal adult life. However, the reforms were called into question when economic costs were considered, and at the beginning of the twenty-first century the austerity policy mentioned above started to question dis/abled individuals’ rights to support and

service. In this dismantling of support and service dis/abled individuals felt how their ontological security was affected in a negative manner.

In chapter 4, “Dreams, Desire and Future”, the analysis is focused on how the dis/abled individuals of the three generations imagine the future through their dreams and desires when it comes to sexuality and family life. In the context of the older generation Bylund identifies a discourse in which the sexuality of the dis/abled was seen as a social, economic and moral risk as well as a taboo. In spite of this, the interviewees in this older generation tell about how they explored their sexual desires and took part in intimate relationships within the institutions. Sexual experiences were perceived as a possibility to conquer an adult’s subject position. Another dream was to form a family and become a parent. In this case dis/abled individuals fought against a general distrust of their role as parents. In the interviews of the middle generation, an even more uncertain or ambivalent future appears. These individuals were more independent outside the institutions, but they also encountered a normative society where they were forced to navigate between the blind alleys and “sticky” living conditions that could restrain their dreams and desires. Thanks to legal reforms, however, this middle generation could increasingly orientate itself towards lifelines which were relatively equal to the norm-following majority of society. When this positive development was stopped due to the introduction of the neoliberal austerity policy, the future (once more) became uncertain for individuals with dis/ability. In this youngest generation dis/abled individuals’ dreams of the future are even more dependent on how the system of service and support works (or does not work).

In chapter 5, “Encountering the Welfare State”, Bylund focuses on dis/abled individuals’ encounters with the caseworkers as representatives of the welfare state and the discourses that are formed by or form these encounters. Through their professional role the caseworkers have a powerful social position, while the dis/abled individual is in a vulnerable situation that influences his or her way

of life in different ways. In this unequal encounter the dis/abled individual sees the caseworker as an antagonist while s/he simultaneously strives for recognition and to become a deserving subject. The dis/abled subjects are disciplined through a system of measurements and assessments and risk at the same time being treated as if they were children, being made infantile.

In chapter 6, "Anxiety and Fear", Bylund investigates two type of affects – anxiety and fear – that are often expressed in the interview situations. Here she refers to Sara Ahmed's theoretical approach to feelings and to how affects have their origin in and are reproduced by power orders. An example of how this power order operates on its subjects is a concept that Bylund borrows from Franz Fanon: combat breathing. This concept refers to what it is like to be subjected to a certain power order – post-colonialism or ableism – and to internalize the threat of violence that the particular power order implies. Bylund sees the combat breathing as the effect of a kind of mental siege that can be caused by the anxiety and fear of losing one's support and service from the welfare system. The new neoliberal austerity policy thereby produces a restricted subject who becomes even more restricted due to anxiety and fear of additional limitations. In this way we can see how different bodies are linked to not only different power orders but also different understandings of what is dangerous and safe in particular contexts.

In chapter 7, "Resistance and Mastering", Bylund turns to a discussion of resistance. She starts by introducing Michel de Certeau's concepts of strategy and tactics. Strategy is here defined as a practice that may change a structure, while tactics is how one acts in a certain situation of a larger structure. In the chapter two key tactics of resistance among dis/abled people are discussed. The first one is called staging or performing a subject of knowledge. This is a dis/ability form where one understands and adjusts to the bureaucratic system and to the information that is needed in order to achieve recognition within the system. In her autoethnography Bylund shows how she herself may represent this subject

of knowledge in certain situations, a subject that also can be related to Pierre Bourdieu's class and capital theory as well as his ideas of habitus. In this context the subject of knowledge can become a subject position that is read as "the supercrip". The second tactic that is discussed in the chapter is called hiding. Dis/abled individuals may hide information about who they are and what relations they have in their contacts with the welfare system. The result can be a silence and an invisibility concerning the individual's sexuality, relations and abled-bodiedness.

At the end of the chapter, Bylund refers to the two key tactics as a form of mastering tactics rather than pure resistance. They are double-edged in the sense that they not only implement resistance but can also support hegemonic discourses on the power order of dis/ability as well the staging of stereotypes in varying contexts.

In chapter 8, "Anachronistic Living Conditions – Conclusions", Bylund summarizes her investigation of how dis/abled persons relate to the shrinking Swedish welfare state. It is concluded that the Swedish welfare state only during very short periods has had the political ambition to give people with norm-breaking dis/ability life conditions that are equal to the conditions of people with normative physical and cognitive ability. The welfare state has often lacked the imagination to dream about and include these dis/abled individuals in the reform politics. However, Bylund also sees dreams and imaginations as the very starting point for the struggle for equal rights.

In this concluding chapter Bylund argues that the changing phases of the support and service of the welfare state have created different subject positions for the individuals with norm-breaking dis/ability. These subject positions have been linked with varying grades of ontological safety, self-determination and freedom of action. In this context, discourses on family life and sexuality have made it difficult for individuals with dis/ability to gain recognition or acceptance in their contact with welfare state representatives. Images of what a dis/abled individual can be when it comes to subject positions as parent or as desired/

desiring subject have limited the possibilities to act. Individuals have been forced to give up their personal integrity and become objects of investigations and measurements. This sort of violence has also led to a kind of non-simultaneity where a dis/abled individual is not recognized as a grown-up person with the right to self-integrity. Bylund also identifies a collective identity with political features regarding what it means to live as dis/abled person in the Swedish welfare context. This collective identity is crucial for how resistance can rise against the system, but also how solidarity can form within the group. As an individual one is at risk of becoming disorientated and alienated due to the discourse of Swedish welfare exceptionalism that can position a dis/abled person as a subject with no credibility. The struggle is therefore directed against the putatively unproblematic image of the so-called good welfare state. The concept of non-simultaneity or anachronism in a way concludes how the dis/abled are stuck not only in a time reversal to non-desirable previous times before the modernization of the welfare state that started in the 1940s. They are, individually, also moved back and forth in their own life-line and are at risk of becoming either an elderly person too early or in reverse a child again, instead of being in a normative adult position.

Anakrona livsvillkor is a thesis that raises many interesting questions about the individual researcher's balancing between closeness and distance towards the ones s/he studies. From this viewpoint, the thesis is on the one hand an ethnological study of the Swedish welfare system that in many ways represents normal science thematically in its results as well as methodologically. The chapters that have been described above follow a thematic pattern that we recognize from other dissertations and studies: first we read a chapter with a historical perspective, and then we go on to chapters on different cultural themes that are relevant for the case and make our understanding of the topic better. In this instance it is a chapter about perception of the future, followed by chapters on cultural encounters, structures of feelings such as anxiety and fear, and finally resistance and

tactics. We also read a methodological chapter that we recognize in some parts from previous studies. We learn that the interviews were structured with open questions about themes such as the welfare state, family and sexuality. In reality the interview persons started by describing their life at present, family situation, age and their need of support and service from the welfare state. This was followed in every interview by a more in-depth conversation about experiences in both past and present, with a focus on the themes that the researcher was primarily interested in. Here in this second part of the interviews the questionnaire was not followed in every detail; instead it was important to have a relatively free conversation. The interviews could in the end cover a lot of different matters that were not part of the questionnaire. All this sounds very familiar from other studies and it is also something I have experienced myself in different interview projects.

On the other hand, *Anakrona livsvillkor* is also a positive challenge to normal science within ethnology due to the specific knowledge perspective that the author of the thesis embodies. The significance of the study lies both in the theoretical pain and the crippled methodology that Bylund realizes throughout the thesis. For Bylund the autoethnographic approach is a method to gain knowledge about the intimate details in the relations that are studied. Bylund argues that she could not expect her interview persons to share such intimate experiences with her. Instead she creates autoethnographic material that mirrors her own relationship to the welfare state. This autoethnographic material takes the shape of a parallel writing that tells – sometimes in a poetic and sometimes in a more realistic way – about the relation to the welfare state as well as her feelings and reflections about this. In her autoethnographic writing she also comments on what she sees as meaningful in the research material and in the theories, in her own intimate relations, in media reporting on the welfare state.

When autoethnography, as in this study, is integrated with the knowledge goal it becomes an active analytical tool. The autoethnography

makes the analysis more profound and convincing. For example, in a section in chapter 6 Bylund identifies anxiety and perceptions of disorientation among her interview persons when they relate to their own life conditions in connection to the hegemonic discourse on dis/ability. Through this analytical entry Bylund then goes deeper into the understanding of what this vulnerability does to its subjects by relating the analysis to her own anxiety when she, as the anxious researcher, is working with the analysis of the material.

This said, I also want to point out a certain overabundance of concepts and ideas that the text tends to suffer from. The text is not always so stringently structured that one can demand in a thesis. It also contains a handful of discussions that are more of loose threads and not really integrated in the analysis, such as the brief reflections at the end of chapter 1 on the meaning of movement in relation to the narratives of the interview persons, or the concept of biopolitics that is mentioned a couple of times in the thesis but not really fully defined.

In the end I must nevertheless emphasize how original this study is. Through its combined crip theoretical and autoethnographic viewpoints it offers a different, bottom-up and critical perspective on what we (still) see as the Swedish welfare state.

Markus Idvall, Stockholm

On the Challenges of Decoloniality in the Swedish Museum of Ethnography

Charlotte Engman, Desires of Decoloniality and Museal Logics: Encounters between the Swedish Museum of Ethnography, Democratic Ideals, and Contemporary Audiences. Faculty of Arts, Department of Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University 2023. 304 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-8070-062-7 (electronic).

■ The pressure on museums to adopt decoloniality is a well-known fact. Museums have begun to critically examine their own histories, their collections, and their representations of cultures and communities that today can be considered both

source communities and local diaspora communities. Museums have also carried out projects involving these communities in producing knowledge about their – and our – cultures.

Decoloniality as a discourse and a set of demands for transformations in museums is the starting point for Charlotte Engman's doctoral dissertation, which aims to extend our understanding of how discussions around decoloniality and claims to decolonize museums are articulated in museums' activities. Furthermore, the study dissects the kinds of tensions and contradictions an examination of these articulations can reveal when investigated in relation to other ideals, conditions, and traditions that define museum work. The project *Ongoing Africa* at the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm deals with representations of Africa, Africans, and people who identify with the African diaspora in Sweden, as well as collaborations and encounters between the museum and African diaspora subjects. As a site where the many demands concerning decoloniality, as well as different activities, practices, and aspects of museum work, can be investigated, the *Ongoing Africa* project is a good choice as a case study to examine decolonization efforts in the Swedish context.

Engman describes the objectives of her study as follows: to explore "how different museal logics condition activities, are reproduced, and relate to each other". The more detailed research questions related to *Ongoing Africa*'s different areas of activity concern the museum's audiences, archives, collections, and museal timeliness. The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. In addition to the objectives and research questions, the first introductory chapter presents the case – and the site of the study. The brief introduction to the *Ongoing Africa* project includes information about the museum as a part of the state authority, the National Museums of World Culture (NMWC), and the background, objectives, project team, activities, and collaborations with external stakeholders.

The theoretical framework, empirical data, research methods, and ethical considerations are ex-

plained in Chapter 2. Research materials included interviews with staff members ($n = 11$) and collaborators involved in the Ongoing Africa project ($n = 10$), as well as field notes concerning activities arranged under the project. Information on these and other textual and visual materials referred to in the study, such as political and other documents, are listed at the end of the book. Chapter 2 ends with a discussion of Engman's positionalities as a researcher, especially as a "partial insider" due to her earlier activities in the ethnographic museum and as a "young, white, and female academic without experience of being racialized in similar ways as many of the research participants" (p. 68), many of whom were of African diasporic backgrounds.

The theoretical framework is built on political discourse theory, especially on the ideas of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001[1985]) and the logics approach developed by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007). In the logic approach, which aims to explore and understand the social, political, and fantasmatic logics of a social practice, the concept of logic refers to an organizing principle to be found within a discourse. Museal logics, which, according to Engman, is an original concept, refer to the organizing principles for how museum activities are constructed, in both speech and material practice.

The analysis, discussed in Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, involves the identification of different logics and an examination of their workings and meanings in different practices. In identifying social logics, which refer to rules and structures that are taken for granted, Engman focuses on what the research participants expressed as natural and self-evident. Political logics are about challenging ideas and practices, and they may create tension and friction by politicizing social logics. Here, Engman focuses on expressions of irritation and strangeness and moments where certain practices were problematized. Fantasmatic logics, which Engman compares to cultural imaginations, address the ideological dimension of what appears natural and encourages contestation or defence. It also directs attention to emotions in mean-

ing-making processes. Engman analyses how research participants wanted the museum to develop, their narratives of success as well as how the museum's future was imagined in negative ways to understand why people cling to certain practices and how different and contradictory ideals coexist.

To develop her analytical themes, Engman follows the idea of retroductive explanations, referring to the dialogue, or cross-reading, between her interpretations of the data, theory, and previous research on the studied phenomena. Social, political, and fantasmatic logics are the basic concepts used in the analysis, but as the analysis progressed, Engman identified and named a number of other logics that were linked to and/or challenged these logics.

Chapter 3 offers an analysis of the logics related to the museum audience and how they determine museums' efforts to be inclusive of new audiences, African diasporic subjects and their communities in particular. Engman shows how both economic logic and difficulties in addressing issues related to racism and racialized relations challenge and complicate social inclusion. For example, it is unclear how – or whether – it is possible to obtain information, or even talk about, museum visitors' (or staff members') racial and ethnic identifications. To ensure inclusion, addressing such issues would be necessary, but the discursive silence related to racism makes it difficult, even impossible.

Chapter 4 focuses on the logic of timeliness, dealing with the staff's experiences and ideas concerning the museum's identity and the relevance of the museum's collections when the *raison d'être* of ethnographic museums has been questioned. Chapter 5, "Objects and Heritage Justice(s)", discusses the changing meanings of museum objects and the timely discourse of repatriation. The increasing relevance of museum objects for diasporic communities, related both to their attempts to raise discussions on the injustices created by colonialism and to the ways in which the objects can play a role in strengthening local diasporic communities, puts political

pressure on museums and museum professionals. However, the logic of impartiality, rooted in museum professionalism and public institutions' working cultures, allows museum professionals to become an "opinionless instrument" (p. 183). The logic of restorative justice, as a political logic, underlines museums' social responsibility and obligation to reform museum practices, but it also includes a fantasmatic dimension, "imaginative geographies", that link together objects, places, bloodlines or cultures. Here, Engman's analysis makes visible essentialist thinking that can also be inherent in discourses on social justice.

In chapter 6 Engman describes the racial logic of the archive and shows how discursive leakages of racial terminology occur between the museum's private and public spaces. Digitalization and the opening of archives to the general public have brought new challenges, requiring museums to break the discursive silence around racism. Using empirical examples of how different knowledge claims are articulated and valued through different logics, Engman also reveals frictions between knowledge associated with professional training and other forms of knowledge, including the situated knowledge of the project's collaborators.

Chapter 7 summarizes the results of the study and offers a list of conflicting ideals and interests that shape museum work and construct the museum as an always unfinished, incomplete space for antagonism. When presenting the contributions of her study, Engman reminds the reader that research ethics, the need to hide her informants' identities, prevented her from using some of her materials, for example, "the few statements some staff members made about their own blackness". I assume that this explains why the concluding chapter also includes discussions concerning racism and the whiteness of the Swedish museum sector which did not emerge directly from the analysis. Throughout the work, Engman avoids presenting views on how things should be done in museums. At the end of her work, however, she mentions, as a cautious message regarding what can be learned about the project based on her findings, "its ability to (intentionally or unintentionally)

stretch and strengthen the boundaries in the aforementioned fields of tension" (p. 257).

Engman's material is rich and sheds light on several aspects of the studied topics. However, the dissertation does not clearly describe how the participants were informed of the study objectives, nor does it specify the questions that were used in the interviews. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the quality of interview data or, for example, whether also the informants (museum professionals and their collaborators) consider the activities and aspects of the Ongoing Africa project that are addressed in the dissertation to be key to the project, and to the achievement of its objectives. A broader application of the logic approach to, for example, curatorial work could have added to the interesting debate on co-creation (pp. 89–95).

Engman's dissertation is a comprehensive study of the complexity of and the challenges in developing museum work. It is a pioneering work in the application of the "logics approach" to museum studies, and Engman demonstrates the usefulness of this approach for studying ideas, traditions, policies, as well as other forces that influence museum activities. The results of the study are clearly based on the carefully constructed and well-argued theoretical framework and a skilful analysis. Engman has rigorously applied the logics approach and made use of previous work in various fields, including critical race and whiteness studies. Although some of the findings, for example, concerning the clash between democratic ideals and economic conditions, are fairly predictable, the logics approach extends the study's focus from what is or has been done – that is, the activities – to why something is – or is not – done. By illuminating how people relate to different discourses and how different logics can emerge and operate in different encounters and situations, Engman's research offers useful tools also for handling conflicts and contradictions in museums.

However, the discursive silence around racism has limited also Engman's opportunities to examine and address the meanings of racism and racialized relations in the studied project. References to African/Black diaspora studies, and Afro/Black

European studies in particular, would have made it easier to deal with some of the questions which have been difficult to address in this work, due to research ethics or for other reasons. Such studies, also concerning diaspora communities' activities with museums in other European countries, are available but are not referenced in this dissertation's bibliography. I also missed references to Achille Mbembe, especially concerning archives, and some other post/decolonial theorists. Nevertheless, Engman's careful analysis produces a considerable number of interesting results, such as when, how, and why different – even contradictory – logics can be identified in an individual's agency and how these logics can contribute to or limit transformations that support the decolonization of museums.

The theoretical framework has facilitated the use of meta-language that has helped the researcher maintain some distance from the empirical data. However, the researcher could shift away from this meta-language when discussing the study's findings. Currently, the results are described primarily using the theoretical concepts which are, above all, analytical tools. This, I'm afraid, may make it more difficult for readers to realize and acknowledge the study's many merits.

Anna Rastas, Tampere University

Listening to the Radio in Sweden

Elin Franzén, Radio. Vardagsliv tillsammans med ett massmedium. Föreningen Mediehistorisk arkiv 51, Lund 2021. 319 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-91-985800-2-0.

■ The book about radio listening in Sweden is based on a doctoral dissertation from Stockholm University by Elin Franzén. The aim is to investigate and understand radio listening from an ethnological perspective, which means focusing on experiences of listening to radio by users of all ages in their everyday lives. The analyses of radio listening go along two paths: One is a phenomenological perspective, perceiving the presence of objects as subjectively experienced phenomena.

This may for instance concern a wireless set and its specific, objective and materialistic presence, which, on the other hand, is subjectively experienced by a person in a specific context of time and space. The other path in the analysis is historical, taking account of temporal aspects regarding the history of radio, for instance the development of the material substance representing radio broadcasting, from a big wooden box to a smartphone, or subjective memories of radio listening in a life-course perspective, marking important cultural-historical moments in national or personal lives. These two paths are intertwined, mutually fertilizing each other and bringing new insights about the topic of radio listening in Sweden from the inception of the Swedish National Broadcasting in 1925 (“Swedish Radio”) until now. Overall, the research question is linked to a phenomenological quest to investigate the construction of meaning in everyday life, in this case regarding the impact of radio on human lives in a past and present perspective.

Elin Franzén has collected empirical material via 17 qualitative interviews and group conversations with people aged from 26 to 90, one group living in Stockholm, another group from a more rural area in Sweden. Keeping a diary of radio listening for one week was also an element in the task for interviewees.

Franzén has also compiled responses by 200 persons to a questionnaire, and furthermore she has used archived material from a national questionnaire during the 1960s by the Nordic Museum.

Three analytical chapters focus on phenomenological and temporal aspects related to the apparatus, content and time, and these three chapters are framed by an introductory chapter about the history of Swedish national radio broadcasting and the development from broadcasting to stationary homes until today's broadcasting to mobile devices distributed digitally.

These three chapters are rich in interesting analytical perspectives revolving around the experiences of listening to radio. An important factor in the first aspect, the apparatus, is of course materiality, space and place. Franzén describes how

ways of listening have changed saliently since devices turned mobile, and not only due to current digital listening from smartphones, but, before that, the development from stationary furniture in central places like living rooms to mobile transistor radios which transported radio listening out of the home and on to the road, into the cars, out on the beaches etc. These changes also have effects regarding, for example, individual versus collective listening, concentrated versus distracted listening, which also touches upon radio listening as a background or a foreground activity. Especially with the smartphone representing a multifunctional device, radio listening becomes a less concentrated activity, and these aspects also include a discussion about how to define “radio” listening, because the different material devices influence the options not only to listen, but how to listen, where to listen, and what to listen to.

The chapter focusing on content is not *about* content but presents a variety of aspects of how content influences daily life, rhythm, activities, and how content attracts different kinds of socio-cultural groups, related to gender, social class, locality and dialect, which relates to communality or individuality of listening, enforced by the distribution in time and place.

The chapter about time presents three phenomena concerning temporal aspects of radio listening: (1) Life-course aspects and memories related to radio listening; (2) the influence on everyday life, for instance on the rhythm of the day or the year with specific times for activities related to specific radio programmes, and the influence of temporal aspects such as listening to streaming or live radio, which also creates different experiences of sharing/not sharing the listening experience with other listeners.

Across the analytical chapters are dimensions of time, everyday life, social and individual experiences and activities, leading back to the theoretical inspiration from phenomenology. The book represents a cornucopia of detailed smaller analyses of the impact of radio on everyday life which is sometimes overlooked as a cultural phenomenon, because radio listening is somehow per-

ceived as an “invisible” element in cultural life, not only pointing to its invisible essence, but also to its impact on everyday life in a cultural-historical perspective.

Anne Leonora Blaakilde, Roskilde University

Women in Icelandic Folk Legends

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir, *Trapped within Tradition: The Portrayal of Women and Femininity in Icelandic Folk Legends*. School of Social Sciences, The University of Reykjavík 2022. 248 pp. Diss.

■ The article dissertation *Trapped within Tradition: Women, Femininity, and Gendered Power Relations in Icelandic Folk Legends* is a well-structured and masterful analysis of concepts regarding women and their expected roles and behaviour, as interpreted from Icelandic legends collected in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The topic is important as it develops international folkloristic work on gender expression in oral traditions that gained popularity in the 1980s and 1990s. The author approaches her topic holistically and the reader is given a thoughtful and analytic overview of this theme from four diverse but complementary perspectives, each encapsulated in one article. The dissertation consists of an introductory section consisting of its own five chapters, four articles (all published), a concluding section, an appendix with the original Icelandic versions of the in-text translated legend examples, and a full bibliography.

Dagrún Ósk Jónsdóttir used for her data published legend collections and archived sound recordings in Icelandic. For her analysis, the author uses qualitative methods rooted in data-grounded thematic content analysis, informed by both feminist studies and critical discourse analysis. Throughout the manuscript, the author demonstrates her thorough and wide-ranging knowledge of scientific discussion in gender and folklore. The author’s critical argumentation in her analysis of these legends leaves the reader clear about how the author’s theoretical interpretation has taken place step-by-step. This is a rare talent.

The main strengths of the article dissertation are the author's expert knowledge of previous relevant literature and the high quality of her argumentation, which pre-empted any critical questions I might have had while reading. The author also pays attention to *how* the legends were produced and considers this question from various critical angles. She gives consideration not only to questions of gender but also to those of class, marital status and social position.

However, the book has a small but notable tendency to overgeneralize about patriarchy, leaving the reader potentially mystified at the implied self-evident nature of patriarchy as an idea of men oppressing women in all situations. Not all would agree with Raewyn Connell's (1987, cited in Article 1, p. 89) claim that "all masculinities nonetheless dominate all femininities". As has been well documented over the past five decades, patriarchy is much more than this. It is a complex, ubiquitous and often invisible power structure that encompasses societal pressure on men to take the burden of responsibility to provide for women and families, women exerting their power over other women (e.g. farm mistresses over female servants, mothers over daughters and mothers-in-law over daughters-in-law); younger men's lives valued less and wasted in wars that benefit the state (i.e. historically mostly older and privileged men), and men directly oppressing other men (e.g. hazing in the military).

There are also a few places in the book where feminist ideology is used beyond what the evidence merits. Although Article no. 3, "It was Ill Done, My Mother, to Deny Me Life", is compellingly argued in the second half of the article, it contains perplexing and overgeneralizing claims in the first half about a gender ideology shift in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries towards "the idea that women were meant to stay at home and oversee the private sphere, the house and children, while men went out to work in the public sphere." It is not made clear here whether this was a middle-class ideology and only attainable for the landowning or position-holding middle classes. How well had it been internalized by the majority

of rural inhabitants in nineteenth-century Iceland? This ideology was also present in some segments of European societies long before the eighteenth century. In the same paragraph, the author states that "During this period, increasing emphasis was placed on the idea that women naturally wanted to become mothers: motherhood came to be considered an important characteristic of femininity." The only authors cited for this statement are two that do not appear to have any connection to Iceland, leaving this compelling idea without convincing evidence. The concept of pariah femininity, on the other hand, works well with the author's argumentation.

Despite these minor shortcomings, reading this dissertation was a pleasure from start to finish. It is filled with lively and determined female trolls, hidden women, ghosts, vengeful revenants, seemingly upstanding human members of society who keep slipping into the realms of these supernatural folk, and diverse forms of violence directed at all of these characters. It is a substantially original contribution to scholarly knowledge on the subject and provides interesting space for reflection on the question of exactly how legends reflect broader cognitive patterns in society and culture.

Laura Stark, Jyväskylä

Phenomenological Reflections on Seafarers' Experiences from the Era of Steamships

Ulla Kallberg, "Sillä ainahan merimies sentään on erimies". Merimiesidentiteetit muuttuvassa maailmassa. *Annales Universitatis Turkuensis B* 592. University of Turku, Turku 2022. 271 pp. ISBN 978-951-29-9014-6.

■ Ulla Kallberg's doctoral thesis describes and analyses the experiences of sailors who worked in the era of steamships. The book gets its title from a popular song, which describes sailors as a special breed. The second part of the title mentions the most important concept of the study, identity or rather identities. Kallberg has pursued a long career in Finland in Forum Marinum and

its predecessor organizations, as a museum curator specializing in maritime history. It is fantastic that after retiring from her museum post she has concluded her PhD thesis and the line of maritime ethnology themed doctoral dissertations has a welcome new addition.

In her museum work Kallberg has done documentation and ethnography on ships and this work has affected her PhD thesis, even though the analysed material is written reminiscences by sailors. The core source material consists of qualitative thematic inquiries focusing on the everyday life of sailors. The inquiries were conducted by the Department of Ethnology at the University of Turku in 1963. In addition to written reminiscences, the material consists of photographs, certificates, letters and one memoir. The inquiry, a set of questions and motivational text (in Finnish and in Swedish) was sent to regular “informants” but also to active and retired sailors in the magazine of the Finnish Seafarer’s Union. All in all, 144 sailors sent their reminiscences to be archived, and Kallberg has used 46 of these as the material for her thesis.

These kinds of inquiries were a regular part of research at the Department of Ethnology and there were many inquiries on various themes. If any reader of this review is interested in these inquiries, there is a new doctoral thesis on this topic written by Anna Kirveennummi. This inquiry “Sailors’ memoirs” (in Finnish and in Swedish) is a unique set of material and it is significant that now there is a doctoral dissertation based on this material.

Kallberg’s research questions are interesting and ambitious. The first set of questions concerns sailors’ selves and self-understandings and Kallberg asks how they become evident in different situations and what kind of experiences they are. How do sailors live their identities? How does gender become apparent through creating, experiencing and living identities? The second set of questions focuses on communities and social life. Kallberg asks how social relations affect the individual processes of forming identities on the one hand and forming the social reality of a com-

munity on the other hand. Finally, Kallberg asks how culture becomes evident in the working communities of ships. After the methodological and theoretical parts Kallberg leads the reader through a general description of seafaring in Finland between the 1880s and the 1960s. The first chapter analysing the findings is about the ship as a lived space. The second findings chapter is called “On the first trip” and the third “Everyday life on board”. These chapters are packed with knowledge and interesting stories. For me the fourth findings chapter, titled “Differentiations and unifications”, is the most interesting since it includes more new and fresh narratives about maritime life. This chapter gives an in-depth picture of different kinds of hierarchies and power relations in the ships’ communities.

Kallberg explains meticulously how the inquiry was conducted in the first place and how she chose the texts she has used as her sources. There is plenty of previous literature on how the inquiries were conducted in general by different organizations, for instance by the National Board of Antiquities, and Kallberg makes good use of it. Inevitably, the way the questionnaire was formulated had a great impact on how the respondents wrote their stories. This should not be seen as a negative aspect but instead a possibility to analyse the interaction between the researchers and the respondents, who both had agency and their own (also individual) goals. This point of departure is acknowledged by Kallberg, but she could have made better use of it, digging deeper into the memoirs and distancing herself from them. For instance, nostalgic reminiscences on community spirit could have been pondered upon more. The dissertation includes interesting reflexive parts drawing on Kallberg’s work as a curator, for instance her experience in documenting vessels and everyday life on ships. Nevertheless, a little more self-reflexivity would have given more depth to the findings chapters. At the same time I feel that functional self-reflexivity in a research text is one of the most difficult things in current ethnological practice.

According to Kallberg, the sailors’ working life on board a cargo ship is defined by the official

maritime working culture and at the same time the crew's own (unofficial) culture. All respondents had worked on several vessels and in different positions and made comparisons of different styles of managing things on different vessels. One definite strength of this dissertation is that it brings together and makes knowledge on the era of steamships more complete. Interest in the disappearance of sailing ships was one of the main motivations of early maritime history research. Therefore, a lot of research has been published about seafarers on windjammers. Also the more recent years of motor ships have seen extensive documentation and scrutiny. The era of steamships is also interesting, since the decades witnesses massive changes in seafarers' living conditions and working patterns. Communal sleeping and living spaces ("fore-castles") were replaced by cabins for one or two crew members. In addition, facilities such as toilets and washing rooms were better on new vessels.

When describing the everyday life of sailors, Kallberg uses plenty of maritime historical and ethnological literature, and her take on previous research is adequately critical. The reader really benefits from the depth of Kallberg's knowledge of the topic. The introductory part also includes interesting and useful compilations and discussion of several theoretical and methodological issues. These include ethnological discussions of identity and especially of phenomenology. Unfortunately, the concept of identity or identification is not explicitly discussed through the text. All things considered, Kallberg's hard work pays off. Her thesis includes important new knowledge about seafarers' experiences. In addition, the compact and clear theoretical and methodological discussions can be inspiring, for instance, for many researchers writing their PhD thesis or masters' degree students. Hopefully, we will later see a popular version of this book with plenty of photos from different museum collections.

Tytti Steel, Helsinki

Pilgrimage in Norway

Hannah Kristine Bjørke Lunde, Pilgrimage Matters: Administrative and Semiotic Landscape of Contemporary Pilgrimage Realisations in Norway. University of Oslo, 2022. Diss.

■ Pilgrimage in Norway and other countries across northern Europe has made a surprising come-back. During the 16th century the Protestant Reformation swept away pilgrimage shrines and the network of routes trod by devotees across northern Europe and it was only during the late 19th century that pilgrimage emerged from the shadows in England, for example, helped by the revival of ritualism led by the 'High Church/Anglo-Catholic' wing of the Church of England and increasing toleration of a Catholic minority, swelled by migration from neighbouring Ireland. In other areas of northern Europe where Lutheran and Calvinist traditions were strong, the revival of pilgrimage has been more recent.

Until the 1970s the academic study of religious pilgrimage in the West largely focussed on the Middle Ages. Historians and theologians produced a range of studies concerning the emergence and rapid expansion of Christian pilgrimage shrines and routes across western and central Europe. Although researchers examined the political and cultural processes associated with the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation during the 16th century, the disappearance of most shrines in northern Europe and the decline of routes to Rome and Santiago de Compostela encouraged the assumption that contemporary pilgrimage was confined to Catholic Europe and had little significance for a secular, 'modern' Europe.

The situation has changed dramatically during the last forty years. There has been a massive expansion of those visiting pilgrimage shrines globally. Old routes such as those across France and Spain to Santiago and the Via Francigena to Rome have been revived, new ones invented in Latin America and even in countries shaped by the Protestant Reformation such as the St Olav route across Norway to Trondheim. Looking be-

yond western Christianity we can see the revival of Eastern Orthodox pilgrimage in the former socialist countries of central and eastern Europe and Russia, the increasing popularity among Muslims of performing hajj to Mecca and Medina, the attraction of Hindu pilgrimage to local, regional and national shrines across India, the throngs visiting the Sikh holy city of Amritsar or the visitors to Buddhist sacred centres across south-east Asia, China and Japan. At the same time, other forms of pilgrimage have also rapidly developed. These involve journeys to sites associated with iconic figures, viz. Lenin's mausoleum in Moscow or the grave of Elvis Presley at Memphis, Tennessee, or such tragic events as Auschwitz and the First World War battlefields in Belgium and France.

The contemporary significance of pilgrimage is a complex phenomenon, therefore, since it is shaped by social, economic, cultural and political processes. Religious pilgrimage reveals the interweaving of different interests such as religious elites, those working in the travel and tourism industry and other areas of the service sector such as shops, hotels and restaurants, and is promoted through global communications powered by the internet. Hence, attempts to separate the 'sacred' from the 'secular' fail to understand the intimate relationship between the two. Religious pilgrimage is more than a quest for some sacred centre divorced from the secular world.

While the Lutheran Church in Norway has been closely involved in the development of the St Olav Ways to Trondheim from the 1990s, Lisbeth Mikaelsson and others have shown that this development has been encouraged by a mixture of influences – the support provided by government agencies at European, national and local levels, a long established interest in the natural environment linked to more recent assumptions concerning the therapeutic advantages of walking, the growth of the travel and tourism industry linked to a burgeoning travel literature and the media, as well as alternative spiritual beliefs and practices often categorised as 'New Age'. The development of the St Olav Ways not only illustrates the complex mixture of agencies involved within Norway

but also more general cultural, social, economic and political processes associated with the rising popularity of walking the 'camino' network of routes converging on Santiago de Compostela in north-western Spain.

Hannah Lunde's thesis explores this complexity through a careful analysis of rich ethnographic data which has been collected over a number of years and draws on her own walking along the routes and volunteer working at a pilgrimage centre. She not only researched the St Olav Ways but also two maritime pilgrimage projects – the Project Sunniva Route and the Coastal Pilgrimage Route. The thesis consists of eight chapters and follows the conventional format of an introduction, conceptual framework and methods, followed by chapters that focus on these three routes, a penultimate chapter which discusses pilgrimage landscapes and a conclusion. The text is illustrated by maps, official documentation and photographs and makes good use of Hannah Lunde's personal involvement as a walker and volunteer.

The thesis demonstrates the importance of working across disciplinary boundaries, i.e. ethnology, anthropology and folklore studies. She uses this eclectic approach to explore the important role played by bureaucracy – an important corrective to the dominant focus in pilgrimage studies on people's motives and shared meanings – and how this is linked to the signs and symbols promoting these three routes. Her research also combines an analysis of land pilgrimage with maritime pilgrimage which is attracting research interest not only in Norway but other countries across Europe from Croatia to Ireland. The thesis, therefore, helps us to locate Norway and the Scandinavian region within the wider context of European pilgrimage and how the development of pilgrimage routes has been encouraged by the Council of Europe as part of its attempt to promote European identity. It also engages with the role of religious institutions, the decline of hostility towards pilgrimage among Protestant churches in northern Europe and the building of ecumenical networks.

From a comparative point of view, developments in Norway are strikingly different from

what has been happening in most other countries in Protestant northern Europe. The bureaucratic support which pilgrimage has received from the nationstate at central, regional and local level contrasts markedly from what has been happening in Britain, Ireland, Estonia and Latvia, for example. In Britain pilgrimage routes have been developed by entrepreneurs at the local level with no funding from nationstate institutions. In the case of the most active group – the British Pilgrimage Trust – the emphasis on inclusivity has encouraged those who see pilgrimage as a ‘spiritual’ rather than a ‘religious’ quest reflecting the influence of ‘New Age’ beliefs and values.

In the English section of Britain the Anglican Church has only recently got involved and maritime pilgrimage has yet to emerge, although it has long been practised in Roman Catholic Ireland at the local level. Pilgrimage has also become even more multicultural with the emergence of Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Jain shrines reflecting the country’s increasing cultural diversity and providing again an interesting contrast to the dominance of the nationstate and the Lutheran church in Norway.

As Hannah Lunde’s thesis suggests, the differences between Norway and other European countries like Britain may be partly explained in terms of the ‘heritagisation’ of religion. The Norwegian government appears to have not only worked more closely with the majority church in promoting pilgrimage routes as part of national cultural heritage but also provided the flexibility for a broad range of agents to engage in pilgrimage to historical shrines. Lots to learn!!

John Eade, University of Roehampton, London

Life-Modes in a Changing World Order

Niels Jul Nielsen, *Livsformer i en verden under forandring (Life-Modes in a Changing World Order)*. Diss., University of Copenhagen 2021, defended September 2022, consisting of a summary, five articles (2013–18), a book (2004), and the nine book chapters reviewed here, to be published 2023. Saxo-Instituttet, University of Copenhagen 2023. ISBN 87-7289-8623.

■ The main part of Niels Jul Nielsen’s doctoral dissertation consists of nine chapters, which together make up half up of the book *Life-Modes in a Changing World Order*, which he publishes here together with the Danish ethnologist Thomas Højrup. In Denmark, a doctoral dissertation represents the highest academic degree achievable. It has been awarded six times during the 62 years of ethnology as a university discipline in Denmark.

The nine chapters explore how various forms of cultural practices, understood as distinct life-modes with different ideas of what makes up “the good life”, relate to each other and within a broader social context, and how the totality of life-modes embedded in the industrial society has changed over time, putting the main emphasis on the transformation that has taken place since the end of the Cold War, marked by neoliberalization and globalization. The exploration of this wide-ranging and complex field is based on thousands of pages of interviews and observations, mainly in a particular region of Denmark where a similar study was carried out more than 40 years ago, thus enabling a deep historical frame of reference. Fieldwork has been conducted among families, companies and public authorities and with people on all steps of the social ladder. The global dimension, crucial for state forms and life-modes in the fluctuating state system, is concretely illustrated using China’s development and especially its relationship with Danish manufacturing industries in China, where extensive fieldwork has also been undertaken.

Jul Nielsen’s dissertation also consists of five articles (2013–18) about migrant workers on the Danish labour market and a book from 2004, *Mellem storpolitik og værkstedsgulv – den danske arbejder før, under og efter Den kolde krig* (376 pp.). In the book from 2004, Jul Nielsen explores workers’ culture from the 1930s to the turn of the millennium, not only from “inside and below” (based on both extensive archive material and fieldwork accounts mainly from Denmark’s largest industrial plant, Burmeister & Wain) but also from “outside and above”, thus exploring the

role of “the working class” within the perspective of the developing Danish welfare state (and in relation to welfare politics more generally in “the West”). A main result is that through most of the twentieth century, the conditions for ordinary working people had the highest political priority in the effort to “immunize” the population against communism and socialism in the ideological struggle of the West against the “workers’ states” in the East (a state of affairs with decisive consequences also for other life-modes, such as owners and managers, that had to take the strength of wage-earners into account in their own everyday practices). The last part of the book describes how the end of Cold War paves the way for globalization and neoliberalism – a development that is followed by an increasing marginalization of workers. In the new world order, career-people and entrepreneurs come into the political focus, because they are regarded as being able to deliver the creativity and unique solutions that are required in the knowledge-economy of the “competition state”.

The reality of a post-Cold War labour market with increased precarity and occasional clashes between non-national and national workers is under scrutiny in the five articles published between 2013 and 2018. The articles – three of them co-authored with colleagues – are based on fieldwork accounts from building sites and farms where non-national workers are employed, as well as from the families of some of these, mainly eastern European, workers.

When a dissertation, as in Jul Nielsen’s case, is a compilation of separate texts, it has to be supplemented with what is called a summarizing exposition. Thus the dissertation also consists of a 77-page paper, *Livsformer i en verden under forandring* (accessible here).¹ Here Jul Nielsen condenses his research agenda over the past twenty years to “the coexistence of different cultural practices in changeable social wholes” and argues for its roots in classical ethnology. His point of departure in workers’ culture from the middle of the nineteenth century till today has been broadened significantly with the nine chapters mentioned

above, which also includes analyses of specialists, managers, owners (both owner-managers and investors), and public employees of different kinds. The analyses are built up as both company and family “portraits” where the coexistence of different cultural practices and ideas of “the good life” are seen within a work and a family setting. Different companies are compared, and he shows convincingly how the different life-mode priorities, for instance in a factory or on a modern farm, constantly alter the total landscape for other life-modes involved. One chapter – analysing a high-end company – develops new concepts to scrutinize how “career professionals” (i.e., the ones that continuously contribute the unique qualifications that keep a company afloat) make up a highly composite group, from those who disrupt the agenda to specialists deeply absorbed in developing new solutions. It will be interesting to follow the fruitfulness of these concepts in the future.

With Jul Nielsen’s emphasis on understanding everyday cultural practices as necessarily dependent on a “larger whole”, and vice versa, he has dedicated much effort to exploring the practices that (together with elected politicians) “run the state”. Continuing other scholars’ work on a “civil servant life-mode”, and in dialogue with the Foucauldian governance tradition, he proposes three necessary and interdependent “dimensions” of practices required to connect (potential contradictions between) the many different “wills” of a society (its contrasting, perhaps clashing, “interests”) with the one political “will” that continuously has to be configured (in spite of instant inner controversies) in order to constitute a viable state-subject. The dissertation contains several analyses of processes of governance – or “interpellation” as Jul Nielsen calls it – in both Denmark and China and on both macro- and micro-level, for instance with vulnerable citizens; and comprehends the complexity of governance in the present era where public services and political agendas are often carried out by non-public actors such as NGOs or private businesses. Continued empirical challenging will test whether these new concepts contain the decisive and necessary inner interdependency that makes

them scientifically consistent. And time will show if they become a new standard of understanding, just as Jul Nielsen's analyses in the 2004 book of the connection between the conditions of workers – with decisive corollaries for the other life-modes – and the external milieu of the state(s) has today become generally accepted.

In all of Jul Nielsen's works he discusses contributions from other scholars, such as in connection with the concepts of "identity" (introduced in the 1990s as a more appropriate term than "class", but, according to Jul Nielsen, with the risk of ending up in a postmodern accumulation of any imaginable identity feature) and "transnationalism" (according to Jul Nielsen criticizing, rightly, a too narrow focus on national "containers" as quick explanatory solution but failing to substantiate why and how survivable state-subjects are, nonetheless, impossible to ignore as providing the basic preconditions for social life, also in a "transnational" era). Thus, for everyone interested in everyday practice relating to work, family and community life, to subjectivation, identity, discourse, governance, interpellation, state and the transformation of the cultural history, Niels Jul Nielsen's comprehensive work can be warmly recommended. It stands out in its incessant dedication to understanding not only the complexity of everyday practices but also how these necessarily – if their viability is to be explained – must be related to a "larger whole".

Klaus Schriewer, Universidad de Murcia

Affect in Online Hate Speech

Karin Sandell, Parasiter och "bättre folk": Affekt i näthat mot det svenska i Finland. Åbo Akademis förlag, Åbo 2022. 198 pp. Diss. ISBN 978-952-389-007-7.

■ This new dissertation, written by the folklorist Karin Sandell, is a contribution to the ever-expanding study of online hate speech. It is titled *Parasites and "better people": Affect in online hate speech directed at the Swedish in Finland* and is an analysis of the discourse on the web

forum Suomi²⁴. Finland has two national languages, and the hate speech posts directed against the Swedish-speaking minority are what Sandell terms "continuations of a dream of a monolingual Finnish nation originating from a time long before Finland's independence from Russia in 1917" (p. ii). Sandell is inspired by theories of affect in the cultural sciences, and sees hate speech as an affective, performative folkloristic genre. The dissertation develops a model for analysing affect, and analyses the performance and performativity of emotion and populist discourse online, with particular attention paid to intersectional categories of language, ethnicity, class and gender.

There is a general understanding that public debate has grown harder and more populist in recent years. Hate speech is very visible online but it feeds off offline events and also triggers offline speech and action. In recent years, the issue of free speech versus the protection of vulnerable groups, questions concerning the regulations and laws of online platforms, have been placed high on the agenda across the world. It is an obvious responsibility for scholars in cultural studies to participate in these debates with sound knowledge and analysis. What is hate speech, why do people participate in it, what role does it play in everyday life, and what effect does it have on our societies? There has been a tendency in folklore studies to focus on the benign and the beautiful sides of folk culture, but it is also our responsibility to look the malignant and ugly in the eye. In choosing the topic as well as the theoretical foundation for the dissertation, Sandell places herself in the midst of a lively ongoing debate.

One of the strengths of the work is how Sandell articulates her paths through the existing literature and clearly explains why she has made the theoretical and methodological choices she has made. This also means that her chapter on theory and method will make for an excellent introduction to readers unfamiliar with the affective turn. She describes the writings on affect by such authors as Ahmed, Massumi and Wetherell, and shows how new theoretical developments justify the use of the relatively new term *affect* in the study of emotion and social performance.

The dissertation is also an important contribution to the field of folkloristics in the sense that it takes seriously the question of what constitutes folklore: transmission and the creation of tradition through repetition. The dissertation uses concepts of genre and intertextuality to understand the phenomenon of hate speech, the play in-between context, genre forms and content (p. 47). Sandell shows how online hate speech can be productively understood as a performative genre. The writers of hate online break into performance and use a variety of affective utterances to get attention and reactions.

The dissertation delves into questions of vernacular literacy and the importance of the online worlds in our daily lives. Sandell shows how hate can be expressed in many ways, and often in a dry and objective form, or through humour and irony. She shows how the online posters manage to avoid breaking with the forum rules but still express stereotypical and extremely negative notions of Swedish-speaking Finns.

The hate directed towards the Swedish-speaking population in Finland has many similarities to the hate directed at other minorities around the world. It is related to the idea of the nation as a unity of language, people, and land. The utopia of a pure nation requires a homogenous society. Sandell shows how the hate speech in her data express a longing for a heteronormative, conservative Finland.

Sandell bases her work on a popular discussion forum on the website Suomi24 from 2015 to 2017, but also uses discourse from other sources such as news media to find and understand online hate speech. Her data are rich, and the dissertation creates a multifaceted picture of the creativity and

intertextuality that goes into hateful performances online. For each specific case she presents, she dives into the specificities of the multitudes of e.g. metaphors, references to popular culture (such as the Moomin, p. 88) and uses and understandings of class, gender, language and ethnicity. I imagine that the work must have been heavy at times, working with hate that is directed at your own in-group. (Sandell addresses this question towards the end of her text, stating that others have commented on the fact that she herself is in the target group of many of the statements she is analysing. I hope she follows up on her hint that she may work on that question in the future.) For those who post hate speech online, Sandell writes, the important thing is to get reactions, to express emotion but also to stir emotions in the audience (p. 47). Even though the topic is a sensitive and heated one, Sandell manages to keep her promise (p. 35) of steering clear of making statements about the writers as individuals. Her interest lies in the perceptions of Finland as a nation, the Finnish, the Swedish and so on that the online posts reproduce – and how they do just that.

The dissertation is an important contribution to our understanding of the links between historical antagonisms and today's online worlds, to our awareness of the intertextuality of online speech, and last but not least how widespread hate speech is and how it spills over into offline everyday private and political speech and action. As Sandell writes, the content of online discussions does not stay within the "walls" of the online forum, but leaks into both public and private quarters, "echoes in Parliament and around coffee tables" (p. 159).

Ida Tolgensbakk, Oslo