

Editorial

By Lars-Eric Jönsson

Finally, 2022, after one year of waiting, it was possible for Nordic ethnologists and folklorists to meet in Reykjavík. For *Ethnologia Scandinavica* it was a special conference since the journal was to celebrate its half-century anniversary. Now it was one year late but all the more long-awaited. Last year we had a special volume with four articles commenting on the fifty-year history of the journal in particular and ethnology in general. At the conference we followed this up with a successful session on the same theme.

The anniversary was timely. For a few years we have been in the middle of a process where journals in general are growing in importance. This also applies to *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. One sign of this is the increasing number of manuscript proposals. This, of course, has its explanation in the changing landscape and practice of academic publishing. As a young scholar you are more dependent on the journals in order to build a competitive CV compared to older scholars who, to a higher degree, were expected to write and publish monographs.

In addition, we have seen a growing interest in compilation theses. As far as I can see, this genre has not really found its form in our field of scholarship. The discussions are ongoing and if the tendency continues, we will soon reach a consensus as to what a compilation may and should be in our disciplines. However, it is not only the end result that requires consideration. The process of writing a compilation thesis is quite different from a monograph project. Fieldwork and/or archive studies, writing and publishing describe a different sequence depending on what kind of thesis you choose. And as a journal editor your assessments and your way of working with

the manuscripts differ if they are intended as parts of a thesis or not. It is obvious that a PhD student is more dependent on a fixed time frame than others. It is also clear that he or she can use more help in constructing an acceptable manuscript. Too often I, as an editor, lack an active and visible supervisor. Too often I find myself doing the work that normally would be the responsibility of the supervisor. I am not moaning. I like to work with PhD students and their manuscripts. But generally, I get the impression that not all supervisors realize what is required to take a manuscript all the way to the finishing line. At the end of the day, we have the same scholarly requirements of an article written by a PhD student as one written by a senior researcher.

To conclude, I think we all still have a distance to go to find a common ground concerning compilation theses, what they should be and the process to get there. With this I would just like to invite all supervisors and PhD students to establish a dialogue that not only solves the individual projects but also contributes to the disciplinary understanding of what a thesis could and ought to be.

The content of this volume starts with Anna Sundelin's and Johanna Wassholm's investigation of the social and economic networks developed around a family of peddlers in Finland between 1850 and 1940. It is a story of itinerant tradesmen who became stationary and established shop owners. But it also gives perspectives on the consequences of political developments, not least of Finland's relations to Russia, where Karelia played a central part and where networks continuously changed.

The following article takes a step west and the Swedish-speaking community in

Finland and its relation to Finland through sports. Katarzyna Herd's article has its starting point in pidginization as a process of cultural communication. She specifically studies Swedish-speaking football clubs in the turn of the twentieth century. In the sports sources she observes the meaning of sports in society, the complex relationships between Finland and Sweden, how identities were constructed and consolidated through sports.

A questionnaire entitled "Norwegian Folk Medicine" (Norsk Folkemedicin), distributed in 1911, is the starting point for Line Esborg's and Greta Karoline Heian's article. It deals with how vernacular folk-medical knowledge was transformed into an object of folklore. But they also note how it was an early example of an interdisciplinary knowledge project. Additionally, Esborg and Heian provide a concise history of the questionnaire. Signe Boeskov's article follows, taking the diaries of Molly Tang, the lady of a Danish nineteenth-century manor, as the starting point for an investigation of everyday life and emotional labour. Boeskov shows how normative and ideal expectations of the housewife role were combined in both practical and emotional work.

Britta Zetterström Geschwind's investigation deals with female refugees who came to Sweden after the Second World War. Many of these women came from German camps and were once again incarcerated, but now in Swedish camps. Zetterström Geschwind's example is taken from a small institution in southern Sweden. She traces a couple of detainees and the institutional perspectives that were applied to them and their attempts to meet requirements with both respectability and

resistance. Maria Bäckman follows with an article on experiences of visual impairment. Belonging to the norm means passing under the radar, being invisible. Bäckman writes from her own experiences of being visually impaired, using a white stick. It does help her, giving her extra space in her everyday life but it also makes her shrink as a person, ashamed of being a person that others have to make room for.

John Ødemark, Åmund Resløyken, and Gina Fraas Henrichsen have found interesting connections between fairytales and the concept and practice of mindfulness. They show how fairytales are used for including Buddhism in therapeutic practices of mindfulness. The investigation shows how fairytales are used as universal and psychological "roadmaps". But not only that. In the context of mindfulness they also serve as a model for living. In terms of the applicability of folkloristic knowledge this is a vertiginous insight. If this may be considered a theme, it is developed in a slightly more expected way by Meghan Cortner, Jessica Jørnæs, Adam Kuskner, and Mark Vacher. They investigate the concept and practice of applied cultural analysis as it is expressed in two related master programmes of Copenhagen University and Lund University. What does it mean to enter a context outside academia? The authors show how applicability is shaped in relation to and in negotiation with clients.

The article section ends with three obviously timely pieces. Lone Milkær investigates how ideas of a sustainable society may be practised. Through an example in Norway she shows how everyday climate activism can take shape through downscaling the climate activist movement, situating and domesticating it to a local

practice and concern. Mattias Frihammar and Fredrik Krohn Andersson write about how built remnants such as bunkers from the Cold War become heritage and bricks and stones to construct and perform masculinity. This bunker engagement obviously acquired added meanings in the spring of 2022 when the Swedish military defence left the post-Cold War downsizing for an upscaling supposed to meet a new security situation in the north-east of Europe. In a situation that is, in a sense less threatening but nonetheless contemporary, Mia-Marie Hammarlin seeks an understanding of vaccination-critical expressions in everyday life. The situation is of course the Covid-19 pandemic 2020–2022. The meaning of

place – or with Hammarlin’s cleverly invented concept “vaccilocus” – is at the centre for these vaccine-reluctant individuals and expressed in a sense of belonging to nature and like-minded neighbours and friends. At the same time it reflects a general reluctance and resistance to national, distanced, and central perspectives and requirements in the welfare state.

As usual, the articles summarized above constitute approximately half of the volume. The other half is as important with its biographical notes and reviews. Together they cover both the need of news and, above all, an ongoing critical dialogue between writers and readers.