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Contents

barn och familj. Rev. by *Lena Marander-Eklund*

171 Career Women. – Birgitta Conradson & Angela Rundquist, Karriärkvinnan. Myt och verklighet ur etnologiskt perspektiv. Rev. by *Mette Boritz*

172 Ethnology of the Everyday-Life. – Billy Ehn & Orvar Löfgren, Vardagslivets etnologi. Reflektioner kring en kulturvetenskap. Rev. by *Eeva Uusitalo*

174 Games from Swedish Finland. – Carola Ekrem, "Vi leder en blindbock till kungens bord". Lekar från Svenskfinland. Rev. by *Helene Brembeck*

175 Environmental and Consumerism. – Rita J. Erickson, "Paper or Plastic?" Energy, Environment, and Consumerism in Sweden and America. Rev. by *Hilary Stanworth*

176 The Politics of Memory and Life Stories. – Erindringens og glemslens politik. Bernard Eric Jensen, Carsten Tage Nielsen & Torben Weinreich (eds.). – Anne Birgitte Richard & Berhard Eric Jensen, Livet fortalt – litteraturhistoriske og faghistoriske biografier i 1990'erne. Rev. by *Birgitta Svensson*

178 "The Other" Civilization. – "Toinen" sivilisaatio. Arkielämä, sivilisaatio ja kansankultuuri Suomessa noin 1500–2000. Pekka Junkala & Elina Kiuru (eds.). Rev. by *Anna-Maria Åström*

180 The Street – An Open Space. – La rue – espace ouvert. Svend Erik Larsen and Annelise Ballegaard Petersen (eds.). Rev. by *Elin Frykman*

181 Lesbian Identity. – Pia Lundahl, Lesbisk identitet. Rev. by *Karin Lützen*

182 The Golden Egg. – Susanne Lundin, Guldägget. Föräldraskap i biomedicinens tid. Rev. by *Bjarne Sverkeli*

184 The City Domesticated. – Karin Lützen, Byen tæmmes. Kernefamilie, sociale reformer og velgørenhed i 1800-tallets København. Rev. by *Eva Helen Ulvros*

186 Theory of Science as Cultural Analysis. – Dikotomier. Vetenskapsteoretiska reflektioner. Fredrik Miegel & Fredrik Schoug (eds.). Rev. by *Niels Kayser Nielsen*

189 Germany and Sweden. – Tyskland i Sverige & Sverige i Tyskland. Dieter K. Müller (ed.). Rev. by *Ulrika Wolf-Knuts*

190 Lifestyles as Superficial Games. – Magnus Mörck, Spel på ytan. En bok om livsstilar. Rev. by *Mari Alvim*

193 Cultural Analysis of the Body. – Niels Kayser Nielsen, Krop og kulturanalyser. Den levede og den konstruerede krop. Rev. by *Magdalena Petersson*

195 Beauty is Simplicity. – Ingrid Nordström, Identitet i Glasriket. Rev. by *Virpi Nurmi*

197 History of the Different. – Toivo Nygård, Erilaisten historia. Marginaaliryhmät Suomessa 1800-luvulla ja 1900-luvun alussa. Rev. by *Pirjo Korkiakangas*

199 Health as Discourse. – Lene Otto, Rask eller lykkelig. Sundhed som diskurs i Danmark i det 20. århundrede. Rev. by *Inger Johanne Lyngø*

201 Swedish Museum Studies. – Museer och kulturarv. En museivetenskaplig antologi. Lennart Palmqvist & Stefan Bohman (eds.). – Stefan Bohman, Historia, museer och nationalism. – Kulturarv eller fasadarv. Om det etnologiska perspektivet i kulturmiljövården. Lena Palmqvist (ed.). Rev. by *Mette Boritz*

202 On Marzipan and Pastries. – Christa Pieske, Marzipan aus Lübeck. Der süße einer alten Hansestadt. – Bo Lönnqvist, Bakelser. En studie i lyxens kulturella formspråk. Rev. by *Nils-Arvid Bringéus*

204 The Festive Year. – Iørn Piø, Det festlige år. Rev. by *Nils-Arvid Bringéus*

205 Between Tradition and Modernization. – Bjarne Rogan, Mellom tradisjon og modernisering. Kapitler av 1800-tallets samferdselshistorie. Rev. by *Dick Harrison*

207 The Culture of Aging. – Pigga pensionärer och populärkulturen. Owe Ronström (red.). Rev. by *Anne Leonora Blaakilde*

209 A Woman in the Museum World. – Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen, Kvinna i museivärlden. En studie i Irja Sahlbergs museisyn. Rev. by *Birgitta Meurling*

211 Industrialism in the Museum. – Eva Vikström, Bruksandan och modernismen. Brukssamhälle och folkhemsbygge i Bergslagen 1935–1975. Rev. by *Cecilia Fredriksson*

Editorial
By Jonas Frykman

It is a paradox that as the nation-state declines in importance, it becomes stronger as a source of identification. As people are getting more identity-choices, the more they embrace collective identities. Where are the identity training camps, the ritualistic playing grounds? How much stereotyping and change is embedded in distinct cultural forms? This year's *Ethnologia Scandinavica* continues the discussion of how identities are produced from ready-made templates such as the nation, the family, or the gang in different ways, embodied and ingrained as habit; how they at once contain tradition and break away from tradition.

Belonging to a nation is usually an implicit and scarcely problematized part of life. Orvar Löfgren examines the places where this becomes a highly palpable physical experience. The border crossing, the airport, the customs post are some of the state's frontier stations, identity checkpoints. Everyone here moves in a border zone that instils a guilty conscience. As a traveller one is questioned by official decree. Not only your papers but also your cultural passport must be in order. As mobility increases, sorting agencies become more common, domicile has to be declared more often.

Barbro Blehr shows how the rituals of the Norwegian national holiday turn the national into a physical experience. Belonging is anchored not so much in ideologies as in a series of practices which create meaning. At the very moment when the national is elevated as high-flown rhetoric, it loses its credibility and becomes somewhat embarrassing. Today it is therefore more senseology than ideology. Parents and children along with neighbours are incorporated in a one-day "little community" that is warm and intimate and conjures up the virtues contained in a nation. One is also given a chance to ennoble one's personal biography by linking it to the destiny of the nation. The fact that it is possible to throw a bridge from the personal to the national makes it possible, strangely enough, to influence the latter. So national rituals also become a stage in a process of change.

It may be a distinctive Scandinavian peculiarity, but the idea of linking one's personal biography to one's national or ethnic background tends to be regarded as emancipatory. Mette Skougaard tells how immigrants in Denmark are expected to acquire self-respect by being represented in museums and collections via their ethnic background. In order to attain equality, they are supposed to devote themselves to the handicrafts of their homelands, to write their memoirs and keep diaries. There is a whole infrastructure to provide the rituals that once turned the inhabitants of the country into Danes and which can now be used to culturalize immigrants. Of course, their culture is thereby categorized and changed.

Shaping national habitus happens more through everyday life than ceremony, through habits more than exhibitions. Both Karin Lützen and Bo Lönnqvist deal with the decisive influence exerted by bourgeois culture. Notions about the home, about honesty and cleanliness, were propagated in the form of a domestic mission. Karin Lützen describes how working-class homes in the cities were reorganized by charitable institutions in nineteenth-century Copenhagen. We see how domesticity based on Christian piety, careful upbringing, schooling, and demure femininity organized both

the materiality of the home and the identity of the inhabitants. The cities, much more than the countryside, became training camps for a national, disciplined habitus.

Bo Lönnqvist shows how the young nation of Finland ended up ever-present in the training of young women in domestic economy. A national culture was secure when it rested on future mothers and housewives. Lönnqvist also reminds us how identity cannot be equated with homogenization. Self-aware women were fostered here, with competence in their own special fields. Just as the nation could function as a place for civic emancipation, so too could the housekeeping school function for female emancipation.

Kari Telste brings out the incredible power of rituals to convince without words. A fake wedding in late nineteenth-century Bergen is the starting point for an article about a woman's gullibility and a man's deception. To a much greater extent than the men, women found their freedom of action restricted and an identity thrust on them during this dramatic period of change. Early industrialism made men mobile while women were still bound by the rules and rituals of agrarian society, still believing in promises and oral agreements. This became heart-rendingly evident when, as here, they were victims of deceivers and confidence tricksters.

Hanna Snellman approaches the same topic from a different direction. She describes the conditions for some of the women who followed lumberjacks into the forest regions. A temporary women's culture flourished here, a culture of prostitution and drunkenness that has scarcely been written into the cultural heritage. For the loggers, "snuff and muff and booze" gave a natural breather on a journey that would include many more stops. For the women, it became an identity that may have been voluntarily chosen, but they could not escape it and could hardly retire on it.

This year's issue concludes with a description of how play has become an all-embracing ritual for today's snowboarders. The powdery landscape in which they move is named according to how suitable it is for riding in, their movements on the board are given technical terms, their clothes are selected to suit the play, and even their bodies are shaped by the constant riding. It is difficult to imagine a more explicit example of how the unbridled quest for freedom and individuality always proceeds via rituals and stereotyped cultural identities.

With this year's issue of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*, Professor Asbjørn Klepp leaves the editorial board. He is the grand old man of the group and has been a highly active member. Our thanks for his many years of service are now combined with a warm welcome to Professor Liv-Emma Thorsen, who now takes over as Norwegian member.

Crossing Borders
The Nationalization of Anxiety
By Orvar Löfgren

Points of Entry

In my dreams I roll
like the holy man
who rolls two thousand miles
down the middle of the highway
who rolls for eight months
to a Himalayan Shrine.
In my dreams I roll –
A battered van follows me
girls dance beside me
trucks overturn.
I roll like a map
like a bale of cloth.
No one will turn their head
no one will say
You can't roll here.
I'll spin through India's
hundred millions
pass through my father's house
before he fled to Pakistan
roll through my family name.
I'll roll right into the girl
I might have been
growing up here...

(From "Rolling" by Moniza Alvi, 1996:22.)

Moniza Alvi was born in Pakistan in 1954 but moved to England as a small child. She did not return to visit her old country until the 1990s, and one of the first sights she encountered in India was a holy man rolling down the road. Her poem is about crossing borders and moving through unknown homelands through a different kind of motion. This paper also looks at the connections between motion and emotion in the staging of national exits and entries. I am interested in both the microphysics and the metaphysics of such experiences, the ways in which we actually move across borders and on the other hand, the grand ideas, metaphors and moralities, which turn such border movements into rites-de-passage with strong symbolic and existential meanings.

The paper is part of an ongoing study of the social and cultural organization of life in transit in a historical perspective (see Löfgren 1995, 1999a and b). What is specific about the ways in which peoples, ideas and commodities move in different settings? (For a more general discussion see Bartkowski 1995; Clifford 1997; Urbain 1998; Van Den Abbeele 1992).[1]

Boundaries

The question of boundaries is the first to be encountered; from it all others flow. To draw a boundary around anything is to define, analyse and reconstruct it, in this case select, indeed adapt, a philosophy of history (Braudel 1949/1975:18).

In his work on the Mediterranean in the age of Philip II, Fernand Braudel analyses the power of boundaries. Every social setting or epoch produces its own world of borders, based upon the need to signal differences or changes, but it is interesting to note that not all differences are circumscribed by boundaries. Which borders take up place, come into focus, stand out as very noticeable at different periods and in different settings? Borders are made to draw attention, they constitute a cultural signal system. The line drawn in the sand, the pause in the conversation, the door that must be opened, the ritual which has to be carried out, they all signal "Look out, something is happening here!", something starts, ends, or is radically transformed (see Fink 1993). Some cultural boundaries are so thoroughly internalized from early on that they need no warning signs, border stones or alarm clocks.

Among the different ways of organizing experiences, identities and communities, the pedagogy of space is very striking:

borders as markers of territories, transitions, and passages. In pre-industrial Europe one of the most developed border systems kept town and countryside apart. Here the system of walls and gates not only controlled the material flow of people or goods; it also marked the differences in privileges and status and the differences in the symbolic worlds of the two territories. It was – for a long time – a very successful way of territorializing cultural difference.

In the industrial state, national borders came to play a similar, central role and the immense success of the national project during the last two centuries owes much to the skilful deployment of the pedagogy of space and the ritualization of borders. Technologies of transport and communication have often been seen as a part of a history making the world of the nineteenth and twentieth century more global. Goods, people and ideas moved more freely across borders, but in the same period we can also observe a closing or sharpening of national borders: the nation starts or ends here! In many ways national borders became the archetypal border of the twentieth century, the model for materializing boundaries with props like red striped bars, an abundance of warning signs, officials in uniforms. This pedagogy of space has also been very seductive in the ways in which we envisage cultural differentiation in terms of bounded space, physically or metaphorically. In cultural terms spatial boundaries are "good to think with".

Some borderlands, however, have become better to think with than others. The image of the Rio Grande has come to symbolize the clash between North and South, the First and Third World, just as Checkpoint Charlie became the icon of the confrontation between East and West. Scholars have tended to flock to such "hot borders". The Mexican border town of Tijuana was once named "one of the major laboratories of the postmodern", using a somewhat dangerous metaphor (Saldívar 1997:34). It was analysed in terms of hybridity, fluidity and ambiguity, sometimes romanticized. But borderlands are also territories of sharp divisions and distinctions where the nation state is made visible in changing ways and for different reasons (see the discussion in Wilson & Donnan 1998).

Early states focused on the importance of strong centres and rather porous borders, but modern (and centralizing) nation-making shifted the energy to the periphery where the state, its power, its cultural capital, its routines, rules and ideas were materialized and challenged. (For two case studies of such changes see Sahlins 1989 and Linde-Laursen 1995.)

Borderlands are often described as no man's land, as *terrain vague*, unchartered margins "in the middle of nowhere", but at the same time they are black holes, attracting a lot of energy and anxiety. Travelling through them, crossing national boundaries represents a multifaceted pedagogy, which changes from setting to setting and from time to time. In this experience a number of polarities and tensions emerge or are challenged. People not only experience a transgression of "the national", but also of intensely personal boundaries, as their bodies are searched, their personal belongings rifled through and intimate questions are asked by irritated officials. In this compressed spatial and temporal event basic issues of identity, of belonging and non-belonging are raised in the construction of a universe of "homeyness" and "abroadness".

In exploring such experiences I will take most of my examples from a less dramatic borderland – the straits of Öresund, where Southern Sweden faces Denmark. In a carefully staged millennium event the gigantic bridge connecting the two countries will be opened in the summer of 2000, carrying a heavy rhetoric of dismantling old national borders and barriers, creating a twenty-first-century model for a truly transnational region – as an economic and cultural laboratory of the future. The bridge has a long prehistory (see Idwall 1999; Linde-Laursen 1995; Nilsson 1999), but here I will use this borderscape as a starting point for a historical anthropology of the rituals and practices of border crossings, discussing how the dramaturgy, scenography and choreography of such movements work.

Anything to Declare?

In 1658 the province of Scania was conquered from Denmark by the Swedes and the Öresund straits changed from a waterway uniting the centre of the Danish kingdom to a border zone. The transit ports of Malmö and Helsingborg now became national outposts on the margins of Sweden.

Today the traditional borderscape of Malmö still reads like a powerful statement of terminus: Sweden ends here! By the waterfront there is a cluster of buildings, communicating state power. The mighty railway station, with a tower from which the Swedish flag used to fly, is flanked by towers of the Royal Post Office Terminal and the Customs House. Further down along the quay are the old buildings of the steam ship terminal and the train ferry, where people changed from train to boat, when embarking for Copenhagen, the Continent and the World. Together these structures made up a "Fortress Sweden", guarding the exits and entries of people, goods and mail. Remnants of a similar border landscape exist in Helsingborg.

During all the years I have kept crossing this border, in all kinds of transport, in buses or cars on ferries, on board railway cars shipped across the waters, or seated in hydrofoils, hovercrafts or catamarans, this borderscape has lost much of its drama. There is, however, still one diffuse feeling which always surfaces. Maybe it is based upon a sedimentation of decades of border-control incidents: trained dogs sniffing their way inside the bus, the drug squad methodologically taking a train toilet apart (acting on a tip-off), a family of immigrants having 12 litres of home-made plum brandy confiscated, teenagers trying to hide packets of cigarettes or a bag full of export beer, custom officials reaching for their rubber gloves, passport police scanning the crowd for aliens. As the border approaches and I watch the guards make their way along the train corridors or line up at the customs counter I feel a vague sensation of guilt and find myself trying to act normal. It is years since I tried to smuggle a bottle of duty-free alcohol across the border, I have nothing whatsoever to declare, I am an extremely legal transient, but still the choice of red and green passages gives me a jolt. How come border crossings instil these feelings of guilt?

In the travel journal *A Summer Holiday in Scandinavia* from 1877 the reader is taken across a number of borders as the author travels through Scandinavia. He enters Sweden by train from Norway, arriving at the imposing but deserted border station:

> Our two portmanteaus were seized upon and carried into the custom-house, where the station master, in a very magnificent dress of light blue, with silver facings, a three-cornered hat on his head, and a sword by his side, was walking about with a piece of official chalk in his hand. We feared all our well-packed effects were to be tumbled about by the rude hands of the custom-house people; but we were spared that trial. Either the station-master was in an amiable mood, or (very probable) our train was behind time, for after gazing benignly upon us, he asked P. if we were tourists, and being told that we bore that character, he mildly begged to know if we had anything contraband. On being informed that we possessed nothing illicit, he smiled a gracious smile, affixed a mark upon our things, and motioned to a porter to take them back to the luggage-van (Arnold 1877:246).

Arriving later at Helsingborg, the luggage of these British tourists was enthusiastically carried aboard the small steam ferry by a host "of industrious Swedelings" or "little Scandinavians". The ferry bound for Denmark had to be shared with peasants, cattle and pigs, but on the other side of the Sound the Danish custom official waved them through as "friends of the ground and liegemen of the Danes". The only real trouble occurred with the German customs officials south of the Danish border, where the travellers were "insultingly inspected by an arrogant gentleman in blue and silver uniform and spectacles". After a thorough search for contraband he found their sporting guns and triumphantly "proceeded to fine us two dollars to the vigilant majesty of the German Zollverein".

Mr Arnold was searched for contraband but not for his identity. In 1877 passports were still a scarce phenomena. During most of the nineteenth century, British passports were so difficult to obtain, and so expensive that many British travellers acquired French or Italian ones when doing the Grand Tour of Southern Europe, if needed (Pemble 1987:33ff.). There were no general rules about passports or visas in nineteenth-century Europe.

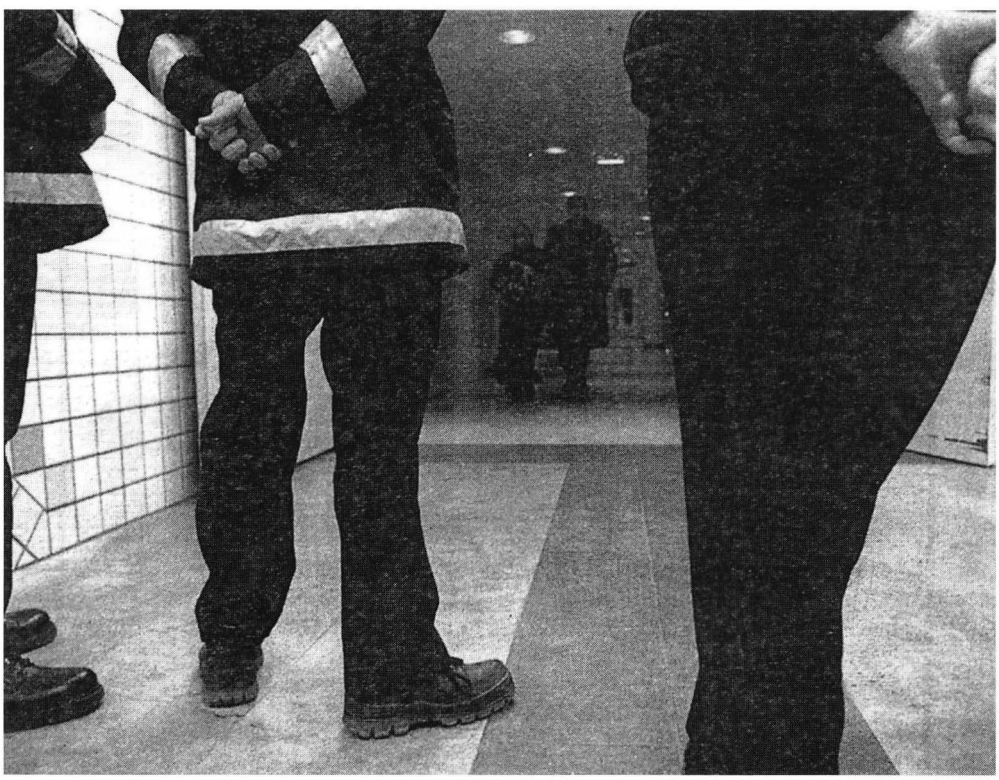
Certain states could – at times – enforce such rules for political reasons. It was often absolutist states not only with a nervous attitude to the influx of certain goods, but also with fears of spies, trouble-makers and subversive ideas and literature. Over-controlled borders were seen as a sign of underdevelopment.

The latter part of the nineteenth century brought a general easing of paperwork at border crossings. This was a period when you could travel very freely from nation to nation. In Sweden the absolutist state had previously tried to control population movements by demanding that all Swedes should carry special travel permits for both internal and international travel, but such regulations were taken away in 1860, as a part of a general liberalization. The old passport system was mainly directed towards interior movements, keeping the king's subjects localized to make sure they had work and did not roam the country as vagrants, thus making demands on the poor relief system outside their own community.

But the new freedoms of movement did not apply to all travellers. Mr Arnold was a tourist – a travelling gentleman, but for those crossing the border from Sweden to Denmark in search of work the situation was different. The nineteenth century saw a growing migration of labourers from Southern Sweden to Denmark, where job opportunities were better. Poverty-stricken Swedes gathered both in Copenhagen and in the agricultural districts, but at first their national status was not a great concern of

local authorities. In 1875, however, the Danish government introduced new laws which made it possible to expel aliens who had not secured work. The police had the right to march them directly to the boat, but soon it became evident that these laws worked very differently for different nationalities. A special rule was made, for example, for British subjects, who were not to be exposed to harsh measures like these. Henrik Zip Sane (1998a and b) has analysed this period of labour migration and points out that the tightening of the laws towards the end of the nineteenth century can be seen as part of a process turning Swedish workers into *aliens*, a separate entity, which during this period also came under increasing stereotyping, with a reputation for uncivilized and criminal behaviour. Swedes were trouble-makers and had to be kept under extra close scrutiny by the authorities. This was a period in which the Danes in some senses focused inwards and built a new, domestic identity, after the traumatic loss of Jutland territories in the German war of 1864.

For the Swedish authorities the main problem with Swedish–Danish border movements was not immigration but illegal *emigration*. The last decades of the nineteenth century saw a sharp increase in emigration, mainly to the USA, and the



The border control lining up to receive a new batch of ferry passengers at Helsingborg. (Photo by Pontus Tideman, Scandia Photopress.)

authorities wanted to make sure this option was not used to escape duties such as military service, unpaid taxes or family support. A screening of ports of embarkation was planned and there was a critique of the ways many emigrants escaped such controls by finding transatlantic passages via Denmark instead of Sweden.

In 1907 new discussions of the need for monitoring transnational movements started, but the authorities were not enthusiastic. Such a system would create an enormous administrative burden, and after all, wasn't the passport system something of the past, abolished half a century ago, the argument ran (Samuelsson 1993:67ff.).

Even travelling gentlemen would, however, see their freedom of movement change, as the First World War put an end to a life without passports. In Britain they were introduced in 1915, in Sweden in 1917. The new rules were a wartime emergency, which became institutionalized into a permanent system for monitoring not only transnational movements but also personal identity. For cosmopolitan élites and intellectuals this was seen as new nuisance, state intervention in private life. As Paul Fussell (1980:24ff.) has discussed, the new passport routines called for standardized ways of defining identity and personal characteristics. The irritation among the travelling élites had to with their exposure to procedures which hitherto had been used for the down-and-out. The techniques of "describable individuality" (Tagg 1988:90) had been developed for the criminals, the insane, the outcasts of late nineteenth-century society (see the discussion in Svensson 1999). Now you were ordered to produce what looked close enough to a mugshot and have yourself categorized in passport terms in order to travel abroad!

The passport produced new forms of modern self-reflection and identity construction. How does one describe oneself, how do the authorities squeeze a unique personality into their pre-prepared boxes? Does that passport photo really show a likeness of oneself, or the more basic question: what is a likeness? (The genre of passport photos rapidly became examples of terrible un-likeness, "this awful photo is certainly not me!") The trendsetting British passport did not only demand a photo, but a list of characteristics, in terms of small, medium and large. People now became blue-eyed or brown-eyed, blond or black-haired, of normal build, with straight or crooked noses, and fresh or ruddy complexions. A letter to *The Times* in 1915 voiced the resentment:

> Sir,
> A little light might be shed, with advantage, upon the highhanded methods of the Passport Department at the Foreign Office. On the form provided for the purpose I described my face as "intelligent". Instead of finding this characterization entered, I have received a passport on which some official utterly unknown to me has taken upon himself to call my face "oval".
> Yours very truly,
> Bassett Digby (quoted in Fussell 1980:29)

People now acquired a passport identity, which later was to be reproduced in other forms, *cartes d'identité*, driving licences etc. Not only could you be troubled by discrepancies of self-definition and passport images, as a traveller you now had to live up to your passport identity, to be able to *prove* your identity.

This was the period when crossings became linked to new forms of anxiety: the suspicious scrutiny of passports and visas.

People cross the border like a criminal under surveillance. Who are you, is this passport photo really you? Are you quite sure you have nothing to declare?

Once people had left the security of their home territory, they became *aliens* at the mercy of others. In travel narratives a rather stable genre of border crossing stories developed. Even as a citizen of a major power one was now subjected to the scrutiny and humiliating treatment by ridiculous officials of very minor powers, representing operetta states and banana republics!

The passport regime was part of a strong nationalization of borders. In Europe it was heightened by the redrawing of frontiers in the Versailles treaty and the discussions about "natural" borders. National exits and entries became more elaborated, borders were supposed to be very visible, their passages monumental.

This production of anxiety also became a machine for focusing on national differences, which is still with us. Looking into the eyes of the customs official, we may start searching for traits of national character: "You know those rigid French officials hardly looked at our kids, but on the Italian side the customs man immediately tickled them under the chin and started joking!"

The history of border crossings illustrates the making of the nationalizing gaze, which increases with the growing emphasis on nations representing not only territories but also national cultures and mentalities (see Löfgren 1993). People start to interpret cultural differences on both sides of the border as national, not local, regional or class differences.

There is of course no unilinear development in the crafting and staging of border crossings during the twentieth century. Their forms of course depend on what different nations are trying to protect their borders from. What alien elements have to be kept out or what (or who) has to be kept in? In the new totalitarian regimes borders were militarized and novel technologies of surveillance and monitoring produced. On the other side of the border narratives of freedom often took the shape of heroic tales of escapes across the border – the genre of the Scarlet Pimpernel, people *breaking out* of their national prisons. Totally different narratives concerned those who tried to *get in*. The first half of the twentieth century saw a general sharpening of immigration laws and an increased sorting out of desirable and undesirable immigrants.

After the Second World War border controls had to adjust to new conditions. The emergence of international mass tourism from the 1950s onwards created new categories of travel and also "the problem of the duty-free". Great energy had to be devoted to the control of petty smuggling, the search for that extra bottle of Scotch or carton of cigarettes. Smuggling duty-free became a popular game of "beating the state and its tax system", and much more energy and anxiety was channelled into this project than the actual economic gains could justify. Earning a couple of dollars could be seen as a major moral victory, but at the same time also strengthened the ties between state and citizen.

During the 1970s, increased drug traffic emerged as a more serious problem, which again resulted in new forms of policing borders and monitoring movements. Any traveller walking through the "nothing to declare" passage was a potential suspect, but some were more suspect than others. (As a student I was often searched when

commuting weekly to Copenhagen during the 1970s, until the day I decided to cut my hair and stop wearing a backpack.)

At the same time population migrations rearranged the European social landscape. Growing numbers of migrants in search of a better life or refugees in search of security crossed or attempted to cross borders. New international divisions of countries with or without visa demands complicated exits and entries in the 1980s and 1990s. Drugs and what was now called "illegal immigrants" became the two main elements in the policing of borders, together with fears of international terrorism. There was often a conflation of these fears in the criminalization of border crossings. Alien substances and alien subjects became intertwined, and new control techniques from drug-sniffing dogs to very thorough body searches changed the routines of passage.

Homecomings

"Welcome home again" was the first message that I used to meet in the arrival hall when returning by hydrofoil to Malmö and Sweden in the early 1990s. To make sure the message got across it was stated in both Swedish and English. Some of the people lining up for the passport control, however, soon realized that this message was not to be taken literally. During these years the policing of borders was heavily increased in Sweden, as immigration laws were tightened here as well as in other European countries. A new alternative of choice (beside the red and green corridor) stated Scandinavians and Non-Scandinavians. (Since 1954 there has been passport-free movement for Scandinavians inside Scandinavia.) The gaze of the passport police scanned travellers for "non-Scandinavian traits". One had better to attempt to look blue-eyed and white, or one was asked to step aside. Many of those Scandinavians who did not conform to such a "Scandinavian habitus" felt themselves harassed and had to carry their Scandinavian passports even for a shopping trip across the border. A black Swede realized he or she wasn't Swedish enough. During the 1990s this selective treatment of travellers has increased, visitors from "less desired countries" may find themselves interrogated in very personal ways: What is the purpose of your visit, how long are you staying, can you show me a return ticket, how much money are you carrying with you, who are you going to stay with, can you prove you have relatives here?

When illegal immigration was defined as a major problem in many Western nations, new sets of metaphors were developed to describe this development:

> ...a flow, a tide, a wave, an influx, a stream, a tsunami, or, after restrictions, a trickle. Immigrants are drained from their homelands. They wash up like "wretched refuse" on the shores. The country is inundated, swamped, submerged, engulfed, awash (Christenfeld 1995:4).

Another common metaphor is the nation as a house and the immigrant as a visitor knocking at the door or the window, standing at the threshold or in the back yard.

Welcome home again! This greeting tells us about changing conceptions of belonging and not-belonging to the nation. During the twentieth century the concepts of home and homelessness have become very powerful metaphors (see the discussion in Löfgren 1995; Malkki 1992; Smith 1993). As the metaphor of home is transferred to the nation, we need to ask how nations are

made to look or experienced as more homelike in the twentieth century. How have people learned to feel at home in the nation and how has this process made others homeless? This is not only a question of a change in identity politics but also of a slow homogenization of shared routines, habits and frames of reference. We still lack ethnographies of this thickening of the nation into a lived everyday experience, a nationalization of trivialities (see Linde-Laursen 1993) which sometimes produce a feeling of homeyness, or as a middle-aged Swedish woman put it:

> My husband and I love to go to Norway on vacation, but all the same, there is a special feeling coming back. Every time we cross the border we look at each other and sigh: Great to be back home again! We long even for the prohibitory signs.

To a non-Scandinavian, life on the Swedish or Norwegian side may look pretty much the same, but the nationalizing eye is scanning the terrain for the small differences.

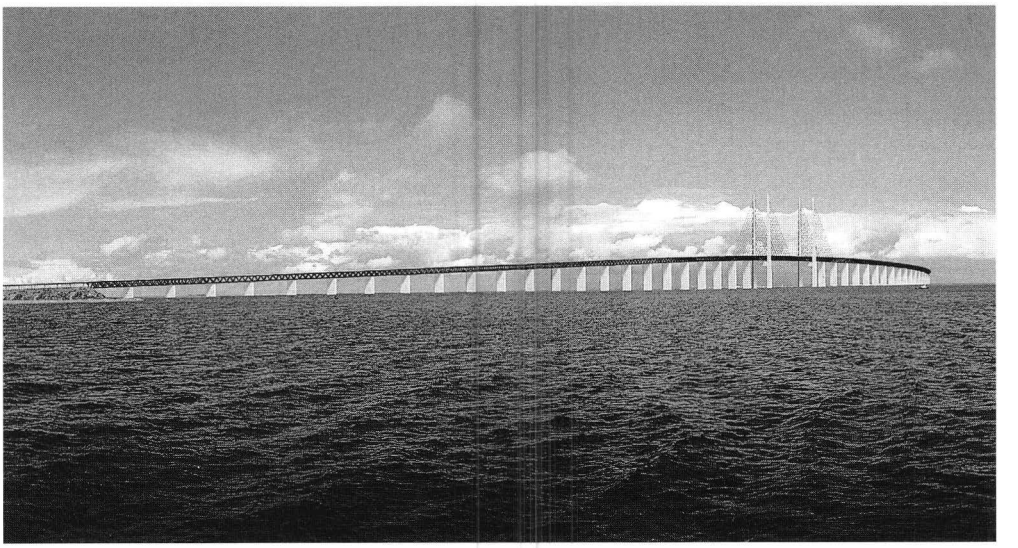
Crossing the border between two very similar countries, like Sweden and Norway, or Canada and the USA, you can still observe how different the national (and the international) is framed on both sides of the border, although often in rather muted and unobtrusive forms. There are many tiny details which makes a Swedish supermarket or post office different from a Norwegian one. Some nations have carried this homogenization of the everyday further than others, but my point is that it is not mainly of question of what and how much is shared on a national level, but that the idea of the nation as homelike places it in a specific semantic universe. A home is characterized by fitting in, knowing the unwritten rules, of belonging and not belonging. Who is part of the family? There are guests and hosts, and guests should learn not to outstay their welcome. Those immigrants don't really belong here, they should go home!

The crossing of borders in terms of homecomings also signals important changes in the perception of citizenship: there is an ethnification of national identity involved (see Frykman 1997 & Löfgren 1999c). It is as a true Swede you are welcomed home. At the same time, the construction of a national home also creates a more distinct abroad.

South of the Border

"Asia begins in Malmö!" "Keep Copenhagen clean, escort a Swede to the ferry!" These two rather popular pieces of Danish graffiti remind us that borderlands often are part of a national moral geography. There is a striking metaphor of North and South in many national self-representations. One's own identity is contrasted with that of others who are more Southern, flamboyant and easy-going (but less dependable) and those who are Northerners, both greyer and less easy-going than one's fellow countrymen. Ideas about emotional control or lack of it seem very central in these kinds of stereotypes, where North and South often stand for the cultural opposition of cold and warm (see Löfgren 1989).

During the twentieth century Denmark has taken on the stereotype of the warm and bohemian South in Swedish self-representations (see Linde-Laursen 1995), whereas Danish self-representation is based upon the lucky fact that the country is totally surrounded by "Cultural Norths", with Swedes as the Prussians of the North and



Long before the bridge was finished it existed as a virtual reality in computer-programmed images like this one. The dramatic and ritual qualities of the actual construction project have been developed very skillfully with massmedia reports on how many meters the span advanced every day – a constant movement reaching out to bridge the Sound. (Photo: Öresundskonsortiet.)

the real Prussians down south. This joking relationship has also been developed by the Danish tourist industry, which ran a campaign some years ago on the theme: "It's more fun to be a Swede in Denmark."

Seen from Malmö, Copenhagen and Denmark is "South of the Border" in many respects. This cultural construction of Southernness feeds on a specific characteristic of borderlands. They are often extremely productive of desire, as John Borneman has pointed out in his studies of East and West Berlin (1998:179ff.).

Over there, across Öresund, waits a land of tempting Otherness, easy-going and fun-loving. Such fantasies are furthered by Copenhagen's position just beyond the horizon, to be reached only by boat. The horizon is a great space for daydreams and desires, as Gaston Bachelard (1994:203ff.) has stressed.

Europe has relatively few marine borderlands like Öresund. The closest parallel is the English Channel, which has produced similar dream-spaces of going South. At the grey and drab Victoria Station, the boat train for the Continent already held a promise of romance and adventure (see Fussell 1980:15ff.). As in the Channel crossing, the short ferry trips across Öresund quite early acquired a hedonist aura. Some of the romance and rituals of the grand ocean liners (see Levenstein 1998:125ff.) rubbed off on to these more modest kinds of sea passages. The actual mode of transportation, casting away from land, sailing out into the blue has helped to produce a feeling of excitement and liberation. Even if the crossing only took one and a half hours by steamer (or 45 minutes today), a space and time of liminality was created. From early on this liminality was strengthened by the

fact that on board you could actually *taste* the freedom. Swedes bound for Copenhagen still treat themselves to the classic ritual intake of a luxurious Danish open sandwich with shrimps and at least one bottle of Carlsberg duty-free export beer. "Go on, spoil yourself, getting there is half the fun!"

For many decades the Öresund ferries have provided a strange mix of fellow passengers. Here very different rhythms and needs are confronted. Commuters on their way back from a hard day's work sit next to partying day-trippers. Stressed executives worry about making their Copenhagen flight connections to New York and Tokyo, their ears glued to their cellular phones. Next to them are passengers who have refined the art of what in the local dialect is called *tura* (touring). Most of them are senior citizens or unemployed people who go back and forth on the ferries, using them as a living room with inexpensive bar facilities. They have all the time in the world, they are not going anywhere, except back on the next returning ferry. With increased duty-free allowances between EU countries, some of them have developed a profitable side-line. They buy low-priced beer and spirits in Denmark and return with several loads every day to be sold at a profit back home.

Alcohol has long been part of the Swedish perception of the Southernness of Denmark. Since the development of cheap steam connections in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Copenhagen has been a pleasure destination. This is where the Continent begins and the bright city lights are and here licensing laws are more relaxed. For thirsty or fun-loving Swedes Copenhagen has represented a wealth of bars, entertainment and shopping. The ferries still land in the old harbour district, which used to carry an aura of sin and sailor's fun, with bars open all night and a neighbourhood which coined the phrase "roll a Swede", which meant relieving a drunk visitor of his wallet.

The experience of going "South of the Border" contains other elements too. Any border crossing may provide what Jean-Didier Urbain (1998) has called "the secrets of travel", the opportunity to hide yourself or parts of your behaviour from those at home or those you encounter abroad. This "partial invisibility" and the game of make-believe is an important part of the desire for abroad. Yes, Swedes may have more fun in Denmark, trying out different behaviours – being more Swedish or less Swedish. They can disappear into the anonymity of mass travel and roam the streets of Copenhagen, sheltered by their identity as foreigners.

From a Danish point of view Swedes far too often live up to the traditional stereotypes. They drink too much and are too visible in the urban landscape. That border towns like Copenhagen and Helsingør have been a haven for Swedish day-trippers has not really improved relations between the two nations. Part of the tensions about "South of the Border" discourse, is of course, that my point of departure becomes someone else's North.[2]

Even if life (or licensing laws) in Copenhagen and Malmö were (at some level) identical, the border crossing by boat would still work as a ritual of transformation, producing a readiness for Otherness, a journey into Elsewhereland. There have been laments about the bridge doing away with this romance of the sea, but there are other transit spaces and experiences available.

As car ferries have tried to redefine themselves as mini-cruises instead of simple tools of transit there has been a market tendency to evoke the nostalgic and romantic images of life on board the ocean liners in the 1920s and 1930s – the liminality of sea crossing as time travel.
(Advertisement for the DFDS Seaways Copenhagen-Oslo ferry 1999.)

Even long before the bridge, Kastrup International Airport in Copenhagen has been the hub of Southern Scandinavia, where Swedes go to fly abroad.

Gateway to the World

"Someone you love will love lobster tonight." The tank with live but tired lobsters is next to the perfume area at Kastrup airport, where a young blond woman is playing the harp, her music interrupted by loudspeaker messages: "This is a security announcement, all unattended luggage will be removed by the authorities." A flood of travellers pass between the lobsters and the harp, some of them stop up for a moment, caught by the music, touched enough to get out of step. Moments before they have been touched in a more robust manner, as uniformed guards have let their metal detectors glide across their bodies, after they have X-rayed their hand baggage. People step out through the passport and luggage control with a sigh of relief and feel they have been let free on international water. Many celebrate the vacation mood by a tax-free drink and then off for some shopping. The world of duty-free paints a paradise outside the nation state and the tax inspectors, but this is a very heavily policed paradise – there are more state officials and uniforms here than in any other public spaces.

People are in Kastrup for the same purpose, they are on their way to catch a flight but their body movements show many variations. There are those who stroll leisurely along the shops, or have a drink or two in the business class lounge, then there are those who are running for their life, desperately trying to locate the departure gate. Others are constantly checking if their tickets and passport are still there, nervously manoeuvring in the sea of people surround-

ing them. The smell of perfume is mixed with that of anxiety, there is a lot of hectic travel fever in the air – an intensity which some find exhilarating and others very stressful.

What kind of place is this, a paradise of hedonist shopping, reeking of perfume, malt whiskies, rich chocolate and pure silk? A stress laboratory, a no man's land between the nation state and the world, a surveillance machine for automated bodies, shepherded from control station to control station? As a point of entry and exit to the nation, an airport like Kastrup has been shaped by contradictory forces during almost a century of flying history.

> Blériot has crossed the Channel! Wars are finished: no more wars are possible! There are no longer any frontiers!

This was the message Le Corbusier heard from a colleague who stormed into his studio on 25 July 1909. The flying pioneers started crossing borders, bridging waters. A year later a Danish flyer was the first to cross Öresund – it took him 31 minutes.

Then came the Great War which laid the foundation for the rapid development of civilian air traffic after 1918: abandoned military airfields, a surplus of planes and out-of-work pilots. This new traffic first of all turned out to be transnational. On both sides of Öresund, *international* airports were built outside Copenhagen and Malmö.

Air traffic reorganized transnational travel and the rituals and practices of border crossings. A new dramaturgy, scenography and choreography of exits and entries had to be developed, and the question was from which earlier systems of transportation one should get inspiration: transnational railways or ocean liners. The newfangled word *airport* tells us that it was the iconography of sailing that flights were modelled on. You *boarded* rather in the mode of the ocean liners, which in the 1920s and 1930s represented both luxury and high modernity. The flight crew took its titles and uniforms from the shipping world, and the actual rituals and aesthetics of the journey were a scaled-down emulation of the ocean crossing, with champagne and pampering by stewards (and from 1930 also stewardesses – the first ones trained as nurses).

Just like many passenger docks and railway stations, the new airports became national monuments. The first modern one was built 1922 in the East Prussian city of Königsberg, not in Berlin. Königsberg was the German outpost on the other side of the so-called Polish corridor from the Versailles treaty, and for Germany this monumental airport had a logical position as a marker of national presence. From the 1930s onward airports became the focus of avant-garde architecture, ways in which nations advertised their modernity to the world. This was very striking in the building of the next Swedish international airport, outside Stockholm, in 1936. It was a functionalist wonder and an exciting link with the international world. In the 1950s my father often took the family for Sunday dinner at the airport restaurant. Eating the new cosmopolitan fare of French fries and steak while watching the planes land and depart through the panorama windows, we felt extremely modern. In the restaurant the Stockholm newspapers had a standing restaurant table reservation for five o'clock, just in time to cover the incoming flight from New York, which more often than not carried newsworthy passengers. Copying the glamour of the disembarkation rituals

of the great ocean liners, celebrities and politicians climbed down the stairway, stopping to wave to the waiting crowd of reporters and cameramen.

Back in the 1950s airports were still sheltered gathering places for a cosmopolitan elite, but the advent of mass travel, above all through the establishment of charter flights in the late 1960s and 1970s, changed the social landscape. Airports became large-scale machines for handling great numbers of bodies. "The passenger, a mobile unit, must be controlled and guided for safety and operating efficiency, in his own interest", as the official language put it (Zukowsky 1996:51). Now the airport experience started to become very different from other borderscapes and transit spaces. In the 1970s the new fears of hijacking and international terrorism led to an even more radical restructuring of the airport into a defence system. Airports became "the perfect field for intense control and high surveillance experimentation" (Virilio 1986:16).

The marriage of modernist functionalism, large-scale traffic and drastically changed security conditions created a new kind of space. For some these new machine-like qualities and nondescript atmosphere were a blessing. In his praise of Heathrow, J. G. Ballard writes:

> Airports, thankfully, are designed around the needs of their collaborating technologies, and seem to be almost the only form of public architecture free from the pressures of kitsch and nostalgia... I welcome its transience, alienation and discontinuities, and unashamed response to the pressures of speed, disposability and the instant impulse. Here, under the flight paths of Heathrow, everything is designed for the next five minutes (Ballard 1997:11).

As Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1993) has pointed out, this emphasis on standardization and efficiency has turned airports into training grounds for transnational mobility. There is a lingua franca not only in signs and directions but also in the orchestrating of movements which makes them easy to use even for a very miscellaneous crowd – a temporary democracy of the transit hall.

In the social sciences of the 1980s these "anyports" often became the archetypal example of a new phenomena called "placelessness" – creating a new and often one-dimensional discourse of "pseudo-places" or "non-places", nondescript, anonymous, barren territories.[3] Paul Fussell's complaint is rather typical:

> Today the tourist is readied for his ultimate encounter with placelessness by passing first through the uniform airport. Only forty years ago the world's airports exhibited distinctive characteristics betokening differences in national character and style. Being in one was not precisely like being in another. In Graham Greene's novel of 1935, *England Made Me*, the character Fred Hall, we are told, "knew airports of Europe as well as he had once known the stations on the Brighton line – shabby Le Bourget, the great scarlet rectangle of the Tempelhof as one came in from London in the dark...; the white sand blowing up round the shed at Tallinn, Riga, where the Berlin to Leningrad plane came down and bright pink mineral waters were sold in a tin-roofed shed." That sort of variety would be unthinkable now, when, as Bernard Bergonzi says, airport design has a become "ubiquitous, international idiom" (Fussell 1980:44).

But this was yesterday. In the 1990s airports started to compete as pleasure zones and sites of national welcoming. For an avant-garde architect like Rem Koolhas the airport should spear-head a new urbanism, the ge-

neric city, which has replaced the old neutrality and nondescriptness with differentiation: "like a drastic perfume demonstration, photomurals, vegetation, local costumes give a first concentrated blast of the local identity." For him the new airports were a concentrate of both the hyper-local and the hyper-global (Koolhaas & Mau 1995:1251).

Airports were now being planned in the 1990s tradition of "event-cities", copying the mall and even the theme park – high-tech now had to be combined with high-touch. The shopping galleries became longer and longer, with local attractions added, a casino in Amsterdam, Doktor Millers World of Erotic Fantasy in Frankfurt, the Karen Blixen café in Kastrup. In these new settings it is almost as if travelling disappears, the rush for closing gates exchanged for idling flaneurs moving through a Sensorama. The trendsetter for this development is Bernard Tschumi's plans for Kansai Airport outside Osaka. Here the idea was to turn the airport "into a new kind of metropolis, to enlarge the airport into an event, a spectacle, a new city of interchange and exchange, of business, commerce and culture – a twenty-four-hour-a-day continuous invention" (Tschumi 1994:105). People should go to Kansai not for the flight connection but "because it is the place to be". Not all the grand plans of this event-city were carried out, and a prolonged stay at Kansai is still just a dreary wait in an airport.

Kastrup mirrors the same historical transformations with upgraded shopping galleries, a Hans Christian Andersen theme, a wealth of local specialities and souvenirs, or as the slogan goes in the promotional leaflet: "Everyday is national day in Denmark – celebrate with a great gift."

But the question remains to be answered, what is an airport like Kastrup, Heathrow, Kansai? The answer still depends on what kind of traveller you are:

> I hate airports and their false cleanliness, their nostalgias, the misty eyed farewells... But more especially I detest the slumped shoulders, the frightened eyes and undisguiseable sadness of the masses who congregate in its waiting rooms, its long queues; the teeming numbers who walk the plank of the slow moving conveyor track ferrying them to god-knows-what humiliation. I hate being one of these people: the men and the women with their bundles, their world and dreams contained in bags and boxes long out of fashion. Even more, I loathe the pawing fingers of the coarse young French officer at Charles De Gaulle, his rudeness and sullen manner, his angry inferiority complex.

This is the Nigerian author Okwui Enwezor (1996:65ff.) describing Western airports, suggesting them as a suitable parallel to the Foucaultian analysis of the prison, with the minute control and disciplining of unwanted bodies. Here one may learn what it feels like to be classified as an unwanted person, under constant scrutiny, trying to pass through the gates of fortress Europe. For millions of non-Western travellers "the airport is a source of deep anxiety and trepidation", he concludes.

What is an airport? A very special kind of border crossing, combining the characteristics of the intimidating national fortress, a welcoming wagon, a duty-free spree with an eternal cocktail hour, a gauntlet, the non-place you never remember or the place you'll never forget. Just as on the ferries, there is a mix of rhythms, but a different mix. This fast lane of travel produces hectic running as well as endless waiting. People may feel caged in by the claustrophobia of

the waiting lounge, eyes tied to the screen messages of new delays or cancellations. There is a containment and control of movement in airports which would never be tolerated in other modes of transport. In the same way the rational and effective smoothness of mass transportation is constantly transformed into chaos and disorder, with eating, drinking, sleeping or waiting bodies everywhere. The transit machine may be turned into a temporary home, private life intrudes on this extremely public scene. As a passenger you pass a Muslim couple rolling out their prayer mat just next to a basketball arcade game in Heathrow, or a group of soundly sleeping backpackers, grouped around an alarm clock in Schiphol, or you may witness how the carpet traders in the transit hall of Karachi snuggle up inside their carpets as night approaches.

Millennium Mo(ve)ments: Bridging the Gap

Welcome to Denmark. Perhaps it does not say it outright on the sign when you land at Copenhagen Airport, but that's not necessary. The whole airport says it.

This is a Danish journalist at the inauguration of the new transit hall of Kastrup Airport in 1998. He points out that this new welcoming scene signals the ways "we Danes see ourselves", a light and friendly country with nice inhabitants, good taste, and functional architecture. "Old welfare Denmark – a good place to be." From the airport he can see the construction of the bridge in full swing: "Beautifully designed, it will give us a land link with Asia, and in purely psychological terms we are reconquering most of southern Sweden ... When will Skåne become Danish again? In 2000" (Hergel 1999:4).

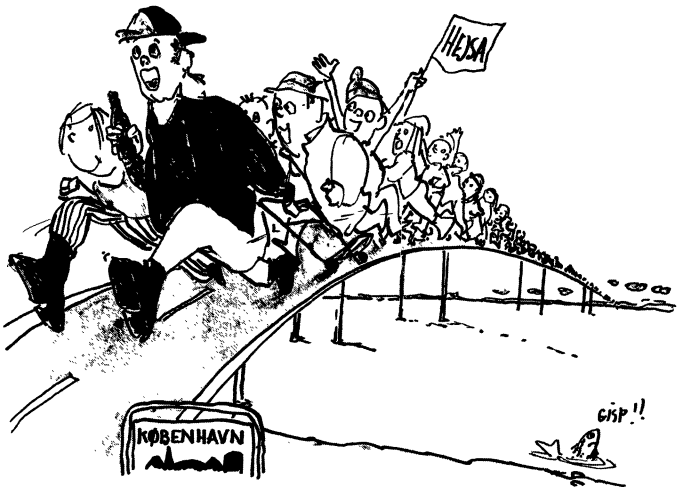
The recent rebuilding and expansion of Kastrup is part of the millennium plans for the Öresund region, to turn it into what is called "a Gateway experience". The bridge spanning the Sound lands right at the airport. No more ferries and reloadings, just a smooth transnational flow from coast to coast, served by a vast new system of motorways and railroads.

In his *Travels in Portugal* from 1981 José Saramago starts his journey by stopping the car right in the middle of the border bridge with the radiator in Portugal and the boot in Spain. He steps out of the car and calls to the fish swimming in the River Douro, asking them:

> what kind of language you speak down there as you swim through your watery custom stations, and if you have to show passports and visa stamps in order to get back and forth (Saramago 1981:1).

He wants the fish to remind him of the dangers of just looking for differences on both sides of the river. Just like the bridge spanning the Douro, the new Öresund link has had a tendency to underline the national differences rather than pointing to the similarities. Almost two centuries of the nationalizing gaze have provided a useful instrument for making proper distinctions: Danish plaice and Swedish herring swim the Sound, which is lined by typically Danish beech trees and very Swedish birches, the customs officials on both side carry distinct national mentalities under their uniforms. This kind of national optic has given flora, fauna, behaviours, people, ideas and things specific national qualities.

As the bridge is moving towards its grand millennium opening in the summer of 2000, the nationalizing discourse has increased in the media, and this in a project



"The Swedish invasion will start soon but who wants to get to know a Swede?" was a headline in the Copenhagen tabloid BT in April 1998. The text illustrated by this cartoon showing party-hungry Swedes crossing the bridge.

which really is about bridging differences and creating a transnational region. There is much talk about national mentalities and character traits, examples of genuine Swedishness or Danishness. The nationalizing gaze is both an economical and a persuasive model for explaining differences, which otherwise would stand out as more complex, diffuse or ambiguous.

The bridge, planned and discussed for more than a century, is finally there, and in the anticipation of the opening ceremony the future has been invested with utopian and dystopian visions. The building of this region has been characterized as a "social experiment in transnationalism", a test surface for EU integration, a cultural laboratory. In what was called a joint "declaration of allegiance" the Danish and Swedish ministers of transport declared in 1998:

> In two years it will stand there – the Öresund Bridge. Perhaps it will symbolize the dawn of a new century, when boundaries staked out by history lose part of their significance and are replaced by coexistence, cooperation, and consensus... A great deal can change when an hour on the water becomes ten minutes over the water... Looking for work in another country will not be exotic but perfectly normal when we are linked together by the bridge. When an hour becomes ten minutes... For us the new millennium is about building bridges and tearing down barriers. Let Öresund be an example (quoted after Nilsson 1999:18).

Fifty years earlier an American tourist exclaimed:

> We take a train from Stockholm to Malmo. From Malmo, an aeroplane. 10 minutes of flying over ORESUND and we are in Copenhagen. TEN MINUTES! (Reynolds 1928:268).

Some have argued that a bridge like this is an outdated project in the era of cyberspace. Why is it important to invest enormous sums in order to be able to cross in ten minutes rather than an hour, but still much slower than a phone call, an e-mail, a fax message? Is ground transport really important in a telematic society? The magic aura of ten minutes has to do with a long tradition of dreams about time/space compressions, but the minutes gained on the bridge

have quite another symbolic power than air travel.

While waiting for the actual bridge opening, there is a lot of cultural bridging going on: reaching out, connecting, spanning, uniting, joining. "Mental bridges" are being constructed in the semantics of the outreaching open hand of friendship and contact. In the business community the region is also marketed within the other more military semantic universe of bridges: constructing bridgeheads, establishing bases for conquering new markets on the other side of the water. A tunnel cannot do the same symbolic work, as the English Channel project has already shown.

The mental bridge-building is driven by a succession of events: proclamations, meetings, conferences, get-to-know gatherings, crash courses in intercultural understanding across the border, where local politicians, members of the business community, university people and administrators mingle. Like most recent attempts to construct new transnational regions, the interest of most of its potential inhabitants is still lukewarm. Here the asymmetry of the project is striking. It is the metropolitan centre of Denmark, the Copenhagen area, which is united with the more marginal and less economically powerful Southern Sweden. While many Swedes are enthusiastic about crossing the bridge in search of new jobs, great shopping, culture and the bright city lights of Copenhagen, many Danes are less sure if they want to take the trip across the Sound.

The bridge makes the nation states visible in different ways. Firstly, there is a lot of bewilderment, as a project like this cuts across two national systems of politics and administration, creating openings for new kinds of actors and combinations of interests. Secondly, the work to facilitate the movement of people, goods, services and capital across the Sound has resulted in a new awareness of the thousands of minor national differences, which are embedded in administrative routines and public life, state regulations and legislation. This thickening of the nation state in everyday practices has a long history, but above all it is a result of the strong homogenizing effects of the period of "welfare state nationalism" in Denmark and Sweden after the Second World War.

Paul Virilio (1986) has asked if the modern metropolis still has a façade, a centre, a boundary. Can we still pass into it, or are we in some sense always inside? His question could be rephrased: Does the nation still have a façade or are the old buildings at the Malmö harbour just relics, a set of backdrops giving a false idea of the controlled border?

New border controls are being built to guard exits and entries through the bridge, although it can be argued that the nation state faces a much more complex landscape of boundaries today. National borders have long been seen as threatened not so much by close neighbours as by distant global/transnational forces. During most of the twentieth century, American culture is what lurks across the Scandinavian borders, must be contained, controlled, checked (O'Dell 1997). As the nature of transnational flows changes, the border landscape changes. Borders have been transgressed in new ways, during the whole history of modern nationalism, from telegraph cables to communication satellites. At different stages new national defence technologies of policing or screening out of transnational in-

fluences have been tried, as for example in the media field.

Today immigration police and custom officials on both sides of Öresund increasingly operate inside (and outside) the nation, rather than just waiting at the borders. The frontiers are mobile.

The Pedagogics of Movement

In 1923 Olga from Gammelnäs went to America and worked as a maid in a wealthy Boston family, while her fiancé Erik stayed home, fishing and farming. After two brief visits to Sweden she finally came back 16 years later, married him and raised a family. Her Boston savings helped to buy the small farm they had longed for.

When she is about to return she writes to Erik asking him to meet her in Gothenburg, at the dock of the Swedish-American Line. She vividly describes the fantastic rituals of reception he will encounter: the dock draped in the Swedish and American colours, a choir singing the national anthem, the gangway swung into the place and eager passengers rushing down searching for well-known faces, and waving to the great crowds gathered along the quay. In hundreds of old newsreels we may see the enactment of this kind of national homecoming. Airports later learned not only to copy this ritual, but also other procedures from the classic era of ocean crossings. Migrants like Olga encountered the vast body-machines developed to handle mass migration in ports of embarkation and arrival during the most intense period of transnational migrations the world ever has experienced, in the decades before and after 1900. By 1905 the number of transatlantic passengers had passed one million and in these transit spaces new logistics of mass handling and control of bodies were tried out, as thousands of emigrants flocked in ports, had their health and their papers checked, were subjected to scrutinies like mass delousing (see Maxtone-Graham 1992:1–32).

Olga and Erik had to keep up their relation through letters for sixteen years, bridging two very different worlds. She wrote about the sophisticated urban life in Boston, he replied with laconic reports on the number of pike or perch caught in the last week.

Olga died young, and after Erik's death in 1993 their daughter found mother's old American trunks, stowed away in the attic. They were filled with American clothes, embroidered silk blouses, stylish dresses, white gloves, bakelite handbags and other wonders of 1930s fashions, as well as untouched cosmetics from nail polish to Luxor Complexion Powder. There was also a collection of souvenirs and memorabilia from the actual crossings, together with Boston souvenirs and photos. These were belongings which a smallholder's wife in Gammelnäs had no use for, and could not show off back home. The trunks stayed closed up there in the attic, encapsulating a time that had been, but mattered little after her return from the exotic world "over there".

Place and space are constituted by movement, but the experience of movement can be very different. Moving on can be a way of staying the same. For migrants like Olga the aim was to secure a life back home. For others the skill of being cosmopolitan is a cultural capital which may give many advantages as they return home or create alternative identities (cf. Hannerz 1996:102ff.). Some people move all the

time, but are safely anchored in their local identities, others travel business class through the world and have created their own safe and secure transit spaces. In a recent interview the trend guru and founder of the British life-style magazine *Wallpaper* was asked to present his view of the future.[4] He says:

> In communicative and cultural terms we are very mobile now. As individuals we identify more with corporations than with national borders. I am myself a citizen of both British Airways and SAS.

His view of the future is a life of two suitcases with a global booking that assures you of a bed close to any airport in the world – that is all you need. In the next breath he says that he has just rented a small cottage in the Swedish archipelago, which makes him wonder if this local setting isn't what life is really about. This is not cultural schizophrenia, this is the ways in which global élites are good at both eating and having their cultural cake. To be intensely cosmopolitan and intensely local is not a polarity, it is a great combination. Everybody should have a little red cottage in the countryside as well as standing hotel reservations all around the world.

In different periods we find the notion that new forms of mass travel, mass migration or mass tourism will change the world, turn locals into cosmopolitans, break down artificial boundaries between nations, localities, classes or generations. Nineteenth-century emigration, modern tourism of the twentieth century, or contemporary inter-railing would produce a more international world. But this is not always the case: today most of the pioneer inter-railers sit in their houses taking care of their families. The restlessness and mobility of youth may just be a "Sturm und Drang" stage in the life cycle, and before we accept the idea that mobility equals cultural and social change or new identities, we have to look much closer at what people learn or experience or don't learn and experience by leaving their homes, their localities, their nations and crossing borders.

In this paper I have looked at the pedagogics of one specific movement, that across national borders. I have tried to show that there is a constant interrelation between the microphysics of movement, the technologies for crossing – walking or driving across, waiting in lines, taking a boat, boarding a plane, and the metaphysics of interpreting such movements in symbolic and existential terms. This fusing of motion and emotion has produced very different kinds of reactions.

The ways in which border crossings are staged today are a result of a long historical sedimentation of practices and rules, and some of them have been naturalized into givens. Once the passport, the X-ray camera, the computerized visa system, has been invented, or problems like international terrorism, illegal entry or smuggling have been defined, matrixes and procedures might be established which are difficult "to unthink". Controls are easily frozen into necessities for the protection of the state. There is also, as I have pointed out, a process of conflation or slippage in which the illegalities of bodies, commodities, diseases or ideas are merged, or as an old Swede commented on the arrival of the bridge: "I am afraid it will bring all sorts of vermin."

The changing production and reproduction of the nation state can be read in the

transformations of the scenography, dramaturgy and choreography of border crossings: the ways in which the borderscape is arranged against a backdrop of monumental buildings or nondescript barracks with endless corridors, warning signs and surveillance techniques, the manners in which movements across borders are dramatized into rituals of passage, stages and stops, and finally the actual choreographing of bodies and their modes of moving. In border crossings there is often a great focus on the staging of departures and arrivals as well as the liminalities of being betwixt and between, in transit. It is this process of intensification through various cultural techniques that gives border crossings their powerful charge.

When the state was defined as a coconut, a strong shell with a soft interior rather than an avocado, the physicality of the border became important. There was a clear pedagogy of space at work, which made the homogenization of all the stuff inside the shell easier. To this era belongs the whole dramatization of frontier crossings.

The fascination or strength of border crossings, which still exists in a world of deterritorialization and deregulation, has to do with the fact that in a world where fewer and fewer identities are based on the clear-cut pedagogy of space, the nation state still tries to provide an absolute space: Sweden or the USA starts here! There is a very powerful territorialization of culture and history here. Few other identity projects have managed to stage this kind of representation and ritualization.

The pedagogy of space also works as a purifying process. All that is alien should be placed (and thus controlled) outside the home territory, which means that there is a constant process of cultural projection at work here. Border crossings help to develop certain interconnected kinds of polarities such as: familiar/alien, home/abroad, safe/dangerous, pure/impure.

At the border the selective nationalizing gaze is scanning the terrain for alien elements, fluids, objects, individuals, influences. What must the nation be protected from – in a given situation and at a given time in history? And even more important, the actual crossing as a critical movement of identity-fixation, the conflation of the national and the personal. In many ways this is a vivid example of what Michael Taussig (1992:111 ff. and 1997) has termed "state fetishism": the magic fascination and sacred aura the state has managed to hold for its citizens.

Who are you? I am reduced to a passport carrier: I am a citizen, a *Swedish* citizen. I do belong here or I don't seem to belong, defined as an undesired arrival. Border experiences are shaped by class and gender (see Buijs 1993) as well as by your position in the hierarchy of nations or ethnicities. For immigrants and refugees border situations may become a very strong organizing life experience. Here their position and future in the nation they are trying to enter is defined and their personalities judged: are you wanted or unwanted, seen as a needy, trustworthy applicant or a devious swindler? The same feeling strikes visitors coming from "low-ranking nations". Slavenka Draculić has described this feeling of constant humiliation from an Eastern European perspective. Is this person just a tourist or a visitor or is she trying to get in on false pretexts? "If you ever has been subjected to these suspicious glances, you never forget them, you

can spot them at a long distance" (Draculić 1996:21).

In psychological terms anxiety is held-back energy. Border crossings mould and channel such anticipations, which can turn into both uneasiness and excitement, dread and desire. The nation state through its ritual staging of such passages comes to give this energy cultural form and focus.

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Notes

1 I thank Jonas Frykman for his constructive comments on this paper.
2 A good example of this are the tensions surrounding the Gibraltar crossing, where Europe and Africa meet. See Henk Driessen's discussion of how this frontier is perceived from both sides of the Straits (Driessen 1998).
3 For an example of this genre, see Augé 1995. Michael Kearney (1995) has used another term which seems just as one-dimensional. He defines airports as "hyperspaces". (The uses and misuses of "hyper" in 1990s social sciences is an interesting theme in itself.)
4 *Svenska Dagbladet*, 4 August 1998.

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On Ritual Effectiveness

The Case of Constitution Day*

By Barbro Blehr

Introduction

Norwegian Constitution Day, the Norwegian day of independence, is widely celebrated all over the country. According to a survey on national identity, frequently drawn upon in national presentations of self, 94% of the population participated in the 1994 Constitution Day events (Aagedal 1997:512). A more recent inquiry in 1998 revealed a participation rate of 78% (*Aftenposten*, 16 May 1998). Most probably, the latter figure is the most reliable one, since the 1998 inquiry consisted of detailed questions focusing on actual plans for the upcoming celebrations. The other survey, by contrast (Skjåk & Bøyum 1995), posed one single question about participation: "How did you celebrate Constitution Day in 1994?", and provided four possible answers.[1] Although the first of these answers was "did not celebrate", the construction seems slightly preconceived, taking for granted that people normally participate. This said, however, even 78% is a high rate of participation.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss how contemporary celebrations of Constitution Day can promote among their participants an embracing of nationalist ideology. From general theory of rituals and ceremonies we learn that such events are capable of affecting, or "operating on", participants in powerful ways (Handelman 1990:16–19, cf. Moore & Myerhoff 1977:7–8). In the context of nationalism, they have been identified as important vehicles for the anchoring of ideology, because of their capacity to transform abstract ideas into a palpable, and moving, symbolic reality (Smith 1991:77). What I want to investigate here are the transformations of ideas into ritual reality that actually take place in contemporary Constitution Day celebrations, and the ways in which these transformations are experienced and endowed with meaning by participants.

Constitution Day is commemorated annually on 17 May, the anniversary of the ratification of the first Norwegian constitution in 1814. Before 1814, the Norwegian territory had been part of the Danish kingdom for four centuries. The constitution came into being when Denmark was defeated in the Napoleonic Wars, and forced to hand Norway over to Sweden. As a counter-move to this plan, contrived by the victors of the war, Norwegian representatives attempted in the spring of 1814 to establish an independent Norwegian state. Writing a constitution and electing a king of their own were the most salient steps of their strategy. But their effort failed. A few months later the king had to abdicate, Sweden and Norway formed a union, and the constitution was slightly altered to correspond to the new situation. It was not, however, overruled. Norway came out of the turbulence recognized as a political entity, with a national parliament in full charge of domestic affairs. Furthermore, the construction of the union allowed movements of cultural and political nationalism to gain ground and prosper during the nineteenth century. Thereby the way was paved for the establishment of a Norwegian sovereign state in 1905.[2]

In Constitution Day celebrations, 1814 and 1905 are highlighted as landmarks in the history of national freedom. Additionally, the ceremonies commemorate the loss of national freedom during the Second World War, and the sacrifices made by men and women during the German occupation to restore independence. Thus Constitution

Day celebrations are tied up with a nationalist project; that is, closely connected to an ideological movement whose foundations are notions of national identity and community, and whose ultimate goal is political self-determination.[3]

At the end of the twentieth century the Norwegian nation-state is, on the one hand, firmly established. Its construction as well as the ideology underpinning its existence are very much taken for granted, supported as they are by institutional frameworks, rules and regulations, and a range of petty routines (cf. Billig 1995). On the other hand, the same construction is fundamentally challenged by global processes of technological, economic, political and cultural change. These processes undermine the power and the legitimacy of nation-states all over the world, and reveal them over and over again as being inadequate for coping with contemporary problems. On the level of ideological reasoning, this challenging is paralleled by a critical rethinking of nationalist ideology *per se*. In the Norwegian case, such a rethinking has affected ideals of sovereignty and self-determination, as well as basic notions about the necessity of cultural homogeneity for the cohesion of the national community.

Likewise in the late twentieth century, there is a strong focus on personal identity, and a great degree of open-endedness in the construction of such identities (cf. Giddens 1991:5). Individuals piece together, as it were, what they are and are not with a certain amount of liberty, and in those dimensions of life where identities are still ascribed, the meaning and the commitment that people invest into them may vary immensely. Thus the meaning of being a Norwegian cannot be taken for granted in contemporary Norway (cf. Eriksen 1993a). Neither can we take for granted the solidity of people's commitment to the national community.

Against this backdrop, what should we expect of the Constitution Day celebrations? Do they serve as a powerful confirmation of ideas and meanings that are increasingly debated and rejected outside the ritual context? Are they the occasion, once a year, when feelings and sentiments in favour of the nation are to be conjured up, and doubt is to be suspended (cf. Moore & Myerhoff 1977:24)? Or, by contrast, does the re-evaluation of the nationalist project enter into the ritual context as well, to affect and alter the celebrations and the meanings arising from them? The last possibility is as likely, in my view, as the first one. But in any case, the examination of what the ritual does and does not do has to take into account a basic open-endedness, and to pay close attention to participant activities. In the view that I want to advocate here, the outcome of the ritual is contingent on the active involvement of participants, and not least of their bodies.

There are two facets of this. First, bodies are important because rituals are "conspicuously physiological" (Myerhoff 1977: 199). Rituals operate through a variety of media, producing messages to be grasped by a range of human senses and faculties, more or less simultaneously (Tambiah 1979:113–114, 119). Thereby, they catch up and absorb their audiences, and leave little room for distance or withdrawal. Furthermore, bodies are important as performing agents. Ritual activities are highly dependent on the phenomenon that Connerton termed "habit-memory", or, more broadly stated, on bodily practices (Connerton 1989:72–104; cf. Bourdieu 1990:66–79).

These terms refer to skills and knowledge that are sedimented in the body, that is, to those things that you can do without thinking, or reflecting, or questioning. Such behaviour is a powerful way of tacitly affirming cultural ideas and values. It is powerful exactly because it is tacit. If the ideas and values concerned were spelled out, it would be possible to question, alter, and perhaps, reject them. But as long as, or insofar as, they are incorporated, and acted out in habitual ways, they are "below the level of consciousness, expression and the reflexive distance which these presuppose" (Bourdieu 1990:73; cf. Connerton 1989: 102). A similar perspective on rituals and bodies is outlined by Jennings (1996). He emphasizes, even more strongly, that the body is the very source of ritual knowledge: "It is not so much that the mind 'embodies' itself in ritual action, but rather that the body 'minds' itself or attends through itself in ritual action" (1996:327).[4]

The focus on participant activities has some important consequences for the following analysis. For one thing, however clear the symbolic messages presented by the ritual may be, in the approach that I have chosen here they enter the realm of analytical importance only insofar as they are filtered through participant experience, and paid attention to in one way or another by participants. Likewise, any explicit purpose or aim of the ritual can be, as it were, nullified by not being perceived, lived through or acted out by participants. Taking these premises as my point of departure, what I have searched for in the Constitution Day setting are the details as well as the overall moods and atmospheres that make the strongest imprints on the bodies, minds and hearts of participants. Likewise, I have tried to find out what people take special care to do during the celebrations. Where do they participate most eagerly and intensely, and what actions do they perform at these moments? And what understandings and meanings, finally, may spring from these ritual experiences?

Participant Priorities

Basically, Constitution Day celebrations can be described as a three-part sequence of events. The first part, in the early morning hours, consists of commemorative rites that are formal and carefully pre-planned. They focus on the founding-fathers of the nation, and on those who sacrificed their lives during the Second World War. In the speeches given at graves or monuments, the contributions and sacrifices of the predecessors are related to present-day challenges and problems. Contemporary Norwegians are invited here to identify with previous generations, and to take on their own responsibility for their country. Thereby, the morning events strongly articulate a national unity extending through time.

Later in the morning, a children's parade is arranged. This is the most important single event of the day; it is arranged everywhere, it is highly cherished, and it is frequently drawn upon to characterize the celebrations as a whole, and the Norwegian nation. Around noon, a public gathering is held, which includes the main speech in honour of the day, songs and other performances. Later on, especially in urban areas, more parades will follow, structured basically in terms of age. The parades and the main gathering comprise the second part of the celebration. It is essentially focused, but it is more festive than the morning commemorations.

The third phase of the day is informal and multifocused. It consists of local neighbourhood gatherings, held outdoors, preferably in a schoolyard. Some formal introduction may take place, but most of the time, participants engage in eating, drinking, participating in playful competitions, and socializing. This is the end of the public part of Constitution Day. Later in the evening, some people arrange private parties in their homes, or come together at semi-public gatherings in clubs and organizations.

In the following I will describe and comment upon Constitution Day practice from the point of view of participants who are familiar with the celebrations and, basically, feel at ease in them. The sources of evidence spring from fieldwork in southern Norway, mainly in urban and suburban contexts, in the mid–1990s. I draw on interviews with around thirty adults recounting their own Constitution Day experience, on my own participation, and on media representations.[5] Among the persons interviewed, two-thirds were raised after the German occupation, that is, represent post-war generations. All of them are ethnic Norwegians. My initial plan to interview people of immigrant descent as well was not extensively realized. I conducted a few interviews with male immigrants, each of them speaking mainly in the capacity of being a representative of an organization or a category. What struck me most in those conversations, whether the men spoke for others or, occasionally, referred to their personal experience, was the similarities of their accounts to those presented by ethnic Norwegians. These interviews, and certain media representations as well, strongly suggested that you do not have to be an ethnic Norwegian in order to be part of and enjoy the celebrations. That said, however, there is a lot to add about the ways in which ethnic otherness is highlighted (or subdued) in the formal events of Constitution Day, most notably in the parades.[6]

The versions I report on are insider ones, and we should keep in mind that the celebrations of Constitution Day may also give rise to experiences, expectations, and understandings that do not produce the feeling of being an insider. There are Norwegians who feel that Constitution Day celebrations are tiresome, or superficial, or simply hard to feel comfortable with. When you discuss the celebrations, in interviews or, even more, in informal conversations, people often tell of persons they know to shun the festivities. The perspectives of those persons are not the focus of this paper. Some of them, though, may be grasped anyway, at least by inversion.[7]

The most impressive experiences of Constitution Day are produced by specific features combining to produce a general atmosphere of festivity. Among the most important of these features are the great amount of people gathering in the streets and open places, the music, and the wealth of flags of all sizes. People are supposed to be dressed up, in folk costumes or Sunday best, and decorated with ribbons in the national colours of red, white and blue. Likewise, it is important for the atmosphere that they are good-humoured and in high spirits. The music consists of familiar tunes: the anthem, other national hymns, some secular national songs, and marches. All these tunes are played over and over again in the focused events. Listening to them really strikes a nerve with many participants, and the experience of joining the

singing may constitute one of the peak moments of the day. When someone is really moved, a lump in his or her throat can block the singing after the first few lines. The Norwegian flags are everywhere. Large ones fly from poles and frame tribunes, smaller ones are held by children or planted in perambulators. Like the music, flags move some of the participants to tears. But likewise, or perhaps even more, they bring about an immense sense of festivity. Norwegian flags (like the flags of the other Scandinavian countries) are not only official symbols of state and nation. They are also frequently used for framing important and joyful occasions of private life, and the connotations that they take on in those contexts are by and large retained when they appear in great abundance on Constitution Day (or, for that matter, in other public settings). Almost as important as the flags are the twigs of birch, bearing, at least in the southern parts of the country, the first fresh leaves of spring. Twigs are not carried by individuals, but they accompany the flags in all other kinds of decorations. Likewise, since most of the events are arranged outdoors, the fresh green foliage is an important part of the overall framing of Constitution Day.[8]

Speaking of single events or subevents, the children's parade is highlighted as the most important one. It draws together, as it were, all the components mentioned above: people, folk costumes, flags and music, and additionally, people are particularly moved by the sight of the children performing as main characters. Partly, then, they enjoy the children as a generalized symbolic category. Children parade as representatives of the future, or, as Witoszek has suggested in her essay on Constitution Day, as "the personification of innocence, purity, truth and nature" (1991a:341). Additionally, though, people look very much forward to spotting and greeting their own children in the crowded parade. Some parents are even reported to run along the route to see and wave at their children again and again. Preferably, they should also be able to photograph the children as they parade by, but this may be hard to accomplish since there are so many people around. Thus, while parades are public and symbolic events, they also mobilize family relations and parental responsibilities in a very concrete way. In those areas where there are additional adult parades, these are enjoyed in much the same manner, with the recognition of relatives and friends being a vital part of the pleasure. But the children's performances are unique, and occupy a position of their own in the hearts and minds of the spectators.

The morning commemorations are important, too, at least to a certain degree. They constitute moments of reflections on central themes and topics, and for those who make sure to join them, they give rise to sentiments that are crucial components of the total Constitution Day experience. At the same time, though, they are not as broadly attended as the children's parades, and not as frequently highlighted as events that you should make sure you do not miss.[9]

One of the least favoured parts of the celebrations is the main speech. Few people declare that they "have to listen to it", that is, that they are really eager to hear it, and many dismiss it frankly by stating that it is always the same. Unlike other components, then, speeches cannot be repeated in more or less identical ways every year, and be cherished because of their familiar char-

acter. On the contrary, the speeches that are appreciated are those that make something new out of the familiar message, by means of reinterpretation or addition of new dimensions. More often than not, those innovative speeches are delivered by children or teenagers.

The informal afternoon gatherings are about as highly cherished as the children's parades. They stand out, most of all, as giant public backstages for relaxing, after the rush and the strain of the morning and midday events. Whether you perform or watch, the commemorations, the parades and the main gathering entail a lot of walking and standing, and call for your continuous attention. When those phases of the day are over, the opportunity to sit down and have a cup of coffee in the sunshine in the schoolyard can be experienced as the utmost peak of delight. For the children, the afternoon gatherings are the Constitution Day settings where they are most free to enjoy themselves. They have done their duty in the parades, and can devote themselves to play and to competitions adapted to their age and capabilities. Small children take part in tricycle races, while elders hammer nails into planks, or try shooting with bow and arrow. In all competitions, small items serving as prizes are generously handed out. Likewise the afternoon gathering is the setting where children consume much of the ice cream that is, according to standard accounts, one of the most important components of their Constitution Day experience. Arranging these gatherings is a duty assigned to the parents of children of a particular grade at the school. The job entails a lot of planning, cooperation, mobilization of local knowledge and resources and, finally, practical chores. Those who have been through it, that is, virtually every parent of a child above the age of twelve, testify that it is hard work, but simultaneously very rewarding, strongly encouraging a sense of belonging.

In the schoolyards, people cluster according to their own preferences in small groups, focused on various activities. These activities may be pleasurable in their own right, but the overall sociable character adds immensely to the quality of the event. An elderly woman, recounting the Constitution Day practice of her grandchildren, described it clearly. After being part of the parade in the city, she said:

> they get home again, and then at four o'clock they go away to the schoolyard, and it is *their* school, and there they experience Constitution Day in another way, because then they are gathered, as it were, the ones they know closely, classmates, and the teachers are there, and the headmaster is there, and the mother and the father and the grandparents, and aunts and people like that, so they are gathered there, and there you can buy coffee, and, well, they sell lottery tickets, and there are competitions, and, well, then it gets somewhat more intimate. Being in the city and watching the parades – then you have to be of a certain size, or be part of it in a particular way, to grasp it, I think.

In much the same way, adults made clear to me how highly they appreciated, for their own sake, coming together in the schoolyard. They go there, ideally, with their own family. But once there, children run off to their own activities, returning once in a while to show their prizes or ask for something. Meanwhile, the parents sit down, have coffee and biscuits, and chat with friends and neighbours. This is the occasion of the year when they can expect to run into virtually everybody in their neighbourhood. Some of the people they enjoy

meeting are close friends, others are acquaintances, still others may be persons that they merely recognize, such as the ones they queue with at the bus stop on weekday mornings. What adults seem to favour so highly in this context is the great amount of interactions, at various levels, including nods from a distance, with a great amount of others. People who have moved a lot, or who have suffered the uncomfortable feeling of being in the wrong schoolyard, can be very articulate on these matters. Even when they were accompanied by their own families, they might feel lonely because there were not enough people around them that they could nod to, wave at, or exchange a few words with.

Describing Constitution Day practice, people often distinguish between being a spectator, that is, watching from the sideline, and participating, that is, really being a part of it. Regularly, then, the experience of participation is related to local community celebrations, while spectatorship is something you experience in city centres. And quite obviously, it is the real participation, and the local arenas, that are preferred. One of the most frequent remarks when people heard that I intended to study Constitution Day was "Oh, you should go to a small place". What they meant, most probably, was that I should look for a field site in a rural area, or a small town or village. My choice to spend three consecutive Constitution Days in Oslo, Bergen and Stavanger, all urban areas, might have seemed strange to many people. But these urban areas, I quickly realized, contained and were surrounded by their own small places: districts, suburbs, and outskirt communities. Every primary school district, as it were, is transformed on Constitution Day into a small place, into a community large enough to stage at least its own small parade and subsequent gathering. Hence, if you live in an urban environment, you may divide your Constitution Day between the city centre where you watch the main events, and the local neighbourhood where you really enjoy a sense of belonging. When it is pointed out, in such a context, that participation takes place in the local setting, it may refer to the fact that afternoon gatherings offer a greater range of events where you can actually perform yourself, that is, where you are not assigned the role of spectator. But additionally and, I think, more to the point, the statement contrasts the familiar character of the local setting with the anonymity of the city, and depicts the local setting as the one where you can be comfortably nestled in social relationships, and really feel that you are part of a social universe.

Grasping the National

So far, I have pointed out the Constitution Day practices that attract and absorb participants most of all. In what ways are these practices imbued with a national sentiment? In what ways do they turn the abstract tenets of nationalist ideology into palpable reality?

Not every tenet, in the first place, *is* turned into palpable reality. Commenting upon the meaning of Constitution Day, people in the post-war generations often produce some reticent statements about national freedom. They know that this concept is important, they know that the essence of the meaning of Constitution Day is predicated on it, but they cannot really make it resonate with their own experience. However much Constitution Day may ap-

peal to them, the celebrations do not fill their hearts with an immense gratitude for living in a free country. At the same time, though, they know, or believe, that the older people, those who remember the war, do feel such a gratitude.

This belief is widely supported by texts and speeches presented in the Constitution Day context. Likewise it is by and large confirmed by my interviews with persons belonging to the pre-war generation. But these interviews also intimate a complicated relationship between the appreciation of freedom and the celebrations *per se*. I will explain this by relating at some length the explication offered by a woman in her early sixties.

Unlike most of the persons interviewed, this woman raised the question of meaning spontaneously. She explained that Constitution Day was about freedom, that she felt an enormous gratitude for living in a free country, and that this stood out in stark contrast to her childhood memories of the war. As a small girl, she experienced the occupation as fear and anguish, as limited access to food, as the sound and sight of German soldiers marching in the streets with their helmets on. Her father was imprisoned, and rumours about what happened in prisoners' camps spread even among the children. Her wartime experiences were deeply ingrained in her mind and body. Still fifty years after liberation, she shunned books and movies describing Second World War events, and she had mixed feelings towards the planned commemoration of the liberation that was due to take place some months after the interview.

As impressive as her wartime memories were her recollections of the relief that liberation brought in early May 1945. The extraordinary atmosphere of "The May Days" (*maidagene*), stretching from Liberation Day on 8 May to the first post-war Constitution Day on 17 May, is an ever recurrent theme in recollections of this moment of history (cf. Eriksen 1995:83–88). During this week, people celebrated by improvised small-scale demonstrations, delighted to be able to present again the national symbols that they had so recently, and for so long, been forbidden to display. Afterwards, everything taking place during those feverish ten days constituted a solid experience of what a liberated country was really like. In this regard, "those who remember the war" had actually experienced national freedom, in stark contrast to the repressive regime imposed upon them by foreigners.[10]

The story of this woman presents an example of a strong personal identification with the phenomenon of national freedom. Occupation circumscribed and restricted her life; liberation opened up a world where it was possible to breathe, move and speak normally, that is, freely. The destiny of the nation is simultaneously her personal one. Whatever occurs to the country, subjugation or resurrection, is made palpable as personal realities in the life of the little girl. Constitution Day reminds her every year of these experiences. But – and this is important to notice – there is no seamless connection between her own perceptions of the core of the meaning of the day and the actual forms of the celebration. Introducing her explication of meaning, she concluded her previous description of her celebration practice by stating that those were the things her family *did*. Furthermore, she said, the day had a content, which was

"something in itself" (*en ting for seg*). Content, thus, was not evident from what the family did. It was perhaps not even easily compatible with it. Later on she also raised, in the most polite and cautious way, doubts as to whether all those who enjoyed the festivity could really feel the serious dimensions that she was herself aware of. Similar doubts were echoed, occasionally in less polite ways, by others in her generation. One man, for instance, vehemently denied the proposition that the people joining the festive crowd in the city were out there to demonstrate their love for their mother country. Most certainly, he claimed, they only cared about having a holiday.

For the woman referred to above, the sincere appreciation of national freedom was strongly related to her standpoint against Norwegian membership of the European Union. The idea of deliberately giving sovereignty away was a shocking one to her, and as she remembered the pro-membership agitation during the heated campaign in November 1994, she expressed strong distaste. Had Norway entered the Union, she said, she would never have bothered to celebrate Constitution Day again.

Others in her generation, by contrast, could perfectly well reconcile the ideas of European Union membership, national independence, and continued celebrations of Constitution Day. They, too, related their understanding to their wartime experience. As one man in his early seventies explained it, there were two crucial points to be observed. First, the European Union was an organization that a country (or, rather, state) might enter or refrain from entering of its own free will. Second, inside the Union, people were free to retain and express their national identities. Thus, in his view, national freedom was never threatened by the Union. It is not hard to detect the logic of his reasoning, once you relate it to his memories of the German occupation. The Germans had done exactly what the prospective European Union partners would not do: enforced their own will upon the Norwegian people, and banned all the expressions of Norwegian nationality that they could not themselves control. At the same time however, we should note what is getting lost in this understanding: the orthodox interpretation that national freedom should be understood, and realized, in terms of the formal sovereignty of the Norwegian nation-state.

Formal sovereignty and national identity, thus, can be identified as two different foci of celebration. And to judge from the overall tendency of the material, identity seems to matter to more people than sovereignty does, and to do so in more direct ways.

In the interviews with persons belonging to post-war generations, reflections upon the national dimensions of the meaning of the celebrations were more hesitant than those reported above, and more directly tied to celebration practice. Their national sentiment seemed to arise, as it were, immediately from the sensation of being part of a cheerful crowd, gathering outdoors in the spring under a wealth of flags. The actual feeling can be specified in terms of satisfaction, joy, and gratitude. "What a gorgeous country we have", they might say, or, "How lucky we are to be Norwegians", or even, "How lucky we are to have such a day when we can gather and think about how lucky we are". Exclamations of this kind summarize a deep satisfaction

with one's own country. The concept of country, then, refers partly to topography and nature. Norway is Norwegian soil, mountains and fjords, apple orchards and woods, and so on.[11] Furthermore, many people made clear to me that Norway is particularly beautiful in the spring, and that Constitution Day is also, really, a celebration of the return of the spring. In addition, though, the phrase "a gorgeous country" may refer to social dimensions: to the welfare state, to a basic level of social security offered to everybody, to the absence of severe conflicts and so on. The dimensions of well-being indicated by these reflections may be quite compatible with the experiences and values that other persons sum up in terms of freedom. Nevertheless, freedom was not a main keyword for those in the post-war generations.

It should be added here that the above associations were provoked by me during the interviews. The younger interviewees did not volunteer such reflections as easily as, for example, the older woman referred to above. And in the course of the actual celebrations, needless to say, participants do not verbalize the wider, or deeper, implications of what they are doing. The explications that are offered tend to appear in the speeches, and in the morning commemorations, that is, during events that many people do not care to attend.

To sum up, national dimensions are, if not always articulated, then at least close at hand when people are encouraged to reflect upon the meanings of the celebrations. Thus, we might well conclude that a successful mediation of the national is taking place on Constitution Day. When people engage, once a year, in the activities described in the previous section, they confirm in a most agreeable way that the Norwegian community exists, and that they are themselves part of it. They may not concentrate on the concept of freedom, and if they do, they can interpret it in different ways, as a concept referring to the political self-determination of the nation, or to the freedom to express a personal national identity. But in any case, they may experience being Norwegians together, as something worth appreciating.

I have some second thoughts, however. They were inspired to me first by a conversation with a woman in her fifties – that is, early post-war generation – in November 1994, just before the referendum on European Union membership. This woman was an ardent supporter of Constitution Day celebrations. She referred to them in terms of adhering to tradition, and she thought of them as something resembling a celebration of a birthday. When a child has its birthday, she explained, we decorate with flags, and we sing songs, and there are presents, and we have something good to eat. Constitution Day celebrations were very much like this; a celebration of the birthday of the country (though it substituted competition prizes for birthday presents). But she frankly declared that she did not really feel that she loved her mother country in the course of the celebrations. Most of all, Constitution Day made her feel at home in her local neighbourhood. It was a good occasion, she thought, for demonstrating a sense of community in local areas. Incidentally, she was in favour of Norway joining the European Union. And when she reflected upon what a hypothetical membership would do to Norway, she noted among its various virtues that it would affect to a very small degree the quality of local neighbourhood life.

About half a year later, I spent some hours talking to a man in his early forties – one of those, by the way, who articulated most clearly the importance of being surrounded by acquaintances, friends and kin on Constitution Day. Reflecting upon the national dimensions, he outlined how all Norwegians belonged to one big family. But the sense of being a part of this collectivity, he stressed, had to be achieved through belonging to smaller social circles: a school, a family, a neighbourhood. The nation was constructed, he explained, by a myriad of small groups, united into bigger ones which were, in turn, united on higher levels, and so on, until you finally reached the national level. From his overall reasoning, though, I got the feeling that the local belonging occupied his mind a lot more on Constitution Day than the national one. And somewhat contrary to his own model, he also envisioned a future when the abstract symbols evoking national history, those that appealed so strongly to the elders, would lose their significance. As the elders gradually disappeared from the scene, he supposed, Constitution Day celebrations would be less focused upon the recognition of the national symbols, and more concentrated upon the recognition of neighbours, friends and children; that is, upon close relationships.

Not everybody verbalized so clearly the importance of local belonging, and few would intimate that it is in fact more important than national belonging. This understanding nevertheless corresponds strikingly well to the priorities of practice described above – which are demonstrated by the vast majority of participants. Thus these practices, if we are to believe Connerton, Bourdieu and Jennings, as they were referred to above, may tacitly confirm, year after year, the value of close relationships and local neighbourhoods, perhaps to some extent at the expense of national identification.

Concluding Remarks

Constitution Day celebrations are secular rituals; ceremonies that resemble ritual forms in their organization as well as in their ways of working. But how about the parts of the celebrations that I have focused on here – or, more specifically, that the close attention to celebration practice has prompted me to focus on? These parts are not necessarily the most formal or ritual-like. The afternoon gatherings, in particular, have very few formal or solemn attributes, and the activities that they invite people to perform are decidedly mundane. In the schoolyard setting, you are not required to bend your body, or turn your head, or freeze your limbs, in stylized gestures. Rather, you are expected to greet and talk to people much in the same way that you would do outside the supermarket, and sip your coffee as you would do in your neighbour's living room. The children's parades, admittedly, are more focused and controlled. But in practice, they do not demand the children to keep in step, nor to produce neatly coordinated rows. To a great degree, they allow casual performances.

Are the activities that I rely on for my conclusion, then, really ritual ones? Should we not, rather, refer to them as play or diversion (cf. Jennings 1996:325), thereby subtly intimating that they are not part of the core of the ritual and consequently cannot serve what Jennings terms "noetic functions" (ibid.), that is, produce knowledge? I do not think we should. Regardless

of their form, the events highlighted here are marked as special, out-of-everyday-order events, which are furthermore recognized as such by their participants. They take on this character by being acted out in special settings, or, put differently, by virtue of their combination into a whole with those parts of the ceremony that are more formal. Any activity or bodily movement, then, may take on a ritual quality when acted out in a ritual context. And moreover, the premise that bodily activity recalls and reproduces knowledge is not in itself restricted to ritual contexts. At least the way it is spelled out by Bourdieu (1990:66–79), it is a general feature of human life, operating in a variety of settings. Accordingly, even if we did not ascribe to the informal parts of the celebrations a ritual status, we still might have to deem them noetic, in their own right.

But the ritual context is important. Or rather, what is most crucial here is the peculiar combination of everyday practices and ritual context, and the ways in which the everyday practices are incorporated in the ritual. As Kapferer (1988, 1989) has pointed out, any ideology, such as nationalism, has to draw on ontological premises in order to be successfully accepted by people. Ontological premises, then, are basic principles and orientations that tacitly permeate everyday routines. In ideological reasoning, those fundamental principles and orientations are invoked and elaborated, and assigned a special and restricted meaning, which they did not have in the context of everyday life (1988:79–80, 1989:168). And any ideology will seem reasonable and defendable, just and sound, precisely by virtue of its ontological foundations (cf. 1988:82–83). If we keep in mind, then, that Constitution Day celebrations are manifestations of ideology, we might interpret the inclusion of selected everyday practices as one instance, and a singular one indeed, of establishing ontological connections. The celebrations do not draw on and transform principles permeating everyday life; they transfer elements of this very life into the ritual setting, and invite people, as it were, to keep on performing everyday routines inside this setting. In my view, this amounts to a powerful confirmation of these elements of routine, and of the experiential and social dimensions that they indicate. Furthermore, it is a kind of confirmation that restricts, in its own peculiar way, the range of possible interpretations of the meanings immanent in ontology (cf. Kapferer 1989:168). By highlighting in the ritual centre actual, live human beings forming families of mothers, fathers and small children, the celebrations effectively block out a range of other possible ways of imagining and experiencing the basic notions that the concept of "family" could sum up.

What, then, are the lessons to learn from the celebrations? We learn that the little world of family and neighbours is an important and meaningful one, and we learn that Norway can be conceptualized in terms of billions of small communities; that Norway is, perhaps, nothing but a little community writ large.[12] The core, or the basics, of this message, are children. When children are placed in the ritual focus, their closest relatives, their parents, are mobilized and highlighted, too. For the parents, this is not an altogether convenient position. Rather, Constitution Day is an occasion where they are put to test and publicly examined. They are required to display their children, but in doing so they expose,

more or less deliberately, the whole family as well, whether this family is a well-adjusted, successful or frail one. To some persons this is demanding indeed. But regardless of the quality of the performances of actual families, celebrations remain a strong manifestation of the family as an ideal social institution. Likewise, the children tie the celebrations to the local areas. As a parent, you should stick by your child on Constitution Day, and your child ought to be in his or her home area, together with friends and classmates. Thus the children's parades, and, even more, the afternoon gatherings, are predicated on the children's capabilities. If it had not been for the children, the afternoon gatherings might have taken on another shape, and been located in a different arena. But when they are constructed in their present form, they constitute a powerful message about the quality of the local neighbourhoods and communities. In the same way as families are acknowledged as the normal social entity, local communities are highlighted as the normal wider framework of the social life of families.

Children, families, and local communities, then, stand out as the most important mediators of the nation. This, no doubt, is the clue to the success of the Constitution Day celebrations. Had it not been for the local character, that is, had the arrangements been restricted, for instance, to formal events in the national centre of Oslo, participants would have been few, and spectators many. When celebrations are multilocal and informal, in the ways described above, virtually everybody can be a participant, in his or her home area. Likewise, the mobilization of families and the foregrounding of children contributes greatly to permeate the celebrations with a sense of intimacy, warmth, and belonging.

Simultaneously, however, the clue to the success may constitute a potential threat to the intended outcome. There is little doubt that Constitution Day celebrations are occasions that "publicly enunciate and index lineaments of statehood, nationhood, and civic collectivity" (Handelman 1990:42). They are paradigmatic examples of celebrations of social belonging; what they manifest and honour is essentially social entities and relationships. But how can we know for sure which entities and relationships they manifest? We cannot know; we are stuck with the basic uncertainty of mediating processes. The local design, on the one hand, secures the broad participation, and the deep involvement, in the celebrations. But on the other hand, local community belonging and close family relationships can be enjoyed perfectly well without reflecting about national dimensions. Consequently, and as indicated by some of my conversation partners in the interviews, local mediations of the national can gradually change their character; cease to be experienced as mediations, and gain ground as privileged foci of celebration in their own right. Thus, the construction that skilfully secures a broad observance of the national ritual may simultaneously pave the way towards experiences that may, in the long run, weaken rather than support the commitment to the nation.

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Notes

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1 The English translations of quotations in Norwegian are mine throughout the paper.

2 Various aspects of Norwegian nation-building in the nineteenth century have been examined by Berggreen (1989), Lunden (1992), Hodne (1994), and by scholars and students at the faculty of Arts at the University of Oslo, cooperating in the project "The Development of Norwegian National Identity in the Nineteenth Century" (for an introduction, see Sørensen 1994). A large number of reports have been issued from this project, as well as a concluding volume (Sørensen 1998).

3 When I identify this as a nationalist universe of ideas, I rely on the definitions presented by Gellner, who states that nationalism is "a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (1983:1), and Smith, who claims that nationalism is "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'" (1991:73, italics omitted).

4 Jennings's focus is basically on religious rituals. Most certainly, he would identify the events that concern me here as ceremonies, rather than rituals in a strict sense. The crucial difference between rituals and ceremonies, according to his text, is that rituals "have both a greater radicality (ontological 'depth') and are more comprehensively paradigmatic" than ceremonies (1996:331). This difference however does not affect the aspect of rituals and ceremonies that I will concentrate on here, that is, their ways of working.

5 It should be added here that I was first introduced to Constitution Day at the beginning of the 1980s by my Norwegian husband. For about ten years, we participated in some of the Constitution Day events arranged by the Norwegian minority in Stockholm, or we celebrated the day in private. Thus when I started in 1990 to outline the study reported on here, I had acquired some personal habits of celebrating, as well as a sense of what the day was all about. Entering the Norwegian context during fieldwork, however, I came across an overwhelming amount of practices, dimensions, connections and understandings that had not been present in the Stockholm setting, nor in my private life. Of course this is what fieldwork, and research in general, is essentially about: being overwhelmed by the hitherto unknown. To some degree, though, my previous experience was helpful in the process of identifying problems and perspectives (cf. Blehr 1995).

6 I discuss this aspect in another paper (Blehr, in press).

7 The surveys mentioned in the introduction can give us some idea of the identities and the positions of the relative outsiders. The 1998 inquiry showed for persons above the age of 60 a higher rate of non-participation (32%) than the average 22%. At the same time, though, almost 50% of those over 60 were concerned with the fact that people were indifferent or lacked respect for Constitution Day (*Aftenposten*, 16 May 1998). The following discussion of my data may shed some light upon this seeming paradox. The scholars analysing the 1994 survey found males, singles, urban dwellers and people who do not vote in general elections to be over-represented among non-participants (Aagedal 1997:512).

8 Admittedly, much of the country is still covered with snow on Constitution Day. This is frequently remarked upon in reports on the celebrations, most often in a mixed spirit of regret and cheerfulness against all odds, as if the northern spring was nothing but a pitiful deviation from the paradigmatic one of southern Norway. In 1995, however, the state television broadcast of the celebrations (NRK, the morning version) included a report from Alta, Finnmark, where a considerable part of the presentation of the local background was spent on highlighting the excellent opportunities for skiing and other outdoor activities in the northern spring. As a piece of local presentation of self, this clearly contrasted with the standard descriptions.

9 It should be added here that children's parades tend to be framed (preceded or concluded) by miniature commemorations, where

children are prominent performers. Some of those who care a lot about the children's parade explicitly include those commemorative moments in their concerns; others do not.

10 Eriksen, in her study of Norwegian popular history of the Second World War, notes that narratives of the beginning of the occupation are personal and reflective, while the recountings of the liberation depict individuals as engulfed in a collective, national exhilaration (1995:83). It might be added, though, that the experience of rejoicing together was restricted to those adhering to "the right side", as the term was in Norwegian (*den riktige siden*). There was also "the wrong side" (*den gale siden*), the side of those that had collaborated or associated in some way with the enemy. They were identified after liberation as traitors to their country, and prosecuted and convicted in legal proceedings. The additional informal punishment that some of their family members endured in the days and years to come has not received attention until very recently (Olden 1988; Fuglestad 1991; Eggen 1993).

11 More than one scholar has insisted that there is something peculiar about the Norwegian way of appreciating, using, and relating to nature (e.g. Nedrelid 1991; Witoszek 1991b, 1998). The Constitution Day reflections on nature may well support such a view, but that is not a main point in my analysis.

12 The latter idea fits in well with received notions of the characteristics of Norwegian culture. Anthropologists and others have repeatedly commented upon the pervasiveness, even in modern Norwegian society, of rural community norms, values and principles (cf. Klausen 1984). A trenchant criticism of these (and other) efforts to delineate a particular Norwegian culture can be found in Eriksen (1993b) and Johansen (1995).

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The New Danes
A Life Story Approach to the Museological Interpretation of Immigrants and Refugees

By Mette Skougaard

Denmark has always been a country of immigrants, and immigration plays a self-evident role in Denmark and Danish history. Traditionally, the immigrants have primarily come from other Northern European countries. However, in recent years, beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, there has been significant immigration from other and, to the Danes, more exotic countries than before, and every year the share of the Danish population with roots in the new immigrant families is expanding. This development places the museums of cultural history in a unique situation. Being part of the society which needs and has uses for a cultural identity, the responsibilities of the museums are to help define and represent the national cultural heritage. At a time when the feeling that national identity should be protected from influences from abroad is expressed widely, what kind of position should the ethnological museums take? To put it crudely, you may ask: are the museums to continue showing harmless folk traditions and handicrafts, or should they convey other messages in view of the present-day development towards a multicultural society and the reappearing questions of nationalism, ethnicity, and identity? And if they choose to get involved, how are they to emphasize the importance of understanding Danish culture as something mixed, and to present this heterogeneous culture in the museums?

In fact, the Danish museums of cultural history have not taken many initiatives to incorporate in their work aspects of the cultural diversity brought by the "new Danes". In the light of the history of our museums, this is understandable; it is a great challenge to the role and self-understanding of our institutions to take on these objectives, the central issue being the definition of culture seen in a national historical perspective.

The Danish museums of cultural history were founded in the nineteenth century, parallel to the other new national historical collections that appeared in European countries at the time. They had different preconditions and organizational frameworks, but they are all to be seen as expressions of the political, social, and cultural movements that can be identified as national romanticism and national liberalism. The revival of the national past became an important part of the legitimation of the liberal constitutional demands. While it was primarily religion that legitimized the absolute monarchies, history became the most important legitimacy of the sovereignty of the people (Stoklund 1997b, 1999).

It follows that the museums have their roots in a cultural understanding which bases itself on the idea of the nation state seen as a community of people, united by the same language and culture. This perception is tied to the assumption that culture is something which belongs to well-defined communities, forming a closed entity. Other cultures are other spheres, each is seen as something homogeneous and delimited, placed among other equally well-defined cultures, like pieces in a mosaic. At the great and immensely popular international exhibitions of the nineteenth century, the new nation states could meet in a competition of technology and industrial products. However, they could also compete in the cultural arena: which country had the oldest, the most unique and unspoiled culture? (Stoklund 1997a, de Jong 1994).

In this perspective, it is no wonder that

museums of the nineteenth century had a role to play in forming the images of national culture and in systematizing the assumptions that each people had its own identity, based on a romantic concept of a community. In the first part of the century, the collections were aimed at prehistoric times and the Middle Ages, then came the Renaissance. In the latter part of the century, the (in principle) timeless folk culture came into the focus of museums, promoting the idea that our roots are found in the old peasant culture – an idea which has been very long-lived and also, at the present time, has made it natural to identify folk tradition with national identity. Thus, a peasant house at an open-air museum or a traditional folk costume will typically for any Dane (as probably for any German, Dutchman, Swede, etc.) be seen as an illustration of the incarnate national culture.

In this century, especially in the years following the Second World War, ethnologists and museologists have shown much less interest in traditional folk culture. The endeavours to use folk culture to construct a national identity at the beginning of this century gave way to a deconstruction of the same national identity. The idea that farmers and fishermen would have preserved elements of the original character of the people now belonged to what is called "the invention of tradition". More attention was paid to historical processes than to the quest for continuity. New topics such as the study of everyday history, of women's, children's, and working-class history came into focus, under the influence of social and economic history. The Dutch museologist Adriaan de Jong has carried out some very interesting studies showing how these phenomena manifest themselves in museums, especially the Open-Air Museum in Arnhem, the Netherlands. At the Open-Air Museum in Lyngby, Denmark, the same trends can be seen clearly, for instance resulting in the re-erection and furnishing of a poor house and a manor house in order to complete the social scope of the collections (de Jong 1994, 1996).

During the last decade, however, we have seen the reappearance of a strong focus on questions of national identity in both Eastern and Western Europe, among other things provoked by the European integration process in general and the rising number of Third World immigrants. This development also forces the museums to consider in which ways they are to define and represent the national cultural heritage, and how they can acknowledge the cultural complexity which the new immigrants bring with them. Second- and third-generation immigrants will ask for *their* Danish history, and this kind of contemporary history, where the focus is on the individual, is not necessarily what is conveyed in the reports, documents, and books about the immigrants produced by the authorities, sociologists, and many others.

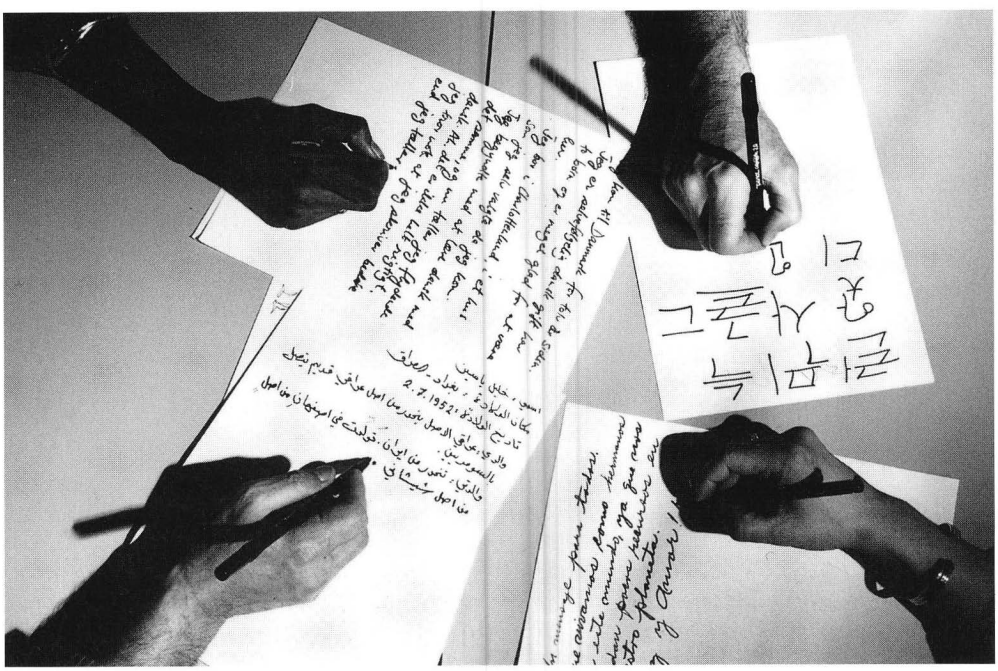
It is in this perspective that the Ethnological Surveys Department of the Danish National Museum has launched a project aimed at documenting immigration to Denmark in the recent years. The main objectives of the project are, firstly, to gather knowledge concerning the background and living conditions of refugees and immigrants by collecting documentation. Secondly, to study the effect of the meeting of cultures. How does the confrontation with Danish culture influence the immigrants, and how does the culture of the immigrants change the Danish culture? Finally, the aim

is to develop the museological documentation and interpretation of the "new Danes" in the museums, traditionally oriented towards the "original" Danish culture.

Methods of Documentation – Collection of Life Stories

In order to gather knowledge concerning the background and living conditions of refugees and immigrants, we have chosen to follow the long-standing tradition in the Scandinavian countries of working with the people's history on the basis of the everyday life of the common people. For more than fifty years, the Danish National Museum has collected autobiographical material from people of all social groups all over the country, and it was only natural to place the documentation of the "new Danes" within the framework of the Ethnological Surveys Department of the museum.[1]

An important source of inspiration has come from the impressive work of the Multicultural Centre in Botkyrka, Sweden (Mångkulturellt centrum 1993) and the presentations in the *Handbok i invandrardokumentation: Etniskt liv och kulturell mångfald*, presented by the Swedish museums in 1993 (Svanberg & Szabó 1993). Another source of inspiration is derived from a nationwide campaign launched by the Danish National Museum in 1992. We asked all citizens in Denmark to write their diary on the 2nd of September – a perfectly ordinary day. The museum received more than 50,000 diaries from all kinds of people, ranging from drug addicts and prostitutes to members of the Danish government, almost all



A questionnaire, translated into 7 languages, has been made in order to help the individual who wants to write his or her life story. Information material about the campaign has been distributed widely. Photo: Reza Farsanghi 1997.

age groups and people from all regions of the country.

Among the many diaries were also quite a large number written by refugees and immigrants, giving interesting insights in the daily routines of immigrant families. However, the diaries – even though some of them are quite short – held more than the mere description of everyday life that we asked for. They contain information about fears and troubles, happiness, homesickness, relations to school and work, thoughts, future plans, and much more. They are personal stories, which have helped to show the possibilities of the autobiographical method, when it comes to the study of the new Danes as well. On this background the National Museum has invited all immigrants and refugees in the country to write their own life stories.[2]

The collection of life stories has been carried on for more than a year now, and as a result we have received about 100 life stories from many "new Danes", along with a number of interviews. In these life stories, we get the individuals' perspective on the migration process, which also contains interesting contemporary foreign history and universal themes on the break-up of families and flight. The individual story tells us of the meeting with Danish culture, and we get an insight in how different groups of immigrants with their different backgrounds integrate in Danish society.

The biographical report thus renders a total picture of a person, explaining motives, results, judgements, and attitudes – but it also gives a better understanding not only of the individual, but also of the category or ethnic group to which the individual belongs.

How do we then define the terms *ethnic groups* or *ethnicity*? In *Ethnicity & Nationalism, Anthropological Perspectives*, where Thomas Hylland Eriksen sums up the anthropological studies on the subject, he emphasizes the character of ethnicity as a construction, which occurs in situations where groups need to distinguish themselves from others. "Ethnicity," he says, "is an aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction. It can thus also be defined as a social identity (based on a contrast vis-à-vis others) characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship... When cultural differences regularly make a difference in interaction between members of groups, the social relationship has an ethnic element" (Eriksen 1993:12).

Ethnicity is seen as an ambiguous and fluid term, which indicates that a group can create a systematic distinction between insiders and outsiders, "us" and "them". You are not born a Turk or a Dane. Ethnicity is a construction, chosen or forced. It can be manipulated like a resource, a limitation, or something neutral. Ethnicity is a means to a collective identity, which above all is used to categorize members of a group and to distinguish them from others: We are not like them. The point is not, therefore, that "real cultural differences" are unimportant, but that it is the uses to which they are put which give them social relevance. The cultural content of identities changes, as does the social relevance of cultural content. The cultural resources that a particular immigrant group brings with it are transformed through contact and "acculturation", but they are also put to new uses in the new context, and thereby their social

significance is changed (Eriksen 1993: 138ff.; Sjögren 1996:101–106; Lindqvist 1996:63; Horgby 1996:50; Alsmark 1996: 8ff.; Jenkins 1997:13ff.).

Following this line of thought, immigration to Denmark can be said to actualize or even construct new ethnic groupings, and to inspire new ethnic strategies. An immigrant or refugee who ends up in Denmark can either try to build up a new identity as a "real Dane" by adopting the Danish language and way of life as quickly as possible, or develop strategies to redefine his or her ethnic identity under the new conditions. Different symbols can be used to enforce the ethnic feelings: religion or language, political commitment, support for causes in the homeland, etc. Basically, individuals are not seen as passive subjects or victims of larger structures, but as more or less active social agents. In this context, ethnicity can be a very useful concept, which is well suited in the work with life stories of refugees and immigrants, as the following examples may illustrate.

The Life Stories – Some Examples

The first to be presented here is from the life story of a Chilean woman, 55 years old, educated at a business school, who came to Denmark as a political refugee following the military coup in Chile in 1973. Her life story is in many ways representative of the Chileans who have written. Not surprisingly, they share a strong politically and ideologically founded awareness in their approach to Denmark, which serves as the key to their observations and understanding of social relations. This part of her life story, quoted here, gives a clear impression of such an approach to the situation of being a foreigner in a foreign country:

> I had not been here for very long before I bought a Danish newspaper. I was desperate to get some news, and to read news every day was so basic a thing for me that I decided to try to understand something, and I bought one. I did not understand anything, so I tried to guess from the pictures. I felt strange; I felt like an illiterate, and I thought of all the peasants who came to the cities, bought a newspaper, looked in it and tried to guess what was written or kept it for someone who could read, to read it to them. I remembered a campaign we had in order to educate teachers among the young peasants who were taught to use Paulo Freire's[3] method of teaching people to read. With the Danish newspaper in my hand I felt a great joy, having contributed to such an important work, and I was proud and appreciated even more our work with the literacy campaign.

Concerning the attitude to Denmark and the Danes, it is again typical of both this woman and the other Chileans that the ideological approach is a dominant factor in the reflections – to a degree which may seem almost impersonal:

> I have great Danish friends. It is difficult to befriend them, but when they have become your friends, they are 100%. I think that the Danes are wonderful people, friendly, maybe a little naïve, but they have difficulties with communication. The Danes show solidarity when they are prompted to do so. The state shows solidarity to other societies who need help, but the Danes also show solidarity individually when they shop in the shops with this special purpose or buy things from the Third World...
>
> To call yourself a Dane, Chilean, Chinese etc., to be white or black, yellow or Indian, developed or underdeveloped I find meaningless when you take into consideration that we all are human beings, living the same place (planet) and having the same body.

Many life stories from refugees and immigrants from, say, the Middle East, Turkey, and Pakistan show a very different ap-

The life stories of refugees and immigrants often contain dramatic themes on the break-up of families and flight. These two photos give an impression of the experiences of a Kurdish woman. The first shows her as a refugee in the Kurdish mountains. The other shows her at work in a Danish kindergarten.

proach to the concept of their home country, to the Danish society and the Danes. The story of this woman, who is a Lebanese refugee, 36 years old, seems to be typical in its attitudes and in the way it emphasizes social isolation and alienation from Danish society:

I came to Denmark almost 11 years ago, in 1986 with my husband and daughter. Because of the war in Lebanon we chose to go to Denmark, where my husband's sister was living... To me it was no easy decision to leave for a strange country, far away from the family, and I love my country, no matter if there is war or not, to me it is the first and the best country.

When it comes to Denmark and the Danes she writes:

Firstly, I do not have much contact with the Danes. Secondly, when I came to Denmark I realized that the Danes do not have as much contact with each other as we had in Lebanon, because they like to live for themselves... In our country, the families live very close to each other and guests go in and out of your home at their own convenience... In my daily life I only have contacts with my children and my sister-in-law. I always speak Arabic to them, even though the children speak Danish. I think they should speak my language, otherwise they will never learn to speak Arabic. I raise my children in the way that I was raised. I teach them to respect people and to act the way God wants them to, and I explain to them what they can and what they cannot do. To me it is very important that the children learn something about the culture of my home country.

You cannot compare family life in Denmark and my home country. In our country it is the parents who decide, our children are not allowed to do everything like the Danish children. The husband does not help so much with the domestic work, but works hard to earn money.

The clear feeling of "us" as opposed to "them" (the Danes) is often evident in the life stories where Islam is mentioned.

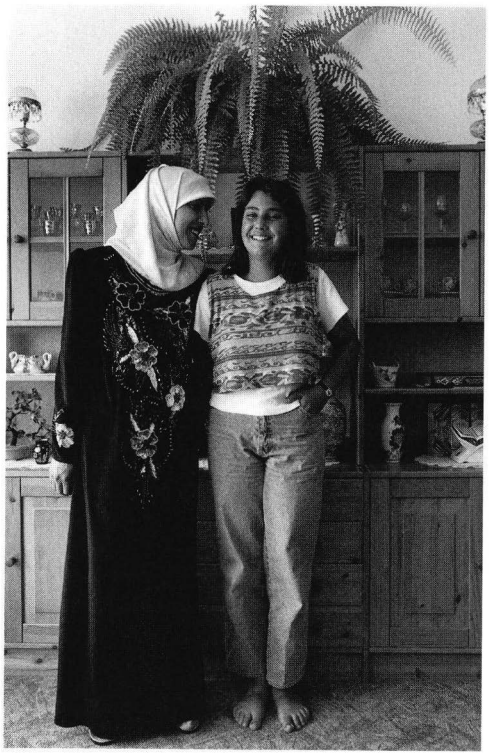
A Palestinian woman, born in 1969, who came to Denmark seven years ago writes:

During the years that I have been here, I have had five children, three girls and two boys... they are the greatest joy for me and my husband. There is, however, something that ruins a bit of the happiness we have in Denmark. We have met problems, because the Danes are not Muslims. People stare at us everywhere, in shops, on the bus... I cannot take off my headscarf – it is a part of me. It is the same problem in the children's school and in kindergarten, especially at the start. Now we are able to speak to people about our Islamic rules, and it makes it a bit easier. We have been here seven years, and I still long for my mother, my country, my friends, and even though we have a nice life in Denmark, I still have a dream of returning to Lebanon.

The life stories of immigrants who arrived in Denmark when very young as well as second-generation immigrants show us new – almost heart-rending – perspectives in the way they shed light on cultural dynamics, identity processes, and perceptions of self. They illustrate the extent to which acculturation in terms of values and general orientation has taken place, how people can switch situationally between a largely Danish or, for instance, Pakistani identity, how there may be tension between these individuals and their parents, and how the boundaries preventing full assimilation may be both internally and externally constructed (Eriksen 1993:138f.). Again issues concerning concepts of family values and religious attitudes are in focus.

This young man, the son of Pakistani parents (his father, now retired, has been an unskilled worker in different factories, his mother from time to time having secretarial jobs), was born in Denmark. He is now 22 years old and a student. To him, Islam and the way it is practised in a Muslim youth

A woman dressed in western style in her home in Lebanon 1985.



The same woman in her home in Denmark 1997. She now always wears a head scarf. Her daughter is free to choose how she wants to dress. Furniture and other items from her home have been aquired by the National Museum as some of the first museum collections from "the New Danes". Photo: Aline Talatinian 1997.

association has changed his perceptions of himself and his place in society compared to the Danes. The Muslim youth association has given him a stronger identity than his hard-working parents seem to have been capable of. It is noteworthy that the Muslim identity takes on an ethnic meaning in the way it is used to define the group of young Muslims in relation to the Danes.

The way I regarded myself at the beginning was that I went around and excused myself for being an immigrant. Being a Muslim has changed this for me, now I am proud of being an immigrant, to be a part of the immigrant culture, and my parents have really taken the dirty work. That I am very proud of. And all this has come because I am now a member of a Muslim youth association... I don't feel "small" anymore, which I did when I went to elementary school and high school. That is what the Muslim youth association has done for me... In a society such as this, you have a lot of problems when you are an immigrant. And if you do not know your background, you are right there in the middle, and this makes you break down and gives you a lot of psychological problems. Islam is everything for me, my foothold, I know who I am.

Before, when I was together with Danes, I didn't know whether I was Pakistani or Danish. I felt this *kulturkløft* [my accentuation, cultural cleavage]. I didn't know what I should do. But as soon as I learned about Islam, I could say to myself: you are not a lesser person than the others. You are just as good as them.

Concerning Danish ways of living, however, things have been somewhat changed in a "Danish" way:

Palestinian women preparing embroideries for the museum exhibition in Helsingør, an exhibition which was based on the commitment and active participation of the women. Photo: Aline Talatinian 1997.

I just have to say that it is tradition in Pakistan that the family stays together. I suppose that it is through input from the Danish culture that my sisters have moved out. I also have two types of friends. The Pakistani and the others. Together with them [the Danes] I play for instance Dungeons and Dragons, stuff like that and watch TV, we have a TV club where we watch videos, often they are concentrated on black humour. We are very taken by Monty Python, Star Wars, the series and the books.

The cultural cleavage is painfully clear in the story of another young man, born in 1973 in Eritrea, who has lived in Denmark since he came as a refugee with his mother at the age of 9. He says:

Often I feel very Danish, but here in Denmark you frequently face opposition when you meet people who don't know you, they think "he is a typical immigrant", and they become very surprised when you talk to them. "My God, you speak Danish very well," they say. It surprises me. They say it even when my understanding of Danish is better than theirs!

When he is on visits to Eritrea, however, he has the same problem.

I have been to Eritrea to visit twice. It was nice to meet the family, and it was also very tough, because they were surprised to see how much I had changed. They could not understand that I had become so independent. I have the Danish mentality, I manage for myself. A somewhat egoistic way of thinking. They could not understand that at all. Down there, there is nothing that's mine or yours.

As for the future, he expresses pessimism and worries about his possibilities in Denmark. This is something he shares with

many other younger informants. To some, it is seen as a fear of a religiously based discrimination or even conflict, while to others it is related to questions of race and ethnicity. The feeling of being marginalized in both the country of origins and in Denmark could hardly be expressed more clearly than in this statement from the young Eritrean:

> My mother wants to go back... I for my own part fear that developments in Denmark will make it difficult to stay ... If I go to Eritrea I will be guaranteed a job, and will not be the victim of discrimination, they will take me for what I am. I think that I should be able to live with that. But in spite of that, I would also miss Denmark. I know Danish culture better than Eritrean culture, ... I am a little pessimistic about the development in Denmark, I have tried a couple of times, only to be refused a job because of my name... The Danes see the immigrants as trouble makers, who beat their wives and things like that. I think the Danes are afraid of that. Even though I say: I am a Christian, they are still afraid of what I might do. Yes, I have experienced this, and it is aggravating. You say you are Danish and at the same time you are not Danish. You say you are Eritrean, and then you are not Eritrean. You Danes don't understand it. You have to talk to other immigrants in order to get understanding.

Representations of the "New Danes" in Museums Traditionally Oriented to the "Original" Danish Culture

The life stories are meant to be kept for posterity in the museum archives, but we have found them of such relevance and interest that we have experimented with using the life story approach in different kinds of media: video film and museum exhibitions.

The video film (28 min. long) is called "My First Encounter with Denmark". It portrays four persons: a Chilean, a Somalian, and an Iraqi-Kurdish refugee, as well as a Turkish "guest worker". They do not tell their whole life stories, but their reflections on the Danes and Denmark based on their very first encounter with the country and its people.

Hellmuth is an engineer from Chile. After the coup in 1973, he went into hiding in the Italian embassy in Santiago. It was a sheer chance that he and his family were accepted in Denmark. He describes their first meeting with the new country, which was through a film, smuggled into the embassy in Santiago, showing a Greenlander paddling his kayak among icebergs, hunting for seals. The Turkish guest worker, a woman who came in the 1970s through marriage, had imagined a country of great wealth, but was shocked by the appearance of long-haired and not very clean hippies; the Somali, well educated and coming from a large town, was treated as somebody from "the bush" who knew nothing about a "civilized" country, while the Iraqi-Kurdish woman, an electrical engineer, was surprised by the different attitudes to family and responsibilities to each other.

Based on their personal experiences, they explain what happens when you encounter a strange country, how you become aware of your own values, traditions, and characteristics. In their homelands, they saw themselves as, for the Turkish woman: a peasant, an Alevit (as opposed to other Muslims). The Chilean was a communist, an engineer, and a public employee. The Somali was an officer in the navy, and belonging to the urban middle class. The Kurdish woman was a middle-class, university-educated, and politically active person. Now they become primarily Turkish, Chilean, Kurdish, or Somalian. But their descrip-

tions of the meeting with Denmark are also a mirror of the Danish culture, a momentary picture of how different cultures meet, change, are preserved, or disappear in present-day Denmark.[4]

Finally an exhibition was set up at a museum of cultural history in the town of Helsingør, north of Copenhagen, in cooperation with a group of women connected to a project for refugee women. There are many such projects all over the country, aimed at helping those who have problems integrating in Danish society. They receive help with the language, instruction in Danish traditions, and so on. What is special about the project in Helsingør is that sewing and embroidery is an important part of the daily activities, and the embroideries are quite extraordinary. The Danish teacher at the project had seen pictures of traditional Palestinian embroidery in a book, and inspired by these, she designed modern clothes and articles on which the traditional patterns can be sewn. Now the women are experts with the needles, but only few of them had learned to sew or embroider in their homeland. The tradition which was once passed on from mother to daughter was long gone.

The embroidered suits and other articles were shown at the exhibition, in themselves an interesting example of the meeting of cultures, a mixture of traditional Palestinian embroidery patterns and modern Danish design of high technical and artistic standard – thus being well suited for an exhibition. In my opinion, they are also well suited to provoke the spectator to consider the essence of traditions, how these are constructed, and how ethnic traits are under constant development.

With the embroideries in the centre, the stories of the women let us follow them from their homelands, their personal backgrounds and life stories describing the journey from the Middle East to Denmark. In a part of the exhibition, the visitor could see one of the much-debated headscarves used by many Muslim women, and visitors would be surprised to learn that some of the women had arrived in Denmark in Western dress (jeans, no headscarf), while they are now wearing long dresses and headscarves. Most Danes imagine that coming to and living in Denmark would bring about the opposite situation, and again this may be an example of what can be seen as a *construction of ethnicity*. Furthermore, the issue of the headscarf was differentiated, because the women presented different personal angles on the question of wearing these. For some of them it was something they chose to use in certain periods of their life, when they themselves felt it to be the right thing to do, while others would or could never be seen without it. This important point makes it clear that ethnic minorities are no more homogeneous than other categories of people, and that there may be important differences in views and values within the minorities.

The exhibition was based on the commitment and collaboration of the women, who took active part in its planning from the first discussions concerning layout and contents to the details of the opening reception. The women collected the objects, wrote the texts, and so on, while the professional museum staff acted primarily as their helpers. This process has helped to turn the women into active museum users – not passive guests. Hopefully, cooperation of this kind, between different cultural institutions and refugee or immigrant groups, will

be one of the possibilities for future initiatives, which may help to communicate cultural knowledge and understanding.

Let us finally return to the questions posed at the beginning of this article: What kind of positions should ethnological museums take in view of the present day development towards a multicultural society, and the reappearing questions of nationalism, ethnicity, and identity? And if they choose to get involved, how can they approach the matter?

The documentation and interpretation based on life stories of the "new Danes" can be used to show how individual and collective identities are always complex and shifting, and to convey the significance of dynamics, changes, and oppositions for the study of cultures. This may be a small step on the way towards building up and using the museums as centres of knowledge, where identities are not just affirmed, but where questions of identity and ethnization as well as the questions of what is alien and what is one's own may be discussed, and where over-simplified notions can be put into perspective.

When it comes to the general involvement of the museums, however, these institutions face a whole new set of questions, such as: Should Danes tell the story of the "new Danes", or should the new Danes themselves do it? Should this be done within the framework of existing museums of cultural history, or in special museums for each group of immigrants? What are the consequences as regards integration and/or preserving ethnic identities? How are relevant policies for the collection of objects and exhibitions to be formulated? Finally, there is also the question whether the existing national museums about the "original" Danes have a task or an obligation towards the immigrants to explain the Danish history and lifestyle to them so that they may obtain a better understanding of their new country. How are such objectives to be attained?[5]

So, as was the case a hundred years ago, the museums certainly may have an important role to play again. The question is: *which* museums and *what* role they are to have.

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Notes

1 The use of the term "life story" or the term "life history" refers to the definitions presented by Daniel Bertaux (1981:7–11), in which he points out the general terminological confusion in the field. The distinction between "life story" and "life history", beyond a distinction between two kinds of data (the second including the first) might well involve a distinction between two approaches. Generally speaking, he points out, "there is a certain terminological confusion in the field, as these two terms and a few more: autobiography, personal documents, human documents, life records, case history, etc. have been used almost interchangeably. The autobiography, which is written by the person himself (or herself), and the biography, which is written by somebody focusing upon somebody else's life, are long-established literary forms." He explains the appearance of the term life story as follows: "In the 19th century, anthropologists doing fieldwork started to collect life stories, i.e. accounts of a person's life as delivered orally by the person himself. But as they were supplementing the person's own story with biographical information drawn from conversations with other people, they needed another term to refer to the whole bulk of data thus obtained: they called it life history." Also Dagfinn Slettan (1994:19–21) dis-

tinguishes between the terms following the same lines: "In my opinion it is important to distinguish between the two... In a 'life story' a person tells about his or her own life, in writing or orally. It is the person himself or herself who tells the story... Life history, on the other hand, refers to a person's life history as such... A life story or course of life may be constructed by the researcher using all available sources."

2 The campaign was launched through the media, through associations, clubs, mosques, Catholic organizations, prisons, schools, and many other channels. Even though it is open to anyone of foreign heritage living in Denmark, there has been a special focus on immigrants and refugees from: Chile, Vietnam, Morocco and other Arabic-speaking countries, the former Yugoslavia, and Pakistan. A special network of "key persons" from different groups was established in order to help promote the campaign. Furthermore, a number of "memoir workshops" were set up, especially to help those with trouble writing.

3 The founder of a school of pedagogy, born in Brazil 1901.

4 The video film was produced for the National Museum by Kim Ernest Film, and was financed by the Danish Ministry of Culture (Kulturfonden). Research and interviews for the film were done by Lise Poulsen, who has been a research assistant for the whole project. The film has been shown twice on Danish National Television (DR) and is going to be used in the work of the counsellors of the Danish Refugee Council.

5 For discussions of this type of museological questions see, for example, Vaessen 1998.

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Bourgeois Charity as Cultural Education

Benevolent Societies and Homes in Nineteenth-Century Copenhagen

By Karin Lützen

In their *Communist Manifesto* from 1848, Marx and Engels described the changes in society that had taken place in the bourgeois epoch: "All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind" (1967:83).

Some of the solid things that were melting into air included the traditional guild society in which everyone had a fixed place, and in which everyone was under the surveillance and protection of the master. Whether one was a member of a freehold farmer's household or a master craftsman's, one was sure of receiving food and houseroom. With economic and political liberalism, however, women, men, and children became architects of their own fortunes. They acquired the right to settle down anywhere in any occupation they chose, and as immigrants into the big towns they could live a free life without surveillance. The reverse of the medal was that there was a greater likelihood that a person with this liberty would end up in the gutter than at the top of the social pyramid. The way this was perceived by Copenhagen's middle class, and the initiatives they took to relieve the social consequences of liberalism, are the subject of this article, based on my book *Byen tæmmes: Kernefamilie, sociale reformer og velgørenhed i 1800-tallets København* (Lützen 1998).

Social Consequences of Liberalism

Denmark received its free constitution in 1849, and the liberal members of parliament who now had to give the country laws, wanted liberalism to embrace not only political but also economic relations. Throughout the 1850s, freedom of trade was negotiated, and after a great deal of resistance from the craftsman class, the Freedom of Trade Act was passed by parliament in 1857. It was not to come into force, however, until five years later, to give the craftsmen time to adjust to the new conditions and replace their existing mutual relief funds with other arrangements.

From 1862, guild membership was no longer compulsory in Denmark, and a young man of humble origin could no longer follow a predetermined path and know for certain that he would finish as a married master craftsman. Everyone now had the chance to end up as a wealthy shipowner – or as a penniless labourer. In Copenhagen there were many people who could not cope with the harsh conditions of economic liberalism, and with their highly visible poverty they gradually became a social problem. For liberal politicians this was merely a necessary, albeit deplorable, consequence of the new freedoms, but for other men of the middle class it was a reflection of the heartlessness of liberalism.

The men who first drew attention to the social inequalities of liberalism were clergymen and doctors, and their vocations gave them ample opportunity to see for themselves how widespread poverty was in the city. At the end of the 1860s, these men began to voice a critique of liberalism, and although they did not wish for a return to the days of absolutism, they nevertheless expressed a yearning for a pre-modern society in which the population was bonded together to ensure that no one was left in the lurch. They observed with concern the wide

gaps that had developed between the classes, and they looked for ways to bridge them. This middle class, which had itself benefited from the freedoms of liberalism, wished to preserve a social order in which the propertied classes retained their property and the unpropertied were given better economic and social conditions.

For centuries Copenhagen had been a fortified city surrounded by ramparts, but in the 1850s the authorities permitted building outside the ramparts, and at Vesterbro and Nørrebro, large tenements were erected at great speed to house the working class. Inside the ramparts, however, the great poverty was still visible, and many poor people lived in Christianshavn especially. The two ministers of the parish church there, Johan Holck and Vilhelm Munck, published several works in which they drew the attention of their class to the poverty problem in the parish. In 1867 Munck wrote that "as circumstances are now, there exists an infinitely deep gap between the well-to-do and the poor in society. We who stand on one side of it generally know nothing at all about what it is like on the other side; we only know that there is a large dose of destitution and misery, a mass of dirt and rags, and a multitude of vices over there."

The poor, just like the middle class, were citizens of a country governed by the citizens, and it was not permissible for responsible democrats to sit with their arms crossed and let the situation continue. Munck wrote that a little relief was sent over to the poor now and then, but it was insufficient. "The best thing the well-to-do could give them would be a real, living interest in their welfare, an encouraging word and kind sympathy, which they so rarely receive" (Munck 1867:66–67). Yet they could receive this only if women and men from the middle class would take part in charity work.

The Deserving Poor

In January 1866, Rev. Munck and Rev. Holck invited their middle-class parishioners to a meeting at which the Christianshavn Benevolent Society was founded. The aim was to support the deserving poor of Christianshavn through voluntary charity, so that they could be brought to the stage where they could help themselves and be prevented as far as possible from sinking into unhealthy destitution and coming into the care of the public poor relief system. It was a matter of helping people to help themselves, but only the deserving poor. It would have been hopeless to support the penniless people who did not seem to want to help themselves; the public authorities could deal with them.

At the founding meeting of the Benevolent Society, about sixty men and women volunteered their personal assistance as inspectors. This meant that they would visit needy applicants in their homes to check that they really were in need and not merely requesting help out of indolence, and also to ensure that they were deserving poor: in other words, not drinking their wages in the pub and letting the family fend for themselves. These middle-class volunteers would inspect the applicants, which seemed perfectly reasonable, since the society had limited funds and wanted to ensure that they were spent in a beneficial way.

Besides their monitoring duties, the inspectors – as Munck had recommended – also had to show a genuine interest in the welfare of the needy and give them encouraging words and kind sympathy. Just as the

master in traditional society ideally took an interest in the well-being of his apprentices and journeymen and encouraged them to do their best, these middle-class inspectors would patronize the poor of the parish. In this form of charity it was possible to maintain the illusion that the whole parish was one big family. Christianshavn Benevolent Society served as a model for other parishes, and within a few years benevolent societies had been established all over the city, and in 1874 they combined to form the Copenhagen Benevolent Society.

Home Sweet Home

The benevolent societies were among the relief associations – from committees organizing soup kitchens to needlework societies – which sought to help poor families to stick together. The frame that was to hold a family together was the home, the flat or room in which they lived, which should ideally be so pleasant that they would like to spend their lives there. However, the poor rarely liked their homes, for they were forced to live in wretched hovels with holes in the ceiling and damp running down the walls. The men therefore preferred to spend their time in the pubs, and the children would rather run around the streets. It was this disorderly state of affairs that the charitable associations tried to remedy.

An important part of the charitable work was therefore geared to providing the poor with better housing, and in 1865 the Workers' Building Society was founded. The district physician in Christianshavn, F. F. Ulrik, took the initiative by delivering a lecture to the workers at the shipyard in this part of the city and urging them to set up a self-help association. Unlike the clergymen behind the benevolent society, Ulrik thought that this patronizing form of charity did not belong in a democracy, and the needy had to take matters into their own hands. On the other hand, Ulrik had the same world-view as the other benevolent members of his class, in that he also held up the value of domestic life and used it as an argument for founding a building society. "A nice home and the blessings that it brings," as he said in his lecture, "is what Scandinavians prize above all things, and nothing is so destructive for husband and wife alike, so mentally corrosive, so blunting in spiritual and physical respects, as the lack of houseroom and the comfort of the home, a place for the tired to find rest from the toil and moil of the day" (Ulrik 1865).

This form of charity was directed towards the poor who had already started a family, and who were able by various odd jobs to provide for themselves tolerably well. It was only in times of crisis and illness that a family like this should need to turn to a benevolent society. The middle class's own delight in the home was transferred to the poor, and it was taken for granted that they too would value "a nice home".

In Copenhagen at this time, however, there were numerous people who were not part of a family and therefore could not have a home in which to spend their lives. They could be the children of parents working outside the home, who had to hang around in the streets after school, before their parents came home. Or they could be unmarried female factory workers who took lodgings in shady hostels where they could spend their spare time with other unmarried casual workers. Or they could be maids on their free Sunday evening, who had the choice of twiddling their thumbs in the

spartan servants' rooms or wandering the streets in search of amusement. They could also be seamen looking for accommodation while in port; if they took lodgings in a hostel through an agency, they could run the risk of being robbed of their money. Or they could be conscripted soldiers arriving on the four o'clock train from the quiet provinces, who could use their limited spare time to sit round the stove in their quarters or else go out to the beer cellars scattered around the barracks.

For all these people temporarily without families, extensive charitable activity was likewise started in the form of what was called protective work (*værnearbejde*). A recurrent complaint about the risks to which people without families were exposed was "the temptations and dangers of the city", although these were not the same for all age groups or for both sexes. For children it was the bad habits they learnt from guttersnipes, such as swearing, begging, and stealing. For young people of both sexes it was loose morals that posed the great threat: young women could be seduced and left pregnant, or they could be seduced and then discover fornication as a profitable sideline, which could lead them into professional prostitution. For young men the special danger was drunkenness, since the pubs were the only place for them to go, and they could easily be enticed into drinking too much. Moreover, they could be seduced by loose women and either contract a venereal disease or lose their respect for the female sex.

Just as the middle-class benefactors considered "a nice home" to be the best protection against poverty for the deserving poor, they also believed that a nice home would be a sure bulwark against the temptations and dangers of the city. If these young people did not have a family home to go to, then the benefactors had to find a substitute for them. The idea that this protective work should be shaped on the model of the middle-class home was propounded by the Hamburg clergyman Johann Hinrich Wichern. In 1833 he had started a reformatory for delinquent boys. Instead of locking them in with handicapped, destitute, and licentious people, as the poor relief authorities did all over Europe, Wichern wanted to bring them up in a family system. In *Das rauhe Haus*, as the home was called, the boys were divided into "families" of twelve, and each family group was governed by a young Christian man. By means of an everyday life which was as close as possible to that of a middle-class family, the boys were introduced to virtues such as diligence, self-control, and moderation, besides which they were taught a craft so that they could fend for themselves (Wichern 1958).

Charitable Deeds

In the revolutionary years of 1848, Wichern drew up a Protestant manifesto in response to the Communist manifesto. This was adopted as the programme according to which the German Home Mission shaped its work. Wichern drew attention to the spiritual destitution that was particularly widespread in the big cities, and he proposed the formation of a special city mission. The Home Mission would not just preach the Word of God to those in need but also perform charitable deeds among them (Wichern 1962). In 1876 this idea was passed on by the Copenhagen clergyman Harald Stein in a lecture entitled "What Does the Home Mission Want?" He presented appropriate charitable deeds in the

framework of a home. He divided the work into three categories: preservation charity towards children, young girls, and young men; salvation charity to counter drunkenness, criminality, and immorality; and alleviation charity towards the homeless, the poor, and the sick (Stein 1876).

With his series of lectures, Rev. Stein blew life into the mission that had been trying since 1865 to work for "the furtherance of the Kingdom of God in Copenhagen". The Church Association for the Home Mission was founded in 1861 as a part of the established Lutheran church, with the aim of doing missionary work among unbelievers in Denmark. According to the Home Mission, revival and repentance were "the only necessity", but this proselytizing would not be undertaken exclusively by clergymen: the lay people of the congregation were also to be involved as helpers. This revival work was successful throughout Denmark, except in Copenhagen, where the furtherance of the Kingdom of God encountered obstacles, and no lay people volunteered for the mission. It was not until Rev. Stein suggested that the mission of words should be accompanied by a mission of deeds that a large share of the Copenhagen middle class offered their services as helpers. They were academics and tradesmen who were themselves converted sinners and now wanted to serve God through charity work.

All over Europe, poor relief and the prison system were being reformed in these years, but whereas the public authorities built palatial new institutions with long panoptic corridors and hygienic single cells for the inmates, private charity erected small, pleasant homes, known as protective homes (*værnehjem*) or rescue homes (*redningshjem*), built according to the family system recommended by Wichern. People who did not belong in public institutions such as poorhouses, workhouses, and prisons were gathered up by private charity and placed in rescue homes. They could include women who had fallen into loose living but wanted to be raised again, or drunkards who wanted to give up drinking, or orphans who had to be saved from being locked away in the poorhouse.

For all these people, the Copenhagen Home Mission wanted to offer salvation charity, while preservation charity was used for people temporarily without families. Whereas a stay in a rescue home, if it was to be effective, could last as much as a couple of years, the protective home was only open a few hours each day or each week. All these homes were financed by private funds. The management of each home was responsible for attaching a circle of supporters to the home, who undertook to donate a certain annual sum, and when there was an acute shortage of money, bazaars were organized, or collections and appeals in the press.

From Guttersnipe to Citizen

Earlier in the century, crèches had been set up for mothers working outside the home, places where they could leave children under school age while the mother was at her job. When children reached the age of seven, they could no longer go to the crèches. Schoolchildren of working parents therefore had to spend the time after school in the street, but when they reached the age of ten they could find work in factories or workshops, or as messenger boys. In the eyes of many of the charity people, wage labour was not to be recommended for such small

children, because it could easily bring them into bad company. Work shelters (*arbejdsstuer*) were therefore set up for these children as a place where they could spend the time after school and simultaneously earn a little money by working at a craft.

The first work shelter for children in Copenhagen was opened in 1874 in St Stephen's Parish, in a small house bought with money collected for the purpose. The initiative was taken by four distinguished men in the city, a wholesaler and consul-general, a captain, a military supply officer, and the vicar of the parish church. The unmarried daughter of the officer became the unpaid leader of the work shelter for the next twenty-five years. In the course of the first year, 30-40 girls aged 7–14 visited the work shelter, where they were kept busy sewing linen, dressmaking, ironing, plaiting straw, and making paper bags. The profits from the sale of the goods were given to the girls themselves, and with their parents' consent the children collected the money in a savings box, where they were also expected to put the money they would otherwise have spent on sweets.

The aim of the work shelter was to get children out of the habit of roving the streets in their spare time or going around begging. The benevolent middle class had seen with their own eyes that many of the people who had migrated to the city, and who did not belong anywhere, scraped through by taking odd jobs by the day. When these people could not find work, they hung around street corners in bad company and soon became a burden to the poor law authorities. "Idleness is the root of all evil", as an old proverb put it, and this was still true in a society based on political and economic liberalism. Any guttersnipe idly drifting around was identified as a future recipient of poor relief and hence as a bottomless hole into which public funds could be poured. If, however, the guttersnipes could be occupied in their spare time, learning to be diligent and conscientious, the benefactors supposed that the boys would later feel a desire to learn a craft and hence acquire an education that would make them self-supporting.

In its annual report for 1887, the board of directors of St Stephen's Children's Shelter, as the institution was called, wrote that it was now in a position to occupy 80 children whose parents were out all day and who were thus left to their own devices: "A large number of children, and hence the whole of society, suffer from the fact that so many children in the capital grow up in the streets and thus become accustomed to doing what they like, so that they do not learn obedience from childhood and therefore will never learn it. It is a deplorable nuisance when children are permitted to be rowdy in the streets, because the young people who grow up in these conditions will never learn to control themselves but believe that they can do what they want. The bad elements will then set the tone and the others will follow, and wantonness and destructiveness and coarseness will prevail among youth."

With this statement, the management of the work shelter emphasized that a child had to learn the virtues of obedience and self-control and be weaned away from the vices of wantonness, destructiveness, and coarseness. If a working-class child learnt to obey adults, he would also be capable later of obeying his superiors and thus becoming an honest worker. Furthermore, if the child learnt the very important mid-

dle-class virtue of self-control, he would be able to master his stubborn temper and refrain from destroying other people's property out of sheer spite. For the middle class itself, it was also an advantage that the streets would be more pleasant to pass through if they were not constantly swarming with wild street urchins.

At the end of the 1880s, certain educationists criticized these work shelters, which were perceived as small factories which only trained children to become good factory workers. Miss P. Smith, superintendent of the Blegdamsvejen Shelter, had seen shelters on her travels abroad which had more of the spirit of a home, and she thought that children would be better playing and singing, weaving with bast and paper, doing woodwork and modelling. In 1890 she set up a Continuation Shelter, as she called it, in Nørrebro, and here the children were occupied with leisure activities and help with their homework, as well as playing singing games and having stories read to them (Anon. 1915).

In 1887 Queen Louise's private secretary, Councillor of State Sophus Hennings, together with representatives of nobility, business, and education, had founded Queen Louise's Crèche Society, which immediately set up crèches in the working-class neighbourhood of Nørrebro. In 1891 Hennings once again assembled a group of benefactors, who founded the Association for the Establishment of Continuation Shelters in the Workers' Quarters of Copenhagen. Having held a bazaar to raise money, the association was able to open four continuation shelters in the city, all of which followed Miss Smith's principle of letting the children do handicrafts and other leisure pursuits rather than industrial work.

Homes as an Alternative to the Street

Children had many benefactors in various circles, but it was only the Copenhagen Home Mission that observed the dangers to which young girls were exposed. Both maid servants and factory girls wandered the streets at night, and they could be enticed into dance halls or pubs, where "the air of immorality and coarseness strikes them", as Rev. Stein said at a mission meeting in 1876 (*Indre Missions Tidende* 1876:756).

To counteract these vicious temptations, in 1876 the Copenhagen Home Mission opened its mission premises in Østergade every Sunday evening for all virtuous girls. They could bring their needlework with them and carry on with it during the meeting, which began with a hymn, followed by an hour's reading aloud or storytelling, after which the girls practised hymns and patriotic songs. To round off the evening, tea and bread were served, and the meeting was closed with the word of God and a prayer. The meetings soon attracted a good attendance, with about 150 maids present every Sunday. These meetings were held until 1892. In 1876, the factory girls were likewise invited to spend every Wednesday evening in the mission house; their meetings followed the same programme as the maids', but they were not discontinued until 1894.

While young girls without families were encouraged to busy themselves with needlework at the evening meetings, young men were urged to read newspapers, listen to educational talks, read about historical subjects – and to write home to their families. They were thus prompted both to educate themselves to become conscientious citizens who could talk about politics and take part in public life, and to become stable

husbands with a feeling for domestic comfort. And whereas the young girls were invited only once a week to a temporary home, more permanent premises were established for the young men.

In 1879 the Society for the Seamen's Home in Copenhagen was founded by benefactors connected to the Copenhagen Home Mission. In a house in Holbergsgade, near the docks, there were evening gatherings where the gospel was preached to sailors, and the home was open all day for seamen to pass the time, talking and reading. From 1881 until 1906, the Seamen's Home was housed in Bethelskibet (The Ship of Bethel), where there was room for 200 sailors, at the end of Nyhavn, the harbour district. Christmas Eve was also celebrated here in a homey way, with a Christmas tree, Christmas presents, and songs, and numerous ladies helped during the years, serving tea and playing the harmonium at the evening meetings.

Some women wished to open separate seamen's homes, however, and the school principal, Miss Atalia Rørbye, who was one of the founders of the Society for the Seamen's Home in Copenhagen, at the same time headed the Copenhagen Women's Society for Missions to Seamen. The women set up a Bible Bag Mission, that is to say, they filled bags with bibles, church magazines, collections of sermons, and other books with an edifying, informative, or entertaining Christian content. In the course of the first year, they sent 158 bags on board ships of the Danish navy and on Danish and foreign merchant ships setting sail on long-distance voyages. In addition, the ladies had begun hanging up bible bags in the sailors' lodging houses and taverns (*Havnen* 1880:119–120).

When Bethelskibet came into use, the women's society found that their protective work was insufficient, since the seamen who had attended the evening meeting and hopefully been edified, still had to walk past all the temptations and dangers of Nyhavn in the form of the beer cellars. If an effort was really to be made on behalf of the sailors, they also had to be offered cheap, decent accommodation. The men in the Society for the Seamen's Home in Copenhagen were against this idea, but after Atalia Rørbye had been in Sweden, Holland, and England to study seamen's homes, the ladies took matters into their own hands (Larsen 1955:15).

In November 1883 the women's society issued an appeal to set up a little Christian lodging house or home for a small number of sailors, together with a temperance restaurant. As the women wrote: "We who have worked for seamen in various ways during these years have often felt that there is need here for such a homelike haven, and we are convinced that it will be greeted with pleasure by many a sailor who now has to resort to places where temptation is nigh, and where he often yields to the power of habit and his comrades. Now in our city we have, thank God and many friends of seamen, the Ship of Bethel, where seamen can hear the Word of God, but we lack a place where they can feel at home, where the good impressions they have received can be consolidated, and where they can enjoy a little of the comfort and peace of a real home" (*Havnen* 1884:60).

The seaman's home was inaugurated in 1884 at 17 Holbergsgade. It consisted of a combined reading room and common room, a dining room, and three bedrooms with ten beds (*Havnen* 1885:281). In the course of

the next two years the home provided lodging to 580 sailors, most of them from the Nordic countries. In addition, some visited the home to sit in the comfort of the reading room or to write letters. "It is gratifying to note," wrote the ladies in 1887, "how comfortable most of the sailors feel in the home, when they have spent a while there. They have the sense of being in a private house, where a pleasant Christian family life is lived. We have succeeded in giving the home this character, and therein lies its strength, in our opinion."

But it was also a strength that the home could protect the young men, and "the seamen's home is one of the small havens in the midst of this large city which is so full of temptations and dangers for the young. The prince of darkness has many houses open to entice young seamen to him, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we have opened this house to draw them away from vice and aberration and bad company, into the fellowship of Him and His friends, that is our goal" (*Havnen* 1887:58–61). As this statement testifies, the homes became the antagonists of the pubs, just as cosy domestic life was set up against the big city with its temptations and dangers. Although the seamen's home was set up after the persistent efforts of the female missionaries to seamen, the cult of domestic life was not restricted to the women of the middle class. The Workers' Building Society was set up by male benefactors exclusively, and according to their world-view "a nice home" was a blessing that should be available to all classes.

In 1890 the seamen's home moved to bigger premises at 18 Holbergsgade, and in 1896 it acquired even better premises at 20 Skt. Annæ Plads, which Atalia Rørbye bought as her private property. In 1903 she resigned as headmistress, took over the management of the seamen's home, and ran it until her death in 1919, at the age of 78 (*Redningsbaaden*, May 1919).

For soldiers doing their compulsory military service, there were likewise not many places where they could go in their spare time, even though the drab day rooms of the barracks were gradually made more pleasant. The first soldiers' home in Copenhagen was opened in 1882 by a circle of Grundtvigians in a rented apartment in Ovengade oven Vandet. In the common room the soldiers could gather in groups round small tables, talking or playing draughts, chess, and dominoes – but gambling was forbidden. The reading room had newspapers and magazines, a bookcase with 250 books, and a desk with inkwell, pens, and blotting pads, where the soldiers could sit in peace and quiet, writing home to their families (*Højskolebladet* 5 Dec. 1882).

Any conscript in the army and navy could have admission to the home by buying an entrance card for 50 øre, which also entitled him to keep his suitcase, civilian clothes, and food in a storeroom at the home (Borup 1957:16). In 1907 the home moved to Søkvæsthuset and again in 1921 to Grundtvigs Hus in Studiestræde.

The Danish equivalent of the Young Men's Christian Association, KFUM, was founded by the Home Mission in 1878, and the association's Copenhagen division expressed a desire in 1888 to take over the work with soldiers, for in their association, as they wrote in the annual report, the soldiers would "find good help in the struggle against the many temptations of the capital." On 1 November 1889, the KFUM hired premises in Fiolstræde which were

open to soldiers every day so that they could read newspapers and write letters, and special evening meetings for soldiers were held every Thursday (*Indre Mission i København* 1889:21). At the meetings, which were visited by an average of twelve soldiers, a short story was read aloud, after which the soldiers could talk, play draughts and chess, or read newspapers. The evening ended with a reading from the Bible, a prayer, and a hymn (*KFUM*, Dec. 1890).

The YMCA monthly, *Maanedsblad for KFUM* announced in April 1891: "Soon a number of young men will be coming to our city to do their military service. The places of entertainment, the authorized immorality, and our city's other 'Institutes of Demoralization' will try if possible to get them to lose their proper youthful joy, if they have not already lost it." The association therefore wanted to gather all the soldiers, and its premises gradually took on the appearance of a soldiers' home.

"Close on 150 military men from every possible branch of service come and go, write letters to their loved ones, read the papers, attend the meetings, chat together, or spend the time some other way. One not infrequently hears shouts of joy when two young men from the same district, whose paths have crossed previously, meet each other in uniform in our home; and what a great benefit for a soldier here to meet one or more fellow believers who are quartered in the same barracks and can thus speak almost daily to him about the things that are dearest in life to the two of them, and receive an encouraging smile or handshake from him when he feels depressed by everything he hears and sees around him" (*KFUM*, June 1892).

Cultural Education

When a God-fearing rural conscript came to the big city, his childlike faith would immediately be crushed by the discovery that the world was full of evil, greed, and immorality. This is how the middle class in the Home Mission imagined that the conscript would perceive it, but it is impossible to know whether they were right in this assumption. Since only twelve soldiers visited the KFUM soldiers' mission in 1890, and since only 150 maids in 1876 spent their Sunday evenings with weak tea and hymn-singing at the Home Mission, this could have been taken as a hint that this kind of domestic cosiness did not exert any great attraction on the solitary young people in the city. The glittering city was full of temptations, which in the eyes of the young people must have made a marvellous change from their local dances, especially because here they escaped the surveillance of neighbours and masters. What seemed like an adventure to the young people was Sodom and Gomorrah in the world-view of the Home Mission benefactors, and it was this clash in the perception of the city that led to such low visiting figures for the homes.

On the other hand, young people did come quite voluntarily to these homes and enjoyed themselves all evening, just as there were many children waiting to be admitted to a work shelter. There is no testimony from these people about how they perceived the visits; the needlework, the hymn-singing, the readings, the prayers, the harmonium music, the tea and bread, and all the other things that were part of "a pleasant and Christian family life" may seem like tame entertainment to a modern reader. For maids, factory girls, soldiers, and seamen in those days, without much

money in their pockets and with only a cold room in which to spend their time, however, it cannot be ruled out that it was nevertheless an exceedingly good way to spend a free evening. It is conceivable that it was here that they first made the acquaintance of this form of family life and came to appreciate it.

When Copenhagen became a big city in the second half of the nineteenth century, it simultaneously acquired an extensive range of entertainment, a huge number of shops with sumptuous display windows, noisy, crowded streets, all the modern features loved by the flaneurs of the day, especially if they could ogle the pretty ladies walking up and down Østergade (Lützen 1996). For many of the worried critics of liberalism, however, and for the charity workers of the Home Mission, it was precisely this part of city life that could be regarded as the temptations and dangers of urban life. They were right to be concerned, for many people in those years ended up in the gutter, but we cannot know whether that was the end of a downward trail from the pubs and dance halls. Although other members of their class greatly appreciated the sparkling city life, the philanthropists' constant emphasis of the dangerous city became a convincing argument as to why "a nice home" was so important. The more dangerous the city was portrayed as being, the more peaceful the home appeared to be, and the more obvious it seemed that a proper life should be lived in the bosom of the family (Löfgren 1984).

In both rescue homes and protective homes, of course, boys and girls were segregated. It may seem strange that young people had to be ingrained with "the sense of being in a private house where a pleasant Christian family life is lived" while still only surrounded by people of their own sex, but this was not the view of the benefactors (Lützen 1991). The nineteenth century was the century of gender segregation, when the distinctive characteristics of each sex were set up as opposites, and when it was recognized that spiritual affinity was greatest between people of the same sex. In addition, the sexual morality of the nineteenth century required that young unmarried women and men should not mix without supervision. For the middle class it was therefore a natural thing to set up boys' schools and girls' schools, that the later scouting movement had separate associations for boys and girls, and that the folk high schools taught girls and boys separately. It was not until the revolt against this sexual morality in the 1920s that gender segregation came to be regarded as old-fashioned, narrow-minded, and mission-like, but girls' schools and the separation of scouts and guides did not disappear until the 1960s. With the new radical women's movement in the 1970s, gender segregation was restored to the agenda.

Although these rescue homes and protective homes, in their own self-understanding, resembled "a pleasant and Christian family life", they did not consist of a father, a mother, and a couple of children, as the middle-class homes of the benefactors did. They were instead centred around a superintendent who acted as a mother and thus illustrated that not only men could be the head of a family. Although the benefactors called these institutions homes, they were more like households with a matron as the supreme authority and a group of coeval young people of one sex, who could be compared to maids or servant boys. In

homes like this, the middle-class benefactors could enforce the surveillance that they had seen disappear with regret when freedom of trade was introduced. When the benefactors themselves called the institutions homes, it was because, in the whirlwind of modernity, when everything that was solid melted into air, and nothing was as it had been, the home appeared to be the institution which could best resist the dissolution of old values.

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"The Male Absent"
Ideals and Pictures of Reality in an Institutional Female World during the 20th Century

By Bo Lönnqvist

Introduction

The liberation movement of women in Finland during the 20th century is to a large extent a part of two different cultural tendencies. The one is political, women starting to take part in and shaping for themselves a position in the public, social and economical life of the Finnish state. The other is cultural, with a large influence on private life, connected to new social values concerning women's role in family life, household, childcare and the division of labour between the gender classes.

Finland was among the first nations in the world to give women the right to vote, and this form of universal suffrage in 1907 resulted in 19 female deputies in the first one chamber parliament of the country. Also, the social structure of the female deputies was remarkably democratic: apart from women from the upper classes, the nobility, merchantry and priesthood, there were maids, washerwomen, seamstresses and workwomen.

As the historian Irma Sulkunen has pointed out, even then a conflict was developing between the ideology of the middle classes and that of working-class women. Due to the young status of the Finnish nation (nationalism mainly developed during the second part of the 19th century, when Finland was an autonomous grand duchy under Russia) one of the most important questions at the beginning of the 20th century was *how to strengthen the nation?* – in physical, moral and cultural aspects. The key concepts were *family, marriage, an absolute innocent morality, home, homestead, health and household.* The women in the new parliament started to work for social reforms. But while the female ideal of middle-class deputies changed to be an independent woman, a civilized woman, a woman taking care of household, family and children, the working-class women struggled for a new, free and equal position for the woman in the labour movement. The maidens organizations exposed a rather radical activity, directed, among other things, against the rural ideals of the country, the basis for conservative social structures. The goal of working-class women implied a *socialization of motherhood*, including single mothers, – from a middle-class viewpoint a poison of society.

When Finland achieved its independence in 1917, one of the dominant social questions, related to the shaping of a new *cultural identity,* concerned the *education of housewives,* both as a female economic resource in private life (there were periods of food shortage in the 1920s) and as a skilled labour resource based on high professional competence. Again, the class conflicts split the efforts with a delaying effect. *Woman – home – family – household* were the common ideals of the young state, but how to achieve the independent and superior position of the woman, not only in relation to the man but in particular to conservative, stubborn ideals of motherhood?

Through the new marriage law in 1929 both parts achieved equal status, the husband was no more the guardian of the wife. The woman was granted an independent status as responsible for the household. As Sulkunen points out, this last remark strengthened the difference in the social roles between man and woman. The political and social emancipation of the woman was definitely seen as dependent on her ability to take care of family and housekeeping. Woman's work was esteemed and

supported – but in the frame of house and home. The struggle for social and economic equality ended in a free housewife-position (Sulkunen 1989, passim).

The strong housekeeping movement and its educational implications in the 1920s and 1930s has to be seen in this context. The form of the family, the home ideology and the gender identity were shaped by the bourgeois respectability, despite the strong position of the social democratic Women's Union. But there were attempts to break this ideology by giving the "domestic economy" an official status both in schools and as a discipline at the university. Nevertheless the gender difference, based on the inherited status of the woman as mother, educator, and housewife, resulted in different masculine and feminine worlds, although the working-class women more and more worked in factories and other traditional male branches. From the 1950s on also the middle-class women carried out service work.

Education in the domestic economy in Finland had started already in the 1870s, but it then involved cookery classes. In the 1880s the Finnish Women's Society discussed the necessity of teaching domestic science in the elementary schools. Education for teachers was organized on the pattern of ideas from Sweden, England and Scotland. During the first decade of the 20th century the education in "domestic economy" (Hauswirtschaft) was stabilized in the Nordic countries and the pedagogical question arose also as a political question, again in the class struggle between the bourgeois women's organizations and the women in the working-class party. Education was still supported by private organizations, not by the state.

"The Women's Castle"

Supported by the young Finnish state, the first institute for domestic economy owned by the government started in 1928. In 1918 a corresponding seminary, for the Swed-

The Högvalla school for domestic economy was established in 1918. Since 1927 it is situated on the old estate Boe gård near the city of Borgå (Fi. Porvoo). Photo: The author in 1990.

ish-speaking population in Finland, called "Högvalla seminarium i huslig ekonomi och Husmodersskola" (Högvalla seminary for domestic economy and housewife's work), was started the education. The predecessor "Högvalla hushålls- och trädgårdsskola" (Högvalla school for household and garden) had been established in 1908 on a private basis. The founder, Fanny Sundström, was one of the first teachers in domestic economy, educated in Scandinavia and England (Sysiharju 1995).

From 1918 on the Högvalla seminary was lead by Elsa Bonsdorff (1883–1973), educated in Scandinavia and Germany, the headmistress 1919–1950, and Runa Melander (1893–1977), who came from Sweden and remained the headmistress until 1961. These two ladies, both representatives for the upper classes, put their mark on the school and its ideology for more than forty years. Elsa Bonsdorff played an important part in the Swedish-speaking Housewives' Organization in Finland (Martha), she also was a member of parliament in the 1930s and 40s. In 1929 Runa Melander published a famous cookery book and this standard source reached its 16th edition in 1972, with more than 60 000 copies.

The two ladies lived together at the Högvalla school. The school was their home, their furniture and equipment a part of the interior. They shaped the educational profile, giving the institution a touch of a girls' boarding-school. Generations of Swedish-speaking girls from different social classes in the coastal area in Finland took different courses at Högvalla under the auspices of Bonsdorff and Melander and other, well-disciplined female teachers. It is not an overstatement to talk about a specific "Högvalla culture", a special life style, a ritualized form of educating young girls for the role of an independent housewife, concerning both high competence in cookery technology and nutrition, and the enlightened manner of a bourgeois, well-behaved lady. The Högvalla seminary has been characterized as a "women's castle" by one of the students who in the 1970s, attended the teacher's education. The followers of Bonsdorff and Melander tried to continue the pedagogical ideology until 1996, when the school came to an end in its traditional form, due to changed pedagogical ideology.

Questions

From an ethnological point of view the main question has reference to the relation between the official Finnish education in domestic economy, in its confrontation with the ideology concerning the emancipation of women, and the realization of the ideals and goals at a concrete ordinary level. How was the institutional culture of Högvalla created and structured? The structure of the hierarchy, the performing of the daily routines and rituals in a women's community? The verbal and nonverbal expressions of a specific female knowledge, its symbols and forms of initiation? The codes of the comradeship of the annual contingents, the importance of the education in their coming life and the memory of the school? How were the ideals and images of reality formed in an institutional female world? In which way was the world of manliness given a specific meaning?

The following remarks are based on the author's ongoing work about the "Women's castle Högvalla". The material consists on the one hand of the author's fieldwork and participant observation at Högval-

la in 1988 and 1990. The most important material is the written memories of 107 former students at Högvalla, collected in 1993–1994 with the help of a questionnaire, consisting of eleven topics, prepared by the author in collaboration with two former students and teachers. The informants were born 1909–1974 and the material covers the period from 1929 to the 1990s. Of the informants 94 describe the period from the 1930s to the 1960s, and 15 from the 1970s to the 1990s. The written memories comprise about 700 pages, complemented with about 60 old photos.

In this short article it is possible to touch only upon some of the questions discussed in the coming book. More than based upon facts from the memories, the analysis focuses on the way the informants write about their education and life at Högvalla. That means reading the texts, the verbal expressions and the structure of the memory stories as evidence of shaping a specific women's culture, an institutional female world. – One example from the memories: "The yellow hall was reserved for big festivals. Near to the yellow hall was the dining-room for the teaching-staff. In front of it was the dining-hall for the students, supervised by the teachers. At the very front of the hall were the tables for the two-years-course, then those for the one-year students and right down there sat the short course-groups. There really was discipline" (1941–43).

The "Foreign Minister" and the "Secretary of the Interior"

The two ladies, Elsa Bonsdorff and Runa Melander, were highly estimated by the students, both for their personal charisma, their leadership, and for their pedagogical

The leading ladies of Högvalla: Elsa Bonsdorff, headmistress, and Runa Melander, chief, accompanied by "Lady". Photo from the 1930s.

competence. Nevertheless, they were very different, Bonsdorff had a gracefulness about her, she was motherly emphatic. Melander very strict and exacting, keeping the whole school under close surveillance. The difference became more obvious in the 1930s when Bonsdorff, as a member of parliament, stayed in Helsinki for weeks. In everyday life the leading couple kept a distance from both the teachers and the students. The common title was "Miss". The hierarchy was rigorous and the difference of rank could be exposed in the place and equipment of the houses at this boarding school, in everyday rituals, but also in the estimation of the students, especially in relation to their origin. Bonsdorff, "Bonssa" the students' nicknamed her, did not interfere in the internal things, but Melander, "Melona", controlled the whole "mental interior" in a pedantic way.

At the 15th anniversary of the school in 1933 a female state supervisor in domestic economy characterized the two ladies as "the foreign minister" (Bonsdorff) and the "secretary of the interior" (Melander). The phrases were accepted by the leaders and they often used them later in a joking way. At the same celebration a male medicine professor in animal domestication *(husdjurslära)* characterized the man as the "intellectual potential", the woman as the "intuitive capacity".

The birthday of Elsa B. was an important recurrent event. Elsa at that time was a member of the parliament and her birthday was celebrated at Högvalla as a fictive reception for the government and the president. I took the role of Prime Minister Cajander and another student the role as President Svinhufvud. Eating with loose moustache caused some difficulties but we went to the veranda, took the moustaches off and could eat in peace. – At another birthday there was a real parliamentary debate arranged. An auditory was changed and given the image of a full assembly at 25 years after the date. Now there was only one man in the parliament. Because at that time Elsa B. was the only woman deputy. The atmosphere was cheerful (1935–36).

The fact that Högvalla was a boarding school attracted me. It had something romantic to it, I had read a lot of books about the life in such girls' boarding schools. —— There was a social difference between girls from wealthy families and those who came from the countryside, attending the short summer-courses based on elementary school.

Sometimes Miss Melander also interfered with the private life of the students, like when one of them after a schooling period on a farm told that she was going to be married to a farmer. Miss Melander argued: 'this engagement has to be broken' – and she managed to do it! —— At another event she made the conclusion: 'You can't do anything when there is a man involved' (1935).

Runa M. and Elsa B. acted as intermediaries for us students in a world of culture where the woman had to participate in all its forms as a full member and consummate man (1945–49).

An informant, a student at Högvalla in 1935–37 and a teacher 1939–1947, remembers that Miss Melander, although she had retired already in 1961, still tried to intervene in the knowing of the school as late as 1973, not realizing that times had changed and that there were critical voices urging the ideology of the school. "As a teacher at Högvalla my position nevertheless was almost the same as a student's. I was obliged to introduce my guests to the Misses. I had to be at home on the stroke of the clock in the evening, controlling the students, and I should always be at hand. Activities outside the school were looked upon with dissatisfaction. The teachers did not have their own keys to the main building. On the other hand the students remember the sound

The female steward at the beginning of the 1930s.

knowledge the leaders conveyed in the education, Bonsdorff in agriculture, Melander in medicine, hygiene and the dietetic relation between food and health. "The lectures of Miss Melander were fantastic". So the students felt themselves educated to be supreme rulers of everything concerning a big household, especially that of a farmer's – despite the fact that the lifestyle at the school was that of gentlefolk and the bourgeoisie.

The Heavy Work and The Woman of World

The girls had to work hard. Högvalla – established on an old estate, Boe gård near the city of Borgå (Fi. Porvoo) – was developed as a farm with cattle and garden. Although there was a steward for agriculture the students had to take part in and be familiar with every branch of farm work, in spite of the slaughter and the forestry. They were educated to be supervisors of big households, without servants, or to manage the education of servants. During the education they had to do practical work for some months at institutions, hospitals and estates in the Swedish-speaking coastal area. This practice was organized on the basis of the personal contacts of the Misses.

The ideology included a command of all the household techniques, all the methods of preservation and preparation of the products of the fields and the garden, the cow-house, poultry-house, also knowledge of pig breeding, hunting and fishing. The school was almost totally self-sufficient.

The education in the above mentioned fields was based on strict principles, reflected in the memories. One was the *practising of strict economy* in relation to the demand of high technical skill in utilizing the primary products. Nothing could be thrown away; in that sense the Högvalla school was a forerunner of the modern recycling idea. – The students remember especially the hard and complicated work when baking the bread. Also, working in the cow-house or with the poultry, assisting at the slaughter, or milking cows strange for many urban girls. But miss Bonsdorff was more fond of domestic animals than

anything else, giving her favourites among the horses and the hens their own names.

Another principle, to the point of fussiness, was the ambition of *absolute cleanliness* in both food preparation and tidying up the big house. This was developed into a ritual. For the girls this seemed to serve the purpose of organizing the time and space in a disciplined way. One generation felt themselves as "soldiers in a female army". Also, the equipment for the cleaning procedures, dust-brushes and clothes, cleaning material, etc. was an integrated part of the system, calling for special knowledge. The floor in the big kitchen had to been scrubbed every Saturday with skimmed milk. – Even in the 1980s the walls, floors and cupboards had to be cleaned every week, but at that time the students protested against this "idiotic cleaning".

It was a hard job to manage the large wash, including the bed-linen of the teachers, table-clothes, handkerchiefs and a lot of other textiles. For example the white, cotton nightgowns of miss Bonsdorff, were complicated to iron because of the frills around the collar and the cuffs. If the flat-iron was too hot the gown went brown and you had to clean it with vinegar water and start again. – First you had to soak the wash in cold water over night in large wash-tubs of wood. Then it had to be cooked in lye made of birch ash in a big cauldron. After that the wash should be given a good rinse in the river close by. It was transported there with the help of horse and sledge. In winter it was rinsed in a hole in the ice. After that the heavy wash baskets had to be carried up to the attic on the third floor in the main building for drying. At last you had to pull out and mangle the textiles. The whole procedure lasted for a week. All works were examined and marked (1935–36).

In the reception hall there was a big table-cloth, the student named it "the Horror". Nobody liked to prepare it, to wash it, mangle, iron and starch it. But every time Miss Melander visited Högvalla (she was already retired) she still checked that this table-cloth was free from wrinkles. Ten years after my examination I visited Högvalla with my students from Stockholm – and then "the Horror" was wrinkled! In 1990 when I was there again "the Horror" had been taken away – nobody wanted to prepare it any more (1971–74).

The third principle, which engraved itself on the memories, was the importance of *separating everyday life and festivity.* This difference should be marked in dressing up, in laying the table, in food, decoration, in a special "style of Högvalla". On Sunday

Rinsing the wash in a hole in the ice, one of the hardest jobs at Högvalla. 1951.

mornings there was a special ritual marking the holiday. The right way of behaviour extended even to the smallest details. For example, should the salt-cellar be cleared away from the dinner table before the dessert was served. The colours of the tablecloth, the napkins and the flowers or other table-decorations should match perfectly. Elsa Bonsdorff, due to her official position, invited many prominent persons, politicians and leaders in the Housewives' organizations, to Högvalla and then the students' competence was put to the test. The former owner of the manor, Baroness Standertskjöld, was kindly received. At Högvalla the traditions from the former manorial time survived, although it was a modern school in domestic economy. Both leading ladies had relatives among the Finnish nobility, which Miss Melander never forgot to mention.

The education included laying the table in the right way, especially at the teachers' table, to hand round when you had the role of parlourmaid. We also had to learn how the napkins had to be folded in different ways. You had to use different dresses for working in the kitchen, in the dairy, in the garden and with the poultry. The speech had to be a polished, correct Swedish. Diligence and thoroughness was stressed in every job, there were rules not to be broken (1935–36).

The ideology of the hard-working woman, the principles of orderliness, and the ritualization of practical work into customs are parts of the cultural capital the students remember bringing with them into their own homes. Especially important was the fact that hard work, the "struggle for survival", united the age groups closely together. In most of the memories the comradeship is mentioned as the best thing preserved from the whole education. In the

A break in the daily routines, on the roof of the greenhouse, listening to music from the gramophone. May–June 1936.

evenings the age groups had their gatherings and tea partys in their spartan rooms. Isolated from the surrounding farm villages and far away from the city, the Högvalla had a character of a "nunnery". Some age groups are still meeting regularly, although the members are living in different places, all of them retired.

The Specific Högvalla Culture: The Festivity Rituals

There were three important big festivities during the year, and in addition to these the birthdays and initiation events were ritualized. The most important time was the Christmas period.

The first festival was the *Lucia-day* on the 13th of December. Runa Melander and another teacher from Sweden had introduced the ceremony in 1919 after the pattern of the gentry in western Sweden, Värmland. Lucia (this form originated from the German Christengel in the 18th century) was a virgin in a white gown with a candle-crown on her head and carrying a salver with coffee and buns. She was accompanied by a maid singing the Sicilian Santa Lucia song and other Christmas carols. The couple started early in the morning, visiting all the houses at Högvalla and bringing the girls their coffee in bed. For the girls, especially in the 1920s, the custom was an enormous adventure, unknown as it had been in Finland. As time went by, Miss Melander and her assistant virgin had to visit 60–70 persons at the school, both the staff and the students. Through Högvalla the custom was spread to many Swedish-speaking homes in Finland and by and by it has got the character of a typical custom of the Swedish-speaking Finns, since 1950 also as a big public festival in Helsingfors (Helsinki). In the memories of my informants this ritual is described in a very positive sense, as a memory for life (cf. Lönnqvist 1969–70).

The meaning of the Lucia-ritual can be interpreted in two ways. Firstly it was a part of the ideology marking the difference between everyday hard work and festivity. But more impressive for the students was the fact that at this event, only, the leading lady Miss Melander took the role of a servant, waiting on the students early in the morning. Once a year the hierarchy was broken and Miss Melander showed a part of her human character.

The most important manifestation of Högvalla's self-assumed role of preserving and promoting the genuine calendar traditions in an elegant way, was the celebration of Christmas. The following quotation from the memories refers to the middle of the 1930s, but the festival was celebrated almost in the same form in 1990, when this author documented it.

> The celebration of Christmas was prepared during the whole autumn term practically. We planted tulipbulbs and hyacinths for the table. At the apple-harvest non-perishable fruits were saved up. At the slaughter in the autumn there was meat for different sorts of brawns and sausages, besides the important baked Christmas ham. In the weaving room table-cloths of straw were made, also as gifts for home. Candles were made. The ling was soaked in lye (stockfish). All these preparations were new for me and I thought that I got the real Christmas feeling, known before only from reading books. At the bakery all the Christmas bread was made, except for bisquits, gingerbread and the sweetmeats made in the kitchen. A speciality of Högvalla were the sweets' tables. The school also introduced the little gingerbread houses in Finland. Some days before Christmas Eve, before everybody went to their homes, we had the traditional Christmas dinner.

Teachers and students sat at their separate tables, which were nicely decorated with flowers and candles. We had to taste all the courses we partly had made, delicacies such as brawns and sausages, stockfish, ham and the rice pudding. At every cover there was a large pile of sweetmeats. – As far as I remember, Miss Melander read the Gospel for Christmas to us, before sitting down to dinner. After dinner, when everybody had helped clearing the table and washed up, we sang Christmas carols and danced ring games (1935–36).

Christmas at Högvalla, year after year in the same shape, had the character of an old Nordic peasant and manorial festival. Miss Melander had introduced a special Swedish Christmas bread, the "kubbe", a loaf of rye, water-cooked for five hours, but she also accepted the typical Finnish dishes au gratin, although she used the name "pudding". The special Christmas drink was the lingonberry juice, also a heritage from the manorial everyday culture; alcohol was non-existent at the school. The first age group had the role of waitresses. More important than the food was the athmosphere. Christmas, as other festivals during the year, also marked the value of eating your meals with dignity and emphasizing the importance of a high standard in the homes and a feeling of homeliness. For some of the students the festival had a strong character of "Swedishness" (Lönnqvist 1991).

The third unique event at Högvalla was the so called "cavaliers' ball" arranged after the Christmas holiday at the end of January. The tradition had been established at the beginning of the 1930s and lasted until the end of the 1960s. In its first shape it started with a sleigh ride and was performed as a real court ceremony. The girls had to invite a male friend if they knew one, some in the higher classes already were engaged to be married. Some years the school organized a

A costume party. Some of the students dressed up as men. 1953.

bus transport of young men, recruits from the Swedish-speaking garrison Dragsvik (near the town Ekenäs) as cavaliers. Later, in the 1960s, the young men in the neighbourhood of Högvalla already had a "great routine" acting as cavaliers, one informant remembers. The girls had nick-names on often-used cavaliers from the surroundings, such as "Semolina" and "Raisin". The young men enjoyed the food!

The festival was prepared many weeks before, it meant baking and cooking, brewing small beer, everybody working at high pressure. – The cavaliers arrived about 12 o'clock and we met them at the local railway station or at the main road if they came by bus. Cars were rare in those days. We then walked along the avenue to the main building, where the presentation of the candidates for Misses Bonsdorff and Melander took place in the yellow hall. I think that the guests were served coffee after that. Then, in the afternoon the sleigh ride started, Miss Bonsdorff borrowed horses from the neighbourhood. It was a long row of sleighs, accompanied with the sound of bells. After that it was time to change for the dinner and dance. My long, white confirmation gown had been coloured into light brown and decorated with a golden ribbon around the collar. I suppose that the dinner menu was a joint of roast meat and ice cream as dessert. The dance lasted until 12 o'clock at night; as refreshments juice or non-alcoholic punch was served. We accompanied our cavaliers up to the main road where the rented busses waited (1935–36).

The cavaliers' ball was the only official event at Högvalla when men were accepted. Relatives, brothers, could be invited after application. The teaching-staff consisted of women, later some men could act as teachers, but usually only for short periods. The only man employed was the steward and then the caretaker with his family. No wonder that there was an aura of mystery around manliness.

The teachers dressed up for a party they arranged for the students. 1933–35.

Once I had to demonstrate how to iron a man's shirt and then I asked the caretaker's wife if I could borrow one of his shirts to train with myself. She just had cleaned a couple of them so I got a lot of them and she was satisfied with the work. She later asked if it was not necessary another time. But the school then acquired a pair of them (1935–39).

The two-years' course should be finished and we, one-year's students should arrange a farewell party for them and they for us. It was the tradition that the two-year's students should give some garments to the following course as a joke. The clothes were: a waistcoat for the girl who acted as a chairman for the age group and the school, a skirt of bast for the girl representing sweetness, a pair of long trousers for the girl with the longest legs and at last a cavalier-cap. The official breaking up ceremony was on the next Sunday, with lunch, guests and a speech given by Miss Bonsdorff. This was followed by a reply, and after that demonstrations and lectures (1941–43).

The school was a female society. Males were not banned, but they had to be presented to Miss

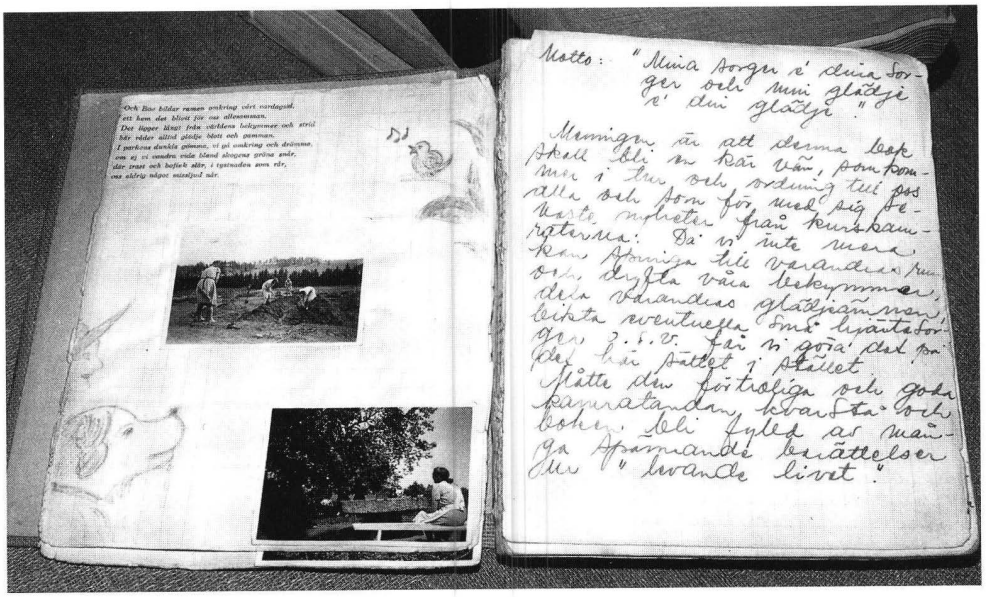
Melander. I think it was more painful for the young men than for us. For example, at the cavaliers' ball she inquired strict who the cavalier was before welcoming him. In our rooms we seldom discussed food, but more the most interesting man at the moment. Sometimes we visited the local youth centre, dancing with local heroes. When coming back to Högvalla after a holiday weekend there happened to be a cavalier at the station helping you carrying the bag (1947–48).

Once in a while we saw men, and a lot of men, especially when the sauna was destroyed by fire. Then every man from 8 to 80 in the neighbourhood appeared when a rumour got around that the sauna was in flames during the bathing evening. The steward, stripped to the waist, chucking water blushed when one of the female teachers appeared. A sensation! (1965–67).

Gender Difference Converted into Gender Sovereignty

In the discussion above we have analyzed a typical female institution as a part of a specific cultural ideology in the young Finnish state during the first half of the 20th century. In some traits the Högvalla school fulfilled the plan of the Finnish state education in domestic economy. In other respects, however, the school shaped its own profile, as a mirror of the specific Finland-Swedish coastal culture: a unique combination of bourgeois and rural lifestyles, with influences from Sweden, a specific language and behaviour, and the shaping of a strong position for the woman, as an independent member of society. Högvalla was a community created by women with a hierarchical structure. The ideology of the school meant a clear division of the world, including a special position and a special field of competence for the woman. Such were highly estimated things as: work and clear division between work and festivity; the ritualization of everyday life; a special style in manners; a profound knowledge and competence in your own field; a view

A course of qualified teachers in domestic economy leaving the school in may 1936.



The memory of the "golden age" at Högvalla, preserved in the course-diaries circulating since 1946 among an age group of 14 students. Each person has to write her curriculum for every year and pass the book forward to the next. At the moment (1994) there were six full diaries. Private possession. Photo: The author.

of food as an element of elegance; a world-view including tradition, memory and continuity; a special cultural world with a given autonomous position for the woman; and a comradeship based on loyalty, responsibility, self-discipline, self-respect and dignity. Although the content of the ideology and the education had a "female" touch, namely the cooking techniques and the domestic economy, it did not mean that the students at Högvalla were initiated into a pattern of subordination to men. In that case the example Högvalla does not confirm the conclusions that education in domestic economy in Finland prohibited women from a free, equal position. At least they were able to reach such a position, as the official role of Elsa Bonsdorff witnessed. On the contrary, by *eliminating the male* all the time it seems as if the Högvalla culture promoted a model of its own, expressing the strengthening of the woman's sovereign position as a competent house-wife and teacher and a lady of the world. At Högvalla the man was degraded to a garment, a pair of trousers, a moustache, a carnevalistic figure, a reversed deputy or an unskilled workman, a component in the food (raisin) or an element in a parody. The man was regarded as non-existent. From this point of view Högvalla as a "women's castle" embodied a strong cultural matriarchy, but not a biological one. It was not only the male that was absent, but also *motherhood* was non-existent. The main components of the Högvalla ideology were knowledge and autonomy.

Referring to a critical study on feminism and anthropology by Henrietta L. Moore the case Högvalla functions as an example

of, to use Henrietta L. Moore's model, how gender has been experienced and structured under special cultural circumstances. The case does not confirm the opinion that male gender dominance in Western societies is a constant one, but emphasizes on the importance of putting the material in a social and historical context (Moore 1988). The analysis carried out by Sherry B. Ortner in 1974 about the relation between woman and nature, man and culture, inspired among other authorities by Simone de Beauvoir (1949), ends in a statement that the woman in the context of body, social roles and psyche, must be completed with a strong emphasis on the *position situated in-between* in the dichotomy nature / culture. On the one hand the woman embodies the biological nature (child-bearing, fostering, cooking), but on the other hand she is a powerful carrier of cultural processes, by transforming products of nature into products of culture. The relation between mother and daughter also inclines a strong role-identification on the *individual* level (not on a couple of abstract elements as in the case between father and son) (Ortner 1974). It is obvious that also in the case Högvalla the students unconsciously identified themselves not with a specific gender role (including motherhood, children, family, cooking etc.), but with *the individual per se*. The written memories express this fact convincingly. The presentation of the female role and identity was a universal one, not a secondary status. Woman, as the carrier of specific cultural ideologies and symbols, was not designated completely to a secondary status in the society. In this respect the Högvalla school promoted women's emancipation and democracy between the genders, although in a typical Finland-Swedish bourgeois context, and by *converting a biological gender into a cultural one.*

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Notes

The text is based on the primary material of answers to my questionnaire "Minnen från Högvalla" sent out 1993–1994 by the Department for Folkloristics at the Åbo Akademi University (Turku). – Accessional number: 1993/5, 107 written answers, 675 pages, 56 reproduced photos. The informants were born 1909–1974, the memories covering the time from 1929 to the 1990s. The material has been completed by interviews, some diaries and letters sent to the author.

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The Performative Magic of Promises

Courtship as Ritual in Norwegian Popular Culture at the End of the Nineteenth Century

By Kari Telste

In 1877 a rather peculiar case was tried by the Supreme Court of Norway. A man was charged with seducing and defrauding a number of girls along the coast of western Norway, and had even succeeded in staging a fictitious wedding ceremony with one of them. How did he go about inducing girls to accept his proposal? How did he make one of the girls go along with the wedding? And did she actually believe that she had got married? These were questions the court asked itself when listening to the story of this girl.[1]

A closer look at her story, as she recounted it in court, and as it was later recorded and commented by the Supreme Court, may disclose the seductive power of this man. I want to examine the efficacy of promises as speech acts to act on social reality and its representations, and show how a seducer was able to exploit the formal acts of proposal and rites of marriage to stage himself as a lover, a suitor, a husband. Through a discussion of courtship as ritual, I will examine how the girl became a participant in the performance and was trapped, not only by his persuasive words and acts, but also by her own actions and the physical transformation of her body. First, however, we will turn to the story of Kari Olsdatter, a maid from the parish of Fusa in western Norway.

A Story of Seduction and Marriage

One Sunday evening in the summer of 1874 a stranger arrived at the farm where Kari was in service, and asked for a bed for the night. The stranger called himself Johannes Storekvammen and passed himself off as a Swede from the district of Värmland near the Norwegian border. The next afternoon he left the farm. Kari had hardly exchanged more than a couple of words with him, and was rather surprised when he returned the next day and wanted to speak to her. He then told her that he intended to propose to her, but she "was frightened of him and refused him". Eight days later he returned once more and told her that he had a big farm in Sweden. This time his efforts were more successful: "she began to take a liking to him." From then on he visited her every Sunday throughout the summer, and a close relationship developed, a fact which did not pass unnoticed by Kari's mistress and her fellow servants.

At the beginning of September Johannes promised to marry her and she accepted his proposal. On the same occasion he borrowed a sum of money from her. It had not been easy for him to induce Kari to accept his promise, however. Only by showing her a bank note, which she presumed was a hundred dollar bill,[2] and once again assuring her of his serious intentions, did he succeed in talking her round and get her to finally say "yes". From then on she regarded herself as engaged to him. Later it turned out that Johannes had tried to dupe several other females by showing them a red bottle label, "which he passed off as a 100 dollar bill". But for the time being Kari was happily ignorant of this. As soon as she had accepted his proposal, she started to have intercourse with him.

Johannes had courted Kari for weeks before she yielded, and he had to assure her over and over again that he was well-to-do and had serious intentions. To illustrate further the effect of his seductive words, we will take a closer look at what he used to say and do in an intimate situation, here rendered with the words of another girl who fell for him far quicker than Kari:

The very first evening he said that he thought of proposing to her, but she understood and answered this as a joke. At bedtime she lighted him to his bed for the night in an outhouse. As soon as they entered he pulled her down on the edge of the bed and started to talk about getting engaged. She stayed in bed with him overnight. The next morning he assured her that he had serious intentions, and said that he wanted to marry her and take her to his farm in Sweden, adding that nothing but death would part them. She then gave him her promise and from now on she regarded herself as engaged to him. Thereafter she shared his bed, as she relied on his promise of marriage.[3]

Returning to Kari's story, in the autumn Johannes suggested that they should go to Sweden to get married, but she rejected this idea. Where the wedding should be held became a controversial issue. In the end she agreed to go to Bergen and get married: "according to what he said it was cheaper to get married in town than at home in the countryside." On their way to Bergen they paid a visit to some relatives of Kari to recover some money which they owed her, and told them they were on their way to town to get married. An unmarried sister of Kari was induced to come along to Bergen to celebrate their wedding, even though she instantly "took a dislike" to Johannes. On board the steamer she had her hostility towards her sister's fiancé confirmed by a fellow passenger who warned her against him. On their arrival in Bergen, she no longer wanted to have anything to do with either of them and left them, while Johannes and Kari got a room in Falch's Inn.

The next day it turned out that her wedding might not be quite like the one Kari had pictured in advance: "The day after their arrival Johannes said that a wedding in church would be rather expensive, and that he could get it cheaper otherwise." He immediately went about making arrangements. While walking together in the town, he stopped by a house in a narrow alley and asked her to wait outside. He stayed inside the house for about half an hour. When he returned, he told her that everything was now ready, they should go and get dressed, and get ready for the wedding. They returned to their lodgings and she spruced herself up, that is, she made up her hair with the help of Johannes. Then they went to a general store nearby to hire a bridal wreath and a dress that she put on, and returned to the house in the narrow alley. They entered a small room with a table, at which a man was sitting. He was dressed in a long, wide gown, which looked like a clergyman's costume. Kari tells what happened next:

When this person and Johannes had greeted each other, the man picked up a book, which lay on the table and was the size of the New Testament. While they stood in front of him, he read something from the book of godly content, which was about marriage. When the man had read for a while, he asked them if they would take each other as husband and wife, to which they both answered "I will", and then joined hands. The man dressed in black then laid his hand on their hands and declared them to be lawfully wedded husband and wife.

Johannes then paid the man, and was given a paper in return that she assumed was a wedding certificate.

From now on Kari believed that they were legally married. A teacher whom she met in their lodgings in the evening made her even more certain. He told her that many couples nowadays went before the registrar to get married. Still she must have felt a certain doubt. When the newly-weds returned from Bergen, she told people that they had been married in church. The mem-

bers of the Supreme Court thought this evasion of the truth could be explained by the fact that she "had been brought up in the countryside, and thus was embarrassed and shrunk from telling people that the wedding had taken place in the way it did". People in her home district also expressed doubts and did not trust that a "real wedding" had been performed. After their return from Bergen, however, she lived with Johannes as his wife, they behaved as a married couple, a fact that Kari underlined by dressing as a married woman. She also handed over increasing amounts of her money. After Christmas Johannes hit on a pretext to leave, but promised to return in three weeks time. He bade her farewell, while "praying that God would bless her for every day they had been together".

But Johannes did not return. Kari, by now expecting his child, still relied on his words and waited loyally for him. Only when rumours reached her that he had been involved with several other women, did she report him for having defrauded her of 110 dollars, for having tricked her into letting him have intercourse by promising marriage, and finally for having cheated her into believing that they were legally married. Johannes was soon caught by the law. Several women along the western coast now came forth and complained that he had seduced and defrauded them. His approach had been to promise marriage, and then to disappear with their money and other valuables. It also turned out that he was not the Swede he had passed himself off to be. Most likely he was a run away husband from the district of Solør in eastern Norway, near the Swedish border.[4]

The Supreme Court wondered whether Kari had to be considered "more than usually simple". Could she in fact have been just as scheming as Johannes? Perhaps she had duped everybody, and was as guilty of the fictitious wedding as he was? They found it especially suspicious that she had not been able to point out the house where the wedding took place. But on second thoughts they allowed for the fact that it was the first time in her life she had been to a town like Bergen:

> Many people have great difficulty to orient themselves, and one will especially experience this in respect of persons who have been born in the countryside and arrive in a big city for the first time; they become confused by the quite new situation, they have entered into.

Thus it might not be all that odd that she had had difficulty in finding her way in the "city" of Bergen and its narrow alleys. The Supreme Court therefore chose to believe her. In summing up, they decided that her explanation before the court "bore witness to her simplicity".

A closer look at her story may reveal that "simple" may not be the right way to characterize Kari. By following a determined course of action Johannes succeeded in establishing a personal relation of trust. Thus he made her participate and go along with the actions he staged. The period from the exchange of promises until marriage was accomplished by the fictitious wedding in Bergen can be regarded as a rite of passage where the ritual actions performed got her increasingly entangled with him. The proposal and the wedding mark two separate points, the beginning and the end, in a rite of passage, and as such they are representations of the performance and reenactment of prototypical actions. The reenactment of prior and prototypical actions

could be a key to understanding how Kari was seduced by the words and actions of Johannes.

Ritual as Word and Action

The concept of ritual raises particular problems as to the relationship between words and action. Ritual has been regarded as an elementary form of communication, as *action without words*, where the value of ritual as meaning seems to reside in instruments and gestures (Parkin 1992). According to the anthropologist David Parkin, it is often seen as part of the alleged special character of ritual that it *does* presuppose an action or series of actions which do not need words. From this perspective rituals are seen as mere action, and are held to privilege physical action. On the other hand, this privileging may be reversed. Parkin argues that it is precisely because ritual is fundamentally made up of physical action, with words often optional or arbitrarily replaceable, that it can be regarded as having a distinctive potential for performative imagination that is not reducible to verbal assertions (ibid.).

In the story that Kari recounted it rather seems that words were ranked above actions. This may, however, be a logical consequence of the court record being a written source. We cannot actually *see* the drama that unfolded. The physical actions are embedded in the text, and have been translated into words. Still it is obvious that actions are fundamental to the performance of the courtship and the wedding ceremony. It has been noticed that it was possible in a conventional courtship situation to establish an understanding without exchanging a single word with reference to marriage (Frimanslund 1938). Still words and actions need each other, and operate in a complementary way, they are inseparably inscribed in each other (Parkin 1992). Speech may thus be seen as a form of action, as a speech act; or the magical power of words to act upon reality.

What is meant by the concept of ritual is not easily defined. For my purposes I have chosen to define the term as rule-governed activity of a symbolic kind which draws the attention of its participants to objects of thought and feeling which they hold to be of special significance (Connerton 1989:44ff).[5] Paul Connerton has unpacked the premises contained in this definition by means of three interconnected propositions: rites are not merely expressive, not merely formal, and not limited in effect to the ritual situation. These three propositions also give sense to understand how the seduction of Kari was embedded in recollections of past experiences which were sustained through the performance of more or less ritual actions.

As *expressive* actions, rites may be seen as formalized acts, which also tend to be stylized, stereotyped, and repetitive. They are not subject to spontaneous variation, or at least are susceptible of variation only within strict limits (Connerton 1989:44). In Kari's story the courtship as well as the wedding ceremony appear as more or less stereotyped actions that have constantly been repeated, and therefore may be easily recognized and determined. To be expressive they also must be performed according to a certain *form*. Connerton maintains that it is misleading to see rites as merely an empty form in contrast to acts that are spoken of as "sincere" or "authentic". On the contrary, rites will be felt by those who observe them to be obligatory, and the

interference with acts endowed with ritual value is always felt to be an intolerable injury inflicted by one person or group upon another (ibid.) Thus when Johannes seduced women by using acts of ritual value, it was a violation, an abuse of the ritual and its form that emptied it of its meaning.

Rites are not limited in *effect* to the ritual situation. They mark beginnings and endings, especially in the case of individual life-crisis ceremonies, like those associated with marriage. But, as Connerton has pointed out, they also permeate non-ritual behaviour and mentality. Until she understood that she had been duped, Kari had clearly perceived the promise as a beginning and the wedding as an ending. But this also had significance with respect to a set of further non-ritual actions. It gave value and meaning to Kari's own life as well as that of the community. When Johannes entered the stage, he started a chain of events that meant that people in their daily life had to face them as lovers and then as a married couple. The expressive, formal, and effective aspects of rites are consequently not just expressive of abstract ideas, but *do* things (Parkin 1992).

The interaction between a man and a woman who exchange promises seems to be in an intermediate position between small-scale encounters of everyday life and large-scale ceremonies. We may question whether a proposal may be regarded as a ritual at all. Might it not just as well be regarded as a custom? According to David Parkin ritual calls for "public attention" in a way that custom, if carried out "correctly", does not. Custom is silent and, if properly carried out, unnoticed, while ritual, as the obverse, is culturally loud and vibrant even when acoustically mute and tranquil. Excluded from ritual are personal rituals, which as personal secrets do not yet evoke public judgement (Parkin 1992). A proposal would not, however, stay a personal secret for long. Even vows exchanged in secret would immediately attract public attention. Blushes, glances, words whispered in passing, visits at the bedside were signs which did not pass unnoticed by people. The couple immediately made themselves conspicuous as lovers. What had been performed in secret instantly became public, with other people as an attentive audience. Thus, although an act of intimacy, the exchange of promises aroused public attention. Moreover, it may be characterized as an expressive, formal, and repetitive act, its scope is not limited to the intimate situation. It is a solemn moment, a situation that calls for appropriate, formal words and modes of expressions. By following a set of well-defined rules the suitor will have the power to influence the order of events, he will have to speak with authority and conviction to give his words the power to act on the girl. This makes the performance of a proposal an institutionalized act.

As an institutional act, emphasis is put on the formal aspects of the proposal. It appears to be a rule-governed act without much space for improvisation and variation. However, it has also been pointed out that ritual may be an arena of contradictory and contestable perspectives, where the participants may have their own reasons, viewpoints and motives, and in fact make up the ritual as they go along (Parkin 1992:13). Maybe this is what Johannes actually did when he employed the form of ritual to work on girls? He played a game

that was made up in response to the way the girls reacted. To disclose the rules of his game I will take a closer look at what he actually said and did, and the effect it had.

The Trap of Seduction

The promise of marriage was at the heart of his performance. Through his promise Johannes gained access not only to Kari's body, but also to her money. Thus a promise was the magical words which had the power to transform their relationship, and start a chain of events which brought Kari still further along the road of deceit. As we have seen, Johannes was not immediately successful in staging himself as a prospective suitor. How could what he said and did still have such a persuasive effect?

Linguistically a promise is a speech act. The theory of speech act was developed by the English philosopher J. L. Austin (1971). When a man uttered the words "I promise to marry you", he was not describing what he did, but acting out his promise. Such statements are consequently named performatives, as their function is to carry out performances and accomplish an act through the very process of their enunciation. A speech act is therefore not a statement which may be logically true or false, rather it is successfully or unsuccessfully performed, or in Austin's words, *felicitous* or *infelicitous*. Austin argued that a speech act is made up of three kinds of acts, which are interconnected but must be distinguished. The first group, named the *locutionary* act, is performed just by saying something, which makes sense or produces meaning (Austin 1971:108ff.).

The advances of a man to a woman might be formulated as a question, a declaration or a promise. In the case of Johannes, he was not immediately successful. Kari responded to his advances with fear and rejection, while another girl instantly took his proposal to be a joke. In other words, his first attempt was infelicitous, his words remained ineffective and we may say that he was not able to make his words work beyond the locutionary act. To get what he wanted from Kari, and transform their relationship, his promise had to acquire a force of utterance, above and beyond its meaning. Only then was his performance turned into an *illocutionary* act. He had to make his words do what he wanted them to do at the moment of utterance. His words would have force, *illocutionary force,* only if he succeeded in expressing what was *intended* to be understood in a certain way (Gilje 1987:72). The whole point of a promise as speech act is to commit the speaker to a certain future action (Austin 1971:157). Johannes therefore had to make his intentions clear in such a way that Kari understood his proposal *as* a promise. That is, she had to understand it as a declaration of his intention to commit himself to marry her in the near future, and also that his intention was to evoke a particular response, a response that was not fear or laughter, but accepting him.

On condition that she had *understood* this, a third kind of act was performed, the *perlocutionary* act, which is the production of *effects* on the hearer (ibid.).[6] This meant that Johannes had to succeed in *persuading* Kari, and make her trust him on his words. Even though the illocutionary act must be seen as decisive, it is the interaction between the three groups of acts that determines whether a speech act is felicitous or not. Thus it is not indifferent how the promise is performed. Just as the acts of a ritual

are performed according to determined rules, a promise has to be performed by uttering certain words and expressions in accordance with certain underlying constitutive rules.

Austin pointed out that there must be an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, and the procedure must include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances (Austin 1971:26). He did not, however, elaborate the nature of these conventions, and therefore left the way open for others to think of speech acts in purely linguistic terms (Thompson 1991:9). As Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out, linguists have reduced speech acts to pure communication, and forgotten that authority comes to language from outside. To understand the power of speech acts, one should study the uses of language and the social conditions in which words are employed. The conventions must be seen as social phenomena, implicated in sets of social relations, imbued with power and authority. The symbolic efficacy of speech acts, in his opinion, resides in the institutional conditions of their production and reception (Bourdieu 1991:107–116).[7]

A pervasive feature of the interaction of man and woman in the courtship situation is that the man is authorized to *speak*, while the woman has the power to accept or reject. What the promise *does*, the intention behind it, the mutual understanding it creates, and the obligations which are constituted can therefore not be seen as detached from a context of conventional and institutionalized norms of actions and gender relations. A chain of events culminating in intercourse was in this context tantamount to a binding promise of marriage.[8] Words may be formulated in such a way as to make their meaning indeterminate and uncertain, but when the words are inscribed in actions in the conventional context of a courtship they may be stripped of ambiguity. To persuade Kari, Johannes therefore not only had to appear as a suitor, but he also had to inscribe his words and actions in the phases and sequences of a conventional courtship. It was not enough to declare his intentions by merely saying that he would marry. The promise had to be performed in such a way, and under such circumstances that she recognized it as the right words at the right time and in the right place.

A fact that must be taken into consideration is that the conventions of courtship were changing at the end of the nineteenth century, and this allowed greater scope for improvisation and seduction.[9] We may therefore ask what Johannes actually did to persuade Kari. His first advance being rejected, he approached her again and told her about his farm in Sweden. Thus he presented himself, the stranger disclosed who he was. Kari's impulsive fear was now replaced by growing interest. She started to take a liking to him, as she puts it, and allowed him to visit her regularly. Thus he succeeded in gaining access as her suitor, and they became increasingly familiar, a fact which was obvious to most people in their surroundings. As he was a stranger both to her and others in the small community, nobody had any knowledge of who he was and what he represented. This was a problem which girls increasingly were faced with at this time. As the story of Kari fully illustrates, she had nothing but personal trust and his words to guarantee that his promise was sincere.

Kari never disclosed much of what had

happened between them in intimate situations. We can imagine that Johannes drew a picture of a future life on his farm in Sweden, and assured her that nothing but death would part them. Still Kari was reluctant, even at the time of the formal proposal. Evidently she was not as yet certain as to how she should interpret his advances. Only when he showed her the label that looked like a hundred dollar bill, was she convinced and accepted him. So convinced, in fact, that she let him have intercourse. To gain her confidence, Johannes thus had had to give substantial proof of his capital. The banknote convinced Kari that he was in the position to marry and able to support a wife and children. The note also signifies more. The Supreme Court remarked that Kari, given the modest circumstances of her background, had means that were not insignificant. Her small fortune amounted to 110 dollars. It also turned out that Johannes *before* he approached her had made inquiries about her: "I hear Kari has a lot of money?" In order to make her believe that he was a suitable man, he had to find a way to show her that his means equalled, if not surpassed hers. Added to this is most likely also the fact that Kari had reached an age when she had started looking for a husband, hoping to get a home of her own.

The American philosopher John R. Searle has made an analysis of the illocutionary act of promising and shown what conditions are necessary and sufficient for the act to have been successfully and non-deficiently performed in the utterance of a given sentence (Searle 1995:54–62). He lists a number of conditions, here I will take a closer look at two of them. One condition is that the promise must be sincere: the speaker intends to do what he promises (*sincerity condition*). Another is that he intends that the utterance of the promise will place him under an obligation to do what he has promised (*essential condition*). To us it is evident that Johannes did not have sincere intentions, neither at the moment of uttering the decisive words nor later on, and we suspect that he had never had the intention of keeping his promise. But actually it does not matter if his promise was insincere, as long as Kari understood it as a promise. Even if he had no intention of keeping it he still purported to have this intention. If he could later prove that he had had *no* intention of committing himself to marriage, logically he would have proved that the words he uttered *was* no promise (ibid.).

When Johannes later on was confronted with Kari and her accusations, he denied every commitment he had made, although not in a very elegant way. He denied having proposed to her, he denied having told anybody either that they planned to marry or had got married, and he would not admit that he had borrowed money from her. He maintained that they had only had intercourse once, even though Kari on repeated occasions had slipped into his bed. It might be true that he accompanied her to Bergen and later stayed with her and helped her, but this was because he was a nice and kind man, and so on and so forth. Everything was designed to give the impression that Kari was naive and easily fooled.

But before it had gone that far, Johannes never betrayed himself. He patiently played his game to its utmost consequence: from courtship and proposal, through a fictitious wedding, to loving matrimonial life, he developed a relationship of personal trust. But his game was also played for a larger

audience, with people in their surroundings as witnesses and keen observers. They noticed actions that corresponded to their ideas of courtship and marriage, but they also discovered signs that told them that things might not quite be as they looked.

Kari herself may have been less attentive to the minor symptoms that might have indicated that her trust in Johannes was not justified. Why did she not react when the promise was combined with a request to borrow money? Apparently she ascribed little significance to this. Perhaps it may be interpreted as a token of her trust. We may also wonder why she accepted his repeated requests for money, economical as she was, and why she agreed to pay for the journey to Bergen, as well as for the wedding. She seems to have been more upset when he insisted on getting married in Sweden, but in the end she agreed to his suggestion of a cheaper ceremony in Bergen, even though the custom was to celebrate the wedding in the parish where the bride lived. When they announced their intention to go to town and get married, it must therefore have caused surprise, even gossip and suspicion.

How her relatives reacted when she arrived and asked them to repay her money is not clear. Neither do we know their response to the forthcoming wedding. What we do know is that her sister who accompanied her to Bergen hardly was sympathetic to the idea. The Supreme Court has not recounted in detail what happened between the two sisters on the steamer to Bergen. Most likely her sister confronted Kari with her hostility to Johannes, and told her about the warnings of the fellow passenger. Perhaps he had informed her of rumours of his affairs with women. As her efforts to warn Kari about her future husband were futile, she left them in anger and refused to take part in the wedding.

Why did Kari not listen to her sister? Considering her situation, what should she have done? At home everybody knew what had happened. She had started to live with Johannes, given him her money, and was probably by this time also expecting a child. If she broke off the engagement, just at the time of its consummation, she would have had to go home in disgrace. She would become the laughingstock of the community, deceived and fooled as she was. People would probably wonder about her in the same way as the Supreme Court later did: she must have been exceptionally and unbelievably naive. She had gone along too far to withdraw just like that. She already was tied to Johannes, and could only hope that it would turn out that her trust in him had been justified.

At the Point of No Return

Kari was in a position where she had no choice but to go through with her wedding. It is evident, though, that she was in retreat. He made her abandon the idea of a church wedding, and thus she entered foreign territory. A civil wedding ceremony was hardly included in her stock of experiences. Still she made herself ready, let Johannes do her hair, and dressed herself in bridal wreath and a hired dress. The settings – a house in a dark and narrow alley and a small room – can hardly have corresponded to the solemn ceremony she must have pictured in advance.

The ceremony, however, must have worked convincingly. It was made up of components that are usually associated with the rites of marriage. The communication, the symbols, the very aesthetics of the ritual

were correct. The couple stand in front of a table, a man who looks like a priest and is dressed in black reads from a book, the book looks like the New Testament, the words he reads are of "godly" content and have to do with marriage. At the end he asks if they will take each other, they join hands as a sign of the matrimonial union, and finally he declares them to be lawfully wedded husband and wife. Thus Kari recognized the ritual she had taken part in as the rites of marriage, and could therefore in future assert that she was married. If she noticed anything that did not correspond to wedding ceremonies as she had seen them in church at home, she could ascribe it to the civil character of the ceremony. When she returned home, she still had to defend herself against the doubts and distrust of people. Their suspicions may have arisen because *they* had not participated in the ceremony. By travelling to Bergen to get married to a stranger, she had in fact excluded people in her community as participants in and witnesses to her wedding. In other words, they could not judge the legitimacy of the rites that had been performed.

Was Kari justified in regarding herself as married? On the surface the expressive form and symbolic effects of the ceremony were right – the right words and acts had been performed. But Kari was still not married. The reason is simply that the man in the wide, black gown was the wrong man in the wrong place. The words in the rite of marriage derive their symbolic efficacy and legitimacy from the institution that has authorized the person to pronounce them (Bourdieu 1991:111). A condition for the ritual to be effective, to do what it was meant to do and join Kari and Johannes in matrimony, was that the man must be authorized to perform the act by an institution with a right to constitute marriage. This right belonged to clerical and judicial institutions, in other words, an authority endowed on ordained priests and registrars at the time.

The Movement of Bodies

To enter marriage may be seen as movement, a passage, in both a symbolic and a bodily sense. David Parkin has argued that action in a ritual can only be understood as bodily movement towards or positioning with respect to other bodily movements and positions (Parkin 1992). If such movements are a principal feature of ritual, it must be through them rather than through verbal assertions that people make their main statements (ibid.) The position of bodies is of course most striking in the description of the fictitious wedding ceremony. The participants in the ritual positioned themselves in the room in relation to the table, and the bride and groom placed themselves in relation to the man in black. Their placing marked the position that each one of them had in the rites of marriage.

A wedding ceremony is the end point in a rite of passage. A passage presupposes phasal movement, directionality, and positioning (Parkin 1992). I have shown how the relationship of Kari and Johannes moved from one phase to the next. A first encounter, rejection, interest, intimacy, promises exchanged, the sexual act, planning the wedding, the journey to Bergen, entering the house, and finally the wedding itself. Metaphorically they are on the move: "on the way to get married", as the saying goes in Norwegian. The course of event is associated with bodily metaphors. Gradually their bodies changes their positioning in

respect of the other, they meet, they are united, joined in matrimony, and become one.

Through metaphors like this the idea of rituals as bodily movement is concerned with directionality and the making of a journey or passage by participants standing in spatial relationship to each other. The body is pictured as moving, passing through space, even if it actually remains in the same position (Parkin 1992). When Johannes and Kari confirmed their mutual promises by the sexual act, the consequence was that Kari in actual fact got in the family *way*.[10] Through her pregnancy her body was transformed from girl to woman. The metaphor of passage is even more obvious when they stood in front of the table and answered "I will" and joined hands. At that moment they stepped across a threshold, a limit was crossed. When they left the house they were not the same persons as they had been when they entered.

Rituals have their own magic. They have symbolic efficacy, which, according to Bourdieu (1991:119) is the power they possess to act on reality by acting on its representations. Thus a man and a woman who had passed through a rite of marriage were really transformed. The representations *others* had of them were transformed, and this meant that the behaviour others adopted towards them was transformed. Simultaneously the representations they had of themselves were transformed, and this in turn would transform the behaviour they felt obliged to adopt in order to conform to that representation (ibid.)

The transformation of representations may be seen by the way Kari and Johannes gradually came to behave as a couple: as lovers, as engaged, and in the end as a married couple. Everybody in their surroundings had to adapt to these representations and to the new conditions. The transformation is, however, most noticeable in the case of Kari, as she had passed through a total transformation, expressed through concrete changes in the nature and destiny of her body. Her body was transformed from girl to woman as her pregnancy became evident. In the story she herself recounted in court she also pointed to other symbols which underscored the transformation. At first she marked the occasion of her wedding, the passing into the state of marriage, by dressing like a bride. Then she underlined the transformed representation of herself by dressing as a married woman. The way she dressed thus marked a change in her role as woman in a sexual, reproductive, emotional, and intellectual way (Parkin 1992). From now on she adopted the behaviour which conformed to the representation of a married woman, and everybody in her community had to adapt to this representation. In turn this would influence the way others behaved towards her. Even if they did not quite trust that she actually had got married, they still had to treat Kari as a married woman after her return from Bergen.

The idea of rites of passage as bodily movement may also explain why Kari could not back out. To understand this we have to look once again at the promise, and what it actually *does*. Words and action – promise and the sexual act – merge and constitute a binding intersubjective relation. This relationship is one of moral obligation, and it forms a mutual agreement that commits both parties (Cooke 1994:64–65). When Kari accepted the promise, *she* was committed to keeping it, just as much as Johan-

nes was. The one who failed to keep the promise would be morally obliged to give an account of him- or herself, to explain, excuse or justify his or her behaviour, or else accept the blame (ibid.). The mutual promise may thus be seen as simultaneously both symmetrical and asymmetrical. But man and woman did not position themselves in the same way in respect of a promise. Nor was what was given and what was received the same. The man gave his word and the woman gave her body. Only when all exchanges were completed and the wedding celebrated, was the relation accomplished and a balance of giving and receiving was achieved.

Kari had been carried away with the promises made by Johannes, and somehow her own actions had made her as responsible as he was. She had become a participant to the game he had staged. She had been set in motion, and was on her way. The promise started a transformation of her body, and she no longer had the power to reverse the transition. The course had to be carried through to its bitter end. And finally she ended up simultaneously married and not married, she had passed through and still she had not. She was left nowhere, injured and seduced, no longer secure of her place, of who she was and what she was, exposed as naive and simple.

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Notes

1 *Norsk Retstidende* 1877:116ff. "Høiesterets Votering og Dom af 19 Jan. d. A i Sagen L.Nr. 34/1 1877: Advokat Bergh, Aktor mod Johannes Olsen Storekvammen".
2 In Norway the currency at that time was called *spesiedaler* or *daler* "dollar" for short.
3 Nocturnal visit by a lover was a custom still practised in most districts of Norway at this time. As Eilert Sundt pointed out in his sociological study of the state of morality in Norway in 1857 the custom was degenerating into an immoral nuisance.
4 His identity was never ascertained. The vicar of the parish of Silbodal in Värmland where he allegedly came from, could disprove that he was born or known there.
5 Connerton (1989) discusses how our experiences of the present largely depend upon our knowledge and images of the past. He argues that the images and recollected knowledge of the past are conveyed and sustained by more or less ritual performances.
6 It is not easy to distinguish between an illocutionary and a perlocutionary act. The felicitous performance of the illocutionary act is not conditional on a special effect on the hearer beyond the effect that the act is understood as something, for example, a promise (Gilje 1987:71). Thus it is necessary to distinguish between *understanding* and *accepting* or trusting a promise.
7 It has been questioned whether Bourdieu relies too heavily on those occasions in which the utterance of speech acts is clearly part of some recognized social ritual, like a marriage or baptism, as distinct from occasions in which individuals engage in relatively unstructured face-to-face interaction (Thompson 1991:10).
8 This may be true until the beginning of the early eighteenth century. As I will show in my forthcoming thesis, however, unmarried mothers continued to argue as if promises exchanged in this context constituted commitments.
9 Johannes Storekvammen was by no means the only man who operated in this way at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.
10 This metaphor is even more explicit in Norwegian: she was on her way.

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Red Lights in the Wilderness

By Hanna Snellman

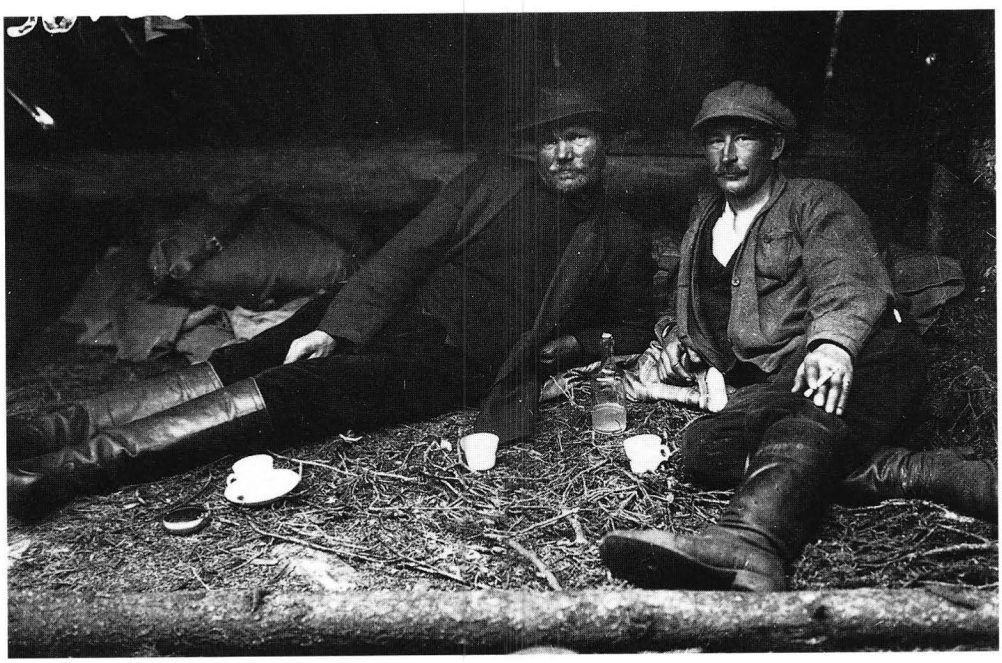
European ethnologists have been accused of making the world a much nicer, happier and safer place than it is. In the 1970s the German scholars Utz Jeggle and Hermann Bausinger pointed out that idealizing the past has been the besetting sin of former generations of ethnologists (Gustavsson 1980:31–32; Lehtonen 1995:177). In Finland the ethnological overviews of Finnish popular culture emphasize the united front of the rural community; poverty and destitution are not mentioned, as Satu Apo has pointed out (Apo 1984a:9–10; Apo 1984b: 153). Therefore, it is not surprising that prostitution has seldom been treated in Finnish ethnological research before the 1990s; it actually did not exist in the texts of ethnologists. The situation – embroidering the truth and creating nostalgia – has been about the same in Sweden (Gerholm 1993:19), with the exception of Jonas Frykman's book (1977) about women with bad reputations. However, all this can be accounted for by the history of ethnology, its roots being in national romanticism.

The aim of this article[1] is to try to find information on the everyday lives of women accused of prostitution in sparsely inhabited Finnish Lapland. This theme is a part of my research project "Women working their way through logging camps" which examines women in logging communities. Everyday lives of women are examined from three angles: First, their work in isolated homesteads taking care of children and cattle while husbands were away working in the woods for long periods of time; second, as cooks in the isolated camps among men; and third, as women on the loose, selling liquor and their company to lumberjacks. In this article the focus is on the third theme, prostitution.

The oral history material[2] – if accepted as such – used in this case study about prostitution on the periphery, far from cities, consists of documents produced by policemen when they were questioning women accused of prostitution. These interrogations of suspects were done in the years 1914–1916, 1918–1920 and 1923–1932 in Rovaniemi, a sort of a capital of this sparsely populated area. The main question in this article is whether this material, examination notes made by policemen, gives any information about the informal economy and everyday lives of the women accused of prostitution. As an ethnologist, I am not interested in whether the women were actually criminals or not, nor am I interested in the way society treated these women. What I will focus on is their life as women without permanent work in an area where men outnumbered women.

Lumberjacks of Lapland

Ecologically the conditions for the forest industry are the same throughout the northern coniferous zone. Through time, however, the regional biases in forestry have changed as the forest sector has expanded, since it was for a very long time possible to move on to new, virgin resource areas. That was exactly what happened in Finnish Lapland at the end of the nineteenth century: In the 1870s industrialists became interested in the vast untouched forest areas in Finnish Lapland and the opportunities they offered for a steam-driven sawmill industry on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia. A professional group of lumberjacks who specialized in the felling and transport of timber was formed in the area. Many of them were like nomads, working in forests during the winter and autumn months, and



These pictures were taken in 1923 by Sakari Pälsi in the logging camps of Lapland. The pictures are from the National Board of Antiquities, Helsinki.

by rivers during the spring and summer months. Some combined logging with farming or reindeer herding, others with periods of unemployment or construction work (see Johansson 1994; Snellman 1996).

The following account of the everyday life of an American logger could just as well apply to that of his Nordic counterpart:

> At the end of the 19th century loggers were largely transient workers, spending the winters in snowbound camps remotely located deep in the forests, and leaving in the spring, when logging and river driving ceased, for summer idleness or odd jobs. They frequently changed jobs even during the winter, walking from one camp to another and working at their trades (Wackerman 1949:67–68).

The logging camps of Finnish Lapland were meeting places for a heterogeneous group of men, many of whom were born beyond the boundaries of Lapland, a territory itself large in area. Men with different social and cultural backgrounds spent months in isolated logging camps built in the wilderness. River driving brought them closer to settlement but still they were mostly living away from society, where communication with people other than fellow male workers would have been possible. Due to long distances, for many it was only a few times a year that communication with women was possible: mostly in the spring and in the autumn (Snellman 1996:56–75).

The lumberjacks were mostly men who had migrated to Lapland. Though not officially recognized, due to the fact that many of them were seasonal workers from eastern and southern Finland and they were registered there, but at least in practice, men outnumbered women in Lapland for some time. For the topic under consideration, prostitution, this outnumbering is essential: Work as a lumberjack was physically demanding, so one can assume that the first tides of immigration were composed overwhelmingly of unattached young men in the prime of life, with the physical strength needed in the work. It must be stressed here that this is only an assumption: even though Finland is famous for its detailed demographic statistics, the seasonal workers are a problem in that sense. Seasonal workers could live permanently hundreds of kilometres from the communities where they were officially registered.

As the forest industry was established in Lapland at the turn of the century, the population of, for example, Rovaniemi, tripled. In 1870 the population of Rovaniemi was around 4,000 and in 1910 around 11,000 (Enbuske 1997:88–89). However, the statistics do not tell the whole truth. At the same time there were thousands of seasonal workers, all men, who worked in Lapland without being officially registered. So far no one has been able to give the exact number of them (e.g. Ahvenainen 1970; Enbuske 1997; Snellman 1996). It has been estimated that each year more than 10,000 men drifted to Lapland to work, and most of them either started looking for work from Rovaniemi (because of the railway and the fact that the timber companies had their offices there), or returned to their home communities via Rovaniemi. Rovaniemi was also famous for its fairs which attracted lumberjacks during times of unemployment (Snellman 1989).

Most likely 10,000 men wandering to the forests of Lapland through Rovaniemi every winter is an exaggeration, but even if the number was much smaller, the ratio between the male and female population stays the same. From oral history material

collected among lumberjacks[3] one can read that those who came to Lapland to work at the logging camps were either bachelors or husbands who had left their wives and families at home. Even though bachelors did marry local girls, there certainly was such a shortage of marriageable women that the unwed seasonal workers were condemned to single blessedness by simple arithmetic.

Mass migration had knocked normal male-female ratios completely out of balance. Nonetheless, again it is impossible to deduce this from the statistics. The demographic statistics of Rovaniemi indicate that the male population outnumbered the female by only 4,198 to 4,123 in 1900.[4] In the narratives of lumberjacks, however, one can learn that a man usually officially left his seasonal worker's status only for two reasons: if he was married or if he gained possession of a farmstead. According to same oral history material it was easier to get a homestead from the state if one was married (Snellman 1996:187). All in all, again it is shown that oral history material can fill the gaps in the archive material.

Gradually, a part of the workforce settled permanently in Lapland and lumberjacks became official residents of the area where they worked. In 1950 more than half of Lapland's rural male workforce was seasonally occupied as lumberjacks (Heikinheimo & Ristimäki 1956:17). From the Second World War onwards forest work was gradually mechanized and professionalized, and therefore the profession of the old-time lumberjack became history.

Since there was an overwhelming surplus of males in Lapland for some time, the situation had its consequences. The existence of this large itinerant single male population created an environment, known as the "rest and recreation culture", in which prostitution could flourish, and flourish it did everywhere where there were lumberjacks: in population centres such as Rovaniemi, but also in small villages and logging camps built in the middle of the wilderness.

According to a Finnish social historian, Antti Häkkinen, prostitution was not common – at least in the sense we understand it today – in the Finnish countryside before the 1890s. The situation changed radically between the world wars: the expanding amount of so called roughneck occupations, i.e. lumberjacks, railroad and construction workers, kept the courts busy with charges against women accused of a disreputable way of life. Not only was prostitution criminalized, but also vagrancy, idleness and alcoholism (Häkkinen 1995:70).

Those women accused of indecent behaviour were questioned by the police in order to find out whether they should be punished by society or not. Usually women were asked to tell their life stories in order to find out how long they had led the life they were accused of. They were also questioned about their lifestyle for the same purpose. In addition to that, the police described the circumstances of the arrest. Therefore, the notes include information about the small routines of people living on the margin, and about lives of individuals. Yet one must remember that the information is construed by the examiner, not the interviewee.

The life story of 33-year-old Saima was written down by the police in 1928. In a few lines one can read not only the sad history of an individual but also about war orphans

of the Civil War[5] and the questionable system of taking care of the ill-fated:

> ... was an illegitimate child, no sisters or brothers, father not known, mother dead. Has been married, but the husband was killed in the Civil War and the four children of the couple were taken away from the mother and their maintenance was entrusted to the lowest bidder. Was a parish pauper herself until the age of 15, since when has earned her living by being a maid in different farms in Lapland. Two years ago moved to Rovaniemi. Summer 1927 she was in Kemi. The winter of 1927–1928 has been living in the cottage of Sierilä without work, earning her living by selling home-brewed beer, lemonade and tobacco. Admits that she has taken an drink when men visiting Sierilä have offered her one, but has not known the men because they have been vagabonds (OMA, Sign. CIIIc:2).

Needlework and Bootlegging

Women without permanent work lived on the margin in many ways: their homes were on the outskirts of communities and their lifestyle was despised by "decent" people. Even lumberjacks who visited their flimsy shacks whenever possible often describe them in a negative way. Affection is not necessarily mentioned in their narratives, but the women's ugliness – with some exceptions – and alcoholism are. A very typical recollection includes heavy drinking, a hasty coupling, passing out and a hangover the next morning. The company of men was as important as the company of women. Therefore – and to reduce the price – a man had the woman not only for himself, but a group of men were waiting in line for the same woman. The location could be anywhere, for example, inside a cottage or a shed or outside in the bushes. Lack of affection and plenty of alcohol for both the men and women is striking (Snellman 1996:192–198).

This is what we usually hear about prostitutes, and that is also the sort of information that is emphasized in the material – not that it is a surprise as after all the interviewers, the police, were interested in possible crime. They were not anthropologists. Yet some information about life beyond the life of a social outcast can be found in the documents. In the following, the information given in the documents which includes information about sources of income other than prostitution is summarized.

Hilda (18 years old) was arrested on 10 June 1916 at 7 p.m. She told the police that the previous September she had left the home of her parents in Kemi, the neighbouring town. The reason can be read between the lines: in July she had given birth to a baby, now in the care of the girl's parents. The past nine months she had been living in three different towns without permanent work. In February she had moved to Rovaniemi, but soon her male companion had been sent to prison after being charged with the procuration of women. Simultaneously Hilda was sent to the nearest hospital because she had venereal disease. She told the policemen that in addition to prostitution her income consisted of washing and repairing clothes, washing dishes and selling home-brewed beer. She had visited her hometown every now and then, which could mean that she was seeing her baby (OMA, Sign. CIIIe.I). Hilda disappears from the documents after this one arrest. Being charged with prostitution did not mean that the person would be a prostitute all her life (Häkkinen 1995:20). Drinking is not mentioned in the report, which is quite exceptional.

On 6 March 1919 two women, Lyyli and Maria, were arrested at five in the afternoon

in a cottage on the outskirts of town. Eighteen-year-old Maria, daughter of a crofter, had already been in prison for prostitution. After prison she had first lived with her parents for four months and later with a man in the centre of Rovaniemi. She had earned her living partly from needlework. At some time she had been in the hospital for four weeks because of venereal disease. On 7 July 1920 she was arrested again at 3 p.m. at the same cottage – known to the police "as a place where prostitutes and thieves live". The records state that Maria had been dating mostly soldiers lately (OMA, Sign. CIIIe:1).

Maria's life continued along the lines typical for a prostitute. At the age of 25 Maria is an alcoholic and also physically abused; she had scars on her face and head (OMA, Sign. CIIIc:2). According to contemporary accounts, the erratic lifestyle of prostitutes was soon visible in their physical appearance (Häkkinen 1995: 120, 171). Maria had already been imprisoned for four times, in 1919 for 4 months, in 1921 for 6 months, in 1922 for 12 months and 1924 for 15 months. Now she was sent to prison for 12 months. At times she had been working as a maid or in hay-making (OMA, Sign. CIIIc:2).

Lyyli's life story is similar, her life circulating around home, prison and hospital. She had left her parents' home at the age of 19 and had been working on farms and at an inn. At the age of 21 she was sent to penal servitude for four months, charged with prostitution. After returning to Rovaniemi she started working in a delivery room of the hospital but because of a venereal disease she had to give this up and become a patient in the hospital herself. The next years of her life she was either living with her parents or in the hospital receiving treatment for her venereal disease. At times she was working as a sales girl in a shop or doing needlework for a living, but from the dates of the arrests one can read that she was the companion of lumberjacks: the arrests took place at times and places where there were a lot of lumberjacks. She was also arrested in neighbouring towns (OMA, Sign. CIIIe:1).

Needlework was also a source of income for 17-year-old Impi, who was arrested on 4 November 1926. In the examination she told the police that she was going to work in a tailor's workshop. When she was examined again the next year she told the police that in addition to prostitution she had earned her living by needlework and crocheting lace for sale. Impi who, according to the notes, had started loose living when 15 years old, lived in the home of her parents, which is rather exceptional in the material (OMA, CIIIc:2). Yet there are other examples of that, too, e.g. 23-year-old Anna who was arrested 1 January 1928. According to the police, the wall-eyed girl had earned her living by selling coffee and home-brewed beer all over northern Finland. Apparently the market had been in the remote logging camps of Lapland and the mother had acted as a pander for the girl (OMA, Sign. CIIIc:2).

Hilda (aged 54) was arrested on 20 October 1931 because for a long time she had been unemployed, without a permanent residence, drinking and sleeping with vagabond lumberjacks for money or liquor. Her only other source of income was laundry. She had lived partly in sheds and partly in cottages where lumberjacks spent the periods of unemployment. The police interviewed Hilda about her life. She said that her father had migrated to the United States

when she was 9 years old and died there soon after. Hilda moved to her uncle's home when she was 12 years old. At the age of 14 she started working as a babysitter and later as a maid in different places. She changed places frequently. At the age of 32 she left her home village and moved southwards to work first as a maid and later in a sawmill. When she was about 40 years old she came back to Rovaniemi. In the cottage where she lived with other women not only was sex for sale, but also home-made beer, lemonade and tobacco (OMA, Sign. CIIIc:2). In the lumberjacks' narratives Hilda was one of the most remembered persons (e.g. SKS, Lumberjack Traditions 1969, Oskari Vuorinen).

Another person also found in the lumberjacks' narratives is Hilma (SKS, Lumberjack Traditions 1969, Oskari Vuorinen). A crofter from the neighbouring village was questioned by the police on 17 October 1931. Apparently a customer of Hilma, he told the police that he had come to Rovaniemi the previous Monday after which he had been drinking. The day before the questioning he went to Hilma's cottage where he had been drinking home-brewed beer with a number of people until he passed out. When he woke up in the morning his wallet was gone. The 39-year-old Hilma had been questioned by the police many times. From the records we learn that she was a daughter of a farmer, and she had lived with her parents until she was 19 years old. She had also worked at agricultural tasks at home and on neighbouring farms. At the age of 19 she married a tenant farmer and moved to another community. After nine years of marriage the husband died and Hilma was left with three small children. The maintenance of the two older ones was entrusted to a farmer in the village,[6] and the baby who a little later died at the age of 6 months was left with the mother. At the age of 30 she moved to Rovaniemi where she apparently was a madam of a modest brothel. Hilma gave birth to another child who was taken away from her at the age of four. Earlier Hilma had also worked as a masseuse, but because of a bad drinking problem, she was no longer able to do massage (OMA, Sign. CIIIc:2).

Aino (26) was arrested on 27 July 1927. Two years before she had bought a cottage in the centre of Rovaniemi and started a business. She rented lodgings to men and women and sold home-brewed beer, coffee and tobacco to vagabond lumberjacks. The women were naturally prostitutes working for Aino (OMA, Sign. CIIIc:2).

Conclusion

The Canadian writer James H. Gray summarized the social life of western Canada with a few words; "Getting drunk and getting laid" (Gray 1995:ix). That characterizes the social life of itinerant lumberjacks and the sources of income for prostitutes as well. Selling alcohol, in this case strong home-made brew or moonshine, was illegal because of prohibition[7] and therefore a successful business. Those who did not drink it too much themselves could make a nice – though illegal – living.[8] However, the business had its dark side: undressing for men inevitably led the same women to put on the unpleasant dress of the prison or hospital, both far away from Rovaniemi.

The typical life story of a prostitute includes leaving home at an early age, work as maid on farms and starting a life of vice around the age of 20. The impression one

gets from the life stories of the women is that prostitution is connected with alcoholism – though which one came first is very difficult to determine. A professional prostitute in 1920s Helsinki spent half of her time in the prison for women or in hospital for venereal disease.[9] There is no reason to believe the situation would have been different in Rovaniemi.

The aim of this study was to see whether the interviews with women accused of prostitution conducted by police have information about other sources of income these women had. The results are that the material concentrates – not surprisingly – on prostitution. "The documents describe encounters of ill-fated lonely persons with difficulties in life," as Antti Häkkinen has stated (1995:9). Yet some information on other kinds of income can be obtained. Mostly these women earned their bread and butter as drinking companions of itinerant lumberjacks. Most of them had worked as maids at some time in their lives and their labour was still needed, at least in haymaking, a task which demanded all the workforce available. Rovaniemi was a centre where different services were needed. Therefore it is not a surprise that these women earned their living partly from washing and repairing clothes, washing dishes, selling coffee, lemonade, home-brewed beer and tobacco or massaging. These all belong to the sector of the informal economy, a field that is difficult to research because of the lack of sources.[10]

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Notes

1 This article is based on a paper presented at the Second European Social Science History Conference in Amsterdam, 7 March 1998.

2 This paper is an experiment inspired by Carlo Ginzburg's article "The Inquisitor as Anthropologist", published in *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method* (1992). Ginzburg writes: "The analogy which is the subject of this brief essay struck me for the first time several years ago in Bologna while I was attending a colloquium on oral history. Historians of contemporary European societies and distinguished Africanists and anthropologists were debating the different ways of dealing with oral evidence. Suddenly it occurred to me that even historians of early modern Europe – a noncontemporary society which has left enormous amounts of written evidence – sometimes use oral sources, or, more precisely, written records of oral speech. For instance, the judicial proceedings of lay and ecclesiastical courts might be comparable to the notebooks of anthropologists, recorded centuries ago."

3 Loggers were the very first labour occupations that attracted the attention of Finnish ethnologists. Already in 1959 and 1960 questionnaires about river driving and forest work were sent out by the University of Turku. These questionnaires contained questions such as "describe loggers' clothing" or "how did local people stand in relation to lumberjacks?", and informants were asked to answer the questions in writing. In addition, in 1969 the Tradition Archive of the Finnish Literary Society arranged a competition entitled "Lumberjack Traditions". Again informants were asked to respond in writing, but this time they were not given questions, but simply asked to tell about their lives as lumberjacks. In 1988 a settlement society functioning in Lapland arranged another competition entitled "Logging Camp Traditions". For this competition informants were asked to write their life stories or describe a year of their life.
The above-mentioned narratives provide the backbone source material for my study of lumberjacks (Snellman 1996), but there is also other oral history material available: namely, fieldwork by the author. In 1986 I documented contemporary floating work in Finnish Lapland for the National Board of Antiquities. I had done some interviews earlier (1983), but on a larger scale I started collecting life-history material among retired

floating and logging workers in 1988. By various means I have amassed 224 informants in my study, of whom one-third have been interviewed.

4 Matti Enbuske from the University of Oulu has kindly provided me with this information.

5 On war orphans (altogether about 20,000 after the Civil War), see Pulma 1987:126–136.

6 On the system, see Pulma 1986:113.

7 On prohibition (1919–1932), see Peltonen 1997:96.

8 On similar unlicensed saloons in Helsinki, see Häkkinen 1995:57.

9 On the vicious circle of prison, hospital and alcoholism, see Häkkinen 1995:112, 171, 178–182, 188–19.

10 On the tasks of women in a rural setting, see Isacson 1994:58–62.

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The Playing Collective
Snowboarding, Youth Culture and the Desire for Excitement

By Olav Christensen

Introduction

A group of young people gather each winter at a campsite near the Hemsedal Ski Resort. Freestyle snowboarding is their shared passion. In this environment, despite being an "old" and physically awkward person, I have been doing fieldwork since 1996. I have gained the confidence of my informants, who have given me the apposite title "Doctor of Words". In this article I enter their cultural universe with the focus on play and playful behaviour. Play can be tests of manhood in the encounter with wild, precipitous nature, but it can be just as much about the mundane acts of everyday life:

It is morning. Cold. So cold that the quilt has frozen fast to the wall of the caravan. The night's breathing has materialized as rime frost on the windows, letting very little of the morning light seep in. There's a creaking noise from the other end of the caravan. Lars the snowboard enthusiast has started moving. A moment later he announces that it's time to get up. The powder snow is calling us from the valley slopes outside. A couple of quick slices of bread and a glass of milk is all the day's breakfast. Then I am invited to come along to the toilet: "It's important to have a crap in the morning," says Lars. "Just imagine if you had to go on the mountain or in the forest, or in the middle of the night in the caravan!" An exhortation like this is not ignored by a keen fieldworker. On the way to the campsite toilet, I am told that the joint visit to the loo in the morning is "an old custom" among the snowboarders who frequent this place. There is room for three men side by side, each in his own cubicle. Lars and I each occupy one. Step by step I am instructed in the tradition. First the seat has to be covered with paper. Then it is important to secure the toilet against recoil: "Flashback remover," Lars explains, crumpling up a length of toilet paper into a wad that is carefully placed in the centre of the bowl. Then braces and other loose-hanging parts of the winter wardrobe are manoeuvred so that nothing ends up touching the filthy floor. "The door has to be half-open," Lars says. "That way you can see the mountain through the toilet window." After these basic formalities, the ritual enters its most concentrated phase. To strengthen my motivation properly, Lars reminds me again how important the toilet visit is, for us and our predecessors. If I am successful it is a relief in more than one way. "You must say 'pass' before you wipe your arse," says Lars, "that's an old and important rule." I make no objections, say "pass" as the ritual prescribes, and round off my visit at the washbasin. During the roughly ten-minute stay in the toilet, I am guided with a sure hand through the rituals, in a light, laughing, playful atmosphere.

This was my first experience as a "native" among the snowboarders at Totten Camping in Hemsedal, Norway, one February morning in 1998, far from the reality that I had imagined my doctoral project would be based on. I have had to change all my descriptions and plans on the way. Since I started in the winter of 1996, this ethnographically coloured project has been conducted in pure inductive style. I have had to accumulate my knowledge of snowboard culture virtually from scratch. On the other hand, the project has been an incredibly stimulating voyage of discovery in youthful *joie de vivre* and creativity.

The Playing People

It was after a long time as a participant observer that I was invited to share food, accommodation, toilet, and other living conditions with the "board people". My host Lars has spent several winters in a row at the campsite. The social community to which he belongs has called itself by such English names as "Totten Happy Campers" and "Totten Hard Core", and they have had various club badges and emblems as proof of membership. The community has consisted of

about forty people aged 18–28, most of them from eastern Oslo. Almost 80 per cent are boys. They have had totem poles and colourful caravans, a social community centred on play, and a Gonzo-inspired cultural programme with distinctly hedonistic elements. The Totten clan has a conscious and active relationship with an international network of like-minded people. As one member of the group put it, "Snowboard culture is made up of many cells which together constitute an organism".

The "cell" about which I am writing has a large number of competent members. They possess a large subcultural capital and cover a broad spectrum. There are several semi-professional riders, others work with photography, film, or other artistic activities associated with their shared interest in snowboarding. They all repair and maintain their own equipment.

The ritual visit to the toilet is characteristic of the way my informants handle everyday actions great and small. From things that are just routine for other people, they constantly make new games and playful rituals. In this article, however, I will confine myself to looking at snowboard play and the arena in which it takes place.

The Playground

Since the snowboard is a relatively new toy and not everyone is familiar with its distinctive character and "genealogy", it may

A lazy afternoon in the Totten camp after a long day in the exciting and challenging terrain of Hemsedal. But the peace does not last long. Most of the time in the camp, the Totten clan is occupied with physical games such as Hacker-sack (a little ball kicked from one person to another), football, trampolining, skateboarding, and so on. Photo: Einar Johansen.

An ultimate day on a snowboard means plenty of fresh powder to ride in. The Totten clan members start as early as possible to get the maximum possible fun out of the day. Hanne Fosnes experiences the joy of cruising the Totten Wood. Photo: Einar Johansen.

help to say a few words about the board and about other boarding activities. A snowboard is curved up slightly at either end. One can ride in the direction of either the "nose" or the "tail". The bindings are placed a little diagonally, in what is usually the forward direction. Movement requires a downhill slope, and a snowboard cannot be used for anything but play.

Surfing is the mother of all boarding games. It is described as a "rite of passage, [an] initiation, into a new world" (Kampion 1997:23). Surfing is about catching a wave and riding on it: you stand sideways on the board and change direction by putting pressure on either the toe edge or the heel edge. This principle applies to all kinds of boarding. The "sideways" experience that is explored on surfboards (and skateboards and snowboards as well) is like a hook for a lot of people; it tends to make them organize their lives around these thrilling and breathtaking activities.

The skateboard was developed in California in the 1950s and 1960s, as a means of transport and an alternative to surfing on days without waves. Imaginative people brought their skateboards to empty swim-

ming pools with round bottoms and found that it was possible to play on the curves between the walls. Later, pools and ramps specially adapted to the skateboard were built. The principle is the same, with curves and half-pipes lying flat, and they are constructed in different sizes. By means of dynamic body movements one can "pump" speed from side to side, and perform tricks at the top of or above the edge of the curve. It was in facilities like these that skateboarders developed much of the aesthetic that was later adopted by snowboarders. The most easily recognizable features include the spins and the "grabs", that is, the trick of grasping the edge of the board while in the air and holding on tight.

The snowboard also originated in the USA. It began when surfing enthusiasts tried surfing in loose snow. For many years snowboarding was prohibited at American skiing resorts, and only the keenest riders went to the trouble of hiking to the top. Despite all the prohibition and opposition, this type of play attracted more and more people. Towards the end of the 1980s snowboarding had become so widespread that most skiing resorts lifted the ban, and some even chose to build "snowboard parks", areas specially adapted for these riders. One of the earliest snowboard parks in Norway was designed by two of my informants in summer 1996 and built in Hemsedal the following winter season.

There are two types of areas for snowboarding: there is natural terrain, which is used basically as it is, and there is constructed terrain, the park. A park consists of a series of different elements called "obstacles". There is usually a half-pipe, built on the model of skateboard half-pipes, but with a few degrees' gradient. You start at the top and ride from side to side down the slope. Another common obstacle is the quarter-pipe. This is a steep wall which you ride up and jump, landing again on the same curve. This can well be described as a kind of representation of a wave. The big jump is the main feature in the park. It resembles a ski jump but the angle of the jump and the dimensions are different. From this a snowboarder can fly up to 40 metres. Boxes are big piles of snow consisting of an upward slope on which you take off and a downward slope where you land. There is often a hollow in between, a "gap", which encourages riders not to perform a mediocre jump. In addition, parks often contain a series of knolls and jumps where one can perform various tricks. The biggest knoll at Hemsedal is appropriately named "The Whale".

The reason that "Totten Happy Campers" frequent Hemsedal is not the snowboard park, but the wild mountains and steeply sloping birch forests that abound in the area. Optimum conditions come after heavy snowfall. When the new snow is deep, everyone searches for the best places and experiences. This results in a kind of state of emergency. "No friends on a powder day" is a proverb that everyone knows and understands. Snowy weather is therefore good weather, and because more snow lies in the forest than elsewhere, the snowboarders mostly ride there. The board glides amazingly well on snow, and it is easy to change direction. At a good speed it is highly stable. My informants emphasize that gliding on a velvet-smooth surface is almost like flying. On a hard surface, snowboarding becomes like playing with G-forces, whereas the softer snow in the forest makes the experience more like being in the world of the birds.

The snowboarders' playground is constantly changing. Even in the prepared parks, the jumps and knolls are never entirely the same from one hour to the next. In natural terrain the changes are even greater. Wind and snowfall mean that the landscape is forever changing through the winter. In some places the snow lies in deep layers, while in other places there arise drifts and "lips". The latter term comes from surfing, where the lip is the top of the wave. Formations like these are ideal for jumping, and even more fun because they are shaped like waves and consequently allow the rider to surf. On "waves" like these, turns on the heel edge have the same name as the corresponding manoeuvre in water, "cutbacks". The snowy landscape is alive, not quite like the sea, but almost.

Riders usually move in groups, from two or three to eight or ten people. They know each other and know each other's physical and technical capacity. On the ride down the often precipitous mountain and forest tracks, it is often an expert who takes the lead. Local knowledge, experience, skill, and daring are essential, but creativity is also crucial for a successful "run". Riders seldom stop to examine conditions; the aim is to build up momentum and keep it up as long as possible. The first person to "drop" off a cliff or down "staircases" does so "on-sight". It is like jumping down one's stairs at home; you know what it is usually like and you bank on it being the same today.

The riders often move at high speed, but communication between them is still surprisingly good. I interpret this phenomenon as showing that they know the rules of the game, they have negotiated among themselves, developed a shared understanding, and they know what is happening or can happen. The riders at the back focus intensely on those in front of them, acting with lightning speed in response to what they see and hear. The sense of play comes from this social interaction, from the challenge of encountering each curve and tackling each landing, and from feeling the excitement that comes with speed and unpredictability.

The landscape is not a neutral backdrop for action, as the archaeologist Christopher Tilley emphasizes. He points out that the landscape is constituted through the experiences a person has of play and work, and that our understanding of the landscape is consequently qualitative and value-charged. Tilley defines landscape as a series of named "locales", a set of relational points linked together with the aid of paths, movements, and narratives (Tilley 1994:34). The paths, or snowboard runs, link places together, creating coherence and connections. Not the least important part of giving meaning to a locale is bestowing a name on it. By acquiring a name, locales and landscapes are incorporated in a person's immediate world, becoming something that can be experienced socially.

The "bush" – areas of birch and other vegetation – is attractive to snowboarders. "Fairytale Forest", "Farthing Wood", "Matchstick Avenue", and "Caravan Wood" (some of these wholly or partly in English) are examples of the boarders' naming practices. Between the two busiest slalom slopes is the area of bush known as "No-name". Special points in the landscape, places where people meet or play, have names such as "The Stone", "The Windlip", or "The Peak Lip", while mountain formations are called "Kathmandu", "The Cairn", or "The Three Drunk Men". Nature's own

According to the snowboarders, Kai Arne Lien has plenty of style. Here he is performing an advanced aerial manoeuvre. The hit – the technical term for a jump – is a result of natural features, wind and snow, and is a favourite place late in the season. It is called "the Windlip", "the Easter Hit", or the "Backside Wall". Photo: Einar Johansen.

runs are among the most attractive. They have names like "The Gwandar Chute", "The Roni Chute", or "The Anal". On several occasions I have been invited to "cruise powder in the Anal".

A Game of Body Architecture

Young people who go snowboarding every day for long periods year after year notice that their physical appearance changes. Having one leg forward and one back, and consequently spending much of the time riding on the back leg, means that some groups of muscles develop more than others. The musculature on the inside of the thigh down to the knee becomes strong, with the result that they develop a back leg and a front leg. The back leg becomes stronger and bigger. There is also a certain asymmetry in the upper part of the body.

As we have seen, a snowboard has an upturned tip at either end. Riding "backwards" is called "fakie". The fact that one can ride or land in both directions means that the equipment itself is boundary-transcending. In freestyle skiing, all jumps,

whether somersaults, screws, or combinations, are centred on one axis. In freestyle snowboarding one can take off and land both ways. This means that the jumper can take up seemingly impossible positions in the air and still twist the body in the necessary direction to land. This is possible because one can create new axes; there is no need to get back to the original position. No other bodily culture except diving can copy this. Spins which are not straight somersaults are named according to the number of degrees: 180, 360, 540, 720, 900, and 1080. The ideal is to avoid swaying or in any other way spoiling the sculptural impression made by a stable stance.

A very widespread element is "grabbing" the board while flying in the air. Unlike snowboarders, skateboarders do not have bindings, so it is necessary for them to hold the board in position to know where they have it in jumps and spins. The functional justification for grabbing has disappeared in freestyle snowboarding, but this sport was developed by young people with a background in skateboarding, who brought many ideals with them to the mountains. The aesthetic and cultural affinity with skateboarding is one reason for the introduction of grabbing, but there is another reason too: grabbing the board helps to stabilize the movement and give control and style. Grabs exist in countless variants, with the right or the left hand, at the front or the back of the board, and so on.

A feature that distinguishes good snowboarders from less proficient ones is "lating". This means postponing the final part of the movement in the air until just before landing. This can be, for example, a spin or a somersault. It is largely a question of courage, but it also requires very well-developed body control. Another feature that distinguishes a good rider from the masses is particularly soft landings.

The snowboard aesthetic is especially expressed with reference to "style". The concept is also used as a verb; you can "style" your tricks in various ways. This sought-after ability is about more than control, and it is unevenly distributed. Some boarders are "stylish", others are not. A person who "styles" can travel through the air in gentle, smooth movements, with full control over the board. When talk comes round to style, the concept of "markings" is often mentioned. Extending the forward leg in the air is called "boning out". Another marking is "tweeking", which means lifting the front or the back leg up so that the board comes as high as or higher than the body.

Style is the body language that is used to express oneself in the air, and it is individual. At the same time, my informants point out that "everyone has his models" when styling. As the key aesthetic concept, style is hypercomplex. Some riders think that style is something you are born with, it cannot be learned. Style is a property, action, magic, and consequently cannot be defined or pinned down. This may be due to different aesthetic ideals, and to the desire to remain open to change.

In the park and on the slope, it has at times been popular to pursue something called "jibbing" and "sliding". This is a trend that arose around 1992 under the name "new school", and it is directly modelled on street-skating. Jibbing means moving alternately from the nose to the tail of the board. Sliding means riding along edges, fences, tree trunks, and so on. Inspired by skateboarding, snowboarders have even

moved wrecked cars and railings into the snowboard parks to have something to slide on. Most of my informants have little time for such antics. They want to keep their environment free from what they see as aesthetically polluting elements. For the same reasons, they have protested vehemently against the park's display of the sponsors' corporate banners.

The patterns of movement and bodily architecture of the snowboard games are the basis for a rich array of terminology, mainly of American origin. In the last decade this jargon has gained ground among Norwegian snowboarders, who have Norwegianized it through their own usage and pronunciation. A key concept is "bailing". In American alpine slang this means "falling in a controlled way". But even play has its rules, and a fundamental rule among snowboarders is that one should stay on one's feet as long as possible. Falling in a controlled way does not invoke respect; on the contrary. Then there are the "rulers". They are the riders who dare, who are best, who give all they have got, and never bail. One of my informants "rules hard", as they say. He is obsessed with overcoming challenges: "It's better to point your nose into a cliff than to let *it* point the nose off you," he says.

Perspectives on Play

There has been little study of the significance of play among young people in a playing community in search of excitement. This is regrettable, since play activities meet fundamental needs in young people. In particular, play provides an outlet for aggression. This is one of the important perspectives in *Quest for Excitement* by Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning (1986), but despite this, the playing person does not occupy a prominent place in this macro-oriented work. The basic assumption is that the civilizing process through which we must all pass, including the process of learning self-control, takes place as much through play as through education. The rationality and consciousness that is necessary to balance impulses such as desire and aggression is constructively trained through play. Apart from very general statements about the significance of play, however, Elias and Dunning have little to offer, especially as regards the playing person's corporeal experiences and attitudes to his own culture.

To find a concrete theoretical basis for physical play in the mountains, I would emphasize in particular the sociologist Roger Caillois' discussions in the book *Man, Play, and Games* (1961). His point of departure is Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* (1938). Huizinga's highly controversial thesis is that culture is derived from play: all important cultural manifestations build on the experiences that people gain by a playful approach to the world. Play is simultaneously freedom and discovery, fantasy and discipline, permitting people to investigate the monotony, brutality, and determinism of nature. Play is defined by Huizinga as follows:

> Summing up the formal characteristics of play we might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside "ordinary" life as being "not serious", but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an ordinary manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings which tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their

difference from the common world by disguise or other means (Huizinga 1938:13).

According to Caillois, Huizinga is "capable of opening extremely fruitful avenues to research and reflection" (p. 3), but the definition is at once too wide and too narrow. A major objection is that play, rather than creating something mystical, tends to be used to demystify the mystical. The distinction between play and activity for economic gain also makes the definition too exclusive, according to Caillois, who stresses that gambling clearly belongs in the category of play (p. 5). Like other playing activity, this form of amusement also provides an escape from everyday routines and monotony. He himself distinguishes play from other cultural forms, on the basis of six criteria, all of which agree with the play of the snowboarders. Play refers to activities which are:

- voluntary, non-obligatory
- delimited in time and place from other activity
- uncertain, without advance knowledge of the outcome
- unproductive, in the sense that the play itself is the end
- governed by their own rules and guidelines, different from those of everyday life
- creators of a fictive reality, a fantasy world (Caillois 1961:9f.).

On the basis of these characteristics, Caillois develops four ideal types of play. These are agon (competition), alea (chance), mimicry (simulation), and ilinx (vertigo) (p. 36). Although these are based on and refer to many different forms of play, I will try to apply this typology to a single activity, snowboarding.

Play and Competition

Many different variants of play involve finding a winner. The fact that one owns the same toy can in itself stimulate competition. The status that comes of victory means that a desire to be best sets its stamp on the game. The competitive play or the playful competition based on mastery is, in Caillois' term, agon (1961:14). Although the outcome of the game is an uncertain project, the practitioner of agon is responsible for his performance. When skill is of decisive significance for the result, and it is an advantage to have stamina, strength, and competence, then the game exposes inequality. Anyone who wants to change the relations of strength by increasing his ability to excel will have to go into serious training. At the same time, a desire for predictability will arise, and this can be satisfied by fixed rules.

These dynamics are particularly clear in sport. But rules, discipline, system, and studious training are far from being exemplary principles in snowboarding, where the ideal is that the play should always develop through improvisation and transcending boundaries. Rules create a fixed framework which does not reward an innovative practitioner. Another factor is that, when the training regime takes command, one rapidly approaches the point where play is a less appropriate name than work. Nevertheless, to be able to perform the demanding activities that my informants indulge in, it is necessary to have relatively high physical capacity. They achieve strength and stamina by being in constant motion and by pursuing all manner of expressive games, not by repetitive training.

While there is an unconditionally negative attitude to systematic training, the atti-

tude to formalized competitions is more ambivalent. When contests are arranged, the performances are usually judged and a winner is selected, but with a constant emphasis that the main thing is to have fun. Perhaps the real reason is to meet friends, with elements of music, show, and party. In any case, a snowboard party is a game, not a way to resolve the question of who has achieved the highest degree of perfection. The main thing is not to pick a winner, but that all those present are offered good entertainment and enjoy themselves. There is therefore a pronounced anti-competitive spirit in snowboarding, as in other board sports (Wheaton 1998:88ff.). In the Totten clan there has been a distinctly negative attitude to the inclusion of snowboarding as an Olympic event at the winter games in Nagano in 1998. The world's best piperider through most of the 1990s, Terje Håkonsen, declined to participate on the grounds that snowboarders should not submit to the dictatorship of the Olympic bigwigs and take part in a competition defined by other people. He received great praise for this stance: "Terje defended the honour of snowboarding", as my informants put it (*Playboard* 1:1998). Referring to the concept of honour drew the boundary between snowboarding and mainstream sports, where honour goes to those who take part (and win). The counter-cultural self-image is strengthened, as is the anti-competitive ethos.

In principle, each participant has equal status before and after a snowboarding contest. The yardstick for a performance is primarily one's own ability. This is constantly emphasized. Each person has his or her own limits, and whether competing or free-riding, the game is all about reaching or exceeding the limit of one's individual capacity. The aim is to see the most exciting solutions to challenges and difficulties, and to take advantage of the possibilities in the most creative and elegant way possible. Normally they know each other's capacity inside out in advance, and I have never seen anyone being re-assessed to any significant extent after a performance. Yet despite the express egalitarian ideals, there are hierarchies. They are based on technical skills, effort, and creativity. This brings considerable status to those who are good. But it is not formalized contests that create the distinctions.

Rather than understanding this as a reflection of an anti-competitive ethos, the conclusion should be that they measure each other's capacity and skill all the time. What happens in a competition is thus of limited importance. By this strategy the snowboarders maintain the validity of inside knowledge, at the expense of the simple and generalized conclusions that can be drawn from a result list. They themselves define what is good or best. Thereby they keep the control of the game inside the group, with the sole right of definition.

Play and Mimesis

All play presupposes a universe that is to a certain degree demarcated and imagined. When this takes place through simulation, imitation, and imaginary realities, Caillois describes play as mimicry (1961:21). The most central features of play are enacted in mimicry; freedom, consensus, suspension of reality, and the annulment of restrictions of time and place. All this takes place by escaping oneself and pretending to be a different person. For children this game is often a matter of mimicking adult activi-

ties. At the same time, mimetic play tends to cross the boundary between childhood and adulthood, Caillois writes (1961:21); in any case, it equally covers any amusement in which one takes part which involves the use of masks or some other kind of disguise.

In mimicry, people adopt roles distinct from trivial everyday life. This is particularly associated with the distinction between work and leisure in the adult world. In physical play such as sport, the act of mimicking aesthetic models can be an end in itself. This applies regardless of the distance between the player's and the idol's technical skills. The fact of moving in the same surroundings as the heroes, performing the same kind of actions, and with similar equipment, makes it easier to imagine that one is a different person. This accounts for a great deal of the importance of sports heroes today.

Snowboarding fits this picture in every way. The distinctive aesthetic, the subcultural values and rituals, and various mythological elements make it a highly mimetic activity. Dressed in snowboarding gear and equipped with a board, one leaves everyday life behind and moves into a fictive universe where one does not just imagine being something different, one actually becomes that. The fact is, the board and the skills make it possible to move at speeds and in terrain that would normally be impossible for people. The width of the board enables the rider to glide on snow that other equipment would sink into. The transcendence is closely associated with adventure and the dream of individual self-fulfilment. But the models are exceptionally important. For many people, the ideals they have influence their choice of snowboarding equipment, clothes, and personal style as a whole.

The snowboarders' highly committed relationship to their idols comes from detailed studies of films and videos. According to Caillois, these give special occasions for mimicry, "but it must be recalled that the simulation is now transferred from the participants to the audience" (1961:22). While professional sportsmen are carrying out a job when they perform, the spectators are stimulated to identification and mimetic understanding. Sportsmen can thus be compared to the heroes of films and novels. The excitement reinforces the involvement of the consumers, making sporting events into occasions of great cultural significance. Elias and Dunning describe these mimetic experiences as emotional refreshment, balancing a trivial or stressful everyday life (1986:44).

Play and Risk

By alea Caillois refers to activity in which the practitioner abandons himself to fate and banks on a successful outcome to the game. Alea is the Latin word for dice, and unlike the skill-oriented universe of agon, will power is of no significance for the result. The outcome of the game is uncertain, and this is part of the essence. Living with this uncertainty and risk is crucial. Alea is chance or risk. There are several elements of alea in snowboarding, both the fact that one gambles on something new by improvising, and that one moves in terrain where luck decides whether or not an avalanche will be unleashed.

Improvisation, which is central to a bodily culture in which the rules are not strictly fixed and countless new tricks see the light of day, this means that the practitioner is

constantly tackling untested movements, on the way to ever new heights. This is part of the play and part of the pleasure, for performers and spectators alike. My informants often stress that it is fundamental for their motivation that they move in a tradition that is not tied by a set of definitive rules. At the same time, there is a rather high risk of accident because the riders are always tempting fate. In spring 1998, two of my informants were riding in an area with a risk of avalanche and were caught in one. They fell a good 400 metres down a mountain slope, incurring serious injury, but they survived.

Injuries associated with snowboarding are a regular occurrence, and X-rays of knees, ankles, and wrists are included in most riders' picture collections. They talk about the injuries, but the risks they run are not a common topic of conversation. I have noticed that the girls, the "snowboard babes", are more concerned with the phenomenon of risk than their male colleagues are. The boys, on the other hand, are more obsessed with traditional male values such as displaying courage in physical activities. The fact that they are reckless and willing to take chances is not thematized explicitly. Masculine courage is not expressed in boasting, but the downhill runs they undertake are explicit enough. Since risk is a non-topic among the members of the Totten clan, it is easy to view this as a kind of protest against society's intense focus on risk (cf. Beck 1992).

While risk is not a topic of conversation, spectacular falls have a great potential as narrative and entertainment. A fall can also become a subject for aestheticization. This happens particularly in media contexts. Falls are an almost obligatory part of snowboard videos, which mostly consist of "parts" in which different riders are presented. Falls, by contrast, are anonymous. Having first been shown all the incredible things that can be done with a board, one is then told the price of becoming good: risk is part of the picture. The repeated and stylized anonymous fall does not only create an "aesthetic of falling"; one also has ample opportunity to identify with the physical impact. The pain is thus individualized, it concerns everyone who dreams of learning how to master the board. Consequently, the pictures are also about the viewer. The costs are imprinted: the risk of accident is ever-present.

Play and Vertigo

Ilinx is Caillois' fourth and last category of play. It concerns games which "are based on the pursuit of vertigo and which consist of an attempt to momentarily destroy the stability of perception and inflict a kind of voluptuous panic upon an otherwise lucid mind" (1961:23). The abolition of equilibrium is perceived as a way to get away from the tyranny of uniform everyday experience, a kind of escapism. It can be something as simple as challenging one's sense of balance. Right from childhood, we experience the pleasure of feeling dizzy after having spun round on our own axis a few times. More extreme amusements such as parachuting are described as "sensation-seeking" by social psychologists and others with an external perspective. "Flow" is a concept that describes the emotional current one achieves by ilinx. These experiences are often compared to the use of intoxicants. Scientists can confirm what most of us have experienced, that chemicals are involved. In extreme situations the

body produces substances such as adrenalin, endorphin, and dopamine, which give the desired sense of elation.

Extreme play can be typologized according to how far it concerns the sense of being in control or relaxing one's control (Janzen & Møller 1995:223). In snowboarding and climbing, for example, you yourself define the nature and character of the challenge (as in alea), whereas in parachuting you decide to abandon yourself passively to fate. In the latter case it is not a matter of what altitude you jump from, of how rapid a descent you dare to take, but the fact that you dare to do it at all (p. 224). Janzen and Møller write that the ecstatic intoxication comes to the parachutist in the fall through nothingness, while for the mountaineer it comes in the feeling of having finally got a grasp of the world (p. 231).

In ilinx the experience is mostly caused by speed. It is the pleasure which children seek in tobogganing, and which is also found in the world of the animals. Fast movement and travelling through the air are the most common forms. In snowboarding the kicks come from both of these. There is an internal jargon to describe the sought-after experiences. Being *stoked* is feeling the sense of excitement and exaltation. The word is related to burning and is frequently used. This state follows from what my informants call an "adrenalin rush" or an "adrenalin kick". I have occasionally heard snowboarders use the term "adrenalin junkies" about themselves.

An ilinx-type experience that snowboarders talk of is the one that can be had on the vertical walls of a half-pipe or quarter-pipe. The English architectural scholar Iain Borden, who writes about skateboarding, is interested in, among other subjects, the experiences that the skater has from moving on vertical surfaces. This experience brings a new feeling, which he describes as the "wallness" of the wall (Borden 1998:4). The movement changes fundamental conditions, and the wall becomes a floor, but in a new way. The body becomes the centre of a space created by centrifugal movements. Gravitational forces work from the rider's feet down towards the surface, regardless of where he is in the curve. Feats like this require a keen ability to sense where one is in the movement, the ability to respond to the forces at work, a good sense of balance, strength and fluidity.

A good pipe-rider keeps up a high speed and can therefore jump several metres above the edge of the curve. The height is as important as the acrobatic exercise. "Air" is sought after, and combinations of words with air occur in countless contexts. "Big Air" contests are held, tricks have names such as "Air to fakie" and "Backside air". My informants also turn the word into a Norwegian verb, *aire*, "to air". In the air the body is not bound by gravity and inertia. It is a momentary flight which annuls the limitations of the body, a sense of disembodiment. It is nice if this moment can last a little while, but if one were a bird, the excitement of being in the air would be gone. One of my informants once put it like this: "Being able to fly is not interesting. I have always wanted to be *almost* able to fly." Flying is hardly an ilinx-like experience for a bird.

The Future of Play

The Totten clan strive for the pleasure that comes from play and excitement. Play is not a superficial or marginal phenomenon for them, but a life strategy with decisive

consequences for each individual. The strength of the community comes from the very strong positive response they receive from other young people, from the media, and not least through the confirmation they receive from the feeling that their project is innovative. Their position has changed radically during the 1990s. To begin with their play was viewed with distaste by other users of the skiing resort, and they were ostracized for having different equipment, clothes, and ideals, but towards the end of the decade their play attracted powerful support. It is not without reason that they feel as if they have won the world.

A point that is constantly emphasized by the snowboarders is the total sense of freedom they experience. This is a feature of today's extreme sports, creating a mystic aura around the activities and their heroes. Hardly any young person is unaffected by these ideas. That is why businessmen try to take advantage of snowboarding and similar pursuits to give their products the mystic qualities evoked by this engrossing form of play. Snowboarders have become models, they are no longer chased off the slopes, and their culture is being "hacked" from all quarters. It is with some ambivalence and anxiety they see their universe of play being drawn into the sphere of commercialism. How certain is their victory really? During a conversation about this problem, my informant Einar focused on the heart of the matter, the physical play and joy: "The snow is spraying as you glide and the sun is shining, and everybody turns to see how big a cloud of snow you leave behind you. Some people like to ride in wide sweeps, while others find a windlip that they can slash up. It's about being creative and seeing the possibilities instead of the limits. No matter how commercial snowboarding becomes, that will never disappear."

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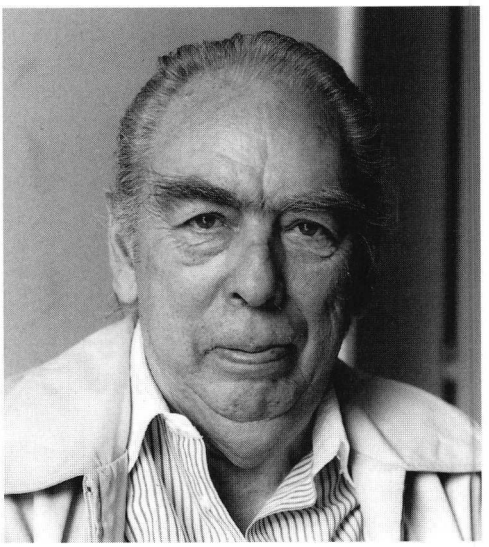
Biographical Notes

Iørn Piø, 1927–1998



On 18 February 1998 the former archivist at the Danish Folklore Collection, Dr Iørn Piø, passed away. This was just six months after his 70th birthday, when he was celebrated at a reception at the Folklore Collection and presented with a large Festschrift, *Traditioner er mange ting*. Besides a large number of articles, the book contains a bibliography of Piø's published works.

The title, meaning "Traditions are Many Things", was well chosen to demonstrate the wide scope of folklore as a discipline, and also to highlight Piø's own breadth. He had a thorough knowledge of most of the many branches of the subject, but it was ballads that were at the centre of his work. He helped to conclude the work of editing the old ballads of Denmark in *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* in 1965, and his major books were his thesis on this subject from 1985, *Nye veje til folkevisen: Studier i Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* and his 1994 book *Visemageren: 1800-tallets skillingsvisekonge Julius Strandberg*. In his study of broadsheet ballads (*skillingsviser*) Piø was a pioneer, and it was partly his detailed knowledge of the production and form of these ballads that justified his doubt in the supposed medieval age of certain ballads.

Piø, however, spread his interest wide in the subject, with books and articles about Christmas and its customs, about minor superstitions, annual festivals, fabulous animals and legendary beings, and proverbs. In the latter two fields he worked together with Bengt Holbek. They complemented each other. Holbek had a command of the earlier material, Piø the more modern stuff; they could both write, and they enjoyed each other's differentness. In 1966 Piø wrote a handbook of folklore, a subject which he saw as "the study of tradition", but it is in the second, revised edition from 1971 that his ideas about the discipline as "domestic ethnography" are unfolded to the full. In his later years Piø valued his work as a specialist consultant and writer for the new Danish national encyclopaedia. He liked the brief, demanding form of encyclopaedia articles. They reminded him of the old days when they would call from the radio news or children's radio to find out all about Lent, Father Christmas, hot muffins, or the Elf-Hill, summed up in less than two minutes and preferably on the spot.

Piø began his education as a philologist and continued to be one in the basic sense of the term: a lover of words. His feel for a pertinent remark was obvious in conversations, and it was obvious to radio listeners and television viewers, and to the many readers of his books. He was a skilled communicator, to children and adults alike. In 1987 he won the prize for popular science awarded by the Danish Authors' Association. His written style became both light and personal as the years passed. An entertaining example is his memoirs of the old folklore collection, printed in *Sådan set: Erindringer fra og om Det kongelige Bibliotek* in 1993.

In the 32 years that I knew Piø, I had the pleasure of cooperating with him on many occasions: on exhibitions, radio montages, fieldwork, and on many kinds of publications. When I use the word "pleasure" I do so deliberately, for Piø loved to play with possibilities and impossibilities, he was highly responsive, undogmatic, but also decisive when it mattered. The playing child in him obviously felt fulfilled when he switched to verse. He did this, for instance, in *Go'e historier på vers*, published by the Danish History Teachers' Association in 1987, and he did it in his ballad about the rather too wise man Laust Glavind, which was printed on one of the posters for the exhibition *Kloge Folk* at Herning Muse-

um. There was a little Julius Strandberg concealed inside Piø.

Piø was a practical man who made his labour and his talents available in many contexts. We may mention his many years of work on the board of the unfortunately defunct Nordic Institute of Folklore, in the Centre for the Study of Vernacular Literature in the Early Middle Ages at Odense University, in the Danish Masters' Association, and his work for the Danish Folklore Association, which he chaired 1973–1991; he was co-editor of the association's annual *Folk og Kultur* from the start in 1972 until his death. Between 1967 and 1972 he taught at Åbo Akademi University in Finland.

Above all, his work for the Danish Folklore Collection must be emphasized. Piø was an archivist here from 1961 until his retirement. As such he managed not just to keep the collection on the cultural map but also to place it in the media with such success that for many years the institution was virtually synonymous with him.

Iørn Piø was himself an institution in Danish and Nordic cultural history. Countless people have benefited from his knowledge and helpfulness. At times it seemed as if the media were exploiting him ruthlessly. His friends miss his attentiveness and humour. A great many of us owe him a debt of thanks.

Eske K. Mathiesen, Copenhagen

Gustav Ränk 1902–1998

Gustav Ränk passed away in his 97th year in Stockholm on 5 April 1998. He was one of the Baltic refugee ethnologists who in 1944 found employment by Professor Sigurd Erixon in the Institute of Folk Life Research at Nordiska Museet and had a long and fruitful career in Sweden.

Gustav Ränk was born on 18 February 1902 on the Estonian island Saaremaa (Ösel) into a peasant family. When 17 years old, he started working as an elementary school teacher on his home island. It was not until the mid 1920s when he began his academic training at Tartu University under Docent Ilmari Manninen, a well-known Finnish ethnologist. Parallel to it he found a situation in the Estonian National Museum. He remained a museum employee until 1939 when he became the first professor of ethnography at Tartu University. Prior to that, he had already given convincing evidence of his abilities, publishing two big topical monographs with a broad historical-geographical background – *Peipsi kalastusest* (The Peipsi Lake Fisheries, with an English summary, 1934) and his doctoral thesis *Saaremaa taluehitised* (Farm Buildings on Saaremaa, with a German summary, 1939).

During the war in 1944, Professor Ränk did a good deal of work directing the evacuation of museum collections and archives from Tartu to the countryside, this saving them from destruc-

tion. And thereafter, in the late fall of 1944, he and his family made their escape in a little boat from Saaremaa to Sweden.

At 42 years of age, he had to leave his native country and establish himself as a Swedish scholar and Swedish citizen for more than a half of his long life. Having been in the tradition of Saaremaa peasants always hard-working, he quickly met with acknowledgement and in 1948 started to receive Swedish state scholarships. From 1955 to 1968 he worked as a docent-researcher at the chair of Nordic and Comparative Folk Life Research at Stockholm University.

Gustav Ränk continued his research work in his habitual diffusionist, historical-geographical line which was the leading trend also in Swedish ethnology in Sigurd Erixon's times. In the 1940s the main subject of his investigations was the traditional division of the living room into separate functional parts by the peoples of North-Eurasia and its religious, social and economic reasons. His work resulted in two monographs in German: *Die heilige Hinterecke im Hauskult der Völker Nordosteuropas und Nordasiens* (FFC 137, 1949) and *Das System der Raumeinteilung in den Behausungen der nordeurasischen Völker* (I–II, 1949–1951). These works with their wide geographical scope may be considered as having central importance in his scholarly production. It is self-evident that writing them needed much old-style armchair work, wading through quantities of different publications. Nevertheless, most commonly G. Ränk's researches were founded first of all on archive or fieldwork and brought much new material into circulation.

His main aspiration was to clear up the historical development of folk culture in its details and their cultural connections. He was at home with most questions of folk life, from its material and economic aspects to customs and beliefs. Territorially his research field could be characterized as Balto-Scandia, centred on his native Estonia and Sweden and always seen against a wide European background.

Here we can mention only some of Ränk's many scholarly works. His concise introduction to the Baltic farmhouse types *Die Bauernhausformen im baltischen Raum* (1962) has remained a useful handbook up to now. Finds in Swedish archives led to writing the book *Die älteren baltischen Herrenhöfe in Estland: Eine bauhistorische Studie* (1971), which clearly showed that in the 17th century in Estonian manor buildings German, Scandinavian and local elements were tightly intertwined. His principal contribution to Swedish folk life research was a historical study of Swedish peasant cheese making: *Från mjölk till ost: Drag ur den äldre mjölkhushållningen i Sverige* (1966, 2nd ed. 1987).

Until his great age Gustav Ränk time and again returned to the questions of religious beliefs. He was especially interested in Lapp (Saami) beliefs. With such thorough analyses as "Lapp Female Deities of the Madder-Akka Group" (*Studia Septentrionalia* VI, 1955) and *Der mystische Ruto in der saamischen Mythologie* (1981) he has essentially deepened our knowledge of the Saami folk religion. In his last years he wrote several essays about illness-bringing animals and transferring illnesses to trees, stones and other objects (e.g. "Fåglar som sjukdomsförmedlare i folktron", *Saga och sed* 1982).

From an Estonian viewpoint, one of Ränk's most important works was his Estonian-language *Vana Eesti: Rahvas ja kultuur* (Old Estonia: the People and Culture, 1949). It is an excellent outline of Estonian traditional peasant culture that has found recognition as a classical textbook, being translated into Finnish (1955) and English (1976).

Mentally Gustav Ränk remained till the end of his life an Estonian scholar who by unfavourable historical processes was forced to work abroad. He was an active member of the Estonian fugitive community in Sweden and observed attentively the condition of his discipline in his sovietized native country.

When Gustav Ränk in 1990, after having been in exile for nearly half a century, visited Estonia, now on its way to freedom, he was widely greeted as one of the foremost Estonian humanistic scholars and elected honorary doctor at Tartu University. In August 1998 his ashes were buried in his home churchyard at Karja on the island of Saaremaa. His life circle had come to its natural end.

Ants Viires, Tallinn

Birgitte Rørbye, 1945–1998

Associate Professor Birgitte Rørbye died suddenly on 27 May 1998, at the age of 53. She was a graduate of the Department of Folklore at the University of Copenhagen, where she spent her whole career. In 1997 she was appointed to a tenure track position. She was a member of the board of the Nordic Institute of Folklore (NIF) between 1984 and 1989 and a member of the specialist council of the Danish Gerontological Society from 1989. For many years Birgitte was also responsible for the publication of UNIFOL.

Birgitte's scholarly works are characterized by an aspiration to extend the limits of the subject and to work in an interdisciplinary way. She tried and managed, despite some opposition, to bridge what she saw as an artificial boundary between folklore and the neighbouring discipline of ethnology, by incorporating the concept of culture and the perspective of cultural analysis in folklore studies. She also extended the folkloristic field towards the social sciences and towards medicine through her involvement in gerontological research on the health of elderly women. The way there went via folk medicine, a traditional field of folklore research, where Birgitte did important work. The anthology *Botare* ("Healer"), a book about Nordic ethnomedicine (1980), of which she was one of the editors, was an expression of her ambition to link early and modern folk medicine with the aid of the concept of ethnomedicine.

Another characteristic of Birgitte's research is that she pioneered new fields such as the study of popular culture. As early as 1970 she wrote about love in the stories in women's weeklies, and in one of her later studies, "Medieskabte fordomme? Forestillinger om den medieskabte ældrebillede i folkloristisk belysning" ("Media-Created Prejudices? Conceptions of the Media-Created Image of the Elderly in a Folkloristic Light", in *Nostalgi og sensasjoner,* NIF Publications 29, 1995), she returned to media studies, this time with gerontology as the theme.

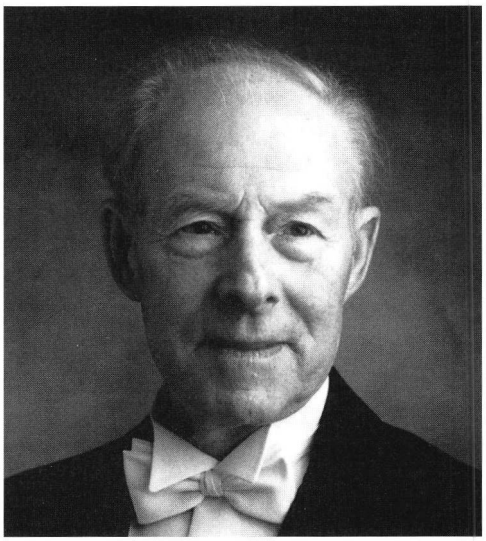
Birgitte never had the opportunity to defend her doctoral dissertation, *Sygdom og sundhed: En narrativ kulturanalys. Om fortid, fremskridt og virkelige læger* ("Sickness and Health: A Narrative Cultural Analysis. On the Past, Progress, and True Physicians"). It is hoped that her dissertation will be published posthumously.

Birgitte was an enthusiastic teacher and supervisor, and it was when she was examiner in folklore studies that she and I developed a deep personal friendship and a professional relationship in the 1990s. We had many lively discussions about what folklore studies should be and what the students should learn, and we not infrequently disagreed. For my part, however, and I hope for Birgitte's, these conversations gave food for thought and new knowledge. Just a few months before Birgitte's death, we had begun to outline a joint research project on narrativity, another field that she quickly made her own. We also had advanced plans for exchange seminars and lectures between our departments.

My personal memory of Birgitte is indissolubly linked to her garden. Birgitte had green fingers. Her garden was packed with flowers and shrubs, berries, trees, paving stones, little ponds, greenhouses, and paths, in a meticulously planned chaos that required a tremendous amount of work, and Birgitte's fingers were mostly black, not green, from all the weeding and digging. But the result was overwhelming. Many of us have enjoyed the splendour of the garden and a proper Danish lunch under the shadow of the big tree in one corner of the garden. Many thanks, Birgitte!

Inger Lövkrona, Lund

Olav Bø, 1918–1998



Olav Bø, Professor Emeritus of Folklore at the University of Oslo, passed away on 26 July 1998, at the age of 80.

Olav Bø was born in Bygland in Setesdal in 1918. After graduating from Hornnes High School he attended the military academy for NCOs at Kristiansand. In autumn 1946 he was admitted to the Royal Military Academy, but he chose to study philology instead. He took his degree in 1950, majoring in Norwegian. In 1955 he received his doctorate with a dissertation on Saint Olav in Norwegian folk tradition. The following year he was employed as an archivist at the Norwegian Folklore Collection. In 1970 he became an associate professor and in 1974 professor of Norwegian folklore at the University of Oslo.

Olav Bø worked with most of the classic areas of the discipline: fairy tales, legends, and ballads; folk belief, ethnomedicine, and festivals of the calendar and the life cycle. He also worked with topics on the margins of the discipline, such as skiing, hunting, and bygone working life, thus linking up with general cultural history. His research findings were published both as detailed studies of individual phenomena and as large surveys and broad presentations.

Olav Bø was part of a strong line of tradition extending from the "fathers" of the subject in Norway. He saw himself as continuing their work, and he tried to include new orientations in the established frames of the discipline. This attitude was in keeping with the basic principle of Olav Bø's work: the science of folklore as the study of tradition. The tradition process retains the heritage while simultaneously being open to reshaping, adaptation, and the integration of new features. The explanatory value of the historical perspective is stressed throughout his works.

Olav Bø's working method was part of a research tradition in which the actual documentation and description weighed heavily in the scholarly presentation. He was empirically close to his material, perhaps because of his upbringing and environmental factors. He respected people's own experience and self-understanding. Folklore had to be understood on these premises, and here we find the methodological approach that characterized all his works: respect for people's knowledge, for tradition, for the cultural heritage. Folklore was for him a discipline in charge of national values. In his work with national culture there was a conscious desire to bring valuable stimuli from the past into the present, as vital and value-stabilizing elements. Olav Bø stuck unshakeably to his view of research and was faithful to his basic values throughout his life. He had the freedom and strength to stick to what he found valuable.

He possessed a unique ability to bring the discipline beyond its narrow academic boundaries. In 1983 he received a prize from the Norwegian General Science Research Council for his work for popular science.

For his extensive work in spreading knowledge of the Norwegian cultural heritage, both at home and abroad, he received the order of St Olav in 1988.

Many of us remember with gratitude our days studying under Olav Bø, in an academic environment with inspiration, wise guidance, and fruitful discussion over countless cups of coffee. In his days the professor's office was both a seminar room and a lunch room; above all, we remember it as a room where we felt welcome.

Anne Moestue, Oslo

Ethnicity in Amsterdam 6th Conference of the SIEF 20–25 April 1998

Springtime Amsterdam was the attractive rendezvous for the close on twohundred European ethnologists who met to discuss the theme *Roots and Rituals: Managing Ethnicity* on 20–25 April 1998. The sixth conference of the SIEF (Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore) was held at the Royal Tropical Institute adjoining the anthropological Tropenmuseum. Many of the members of the conference organising committee are employed at the P.J. Meertens Institute engaged in ethnological research in Amsterdam. The Chairman of the conference was *Herman Roodenburg* and the Conference Secretary was *Ton Dekker*.

Many of the speakers at the plenary lectures defined ethnicity in accordance with recent academic debate as a social construction and stressed its instrumental and symbolic nature. Several speakers recoiled from the essentialist view of ethnicity as being dangerous. This was stated in most concrete terms by *Tamás Hofer* (Museum of Ethnography, Budapest), who spoke of ethnicity from the Eastern European perspective and maintained that most people do not have an ethnic identity. The need for it is manifest in times of war. The ethnicity beyond the individual's freedom of choice and thought to be primordial must therefore be deconstructed. Instead of setting up barriers, research should determine the multidimensional and changing nature of individual identities, thereby increasing tolerance to difference.

Peter Niedermüller (Humboldt University, Berlin) and *Regina Bendix* (University of Pennsylvania) approached ethnicity from a global, postmodern perspective. Niedermüller stressed that ethnicity assumes significance via social and political practices. He spoke of ethnicity in multicultural towns that break away from their national contexts as islands of global urban culture. In these towns politics, economics and culture are interwoven to form a constantly shifting, symbolic space specific to the situation in question. It is within this space that the cognitive systems, identities and ethnic categorisation exist. Niedermüller regarded the performance of ethnic culture as the only political tool for those who hold no other political power.

Bendix picked out some of the positive and negative aspects of the post-ethnicity manifest in the postmodern world superseding common, integrated ethnic structures. Post-ethnicity is a multiform concept and specific to a given context; it does not simply exist. Negative situations are, in her opinion, those in which ethnicity is cast in the form of a product for commercial needs, as in the case of tourist marketing. Here the clichéd expectations of ethnicity held by the tourists at a tourist resort clash with the diversiform life of the local people. The places that make their living from tourism must nevertheless try to live up to the expectations of the buyers of their tourist services, even if it means losing command of their own identity. The positive side of post-ethnicity is, according to Bendix, that ethnicity and nationality have acquired many meanings that exist side by side and which in many cases give the individual even greater choice.

Gerard Rooijakkers (Meertens Institute, Amsterdam) said that because ethnicity as a concept ties in with origin and biology, it has little to offer as a means of analysing culture. People classify, but they fix borders not according to ethnicity but via other metaphors of many kinds. Political, social, gender- and worldview-specific meanings are, for example, of great import in classifying ethnicity. As an example Rooijakkers took the scarf worn by Muslim women, describing the numerous meanings attached to it among Western immigrants, depending on the wearer, the context and the way the scarf is worn.

Gisela Welz (Humboldt University, Berlin) spoke of the importance of museums in the process of classifying cultures, analysing the exhibition in the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. The museum is a great national monument which, instead of presenting the rich diversity of immigration, gives only a one-sided, generalised picture of the immigrants arriving in America. *Willem Frijhoff* (Free University, Amsterdam) presented the image of their own origin construed by an organisation for men of Dutch descent found-

ed in America in the late 19th century. On closer inspection the construction proved in many respects to be a deliberate falsification and the Dutch descent untrue. The organisation is thus a socio-cultural network operating within a virtual Dutch identity. *Reinhard Johler* (University of Vienna) explored the potential for construing a European identity, quoting certain EU symbols and rituals, such as the planting of trees, as a sign of Europeanism. These pan-European symbols have not, however, taken root on European soil. Johler went so far as to claim that Europe can be created only by preserving the nation states.

In his discussion-provoking paper *Anthony Smith* (London School of Economics and Political Science) dealt with the role of religion as a means of handing down ethnicity from one generation to the next in Europe. He did not regard ethnicity simply as a construct created by the power elite, claiming instead that it has existed among the ordinary people for centuries. According to him, ethnicity has a long, persistent tradition behind it. Religion, with its recurring rituals and moral precepts, is one means of passing on this tradition and has indeed been of great significance in this respect.

Judith Okely (University of Hull) talked about the relationship between ethnicity and locality in the light of gypsy research. She proposed that the idea of origin and roots is organically linked in Western culture with permanent settlement and borders, and the related myths serve to build a bridge between the past and the present. A nomadic life, migration and homelessness are regarded as traumatic. There is no place in a world such as this for people who are defined as rootless. One example of such people are gypsies, who do not themselves attach their identity to the ideas of home and place. For them the important elements of their identity are the body, dietary and hygiene customs, and the distinction between private and public. Rootlessness as such is of no significance.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen (University of Oslo) argued in his survey of the history of research that the essentialist view of ethnicity is regarded as dangerous in contemporary academic debate. Attempts have been made in the past few decades to deconstruct ethnicity, to examine it from a symbolic or instrumental perspective. Yet people make distinctions in their lives, create and use meanings in their own immediate environments. People regard identities as important and they are aware of them. Eriksen urged researchers to adhere firmly to the study of cultures that are clearly distinct from one another and to seek out socially relevant distinctions. He nevertheless warned scholars against understanding the relationship between cultures and individuals as deterministic.

The discussion of the plenary lecture themes continued in the sessions, and there were always from five to seven going on at the same time. All in all the sessions were divided into 13 themes examining ethnicity from such points of view as nationality, locality, construction of ethnicity, emigration and acculturation. Some of the sessions concentrated on the ethnic dimensions of topics such as tourism, food, language, or dance and music. The museum perspective on ethnicity was also represented. I will here be concentrating mainly on the papers delivered at some of the sessions: "European ethnology and the construction of ethnicity", "Regionalism and ethnic group" and "Ethnicity and nation". A report is to be issued on the conference giving the plenary lectures and a selection of the session papers dealing with the results of current studies of ethnicity.

In the session dealing with the construction of ethnicity *Thomas Schippers* (University of Nice) took a strictly negative view of ethnicity as a scientific category. In his view, culture and identity are more serviceable analytic tools for the study of culture if they are kept distinct from biology and genotype. He emphatically stressed that the idea of origin carries the dangers inherent in the concept of ethnicity. The results of research into ethnicity, even that conducted in all good faith, may become instruments of persecution, and there are of course numerous examples of such persecution in recent European history.

In the same session *Klaus Roth* (Institut für Deutsche Volkskunde, Munich) approached ethnicity from the perspective of applied research. Taking the history of Southeast Europe as an

example, he sought out situations in which interethnic interaction was part of the peaceful everyday routine. Using these situations he tried to discern cultural knowledge that could also be applied elsewhere to achieve peaceful coexistence. During the discussion that followed Schippers took a sceptical view of Roth's optimistic approach, which makes no allowance for international attempts to gain power and geopolitical position. Roth nevertheless felt that it is essential to maintain an optimistic view and faith in the potential of interethnic interaction.

In the session devoted to regionalism the listeners were treated to a selection of studies of minorities living on the periphery of European nation states. To some extent these groups are regarded as assimilated, but they have now been singled out again by research as well. The studies of immigrants and refugees is, it appears, being joined by a strong front of studies looking into ethnic and other minorities with strong roots in the European soil. In places the lives of these minorities were seen as unproblematic, as in the paper by *Herbert Nikitisch* (University of Vienna) on the Slovaks in Austria. Meanwhile others analysed the rise of ethnicity as a tool for gaining political influence, as in the paper by *Marjut Anttonen* (University of Turku) on the Qvens, a minority of Finnish descent living in Northern Norway, and that by *Reetta Toivanen* (Humboldt University, Berlin) on the Sorb minority in Germany.

The conference also brought to light a number of ongoing studies of regionally significant groups living as minorities in their nation states. *Gábor Barna* (József Attila University, Szeged) and *Bo Lönnqvist* (University of Jyväskylä) had initiated a broad research project in a multicultural area of long standing in Romania. Two of the ongoing studies were concerned with the Nordic countries. *Carina Kullgren* (University of Gothenburg) reported on the situation in the Swedish province of Värmland, which is still turning to Finns who lived there a hundred years ago to provide impetus for its economic, political and cultural image. *Katriina Siivonen* (University of Turku) is looking into the dialogue between Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking Finns in the Southwest Finland archipelago in an attempt to define their identity within the new regional definitions introduced by the European Union. *Kerstin Gunnemark* (University of Gothenburg) approached identity from the angle of the modern suburb. Gunnemark, who defended her doctoral dissertation on the topic shortly after the conference, described a museum that has been founded in the suburb on the residents' own initiative and its significance to the local identity.

Tine Damsholt (University of Copenhagen) presented a paper in the session on nationality and ethnicity on the rituals and symbols reflecting patriotism and nationalism in the patriotic culture emerging in Denmark in the 18th century. Speakers at the session also sought to establish the potential nowadays afforded by nation states for maintaining multicultural culture. *Anders van der Zeijden* (Dutch Centre of Popular Culture, Utrecht) felt that there is strong pressure in the Netherlands to homogenise the modern multiethnic state. The national sponsored institutions support this striving. Immigrants do not have similar institutions for maintaining and developing their own culture. *Henriette Kelker* (Provincial Museum of Alberta) quoted Canada's pluralistic and tolerant society as an example. Herself a European immigrant in Canada, she analysed the levels existing within the nation, the region, the immigrant community and the family, the language and codes of which must be familiar to achieve a sense of belonging. *Erik Brandt* (University of Nijmegen) examined national constructions from a broad European political perspective. He took a look at the Balkan regions and related images of violence, which are, he claimed, means construed at the beginning of this century to satisfy the requirements of international politics. *Anna-Maria Åström* (Academy of Finland) demonstrated just how different Helsinki looked when viewed as a national symbol or through the meanings ascribed to it via people's own everyday lives.

Research into immigration and acculturation was also presented at a couple of sessions. *Åsa Andersson* (Gothenburg University) described a multiethnic suburb of a big Swedish town and the ongoing identity work of immigrant girls living there in terms of gender and ethnic socialisation. *Mette Skougaard* (National Museum, Lyngby)

reported on the way the Danish National Museum has raised immigrant groups as the subjects of research and documentation projects. *Per-Markku Ristilammi* (University of Lund) debated the identity of young, unemployed immigrants and refugees and the way they deny their identity through images from a global popular culture that draws authenticity from mimetic representations of alterity. *Raili Törmäkangas* (University of Jyväskylä) reported on ethnicity in a multinational organisation. *Anna Bohlin* (University of Gothenburg) presented a paper on the December 1 Movement in Cape Town, South Africa reflecting the importance of a shared past to the feeling of cohesion of a given social or ethnic group or region.

The conference was in every respect a successful overview of the present-day debate on ethnicity. The plenary lectures were excellent and well-chosen. Some of the session papers gave sharp analyses of advanced research projects while others filled in the background to projects only just staring out, which proves that the study of ethnicity, cultures and multiculturalism continues. Among the wide selection there were, however, also some papers that did not seem to reflect the numerous dimensions and problematisation of the ongoing ethnicity debate one might expect from the long history of research into the topic.

As part of the social programme our Dutch hosts took the conference delegates on a whole-day trip to the large Arnhem Open-Air Museum. The museum has in the past few years been developed by introducing demonstrations of various crafts or presenting different cultural phenomena by means of exhibitions, activities and guides supporting the museum milieu and interiors.

The museum has succeeded in recruiting a large circle of voluntary enthusiasts to lead the guided tours and to show visitors the museum buildings and the former way of life in them. The economic situation does not permit the museum to employ any other guides. Unfortunately this was reflected in the quality of the tours, in that the guides did not have sufficient information about, for example, the cultural, social and economic background to the exhibits and demonstrations. Reducing broad and complex phenomena to concise, popular guide texts is difficult even for the professional expert.

The general meeting of the SIEF held in conjunction with the conference remodelled the organisation by formulating new rules. *Konrad Köstlin* continues as Chairman. Now, for the first time, anyone active in the fields of European ethnology and folkloristics can apply for SIEF membership. The membership fee for successful applicants was also fixed. Previously, anyone who has presented a paper at one of the SIEF conferences has been eligible for membership, and reports of SIEF activities have always been sent to all those who attended the previous conference. Conference attendance is now no longer a condition of membership, though it is still one channel for anyone wishing to become a member.

During the general meeting ideas were also put forward for the next conference. The tentative theme of the conference to be held in Budapest in summer 2000 is *The making of change – times, places, passages.*

Katriina Siivonen, Turku

Translation: Susan Sinisalo

What do Ethnologists Eat? Reflections on the 12th International Food Conference

The first International Food Conference took place in Lund, Sweden, in 1970. In the summer of 1998 it was once again Sweden's turn to host a group of about 50 people interested in food. Since the start the conference has been held in eleven different places all over the world. In focus this time was the northern part of Sweden, and Umeå functioned as base camp. The conference started out with a voyage 400 kilometres into the hinterland. The destination was Frostviken, an area in the region of Jämtland, close to the Norwegian border.

The theme for this year's conference was *Making the Most of Nature*. During one week the participants were offered widely different knowledge about how mankind in different times and environments has made the most of the resources of nature. Naturally, many lectures concerned topics such as gathering mushrooms and berries, hunting and fishing. A cultural-historical approach dominated this category of papers: for example the Slovene Maja Godina-Golija's lecture about "The Role of Wild Fruits and Mushrooms in the Food Culture of the Slovene Population in the Twentieth Century" and the Hungarian Judith Knézy's paper about "Fish Consumption in Western Hungary (Eighteenth–Nineteenth Centuries)". However, there were two papers with a different analytical approach. Elisabeth S. Amundsen gave a lecture about "Nature – A Pantry of the Bourgeoisie? Hunting Policies in Norway 1850–1900". Her colleague Marit Westli Arntzen talked about "Mushrooms in Norwegian Food Culture between 1900 and 1950".

The Cypriot contribution to the discussion started with a collection of herbs found just outside the conference hall. In Sweden today these herbs are mostly regarded as parasites. In this very concrete way Nicholas Andilios' lecture "The Use of Wild Vegetation in Cyprus" showed how cultural differences, geographical and historical, are reflected in our food habits and in our way of looking at nature. What is seen as most normal to eat from nature in Cyprus is seen as useless in Sweden, or not seen at all in a figurative way of speaking.

The fact that mankind has organized nature in different ways was also discussed by the Norwegian Anne Helene Bolstad Skjelbred. Her paper "Use and Non-Use: Natural Resources in Traditional North-Norwegian Households" demonstrated, with the concept of *ufisk* ("non-fish"), how what is considered edible or inedible is culturally determined. By giving examples from northern Norway, Skjelbred showed how making the most of nature is constrained by cultural and historical conceptions. Even in times of starvation various sorts of fish were not eaten because of their designation as inedible, as non-fish.

A similar discussion of the concept of nature was presented by the Austrian Reinhard Johler in his paper "Borders in Europe: Eating Birds and the Cultural Idea of Wildlife". Starting from the category of songbirds, he illustrated that different conceptions of nature and wildlife in the north and south of Europe influence the willingness to hunt and eat birds. In the north of Europe, small birds with singing skills are considered to be closer to human nature, that is, more cultivated as opposed to natural, because of their singing. As a consequence, opposition to the killing of songbirds is stronger in the north than in the south of Europe.

Apart from the intellectual experience, the participants also had the opportunity to have an extraordinary natural experience offered by the site of the meeting: if one wanted to make the most of nature one just had to step outside. The theme *Making the Most of Nature* corresponded well with the chosen region and its natural resources. Departing from the theme, it is very interesting to focus on the food offered to the participants. The meals served during the conference indicated how the local inhabitants are forced to make use of nature instead of buying groceries at supermarkets. The hinterland of Sweden is rich in nature, but poor when it comes to infrastructure, which is reflected in the regional diet: this was the image served together with the food on our plates.

As ethnologists we are not immune from being subjects of cultural influence. When we, as ethnologists, were served elk burgers, reindeer

stew or other meals containing ingredients from the nearby area, we were mere tourists. A picture was mediated to us as visitors: this is what they normally eat in this region every day. Originally I come from this part of the country and I had difficulties in accepting this image. Of course we were served food that was supposed to represent the diet of the area, but I wonder why the image could not have been nuanced, or at least the menu. Even if "traditional food" is still common in this region, I think our visit highlighted the tradition more than what is normal on the inhabitants' weekly menu. The meals that were presented became museological traits of the regional food culture.

In an interesting lecture, "Restudying the Nature of Food Culture: How European Ethnologists Have Made the Most of Nature", the Austrian Bernhard Tschofen discussed the role ethnologists play in the "making" of food culture (or of culture in general). Tschofen used ethnological museums as an example to demonstrate how scholars' conceptions of traditions and material culture play a significant role in how culture is experienced and presented in museums. Tschofen argued that ethnologists, museums, and more general cultural processes participate in the construction of cultural images about how natural resources are being, or should be, used. Thinking critically about the regional food that we were served and presented during the week one can join Tschofen and wonder whether "the reconstruction beat the reality".

Another critical standpoint was presented by Professor Emeritus Nils-Arvid Bringéus. Bringéus was one of the founders in 1970 and his contribution was an analysis of how the 1998 conference, as well as those of other years, was organized. His proposal was to see it more as a symposium and a place for discussions about food ethnology. This idea differs from the more informative and cultural historical character that the conference of 1998 really had. Food research has for many years been an important branch of ethnology, and the International Food Conference is its largest manifestation. It would therefore be pleasant, as Bringéus suggested, to use this forum for discussions of method, material, problems and analyses.

The International Food Conference is held every other year. In 2000 the conference will take place in Slovenia and the theme will be *Food and Festivities*. Hopefully it will offer a chance to discuss the problems of food research today. Perhaps the conference could also function as an occasion to summarize what is going on in different countries concerning food research?

Anna Burstedt, Lund

New Dissertations

Museum in Swedish

Kerstin Arcadius, Museum på svenska. Länsmuseerna och kulturhistorien. Nordiska museets Handlingar 123, Stockholm 1997. 329 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7108-412-6.

■ The history of museums was once a rather narrow field of interest, engaging virtually no one except museum workers themselves. Museum history was often written for jubilees and similar occasions, and there were usually limited references to the society outside the museums. Now things are different. Historians, ethnologists, and anthropologists have had their eyes opened to the fact that museums are important elements in the culture of a given period; they are phenomena which, as in a mirror, can capture the self-understanding of a bygone time. The history of museums has implications far beyond their own confined world. Their origin and changing form have therefore become a favourite object of study in cultural history.

It is in this context that one should view Kerstin Arcadius' dissertation, "Museum in Swedish". Its subject is the Swedish county museums during the first century of their existence, from the associations that laid the foundations in the mid-nineteenth century, via institutionalization and professionalization, up to the outbreak of the Second World War. The fascinating thing about following this process of "museologization" is that it makes us realize that the museum as an institution is not an entity that is given once and for all, but is constantly changing, keeping in step with shifting social constellations and cultural preferences.

Kerstin Arcadius has assembled a huge body of material to illuminate this process. She has delved in the archives of six county museums and undertaken a number of more sporadic studies. She has ploughed through reports and articles in museum yearbooks and in the local press. In addition, she has been in some state archives and – like a good ethnologist – has interviewed older museum workers about conditions between the wars.

What is one to do with this corpus of documentation if one wants simultaneously to show the main lines of development and to give an impression of the motley diversity? A plan to follow a few museums through the period was abandoned, for fear of ending up in a series of monographs. Instead Kerstin Arcadius has chosen to shed light on the general course of development, elegantly divided into sections, each one beginning with a meeting presaging a new chapter in the history of museums. En route she draws on the large body of documentation, with a multitude of people and examples taken from here and there. The result is a flickering picture that makes great demands of the reader – as Arcadius herself points out in the introduction. It is fascinating in many places, but it is difficult to keep track. At times I found myself sighing for the solution that the author abandoned; a series of monographs summed up in a discussion would surely have been more lucid.

The second problem of the dissertation is the coupling to time and society. One possibility would have been a comparative approach, looking beyond Sweden. The title "Museum in Swedish" actually seems to suggest this, and with my own knowledge of Danish museum history I was struck by how different – despite all the similarities – development has been in the two neighbouring Nordic countries. This applies both to the starting phase, which in Denmark was more obviously geared to archaeology, and to the phase of institutionalization and professionalization, which came much later in Denmark. And in Denmark we have never had any parallel to the Swedish county museums, only rather loose cooperation between museums on a county basis.

We are given no such comparative study, however. The dissertation sticks by and large to the Swedish museums, just as the survey of previous research is purely Swedish. There are also problems, however, with the links between specifically museum history and general cultural history. The author seems to shy away from the many obvious conclusions and generalizations to which the material invites, perhaps because her ambitions are set too high. Evidently she feels that, if she is to find connections and generalizations, it has to be at a very high level of abstraction. The scene is set for this in some introductory reflections, which I must admit that I find it difficult to

make anything of. But they contain the right references: Nietzsche and Foucault, and the big B's: Braudel, Barthes, Bourdieu, and Bauman.

And these bigwigs are brought into the empirical text. At appropriate points in the account they are called in from the wings to deliver their wise lines about the state of things. Often, however, the link is missing, and instead of giving the author inspiration for her own analysis and interpretation, the bigwigs instead obscure our observation of the connections, and at worst they lead us on to the wrong track. At times there is quite superfluous name-dropping, as when Braudel's three levels are invoked as inspiration for the historical presentation in the dissertation. With modernity as a key concept and with Foucault, Bourdieu, and especially Bauman as the most important references, the dissertation clearly springs from the Lund ethnological milieu of the 1990s.

Bjarne Stoklund, Copenhagen

Love, Taste, and Education

Eva Lis Bjurman, Catrines intressanta blekhet. Unga kvinnors möten med de nya kärlekskraven 1750–1830. Symposion, Stockholm/Stehag 1998. 271 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7139-381-1.

■ The studies and analyses described in this dissertation are part of the interdisciplinary project "Young Women's Everyday Life and Culture in the Nordic Countries", which was started in 1989 on the initiative of the media scholar Kirsten Drotner, Copenhagen University.

The book problematizes the formation of the bourgeois female type. Eva Lis Bjurman associates this process with the fact that the new middle class, which comprised the rising intellectual, commercial, and industrial bourgeoisie, was trying to manifest itself. She declares that the period coincided with the Enlightenment in the latter half of the 1700s and the start of the bourgeois century, the 1800s. During this period a series of books were published with advice on upbringing and education which advocated a discourse between father and daughter. Bjurman has found 52 books of this kind.

The new female type formed in this period was radically different from that of previous centuries. Now a woman was primarily supposed to care for her husband and children. She was to hold the family together by means of love and not, as previously, by shared labour. Yet this project gave women a role on the sideline. Bjurman shares this assumption with the German sociologist Ulrike Prokop. Young girls were trained to acquire an education, good manners, and certain skills. They were incorporated in the male sphere, but they simultaneously had to practise traditional domesticity. Women had to accept this conflicting dual role. The schooling they received did not lead to true emancipation, a job, or an independent life.

It is fascinating to follow Bjurman's close description and analysis of this process. The subject has been treated before (e.g. by Elisabeth Banditer in *Kærlighed i tilgift*, 1981), but Bjurman adds a new aspect. She shows the active role of wife played by women in the establishment phase of the middle class. They developed a special middle-class habitus by which they could simultaneously strengthen their self-awareness. It consisted of a set of cultural codes associated with consumption, such as choosing furniture and textiles of the right style and quality. This included the concept of "taste", through which one showed one's education and affiliation to the new class. Taste involved a number of bourgeois values such as diligence, thrift, morality, and self-control. An article from 1796 specifies the characteristics of taste: it is shared by a group with the same cultural expressions. Taste determines both the way people think and the pleasures they choose. From this it is natural to bring in Bourdieu's theories, as Bjurman does.

This aspect is important, and it offers new angles on the discussion that was carried on in the latter half of the nineteenth century in connection with the industrial art movement. The aim was to give people the right perception of taste and style, and hence the codes corresponding to the bourgeois lifestyle (see my *Smag og stil*, 1991).

Bjurman's sources are letters and diaries written by and to women in Sweden, Germany, and Denmark. Sources on five Swedish women come from *Kvinnors självbiografier och dagböcker i Sverige 1650–1989* by Hættner, Larsson, and

Sjöblad (1991). Two German women's lives are based on Ulrike Prokop's *Die Illusion vom grossen Paar* (1991). Another major source is Sophie Thalbitzer's confessions, written in 1807 and published in Copenhagen in 1906. All the women belonged to the intellectual or commercial bourgeoisie. Bjurman devotes a chapter to each of the women. She interprets their need to write letters or diaries as a reaction against the upbringing and female role assigned to them early in life by their fathers. They were brought up to regard themselves as independent individuals, yet they were not free to choose the man they fell in love with. They had to accept the husband desired by the father or by a relative. They had to be rational and think of their maintenance. They probably overcame their frustration by writing about it. Several of the women say that the choice of husband was difficult and controversial.

Upbringing was designed to produce a type of marriageable young woman who could be used as an instrument in the father's aspiration to advance on the ladder of social status. A girl had to be well-educated, fluent in several languages (to be able to speak to business connections), to have a knowledge of literature, and to emphasize emotions. They were supposed to have talents such as being able to draw, play music, and embroider, and they had to demonstrate "good taste". This was the time when girls' schools were established in many towns, where daughters could learn bourgeois virtues if they were not sent to finishing school.

Bjurman follows two German sociologists who have written about the new marriage based on love. Niklas Luhmann has studied love as a historical process in the eighteenth century, concluding that the new love required different moral qualities. Marriage was freed from the demand for moral status, class, and money. The paradoxes of love became "nature". Ulrike Prokop develops a thesis about the compulsion under which women had to live. It led to a new historical reality. Although priority was now given to the individual and love rather than to the family, women still had to find a source of maintenance appropriate to their status. They had to take up their social position as someone's wife. This compulsion existed alongside the demand for pure emotions. This led to a conflict between the need for maintenance and the demand for love. Young bourgeois women were left in a cultural vacuum. They had previously had a culture of community but now they were left in the lurch by being incorporated in the male culture of education. Bjurman discusses Prokop's thesis in each of her essays and builds on it by looking not only at the compulsion under which the women had to live but also at the women as individuals who played an active part in building up the cultural codes of the new middle class.

Bjurman also considers famous books of the time, such as Rousseau's *Emile*, Richardson's *Pamela*, and Goethe's *Werther*, all of which stress the individual's work with his or her own feelings and conscience. This literature had an exceptional social function. The novels became handbooks telling women how to feel and act. This process was intensified by the contemporary emotional culture of pietism. Bjurman looks at the pedagogical ideals imported to Sweden from Germany, where Rousseau's *Emile* was taken to heart. The sexes were polarized, each with its own sphere, and hence each needed its own education. The Germans believed that girls had to be educated, but they also had to manage their homes. They acknowledged women's education and hence legitimated the men's continued superiority. It is on these views that Bjurman builds her main thesis.

Bjurman tackles her subject well. In her analysis of the letters and diaries she constantly examines the young girls' thoughts about love and marriage by focusing on individual scenes. For instance, Cornelia Goethe, at a gathering with her brother's male friends, is reluctant to be seen in the light, so she sits away from the table. Bjurman works with symbols and interprets the event as showing that a girl did not enter the male world when men were speaking together. She could not feel close to them, since conventional compliments were the rule.

Throughout the dissertation, Bjurman compares what others have written on the subject, discussing the findings of Edward Shorter (*The Making of the Modern Family*, 1976) and Lawrence Stone (*The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500–1800*, 1977). She does not agree with Shorter, who says that romantic love began

in the underclass, where there was a transition from family considerations and social control to individual life projects. Bjurman's thesis is that romantic love began in the middle class.

Besides her analysis of the primary sources, Bjurman has a chapter about the Swedish middle class, and she sums up her findings in a chapter on "Educating Girls, a Difficult New Question".

The dissertation covers an important and fascinating topic, giving perspectives on the bourgeoisie and the society that they formed. The very thorough analysis is problematic, however, giving the impression that the material is ransacked more than it can bear, especially when it is broken down into individual scenes. And the same scenes are used for different descriptions and analyses. She particularly dissects scenes in which women write about themselves and their emotions, about how they perceived situations in which men were present. She writes that her theory is taken from Carlo Ginzburg, the historian of mentalities, who works with details and problematizes them, without imposing any "truth" on the material.

Perhaps Bjurman forces too much out of her material. She nevertheless incorporates many facets to give a picture of the times. However, she draws too sharp a boundary with the old aristocracy, which did not use the new cultural codes developed by the bourgeoisie. Bjurman writes that they aspired to a different status and followed another strategy, intended to preserve their class and hold it together. I do not think that it was so simple: for centuries they had used the same educational methods, including fixed daily programmes, a strict upbringing, teaching both book learning and skills such as drawing, riding, and music (see Birthe Andersen, *Adelig opfostring*, 1971, and Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, 1962). This kind of education should really be seen as an expression of the desire of the bourgeoisie to attain the cultural power they thought they deserved, after having acquired the economic power.

Despite Bjurman's aim – to problematize the role of the daughters and see them as actors in the middle-class building project – the book has the weakness that almost always results from material being analysed more than it can bear. In Denmark at least, there is evidence that work with the organization of the home and the new cultural codes was often the responsibility of the husband or the mother-in-law. The young wife's responsibility for the home is a nineteenth-century phenomenon, a result of the industrial art movement.

It is clear, however, that the young daughters of the bourgeoisie were brought up to play new roles and were given a good education. August Lafontaine wrote about the benefits of this, stressing that educated girls were attractive on the marriage market. Through advantageous marriages they could improve the status of the family.

With this dissertation, Eva Lis Bjurman has given insight into a large and fascinating body of source material.

Kirsten Rykind-Eriksen, Egtved

Talk is Silver, but Silence is Golden

Georg Drakos, Makt över kropp och hälsa. Om leprasjukas självförståelse i dagens Grekland. Symposion, Stockholm/Stehag 1997. 240 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7139-356-0.

■ Georg Drakos has produced a monograph about people suffering from leprosy in modern Greece, being at the same time his thesis in ethnology. The subject itself, leprosy, is surprising in that many people would imagine this disease to be totally eradicated in Europe. The real situation does not correspond to that vision, but leprosy is very much under control by medical science, and recovery is virtually guaranteed if medical treatment is applied as soon as the diagnosis is made.

First of all the book is well organized and gives a good introduction to the content as well as to the material on which it is based. The beginning has the form of a fascinating, even thrilling prologue, where the reader gets into the special atmosphere of the leprosy treatment centre in Athens. You actually feel the distaste of the decease and you perceive that fear of infection and negative classification of leprosy patients, which is shared by some members of the staff and by ordinary people in general.

The prologue is really good ethnography in the sense of cultural scientific description. However, there is another chapter (Ch. 2.) dealing

more specifically with the author's working method, which is entitled "Ethnography". Georg Drakos did his fieldwork in the years 1987–1993 and he tells about the different periods, lasting 1–3 months. The reader is nicely informed about the establishment of relations between researcher and informants, and under what circumstances the correspondence, interviews, visits and residence inside and outside the treatment centre were arranged or managed.

Georg Drakos presents his theoretical approach to the subject in Chapter 1. Here he introduces the general themes of the analysis: the question of power, medical science and body culture. Among the most important theorists we obviously find Michel Foucault, Mary Douglas, Erving Goffman and Bryan S. Turner. Concepts such as practice, discourse, category, stigmatization, taboo, myth, power, body experience–strength–territory are common throughout the analysis. Drakos does not explicitly refer to Pierre Bourdieu, but they certainly do have concepts in common. This goes for the terms "position" and "embodiment" and especially the way of conceptualizing individuals as powerful actors capable of changing everyday life if they want to. In this connection Drakos refers to the concepts of "agency" and "subject" and to researchers like Charles Briggs, Jean and John Comaroff, Allan Feldman, Mark Warren and Claes Ekenstam.

Georg Drakos works on the basis of Foucault's theory of discourse power, but he carefully indicates that he wants to adopt the patients' point of view (not that of medical science and the institutions) and that he refuses to view the individual as a passive object or victim of discourse. Drakos therefore goes shopping in the field of phenomenology and chooses Merleau-Ponty's way of understanding human beings as an integrated whole and the work of Katharina Young concerning the cultural meaning of narratives and verbalization in general. He also seeks inspiration in the research work about performance and ethnopoetics.

Georg Drakos's aim is to examine how the leprosy patients deal with the way of speaking about leprosy and to interpret the discourse as medium of self-understanding. He digs into the past and the references to leprosy in biblical mythology as well as in literature. Later on he examines in detail the different ways of speaking in relation to the patients and the former patients, the medical staff – the modern leprosy classification of "sick" and "healthy" among themselves and the classification made by the outside world.

This analytical procedure leads to a very deep and differentiated work in terms of "text, contextualization and intercontextualization". Consequently the dialogue between researcher and informants, i.e. the conversations and interviews, becomes a matter of ultimate importance. This is clearly illustrated by the large numbers of quotations from his main research material, presented in Swedish as well as in Greek. Wherever possible he also integrates written sources in his work.

Georg Drakos does not make a sharp distinction between speech and action, he rather perceives speech as a way of acting. His point is that by decoding the practice of verbalization you get to a knowledge of how people actively manage their lives and living conditions – the disease, the cure and the (negative) discourse about leprosy to be found in the surrounding world. Drakos tells us about the different strategies used by the patients: provocation, explanation, circumscription and concealment. The author thereby clearly demonstrates that people actively take care of their lives and manipulate the resources they are able to mobilize.

As already mentioned, the book is composed of a prologue, a theoretical and a methodological chapter, followed by an analysis of history and territory. Then Drakos examines three case studies concerning patients, and finally there is a chapter on "Intertextualization", which gathers together the theoretical points about power and discourse. It is fine that the quotations are presented in Swedish as well as in Greek and that the rules of transcription are also presented. It is excellent that each chapter includes a short summary and that there is also a main summary in English. The notes are good, as are the bibliography and the short list of sources.

Taking everything into account, Georg Drakos has conducted a fine analysis and presented a piece of work that is well done. At first it may look like a classic study of a small community, this time located in a medical institution and surrounded by an urban European context. But this

is not the reality. This is a monograph made in a different way and it proves that the genre of monographs has not died out. At certain places in the book you may find a tendency to repetition, but still I think this is a very fine piece of medical ethnology. If one were to wish for something else it would be interesting to discuss in general the category of "the modern unclean", that is, contrasting the group of leprosy patients with groups like people suffering from AIDS, HIV-infected people, and those whose work deals with cremation or with garbage.

Kristina Grosmann Due, Copenhagen

A Paradise for Everyone

Cecilia Fredriksson, Ett paradis för alla. Epa mellan folkhem och förförelse. Nordiska museets Handlingar 127, Stockholm 1998. 273 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7108-436-3.

■ *Folkhem*, the "people's home", has become a popular term in studies dealing with the period between 1932 and 1976 – the golden age of Swedish social democracy. After having worked as a positive label for welfare-state Sweden, the term is nowadays mostly used to juxtapose good ambitions against inhuman aspects in the realization of utopian goals. It has almost become difficult to understand how the "people's home" could function as an attractive thought for such a long time. When Cecilia Fredriksson uses the term in her dissertation about the department store chain Epa, she is pointing at the genuinely Swedish, at the thirties and sixties, at the modern and the rational, at mass consumption and liberation. These are the ingredients of Fredriksson's understanding of the acronym Epa as well as the *folkhem* as "a paradise for everyone".

However, regarding Epa the question was not "putting life right", but "putting life on a tray". In this perspective Epa becomes a de-politicized "people's home", its tempting market-economy version. Unlike the co-operative movement with its "educative" ambitions, one could critically or ironically associate the Epa "people's home" with a house of pleasure. Fredriksson points at something else, though: to her Epa is the institution where the majority of the Swedish people learned how to meet modernity in an independent way, to become conscious consumers and to find their own creative lifestyle. Fredriksson takes Epa seriously, although in many areas it has become a synonym for trash, and she resists the temptation to denounce her subject. She contributes constructively to the debate by raising questions of the nineties and at the same time reminding us that the "people's home" was about the cultural breakthrough of mass society in the first place and not just about forced sterilization.

Actually Epa neither stood for "a paradise for everyone" nor for "a bag of garbage", as some ironical voices put it, but simply for *Enhetsprisaktiebolaget* (The Standard-Price Corporation). The standard-price concept was characteristic of a new type of business. It was built on a few low-price categories for a large number of ordinary products and was retained until the forties. It was the breakthrough of Fordism in the area of trade, characterized by standardized prices and products as well as many branches, large holding stocks and low delivery costs. Epa was introduced in 1930 as an initiative of the department store owners Josef Sachs from Stockholm (NK) and H. G. Turitz from Gothenburg. The American Woolworth chain was considered as a model, and practical help was delivered by the German Karstadt AG. At the end of the thirties there were about 20 Epa stores in Sweden, and by the end of the sixties the number had grown to more than 100. In 1977 Epa was merged with its competitor Tempo, and since 1985 the department stores have been known as Åhléns. How could this seemingly American, German and Jewish project become "the most Swedish thing one could imagine" and why did its decline coincide with the decline of the Swedish model?

The assimilation of Epa in Sweden was quite a painful process. The department store was an immediate success amongst the customers, but at the same time there was an almost hysterical debate about the quality and effect of its mass products. The association of merchants carried out a successful blockade against Epa's suppliers, and the state commission on standard-price companies, which was set up in 1934 on the initiative of the association, had to state that quite a few orders had gone to foreign countries because of

the lack of access to the domestic market. In the early forties the director H. G. Turitz was forced to resign in favour of a non-Jew. Even if this was done mainly to meet foreign policy demands, anti-Semitic patterns of thought were very widespread right from the beginning in the domestic debate on modern commodities and retail trade.

To provide information about these discussions will be the task of another study. Fredriksson confines herself here to a few comments. It would have been interesting to get to know how Epa was discussed amongst the representatives of the working class, where its customers came from, or what liberal and conservative opinions were like. The only socio-cultural or political milieu mentioned here is the national socialist one, not in connection with Epa, however, but with the Stockholm exhibition from 1930, which is taken as another icon of modernity.

When she is discussing the sixties, Fredriksson states that the standard-price companies on the one hand and the functionalist designers on the other were representatives of two different varieties of modern standardization, who needed thirty years to cooperate. Obviously there was a tension between Epa's modern sales idea and its rather traditional and boring products. "The commodities domesticated the department store", as Fredriksson writes, and in the English summary she even goes a step further in stating that "Epa occupied an interesting intermediate position between traditional and modern". Unfortunately we are not given a more systematic analysis of this.

Alva Myrdal's statement that "our *folkhem* should not become an Epa imitation of the bourgeois milieu because of the sheer feeling of being tied to tradition" (*Morgonbris* 1937/2:17) could have served as a point of departure for both the political debate and the aspect of class as well as the interesting question of a hybrid, popularized or vulgarized modernity. The source material Fredriksson uses – the Epa staff magazine and interviews within what one could call an Epa milieu – is probably why the study rather describes myths about and encounters with a purer and less conflictual modernity.

Epa became Swedish at the same pace as modernity was incorporated into the Swedish self-image. In the chapter on "Epa-Doris" Fredriksson draws the conclusion that Epa was a masculine project, which was represented towards the customers by female shop assistants. While men could make successful careers at Epa (they were condescendingly called "Epa engineers"), the possibilities for women were more limited. At least they could become part of the labour market. While working they were not allowed to wear their wedding rings, though, and most of them quit after marriage. In spite of this, the new department store culture helped to make women visible in modern society. This was due not least to the safe environment for female flaneurs, which had not existed before.

In the chapter about Epa as a "classroom of consumption" Fredriksson likewise makes interesting observations. Anonymity, the freedom to go mooching about and not having to buy anything, as well as the chance to touch one's dreams, were characteristic of Epa. This could lead to purchases or shoplifting – one could learn or be tempted to become a good or a bad consumer. Fredriksson succeeds in her main ambition to show that mass consumption was about sensual experience rather than exploitation – and one would like to add that this happened long before the "paradigm shift" to the late modern culture of experience. She also shows that anonymity and economies of scale could go along with informalization and intimacy.

This is described in greater depth for the sixties and seventies. The problem with the chapter about "the aesthetics of intimization" is that Fredriksson on the one hand is following her sources so closely that she cannot seriously observe the economic and cultural processes that resulted in Epa's decline – at the same time as the political "people's home" was an object of greater turbulence. On the other hand she draws on theoretical literature that allows only very general statements and hypotheses.

Throughout the study it is doubtful whether it is analysing experiences or reproducing myths. It is never questioned, for example, that the so-called shop rat (a person pickpocketing from other customers) is female. This concerns the questions of metamyths and also of modernity. At the same time there are theoretical remarks spread out over the book without blending together

either with the empirical observations or the other theoretical parts. Even in the final chapter we meet a disconnected theoretical section that would have been of greater use at the beginning.

In spite of these critical remarks, those interested in the history of Swedish culture and consumption will benefit from reading *Ett paradis för alla*. Important questions of twentieth-century Swedish economic and cultural development are touched upon in this study. With a little more openness to social categories and processes and a little more distance towards empirical objects and theoretical explanations, open-minded ethnological research on consumption could widen our perspectives. It has been a particular pleasure to look at the fine illustrations in this book, which are well integrated into the text.

Norbert Götz, Greifswald

Local Identity in a Swedish Suburb

Kerstin Gunnemark, Hembygd i storstad. Om vardagslivets praktik och den lokala identitetens premisser. Etnologiska föreningen i Västsverige, Göteborg 1998. 356 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-85838-37-3.

■ With her study of the suburb of Kortedala in Gothenburg, Kerstin Gunnemark has written a fascinating book about modern everyday life in the welfare state from 1950 onwards. This doctoral dissertation in ethnology, presented at Gothenburg University, is based on many years of fieldwork. The interdisciplinary Kortedala Project, which started in the mid-1980s, mainly aimed to develop new planning methods in the urban renewal project which had just been initiated, and which was to incorporate the experiences and influence of the inhabitants. Over the years the Kortedala Project has been financially subsidized by Gothenburg Municipality and the Swedish Council for Building Research, and it has gradually grown in scope.

In the course of the project, Kerstin Gunnemark has worked with a variety of research perspectives, such as the lifestyle of socio-economic groups in an urban environment, women's attitudes to the city, and the significance of the place and the material culture for the experience of identity. The dissertation thus deals with concepts such as local identity, social integration, gender and class, fields of activity and symbolic values, etc. The theoretical sources of inspiration include Anthony Giddens, Hermann Bausinger, and Pierre Bourdieu, who have in various ways been brought into the survey of everyday routines as a foundation for the growth of a gender- and class-specific sense of feeling at home in a place.

The main question is how a modern suburb could become a home district to people who moved into it in the 1950s. How is local identity created, and what changes take place in the course of the latter half of the twentieth century? What processes promote or counteract the local rooting of the inhabitants? Gunnemark examines the subject by focusing on women's conditions and strategies through two generations, 1955–65 and 1985–95. The life-historical experiences of individual women make up a framework for our understanding, through which the suburb is viewed not just as a material shell for individual solutions, but as a symbol of the post-war realization of the "People's Home", the prevailing optimism, and all the new features of modern life. For the majority of the women, everyday life in the suburb was a positive experience, which contrasted with their often tough childhood and hard toil in the countryside or in working-class areas. In the suburb it was possible for them to cut off constricting bonds and start life afresh. Through life-history experiences, this meaning is revealed in a historical context, a brief period during which housewives' work had a prestige that it did not enjoy either before or after.

The suburb is concrete material evidence of the vision of the welfare state and the growth and success of Swedish society. Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson's statement about "the good home, where equality, consideration, cooperation, and helpfulness prevail" was to apply to the whole of society. The People's Home became a metaphor for a national community, based on a vision of justice, with each citizen having both rights and obligations. Kerstin Gunnemark sees this idea as a direct continuation of the Utopians from the turn of the century, when the simple national romanticism and the philosophy of making one's own home went hand in hand, as expressed by

people like Ellen Key and Carl Larsson, but it also derives from the functionalist holistic solutions and rational building of the 1930s, which inspired the semi-industrial housing construction of the 1950s.

Kortedala was built seven kilometres from the centre of Gothenburg in 1953–7, becoming a satellite town with three-storey blocks of flats, tower blocks, and low detached houses and row-houses. The urban plan thus allowed for variation, a synthesis of the traditional and the modern, of the family home and le Corbusier's functionalist housing machine. The suburb was fitted into a natural area with woodland, which most of the inhabitants appreciated. Nature was close by. Most of the flats consisted of two bedrooms and a kitchen, planned so as to use the small area functionally.

Kortedala grew in the course of 4–5 years to house about 21,000 people in 1957. The first generation to move in were families with children. The men were blue-collar or white-collar workers, the women housewives. The women stayed in the area while the men commuted to other places to work. Many families came from the countryside and were first-generation city dwellers, while others came from the old working-class quarters of central Gothenburg. For the women, informal and formal communities with other women became important for social integration in the area. They met as housewives and mothers in the sewing clubs and associations, at the playground or in the shop. For the men, life in the area did not acquire the same meaning, since they were away in the daytime, and some of them worked shifts, while their leisure time was often spent outside the area, which apart from sports facilities had no pubs or other places where men could meet.

The experience of moving to Kortedala was positive in the women's eyes. "It was like coming to Heaven" was one frequent comment. Many newlyweds had not had a home of their own before, and conveniences such as bathrooms were particularly appreciated, especially by women with children. The rent was relatively high, so the housewife's ability to save, to buy things where they were cheap and to make her own clothes, were essential skills. Part-time work could be considered if any major capital investment was to be undertaken, such as buying a car or a summer cottage in the early sixties.

Kerstin Gunnemark does not only study the experiences of the first people to move in, but also looks at the inhabitants' retrospective view and the general structural changes. It is remarkable how the interviewed women are oriented to Kortedala as the centre of their life experiences. How do the women view their lives today? Many have stayed on in the area, just as many of their daughters have found homes there too. The daughters' everyday lives show why the second generation chose to live here or to return to the area in the 1980s and 1990s. Family ties have become more important, and close relations with neighbours have often survived. The young women are in gainful employment, but high priority is attached to social relations with other women (mothers, school friends, family members) and informal forms of social life. From having been a show town, exhibited as a model to follow, it has gradually become neglected and turned into something of a slum. Some people have moved out to accomplish material ambitions in bigger homes, and new people have moved in. Groups such as drug addicts and alcoholics came in the 1970s, but as a result of the urban renewal project they have moved on to other areas. Gunnemark's in-depth study gives a nuanced picture of the inhabitants' perception of the slum-like character that the area has acquired. People knew that behind the shabby walls there were tidy flats, and they often knew the family background and life history of local substance abusers. They thus took a different view of matters because of their local knowledge.

The source material for the study came about as a result of local campaigns, fieldwork, and writing circles, collected over a series of years from the mid-1980s. A special field office was set up in the area, to which the inhabitants themselves could go on their own initiative, so that documentation could be done on the spot. The most recent topics to be included in the study are informal life in the area and the material conditions of the households. Material expressions of the suburb, such as clothes, furniture, and fittings from the 1950s and 1960s, have been collected

through the Kortedala Museum Association. With the help of interested local people, a flat from 1955-65 has been reconstructed; the museum flat was opened to the public in 1994. Local identity is generated in many ways, and the foundation of the museum underlines the involvement of the women in this. The women's material possessions from the 1950s and 1960s are given new meaning, visualizing "tacit knowledge", for example, the joy of being able to buy a sewing machine of one's own. It is interesting to see the composite totality of the traditional and the modern, with the housewives' new aesthetic universe comprising not only the production of their own bedclothes with embroidered monograms but also the acquisition of practical plastic objects and colourful ceramics.

The dissertation follows the classical ethnological literature about the gap between the planners' often ethnocentric visions and the inhabitants' and users' concrete everyday lives. The reasons why the women stayed on were not just rational but often grounded in the past. The role of the ethnologist as a messenger and translator in the planning debate is at times full of conflict, with irreconcilable demands. Kerstin Gunnemark has given a voice to a population group which must be characterized as the core voters of the welfare state, but were they really listened to? And can one negotiate one's way out of the problems? The use of a longer time perspective shows how affiliation to Kortedala found new expressions when the pioneer years were over and the memories became established through the museum activities. The dissertation shows that more expressions than purely verbal ones, such as emotions and memories, must be incorporated in the analysis and the planning debate when the concept of local identity is used.

The great merit of Kerstin Gunnemark's work is that she views the suburb from a perspective of cultural optimism, centred on the inhabitants' own perception of their housing estate over forty years. This challenges the stereotyped discourse on the suburbs, as expressed for instance in the mass-media image of suburbia as boring, monotonous, isolated, as a constant in time and place, where problems just accumulate. She shows instead how the suburb becomes a new home to women and children, to which life-history experiences and memories are attached. The local rooting of men and women is reflected in different ways, which explains conflicts in the family, for example, when there was talk of moving to another area in connection with a change of job. The thick description not only gives insight into the adaptation of a specific group through everyday routines, but also a broader, important description of the welfare state in transition.

Lykke L. Pedersen, Copenhagen

The Body, Space, and the Psychiatric Gaze

Lars-Eric Jönsson, Det terapeutiska rummet. Rum och kropp i svensk sinnessjukvård 1850–1970. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1998. 299 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7203-810-1.

■ This dissertation fits nicely into the sequence of Foucault-inspired studies produced in Scandinavia in recent years, dealing with the treatment of people in institutions and hospitals. Jönsson has studied Swedish mental care before, for instance in *S:ta Maria Sjukhus*, the mental hospital in Helsingborg, and it is evident that he has a good prior knowledge of the most relevant types of sources – patient records – and he has also included some of these records from Helsingborg in his dissertation. The present study is confined to the care and treatment of mentally ill people in the large state-run mental hospitals, especially how they were viewed in the long period 1850–1970. Jönsson studies how psychiatry, as represented by the psychiatrists and other staff, regarded the patients.

Jönsson links his interest in the mental health system to his first acquaintance with Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*, a reading experience that gave him the inspiration and "the will to know" about mental hospitals and the treatment of their inmates over a long historical period which saw the parallel development of hospital building and the science of psychiatry. It is characteristic that Foucault's masterpiece – perhaps not least in literary terms? – has been the first inspiration for so many scholars in the field of normality/marginality. It is tempting to claim (with a slightly unfair rejection of Foucault's

subtle little essay "What is an Author?") that the author actually means something! In this study, however, it is two other works by Foucault that are most important, *Discipline and Punish* and *The Birth of the Clinic*, since Jönsson views the place of the mental hospital in "the modern project" as closely associated with the two institutions in which people's bodies are observed, treated, cared for – and stored for a long time in those cases where no change for the better is noticed: the prison and the somatic hospital.

The author views the individual patient as the centre – or the object – of the diagnostic gaze that precedes all treatment and physical coercion. He sees the actual institutions as therapeutic instruments. The physical space, the observation and the therapy are essential for an understanding of what the mental hospitals did to the patients, just as they are important for the nature of the patient's reaction and resistance. In the latter case the strategy seems to depend on the space in which the reactions occur. Here Jönsson is inspired by Michel de Certeau. According to Jönsson, the actual confinement of the patients in these spaces was not "productive" in Foucault's sense: the aim was not to train the inmates in specific qualities such as speed and efficiency; it was rather a matter of pacification and passivization.

In chapter I Jönsson presents the starting points of his study, and in chapters II and III he looks at the examination and treatment of the patients on the basis of the spatial placing of the body: in the nineteenth century the cell was considered to be the right place to give the patient calm and therapy, and there were further possibilities for locking up violent patients. The therapist could thus avoid close contact with the patient. Around the turn of the century, cells virtually became a symbol of the inhuman and antiquated treatment of the mentally ill, and the first attempts at open observation in larger wards were made. This also gave greater scope for visual observation and the maintenance of the order that was considered essential for any improvement in the state of the patients. This improvement, or lack of it, was also to be significant for the form of the patient records; as Jönsson points out, attention was focused on progress or regression, whereas stagnation could mean that for years a curt "status præsens" was all that was noted in the records. It is remarkable (also in the Danish case files that I have seen) how much the therapeutic optimism was challenged by what seemed like a gradual deterioration of the patient's condition. When the treatment was not successful, the staff lost interest unless there was a sudden and worrying decline in the state of the patient.

With my comparative knowledge of the care of mentally deficient people in Denmark, I find the question of the form of the Swedish patient's records particularly interesting. Jönsson writes about how the long series of records might at first give the impression that things were in order and easily accessible. The reality was different. The very selection of records is a problem, and one is forced to choose the simplest possible criteria. Jönsson has selected roughly equal numbers of men and women to see if possible whether there were any differences in the pattern of treatment. The records may be said to document a person's life as a patient, and basically they always contain a prior history and a case history built up with the aid of continuous observation. Jönsson says that he must have read through a thousand case files to make his selection. He does not say how large these files were, but with my knowledge of the records of Danish mental patients I can say that it must have meant a lot of reading; some of the files at the Ribe home for the mentally deficient that I read consisted of 200–400 sheets! Jönsson's thorough knowledge of many records from the large mental hospitals is obvious, however. He is able to pinpoint precisely the passages in individual cases that relate most explicitly to his topic and the problems he is investigating. Although the dissertation is structured according to a relatively simple framework of theory and subject matter that is rarely transcended, there is no doubt about the thoroughly sifted wealth of empirical material on which the book is based. Jönsson knows his mental hospitals inside out!

In chapter IV Jönsson deals with the means available for physical restraint. It was not just a matter of restricting the physical freedom of the patients for therapeutic reasons, but also of administering outright punishment, although more lenient rules were introduced in 1858, stating that only certain specific coercive measures could be used, and only those "by means of which the

patient, without being physically abused or morally degraded, may be rendered incapable of hurting himself and others". After 1929 patients could be admitted voluntarily to mental hospitals, but medical coercion nevertheless continued to be associated with institutional treatment of the mentally ill. In this chapter Jönsson also has a good, almost museological, description of "the tools of coercion". The pictures of the institutions, the inmates, and the treatment make a profound impression, greatly increasing our knowledge of life in a mental hospital. The author also deals with the question of order and cleanliness and the significance of these concepts in the institutions. Patients' uncleanliness and the way in which human exudations were handled are also important issues for our image of the relation between the inmates' bodies and the physical space, as this chapter illustrates so well.

In chapter V Jönsson comes down to the history of an individual patient. He writes here that what took him a couple of hours to read corresponds to an entire life in the institution, but the patient's perception of this life, as the author says, is forever concealed from us. It is a cardinal point for Jönsson that it is impossible to "put oneself in the patient's place". One of Jönsson's keywords in his account of the study is "pragmatic", and the two things go together. Jönsson has to avoid any interpretation of what the patient may have thought and felt as an object of observation and therapy. We only meet the patient himself in two small letters. Yet these lifelong records (of which there are incidentally a great many in homes for the mentally deficient) do give us the chance to come close to "the disappearing patient", although he is only documented medically and psychiatrically, and through sporadic necessary references in the outside world to the existence of the patient. We see the almost unnoticeable change that is perhaps primarily illustrated in the somatic case files, the momentary bouts of activity, and so on. This is a moving life history even though (or perhaps because) the patient himself only speaks in it to a limited extent. The ideal patient was susceptible to improvement. The "forgotten" patient belonged in the asylum.

A theme running through the dissertation is that the patient's self-understanding is unimportant; he or she is viewed as an isolate rather than as an individual. The strength of the dissertation lies in this stringency, this attempt to avoid "reading the patient" with the omniscience of the researcher; instead the author contents himself with conveying what in revealed by the observations and the change in treatment. Yet this is also a slight weakness: to enable us to see for ourselves, the author is obliged to quote many excerpts from the records, and these citations in virtually all the chapters of the book may disturb the reader's sense of order. This is a minor complaint, however, if we realize that the author feels that he did not have so many options. For behind all this lies Jönsson's desire – and this is one of the good points of the study – that, as the psychiatrist *saw* the patient, the reader should be able, with the aid of the observations and evaluations in the journals, to *see* both the psychiatrist and the individual patient, and since the reader is fortunate enough to have a "double gaze", he or she sees the patient not just as an isolate but as both a result of the subjectification that turned him into a patient, and an individual who at least some time previously had had significant relations to normality – before the mental illness become the feature that expressed the patient's individuality. These relations almost always seem unsuccessful because of the exclusion resulting from the later diagnosis of mental illness, and the exclusion was blamed on the patient's defective social relations before his confinement. Perhaps Jönsson gives his readers too shaky a foundation on which to interpret the patient's feelings. But this is fine – a reading experience should involve transgressing a boundary, as the author's first fascination with Foucault shows.

There can be no doubt that this is an important book, which takes us a step further in our knowledge of Nordic mental hospitals and institutions. At times one may wonder why Swedish ethnologists have shown such a great interest in mental hospitals, while not giving nearly as much consideration to the homes for the mentally deficient. There are in fact great similarities in many of the forms of care and treatment. The asylum, for example, the spatial framework of the non-events, is closely related in the two kinds of care. When Jönsson sees the mental hospital as connected to

the prison and the somatic hospital, I would ask why he does not see the close relation to the homes for the mentally deficient. Here again I think it is due to Jönsson's method: he is standing inside the circle regarding the patient with the psychiatrist's diagnostic gaze, and probably deliberately avoids looking for any close links to the culture and society outside the hospital. If he had done so more, he could not have escaped seeing the connections, which are based on the concepts of normality and health. Taking up a stance in relation to "the modern project" (in which definition?) appears to be merely a tribute that Jönsson pays as an ethnologist to today's Swedish ethnology.

Despite my few question marks, I still suspect that the purism of the dissertation is in fact its strength. At all events, one must conclude that this is a worthy and important study, which deserves to be read for the inspiration it can give. I would make one final wish: if only Lars-Eric Jönsson were willing and able to carry out the important ethnological study of Swedish homes for the mentally deficient which is sadly lacking in Swedish research into marginalization. With the present work he has shown that, if anyone can do it, he can.

Edith Mandrup Rønn, Copenhagen

Female Piety

Katarina Lewis, Schartauansk kvinnofromhet i tjugonde seklet. En religionsetnologisk studie. Skrifter utgivna av Bohusläns museum och Bohusläns hembygdsförbund, nr 59, Uddevalla 1997. 215 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7686-155-4.

■ Scandinavia and Finland have been the promised land for revivalist movements since the middle of the nineteenth century. Characteristic of these movements has been a kind of back-to-basics religiosity, together with strong lay activity and commitment to following religious beliefs in everyday life. The emphasis is on living, not only believing in, a Christian life. Katarina Lewis' doctoral thesis on Schartauan female piety in the twentieth century deals with precisely this issue. In other words, she analyzes how the Schartauan form of Christian belief affects and is expressed in the daily lives of laywomen.

The primary data of the study consists of 46 in-depth interviews with women in three age groups in the county of Bohuslän in Sweden, which is one of the main centres of the Schartauan movement. The informants were: 24 women born between the years 1895 and 1921, ten women born between 1922 and 1939, and twelve women born between 1943 and 1968. Apart from conducting interviews, the author also gathered other biographical material, such as letters, diaries, notes on sermons, drawings, pictures and paintings. Moreover, her established network of relations with other persons involved in the movement proved to be a useful source of background information and correspondence for the study. She gave many public talks about Schartauan piety, collecting useful feedback for her investigation from people well acquainted with the movement. Additionally, a vast amount of material on the theological and pastoral perspectives was consulted for the particular purpose of gaining a thorough insight into the teachings of Schartauanism.

The study operates on many levels of analysis, and is also of general theoretical interest. The author informs us at the very beginning of her study that the investigation originated in her interest in women's studies. Her approach is balanced, however. Her feminist approach is mainly reflected in the fact that she is studying pious Christian women belonging to the Schartauan movement, but also in the fact that she has grown up in the context of Schartauan piety herself. Although she was later alienated from this movement, when she conducted her study she felt as if she was coming home and acknowledged the advantages of being thoroughly familiar with the particular form of Christianity and way of life of the women investigated.

The author aims at an insider's perspective with the specific purpose of 'remaining' in the 'reality of those studied' long enough to understand and to be able to describe and interpret the reality of their everyday life. I find this approach interesting, because I have myself aimed at a similar understanding in my studies of the way of life of the Athonite monks in Greece. In her description of the fieldwork process, however,

the author does not analyse her own position and influence in the field clearly enough, and nor does she fully assess the difficulties involved in explaining and relating the intracultural terms to intercultural theoretical concepts. Her position still seems to be very much that of an interviewer collecting verbatim statements from her informants. She interviewed half of the women only once. She does not describe in any detail the actual fieldwork situation, the atmosphere for example, or her own participation in the everyday lives of the women investigated. In the field, the fieldworker takes part in many activities, and experiences the field personally. All these things are an integral part of fieldwork. Here, however, the author's own experiences are only hinted at. Although she uses this personal material in the way she describes and interprets women's everyday lives, she does not analyse this part of the fieldwork process at any length in her chapter on the fieldwork method.

The study is strong in the descriptive part and in the way the author has been able to relate the everyday lives of Schartauan women. It is a 'thick description' *par excellence* in Clifford Geertz' sense of the term. The other theoretical frames are not used in the same thorough way. They appear to be more or less loose background structures than meticulously applied analytical tools.

The bulk of the study concerns Schartauan piety and interpretations of Christian teachings. The beliefs are related to the context of the women's everyday lives, and perhaps even somewhat overemphasized. One would have expected a little bit more about the daily routines, the work and ordinary lives apart from the piety. Is the piety really present all the time? Or were the questions put to the women focused so that the 'normal' day became somewhat 'extraordinarily religious'? These are questions that perplex me. At the same time, however, the author argues her point convincingly through the verbatim statements of the women investigated.

The three-model approach of Mother, Community Mother and Faithful Servant mirroring the identity of the Schartauan women in everyday life provides a convincing interpretation of the living conditions and identity of the Christian women studied. It seems that the author's insider's perspective on this interpretation in particular demonstrates its usefulness in understanding another human being and, in this case, the everyday living conditions dictated by and values of Schartauan female piety. I cannot but congratulate her for having produced an interesting and valuable ethnological study of religion.

René Gothóni, Helsinki

Shared Lives

Lena Martinsson, Gemensamma liv. Om kön, kärlek och längtan. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1997. 238 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7203-231-6.

■ Lena Martinsson is an ethnologist at Gothenburg University. Her dissertation is the result of a research project based on interviews and conversations with ten married couples, ten men and ten women aged 27–41. All the couples have children.

The aim of the work is to understand and interpret how people establish a community as woman or man in a pair relationship and separately. For Martinsson this means tackling her informants' descriptions of how gender, community, and sexuality are defined and interpreted. Her theoretical point of departure concerns how these categories are experienced and what they mean for self-understanding and identity, rather than being based on feminist theories of power and repression. She studies how the informants' reflections on their own lives in different ways give meaning in life. This is significant for self-understanding and for the possibilities of living in different ways.

The book is divided into four main chapters. Before this, in the Introduction, the author reveals glimpses of her own life in the encounter with the informants. She is a woman, lives in a pair relationship, and has children. The chapter on method focuses on inequality. This is essential for Martinsson's perspective. The couples interviewed are very different, with few shared features associated with class and localities. Yet this is not to say that education, class, and housing are not significant for their lives and their marriages. What ties them together is primarily that they all

live in a heterosexual relationship and that the couples have small children. First she interviewed one of the partners, then the other, and finally both of them together. The material consists mainly of a series of individual and joint biographies with fluid transitions. The discussion of previous research primarily reveals Lena Martinsson's theoretical base. She says that she is not striving to define specific life-modes, class cultures, or patriarchal gender orders. What she is interested in is ambiguity and diversity.

In the first chapter, "Shared Life", the author describes how community comes into being. The descriptions are multifaceted. Key concepts are quality of life, environment, and the place of children in today's society. Some couples have their Christian faith as a guiding star. Others view themselves as a counterbalance to modern society, which may be terrifyingly new. Others see our rapidly changing society as an opportunity for large and small alike. Here Martinsson shows how different ideas and conflicting standards give marital life opportunities and dilemmas at the same time, precisely because the diversity of cultural forces is made visible.

The question how people think about and relate to the theme of "Equality – Norm and Change" is posed in the second chapter. In the interviews the informants often refer to their own upbringing as a contrast to life today. This involves many conscious choices. Martinsson goes on to ask how these changes affect the informants' own understanding of gender. She concludes that the debate on equality conducted in the interviews, among other things, creates an awareness that gender is not an unchangeable concept. It is a process of change in which every individual takes part, in different ways and at different speeds.

This brings us to the third chapter, "Understanding of Gender – An Unstable History". This particularly exposes what is contradictory and ambiguous. Norms as to how women and men should act are not given once and for all. Some traditional gender boundaries are transgressed while others remain watertight. Through the interviews and the many conversations, norms and practice are discussed and revealed. The handling of norms and the choice of strategies in different contexts show how cultural forces affect the perception of one's own gender. Martinsson concludes that notions of differences between the genders can therefore be a cultural resource.

The fourth and last chapter discusses how gender is created and changed, under the title "Love and Longing". The problematization starts with the way that heterosexual love is described in the light of understandings of gender. This makes the individual's reflections and stances *via-à-vis* romance, dreams, and equality important. In particular, several of the interviewees show great tolerance of homosexuality, while others find it difficult to reconcile their faith with an acceptance of partnership between two people of the same sex. Old norms and attitudes are being shaken.

Finally, Martinsson points out that she has seen how different interpretations of gender and sexuality both compete with each other and exist side by side. Conservative perceptions of gender are far from reigning supreme. Gender is perceived by most people as something changeable, a process in which each person participates with individual responsibility. Yet it is not possible to transgress the norms and stand outside this process. And the norms and principles are far from being fairly distributed.

The dissertation is primarily a thorough documentation of how gender and marital life are experienced and interpreted in the Sweden of the 1990s. Here it is particularly the potential for change that points the way forwards. At the same time, the dissertation shows that things take time, an infinitely long time, precisely because there are so few fixed cultural pigeonholes and categories. Masculinity, femininity, the mother–father relationship, and pair formation are good examples of this. Lena Martinsson brings this out very well in the dissertation. Yet I am left with one question: could the dissertation not have devoted more discussion to the gender hierarchy and power relations? If I understand Martinsson correctly, she claims that a perspective like this would conceal more than it would reveal if one is trying to focus on cultural forces. I do not think that I agree with this.

The book has a useful and brief – perhaps too brief – presentation of the couples' biographies.

Lena Martinsson allows their voices to be heard well, and she does so with empathy, respect, and warmth. In the text we hear some of them more than others. As the dissertation is arranged, it is difficult to make comparisons. I tried to follow the individual couples all the way through, but it was not easy. The analysis is nevertheless highly credible, and Martinsson's summaries and interpretations testify to good research and a high ethical level. All the material, needless to say, has been made anonymous. There is a full bibliography and the book makes easy reading. The book might possibly have gained from being shortened somewhat, but perhaps repetitions cannot be avoided. To conclude: this is an important piece of research which gives penetrating insight into the complex associated with gender and marital life.

Inger Øverby Walker, Oslo

Nature as an Argument for a Healthy Life in a Healthy Society

Signe Mellemgaard, Kroppens natur. Sundhedsoplysning og naturidealer i 250 år. Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 1998. 357 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 87-7289-512-8.

■ The point of departure for Signe Mellemgaard's book is nature as an argument for health. What is natural is also healthy. Nature is regarded as a lost pristine state, but we can get back to the good old days by using nature. Nature is fashionable. But it is not just any nature, only good nature: what is good is natural and what is natural is good. At the same time, we are becoming increasingly uncertain about what nature really is, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between what nature has created and what human beings have created. Mellemgaard views the body as an intersection between the social and the individual, between the physiological and the symbolic, and between nature and culture. Health stands for a person's entire well-being, the good life and a kind of art of living. This is where the ethnological interest comes in. It is a matter of creating a new order in everyday life. Mellemgaard, however, is not interested in "the lived life", that is, in people's experiences, but in the arguments used by the people who spread health information, and the outlook on life to which this argumentation leads, and how this outlook has changed through time. Her concern is the adjustment of everyday life. With the aid of discourse analysis, she seeks to reveal what the nature argument in health information means for our understanding of the individual, the body, and human life.

In the introduction the author says that she wants to study the expressions taken by this adjustment of life. She does so by examining health information as social critique, as an interpretation of the role of the doctor in society, and as a reflection of the view of "the Others", of one's own body, the societal body, and individuality. However, the book considers only the work of private health informers, not that of the state.

The chronological focus of the dissertation is on the late eighteenth century. The explanation for this choice is that this was the formation phase of health enlightenment, when it was established and consolidated as a phenomenon. A short section then lets us follow the development and change of health information through the 19th and 20th centuries until our own days.

The book consists of three parts. The first is mainly a survey of research, in which the author presents her theoretical predecessors and sources of inspiration. In the second and longest part, which occupies almost three-quarters of the text, she deals with the empirical material from the eighteenth century, in seven sections, from the prehistory of health information, via the beginnings and establishment of the health discourse, the unnatural nature of masturbation, the creation of a catechism of health, and health information as dietetics and social utility.

The last part of the book contains an account of nature as an argument in the 19th and 20th centuries, with the focus on the important watershed around 1900. In this part of the book, remarkably enough, we also find the concluding theoretical analysis in a short final section.

In the introductory survey of previous research, Mellemgaard emphasizes "the absent presence" of the body in ethnology as well as in the social sciences and the history of medicine. Yet ethnologists have shown a certain interest in this "animal part" of human beings, which has at

least, she says, left room for studies of topics close to the body, such as cleanliness, food, and clothing. Here she mentions Troels-Lund's great interest in the history of the body.

When she examines what has been written about health literature in history, she finds that Bryan S. Turner, the sociologist of the body, is one of the few exceptions who have not tackled the subject from the angle of medical history. However, she criticizes his too narrow interpretation of dietetics as a form of disciplining and social control, arguing that if one interprets dietary rules as denying the body, then one has only solved part of the problem.

She chiefly follows the new historiography in the field of the social history of medicine, which began with the critique of modern medical science by scholars such as Ivan Illich and Michel Foucault. Mellemgaard's main source of inspiration is social constructivism, which views medical knowledge as a social construction, whose objects are historical products, inventions rather than discoveries. She regards health information as a discourse, as talk about a specific object. In the spirit of Foucault, she sees concepts such as nature and health as arising from a discursive practice, created by culture-specific historical contexts. With this approach, even humans and their bodies are a historical product. Whereas scholars in the 1970s and 1980s viewed the body as a refuge of authenticity, as something natural that had to be liberated, she follows today's body scholars in seeing the body as a cultural creation; in other words, its meaning is ascribed to it. Mellemgaard rightly devotes space to those Swedish sociologists and historians of ideas who have adopted a social constructivist perspective in their research into medicine and the body.

As a Swedish ethnologist, I am fascinated by Mellemgaard's use of the concept of cultural history. She mentions the new cultural history and the problematization of postmodernism in the same sentence. She even uses the concept of cultural history to describe the new direction taken by social history after it left the quantifying tendency of the 1960s and 1970s. Italian microhistory, the French *Annales* school, and the new American cultural history are cited as its foundation. In Sweden the concept is used in this way by historians, whereas today's ethnologists do not want to be associated with cultural history. Perhaps something of interest could be derived from a study of these different research trends.

Today there is a greater focus on bygone linguistic expressions, according to Mellemgaard, and less on revealing meanings, ways of thinking, symbolic worlds, representations, and ways of looking at things. Today's ethnological interest in concept formation and discourses, as she says in a happy formulation, has led to the following situation: "from having taken an interest in the people, ethnology has now developed an interest in the interest in the people." As a result, we have also started to reflect upon our own role.

This is an ethnological study of health literature, so the source material is publications of various kinds. It is therefore natural to study it in the form of text analysis and discourse analysis.

In the 18th century nature was first used as an argument in health information, and that century is the main focus of Mellemgaard's dissertation. Nature replaced God as the great point of reference, the entity that was beyond all doubt. A discourse on health began, she says, and nature was supposed to explain health. Health literature began to appear in Denmark in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Before 1760 there was no literature at all about health, but between 1770 and 1800 there was a huge growth in the number of published books and periodicals on the subject. It is chiefly the physician Johan Clemens Tode's popular medical books that are discussed, but influences from other quarters are also considered. She regards Linnaeus as a very early representative of the new health information.

As nature became the great external reference point, there were evidently growing demands to adjust life in accordance with it. A new lifestyle emerged, regulated in great detail. Mellemgaard borrows the concept of *lifestylization* from the German medical historian Heinrich Schipperge, to describe this endeavour to order the whole of life. Health information is not just what it claims to be but also a means of social distinction, creating a whole new world-view and self-understanding. Mellemgaard says that it was used to formulate an outlook on life and a critique of society.

The health informants of the time viewed nature as a grand harmonic order, in which humans could find their place if only they lived in accordance with it, that is, in a healthy, regular way. On the other hand, if people led unhealthy lives and did not follow the natural order, they became sick. The natural ideal held up in the literature was the wild and the savage, all that was untainted by civilization, such as children and primitive peoples, but also the simple, hard-working peasants. The sumptuous way of life of the aristocracy was thus criticized, while nature was set up to represent bourgeois simplicity. Mellemgaard sums up the health information as the ideal self-portrait of the bourgeoisie. Doctors developed at this time into experts on and exegetes of nature; their role was to point out and define evil. Masturbation among children and young people was singled out as an obvious example of unnatural behaviour. Children's sexuality was not considered natural. It could be checked with the aid of self-discipline. Masturbation was turned into a medical problem, which in turn meant that the prescribed cure also became a lifestylization, a way to make life conform to dietetic rules.

The champions of health, however, were not advocating a regression to an uncivilized state, but rather a further civilization of culture. People were to learn moderation in their way of life, not by external coercion but by an internal pressure forcing them to come to their senses and live decently. Rural life was the ideal, with unhealthy urban life as the contrast. Despite this, the reform-minded, well-educated, prosperous readers targeted by the health literature lived in the towns. And life in the country also brought problems. The peasants were considered fatalistic and indifferent, so the arguments aimed at them more often invoked religion. Arguments from nature were formulated more in terms of self-control and less in terms of the wild.

Like masturbation, bodily excretions are an area in which Mellemgaard can most clearly distinguish a will to teach the art of living, the ability to constitute and care for the self. Here she closely follows her masters, and it would have been interesting to learn how she relates to their findings on this subject. She refers to Foucault's debate about masturbation, observing that the pedagogization of children's sexuality, together with the psychiatrization of perversity, are among the most important elements in the modern discourse on sexuality, but she then goes on to look more closely at some paradoxes in the early discussion of masturbation in Denmark. She takes issue with Elias, however, in that she claims that scholars who have followed in his wake in their view of the civilizing process have made things too simple for themselves by just considering the silence about the "discharges". She argues that Tode is actually coquettish in his euphemisms for bodily excretions. She also disagrees with other classics in the field, such as Mary Douglas and Edmund Leach, when she talks about the marginal zones to which people banish whatever does not belong to the body or its surroundings. She professes a reluctance to follow them in their universalism, wishing only to use their way of focusing on the boundaries of the body.

The "art of living" is the concept she uses to describe dietetics, the doctrine of a healthy way of life and the relation between moderation and desire. It is especially here that she takes her theoretical inspiration from the last two parts of Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, where he speaks of how different practices create different subjects, and how different techniques help us to constitute the self.

She criticizes historical research into the body for having been too geared to its disciplining, and she argues that, ever since the eighteenth century, there has been a dual attitude to the body. Bodily disciplining has gone hand in hand with the worship of the body as the place where action and experience have their origin.

Around 1900 nature was still used as an argument, but in new social and cultural contexts. There was an emphasis on cleanliness, and the focus was shifted from the countryside to the city and its working class. It was no longer a matter of bourgeois simplicity advocated in opposition to aristocratic excess; instead health information was geared to preventing three diseases: tuberculosis, alcoholism, and neurasthenia.

In our late twentieth-century society, which is described under the heading "A Longing for Wholeness and the Ideal of Naturalness", we no

longer ask why we should have good health. It is regarded as an end in itself. Health seems to have become virtually synonymous with happiness, that is, mental, physical, and social well-being.

Mellemgaard concludes by presenting her own view of health information as a lifestylization, in what can best be described as an epilogue. She justifies the use of this concept by referring to its duality. On the one hand. lifestyles serve to distinguish individuals. At the end of the eighteenth century, for example, the bourgeoisie could use it to mark their distance from a traditional aristocratic lifestyle. On the other hand, lifestylization creates a life order for oneself. Here she returns to Foucault and his talk of dietetics as a stylization of a freedom, to emphasize that health information is not just a matter of asceticism and denial but also the worship of the body. It can also be used to provide training in the enjoyment of life.

Mellemgaard has had problems in arranging her text. Since the book is mainly about the formation phase in the 18th century, perhaps it should not have been divided into three parts, since parts 1 and 3 also deal to a large extent with the matter covered in part 2. The brief section about the 20th century could have been appended as a forward-looking excursus, and the final section in which she describes health information as lifestylization could have been a separate chapter, since it sums up the whole book.

I am also critical of the author's failure to discuss the role of the state in health information, although she begins by noting that the state and the people are part of each other's context. The élite and the experts who spread this information must surely have had considerable influence over the state, and vice versa. If this was not the case, then it would be very interesting to compare Denmark with Sweden, which has had a different tradition as regards the role of the state.

Readers will recognize many familiar things in this book. Many people before Mellemgaard have discussed nature as an argument. The significance of the body for identity formation is another well-known topic. The bourgeois use of health information as a means of social distinction is nothing new either. The book does not open any radically new perspectives or ask any unusual questions, but it is very well written, and the huge body of source material has been analysed well. The dissertation is thus a valuable addition to research into how people's conditions have changed in modern society.

The book is heavily influenced – in a positive sense – by the two research environments in which it arose: the research programme "Man and Nature" in Odense and the Department of Ethnology in Copenhagen. Signe Mellemgaard combines the interesting research on the body and nature at the former institution with the solid historical cultural analysis of the latter. And although she could have developed the many theoretical approaches to challenge more clearly what others have said, she gives us new perspectives on the body, nature, life, and society.

Birgitta Svensson, Lund

Women of the Archipelago

Monica Nerdrum, Skärgårdskvinnor. Tradition, modernitet och diversitet. Åbo Akademi University Press, Åbo 1998. 256 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 952-9616-93-7.

■ Finland is known as "the land of the thousand lakes". This fairytale landscape of freshwater lakes and white-stemmed birch trees is framed by Baltic salt water and islands in stretches and clusters. There are old communities of farmers and smallholders, mariners and fishermen, today subject to the whims of modernity. The communities are undergoing changes that consist of the inevitable dual process of depopulation and centralization, largely triggered by the switch of transportation from sea to land, and from subsistence to cash economies for men and women alike.

The Turku (Åbo) archipelagic communities of Pargas, Nagu and Iniö constitute the geographical base for Monica Nerdrum's book, her dissertation for the Finnish doctor of philosophy degree, in which she has undertaken to investigate the relationship between modernity and tradition, focusing on women's ways of life. To that end she has interviewed two generations of women, representative of differing social and economic types. The older women were born between 1906 and 1925, the younger ones between 1926 and 1972.

There were approximately 30 women in each group. The main cultural divide occurred with the Second World War 1939–1940. Afterwards "modernity" increasingly set its stamp on community life. This is the main perspective of Nerdrum's investigation, and she seeks to focus on modern living conditions against a background of traditional life and ways.

Nerdrum was a member of a research project organized by Department of Ethnology at Åbo Akademi University to examine modern archipelagic dwellers and their maritime ways of life, modernity and identity among the inhabitants of south-west Finland. The outer islands had fishing as the predominant occupation, whereas farming with animal husbandry was characteristic of the inner areas until about 1950 when changes began to take place, not least because road transportation took over from maritime transportation. Nerdrum concentrates on the effects these changes had on women's way of life, dealing mainly with modern ways.

A great appetizer in Nerdrum's dissertation is her questionnaire, a well-written piece of literature of its kind, raising the reader's interest in the kind of answers her informants will provide, and the way Nerdrum herself will edit her presentation. On the whole her field method is admirable in its combination of professional methodology, and keen interest in her subject. Nerdrum gives voice to the women she has interviewed and visualizes them as traditional and modern, sometimes – inevitably – as both. This is a respectable piece of work, and she competently and painstakingly performs the task of presenting the scope and background of her investigation.

Her methodological approach aims to give an account that is representative of the women's experience seen from the inside. While "making visible" was the ambition of women's studies of the 1970s, the "insider's perspective" has been a feminist mantra of the 1980s, incorporated into Nerdrum's toolkit, indeed perhaps as her most fundamental ambition. In the 1990s "reflexivity" has become a slogan, and Nerdrum employs this as well, but without really convincing this reader, who takes more pleasure in Nerdrum's "traditional" ethnology, less in her attempts at handling modern analytical tools and the theory of modernity. Her struggle is too obvious, both in performing the compulsory exercise of "theory and method" in general and also in practising feminist theory. This may be due to her personal inclination, but it has a wider relevance in displaying contemporary ethnology at the crossroads between inductive material collection and the analytical approach that gives prominence to theory and perspective.

Nerdrum's focus on women is so pointed that it is worth discussing whether a gender perspective and feminist theory really add to the value of her study. To say so may be dynamite in some quarters, yet one may ask whether feminist theory is most effectively applied to matters that are explicitly focused on one sex, and have an inbuilt gender perspective from the start. Would not general modernity theory be sufficient as an analytical tool?

Nerdrum does not abstain from either, and that is too much of a mouthful. She ought to have put the brakes on and restricted her ambitions. There is too much of an effort to say the right words and to strike more notes than she, or probably any scholar, can manage from beginning to the end of an investigation. It is a pity that her 50 pages on "theory and method" out of 225 are not integrated into the dissertation as a whole. These are the crucial 50 pages to convince her readers that she has managed to integrate and contrast the traditional and the modern in her theoretical approach just as well as she has managed to present her informants' experienced transition to modernity.

The temporal scope of Nerdrum's ethnological studies covers a significant part of academic activities within women's studies, which has gradually been transformed into the theoretically dynamic field of gender studies. Her book is therefore too much of a bricolage to serve her well. She began her ethnological studies in the 1970s, her book is from 1998, and even her work with this specific topic for the dissertation covers a fairly long span of time. While much went on in women's studies, this was also the case for general cultural studies, and for literature, ethnology and anthropology. This time span and the enormous input of new perspectives and scope constitute a problem for me as a reviewer, but unfortunately not for our author, who treads doggedly through

a minefield of methodological traps, each of them worthy of a discussion – which does not take place. Most crucially there is modernity itself, with Nerdrum paying tribute to Giddens, Berman and Ziehe, but merely in a footnote to a two-line sentence. She chooses to concentrate on Peter L. Berger's *Facing up to Modernity* (1977), but I have the feeling that Nerdrum is more comfortable in the company of Magnus Berg in his article on modernity in Birgitta Skarin Frykman & Helene Brembeck (eds), *Brottningar med begrepp* (1992). In itself this is not a bad choice, and one which could have lifted the ethnological gaze to a comfortable level adjusted to the topic, just as for instance Yvonne Hirdman's much discussed gender theory might have been brought far more to the foreground. Too often we are given a little from many, and too little from her selected and focused few. (May not a reviewer have the right to make a wish?) Nerdrum gives her readers reminders of all the wonderful new inputs to ethnology there are around to be brought to the foreground for discussion. She stops short of the latter.

It seems that Nerdrum is split between affections and obligations. She is a great and meticulous worker in the pre-theoretical and rather innocent traditions of ethnology before the 1980s, and she has not lost her innocence. She is curious to know what it was like, and what it *is* like, out there in the skerries, and has undertaken to find out, and has done so. We trust her. On the other hand, there is a certain naivety in her dissertation as it lags somewhat behind in method. She is just not properly aware of the implications of the analytical and interpretative turn which has created an identity crisis in "documentary" ethnology as opposed to "theoretical" ethnology. No one would expect her to solve the problems of contemporary ethnology vs. cultural studies, new historicism, new cultural history etc. But what about charting modern life, and traditional life, and indeed the challenges of charting life at all?

Unfortunately there is too little discussion among contemporary ethnologists of general ethnography and documentation issues on a broad Nordic level. Had Nerdrum gone into such a discussion, and used her doggedness here, making a virtue of her true talents as a meticulous and energetic fieldworker and even antiquarian, her talents would have been well exposed and her dissertation's freshness would have been more conspicuous. Nerdrum has one foot in the ethnology of the 1970s while translating aspects of new approaches from those days into post-modernist jargon, leaving to readers and reviewers alike the unpleasant task of looking for a scholarly foothold and direction. There is a little about cultural analysis, a little about modernity/tradition problematics, and a revelation that the true implications of theoretical reflexivity have not entered her understanding of reflexivity. Her loyalty to material and informants, however, and her ability to grasp the life patterns of the geographical area she has studied prevents her book from falling apart in intentions and aspects. The result of all her attentiveness towards Academia's front figures and latest fads is a fair presentation of lifestyle patterns of archipelagic women traditionally and today. Nerdrum has had the stamina to work her way through a vast amount of material, ending up with a monument to women's ways and work, traditional and contemporary, in coastal south-west Finland. This is not a bad accomplishment. When all the theoreticians are dead, Nerdrum's book will continue to deserve a life on the bookshelves thanks to her meticulous charting of coastal lifestyles, especially the female part of maritime culture.

Brit Berggreen, Bergen

Ideal and Reality in Swedish Social Work

Karin Salomonsson, Fattigdomens besvärjelser. Visionära ideal och vardagliga realiteter i socialt arbete. Historiska Media, Lund 1998. 256 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-88930-29-9.

■ This book, entitled "Invocations of Poverty: Visionary Ideals and Everyday Realities in Social Work", is a doctoral dissertation in ethnology written as part of the research project "The Cultural Organization of Care", a collaborative venture by the Department of Ethnology in Lund and the Social Services Department in Malmö. The topic is changes in social work in Sweden this century, or more accurately, the changing view of how best to tackle social problems. The point is

that the social issues that are put on the agenda do not just arise out of "reality" but out of the social practice that defines and demarcates the tasks to be solved at any particular time. Poor relief therefore requires that there is someone who can transform poverty into public discourse. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this was done by the medical professions, whereas social destitution in the twentieth century has become a field for more and more professional groups with different educational qualifications and with differing expectations of their role. Consequently, one cannot understand the social reality without understanding how it is culturally constructed by these professional groups working with and against each other. This is the reason why the author finds it relevant to deal with the subjectivity and practice of social workers in everyday contexts, in which the tiniest details may take on great significance: "I want to show how descriptions and narratives, knacks and gazes, practice and rhetoric have constituted a variable professional role with changing expectations" (p. 14).

Using interviews with social workers and an extensive range of source material, the author has tried to capture changes in the social workers' conceptual world and their understanding of their tasks and responsibilities. By adopting a broad concept of text, through which statements, letters to newspapers, articles in professional journals, minutes of meetings, and reports of inquiries are treated on an equal basis in the analysis, Salomonsson manages to present each period as a rational totality of theories, practice, and outlooks on people and society. She thus makes it clear that the people who are employed by the state to combat social destitution actually help to construct their object and hence the nature and scope of their tasks. This point is illuminated from different angles throughout the book, thus avoiding the simplified histories of increasing control and power or of increasing insight. It is this wealth of cultural nuances that makes the book interesting to read.

The study does not proceed from a theoretical problematic (p. 26) but consists of an intuitive close-up reading of an impressive number of texts of widely varying types. In the actual analysis of the texts Salomonsson makes many theoretical reflections, trying to use a wide spectrum of modern theories and concepts. With references to so many scholars, concepts, and theories, at times we get a rather flickering picture which can create uncertainty as to what the crucial point is. This may be partly due to the long time that it has taken for the book to be completed (the first interviews were conducted in the 1980s), but this does not mar the overall impression: despite all the detours, one ends up with a feeling that this study has presented some key concepts for our comprehension of the social workers' self-understanding. This is because Salomonsson has a sense for significant details and treats the seemingly trivial things as clues to deeper meanings. The result is a kind of condensed Zeitgeist, in which one can not only perceive clearly how different it was to be a social worker at the turn of the century, in the thirties, in the fifties, and in the sixties and seventies, but also see the shared features that make it reasonable to view social work as part of a concerted vision of a welfare state which seeks to care for everyone, with an aspiration for equality in the administration of social services.

The book is structured chronologically, and in each of the selected periods the author analyses a social case which she claims to be a concentration of the social gaze of an entire period. This can of course lead us to suspect that her intuitive perception can lead her off track at times. I am not convinced, for example, that the gender debate is the essence of the philanthropic discussions at the turn of the century. The home and the woman were key concepts, it is true, but mortality, social destitution, and the dangers of socialism were surely no less essential, and this is the impression we get after the first two chapters. Salomonsson also relates the individual cases to the central figure of each period, who incarnates ideas about how best to tackle social problems. At the turn of the century, for example, it was Ebba Pauli, in the 1940s Olof Kinberg, and in the 1960s Bengt Hedlén. The distinct periods are viewed as representatives of different rationalities, known as "care paradigms", which succeed each other after a time of change in which social work is characterized by uncertainty and instability (p. 69). Salomonsson's explanation for these rather radi-

cal changes does not go beyond the micro-level, that of discourse, since she hints that different positions in the discourse can pull in new directions, as concepts such as client, need, poverty, and assistance are continuously constructed in the social practice. This thereby creates the reality with which the social worker has to work, and possible courses of action are also indicated in the same process.

The book may be seen as a reflection of the general interest shown by the cultural sciences in subjectivity, not as something individual but as inseparable from society. It could almost be said that subjectivity has replaced culture in cultural studies. The social workers' self-understanding is interesting precisely because it was not just a private concern but had consequences for the lives of so many people. The book thus gives a thought-provoking picture of a highly differentiated professional group which helped to shape the welfare state by pointing out the problems that had to be solved and suggesting new ways to solve them. It is interesting, for example, to follow the discourse about the welfare state's demands of the citizens to follow the experts' recommendations and at the same time to qualify as citizens by taking responsibility for themselves. Although the author, with Foucault, argues that the clients are constituted as *subjects* by the discursive practices of the investigations, I personally believe that the analysis would have gained by concentrating on the social workers and not also trying to reconstruct the clients' subjectivity with the aid of what Salomonsson calls a *hypernarrative*, a mixture of fact and imagination (in the chapter on "The Sexual Girl").

In the last chapter she briefly discusses the neo-liberal critique of the social state in the 1980s, and it is natural that there are more questions than answers here. One characteristic of a good dissertation is that it leaves one with new questions. This is exactly what Karin Salomonsson's book does: Something must have happened which makes it possible now to think of the welfare state as a relic from the past and not as a project for the future, as a result of which social workers no longer have the role of "constructors".

Lene Otto, Copenhagen

Brickworks, Factory and Farm

Sanna Kaisa Spoof, Savikkojen valtias. Jokelan tiilitehtaan sosiaalinen ja fyysinen miljöö. Kansatieteellinen arkisto 43, Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistys, Jyväskylä 1997. 351 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 951-9057-28-5.

■ The initial impetus for the research was provided by a project examining the working classes and launched by the National Board of Antiquities in 1980 in which the writer participated in 1987. The object for research at the time was the Jokela brick industry in Tuusula. This work was later to expand and provide the writer with the substance for three theses. The first was a study of the Jokela industrial architecture submitted in her subsidiary subject, art history, in 1990, the second her thesis for a licentiate degree in ethnology on the Jokela brickworks and its farm in 1992, and the third her doctoral dissertation in ethnology in 1997. The labour research project was designed to concentrate exclusively on the study of the worker population; this had been the custom in ethnological research in Finland ever since the early 1960s, in accordance with the Nordic and Central European models. In her dissertation the writer nevertheless broadened the perspective to take in the whole of Jokela, its entire population and occupation groups, its livelihoods and the physical milieu. In viewing the workers' way of life and culture in their overall context the writer was thus able to obtain a more diverse and more comprehensive picture and understanding than would otherwise have been the case. For the workers did not, as indeed nor did any other population group, live in social isolation but in close interaction with, for example, the factory-owning class and other sectors of the population. This approach had in fact been adopted by European ethnologists immediately after the Second World War already, when the concept of 'the people' or Volk was broadened to take in not only the agrarian population but all others as well, as the writer points out. But it was she who had the insight to apply the principle at micro-level as well, in an ethnological study of one single industrial community, and in this respect her work can be considered pioneering.

The writer has thus broadened the confines of her subject far beyond those of an ethnological study of workers, and the result is an all-round presentation of unprecedented scope of the evolution of a farming and brickworks community into an industrial town. On the other hand, as the writer herself points out, her research does not apply solely to the one community, Jokela, since it also stands as an example of the process by which today's industrial Southern Finland was born and grew. There was undoubtedly enough material for at least two dissertations. To begin with she includes the founding of the Jokela brickworks, its growth into a real factory, the recruiting of its workers and their transformation into an industrial labour force, and the conversion of the uninhabited areas along the railway line first into a brickworks and later an industrial community. Secondly, she also covers the evolution of the farm established alongside the brickworks, the history of its building, its agriculture and farm workers. Thirdly, she takes a look at the history of the factory and farm owners and their families within the context of the transformation and modernisation of the patriarchal estate society. This meant delving deep into all manner of ethnological and related research traditions, such as traditional ethnological research into agrarian occupations, research into the mechanisation of agriculture and village studies, research into industrial workers' culture and communities, and research into manor-house culture. Her studies accordingly took in the approach to these subjects applied in not only ethnology but also in history, cultural geography and the social sciences. Above all her collection of primary material took on awe-inspiring proportions, and not only the book in itself, but the bibliography and references more than prove that they are the result of an immense project which no one can possibly fault. The issue is not, however, primarily one of collecting material – there have, after all, been any number of collectors – but specifically of assembling and interpreting a corpus of material that is in itself chaotic, of finding the vital needle in the haystack of extraneous facts. In this she has been more than successful, and it is undoubtedly her great strength. The outcome is an overview that is clear and to the point of the evolution of one community and at the same time an example of a broader, universal development process.

The work is not, however, entirely above all criticism, for what the writer gains in breadth she loses in depth. The source literature is, despite its broad scope, almost all Finnish and Swedish, and she has thus also had to resort to second-hand sources. Perusal of the original Anglo-American studies might have helped to give the research greater depth at theoretical level. Applicable and even explanatory theoretical models were indeed found in the literature, but this she merely reports. No real dialogue is generated between the theory and practical experience and hence there are no applications of the theory to the case in hand. At the level of theory the study therefore does little to advance our knowledge of the subject. I refer here specifically to her reference to *the Canadian life-cycle model of factory communities* (p. 21, 255–256) and the *model of the structural renewal of communities developed by British sociologists and geographers* (p. 21–24), both of which have been filtered by Finnish literature and used without examining or referring to the original sources. In the case of a work of such breadth this demand may sound unreasonable, since the same failing may be observed in numerous doctoral dissertations on far narrower subjects. It is nevertheless a point that should be made.

My second criticism is that the book provides a very harmonious overall picture of the Jokela community as one devoid of any conflicts. I do not claim that this picture is necessarily false, but it certainly is unusual, considering that Jokela is here held up as an example case. In other words, the fact that it is unusual should have been pointed out more clearly. There are hints of this cosy little community free from conflict in the text. For we are told that before the Civil War of 1918 the Jokela Youth Association met at the Workers' Hall and lent the Workers' Association the money to build a meeting hall, and that when the Youth Association disbanded, it donated all its funds to the Workers' Association because certain active people were members of both associations. We are further told that the Youth Association was re-established in September 1918, and that a new association building was completed as a communal voluntary effort in November 1919 (p. 206–

207). Why was an association that had only recently disbanded re-established immediately after the Civil War, and why could it not meet at the Workers' Hall, since it had donated all its funds to the owners only a short time before? What happened to the Workers' Association and Hall after the Civil War? Maybe this was a reflection of external pressures and the political conflicts and trends of the times in an inwardly harmonious small community that refused to let such external factors affect its mutual relations, but this is not clearly stated. If this was the case, it would have been a significant research finding. The writer defended herself at the public examination of her doctoral dissertation by saying that she had deliberately excluded the time of the Civil War from her research, and maybe this explanation is acceptable in the case of such a broad study. But were the events of 1918 merely passing, regrettable exceptions to normal conditions or the inevitable culmination of developments sparked off by these "normal conditions"? Attention should, to my mind, have been paid to the latter alternative, in which case the Jokela case would have to have been given some deeper thought against the general background of 1918.

My final comment concerns the title of the book, "Savikkojen valtias" ("Master of the Claylands", English summary translated as "Living off Clay"). This is to my mind both unscientific and uninformative, because having read the book, I am still not quite sure what it means. It cannot have been an attempt at commercialising or at wooing the reading public, because the title is not in my opinion particularly arresting; on the contrary, the book has far more to offer than the title suggests. At the public examination of her dissertation the writer defended her choice by saying that her aim had been to find a name that does not immediately reveal all. This proves that the choice was a deliberate one but does not explain the motives. Luckily the book has a subtitle that tells what it is really about (The social and physical milieu of the Jokela brickworks).

Pekka Leimu, Turku

The Making of a *Hembygd*

Karin Öman, Kolbottnar, bönemöten och krut. En etnologisk studie av Karlskoga – identitet och image. Etnolore 20. Uppsala 1998. 320 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-506-1257-3.

■ When I read Karin Öman's dissertation on Karlskoga, I was inspired to ask: How does a *hembygd* come about? It seems like an obvious fact that everybody has a *hembygd*, a "home district" of his own, that is, a place where he was born and where he feels at home, a place to long for. In the concept of Swedish *hembygd* (rather like German *Heimat*) there is very often a nuance of nostalgia, a representation of a time and place where all was harmony. It is often described with the aid of folk costumes, folk dance, high summer, sunshine and happiness. Nostalgia seems to be the main ingredient in feeling deeply for a *hembygd*, and rurality seems to be a prerequisite for the very concept. Would it even be possible to regard the centre of a city as a *hembygd*?

Karin Öman has chosen the town of Karlskoga, an average western Swedish town, for her dissertation on local identity and public image as created by the friends and eager supporters of the local region. The aim of her work is to study "how local history has been built up of various elements in the past and how it is exploited", and how this exploitation may cause colliding interests in one and the same place. The author very thoroughly, almost in too much detail, shows how five different cultural sites in Karlskoga have been chosen and developed as sites worthy of the position of symbols of the *hembygd*. I like her division of time into different parts during which we see different periods, from realizing that a site is a potential cultural setting, up to the very recent period when it is possible or at least desirable that tourists should come and spend some money there. In the so-called formative period the potentialities of a cultural item are recognized, then a visualizer has to formulate a dream of how to utilize this potentiality, after which a designer realizes the dream, and finally the item is ready for use.

Öman picks five different cultural sites and thus shows how people in Karlskoga identify in different ways. Central values in the community

turn up as the motors behind the decisions as to how the items were selected. Work, as it was performed in rural Swedish society a hundred years ago as well as in the local blast furnace, religion in a revivalist movement typical of that region, money and fame in Alfred Nobel's home Björkborn, and nostalgia as presented in the Museum of Memories – these are the values that are in fashion today. Behind these values we can see the historical periods in Sweden during the last few centuries: national romanticism, industrialization, poverty and consequent emigration, the birth of the "People's Home", the birth of the concept of leisure time, and recent economic problems followed by efforts to develop tourism.

Karlskoga is by no means among the great tourist traps of Sweden. This makes it so much more interesting to see how people consciously try to find details in their environment which they think might thrill travellers enough to make them stop, get out of their cars and stay for a while. The image of the town thus presents what people today think might attract tourists from other places and descendants of emigrants. The image has to meet with the presumed expectations and it must satisfy the visitors' need for things with which to identify.

Öman's book clearly shows that the *hembygd* is a cultural construction. This point could have been elaborated more. The *hembygd* changes over time according to the values that are predominant. It also changes for individuals according to what part of life they are in. It is a cultural construction, provided "cultural" is seen not merely as a concept for idealistic thinking but also a concept from which to extract one of our time's most important values – money – through the creation of a tourist industry. One part of that construction is apt to make the average Swedish tourist feel at home, make him identify with Karlskoga and hopefully return. The other part is created in order to show in what way Karlskoga is outstanding and unique among all other Swedish towns. Beyond these two aspects there is a third one, that of nostalgia and comparison. A visitor may think: "Our forefathers earned their livelihood in this poor way. How admirable they were! Thank God that times are better now!" or "Thank God my grandmother emigrated!"

What today's visitor in Karlskoga sees is, to a great extent, chosen and restricted by what those who "saw" wanted to show to posterity. The academic disciplines also try to reveal what the romantics want to hide. Öman's dissertation is a typical ethnological, or even a folkloristic dissertation, for she asks what the people themselves wanted to show and how they reasoned about their choices. Local heritage societies are good objects of research within our disciplines, because the folklore process – that is, the process by which folklore, in a wide sense that also includes the way people think and reflect, is re-created and re-used over and over again – appears in a very distinct way.

Karin Öman's book is a very thorough study. It is obvious that she works as a teacher; everything is very clearly explained, crucial concepts are even italicized. The author has come across several recent ethnological theories, without really making use of them. She has an immense list of references. One has the feeling that Karin Öman knows a lot and has read a lot and does not want to omit anything just to be sure. Although there are minor cosmetic problems of this kind, her dissertation is still important, for the more we know about how people think about other people's dreams and hopes when they build up an image of the past, the better those in charge of cultural politics are able to make wise decisions.
Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Åbo

Book Reviews

Is Identity a Shirt or a Soul?

Skjorta eller själ? Kulturella identiteter i tid och rum. Gunnar Alsmark (red.). Studentlitteratur, Lund 1997. 198 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-44-00198-3.

■ This is an anthology by a group of scholars working at the Department of Ethnology at Lund University. The articles deal with various sorts of identities as modern constructions.

In the introduction, *Gunnar Alsmark*, the editor of the book, roots the concept of identity in the psychological aspects of an individual's self-ascription in a group, as well as in the "cultural"

constitution of such a group. He also says that the present discussion on identity follows a *constructivist* approach, which according to Alsmark means that identities are flexible, situational and exchangable, "a process constantly under construction and changing." This differs from an *essentialistic* approach, which according to Alsmark has its roots in functionalism and puts emphasis on the fixedness of identity and its continuation as tradition. The difference between the two lies for Alsmark in their relation to change: instead of having fixed identities, people are constantly building their identities. Our perspective on identity is thus constructivist when we see it as constant construction work.

In the historical sketch that Alsmark draws, constructivism represents present-day scholarly approaches, while essentialism is a thing of the past, placed there by such people as the Norwegian social anthropologist Fredrik Barth. For Alsmark, constructivism is good, as it emphasizes the changeability of identities and lack of their continuation, and essentialism is bad as it represents functionalism, tradition, fixedness, and continuity. Yet, drawing on the psychologist E.H. Erikson, Alsmark also emphasizes the importance of identity for security and stability, for life historical continuation, which makes identity a good thing to have. Alsmark also mentions that identities are created *in contrast* to others and otherness, and that otherness is created on the basis of both negative and positive attitudes, of both hate and romantic admiration. Yet again, identity is also an issue about a relationship to a place.

These perspectives to a great extent cover the approaches employed in the respective articles of the anthology. Yet, on top of this Alsmark places the "grundproblem", which is expressed in the title of the book: is identity a shirt or a soul? The idea of identity as a shirt refers to its changeability, and changing shirts when necessity arises seems like an adequate metaphor for Alsmark's "constructivist" idea that personal identities are changeable. (By the way, does this mean that there are also clean and dirty identities?) "Soul" refers here to the more permanent aspect in identity, as well as to its psychological dimension. One might have thought that Alsmark had already answered his question; that he had placed "the shirt" in constructivism and "the soul" in essentialism. In his own article in the volume Alsmark emphasizes how identities are both fixed and changeable.

Alsmark's historical sketch about identity becoming flexible and changeable has a certain similarity to the arguments presented, for example, by Zygmunt Bauman, whose ideas are discussed in *Orvar Löfgren's* article. Modernism denotes a time of identity making, and the modern discussion on identity indicates a lack of security for what one is. Modernization brought about a confusion of one's identities and therefore one of modernity's key projects is (was) the search for an identity. Then along comes postmodernity which makes people fragmented and rootless, travellers, tourists and pilgrims of many kinds, searching for a momentary peace in identification. One aspect in this is that identities become changeable like Alsmark's shirts. It might seem awkward, however, that since postmodernity does what modernity has already done, the only time when identities were fixed and people were in harmony with themselves and each other was in premodernity.

Löfgren warns against the too easy construction of a "before", when, unlike in the "fragmented present", things were bounded and spatially anchored. He discusses in his thoughtful, essayistic article the role of space and movement in identity building by questioning some of the basic "postmodernist" assumptions about people's relationship to space and territory. He starts off by being critical of the rather common use of the motel, in contrast to home, as the key metaphor for present-day hypermobility and transit life, and ends with the argument that peasants in the previous centuries had flexible and ambiguous identities, too. Löfgren applies the same criticism to other popular metaphors such as the flaneur and the tourist, which Bauman uses to emphasize the rootlessness of the postmodern times and people. Increased movement need not mean increased rootlessness, reminds Löfgren. And if the media technology can produce fragmented pictures, which seem to transgress the boundaries of time and space, we should not project the same features onto the users of the media. If we do so, says Löfgren, we are follow-

ing a particular discourse genre which has got a history of its own. For this reason we need both a historical and genre analytical perspective to study the ways in which space and movement are organized in identity building.

But what is this genre analysis that Löfgren refers to? Instead of accepting a devolutionistic narrative, he hears in the postmodern talk about disruption and rootlessness a familiar ring that echoes of the previous fin-de-siècle debate one hundred years ago. Consequently, he makes a suggestion for a comparative and critical analysis between these, which should put the present debate in a historical perspective. The genre analytical point lies in the observation that the similarity between the two debates is an indication of a specific turn-of-the-century discourse genre, but it is not Löfgren's intention to reduce the present debate to a reproduction of an old genre.

In order to give an example of a perspective which sees both disruption and renewal, as well as deterritorialization and reterritorialization, Löfgren discusses the ideas of the home and the nation. Following Mary Douglas, he presents the home as a modern emotional category rooted in both territory and a sense of moral difference from the outside world and other forms of lodging. The nation is described in similar terms as a place where even minute differences from the neighboring country make one "feel at home". Löfgren regards such emotionalization of space as a consequence of the tendency to nationalize the past and homogenize the everyday, which has its "backside" in the tendency to tell immigrants to "go back home". However, a more political perspective might have included discussion on the role of the state in the construction of a nation for "family-members" only.

Under a heading called the pedagogics of movement, Löfgren discusses how space and spatial boundaries are constituted and made meaningful by movement. This is exemplified with the American "road movie" genre, which depicts the home as something that one escapes from to the "inbetweenness" of the motel. How this then applies to the idea of the nation, Löfgren does not tell. Instead, he concludes by emphasizing (that is, repeating) how historical analysis can provide us with the understanding of the complexity of the relation between space and identity, for example due to the different mental landscapes that people moving about in a given physical environment may have.

While Löfgren points to the lack of a great divide between "traditional peasant societies" and the "postmodern" present, as far as identity processes are concerned, many other authors in the volume – including the editor – place the foundation of their arguments on such present-day writers and thinkers whose main point is to emphasize this very divide. This also applies to *Birgitta Svensson,* who discusses the relation of life stories to identity building and presents them in Giddensian and Meluccian manner as part of the modern project in which people narratively construct "the reflexive I". This is made emphatically distinct from a traditional society in which identity was based on learned and customary behavior rather than self-construction, and in which memory was collective and expressed in oral traditions. In the modern "tradition-void" order, writes Svensson, an individual must constantly work for a narrative of the self in order not to lose his or her identity.

Svensson has recorded life story interviews of middle class Swedish intellectuals from two generations and paid attention to the similarity in the narratives in terms of style and form. She sets out to explain this similarity, discuss how life stories reflect society and the spirit of the time, why the present is so biographical, and how in Sweden the intellectuals exercise power on biography and the spirit of modernity. The key concept for Svensson here is the spirit of the time (*tidsandan*), which she finds expressed in life stories through common problems and a common narrative tradition. Since *tidsandan* is the historical and cultural context of life stories, the reflexive construction of the individual self is also a collective process.

It has been rather common in the study of life stories to try and create – sometimes rather desperately – order and methodological systematization in the ambiguous terminology of the field. Svensson discusses the relationship of the life story to the spirit of the time by making a distinction between life narrative (*levnadsberättelse*) and life history (*livshistoria*). The former is the subjective version of life and concerned with

internal cognitive processes and the presentation of the self as a structured "I". The latter is concerned with various relations and role plays with other people, which give one's life history a life of its own outside of one's own life narrative. Together they make up a person's biography. A self-biography is then a narrative which requires a well-developed reflexive "I" and this genre is mastered especially well by intellectuals, people with "cultural competence".

Gunnar Alsmark describes in his article his amazement that a person in his university class can at the same time be a Swedish Ugandan-Indian woman and a Shia muslim, married to a Sunni muslim from Kurdistan, live in Lund and study at a teacher's college in Malmö. With such a combination, what does her cultural identity look like? How does she picture herself and how does she participate in the Swedish society? This Alsmark decided to find out by interviewing her, which produced hundreds of pages of transcript. He was pleased to see that she is an emigrant who is not victimizing herself or asking for compassion or support. Indeed, as a "postmodern" transgressor of all sorts of identity categories, she seems like an apt model for peaceful coexistence in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

Although Alsmark takes as his theoretical starting point that the self is narratively constructed, his article about his discussions with this cheerfully "hybrid" personality is a somewhat exoticizing description of her relation to various social and religious institutions and practices, celebrating her in a rather Orientalist manner for "taking distance from Oriental obedience" and "expressing capability for Western critical thinking". The major point, however, seems to be to discuss the nature and degree of adaptation and integration of emigrants into the Swedish society. How can they adapt and integrate if they wish to stick to their own groups? If the Swedish society is, after decades of assimilation policy and in the name of multiculturalism, now supporting an ethnification process in which all sorts of emigrant groups are expected to preserve and put on display their cultural traditions and their uniqueness, doesn't this emphasize their difference from "ordinary Swedes" and categorize them as second rate citizens? By presenting his culturally hybrid, reflexive, critical, constructivist, and modern informant, Alsmark is saying yes.

Transgressing boundaries is also celebrated in *Lissie Åström's* article on women as agents of their own cultural identity. Åström has studied both women and men in three generations from different social classes, and using life historical materials she discusses here how women's identity building varies in time and space and how their self-identification relates to common ideals and expectations for the female.She is thus interested in studying how subjective identity construction relates to one's imposed identities. Åström emphasizes that women construct their identities in interaction with men, and vis-à-vis processes of modernity.

According to Åström, the preindustrial society was a Gemeinschaft based on face to face relations, with women and men sharing the public and productive sphere. Yet, men had more chances for identity building because they took care of the economically more prestigious tasks. Following various theorists and thinkers, Åström presents the process of modernization as movement from a preindustrial community to a cold and calculative postmodern society, from a society based on personal relations to one based on object relations. Because of their reproductive means and their roles as mothers and caretakers, women have a balancing and synthetizing function in the fragmentizing, technocratically oriented process of modernization.

Åström views gender identity as a strategy for both women and men to define their respective roles vis-à-vis the private and the public sphere. Women have always crossed the boundaries between these categories, but recently more and more independently of conditions set for them by men. Men's possibilities to cross these categories have earlier been much more controlled, but recently also they have started to show orientation towards caretaking (*omsorgsinsatser*), for example as fathers. For women, the dynamics of identity building is constituted by their balancing between the ideals of feminity and the transgression of traditional gender boundaries, while for men these dynamics are constituted by their transgression of traditional gender boundaries and avoidance of being "feminized".

Modernity is a major theme also in the article by *Kerstin Arcadius,* who discusses the growth and development of professional identity among Swedish museum curators, directors, assistants and other museum employees in the beginning of this century. Her starting point is a published photograph of a meeting in Gothenburg in 1906, which has challenged her to inquire why the picture was taken, what the messages it purported to signal were, why did the photographed people sit or stand where they did, occupying a particular position vis-à-vis each other in the half circle. Of special interest for Arcadius is the identity of three young women in the photograph. Are they there as spouses or daughters, as one might first think, or as professionals?

Drawing on a variety of historical sources and personal histories, Arcadius presents an interesting discussion on how a photograph of a single event participates in a number of discourses. One is the discourse of the museum as a national institution, which is not only constituted in contrast to similar institutions in other countries but also in the attempt to cover, in various forms of representation, the whole of what is considered as Sweden. It is here where many of the internal conflicts of the new profession lay, concerning for example a power struggle between smaller provincial museums and the large Nordic Museum in Stockholm. Other discourses include the position of women in the field, which paralleled the more general debate on women's status in the Swedish society, and the organization of museum work in relation to the heritage of Artur Hazelius, the envisioned role of the museum in modernity, modern scientific requirements, the categories of university disciplines (especially art history and archaeology), and the academic division between the natural sciences and the humanities.

According to Arcadius, who follows here the more general theories of modernity by Marshall Berman, people working at museums in the 19th century had an ambiguous relation to the processes of modernization, but after the beginning of the 20th century the attitudes became more polarized. One was either critical or uncritical. Applying concepts from Mike Featherstone, Arcadius then suggests that the museum as a marked and bounded territory for antimodern sentiments represents legitimated nostalgia; a nostalgia made unharmful to the modern project by its boundedness. Yet, even as such, the museum of the early 20th century was, according to Arcadius, especially due to the professionalization of museum workers, a modern institution which provided a modern perspective onto the past. The place in Gothenburg in which the professionalizing museum people were gathered in 1906 and where the photograph was taken was a clear signal of this modernity.

Carina Sjöholm writes in her article about young people's movie-going in the 1940s and 50s in Sweden. Her discussion is mainly based on material collected in the Folklife Archives of Lund University by means of a questionnaire sent out to the Archive's network of informants. Starting off with the idea that movie-going has more meanings than just seeing the film, Sjöholm sets out to discuss its relationship to modernization and modernity. Echoing recent Giddensian theories of modernity as reflexivity, Sjöholm presents the movie theater as an arena for a cultural encounter and a place where the young people learn to be reflexive and modern.

This interactive arena is the context for the identity construction of young people, who wished to be modern and break away from the traditional authority represented by their parents and their generation. The films showed at movie theaters depicted movement and moving in both space and mentality (in addition to being "moving pictures"), and the very idea of moving became the icon of modernity, as well as basic material for the construction of the young people's collective identity vis-à-vis the rest of the society in change. Yet, in a similar way to the museum, as discussed by Arcadius, the movies can also be seen as a modern form of technology which makes modernity itself an object, by, for example, presenting images of premodernity.

The last two articles in the volume focus on identity as an issue of space and territory. *Markus Idvall* presents a historical sketch about attempts and counter-attempts to build a bridge across the Öresund, the sound between the Swedish town Malmö and Copenhagen, the Danish capital. One of the controversial issues in this has been the use of the concept of region, by which those in favor

of the bridge and other construction plans have emphasized the area's regional character. This has the rhetorical function of making the various locales in the area seem as if belonging together, and even make relatives.

In the final chapter, *Anders Linde-Laursen* pays a visit to a town in Southern California which has a history of Danish inhabitancy and which draws many of its identity symbols from Denmark and Danishness. Following the lines of thought established by E.J. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, Linde-Laursen discusses constructivism as a way to "reveal" inauthenticity and "deconstruct" traditions which have their origin in the modern society. Accordingly, Linde-Laursen walks the streets of Solvang pointing out the differences between "real" Danishness and its American constructions. However, instead of wishing to be a "tradition police" himself, Linde-Laursen sets out to observe the "fake" traditions in their own cultural context and study how things get to be constructed as traditions.

Linde-Laursen gives a historical picture of how Danish institutions have come and gone in the town, and how presently the town is all-American "on the inside" and Danish "on the outside". "Outer" symbols of Danishness are used for touristic purposes mainly. The question then becomes: what are the things that get to be selected as symbols of Danishness in this context? Linde-Laursen's answer is: those that carry a strong potential for representing Danishness, are part of what Orvar Löfgren has called the "checklist" of national symbols, and are successful and marketable in the American context because of their white, middle-class frame of reference.

All of the authors emphasize how identities are constructions, by which is meant respectively that they are relational, contrastive, flexible, reflexive, multiple, modern and even inauthentic. Yet, no one, except the editor in his introduction, discusses identity as a shirt or a soul, or even seem to comment on the question in the book's title. So which one is it? Or did I just miss the underlying debate between essentialism and constructivism?

I greet with pleasure the ethnologists at Lund for their interest in discussing ethnological issues in relation to the fundamentally important question of modernity. Yet, it seems to me that the idea of modern people being distinctively reflexive in their identity processes is cherished without too much critical reflexivity over the historical narratives thus constructed. Normative behavior and the role of collective rituals in the organization of people's lives tend to be observed and marked in the past only, while modern ways to organize life are seen as concerning individuals only. The modern reflexivity of young movie goers in the 1940s and 50s, for example, seems to derive from a fondness to Anthony Giddens' post-traditionalist theory rather than from an actual analysis of what these people have said or done.

The rhetorics of the anthology in promoting particular theoretical conceptions and interpretations of modernity for the average Swedish-speaking reader, to whom the anthology appears to be directed, are not reflected upon. Another problem seems to be the synonymization of cultural identity and the (reflexive) construction of self. Except perhaps for Markus Idvall's article, there is not a word on the politics of identification, which is not merely a question of changing shirts or their color. If identity is a construction, it implies agency, and agency implies argumentation. Most anthologies lack a consistent theoretical framework and a finalized argument, and so does this one. A more scholarly purpose for the book would have certainly challenged the group of scholars for one more work session.

Pertti J. Anttonen, Helsinki

Swedes and Gypsies

Karl-Olov Arnstberg, Svenskar och zigenare. En etnologisk studie av samspelet över en kulturell gräns. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1998. 462 pp. ISBN 91-7203-226-X.

■ The Swedish professor in ethnology, Karl-Olov Arnstberg, has written a book entitled "Swedes and Gypsies. An ethnological study of the interplay across a cultural boundary." It has nine chapters between a prologue and an epilogue. It also includes longer, informative notes (pp. 428–457), and a literature list of nearly 75 titles (though in the text even more references). In the list I miss Jahn Otto Johansen's book "The people whom nobody wanted. The persecution of

Gypsies in East Europe" (*Folket som ingen vil ha. Forfølgelsen av sigøynerne i Øst-Europa*. Aschehoug. Oslo 1995). Unfortunately Arnstberg's voluminous work has no index to help sorting out specific categories of interest.

The title and the fact that the book is presented as an academic study on cultural interaction gave me certain expectations to learn about Gypsies in today's Sweden from a cultural-historical perspective. However, Arnstberg had not intended to write about Gypsies as such. In 1993 he was engaged by the social authorities in Stockholm to evaluate the project work on Gypsies which had been done in the suburb of Rinkeby since 1988. "What is focused upon is how Swedish researchers, debaters, journalists and persons in central authority during the period after World War II have engaged themselves to integrate a nomadic [sic] culture into a modern society. It tells about how the Gypsies are helped as well as ruined. The perspective is interactive – the Gypsies are not only objects, however; to a high degree they are co-creators in the adaptive systems which emerge" (p. 8). "The discussion of why social work with Gypsies, in spite of the best intentions, has so often come to nothing, constitutes the core of the book" (p. 9). A more appropriate title for Arnstberg's work might have been "Majority experts and minority clients. An ethnological critique of social interaction across an ethnic boundary". He seems to identify persons of Gypsy background as non-Gypsies if they are well integrated into the Swedish society with stable jobs and social problems.

Arnstberg's prologue begins with the inauguration in 1904 of the Gypsy camp at the Skansen open air museum in Stockholm, and with a reference to the Gypsy as "the archetype of alienness" (p. 10). He reckons that the known history of Gypsies in Sweden begins at the turn of the century, when two *Kalderash* families (*vitsi*) from Russia came via Finland and six *Kalderash* families came from Hungary via France and Denmark (p. 22). Arnstberg refers to others who have divided the Gypsies' history 1900–1980 into four periods: 1. The time of productive nomadism until the end of the 1930s, when the Gypsies were still self-supporting. 2. The time from the 1930s to the mid-1950s, when nomadism continued, although the possibilities of self-support were reduced. 3. The decade before 1963, when they successively gave up nomadism and became permanently settled, i.e. they were forced to live in camps, caravans, tents and summer cabins. 4. The time of real settlement from 1963 onwards, when they got proper dwellings (p. 24). When the services of the Gypsies were no longer needed, they stopped being "external aliens" and became part of the category of "loose people" furthest down in the social hierarchy. They lost their traditional niche of support (such as metal work, handicraft, trading, fortune-telling, music, etc.) and survived through the sale of junk, minor theft, shady trading, begging and gradually social benefits (pp. 24f). Arnstberg concentrates on the period from the 1950s until 1995, during which Sweden had a large immigration of Finnish *Kalé,* Belgian, French and Spanish *Kalderash* and French and Polish *Lowara*.

Arnstberg wonders "who can count themselves into this ethnic group who want to call themselves *Romer*? Historically the Gypsies have in fact no uniting name for themselves as a group. If it is strategic to collect various Gypsy and Gypsy-like groups under the same term, then one can probably do that. Gypsies have a long tradition of saying 'almost anything' to *Gajé*, as long as it is an advantage for the survival of the groups" (pp. 417f). Arnstberg prefers the term *Zigenare* (Gypsy), the term established by *Gajé* (non-Gypsies), which is "after all – more neutral. In addition it is by far the most common term. In Sweden all people know who the *Zigenarna* are, while the concept *Romer* so far creates uncertainty" (p. 428, n. 2). "*Romer* has above all become the concept which is used by those who support Gypsy activism" (ibid.).

Ordinary people do not distinguish so much between Gypsies (Zigenare) and Tinkers (*Tattare*) according to Arnstberg: both peoples came travelling and represented about the same life style. The Tinkers were more numerous and considered more difficult than the Gypsies; however, in some way they still belonged together in the popular consciousness. The authorities and the researchers started separating the two travelling folk groups in the inter-war period. The Tinkers were defined by the authorities as descendants of

certain despised professions in the old agrarian society, such as executioners, scavengers, slaughterers, peddlers and even soldiers, prisoners of war and asocial Swedes. The Gypsies were considered a category of better and more honorable origin, a community of Indian folk remnants, while the Tinkers were regarded as refuse derived directly from the Swedish people (p. 21). Swedish and Norwegian researchers have recently agreed that "Ethnic belonging has become a kind of honorary title and 'if one succeeds in conquering this title one has the right to claim special treatment by the authorities'" (Arnstberg p. 22, quoting a doctoral thesis from 1993).

Arnstberg's criticisms against Gypsy policy in post-war Sweden are aimed at the first "experts". They, "more than others, made the Gypsies into an important welfare political question" (p. 18). He denotes them "naïve realists"; their very concrete ambitions were to provide a better life for the Gypsies in the welfare state, with housing, literacy, schooling and professional education. They were naïve because they thought all humans are functioning and thinking principally in the same way (pp. 18f). Before 1970 "the solidaristic experts" followed these "self-constituted" spokesmen for the Gypsies. They were researchers, ambassadors, public consultants for Gypsies and other representatives of the authorities (p. 244). The psychologist Arne Trankell's report in 1973 about a long conflict between Finnish Gypsies and their neighbours in a suburb of Stockholm is "reread" and discussed by Arnstberg (pp. 161ff). Typical for "solidaristic experts" is, in spite of a conscious boundary set between Gypsies and themselves, that they consider the Gypsies "rich inside," while "Swedes and Westerners" are "poor in their inner and in addition poor in community feelings" (pp. 47f). They point to history and to suppression as the explanations for the present pattern of living and conditions. They lift up the culture and make it sacrosanct. They clean and smooth in their reporting, so that it gets a positive bias. Finally they individualize unpleasant events and facts (pp. 49f). Arnstberg admits that he himself has been caught up by this idea of "cultural sacredness." Today he will not accept what may be considered universally unethical norms, nor internal symbols that suppress members within a cultural group (pp. 263f).

Fredrik Barth's theory on ethnic boundaries from 1969 is the essential analytical perspective for Arnstberg, though we are not told explicitly before halfway through the book that Barth's way of seeing was "epoch-making": "Groups are certainly assimilated, but new groups are also constituted. And certain groups succeed in continuing, in spite of, to say the least, bad odds. It is not customs and cultural heritage that are analytically interesting, but how the groups handle their collective identity in the interplay across ethnic borders. It is precisely *the interplay across the boundary* which should be the focus of research, not the cultural content within the boundaries" (pp. 222f).

Arnstberg confirms his admiration for Barth's theory when he refers very positively to Inga Gustafsson's discussion of boundary-maintaining mechanisms in her dissertation in psychology from 1970. Gustafsson does not moralize, in Arnstberg's opinion. She is apt to "neither apologize nor solidarize with the Gypsies. Nor does she get caught by the opposite attitude, i.e. accepting without reservation such cultural traits that she finds offensive. Perspective as well as language reveals that here is not a debater on society but a researcher who presents her results; in principle the dissertation could as well be on banana flies as on Gypsies" (p. 222). Arnstberg apparantly finds it difficult to live up to this ideal; he admits that "Gypsies arouse hatred as well as love" (p.13).

Arnstberg has studied the Gypsies since the 1970s, which is indicated in the list of literature (p. 458). He contributed early to the new, post-war theoretical and socio-political awareness of ethnicity in Norden. Norwegian ethnologists have benefitted from this (cf. K.O. Arnstberg & B. Ehn's edition of "Ethnic minorities in Sweden in past and present", 1976). Ethnic minority history in the one country often connects with that in the other, which we know from the history of Samis and Finns in Sweden and Norway. Yet, until the 1990s Norwegian ethnologists and historians tended to ignore the ethnic dimension of the majority populations within the Nordic region, and the implicit political significance of this dimension in social planning and development. "Ethnic" has

tended to be an identity label for new immigrants from non-European countries, even in the new field of gender studies. In regional administrative documents, for example in North Norway, "ethnic" is even in the 1990s used as an empirical category synonymous with "Sami" in contrast to "Norwegian". Swedish rather than Norwegian ethnologists used Fredrik Barth's thoughts as a fertilizer for Nordic ethnology in general and for the study of ethnic minorities within Sweden. For some Swedes he was even used as a pesticide against traditional, though vital, methodology. Thus the role of physical expressions or manifestations in maintaining cultural identity was ignored as analytical data. This tendency seems to be present in Arnstberg's understanding of culture independently of physical expressions as sign vehicles: "It is not customs and cultural heritage that are analytically interesting, but how the groups handle their collective identity in the interaction across ethnic borders" (p. 223). However, the theoretical issue is about signs and the relation between signifier and signified (expression and content or symbol and reference). In an article in 1960 on diffusion as a cultural process Barth emphasized that "customs" and museum items are not elements of a culture but pieces of evidence – material and social expressions – from which it is possible to abstract the ideas that culture comprises.

In a small space is difficult to render the wide empirical content of the book. The cultural-theoretical, moral and even ontological implications of Arnstberg's report are immense: "One may – and one should also – sharpen the question as to who at all has any pleasure from the Gypsy culture. Of course, this is a utilitarian perspective, but is it really so wrong? Why should we not demand that humans in one way or the other be useful for each other? What other possibilities are there of creating a good society for as many people as possible?" (p. 425). Useful? Wasn't it Vàclav Havel who said that the solution of the Gypsy problem is the litmus test of democracy? A school bureaucrat of Finnish Gypsy origin at a Nordic conference dealing with the European charter on the protection of regional and minority languages told us that he was proud of the fact that there are not found names of Finnish Gypsies on the Nazi German death lists. This is a historical paradox, since Finland was the only Nordic country that was allied with Hitler's Germany in World War II.

Another paradox is Arnstberg's "final" solution to the Swedish Gypsy problem. He looks across the border to democratic Norway: "However, it may be possible to assimilate Gypsies as individuals. Either by taking away from them their children to be fostered away from the Gypsyness, as was done in Norway in the inter-war period, or by giving motivated Gypsies special training and qualifications so they dare to make the jump over the no-man's land that separates the two cultures. In neither cases could these Gypsies take with them their Gypsy culture" (p. 220). Arnstberg's book was written before the *Romani* people of Norway were legally accepted as a national minority. Yet by the 1990s "ethnic cleansing" had become a *taken-for-granted* concept in the index of Norway's public parliamentary documents to describe *internal issues*, not only international politics. These issues were concerned with several post-war as well as inter-war solutions to the *Romani* people as a social problem.

Karl-Olov Arnstberg's conclusion is that it is not we, the Nordic majority populations, who are undemocratic, but the Gypsies, who are unsolidaristic with other people and thus self-destructive. Is he balancing on the sharp blade-edge of love and hatred (cf. p. 13)? However, to Arnstberg's credit, one is not caught into an imagined banana-fly world (cf. p. 222). He confronts persons. He does not study his fellow beings in the microscope, though I think he is often kicking the ones who are already lying on the ground, more often than talking to them.

Should "decent" academics then hang the researcher Arnstberg? Or should they accept the unpleasant fact he is conveying, that the Gypsies, the *Romer*, are still a pariah-group in the democratic Nordic states? Should we ask further questions about ourselves, about Nordic cosmology and anthropology, about our values and norms and our means of maintaining our world view? Should we ask whether the state apparatus is a bridging social order or if it is an ethnic institution for maintaining the majority cultural identity? Is it a mechanism for maintaining boundaries, not only

in interaction with other nation states, but also in interaction with ethnic minorities within the state?
Venke Åsheim Olsen, Trondheim

A View of Popular Orientalism

Magnus Berg, Hudud. Ett resonemang [on the cover: En essä] om populärorientalismens bruksvärde och världsbild. Etnologiska skrifter, Umeå universitet. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1998. 221 pp. ISBN 91-7203-306-1.

■ The author is an associate professor of ethnology at Umeå University. In this book he undertakes an analysis inspired primarily by Edward Said's well-known *Orientalism* from 1978 (Swedish translation 1993). Like Said, Berg seeks to examine what he calls a discursive tradition, in this case a particular way of expressing oneself about and hence also interpreting an alien culture. The influence of Michel Foucault, which is rather strong in Said, has been considerably toned down by Berg. Instead he has derived inspiration from others, for example, two of Said's critics, the Syrian philosopher Sadiq al-'Azm and the sociologist Bryan S. Turner.

Berg's study thus concerns what he calls "popular orientalism", which is a rather diffuse phenomenon. Whereas Said mainly emphasized the academic study of "orientalism", that is, the learned or scientifically based Western analysis and description of the Orient, Berg's concern is to see how the Orient is presented in Western popular culture. His source material comprises such diverse things as films, novels, and detective stories. He deliberately refrains from differentiating between these as genres, and this initial choice is problematic from an ethnological point of view.

The material appears to have been collected rather at random. Berg himself puts it like this: "The material that is analysed may therefore be said to be representative of the popular orientalism that surrounded a middle-class man in his early middle ages, and his social network in a large Swedish city during a few years in the second half of the 1990s" (p. 17). Despite the random nature of this, the list of references shows an impressive collection of literary and cinematic sources, although only a minority of these are analysed in detail.

With special consideration of the philosopher al-'Azm and his critique of Said, Berg tries to place his findings in a historical perspective. Al-'Azm's point is that the Western images of the Orient have varied through the ages, and that one must take this into account when describing one's sources. For Berg this is chiefly a matter of viewing modern-day popular orientalism in the light of the past, and he particularly does so in the first part of the book (pp. 24–54), where he tries at times to go as far back as the eighth century but nevertheless mostly ends up around the start of the twentieth century. Berg does not refer to any independent research of his own in this area.

Berg's analysis of the material is not entirely surprising, although he shows a fine ability to read some of his texts and pictures in detail. Following Jochum Stattin's dissertation on *Näcken* from 1984, to which he refers specifically, he finds that the images and narrative of popular orientalism primarily reflect Western culture's own fears, opportunities for escape, and utopias. The image of "the alien" ultimately becomes an image of "the alien in ourselves". The Orient becomes an image of time standing still, of the attractions and possibilities of "the natural", and of the terrifying face of evil. In short: popular orientalism is an important field of articulation for modern and late-modern Western Culture – *quod erat demonstrandum*.

Berg's account is at times entertaining and his material is certainly interesting. I nevertheless feel that at times he reasons in circles, or rather that he goes too far in arguing his points, making too much of them rather too often. It is possible that this is a deliberate strategy concealed behind the subtitle, which means "A Discussion/Essay", but the effect can still be rather tiring, since the book otherwise pretends to be a carefully structured analysis.

I also confess to a certain scepticism about Berg's rather diffuse concept of "popular orientalism" and the material with which he seeks to substantiate it. He is explicit enough when he points out that he is investigating some written traces of commercial Western popular culture. But what about their reception? On the one hand,

he hints that this could also have been examined but says that he chose not to do so. On the other hand, he presupposes that, precisely because it is commercially oriented, this type of expression will arouse crucial associations in the consumers (p. 22). He produces a somewhat different explanation at the end of the book, where he says that the basic ambition of popular orientalism is "to convince its consumers that the Orient is inferior to the West and essentially different from the West" (p. 204). This suggests that there is at least a certain degree of friction or inertia in the relationship between the consumers and those (by the way, who are they?) who deliberately try to convince their readers or viewers of a particular world-view. However, Berg fails to define the consumers precisely, and this is no less striking in that he is working extensively with a corpus of material published from the inter-war years until the 1990s. I would imagine that information about the number of translations, the number of copies printed, and some simple reader sociology would have made for a clearer picture.

This absence of a reception analysis becomes particularly problematic when one of Berg's general points is to draw attention to the "cultural utility value" of popular orientalism (p. 21), which he discusses partly in the light of scholars such as Thomas Ziehe and Anthony Giddens. To be able to talk about cultural utility value in this way, it is necessary, in my opinion, to contextualize the cultural expressions in some form of reception, and perhaps to place them among a specific group of cultural actors (authors, film makers, politicians). The cultural utility must be assessed as the utility that the expression has *for someone*, not just as an isolated cultural function. Here it is not enough to make general reflections on colonialism and postcolonialism, capitalism, and globalization, as presented by Berg.

I am no less critical of what Berg himself says is a historical perspectivization of his own material. He does this by – at best – drawing a few simple lines to describe some main features of Western orientalism (in Said's sense of the word) over more than a thousand years. It goes without saying that he finds here models for the presentation of popular orientalism as Berg sees it in the last eighty years, but can historical perspectivization be done so simply? What Berg may have grounds for claiming is that there are certain themes that recur in the Western discursive tradition on the subject. But surely it is not without importance to see how this discursive tradition has been maintained, what channels it has taken, or what differentiation it has undergone. Let me take an example: Berg points out that earlier Western orientalism can often be found in travel accounts with an increasing aspiration to scientific observation in the best colonialist spirit from the eighteenth century onwards. This literature contains much more than the discourse that Berg claims to find in twentieth-century popular orientalism. Could it be that other aspects of the historical discourse about the Orient found their way into other literature which, according to Berg's own definition, also could be called popular culture, such as the news media or the widely disseminated travel accounts and documentary books with which today's book market is flooded? If so: why is this not reflected in (or out of) Berg's presentation? With an approach like this, the historical perspectivization would, in my opinion, become more than a collection of self-evident and self-confirming findings.

To sum up: In my view, Berg's book suffers from several weaknesses, but this cannot shake the fact that it is worth reading, that it is well written, that the author's analytical temperature is admirably high, and that it is at times exciting to follow him on his journey.

Arne Bugge Amundsen, Oslo

Concept of a Symbol

In Search of Symbols. An Explorative Study. Jens Braarvig and Thomas Krogh (eds). Occasional Papers No. 1, Department of Cultural Studies, University of Oslo. Novus forlag, Oslo 1997. 235 pp. Ill. ISBN 62-7099-288-7.

■ This is a volume of Symposium papers of an unusual kind. In 1994, the new Department of Cultural Studies was created in the University of Oslo, as a result of reorganisation of the Faculty of Arts. There was amalgamation of departments, largely for administrative purposes, so that Cultural Studies now consists of Ethnology, Folk-

lore, the History of Ideas and the History of Religions. The quesion was, how could the work of each be brought together, while still maintaining the autonomy of the different fields of study? Wisely, it was decided not to seek a common methodology, but rather to talk to and inform each other about the individual approaches and intellectual constructs of the four broad subject areas. In practical terms, this takes place by means of an annual intradepartmental conference, begun in 1995 (and no doubt also through normal daily contact between staff members). Interpretation of the concept of a symbol was taken as the basis for a first interdisciplinary comparison of different theories and empirical approaches. The strong team comprised members of staff representing human geography, folklore studies, ethnology, the history of religions, the history of ideas, and cultural history and cultural analysis. Chance rather than academic planning may have thrown them together, but the thought provoking content of this volume, taken as a whole, may be seen as a first fruit that is well worth the tasting.

The symposium was held in the Norwegian Institute in Rome. No doubt it was important to get the participants away from their daily environs as a means of concentrating their minds, but it was also appropriate since the content of some of the papers flows from the culture and religion of classical Greece and Rome.

As Thomas Krogh says in his Introduction, this in an eclectic and unorthodox volume. But each chapter makes a substantial contribution to the question of what is to be understood by 'symbol', and Krogh's comment that a fitting image for the symbol is to see it as a sponge, capable of absorbing – and expressing – meaning in diverse ways at different times and in different places, is apt.

Leif Ahnström bases his chapter on the philosophical writings of the Vienna born Alfred Schutz, who sought to apply the concept of phenomenology to the problems of social reality, in the world of everyday life that each individual shares with his fellows and takes for granted. He examines the place of man in the cosmos that transcends his daily existence, where signs and symbols are harnessed as a means of coming to terms with or perhaps providing a viewing platform for such transcendency. This duality – on the one hand everyday life and on the other means of communication with the mysteries of the creativity of art and of religious beliefs – runs through nearly all the contributions, though expressed in different ways. Each must be taken into account in studies of human culture. Ahnström provides useful diagrams on pp. 30–32 of 'subjective (embodied) consciousness' that neatly express the relationships between the world within reach, the related world within potential reach and the worlds beyond these.

Braarvig continues the approach through the works of men of ideas by commenting on Aristotle, specifically his *De Interpretatione I.* It is of interest to note that in its original Greek sense, the 'sumbolon' referred to the two halves of a ring, or a die, which, when reunited, made a whole. He is especially concerned with the religious meanings attached to the word 'symbol', and notes the double sense already present in ancient Greek: as a well-defined entity and as a focus of interpretation. The latter, due to an accumulation of reinterpretations over time, is what gives the symbol its sponge-like attributes. It accumulates meaning rather than contributing meaning, through ritual repetition, allied in many cases to the infliction of pain, which nails 'such symbols to one's own soul' (63). Braarvig sees the collective experience of pain as being at the centre of the creation and maintenance of the major symbols in any given culture – perhaps the almost spontaneous national mourning in Britain at the time of the death of Princess Diana is a recent example of largely vicariously felt pain, which could turn Diana into a symbol if the central will for this was there.

Naguib's paper is based on the weighing of the heart in the trials of the dead in ancient Egypt, the figure around whom the activity revolves being the god Osiris and not a human being like Schultz or Aristotle. This activity is in itself a symbol of a very different kind of religion, the interpretation or presentation of which was facilitated through the recognisable signs of pictograms, which eventually became codified and abstracted into hieroglyphs that were readable rather than simply identifiable. Her study is essentially one of visual

art, of an iconography anchored in a historical and cultural environment, and of the transformation of signs into symbols.

Whereas Neguib notes the continuity of belief in Ancient Egypt, Eriksen looks at pre-modern cultures, taking St. Augustine's thinking as a centre point for discussing the more general theories of symbolism. Medieval thinkers considered music, art, nature, beauty as an integrated whole, attributes of the Creator, in which the sensory was ephemeral and the supersensory was eternal; but there was a Renaissance change in which art, or the arts, came to be regarded as a sphere of their own. This is change from aesthetic theory to a more empirical approach, in which the validity of all transcendent imagery was tested. God was no longer lord of both nature and history.

Strømholm has two heroes, the early 17th century astronomer Johannes Kepler who moved science away from the traditional concept of circular motions and constant velocities to the new ones of varying speeds and elliptical orbits, and the 16th century architect Baldassare Perruzzi, who likewise had 'flattened the circle' in buildings by designing oval structures. The achievements of each points to a new, mathematically based view of the world.

Gjerpe deals with the signification of emblems in the late Renaissance period, using the works of a 16th century poet-philosopher. Giordano Bruno, as the text for her sermon, jointly with an analysis of emblem books, and using the concept of the eagle which dared to look at and strive for the sun, but which yet had a weight on its leg that held it back. She considers that the emblem should be given its place in the world alongside the concepts of symbol and allegory.

Rogan's entertaining contribution is very different. His central figure is not a specific individual, but the collector, whose mania involves him in a complex of attitudes and forms of behaviour. Fictional sources provide a treasure trove of data, as well as interviews with collectors. He sees the passion of the collector as lying within the same bracket as eroticism, though it may be noted that most collectors are male. Collecting may be seen as the acceptable face of materialism in modern society, a fact that is probably underlined by the number of car-boot sales and flea markets that are to be found nowadays in European countries. Rogan's data suggests that humanity is divided into two groups; those who think rationally and those who think symbolically, though he rightly notes that man is perfectly capable of both ways of thought.

Christensen's approach is to follow the changing fortune of the 'Swiss' building style, in wood, in Norway, as a symbol of the broad changes that were taking place in national thinking. He demonstrated well his view that folk culture is the cornerstone of the national state, and shows how an originally German form of 'folk architecture' was adopted first by the Norwegian middle classes, was then subjected to forms of industrialisation, came to be rejected by the elite, and finally has come back into fashion as a mark of popular housing again, though without the individuality of earlier times when craftsmanship rather than mass production was the rule. Its origins forgotten, the Swiss style has become a kind of national symbol in popular belief. It has thus accumulated meaning, though not the original one, which was far more status orientated.

Finally, Amundsen introduces a 19th century lay preacher, Hans Nielsen Hauge, as his symbol-laden hero, along with his interpreter and promoter, Bishop Bang. Like Christensen's, this paper points directly into the interpretation of the concept of Norwegian national identity. Here, the way in which a locality-related individual with outstanding characteristics became a national figure, as promoted firstly by himself and subsequently by others, is elucidated. Hauge has been fostered as a conceptual symbol and has become a historical symbol.

The varied nature of the book and of the individual approaches is evident. Much can be learned from its perusal, and it is to be hoped that the members of staff involved profited accordingly. The canvas is wide, in space and time, and it is appropriate that the two final articles should concentrate on Norway, perhaps as a symbol of the fact that the material, spiritual and intellectual history of the culture of any country can never be viewed alone.

Alexander Fenton, Edinburgh

Young Women and Motherhood

Helene Brembeck, Inte bara mamma. En etnologisk studie av unga kvinnors syn på moderskap, barn och familj. Skrifter från Etnologiska föreningen i Västsverige 28, Göteborg 1998. 280 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-85838-41-1.

■ The ethnologist Helene Brembeck's book *Inte bara mamma* ("Not Just a Mother") is an interview study of how young mothers view motherhood. The idea of trying to arrive at a new outlook on motherhood came to Brembeck in connection with an educational course which taught new, free ideas about breast-feeding. Instead of welcoming the new ideas, the participants were sceptical about them. They thought it was wrong to restrict young mothers to breast-feeding entirely on the child's terms, since they felt that women need time to be themselves. Brembeck interprets this as an expression of modernity, a desire to liberate oneself from stereotypes, and a questioning of basic ideas about the symbiosis of mother and child. It is considered more important to be true to oneself than just to be a mother. Brembeck's approach is to find new attitudes to motherhood. Starting from her own radical 1968 generation, she seeks to study and present new tendencies and new themes in the view of motherhood, while simultaneously deconstructing the traditional motherly image. She wants to understand motherhood in relation to the mothers' self-image. She does so within the framework of the theory of modernity. As a way to understand the women's narratives, she uses the concept of discursive fields. By this she means contradictory images and ideas about what it is like to be a woman and a mother, images and ideas which are concretized in specific practices and which indicate different subject positions, different ways of presenting oneself. Brembeck combines the discursive outlook with an individual-oriented perspective, the (bodily) subject positions, the aspects or identities that women choose to show off. Brembeck wants to recognize the subjectivity of the individual, which she thinks that a field ethnologist cannot avoid doing; she feels – and here I agree completely with her – that one cannot ignore the fact that we are dealing with "real people".

In the quest for post-modern motherhood, Brembeck selected interviewees from three groups: firstly, young women with an academic education, and secondly, women working in the culture sector: this includes women with a background in the punk movement and representatives of an active counter-culture who can be regarded as representatives of new lifestyles. Thirdly, Brembeck interviewed middle-class women in a suburb of Gothenburg. She describes her fieldwork in a highly detailed, reflexive manner. In addition, she wants to let the material stand on its own premises, and in this I think she has been successful. The women in the material stand out with distinct contours. The breadth of the material is also evident. Brembeck positions herself in relation to the interviewees and to the view of motherhood that they represent. Here it is clear that she felt alien in relation to the women in the suburb, and that she struggled to link her world with an understanding of theirs. It is important to position oneself, but it can also be somewhat problematic. Brembeck's text made me wonder what the young women in the suburb thought about her attempt to understand their lives, while they themselves presumably think that they are no different from anyone else. Moreover, Brembeck is positively surprised about the young women's willingness to deconstruct the image of motherhood as their primary identity. Here Brembeck falls back on the studies she has conducted on motherhood among the baby boomers, the generation born in the 1940s. I believe that there is nothing new about women perceiving motherhood as not being their only true identity, but the young women in this study state this with great freedom. This suggests a new attitude to motherhood.

The book consists of four main parts. The first is entitled "Images of Motherhood", dealing with different attitudes to motherhood as found in the material. This concerns how the young women relate to the available external images, media representations, and notions of motherhood, including the difficult-to-eradicate image of the good mother with her instinctive motherly love. With the aid of both historical and theoretical reasoning, Brembeck builds a foundation for the ideas put forward by the women. A central feature

of the young mother's attitudes is the attempt to distinguish mothering and caring from biological motherhood. The main threats perceived by the young women are the career woman who also has to do all the housework, and the nagging hag. Motherhood is also perceived as a threat, since the women may feel that their independence is threatened, or they may fear getting old and worn-out. Being a mother finds different expressions in the women interviewed by Brembeck: some are testing and reflexive in their attitude, others are not. Some want it to be obviously visible that they are mothers, others want to under-communicate it and wear bold clothes, to show that they are still young.

In the second part, entitled "Why Children?", Brembeck thematizes the analysis of motherhood as a protest against modernity, as a way to manifest a more adult life and as a way to establish a happy family. I found this part fascinating. At least Brembeck convinced me with her argument, and I think that she diagnoses our times well. She regards motherhood as a protest against today's society. This protest can take different forms, as a way to do something genuine or anarchistic, as a way to get out into the world, to acquire economic advantages in the form of government benefits, or as a way to draw one's boundaries and take the big step out into the adult world. In the section about having children as a way to establish a happy family, Brembeck shows that men and women are highly segregated in their outlook. Since this seems to reflect a "reality", it seems rather depressing. She speaks of a "conquest motif", of the women's attempts to shape the men's true identity and trick them into fatherhood as a confirmation of their love. In addition, she exposes the utopian dreams that women have of an equal couple. Although today's men want close contact with their children, this does not mean that they take part in the housework.

The third part is about the view of mother and child. Brembeck examines this by considering in some detail the various theories put forward about the mother–child relation. The symbiosis between mother and child has been a fundamental idea; it has been the mother's responsibility to ensure that the child develops and is healthy, with the belief that everything the mother does or does not do makes an impression on the child's psyche. The young women interviewed here reject this idea. They think that the father should also share this responsibility; they place parenthood before motherhood, and they also see the child as an independent individual right from the start. Brembeck's interpretation also brings out a post-modern attitude to expert advice and the state institutions. The young women do not regard the experts as absolute authorities. To begin with, the experts' advice gets drowned in the mass of information; secondly, the scientific quest for a "truth" that is soon replaced by a new truth has a self-destructive effect. Women are fully aware that there is no advice that is more valid than any other. Post-modern motherhood is also seen in the mothers' attitudes to child rearing. The mothers still want to bring up their children to be capable individuals, but they do not do so at the expense of their own integrity.

The last part of the book is entitled "Structural Inequality and Different Reflexivities". Here Brembeck returns to the suburban women whom she found so alien to herself. She makes repeated attempts to analyse their world, but she finds it difficult to understand their non-reflexive existence. She is candid in her account, presenting her frustration openly. This is admirable, but why not accept that not everyone has an equally reflexive attitude to life? I can imagine that the reason for Brembeck's surprise is partly that, in her search for post-modern motherhood – which is rather successful – she has come across young people with whom she would not otherwise have spoken and who perhaps lack the ability to express their actions verbally.

This is an interesting and rewarding book. The author's profound knowledge of the subject is well utilized in the historical and theoretical background that she provides for the phenomena she is analysing. The comparison with the mothers born in the 1940s also gives depth to the analysis. Brembeck's self-positioning, her exposure of her pre-understanding, shows the role of the researcher in the research process. With this book Brembeck has made a fine contribution to the debate on reflexivity. Her interest in child rearing, childhood, and maternal roles, in our

own times and in everyday life, produces good results, and I look forward to future works by her. The topics that she studies are so relevant and essential today that I hope they also give rise to debate at other levels than the purely academic one.
Lena Marander-Eklund, Åbo

Career Women

Birgitta Conradson & Angela Rundquist, Karriärkvinnan. Myt och verklighet ur etnologiskt perspektiv. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1997. 189 pp. ISBN 91-7203-229-4.

■ No one today questions that men with a higher education pursue a career, and that they give high priority to their career. It is regarded as a matter of course. Where women are concerned, however, the situation is very different. Women who choose to go in for a career are evidently not like women in general. The mass media paint a stereotyped, often negative picture of what it means to be a career woman. Such a woman tends to be presented as a superwoman rather than a human being, a superwoman who is successful in her working life and simultaneously a perfect wife and mother. According to the authors of this book on "The Career Woman", the idea of this superwoman is one of the most powerful myths of our times. But what is myth and what is reality?

The aim of the book is to get behind the stereotype image of the career woman and instead see how the women themselves perceive and describe both their working life and their private life. The authors have been particularly interested in studying how successful women get these two sides of their lives to fit together. The first part of the book focuses on the women's working life, while the second part deals with their private life. The book is based on a wide range of material collected from various media, from books about management, from the authors' own participant observation in conferences and the like, and from a series of interviews with successful career women. In addition, the authors have spoken to young girls studying at business school, to investigate their expectations of their future career and family life.

To describe the myths and the reality surrounding the career women, the authors have chosen what they call a kaleidoscopic research approach. They start from the women's own statements and perceptions of their lives. These perceptions are contrasted with the narratives of the media and of other people (e.g. male managers). The authors do this so that they can study how the women's self-perception agrees with the way other people see them, but it is also an attempt to get closer to the women's self-perception. One of the authors' points in the book is to show that the women's self-understanding is based on traditional and modern ideas, and that they also use stereotypes and clichés from the general discourse when describing themselves.

Various pairs of opposites are explored throughout the book, such as work/home, modern/traditional, and male/female. When it comes to working life it is meaningful to look at the difference between what is regarded as male and female. As a career woman one has to perform well and compete in a male-dominated world. That is why career women are often regarded as "conquerors" moving into a traditional male domain. In the first part of the book the authors problematize the relation between male and female. Women and men, for example, have different definitions of what it means to have a good career, and their careers often follow very different courses. Whereas men's careers are mostly carefully planned, aiming at a specific goal, women rarely plan their careers so exactly. In addition, there seems to be a difference between the leadership style of the two sexes. American management books describe men's style of leadership as rational and analytical, while that of women is based on something more emotional. And men are brought up to break rules whereas women are brought up to follow them. If we ask the women themselves, we see that this picture is far from the truth. Women's management style may be due to many different factors, and for them management style is more about the individual in a particular situation than a question of gender. A woman manager has the option to choose from among different strategies, and it is clear from the book that many consciously choose to adapt to some of the male strategies while simultaneously playing on their femininity. Modern women do not want

to act according to any set categories. This is one of the refreshing points in the book, that there is – fortunately – room for difference, and that the working life of career women contains more than merely adaptation to a masculine world.

The book has an interesting treatment of how career women's work and private life have been viewed over the decades. This gives insight not only into how the world has gradually changed its view of career women, but also insight into the women's own self-understanding. This self-understanding is in large measure influenced by its times.

In the second part of the book (the one that works best), the authors tackle the women's private lives. An important starting point is the eternal discussion of guilty consciences that always comes up when talk comes round to women and their working lives. Ever since women entered the labour market, the focus has been on the dual role of women, looking after a job and a home. For career women, according to the book, the distinction between work and private life is even worse than for other women, since the labour market demands even more of women who pursue a career. This evidently results in ambivalence and a guilty conscience. But how do the women make it all work? Many of them need careful planning, set routines, and conscious choices and renunciations. It is interesting that, for all the modernity in their perception of their working life, these women seem to have a traditional view of what is expected of them in their private lives. The traditional idea of what makes a good wife and mother can be difficult to reconcile with a career. In recent years, however, attitudes have softened. Today the women would rather employ domestic help so that they can spend more time with the children, instead of, as before, plunging into the cleaning to show that they can fulfil their duties as wife and mother.

Choosing a career is not without its price. There is a great distance between the superwomen featured in the weekly magazines and the reality for many women. Beside the eternal guilty conscience, their problems include stress, burnout, and loneliness. The price of a career can also mean that a woman has to renounce the option of having children. But the advantages of having a career can also be asserted. For many women a career is synonymous with greater freedom and the opportunity, for example, to decide one's own working hours.

It is highly refreshing to receive an ethnological contribution to the debate about gender, career, and leadership style. This debate has long been conducted on the premises of management people and the media. It is obvious that ethnology can provide fruitful new and unusual approaches to this field. In this case the authors' ambition has been to make a broad empirical description of how the imagined and the lived reality are interwoven. The authors have in large measure been successful in this ambition. As a reader one could have wished for a little less breadth and a little greater depth. Instead of wondering how busy career women can find time at all to varnish their nails, it would have been more interesting, for example, if the authors had asked why the women seem to attach high priority to nail varnish and clothes. The sharp distinction in the book between work and private life does not always work well, and the book at times seems somewhat untidy. Although the authors have aimed to get behind the stereotype image of life as a career woman, it appears as if they themselves have found it hard to get away from it to begin with. Their initial attitude seems to have been that it *must* be difficult to combine work and private life into a higher unity (which it no doubt is). Yet no one would dream of starting from this proposition in a study of career men! The book tells us more about women's dual role rather than bringing us close to an understanding of why women decide their priorities in the way they do.

Mette Boritz, Tåstrup

Ethnology of the Everyday-Life

Billy Ehn & Orvar Löfgren, Vardagslivets etnologi. Reflektioner kring en kulturvetenskap. Natur och Kultur, Stockholm 1996. 192 pp. ISBN 91-27-06283-X.

■ Two prominent Nordic ethnologists, professors Orvar Löfgren and Billy Ehn, have published a book which takes the reader back to the basics of ethnology and to the roots of its identity

by revealing some of the central characteristics of this particular identity: its inclination to change, its openness to different kinds of research-practices, its tendency to question itself, its ability to cross disciplinary borders. The authors define it as a textbook, but stress that their intention is not to tell how to do ethnology, but to show the different opportunities inherent in the discipline.

The book consists of two separate parts, or articles, and the division of labour between the authors is according to their own personal ways of doing ethnology. Thus, Orvar Löfgren has chosen a historical point of view, and in his text, entitled *Ett ämne väljer väg*, outlines the different ways ethnology has been defined and carried out in the course of its history in Sweden. The article also deals with some central aspects, approaches and research trends of the study of culture today. But the main point of Löfgren's text, according to himself, is to understand the changing character of the silent knowledge ("tyst kunskap") behind ethnology. The reader is taken to the early days of the discipline in Sweden, when something which later would be called ethnology was only starting to take its shape. Löfgren then proceeds along the lines of the history of Swedish ethnology, stressing the impact of historical circumstances, neighbouring disciplines and the forces within ethnology itself, all of which "caused" the changes in the courses ethnology took. This first section is probably more of interest to the Swedish audience, but I think that from a non-Swedish point of view there is also something to learn, especially from the general attitude of the author. By this I mean that, in the midst of a deconstruction-boom of the critical young generation of ethnologists, when much of what our forefathers and -mothers have done has been called into question, it is comforting to read a text which assesses ethnology by putting it into its historical context, and by seeing the lines of continuity.

Orvar Löfgren opens the history of Swedish ethnology to the reader, and also discusses the present state of affairs in the field. Billy Ehn, for his part, concentrates on the central defining factor of the discipline: fieldwork. He writes about doing ethnological research as a continuous interplay between *Närhet och avstånd*, closeness and distance, and describes how to document present-day culture through ethnological fieldwork. The process of doing this is split into smaller units, which then are examined at more closely. Ehn thus clarifies the research process step-by-step, from Choosing the topic all the way to Afterwisdom, but he avoids the technical sidetaste which accompanies many methodological manuals, as if collecting and analysing the material could be done by just following the instructions of the guide-books. Ehn structures his text by using his own experiences as a researcher, and also by clarifying his points with some examples from the contemporary Swedish research, showing thus the many possible roads that the researcher can take.

Billy Ehn reminisces about his own experiences: "Jag minns också all osäkerhet och förvirring under fältarbetena och skrivandet. Vad handlade undersökningen om egentligen?" (p. 93). This quotation characterises a lot of ethnology – the awkward situation of not, at least consciously, really knowing what you are studying – and still in the end finding your way. Personally I found most interesting this reflective approach of these two established professors of the elder generation of ethnologists. They put to the fore the difficulties they themselves have had in the beginning of their careers – and maybe still have. This kind of reflexivity is also the distinctive feature of our discipline, a fact that clearly emerges from these texts. Also, the importance of doing things differently, going in through the kitchen-door instead of the main-door, as Orvar Löfgren puts it, in order to make advances in the discipline, and make use of its full potential, arose clearly from the book.

This book is a general introduction to ethnology for those who take their first steps within the discipline, or for those who just want to know what ethnology is about. But as ethnology is a critical science by nature, I would like also to make one critical remark. When the research process is described in detail, it occurred to me that there seem to be no secrets left, nothing to be found out by the young beginners themselves. Even the feelings of distress, despair and doubt are given too neatly, predigested. Instead, they actually could be considered as something every ethnologist should confront, and then learn

through them some basic issues. But, on the other hand, and somewhat paradoxically, a more advanced student like myself, can find comfort in these same lines and sentences, and in the fact that certain aspects seem to be a more or less common experience for ethnologists. For example, the difficulties in defining and ethnologising one's topic, or having a vast array of material, and not knowing what to do with it, or in general the sense of fear, inability, loneliness or hopelessness that sometimes accompany this magnificent enterprise of ours.

Eeva Uusitalo, Jyväskylä

Games from Swedish Finland

Carola Ekrem, "Vi leder en blindbock till kungens bord". Lekar från Svenskfinland. Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland. Helsingfors 1997. 181 pp. Ill. ISBN 951-583-038-9.

■ Much of the collected tradition of games preserved in the archives is in danger of falling into permanent oblivion, according to Carola Ekrem. In her book she presents 140 games, mostly collected in the 1920s and 1930s in Swedish-speaking Finland, which she thinks could be exciting and amusing for today's children as well. The book is primarily intended as inspiration for parents, teachers, and recreation leaders, and the selection is guided by the author's judgement of how useful the games are today. Yet ethnologists who are interested in children and young people will also find nuggets here.

Most of the book consists of an enumeration of the selected games, classified under headings such as "tag games", "ball games", "memory games", and so on. The different games are lucidly described with explicit instructions, often supplemented with sketches showing how the games are arranged. The few singing games are accompanied by musical notation. Everything is conveniently packaged for use by today's children. The footnotes provide details about the distribution and history of the games.

It is of course nice to let an old game tradition serve as inspiration for confused parents and recreation leaders. It would also have been valuable to have an accompanying discussion of what happens to the games when they are taken out of their context, recorded, archived, and brought out many years later, translated into modern language, provided with instructions, and presented to adults to be taught once again to children. There is no doubt very little left of the pristine quality of "the old folk games".

Part of the authenticity that has got lost can perhaps be approached via the content of the games. The games are about planting turnips, boiling swedes, herding goats, building fences, selling linen, and grinding malt – glimpses of the working life of a bygone time, jobs that also involved the children. We come even closer to the children who once played the games through the plentiful and splendid photographs in the book. These are all posed, with well-dressed children demonstrating their games to field researchers: children's eyes turned towards the photographer, formal, wary, exhilarated, smiling – frozen moments of contact between the fieldworker and the children, captured on film 60–70 years ago. These photographs would be worth a study of their own.

In the commentary section the work of collecting is brought to life still further. We find the usual accounts of young men and women cycling round the countryside with their student caps on their heads and their glass plates in their rucksacks. The collecting was governed by directives that are far removed from our current ideas about fieldwork. "Children's games, songs, and rhymes are best recorded at small occasions arranged by the recorder, when the children often try to outdo one another in recalling as many as possible" (p. 119). The diligent fieldworker Erla Lund recounts in her memoirs that the children were sometimes so eager to "serve scholarship" that they forgot their everyday duties back home on the farm. This could cause a certain discord between the researcher and the adults in the village (p. 123).

This part of the book also has an interesting survey of early research on games, in the Nordic countries as well as in Germany and England. It is interesting to see how the romantic view of childhood at the turn of the century coloured the research. Children were viewed by these early scholars as authentic, close to nature, and when they passed on archaic customs and rites they

embodies an unadulterated and unspoiled humanity. The goal of research was not only to find this genuine humanity via the games; the researchers themselves often confessed a nostalgic yearning to get back to the paradise into which memory had transformed their own childhood. Folk games were also regarded at the turn of the century as patriotic education. They were believed to give strength, to train children in suppleness, courage, solidarity, self-denial, steadfastness, and patience – properties worthy of the new nation-builders (p. 131).

The book concludes with a glimpse of Finnish ethnological and folkloristic research into children's games, works that are sometimes inaccessible because of the language barrier. Ekrem's book can be recommended to those who are interested in traditional research into games, both the collected material and the ideologies that steered the actual collecting.

Helene Brembeck, Gothenburg

Environmental and Consumerism

Rita J. Erickson, "Paper or Plastic?" Energy, Environment, and Consumerism in Sweden and America. Praeger, Westpost, 1997. 180 pp. ISBN 0-275-95766-7.

■ Achieving environmental sustainability is probably the most important task facing humans today, and one to which the social sciences can contribute, for example by studying the ecological beliefs and activities of the "ordinary" people, whose everyday practices may have to change to avert disaster.

American anthropologist Rita J. Erickson's *'Paper or Plastic': Energy, Environment and Consumerism in Sweden and America* promises such a contribution. It investigates a limited sample of Swedes from a small town in Skåne and compares them with their American counterparts from a small town in Minnesota, in the early 80s and again in the early 1990s.

Both are shown to be in the grip of consumerism and to underplay the extent of their energy use, particularly by ignoring the energy embodied in consumer items. They find it hard to be environmentally responsible when this costs them money, time or effort, or inhibits their participation in normal activities in their community. Mostly, they hope for technological solutions to minimise their need for cutback.

Erickson finds the Americans even more consumer-oriented than the Swedes. Traditional Swedish norms of moderation ("lagom") provide an element of restraint. Influenced by their Social Democratic, collectivist, welfarist tradition, Swedes are also more likely to think holistically, recognising the interconnectedness of things, and in particular, the consequences of their own actions for, and responsibilities to, others. Most strikingly, the Swedes exhibit (or exhibited) greater faith in the ability of themselves, their government and official agencies to improve things. Unlike the Americans, Swedes, at least in the 1980s, had faith that the state represented their best interests and acted rationally. Their tradition of popular social movements, according to Erickson, helped them believe in their own transformative powers. Nevertheless, she suggests that Swedish distinctiveness is being undercut as Social Democratic hegemony ends and globalisation and other factors threaten welfarism.

Erickson's analysis does not make systematic comparisons within her national samples. Her respondents are not differentiated by age or gender. We learn that they came from towns with populations "employed in factories, construction and retail shops, or as lower-level civil servants", but the class composition of each sample is otherwise opaque. This is serious, for manual industrial workers and public sector white collar employees often have different outlooks and their proportions may be differently represented in the samples, leading class-cultural distinctions to be mistaken for national-cultural ones.

Further, there is limited investigation of the extent to which, for each set of respondents, positions on one issue correlate with those on another. This seems a pity, given that anthropologists have often suggested that the ways people conceptualise the natural environment (and their propensity to see it at risk) are affected by their particular underlying "world views"; world views whose structures will be, in their turn, linked to the patternings of their social relationships – another factor which Erickson ignores. Though

her respondents see their actions as constrained by their social relations, the social structuring of the communities in which they live is uninvestigated, and the patterning of their individual networks is unexamined. We do not even learn if any of her subjects belonged to groups interested in environmental issues: did any of the Swedes, for example, belong to study circles investigating environmental topics?

These omissions weaken the study as anthropology and as a resource for any environmental strategist who believes it is less profitable to emphasise where everyone goes wrong, than to build on where some have got it a bit more right than others, paying due regard to context in evaluating whether one category's better practice is generalisable elsewhere.

Perhaps Erickson's particular understandings of the environmental crisis and how to avert it have affected her research. They seem partly questionable in themselves, and either do not fit with the research strategy or may have adversely affected it. Erickson believes that every expenditure of energy and transformation of raw materials, by whatever means, produces irreversible disorder in the universe. She condemns the hope that a technical fix might allow high levels of energy use and consumption without harmful effect, and concludes that the endemic consumerism of Western, industrial (I would rather say capitalist) societies must end, to avert global ecological catastrophe. But she does not specify what kind of socio-economic order could support environmentally sustainable levels of energy use and the world population. If Erickson believes that we must not use manufactured goods at all, then her cross-national comparisons of rates of weekly microwave and dishwasher use are perhaps beside the point. But if reduction rather than elimination is worthwhile, then intra-national variations of practice also need examining.

Erickson's discussion of how we should get from where we are, to wherever we should be, is also problematic. No concrete suggestions are offered, for example, of how we might construct institutional forms helpful to the task. All we are told is that we must gain a spiritual awareness of the national and human world as God's creation. Dedicating her text to "Bahá'ís everywhere", she praises this faith's emphasis on "the oneness of humanity and all religions", proclaiming: "We must transform culture profoundly and lastingly by restoring its spiritual basis – by moving beyond anthropocentrism, ecocentrism and biocentrism to theocentrism". But can we ignore religious differences? Not all faiths see mankind as indivisible and encourage attention to the present world. Some even envisage its imminent destruction as part of God's plan. And, isn't some *kind* of anthropocentrism appropriate, since it is *our* activity that needs transforming to prevent ecological disaster? We must understand why we engage in problematic (material) practices. This requires recognising that we are social beings and fully examining the socially-generated differences that lie above our common humanity.

The contribution of Erickson the anthropologist to this task has perhaps been diminished by Erickson the (idealist) theologian. But even from the religious perspective, the ethnography is flawed. For if it is the case that the future of the species depends on whether we believe in God, shouldn't the ethnography be directed more to investigating why people do or do not have faith, than to whether and why they buy environmentally-friendly detergents?

Hilary Stanworth, Swansea

The Politics of Memory and Life Stories

Erindringens og glemslens politik. Bernard Eric Jensen, Carsten Tage Nielsen & Torben Weinreich (eds.). Band 1 i skriftserie om humanistisk historieformidling. Roskilde universitetsforlag, Frederiksberg 1996. 280 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 87-7867-013-6.

Anne Birgitte Richard & Bernard Eric Jensen, Livet fortalt – litteraturhistoriske og faghistoriske biografier i 1990'erne. Band 9 i skriftserie om humanistisk historieformidling. Roskilde universitetsforlag, Frederiksberg 1999. 254 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 87-7867-049-7.

■ A series of books about history, heritage, memory, and narrative, published in the last few years by the university press in Roskilde, have discussed the communication of history from a

number of aspects. Two of the volumes published hitherto are of particular interest to ethnologists. The first, *Erindringens og glemslens politik* ("The Politics of Remembering and Forgetting") is an anthology with contributions by historians, literary scholars, and museum people. The common theme is how different kinds of memory are created, maintained, and passed on. Among the international theorists used in interpreting and analysing the construction of history, memory, identity, and cultural heritage we find Paul Connerton, John Gillis, Maurice Halbwachs, and David Lowenthal.

Claes Bryld begins with a paper analysing social memory as an arena of conflict. Several other contributions are on the theme of conflict. This comes up, for instance, in the section analysing a drive for cultural tourism in Copenhagen in the mid-1990s. Conflicts arose between the museums and the tourist industry in the view of which sides of history should be communicated. Seasoned tourist guides with long experience of showing off the best of the city opposed the desire of the museum historians to provide a deeper knowledge that also included the darker sides, such as poverty. The drive had more successful ingredients, however. Anette Vasström concludes her article with a discussion of culture as a commodity and the need for a secure past.

Lene Floris describes the part of Danish history culture represented by the museums, through an analysis of the series of popular memoirs *Folk Fortæller*, which seeks to get close to the everyday life of the past. The last two chapters in the book deal with the question of how we use the past. Anette Warring discusses whether the concept of collective memory can be of any use, and Bernard Eric Jensen shows how the growing interest in anniversaries and commemorations as a research field says a great deal about the contemporary politics of memory.

The book *Livet fortalt* ("Life Narrated") analyses the relationship between the lived life, the biographer, the subject of the biography, and the reader in modern society. Although the authors are a historian and a literary scholar, they deal with issues that are highly topical for most ethnologists today: how are we to understand and communicate knowledge about the lives we want to depict, what distinguishes a biographical narrative from the lived life, subjectivity. The growing interest in biographies is explained by the increased concern for our own personal development that characterizes modernity. Biography is described as a genre without boundaries, but in it we can understand boundaries, differences, and connections between us and the surrounding world.

Biography is also a way to remember, and several contributions in the book analyse the relationship between this and life history. Life and the life story can be read both in parallel and in opposition. The gender aspect is considered in connection with the many women's biographies written in the 1980s and 1990s. The construction of the female subject looks different, and a feminist biographical description should aim to inscribe the woman in history.

Biography is described as a communicative space with qualities all of its own. Historians have discussed the difference between political and social historical biography and whether the intimate sphere can be included in a historical biography. In connection with privacy and intimacy, Birgitte Possing's much-discussed biography of Natalie Zahle, *Viljens styrke*, is used as an example. But it is above all Possing's role as a "myth-destroying detective" that has attracted attention. It is she, the detective/historian, who has become the acting subject in the history that is told; in other words, this biography has two main characters competing for the reader's attention.

The book concludes with a discussion of the relation of biography to the politics of memory and identity on the basis of the question of whether it should be regarded as a sign of decay or growth. In any case, biographies provide an opportunity for critical scrutiny, both of people's importance and of the opportunities offered by society. This book views biographies as "the story of a life that has been lived on the basis of given conditions and decisions taken, lived within the larger framework of history and as the life project of an individual."

Birgitta Svensson, Lund

"The Other" Civilization

"Toinen" sivilisaatio. Arkielämä, sivilisaatio ja kansankulttuuri Suomessa noin 1500–2000. Pekka Junkala & Elina Kiuru (eds.). Jyväskylän Yliopisto, Etnologian laitos. Tutkimuksia 36. 1998. 144 pp. ISBN 951-39-0235-8.

■ In a new research project sponsored by the Finnish Academy and led by Bo Lönnqvist, Lönnqvist himself, the editors Pekka Junkala and Elina Kiuru and two other researchers, Jan Löfström and Nina Sääskilahti, have undertaken an ambitious task. The project concerns everyday life, civilization and popular culture in Finland from 1500 to 2000. The aim, however, is not to write a history of everyday life in this vast period, but to ponder about questions concerning the "inner life" and meanings of everyday life and the culture that human beings create by their actions.

Civilization and popular or folk culture are two sides of an overall European cultural process that must be treated together – as mirrors and objects of distinction or opposition or in some other relation – in the effort to understand how they have been shaped at different times. In this case it is the Finnish variants that are put under the lens. The book *"The Other" Civilization* is to be seen as a foretaste of the studies to come, preliminary at this stage, but foreshadowing the final report.

This little book puts forward the research ideology and theoretical starting points of the project: the research positions, the main concepts and objects of study. Clues are given to what could be studied and how, what sources could be used and for what purposes and what question should be asked of them. Merely asking the questions – probably never getting definitive answers – can bring out new ways of looking at "the other" civilization.

From the viewpoint of today, both high culture or civilization and popular culture can be seen from a distance, while they must also in some way be living concepts if, as the researchers state, they are seen as processes. These processes and also previous studies of these processes are then what ought to be studied.

In a somewhat oversimplified form, the main ambitions of the researchers are: in the footsteps of the *Annales* scholars and in a holistic way, to present different angles on different items of everyday life. Everyday life is thus deciphered as a process of meaning which is characterized by continuity, discontinuity and as a field of paradoxes. The most important aspects of everyday life for the researchers are space, the body, sexuality, things and time-memory. The shaping and construction of meaning in concrete life situations and a stress on communication and also breaks in lifestyles and everyday experiences seem to be the focal points. The sources of inspiration are clearly stated by all the authors, but mostly by Bo Lönnqvist, and the project can thus be quickly put in its broad historical anthropological context. After reading the whole book I would guess the most important inspirations to be Alf Lüdtke's views on "Alltagsgeschichte" and Gert Dressel's conceptions of historical anthropology, besides the more famous works of Norbert Elias, Michel Foucault, Philippe Ariès, George Duby, Roger Chartier and Carlo Ginzburg. Dressel underlines the "human being in history", which means that heavy stress is laid on thought structures and sensual and other ways of conduct that have varied very much in history.

The covering concepts of everyday life, mentality, historical anthropology, civilization and popular culture and also the conceptions of beauty are thus discussed in highly interesting and comprehensive ways, which means that new light is also shed by the Finnish variants and how they have been handled, for instance, in ethnology. At the same time, the researchers spell out their own special angles. Popular culture as "the other", for instance, needs other marks than tradition and authenticity, which have been given high value by the ethnologists. Continuity must be found in more neutral ways, as Nina Sääskilahti says. Civilization is also an ambivalent concept, and in analysing the processes at work the concept of border and its symbolizations is important, but Jan Löfström stresses that one should not miss the polyphony and ambivalence at the border. Thus "the other" cannot only be seen as a counterpart but also as a culture or cultures with their own strength and "readings" of common phenomena. What these readings consist of is thus the object of study.

In the second half of the book there are miniature studies of different topics, by which the reader comes to understand the methods of the researchers in practice. The six miniatures treat such diverse topics as the difference between eastern and western Finland, the witch culture of the seventeenth century, civilized sexuality and its ambivalence, one of Finland's esteemed "national" artefacts, the beer *kousa* of Rusko, and the problematic of artefacts and time.

One question is whether the difference between east and west in Finland can be seen in the light of geographic distance. Junkala points out the difference between densely populated villages in the west and dispersed settlement in the east and above all, but also depending on different types of settlement, different views of what is reasonable, e.g. contrasting conceptions of reason. One could add that geographic distance is also the main determinant for the respective positions of the two cultural areas in relation to dominant trends in European culture, where west stands for rationality and east stands for primitiveness. The question could thus also be seen in the light of the concepts of centre and marginality.

This is also the case of the witch trials. Lönnqvist underlines the almost scientific methods of the judges in their questioning of the accused. What was also at stake was different views of reason and rationality: when everyday utensils were used for other or magic purposes, it was threatening to the emerging new rationality of the learned. To see the witch hunts as a weapon in the civilizing process is perhaps not so astonishing; what is more interesting is how the questioning was done and what came into focus. After a hundred years of alienation of both witchcraft and witch hunting, the scientific view had turned to an interest in the contents of magic, as Lönnqvist says, citing Christfried Gannander's work *Mythologia Fennica*, which was published in 1789. At the same time it could be said that popular culture was then looked upon as an object of natural science, with classification as one method. But Gannander's subtitle of the subtitle also takes us a step further: he turned to those who were interested in the Finnish language, history and poetry.

How the humanities are vulnerable to national and nationalistic trends is shown in an exemplary way by Elina Kiuru in her account of the scientific history of one richly decorated two-handled beer stoup or bowl named the Rusko *kousa*, which had found its way into the collections of the National Museum before 1885. Relying on the works of the cultural historian Nils Cleve, she is able to show that the views of the famous ethnologists U. T. Sirelius, Kustaa Vilkuna, Auvo Hirsjärvi and Toivo Vuorela – according to which the *kousa* was a sixteenth-century testimony to the outstanding handicraft of Finnish rural artisans and used on solemn beer-drinking occasions – were a kind of wishful thinking due to functionalist theories and a quest for national prestige. In 1965 Nils Cleve, having compared similar objects in the Nordic museums, found that the decorated *kousas* were specially ordered and made for the nobility, most likely for one family only, the Bielke family.

Questions of things and time are exemplified by an account of the reasons for marking mostly wooden objects, but also others, with the year of their making. Placing the individual in time and space seems to be of importance. The human being in the web of time, especially when time stops in the case of death, is also analysed by Nina Sääskilahti. She notes the exactitude with which the time of death was recorded, as a form in which civilization tried to handle the vulnerable moments of coming and going in time and space, which are inexplicable moments that cause anxiety and can be controlled at least to some extent by dating. She thus points to a cultural code that, to her mind, seems to be at work. Sääskilahti clearly does not seem to know how widespread it was to give even the minutes and seconds of the death moment in the reports that were sent after death in the high culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. This would have made her suppositions even more certain.

Serving these small hints about the theoretical background of the project "Everyday Life, Civilization and Popular Culture in Finland c. 1500–2000" and longer accounts of some of the miniatures has been the only way for me to present this highly stimulating book. Every page is full of assured insight and theoretical argumentation which cannot be cited here. At the same time,

every page functions as a place for humble searchlights directed at hidden areas of everyday life. One is eager to see the more comprehensive result when the searchlight has probed even further.
Anna-Maria Åström, Helsinki

The Street – An Open Space

La rue – espace ouvert. Svend Erik Larsen and Annelise Ballegaard Petersen (eds.). Odense University Press, Odense 1997. 219 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7838-165-7.

■ *La rue – espace ouvert* (*The Street – an Open Space*) is a compilation of texts introducing the reader to the different ways the public space of the street can be used to say something about our culture. The articles are written in French, and treat a variety of places such as Paris, Montpellier, Rome, Copenhagen, Gothenburg, Berlin, Corsica and the United States. With a preface by *Anne Cauquelin* where nature is brought in from the savage landscape to the urban townscape, the frame for the book is drawn. The editors write in their introduction that the street is to be seen as a local neighbourhood as well as part of a greater entity, as a concrete reality as well as a symbol and as public arena as well as a private and individual one. The contributors concentrate on these very dual roles of the street when they go on to discover modern urban identity in a historic context.

Svend Erik Larsen writes in "La rue entre ville et nature" ("The Street Between City and Nature") how the cosmology of the street that once was based on that of the nature, today has transformed nature into a human, urban project. Firstly he draws the theoretical framework for his analysis of three literary accounts of the urban nature. The in-built movement of the street and its voyageurs are central to the understanding, as are the disappearing opposites (centre and periphery) and the localities that give way to larger, global networks. He then goes on to analyse Honoré de Balzac, Prosper Merimée and John Dos Passos. Through their accounts he shows us how important it is for the urban milieu to be perceived and described as a landscape. He shows us how the movement and structure of the city shape our perception of the nature outside of the city and how the need to travel puts the road, rather than the street, in focus. Throughout the accounts, the limit between nature and non-nature is drawn where the movement of the body halts. *Johannes Nørregaard Frandsen* writes a colourful description of the young and hip, who move in groups and colour the streets with their presence in his article "Séduction et résistance: La rue, les jeunes et le rock" ("Seduction and Resistance: The Street, the Young and the Rock"). Rollerskaters, hip-hoppers, electric-boogie dancers, cure-heads and squatters are put in a context where they use the street to create their identity: to see themselves and also to be seen. The double identity of the street as the place where you are at the same time observable *and* invisible in the crowd, makes room for what Nørregaard Frandsen describes as a post-political criticism of the values of the older generation. *Niels Kayser Nielsen* writes about the crowds of the stadiums and arenas in the modern cities in "Un stade dans la ville: Une histoire moderne" ("A Stadium in the City: A Modern Story/History"). The stadium is described as part of the more and more standardized city, where all stadiums must look alike because of their function. Athletic competitions and football games need to be acted out under the exact same condition whether in Montpellier, Copenhagen or Gothenburg. At the stadium the individual choice of lifestyle can flourish parallel to the group identity in the common rules of the crowd. By going to football games and adopting the codes of behaviour specific to the spectators you are part of an exclusive group with an exclusive identity. *Annelise Ballegaard Petersen* writes about the ambush behind the windows. The theme in her article "...sert uniquement à circuler" (...for Transport Only ") she shows how, over the past century, the artist as a spectator distances himself from street-life by watching from behind windows, while being allowed to scrutinize it all the closer. Using the writings by E. T. A. Hoffmann, Wilhelm Raabe, Karl Henckell, Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, Walter Benjamin, and paintings by Lesser Ury, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Franz Krüger, she brings to our attention some of the attributes of the street that the spectator/writer/artist uses as a playground for his or her imagina-

tion. *Jacob Isager* writes an article "La rue: scène et monument. *La via triumphalis* dans la République romaine" ("The Street: Stage and Monument. The *Via Triumphalis* in the Roman Empire"). He discusses the meeting of private and public space in a dialogue which is carried out in commemoration of heroes and public figures. Triumphal arches and semi-private back yards are used to tell the story of the winner and expose war-trophies. By inscribing the names and deeds of founders of the city on public and private monuments, a common identity was thus visualized at the same time as the great deeds and persons were visualised. *Henrik Reeh*, lastly, writes a wonderful account of how street-names keep alive the mythic and the familiar sides of the city. In his article "La rue et ses légendes – à partir du *Plan Taride*" ("The Street and its Legends – Starting from the *Plan Taride*"). He tells the story of the street names that live longer than the places that originally named them. He analyses the impact the mental structure and square pages of the *Plan Taride* (the Paris "A–Z") has had on people's perception of the city, and the impact the specific structure of *arrondissements* has had on the *Plan Taride*. Using the works of the contemporary artist and writer, Pierre Alechinsky and Gilbert Lascault, he shows how the mental map of Paris has changed over time and with the accessibility of the user-friendly A–Z map.

Elin Frykman, Lund

Lesbian Identity

Pia Lundahl, Lesbisk identitet. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1998. 245 pp. ISBN 91-7203-317-7.

■ The book is part of the research project "Four generations of bi- and homosexual men and women" and consists of 24 interviews made from 1991 to 1994. The interviewed women were chosen according to their different experiences and represent different social backgrounds, age – they range from 18 years of age to 78, occupation, and geographical areas of Sweden. The women also have different experiences concerning their age of "coming out" as lesbians, heterosexual experiences, and whether they live a life as so called "open" lesbians or hide their lesbian lifeform from their surroundings. Likewise they have different experiences with homosexual organizations. The aim of the book is to discuss the formation or the construction of a lesbian or bisexual identity.

Pia Lundahl's theoretical approach is deconstruction as it is applied by post-feminists and queer-theorists. What is central in this theory is firstly that experiences are not seen as an expression of an essence inside people but as an expression of the representations – such as "woman", "lesbian" and "sexuality" – accessible in society at a certain time in history. An individual's experiences are thus seen as both constituted and interpreted from the social and cultural conditions and limitations of a certain time. Secondly deconstruction is a fundamental critique against essentialism and claims that what we experience as sexuality, gender and identity always should be seen as interpretations of existing social and cultural constructions. Hereby both "homosexuality" and "heterosexuality" are seen not as an expression of an essential sexuality but as social constructions. Thirdly deconstruction sees identity as a double-edged tool. A lesbian identity can on the one hand be seen as a way to locate oneself in society in relation to other individuals, groups and institutions. From this perspective identity implies possibilities, but on the other hand it makes identities compelling. The categories of identity demands that individuals give in to the conditions, assumptions and limitations that constitutes them. Experiences perceived as "lesbian" thus force the individual to relate to the entire concept comprising lesbian-ness.

With this theoretical approach in mind, Lundahl has asked the interviewed women to tell their lifestory as a road to embracing the identity as a lesbian or bisexual woman. Through this process of identity-formation the women have created their own lifestories in such a way that bits and pieces in the end form a coherent story of "how I became what I became". Lundahl stresses that such lifestories sometimes can be compared to heroic legends where the protagonist is fighting to liberate herself from or conquer inner or outer restraints. Women who tell such stories have a belief in something authentic or essential that will

appear in the end of the story. Some women also stress the fact that they always felt different, and some emphasize how they as children were a "tomboy" hereby experiencing a different gender-role.

Pia Lundahl has also asked the women to talk about being "out" – meaning whether they tell others about their lesbian life or whether they try to hide it. Not surprisingly the older women wants to be discreet whereas the younger women tends to view openness as a weapon against the invisibility of lesbians.

Though Lundahl herself views homosexuality as a construction she gets a lot of different answers from the interviewed women concerning the cause of homosexuality. The older women see it as being something biological whether hormonal or genetic and the younger women explain the cause of their lesbian life due to a mixture of psychological, social and biological explanations.

All the interviewed women talk about an authentic self and an authentic sexuality – they *are* really lesbians. One of Lundahl's assumptions is that lesbian women also differ from heterosexual women in their perception of gender. The tomboys saw themselves as different from other girls but even grown up lesbians stress that they transgress the feminine gender role and are women in a different way than heterosexual women.

This is the first book in Swedish on lesbian identity and it presents some of the newest theories on identity formation. Pia Lundahl explains the deconstructionist perspective in a clear and understandable way but unfortunately she does not place her own work in an international context. There is no presentation of similar books in Scandinavia – and they do exist – nor in other European countries. Her book is interesting in that it treats some of the important concepts of deconstruction and uses them in a sensible way in the analysis of the interviews. None the less, the book seems somewhat uninspired, which might be due to the fact that it is written four years after the interviews were finished. It is also tiring to read because of the long passages from the interviews and though Pia Lundahl on page 25 argues sensibly for her reason to bring such long quotes it none the less would have made the book more readable if she had used them as arguments and not just as sources. Apart from these minor objections the book is an important contribution to research on identity formation as such and as a testimony of lesbian lives in Sweden in the 1990s.

Karin Lützen, Roskilde

The Golden Egg

Susanne Lundin, Guldägget. Föräldraskap i biomedicinens tid. Historiska Media, Lund 1997. 159 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-88930-12-2.

■ Cultural questions concerning childlessness and treatment for it are subjected to a highly convincing analysis in Susanne Lundin's study *Guldägget* (The Golden Egg). Throughout the book she shows how microbiology, the body, and reproduction raise a number of interesting cultural problems, and she juggles with these in the fine tradition of ethnology and cultural analysis. Her primary foundation is her empirical material, which is what carries the rest of the book. She does not tire the reader with airy theories about modernity and cultural identity, of which we have seen enough in many of the cultural sciences in recent years. The book is a piece of irreproachable handicraft, undoubtedly based on extensive fieldwork.

Because of various factors, for many couples it is not enough to go to bed together if they want to have children. There are men whose sperm is not of the right quality, there are women who are unable to keep the embryo in the womb, and there are inexplicable mismatches which mean that a couple cannot bring a child into the world by their own devices. Although some people accept their childlessness, there are many who look for professional help. They visit hospitals and private fertility clinics and manage to conceive with the aid of *in vitro* fertilization (IVF), by which sperm cells are injected into egg cells. This may seem like a trivial affair in our hypertechnological age, with accelerating progress making it seem as if soon no medical problem will be insoluble. Thousands of couples have already had children with the aid of IVF. In the wake of this rapid development, several interesting problems have arisen which are not just discussed between doctors and patients but by the whole of society. As one of the

IVF specialists at Haukeland Hospital in Bergen said when I told him about the book, "Oh, has this become culture?"

In both the Swedish and the Norwegian welfare state, the nuclear family consisting of mother, father, and children is an important cultural building block. The ideal of marrying and having children becomes an important part of people's consciousness early in life. If one cannot manage to fulfil this ideal one is quickly labelled an oddity and a failure. For women in particular, not being able to have children requires having a strong back. Passing forty and still being childless is no joke. People immediately ask, "What's wrong with her? Why hasn't she got children?" Readers of *Guldägget* will realize that these are really serious matters. Lundin shows how the whole of a person's identity is evaluated with the discovery that he or she is infertile. Reproduction is the acid test of male and female gender identity, especially for those who fail the test. In a period of repeated unsuccessful attempts to have children, everything revolves around sex organs, testicles, ovaries, wombs, sperm, and eggs. As one of the author's informants puts it, the sluggish sperm became an image of his whole masculinity. He was no longer a real man. In his own eyes he became as useless as the semen on the microscope slide. Similar feelings are experienced by a woman who has been informed by the gynaecologist that she is unable to become pregnant in the normal way. Not being able to conceive, to get an embryo to grow in the womb, can uproot her whole femininity. If one then attempts IVF, it can seem as if the whole meaning of life boils down to one thing: becoming a mother or a father. It is only through reproduction that one becomes a real man or a real woman.

Lundin is an outstanding ethnographer. The whole book is well seasoned with quotations and anecdotes which make the book very reader-friendly. The best passages in the book are when she puts on her hospital coat and mask to go in search of the magic of the "golden egg" – hospital jargon for the artificially fertilized embryo that is implanted in the woman's body. This poetical name arouses associations with fairytales, and the childless woman becomes the princess in the tower, with the white-coated doctor as the knight in shining armour who is to save her from the captivity of childlessness, under the skilful direction of the author. The whole emotional register is involved: pain, longing, love, envy, and hate. We meet both heroes and rogues, but Lundin shows us that is it primarily a matter of hard work, and that the reality is obtrusively brutal and far from fairytale romance when a woman chooses to become pregnant with the aid of IVF. Lundin's thick description of everyday life at the fertility clinic brings the mystique of childbirth down to earth.

In recent years there has been a new moral awakening in the Western world, in which almost all intervention in nature is regarded as evil. This discussion receives a particular emotional charge when it is about life before birth. Television channels show tear-drenched documentaries about people interfering with nature and having an abortion on the basis of an ultrasound scan or amniocentesis. In these narratives, natural represents good, while the advances of high-tech biomedicine represent evil. This book paints a more balanced picture than that, avoiding the easy temptation to go to excesses and ridicule the extreme consequences of this science. Although the sixty-year-old Italian women who give birth with the aid of IVF appear in the book as a corrective to show what can happen if everything is permitted, this never becomes more than a corrective.

The book thus serves as a contribution to the debate, putting the entire ethical and moral discussion of IVF in context. Lundin shows us how nature can sometimes be really evil, and that biomedicine can be good. Nature is not always perfect and can sometimes need a little push. Lundin illustrates that both sides of the debate have sensible arguments, and she gives all the opposed ideas a chance to speak. It is nevertheless evident that Lundin believes IVF to be good. The genre of cultural analysis allows room for the author to have her own ideas and to be subjective, and it is refreshing to see how elegantly Lundin takes advantage of this.

Lundin is able to see the ethical problems from the angles of the enthusiast and the sceptic alike. The book shows how having a child becomes incredibly important for some people, and how

all life suddenly revolves around this single issue: becoming a proper family. When this succeeds and the joyful young couple hold a healthy baby in their arms, there is little doubt that all talk of immorality and evil fades. Even religious fanatics must approve of a newborn child in the arms of a loving mother and father, regardless of whether it was conceived in a test tube or in a woman's womb in the old-fashioned way.

The book is very well written, and despite the serious nature of the content it is couched in a light, optimistic style. As in all book reviews, however, some negative criticism is called for. Why on earth are there 194 notes in a book of just 139 pages? I read the first ten notes and then gave up all the leafing back and forth. I found a couple of notes which could well have been incorporated in the text, but the rest could have been omitted. An author's name and date in parentheses in the text is less disturbing to the reader than having to flick to the end of the book to find out the source of a quotation. Tiny footnote numbers dotting the page should be out of date in this genre. Apart from the notes, *Guldägget* is a magnificent book which should be required reading in ethnology and other disciplines dealing with medical issues.
Bjarne Sverkeli, Bergen

The City Domesticated

Karin Lützen, Byen tæmmes. Kernefamilie, sociale reformer og velgørenhed i 1800-tallets København. Hans Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen 1998. 456 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-412-2773-5.

■ The Danish ethnologist Karin Lützen, of the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of Copenhagen, has written an imposing book about Copenhagen during the nineteenth century, "The City Domesticated: Nuclear Family, Social Reforms and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-Century Copenhagen". She declares that the purpose is to set the scene for the formation of the modern Danish welfare state, by capturing its background in the nineteenth century. Lützen focuses her attention on the period 1830–1895, and at the centre of her project are the men and women of the middle class. Her opinion is that it was the middle class who were the heart of the nation at this time and who had the power and the opportunity to hold up their lifestyle and their virtues as a model for everyone. The title of the book illustrates the author's view that the negative social consequences of industrialization first became visible in the big cities in Europe, and that it was this destitution that came into the vision of the women and men of the middle class and made them want to do something about it. A big city could and can be a place of freedom for some people and a place of poverty, dirt and vice for others. Lützen wants to point out the different conceptions of the city, and the measures undertaken to change it. The uncontrolled life of Copenhagen had to be controlled.

The book is divided into four parts: "The City", "Poverty", "Prostitution" and "The Christian Shield", with several chapters in each. As an introduction, the author discusses the middle class in nineteenth-century Copenhagen. She calls attention to conceptions such as the nuclear family and heterosexuality, phenomena which to some extent can be seen as constructions. In the nineteenth century, many women lived together in close and loving relationships, and Karin Lützen reveals that the idea of the family as a unit with a man, a woman and children as the only right model, is an invention from recent days, but with roots in the late nineteenth century. Referring to the English sociologist Anthony Giddens, however, Lützen thinks that we today can once more distinguish a transformation of the family and marriage. Sexuality has been separated from reproduction, and many men and women live together in the 1990s in a way that comes close to the relationship between two women. Sexuality is an important part of the personality and one of the most important and unifying bonds between two persons. The relation as such is the main thing. Lützen returns to this discussion in the epilogue, which she calls "The Twentieth Century", where she sums up the main contents and briefly outlines some typical features of our century as regards social reforms, homosexuality and the transformation of the work for social welfare from philanthropy into political reforms.

The sources for the book consist of articles and debates from the press, letters to newspapers, proceedings of the city council and the Parlia-

ment, and annual reports from charitable societies. All the material is printed, because Karin Lützen's aim is to show the Official Discourse. The spheres in focus are private philanthropy, the Home Mission and the demand for gender equality in sexual matters; these fields have acquired a highly unfavourable reputation in more recent times. The last theme was intensely discussed at the end of the nineteenth century. The opinion of most women in the middle class was that both sexes were required to lead a chaste life before marriage.

Despite the declaration of the three main themes for the book, it contains far more. In this ambitious work, Lützen obviously aspires to cover the majority of what happened in Copenhagen during the period. We can read about political reforms and democratization, the creation of Tivoli and its importance for the citizens as a place where everyone could mingle and where the limits between the social classes to some extent became blurred. Lützen describes the hygienic conditions in the city and the measures taken to improve the situation, the system of supervision by the police force and other authorities, and gives the reader a detailed image of the debate on the questions in the town council and the newspapers.

But of course, the major part of the book deals with the fields indicated above. Lützen desires to rehabilitate the work done by the Home Mission people and the philanthropists. The extensive chapter about prostitution gives an interesting and unpleasant insight into the creation of an identity as a prostitute, a process completed by the authorities through their intention to drive all girls involved in prostitution into the regulated form. By inscribing the prostitutes in records, regulating them in different classes, telling them where to live and controlling them with medical examinations every week, it became even more difficult to rescue many of the girls from prostitution. Naturally, this consequence was not the intention behind the regulation of prostitution; the reason was the fear of venereal diseases. Two different views can be distinguished: one strictly medical and practical desire to prevent the spread of venereal diseases, and one more humane view which considered the prostitutes as human beings who could be rescued for a better life. But it was the medical conception which was the most influential, and which directed the actions of the authorities. Among others, the famous author and reviewer Georg Brandes was against the intention of hunting all the prostitutes into the fold of regulation, because of the difficulty of delivering women from it. It is very natural to interpret these different views in a gender perspective, whereby a society governed by men on male terms organized the sale of female bodies to male customers. The customer had to be assured that the product he bought was healthy. I find this pattern very obvious, and the society of that time was gendered to a great extent.

Lützen describes the opposition to the regulated prostitution among both men and women, and how middle-class women established special homes for rescuing fallen women. It is noteworthy that the missionaries were of the opinion that men could also fall and be tempted to a sinful life, seduced by women who had previously been seduced by other men. Both young women and men had to be protected from the temptations of the modern city. The dangers pointed out were materialism, lack of character, and the spirit of the age. Poverty and destitution drove many women into the slough of prostitution. At the rescue homes the ex-prostitutes had to be brought up afresh, in a new and Christian way. The good, moral middle-class home was the ideal. The girls had to learn housekeeping, how to cook and clean, sew and knit. The practical routines of the day were mixed with regular prayers and reading aloud from good books. But it was evident that the girls could not count upon belonging to the middle class themselves, but to be raised from the gutter up to the level of the honest working class. The goal was that the girls should learn to be good servants, acquire good manners and obliterate the bad ones. Rescue homes were established for other vulnerable groups. The inmates were all of the same origin: prostitutes in one kind of homes, orphans, unemployed servant girls, blind and deaf people in others. They were divided into different homes just as they were divided by the Poor Relief.

Karin Lützen discusses how the domain of private philanthropic work in the twentieth century to an ever increasing extent becomes a ques-

tion for the national social welfare policy. The struggle for better sexual morals and chastity before marriage for both sexes in the nineteenth century, with the goal of protecting women from sexual abuse and increasing the opportunities for all women to move freely in the city without fear, was ridiculed in the twentieth century. Now new ideas about sexuality and the conception of a female sexuality made the chastity ideal of middle-class women out of fashion. Philanthropic women were seen as prudish old spinsters.

Karin Lützen has written a voluminous book, which embraces many subjects. *Byen tæmmes* contains a great many facts and persons, and should be of great interest for everyone interested in the history of Copenhagen. The large number of personal eye-witnesses enriches the book and gives a vivid glimpse of nineteenth-century Copenhagen. But *Byen tæmmes* is also a book for everyone interested in nineteenth century philanthropic work, prostitution, Christian charity, and the construction of the nuclear family, heterosexuality and homosexuality. I found certain fields somewhat superficially treated. For instance, it would have been of interest to know a little bit more about the whole group of philanthropic women. Were most of them married or unmarried? Young or old? And the fascinating discussion of homosexuality and heterosexuality, and the creation of the ideal of the nuclear family, is blended in here and there. I would have appreciated a more concentrated presentation of the theme. It is without doubt suggestive to follow the creation of the ideal of the nuclear family. How the fact that economic and social changes made it possible for most people to marry and provide for a family, could have contributed to the formation of the nuclear family and the heterosexual relationship as an ideal, furthermore established when homosexuality was defined as a disease by the medical authorities.

Eva Helen Ulvros, Lund

Theory of Science as Cultural Analysis

Dikotomier. Vetenskapsteoretiska reflektioner. Fredrik Miegel & Fredrik Schoug (eds.). Studentlitteratur, Lund 1998. 236 pp. ISBN 91-44-00239-4.

■ This book is rightly called "Dichotomies", because it is this problem – essence/construction, nature/culture, depth/surface, us/them, norm/deviation, etc. – that is in focus, but it could actually have been called something along the lines of a blurring of dichotomies, for in reality it is a matter of the great problem of cultural analysis: how do we avoid thinking and researching in terms of binary poles? Dichotomy and polarity are useful as analytical jemmies, but they also involve a danger: if the safe has been opened with the aid of the jemmy of polarity/dichotomy, there is a risk of destroying the product, and a risk that one finds it such a good idea that one uses it all the time. In short: the anthology challenges our vision. This is an old ethnological problem, but it is presented here with crystal clarity, not least in Ella Johansson's intelligent article, one of the best in the book.

But the editors are also capable. The two ambitious young scholars who are responsible for the book put the problem in relief for us with great clarity. For them it is a matter of the relation between nominalism and realism. In other words, they refer to the old controversy from the late Middle Ages, when the problem was first noticed: are our concepts intended to classify and create order, or is reality itself classified and orderly? The problem is connected to secularization: is it we humans who create order by means of our rational classification, or did God himself order the universe? This is the problem of modernity in a nutshell: is the world good enough as it is, or should we strive to put it into order?

As sons of modernist research, the editors find the answer unambiguous: we ourselves must classify. But here they encounter the problem that there are pre-classifications: the world exists, and it is already ordered. On top of this, it is ordered in a specific way. Or to put it in other words: the world is not meaningless; it always contains its own meaning already. We can then adopt a stance to this: we can like it or not; we can accept it or we

can change it. This immediately brings us to the next problem: how do we combine our inclination to classify with the already given classification? How do we combine essence with construction? How do we let *Homo Faber* play along with God? This is the central question asked by the book, and it is posed with crystal clarity.

It is most clearly asked in the editors' own contribution, but there are others that come close behind. All in all there is a wealth of good articles in the anthology, which can be read separately or as a whole. The first way of reading is the best, for the book as a whole is uneven: not all the articles reach the same standard, and one alone is substandard – yet simultaneously, and paradoxically, it is highly readable as a deterrent example. Let us take a concrete look at the articles:

Fredrik Miegel grabs the long-haired end and begins with "Hume's Law" regarding the issue of what we can know something about and what we cannot know anything about, that is, the relation between "facts" on the one hand and norms, values, etc. on the other hand. It is wrong, according to Miegel, to confront the opposites in this way. Perhaps the greatest danger is that the naturalistic cult of facts invites universalism and scientific imperialism: to demonstrate their cultural liberalism, the natural sciences issue invitations to inter-disciplinary research and believe that the humanistic contribution consists of rounding off the lecture with a nice slide of Ayers Rock against the sun. In short, the natural sciences with their demand for regularity, causal nexus, etc. must be extended to include the social sciences and humanistic research, centred on a universal scientific language.

Miegel cleverly pulls this myth apart and rightly points out that the humanities and the intelligent part of the social sciences deal with meaning. This kind of research has no use for control groups. With Rorty, Toulmin, and Putnam as support, Miegel argues for science as educated popular enlightenment, which is seemingly modest but is in reality much more ambitious than looking for general laws; it operates with local and provisional truths. Compliments are due once again to the Swedish tradition of scientific value nihilism founded by Axel Hägerström: research should be directed towards the problems of its time, determined on an *ad hoc* basis. Miegel picks up this thread in the best possible way when he concludes – like Pascal – as follows: it is not a matter of finding a meaning *for* existence, but of finding "meaning *in* a contingent and changeable existence" (p. 35). Well put!

The same can be said about Fredrik Schoug's contribution. He too dethrones the demand for scientific purity and truth. For Schoug, scientific practice is evidently much more similar to the approach of the artist, in that art does not operate with one central idea, but shapes its images on the basis of an aspiration and a rapture deriving from the act of creation and the material itself. In other words, the artist works with transformation and diffusion rather than unambiguity, and the effects comes from reflection, shade, displacement, segregation, overlayering, overpainting, screening, memory, aura, and so on. The aesthetic essence is thus moved from the centre out to peripheral phenomena, transgressions, searches, that is, the still undeveloped potential of the moment. Related to Ernst Bloch's ideas, Schoug and Miegel call this practice "possibilism".

The traditional Western European ideal of science, Schoug writes, is based on a traditional distinction between subject and object (the distinction that Ernst Bloch criticized all his life). It ultimately rests on an assumption, namely, that it is possible to obtain truth, eternal truth. In this there is no difference between the natural sciences and the social sciences. Both – unlike humanistic science, philosophy, religion, and art – rest on the basic assumption that what science is ultimately about is correspondence, understood as coherence between the real world, the object world, and the representation of this world. For the researcher the aim is that of old von Ranke, to determine "wie es eigentlich ist". The goal is to draw the boundary between true and false, between certain knowledge and uncertain knowledge. And true and certain knowledge has been achieved when there is full correspondence between reality and its representation, that is, when this agreement is as exact as possible. To this end, scientists operate with different techniques such as "method", "logic", "source criticism", or "experiments", all of which are intended to render reality as correctly as possible, and which are

accompanied by the conviction that this can be done.

Against this dream of a positivist, unified science, Schoug sets up the humanistic and artistic idea-producing tendency, that is, another form of science, the aim of which is not so much to arrive at eternal laws but rather to experience pleasurable, searching instants, since it is more interested in possibilities than in conditions, more concerned with the future than the past. Here it is not sufficient to depict reality and set up this depiction as the truth. In fact, the concept of truth is not so interesting. It is much more a matter of the unpredictability of existence, that is, the capacity for amazement. This means being open to ambivalence, contradiction, and ambiguity. The complexity of existence is so great that it cannot be reduced to a formula or fitted into a diagram with squares and circles and arrows going back and forth. The crucial thing here is more amazement and voluntary consent than certainty and intellectual "purity". One opens the door to let the world in.

Schoug is also an honest man, however. With an almost cynical self-examination he also analyses the danger that constantly threatens the idea-producing humanistic research: that it can become subject to fashion, that it tends towards rhetoric and slogans, that it often apes the taste of the times (p. 45), that it spends so much time following "recipes for success" (p. 47). It is a matter of getting into the media, if possible in the news. You can then be sure that you are a successful researcher. At any rate, you have done your bit to promote yourself and stage a performance.

Many people will derive pleasure from these two excellent articles. They can be used in tuition, in both theory of science and cultural analysis. It is enjoyable reading at a high academic and intellectual level. At the same time, it is a seismographically sure – and critical – sounding of the current Zeitgeist.

The same can be said about another good block in the anthology, Pia Lundahl's and Ingrid Bosseldal's articles on feminist gender research. Each of these is a good survey of research, giving the best possible accounts of the development from gender-role studies, via equality feminism and difference feminism, to today's precarious situation, when it is realized that the level of discourse is not good enough. What is needed, as Miegel points out, is research that is locally anchored in both time and space. Abstract concepts have to give way to life-history and contextual analyses. The idea of Woman must be replaced by women. Britta Lundgren was already thinking along these lines in the early 1990s (e.g. her paper in Lena Gerholm's anthology *Etnologiska visioner* from 1992) where she draws attention to the danger of overvaluing femininity while devaluing women.

To put it another way, perhaps there was no need at all to become conversant with the prolixities of deconstructivist gender analysis and discourse analysis in women's studies. At all events, Lundahl introduces a fine concept, "context-bound essentialism", to designate the near-biological, historically changing dimensions of life at the intersection between essence and construction, to which every single person has to relate. Likewise, Bosseldal shows brilliantly how hostile to the body deconstructivist feminism really is. Bodies are far too different to be fitted into the discursive clichés. The result is neglect and oblivion.

Between these four large essays, Leif Stenberg has written a solid article about the Islamic view of Western research. Here, without lapsing into either xenophobia or ethnocentrism, he shows how difficult it can be for the fundamentalist part of the Islamic world to understand the secularized Western European subject philosophy with its orientation to *Homo Faber*. This is not made any better by the "multitude of diverging theories" (p. 70) flourishing in Western humanities and social sciences, with provisional and relativistic scientific postulates (p. 79). This kind of thinking is not easy to reconcile with a monotheistic demand for truth.

But it is not only in Islam that there are fundamentalists, as the anthology clearly shows. In Tom O'Dell's paper we see a particularly crude example of the potential for scientific terror that lies in the struggle for political correctness. Here the thought police have turned out in full strength, crushing all offenders in their demand for law and order and toeing the line. O'Dell criticizes two ethnological works for not including immigrants. This is commendable enough, but not the way in

which it is done. O'Dell acts the hard-boiled lieutenant, under a cloak of humane concern for the weak. He goes so far in his reasoning as to claim that it is wrong to speak of the Other and wrong not to speak of the Other; in the latter case they are thus conspicuous by their absence (p. 191). This is like having to answer the diabolic question: "When did you stop beating your wife?" Whatever you say, it is wrong. It ultimately means that the wisest thing is to keep quiet, so that you do not do anything wrong. There is good reason to look sceptically at this monomaniac, American-inspired front against freedom of thought and expression, which is now also taking root in Western Europe. In so-called progressive circles in the United Kingdom it is already poisoning the political and cultural debate. In reality this deconstructivist tendency is as great a danger to a universalist unified science, as the danger of naturalism pointed out by the editors in their contribution.

There is much more substance to the concluding articles by Ella Johansson and Erika Andersson, both of whom deal with the implications of the narrative matrices: that the form can steal the content. Andersson asks the tricky question whether research in the Extraordinary is compatible with scientific practice, since this is *nolens volens* concerned with generalizability. The article wisely concludes that distance is a precondition for being able to see the Extraordinary (p. 226).

Ella Johansson tackles the old ethnological problem of distance versus blindness to what is familiar, but she presents the problem with such narrative elegance and lucidity that here too one feels tempted to say that this article must be included in the next compendium on cultural analysis that you compile for your students. It all boils down to this: a well-intentioned presentation of people as equals means ignoring individuality (men, women, religious minorities, ethnic groups, social groups, etc.), whereas a presentation of differences does not treat people equally (p. 215). This constantly leads to criticism. But, Johansson points out, the empirical differences between people do not need to mean ethical differences. It is a constant political task to ensure that this is so. People must be treated properly, regardless of the differences. Yet this does not mean that they should be treated in the same way.

And here we end. The anthology as a whole must be rated very highly. It is very readable, and it contains a number of good articles. Their quality, however, is particularly obvious from the difference between the excellent and the dreadful. *Niels Kayser Nielsen, Odense*

Germany and Sweden

Tyskland i Sverige & Sverige i Tyskland. Rapport från ett tvärvetenskapligt symposium vid Etnologiska institutionen, Umeå universitet den 10 november 1995. Dieter K. Müller (ed.). Etnologiska skrifter 11. Etnologiska institutionen, Umeå universitet 1998. 157 pp. ISBN 91-7191-412-9.

■ A seminar on the relationship between Germany and Sweden brought together representatives of several scholarly disciplines. Three medical doctors, one ethnologist, two historians, one cultural geographer and two historians of literature tried to find out what this relationship was like over time. The venture must be regarded as an answer to the needs in a de-nationalized Europe, as an effort to show that the two countries have had much in common for centuries.

To a folklorist it is interesting to see how much presuppositions still affect the image of the two. The Germans seem to "antiquarize" and exoticize Sweden, as we can read in the article on how Swedish novels have been received in Germany (Platen). The Swedish countryside is idealized with naturalism and quasi-mythologism as a clean, primitive and original, truly romantic phenomenon. Nobody even hints at the current problems in a modern highly industrialized country.

Correspondingly, the prejudices among Swedes about Germans are just as incorrect. The Germans are regarded as ruthless, greedy and rich when the Swedes meet them as inhabitants of summer houses in rural Sweden (Müller). The image is no more pleasant when the population of Kalmar is asked about their views of German tourists (Genrup). The stereotypes are very negative. This is in fact somewhat amazing if one considers the cultural exchange going on for centuries and the lively trade between the two countries until the Second World War. Thus, the

book opens up for questions on why this negative attitude is found in Sweden and why the Germans go on reducing the Swedes to the status of object with the associated usurpation. On the other hand, ten short articles cannot but give a taste of such a big issue.

Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Åbo

Lifestyles as Superficial Games

Magnus Mörck, Spel på ytan. En bok om livsstilar. Etnologiska föreningen i Västsverige, Göteborg 1998. 266 pp. ISBN 91-85838-39-X.

■ Magnus Mörck, who works at the Department of Ethnology in Gothenburg, starts this book by discussing the concept of lifestyle. He claims that all people can be described in groups of lifestyles, by which he means the way that tastes and preferences are translated into visible expressions in people. Whether or not an individual's or a group's lifestyle provokes attention from other people depends on the fashions and trends of the time. He thus maintains that all people have a style or an external expression which is shared by others, which means that a person can be pigeonholed. Lifestyle is a tool for categorization. To study the meaning of the concept, Mörck has chosen to go to a group that he calls mediators of culture (people involved in various ways in the arts) and a group of sportsmen. These groups have presumably been selected because he believes that they have an easily visible lifestyle. But Mörck points out in the introduction that the book is not about how the culture mediators or sportsmen live as mediators, artists, or sportsmen and women. He is thus not interested in studying their identity and lifestyle in relation to their profession, work, or activity; instead he wants to get at their view of the spaces they use in their leisure. He is not interested in finding out what it means for the lifestyle to be an actor, a drag artist, or a famous footballer, but he has chosen these groups because they may have a "visible" lifestyle outside their "work". In short, he wants to examine the kind of material surroundings they choose for themselves in their leisure time.

Since this is a study dealing with young men and women aged 20–30, most of them have not yet settled down or started a family. The study is thus about what may be called mature young people and their opinions about the concept of lifestyle. Mörck wants to investigate how they view their interior decoration and their consumption, how they view the public space and what they mean by going downtown and to parties and travelling abroad. He believes that because these young people belong to a specific generation and live in the same city, Gothenburg, the informants also share a perspective over and above the one they pursue in their "work". They represent the Western lifestyle with its limitations and possibilities. Mörck believes that some of the thoughts and actions expressed by the informants can be made visible by a discussion of lifestyles. Above all, however, Mörck is writing a book on the concept of lifestyle, and he shows what a number of cultural scholars around the world mean by the term. The discussion here concerns consumption, individualization, experiences, and desire, and he discusses whether the lifestyle figures become more individual or more uniform as the markets are opened for more and more actors all over the world. Mörck is critical of Bourdieu, who claims that lifestyle stands for the way of life of certain social groups. He seeks to show that lifestyle is a partly independent dimension which is in a way beyond class and gender, and he wants to study whether consumption and leisure activities, which are used in lifestyle debates all over the world, help to create lifestyles that cut across class and gender. Mörck therefore begins the book with a detailed presentation of the theoretical debate about lifestyle.

The book is divided into three parts, each with a different theme. The first is about what the informants mean by the concept of lifestyle. Different definitions are suggested by informants and by interviewers, and these are discussed. The concept is examined particularly in the light of categorization and self-categorization. Many of the informants are critical about using the concept. Many think that lifestyle is just a fashionable word which helps to pigeonhole people in a stigmatized way.

The second part is about the home and its connections to the lifestyle concept. Here the author is particularly searching for the inform-

ants' views of interior decoration, the symbolic value of objects, negotiations about who decides where furniture should stand, and why the informants' homes look the way they do. In this part the focus is particularly on the informants' age and their more or less unsettled way of life.

The third part of the study is about public space. Here Mörck discusses different haunts in Gothenburg, and the informants describe where they like to go shopping and dining, where they meet their friends in the daytime, and where they go when they are out on the town celebrating. They tell us the restaurants they like and where they do not like to be seen. This part is about where they meet like-minded young people and why they are not happy in other settings. There are so many specific details here that we would have benefited from a map to enable us to follow the informants' movements. Here the discussion concerns image, appearance, the symbolic value of the surroundings, and the potential and limitation of the city as regards anonymity and nearness.

In the last two chapters the author takes us into the great debate about globalization. He tries to put his informants into a global perspective and shows us that culture and sport are part of larger geographical context.

Finally, Mörck discusses the global mediation of culture through the informants' journeys to metropolises such as London and Amsterdam. Here he discusses the global "lifestyles" of the sportsmen and culture mediators. He views the shared networks as a chance to see the concept of lifestyle in a global perspective. Here Mörck has the opportunity to enter the discourse of local and global values. He discusses the tourist and the plug-in culture that gives international openings on the surface. Mörck rounds off the book by asking whether life really has any style.

The interviews were conducted by two doctoral students at Gothenburg University. The culture people were interviewed by a female ethnologist who is also a culture mediator, while a male ethnologist and sportsman interviewed the other group. Both interviewers were of the same age as the informants. The doctoral students interviewed only people in their own area.

The mediation of culture includes a broad spectrum of professional groups: ticket sellers, an impresario for a rock band, waitresses, a female lighting technician, rock singers, a drag artist/costume designer, and an actor. There are fifteen of them, and they all live in Gothenburg. On the sports side there are also fifteen informants, including male and female footballers and athletes belonging to clubs in Gothenburg. Most of the informants cannot make a living solely from their activity, so they have many other affiliations. They are businessmen, workers, officials, and take casual jobs. Among the culture mediators there are also many employed in job-creation projects. We are not told whether these projects involve cultural work or not. But this is probably not an interesting question as long as Mörck is only concerned with finding out what kind of taste the informants have in interior decoration, entertainment, dress, and life on the town. Mörck himself points out that it is a weakness of the study that the interviewers did not talk to people in both groups, and this is particularly obvious when the interviewers talk to people of their own sex. Since I myself am an "insider" from an institutional theatre in Oslo, I find it difficult to regard a waitress in a restaurant as belonging to the same category as a professional actor. But perhaps they do so on the surface. It may not be so easy for Mörck to evaluate this since he has not been in the cultural and sporting arenas or interviewed the informants himself. I find that the book has the character of textual analysis, with the limits that this entails. Is that Mörck's intention? Maybe it is, for Mörck highlights one informant, a male monumental artist who says, "Lifestyle is what moves on the surface, clothes and furniture symbolize a lifestyle." A female footballer says this about the lifestyle concept: "One person in the class, their lifestyle is to have withered geraniums in cracked terracotta pots. It's so studied. As if everything has to be as old and shabby as possible."

The book contains many observations about how the informants have decorated and composed the interiors of their flats, and how temporary this may be in the stage at which they find themselves in the life course. The descriptions are very similar to the way most people live when they first establish themselves on their own, and

it is perhaps this chance mixture of objects mixed with some deliberate choices that Mörck wants to show us. The same applies to appearance. Mörck calls the chapter "In and Out of the Fitting Cubicle". The informants say that their consumption does not go beyond buying clothes. It is through their choice of clothes that they have the chance to create a lifestyle for themselves. At their stage in the life cycle they have few opportunities to shape a lifestyle by expensive investments such as furniture and white goods. Their choice of lifestyle may go no further than buying one special expensive garment which is then combined with cheap copies from Hennes & Mauritz. Nor is there any great difference between the sportsmen and the culture mediators. Mörck finds that the male culture mediators are more interested in expensive clothes than the female ones, but I think that it must be difficult to see this as a cultural feature as long as we do not know who the informants are under the surface and what kind of economic status they have.

In the chapter on entertainment the author analyses the movements of the informants in Gothenburg's night life. The culture mediators and sportsmen have different tastes and routines as regards where they meet their friends. In this part of the book I miss more than ever the details of the informants' backgrounds, and it is difficult to conceive any interest in places and restaurants with no descriptions of the interior aesthetic or the social setting. Readers from outside the city would need a map to be able to follow the analysis. We are told a great deal about the restaurants on Avenyn and Linnégatan, but I lack an analysis of what these places represent. Details about whether the informants go out two or three times a week, whether they meet friends or not, whether they go out on a weekday evening or at the weekend, are not enough to capture the reader's interest if the theoretical analysis is shallow.

In the chapter entitled "Other Cities", Mörck shows what it means for the informants to move to bigger or smaller cities. Here the culture purveyors and sportsmen differ. The former want to be in a city with a large range of culture on offer and a big job market, while sportsmen and women view sport as an activity lasting a limited time and not dependent on the choice of occupation. Here I wonder how tied the young culture workers are to a place. Since I myself have been a lighting technician at one of the big theatres in Oslo for about fifteen years, I know cultural life well from the inside, so I know that theatrical people are an international professional group. We can work just as well in London or Prague as in Stockholm or Gothenburg because the working methods and tools are the same all over the world. I also know that our "lifestyle" is steered by our professional career, regardless of whether we work in Oslo, Paris, Gothenburg, or in a provincial theatre in Norrland. This is a theme that Mörck has overlooked.

Nor can I grasp whether the lifestyle of sport regulates and shapes sportsmen. Having spent many years on the board of a sports team in Norway and with a major degree in ethnology about skiing from the University of Bergen, I know that sport is an activity that also helps to create a material lifestyle beyond interior furnishing, party wear, and entertainment. What has happened to all the sports arenas, the bodily culture, the sports clothes, the leisure-time consumption, and the sponsor market? I thought that these were essential elements of a sportsman's lifestyle.

Mörck sums up the book by asking whether life has a style. He thinks that even if "lifestyle" manages to survive among postmodernists, we just have to look at the tired composition of the words "life" and "style" to realize that the word was formed during a different age. The word "life", he says, gives an opportunity to sum up everything that is essential in a single word, whereas "style" originated in the study of art, being used to describe formal elements that can characterize a whole era, such as Romanesque and Gothic arches. It is tricky, he says, to link these concepts. It does not give an open concept, but a concept that describes and argues from the assumption that individuals and groups are similar. He continues this theme in the book, claiming that the problem with lifestyle is not that it raises questions about the integration of the life lived by individuals and groups as such, but that it gives a pre-programmed answer to the question of what this integration is like. He says that it is wrong to postulate order from similarity. He is

thus critical of Featherstone's use of the concept. In this section Mörck deals with themes such as "misgivings about life-labels", "lifestyle and self-categorization", "topographical metaphors", and the lifestyle concept in relation to gender and class, and not least of all lifestyle as a phenomenon between play and structure. Lifestyles stand out here in a spatial context, and not as the opinions or attitudes or values underlying the lifestyle. Mörck thereby means that the discussion of lifestyle has been placed where it belongs, namely, in the living room and on the street. The problem for me, as an insider in both camps, and as an ethnologist, is that I do not think the analysis is where it ought to be. If lifestyle means the way we decorate our homes and ourselves – in other words, that lifestyle is the objects with which we surround ourselves – that is all right as far as I am concerned, but why then choose these young informants who through their activities and jobs have other fields that are more interesting than aestheticizing their homes? Have these "non-material" youth settings been selected speculatively, to prove that life has no style? The ethnologist, in my opinion, has not been where he should have been before he started the analysis, namely, out in the enterprises, the arenas, in the everyday homes, and on the streets. If he had been there, I think we would have been given a more composite picture of what lifestyle is and more knowledge about what material lifestyle can be.

As a contribution to the theoretical debate about lifestyle, the book is nevertheless good. It is both thought-provoking and exciting.

Mari Alvim, Oslo

Cultural Analysis of the Body

Niels Kayser Nielsen, Krop og kulturanalyser. Den levede og den konstruerede krop. Odense Universitetsforlag, Odense 1997. 246 pp. ISBN 87-7838-354-8.

■ Niels Kayser Nielsen's latest book, with a title meaning "Body and Cultural Analyses: The Lived and the Constructed Body", analyses the body from a cultural perspective. The book is mainly a compilation of a great deal of the research into the body that has been done outside feminist theory in recent decades. Theorists such as Norbert Elias, Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens, Bryan Turner, Charles Shilling, Pasi Falk, and Mike Featherstone are therefore the most prominent names. The book is written as an introduction, based to a large extent on notes from lectures and supervisions. It therefore does not hang together well as a continuous text, but perhaps gains more from being read as separate parts. The approach combines cultural history and structural sociology. The first of the three parts is entitled "Body Culture – Theory and History", a survey of research and theory in the field. The second part, "Culture-Analytical Theories and Subject Areas" deals with cultural analysis and culture theory, while the third, "Studies on Topics in Body Culture", presents theories of the relation between body and topics such as rituals, space, food, fashion, and sexuality. The arrangement of the book makes it possible to use it as a reference work.

The use of the plural form "cultural analyses" in the title indicates that the book should not be seen as preaching one particular analytical strategy. According to Nielsen, that would signal that there is a metastrategy for cultural analysis or that there is a homogeneous field called culture. The designation "cultural analyses" should instead reflect a perspective that allows many different expressions of culture, each of which requires its own analysis.

Nielsen's starting point is that a breach occurred in body studies around 1990, "a true new departure". Before that, the body had been exclusively analysed as a socially constructed phenomenon, on which stagings and codes could be read. This outlook has now been extended, and the body is seen as more than just a display window. It is also a condition to which we are subject and to which we belong in terms of our life history. However, Nielsen is careful to emphasize the risk of falling back into an old-fashioned biological way of thinking, with concepts such as heritage and race. His aim is instead to get away from the dualistic opposition of body as construction and body as biology. This can be achieved by attempting to combine body culture with historical thinking and cultural analysis, with the focus on the experience of living in a

body. A perspective like this is described as the only interesting one today. The subtitle of the book, "The Lived and the Constructed Body", illustrates the opposition that Nielsen sees between the body as a construction and the body as lived experience.

In the first part of the book, under the heading "Gender, Body, and Awareness", we read what is unfortunately the only brief survey in the book of feminist body theory. Since it is in this area of theory that the most interesting and challenging thoughts about the body belong, this marginalization is not just the great mistake of the book but also very strange. Perhaps the explanation for this regrettable demarcation is that Nielsen generally speaking regards constructivism as a thing of the past. The idea of "the body as construction", he says, was launched by the anthropologist Margaret Mead. Her aim was a progressive attack on the traditional view of gender as biologically determined. Later, with inspiration from Foucault, the body was viewed as a lump of clay which could be shaped in one way or the other. In the 1980s, according to Nielsen, criticism began to be levelled at the idea of construction. It was claimed that it consistently ignored the significance of the body for gender identity. Nielsen's description of feminists differs from the way in which I used to perceive them. Perhaps it is not just the fact that known constructivists such as Rosi Braidotti, Susan Bordo, and Elizabeth Grosz are referred to as feminists who believe that women are essentially different. When Nielsen presents a critique of abstraction from the body and says that one can find in these feminists a view of gender as a prediscursive factor, I feel great scepticism. The discussion of bodily (or non-bodily) experience is very interesting and important, but despite some small attempts there is no satisfactory discussion of this in the book. Nielsen believes that the body cannot just be seen as a construction and that most feminists have abandoned this idea. The attendant question – how one should regard gender, what comes after a constructivist view of gender – is missing. At the same time, it is essential to know where Nielsen stands if one is to be able to relate to the argumentation. Or how can one interpret "Even the most hardened gender constructivists fall back into gender essentialism when it comes to phenomena such as genital mutilation" (p. 15)?

It is thus not clear how one is to interpret the distinction between the lived and the constructed body of the title. What is clear, however, is that Nielsen himself sees gender as something that exists before our interpretations of it. We are not assigned a gender, he writes; we are already part of it, after which the construction and awareness of this gendering can begin. I would rather claim that it is impossible to make a distinction between the lived and the constructed body, and I am not convinced by the reasoning. Although Nielsen wants to get away from the biology–construction dichotomy, with "lived experience" as some kind of intermediate stage, this rather leads to a new dichotomy. Being at the intersection, as he writes, between the body as lived experience and the body as construction nevertheless leads to a dualistic opposition, despite the intersection. Contrary to what is argued in the book, I believe that not even death in corporeal terms is outside all discourses.

To illustrate this so-called post-constructivism, Nielsen refers to the film star Sharon Stone. In summer 1990 Stone posed in the men's magazine *Playboy*, sitting naked from the waist up on a lump of ice. In addition, she told about how she masturbated in a bathtub in the film *Sliver*. This has created an image of her as being liberated as regards nudity and sexuality. But in her private life Sharon Stone is not so liberated in bodily terms. On her neck she has an 18-centimetre-long scar from a riding accident during her childhood. This scar is removed electronically in all her films and retouched on photographs of her. Nielsen believes that these examples could easily be interpreted from the angle of the Frankfurt school, showing that the private body breaks through in the end. But this would be an oversimplification. Sharon Stone's private body is spread by the media and hence made public, and it is the interaction between her private and public body that is decisive. It is impossible to say where one ends and the other begins.

Swedish cultural analysis is highlighted in the book as a viable approach. One characteristic of this is said to be the interest in the intersection between experience and cultural construction. A

great deal of what we perceive as natural and general is instead cultural and specific. Nielsen believes that there is a basic assumption in many Swedish ethnologists that social man can be understood as both a culture bearer and a culture builder, not least in analyses of body culture or the welfare state.

The third and final part of the book, "Studies on Topics in Body Culture", is the most accessible, based on a number of concrete and interesting examples of how body culture is expressed. Under the heading "Body and Rituals", for example, Nielsen describes how important it is that the performance of rituals is consistent in bodily terms. At a memorial ceremony at Verdun for the fallen in the First World War, Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand stand side by side. As a gesture of reconciliation between two equals, they hold hands. The harmony is disturbed, however, by several factors. Kohl seems almost twice as big as Mitterrand, whose hand appears to vanish in Kohl's. In addition, Kohl is gazing amicably at his colleague, who is looking gravely at something more momentous. On top of everything, Mitterrand's trousers are far too large, so his body looks as if it is disappearing. In view of the graves and the wreaths, it is scarcely appropriate that Kohl should be "smiling contentedly like a bridegroom delighted at finally being able to hold the bride's hand". The result is comical and disharmonious, and hence confusing. The ritualization of the ceremony which arises when the men hold hands like a married couple sends the wrong signals. The ritual is not coherent.

Under the heading "Body and Sexuality" Nielsen discusses the last thirty years' research in this area. Three phases are described: the era of the repression thesis, the Foucault era, and the post-Foucault era. The latter is characterized by building on some of Foucault's theses about sexuality and history, while criticizing and supplementing these, in terms of social history as well as theory and discourse. More than anyone else, Foucault has determined the discourse of sexuality and hence helped to create his own study object, according to Nielsen. Despite this, it would appear from works of popular scholarship, self-help books, or weekly magazines as if he had never written a line. Here we find instead what is called the repression thesis: that sexuality has been repressed for so long and should therefore be released and liberated. The basis for these ideas is that, under the veneer of culture there is a healthy, unspoiled nature that should be brought out into the light.

From the farmhand Mikkel Christensen's experiences of sexuality in Vendsyssel at the end of the nineteenth century, Nielsen argues that social history can teach us that people are not just victims of a discourse, not just culture bearers; sexuality and the resolution of sexual problems is also a product of man's ability to create culture. True, Nielsen agrees with Foucault that gender and sexuality are changeable and that one can therefore speak of construction, but he thinks that Foucault ignores the fact that the body, gender, and sexual practice are already there, before they become objects of discursive inventions. One thus cannot speak of a total invention; it is rather a matter of adjustment and design. Unfortunately, Nielsen does not take any stance on the common objection against this type of reasoning: that even if the body is "pre-discursive", we cannot relate to it in any way but through discourse, which thereby makes it always discursive. In the section on sexuality, feminist theory – which could have been a great asset – is also noticeably absent. Perhaps this is the explanation why "sexuality" here is mainly about "sex", and why a problematization of heterosexuality is conspicuous by its absence.

Magdalena Petersson, Gothenburg

Beauty is Simplicity

Ingrid Nordström, Identitet i Glasriket. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1995. 190 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7798-967-8.

■ An ethnological study has been published in Sweden making an all-round examination of the people in one single occupation, and of their work, working environment and regional identity. The study in question is by Ingrid Nordström and covers glassmakers over the past hundred years.

In the last three decades of the 19th century dozens of little glasswork communities with their

production plants and workers' housing sprang up in the Småland region of southeast Sweden. The whole area later came to be known as "Glasriket", mainly in an attempt to attract tourists. This is the area on which the study focuses.

The study on many sectors for its background. Technical progress and the consequent change in the craftsman's work is one important topic for examination. The writer therefore follows the glassmakers' work and life in the working community by highlighting the impact of the technical advances and industrialization on the craftsman's art, so rich in tradition.

Nordström also approaches her topic from the perspective of art, culture and social history. She accordingly enlightens the reader on the principles, ideals and policies that have over the past hundred years been guiding Sweden's domestic culture and have even gone so far as to dictate the types of homes and the material culture in which people were to live. At the time this was a question not only of social policy but also of fashions, of "good taste" and lifestyle models. This also explains why the Swedes bought glassware of a particular kind for their homes, why they drank their milk from glasses of a specific kind, etc. Of focal significance to the glassware made in Sweden at the time was "Glassland".

From around the turn of the century until well into the 1930s the Swedish home ideology and its "ideal home" concept embraced both the idea of harmony as the source of a happy domestic life and a democratic view of equality between members of the family, both at home and in the community. The ideal home was to be a "beautiful home". The author does indeed give an admirable account of the way the "beautiful Swedish home" was the result of deliberate planning guided from outside. She also reveals to the reader the means by which people were enlightened and taught to understand what constituted the "good taste" that made an object "beautiful". The democratic way of thinking led to the belief that all Swedes should be given the chance of acquiring a "beautiful home" that was beautifully furnished.

If every family was to acquire this beauty, glassware had to be inexpensive and simple in design, i.e. suitable for mass production. The favouring of simplicity and practicality rather than ornamentation and large dinner services was not just a Swedish phenomenon at the time, but the period leading up to the Second World War was indeed a golden era for Swedish glass design and designers. It was then that the concept of "Swedish glass" was established in design and the international community in general.

This world success raised the Swedes' national esteem. It also made all those involved in glassmaking, both the craftsmen carrying on the tradition and the employees engaged in mass production, aware of the rise in status of their occupation in the eyes of the users of glass. In her study Ingrid Nordström also draws attention to the simultaneous birth and growth of local identity, as indicated by the title of her book, *Identitet i Glasriket* ("Identity in Glassland").

Not only did the good reputation of Swedish glass bolster the self-esteem of the glassmakers and other inhabitants of Glassland; it also encouraged tourism, which played an important role in the process. The tourist industry "discovered" the glassworks and in fact invented the name for the region, Glassland. Tourists were sold not only glassware but also atmosphere and thrills in the exotic world of the glassmaking teams or chairs. People wanted to see the glassmaker at work by his glowing furnace, to admire his graceful movements and his tools, the symbols of a dying art. Above all they wanted to witness the miraculous event of a piece of glass being conjured forth by a skilful blower from a batch consisting almost exclusively of sand.

The "ordinary" people (the users of the glass) thus helped to point the way to the design and spread of mass-produced goods. Tourism brought to light different consumer needs. This new demand raised (and is indeed still raising) the value of individual design in handicrafts and glassware. Many Swedish designers have left the big works for the little glass studios.

Nordström's book shows how aesthetic awareness was aroused and reinforced in the minds of the Swedes, and how the artists and glassmakers transformed "Swedish glass" into a beautiful form of art. The reader is also shown how the aesthetic aspect of mass-produced goods is called into service in community planning when a new way of life or lifestyle demands new props, new

forms. "Swedish glass" is an example of art in the service of society.

The economic recession of the 1990s has given many of the Glassland glassworks a bitter taste of reality. Many of the works have closed down. People can no longer take it for granted that they will find and keep a job, and their confidence has been undermined. There are in Glassland empty industrial premises, houses, meeting places, but no longer the routines established by work or the production that made the works famous. Nordström conjectures that cultural activities, such as those now taking on a new lease of life in Glassland, acquire deeper significance when society is in crisis. The local identity was turned to in an attempt to discover ways of maintaining life in the "dying" industrial areas. The traditions of the popular movements are, in Nordström's opinion, proving their strength again.

While the study by Ingrid Nordström is highly laudable, it does also deserve a few criticisms. With a view to a wider readership it is regrettable (though the fault probably does not lie with the writer) that it was written in Swedish and not, say, English. The Swedes, like the Finns, suffer from the fact that they speak a minor language. Even so, the author would have done well to examine the studies of glass published in Finland or the Finnish literature on the history of the arts and culture. She would then have discovered some interesting potential for making comparisons and her findings would have found confirmation in an area that was not confined to Glassland. Although the Finnish monographs are mostly published in Finnish, they have a summary in English or German. I could here recommend such examples as the article "Beautiful glass for everyone" by Kaisa Koivisto of the Finnish Glass Museum (in the *Scandinavian Journal of Design History*, volume 6, 1996) and my own doctoral dissertation of 1989: Summary: "Glassworkers and glass manufacturing in Finland during the early 20th century (1900–1939): an ethnological study of workers and work".

Virpi Nurmi, Rauma

History of the Different

Toivo Nygård, Erilaisten historia. Marginaaliryhmät Suomessa 1800-luvulla ja 1900-luvun alussa. Atena, Jyväskylä 1998. 237 pp., Ill. ISBN 951-796-091-3.

■ Toivo Nygård's book *Erilaisten historia* (History of the different) is the first comprehensive historical study in Finland concerning the history of normality and abnormality, different kinds of marginal groups. The period studied by Nygård stretches from the end of the nineteenth century to the first decades of the twentieth century. At that time Finland was a grand duchy of Russia and since 1917 it has been an independent state. Over the period studied by Nygård industrialization got stronger in Finland and gave an impetus to many social changes. The landless population of the countryside had to move from place to place to earn their living. Many of these landless persons moved to towns and this caused different kinds of social problems. Finnish society also began to be more and more clearly divided on the basis of wealth so that some got richer and some became poorer and poorer. Because the social welfare programmes were deficient, unemployment, especially, increased misery. In this situation many poor persons had to be very clever, and sometimes resorted to illegal methods, to earn their living.

The period studied by Nygård is adequate because the difference started to arouse attention and conversation, and attitudes concerning some groups (e.g. the mentally ill) began to change. At the same time the professional status of medical doctors, police authorities, nurses and special teachers also became higher; nursing, controlling, isolating and education of "the different" was taken in the hands of professionals. However in the rural districts clergymen continued to be partly responsible for public health. On the other hand, the new professionals kept up some traditional beliefs, differences which seemed to be acquired, like alcoholism, prostitution, sexual diseases, and mental disorders, could be interpreted by the professionals to be penalties for transgressions against God.

Difference has always marginalized people.

As a historian Nygård emphasizes that the history of the different is explicitly the history of social problems, and that the ruling classes of the society have controlled the life of "the different". Difference is a problem to those who have power to control others; the different are objects of the exercise of power. In a society which, in accordance with the protestant ethic, appreciates blamelessness, hardwork, and earning one's living, those who could not fulfill these demands were on the margin of the society. They also constituted a moral problem and a threat of those who possessed power. Although the members of the different were quite small, their existence seemed to be a problem which had to be solved.

The time of publishing of Nygård's book is pertinent. In 1990s there has been in Finland passionate debates about the crumbling of the welfare society during the economic recession. Ideas of what is right and fair have been tested. At times of crisis ideas and thoughts usually become sharper, and also measures. Although official decrees and statutes often are in advance of public attitude, during a crisis latent ideas and attitudes of the ordinary people also sharpen and become more critical.

It is very important for our self understanding to study marginal groups of former times because this is a way to understand how we usually make the differences between so called normal and abnormal people. Abnormal people have always been "the others" in our society. A hundred years ago, according to Nygård, examples of the groups of "the others" were vagrants, prostitutes, the sexual diseased, disabled and insane persons, ethnically different people like gypsies and refugees. It seems that the difference was defined by two even oppositional characteristics: you could be born different or you should take the responsibility for your difference. The idea of difference has always been a cultural idea.

According to Nygård the different were considered (besides being a social problem) as a physical and mental threat to the society. There was a fear that they could, for example, infect "normal people" with disease. Three main possibilities seemed to exist to avoid different kinds of "infections": the different could be left without (medical) care, they could be cured, or they could be isolated from others. Because there were not effective methods of taking care of the different, the only "human way" to solve the problem was to isolate them. It is true that some very radical operations were also carried out, for example sterilization, which was justified by the eugenic opinion that genetic debilities ultimately destroy the whole population. However, attitudes concerning whoredom were contradictory. Prostitution, which in fact was illegal, was also seen as morally hateful and condemnable. But on the other hand, it was thought to be an inevitable, even a desirable "safety valve": prostitutes protected decent women against men's immoderate, though natural, sexual lust. The sexuality of a virtuous woman was only for reproduction, and it was quite easy to see "a sickly greedy whore as the opposite of an unwilling lady of the middle class". Although illegal in practice it was in a way legal. That was because in Finland there was an ordinance of regular health control of prostitutes. Statute to abolish prostitution was given in 1907 but it was not easy to annihilate a practice which had been rooted deeply in society. When the society forbade "the oldest profession" it absolved itself morally, but the phenomenon of prostitution lived on.

The book by Nygård is structurally considered and it works. It includes four main chapters which cumulatively guide a reader from the problems between the different and society into the efforts of society to normalize, eliminate with isolation, teach and to take care of the different. All these arrangements aimed at the fact that the society obliterated the different from social view. In general the different were isolated into institutions: the ill-mannered into prisons, female vagrants into houses of correction for women, persons with sensory defects into boarding schools, and mentally retarded into their institutions, and in the 1920s the Russian, Ingrian, and Karelian refugees into the camps.

Erilaisten historia is written fluently and it includes a lot of comprehensive facts and points of view about the history of "the different". Nygård has mainly used official archival sources and this means that the different have remained objects; they are marginals with different characteristics and their life is described mostly through

public and official attitudes and arrangements. This is the conscious choice of the writer, and thus the different and their life have remained lifeless, in a way. However, the illustration gives very instructive and individually touching flashes of the life of these marginal people; especially photographs taken by the Finnish photographer Viktor Barsokevitsch (1863–1933). In the beginning of this century Barsokevitsch took excellent pictures of, for example, unknown vagrants, gypsies, prisoners, the disabled, and inmates of poorhouses. On the whole the book by Nygård is a very interesting, multifaceted and essential study of the perceiving and categorizing of "the others".
Pirjo Korkiakangas, Jyväskylä

Health as Discourse

Lene Otto, Rask eller lykkelig. Sundhed som diskurs i Danmark i det 20. århundrede. Komiteen for sundhedsoplysning, Copenhagen 1998. 156 pp. ISBN 87-90073-39-8.

■ The Danish Committee for Health Information, which is an interdisciplinary humanistic research project on health and health information, is behind the publication of this book. As we read in the foreword, their reason for wanting to publish this master's thesis written in 1991 by the Danish ethnologist Lene Otto was that the committee had been interested for many years in the conceptual and philosophical aspect of health information. The committee felt that this thesis was particularly interesting because it had a theoretical model which "created a cognitive link between conventional medical prevention and the alternative sector with its demands for autonomy and holistic understanding". The book is intended as a textbook for "professionals" in the health sector and for adult education, and should be regarded primarily as such, rather than as a study in cultural history, although the author in her own preface refers to cultural history and asks, "How does one tackle health as a cultural-historical phenomenon?"

Lene Otto proceeds from the assumption that health has no intrinsic existence. Health is everything and nothing, she says, referring to Troels-Lund's *Sundhedsbegreber i Norden i det 16. Aarhundrede* (Concepts of Health in the Nordic Countries in the Sixteenth Century), which appeared in 1900. Precisely because it is so tricky to study health, we must approach it by roundabout routes, and the route chosen by Lene Otto is to study health as a discourse. She is interested in the way people have thought and spoken about health. Why do we talk about it, how is the concept used and in what contexts, and where did it originate? Health itself is not her concern, but twentieth-century *knowledge* about health.

The author believes that two ways of talking about health have set their stamp on this century's discourse. On the one hand, there is the medical concept of health, in which it is perceived as the absence of disease. She links this concept to preventive medicine or the science of hygiene which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century in connection with the growing knowledge of bacteria. The "era of bacteriology" provides the chronological limits to her study, as she says on page 28. She also says that this represented an epistemological shift that laid the foundation for the rational breakthrough in medicine. With bacteriology, "the art of medicine" gave way to "the science of medicine". This medical concept of health is causal, with a cause-and-effect relationship between disease and health. Health is seen as a means to prevent disease.

On the other hand there is the broad concept of health. Here it is not the absence of disease that is the point; health is seen as a goal in itself. Health is the same as quality of life. This concept of health is associated with people's own perceptions about what it means to be healthy and live a good life. This concept of health is subjective and holistic; there is no cause-and-effect relationship between disease and health, since everything is interconnected. This more popular concept of health has also come into the foreground in the medical discourse, often referred to as an alternative concept of health.

Instead of looking at these two concepts of health as completely different and seemingly incompatible, the author's aim is to study them in relation to each other. She says in chapter three that she has found it important to find out how these two concepts are "structurally" connected: how health understood as the good life is not in

opposition to the medical discourse but is in fact a part of it, even a "logically necessary development". The author sets up a model that moves in a circle from health as prevention to health as an end in itself, and she calls this "the thesis of the self-producing health discourse". This continuous circular movement, as she sees it, is a characteristic feature of the twentieth-century health discourse, in which it is possible to talk about health as something causal and holistic at the same time. Health can be both the good life and a way to prevent disease, whether this means a good family life, a proper diet, fresh air, or healthy sexuality – some of the empirical examples that the author studies in detail.

The book consists of seven chapters which alternate between theoretical discussion and more empirical descriptions. By using the expression *the discourse on health*, the author also hints about where she derives her theoretical inspiration. As in so many other studies of health and disease, Lene Otto refers to Michel Foucault, and one chapter is devoted to his works, methods, and theories.

In the 1980s and early 1990s Danish ethnology was inspired by Thomas Højrup's life-mode analysis, and Lene Otto is no exception; at one point she even makes ethnology synonymous with life-mode analysis (p. 57). But she is also critical and concerned that life-mode analysis should not become lifestyle analysis. In part two of the thesis the theme is life-mode analysis, but before the author turns to the life-modes and the empirical evidence, she develops some possible ideal types inspired by Max Weber. She says that these are to be used "to bring order to the multiplicity of seemingly individual ways to relate to health, and to sharpen our vision to see contrasts" (p. 98). These ideal types are also related to the two concepts of health, whether this is viewed as the good life or as resistance to disease. Otto then shows how these ideal types can be applied to empirical material, her own interviews, and she shows how different people in different ways in different situations relate to the two concepts of health. While some see it as the good life and live in accordance with this in their everyday lives, others are more pragmatic and see health as a way to prevent disease.

The book is primarily intended as a theoretical contribution, and it is quite clear that the author is most interested in the conceptual, logically necessary, and structural aspects. This is also the level at which the book works best, but the author also refers to cultural history, and here there is quite a bit to be said.

It is never entirely clear what kind of empirical evidence Lene Otto has used. On page 109 she presents her own empirical material, which consists of ten interviews, and although this is a discourse analysis, it is taken almost for granted that empirical material must be interviews. But it is possible to do empirical studies of discourses! True, in her bibliography she refers to some journals, but it is difficult to see how these have been used in the text. In one place where she tackles the historical development of the discourse, she even uses other research as her own empirical material. "My material", she says, "is the studies inspired by the history of civilization and mentalities that appeared in the 1970s and 1980s" (p. 73). These weaknesses mean that there are many general and loose statements that are not linked to historical or cultural conditions. For example, when she says that she is studying the era of bacteriology, it is in many ways wrong. The era of bacteriology was at the end of the nineteenth century, and although it has been important in this century too, a great many other things have arrived that have influenced the discourse on health. Knowledge of vitamins is one example. The author does bring up vitamins, but to say that the discovery of proteins and later vitamins (p. 73) is part of the same discourse is to lose the nuances. Proteins and vitamins represent two different knowledge systems which made their mark on the health discourse in different ways. Whereas protein is associated with nineteenth-century nutritional physiology, in which attention was focused on calories and minimum standards, especially as regards the diet of the working class, the knowledge of vitamins led to a shift of focus towards an optimum and the ideal diet. The notion of ideal perfection was to set its stamp on the discourse on hygiene between the wars. This was the age of social hygiene, and in many respects the precursor of post-war welfare policy, directed at all strata of the population.

All in all, I miss a nuanced description of the twentieth-century health discourse. How have cardiovascular diseases affected the discourse? To say nothing about Aids or the technological development in medicine that makes it possible to live with organs from animals and other humans, and even artificial objects? How has plastic surgery influenced the health discourse and the ideal of the young, perfect body? What is the relation in general between mind and body in the twentieth-century health discourse? Just as health is cultural, diseases are also cultural to a certain extent, helping to influence the way we talk, think, and act in relation to health and the ideal of the good life.

When it comes to cultural history, this book has many weaknesses. To turn back to Troels-Lund and his *Sundhedsbegreber i Norden i det 16. Aarhundrede*, he himself was not satisfied with his theoretical expositions and reflections about the actual concept presented in his introduction, which is the part that Lene Otto found most interesting (p. 12). His conclusion was that one ends up "in insoluble difficulties". "Until one has explained in full what it means to live, one has not understood what it is to be healthy," and this must surely be an impossible project. Troels-Lund did not want to make the universal more important than the cultural. Nor was he content with definitions that set up an average or an intermediate stage between two extremes. As he saw it, these were just imagined entities with no real existence. For Troels-Lund the *cultural historian*, health was not cultureless, but conditioned by culture in time and place, and this was also why he cast his gaze on sixteenth-century concepts of health as a contrast to those of his own time. Troels-Lund's method (and for that matter Foucault's too) is contrastive and is based on empirical studies, it is not logical and structural.

As I see it, this book is interesting for its analysis of the logical structure of the health discourse itself, and as a textbook for health care staff it also serves its purpose.

Inger Johanne Lyngø, Oslo

Swedish Museum Studies

Museer och kulturarv. En museivetenskaplig antologi. Lennart Palmqvist & Stefan Bohman (eds.). Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1997. 150 pp. ISBN 91-7203-286-3.

Stefan Bohman, Historia, museer och nationalism. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1997. 160 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7203-258-8.

Kulturarv eller fasadarv. Om det etnologiska perspektivet i kulturmiljövården. Lena Palmqvist (ed.). Nordiska museet/Samdok, Stockholm 1998. 96 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7108-431-2.

■ In recent years there has been a growing interest in research in the fields of museology and cultural heritage. As a result we have received new contributions to the specialist literature on museums, with analysis, theory, and discussion of the work of the museums. This review is a brief presentation of three new Swedish contributions to this field.

There are many different approaches to the field of museology. The motivation behind the anthology edited by Lennart Palmqvist and Stefan Bohman, entitled *Museer och kulturarv* ("Museums and Cultural Heritage"), is to provide a number of contributions to the debate about what the cultural heritage and museology are or can be. On what criteria, for example, do we base our use, selection, and perception of the cultural heritage? And what role do museums play, for example, in the construction of identity? According to Bohman, it is not enough to describe what the museums actually do; it is also essential to ask why they do it, and what ideas lie behind it. The book consists of a series of interesting and very different contributions, shedding light on very different areas. These range from the encounter of the public with the museums, via a description of the history and present-day role of museums of natural history, to a chapter about the home district (*hembygd*) as an idea underlying the construction of local and regional identity. The real pearl in the book is Palmqvist's survey of international museology. This takes the form of a short, precise, and thorough enumeration of different approaches to museology. Palmqvist also singles out some of the most crucial contributions in the field and

their authors. Also worth mentioning is Bohman's chapter about what museology and cultural heritage really are. Cultural heritage and history in all their aspects are not given in any particular society. The history we encounter in written texts or museums is used by different groups with different aims. What cultural heritage do we find worth preserving? By what social, political, and ideological criteria is it selected, and how is it used?

Stefan Bohman's book, *Historia, museer och nationalism* ("History, Museums, and Nationalism"), continues the debate about how we use history and the cultural heritage. History plays a major role in the construction of national identity. The museums therefore play an active role, since that is where history is exhibited. By exhibiting and collecting, the museums help to further and preserve not only national treasures but also national identity. According to Bohman, nationalism is in fact an important driving force for the museums. It is therefore important to be aware of how the cultural heritage and history are used to further various national goals, and also to look at the role played by museums in this process. Using concrete examples, Bohman illuminates the relationship between history, museums, and nationalism in three periods: before the First World War, during the Second World War, and in the 1990s. The result is a very interesting book which will no doubt provoke debate in the museum world. The role played by museums in the construction and manifestation of a national identity is a subject that has not been properly described, and only rarely with European examples. Museums in relation to nationalism seems to be a taboo topic, which does not make this book any less relevant. Bohman describes how many Nordic museum workers reacted very negatively to his question whether museums actually influence identity, whether national or regional. In other words, museum people are unable – or unwilling – to admit that there may be truth in this. For precisely this reason it is important to discuss the topic at a time when national identity is often brought up as different groups or nations try to demarcate themselves from others.

The third book, *Kulturarv eller fasadarv* ("Cultural Heritage or Façade Heritage"), is not of the same calibre as the first two books. It publishes the results, contributions, and discussion from a field seminar in 1996 entitled "Does Anyone Live in the Cultural Environment?" The aim of the seminar was to find potential areas for theoretical and methodological collaboration between ethnologists and people working with cultural heritage management. The goal, according to the book, should be to arrive at a holistic view in this work. A holistic view means that it is not enough to concentrate exclusively on what the book calls façade heritage, that is, material remains, buildings, or the landscape itself. According to the book, there is a tendency at the moment to focus on purely physical and material documentation, with no regard for use, meaning, or location in the surrounding context. The point of the book is that the cultural heritage is created in the interaction between people and their surroundings. It is therefore important to collect more than just physical descriptions, so that one can shed light on different ways of life in different historical and social settings, and also so that we can bring history to life for those who come after us. The problem is based on Swedish conditions. In Denmark, on the other hand, ethnologists and museum people are often involved in cultural heritage management. As an ethnologist one can only agree that a holistic view is necessary in the preservation of historic sites and the cultural heritage. It does not hurt, however, to constantly debate what it is in our cultural heritage we want to preserve and by what criteria.

Mette Boritz, Tåstrup

On Marzipan and Pastries

Christa Pieske, Marzipan aus Lübeck. Der süße einer alten Hansestadt. Gustav Weiland Nachf., Lübeck 1998. 120 pp. Ill. ISBN 3-87890-084-8.

Bo Lönnqvist, Bakelser. En studie i lyxens kulturella formspråk. Photographs by Katja Hagelstam. Schildts, Helsingfors 1997. 276 pp. Ill. ISBN 951-50-0818-2. English edition: Pastries. A Study of the Cultural Expression of Luxury, Trans. Elwa Sandbacka. Schildts, Helsingfors 1998. 276 pp. Ill. ISBN 951-50-0917-0.

■ "But no marzipans may be consumed, neither large nor small, on pain of a fine of 12 dalers."

Thus decrees the Swedish royal statute of 1664 concerning feasting among the burgher estate. The ban on marzipan applied to "distinguished weddings" and must be viewed in the light of the fact that both almonds and sugar had to be imported. The prohibition of sweetmeats must have been unwelcome to those who were preparing wedding feasts, for people on such occasions tend to spare no expense. The ban was even less welcome to the confectioners in the nearby town of Lübeck, who were famous for their delicious marzipan.

Although prohibition is one thing and practice another, one cannot ignore the difference between Scandinavia and the continent when it comes to marzipan and other confectioneries. When I had the pleasure of attending the inauguration of the major exhibition "Marzipan weltweit" in the Sankt Annenmuseum in Lübeck in October 1998, I noted that there were no exhibits from Sweden, although Anthon Berg of Odense showed off a cornucopia of *kransekager* (ring cakes), the form in which our Danish friends chiefly eat marzipan nowadays.

The German picture researcher Christa Pieske, who lives in a suburb of Lübeck, had arranged the grandiose exhibition which attracted a record number of visitors. At the entrance to the exhibition one could pick up her sober book *Marzipan aus Lübeck*. It begins with some words by the Lübeck author Thomas Mann, who leads our thoughts to the channels of contact from the Orient via Venice to Lübeck. Of course, there are explanatory legends to link marzipan with Lübeck. More reliable sources, however, can be found in the records of marzipan in the town accounts from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Marzipan was fashionable in the baroque era, and it is not surprising that it reached Sweden a little later. Food and medicine go closely together, and it was therefore natural that marzipan was first available from apothecaries and was prescribed as a cure for the lovesick.

Christa Pieske also emphasizes the pictorial sources which show the role played by marzipan in past and present alike. The Nordic Museum could actually have contributed models of some marzipan cakes, but it is characteristic that they show Dives and Lazarus; even at weddings one was supposed to think of the poor – one could never be really happy.

Marzipan is a plastic material that invites "Kleinkunst". In the Sankt Annenmuseum one can see exquisite creations in marzipan, and a complete urban panorama in marzipan. But marzipan is not just a part of history in Lübeck. Although there are not so many marzipan makers today, they have become bigger. At the entrance to the exhibition one can see the large specialist machines they use for crushing almonds. Visitors to the opening of the exhibition could also note that marzipan and a glass of red wine go well together.

The Lübeck exhibition could have been subtitled "The Cultural Expression of Luxury", but this had already been used by the Finland-Swedish ethnologist Bo Lönnqvist in his book *Pastries*, which shows that we are not bankrupt in Finland and Sweden when it comes to sweetmeats. The step from costume research – Bo Lönnqvist's main field hitherto – to pastry research is not as great as it might at first seem. "When the confectioner's creations became works of art, they became subject to the same laws as fashion, the idea of rapid change, the pleasure of constant innovation," he writes. He even claims that "there is a connection between costume fashion and pastries, and this connection arose in the luxury-loving Venice." However, a scholar from the country that we associate with Paavo the peasant cannot throw himself into the paradise of pleasure without first having delineated a backdrop of famine. It was only relatively recently that the Swedish term *bakelse* (pastry) took on its present-day meaning of a confectioner's product. In the past the word also included fried items such as waffles, crullers, and *struvor* (rosettes); the latter were on the Sunday menu of Bishop Brask, and Lönnqvist's supposition that they are of medieval German origin is supported by E. M. Segschneider in *Nahrung und Tischkultur im Hanseraum*, ed. G. Wiegelmann (1997:458).

Bo Lönnqvist is not the kind of ethnologist who apologizes for going far back in time. On the contrary, he can surely be called a cultural historian, albeit with a partly anthropological approach. Lönnqvist puts his pastries into a historical and geographical context that includes magic

and metamorphosis. When bread is ritualized, transformed into pastry, and elevated to fashion, a name is bestowed as the finishing touch. Lönnqvist speaks of "monumentalization" but what he really means is a symbolic charge. Parading before us we see the Napoleon pastry, the Gustav Adolf pastry, the Runeberg pastry, and the Alexander pastry, called after the tsar and known in Helsinki in 1818. It is important that cultural influences from the east, particularly St Petersburg, are made visible too. The famous Helsinki confectioner F. E. Ekberg, for example, had worked as a journeyman in Viborg, Riga, and above all in St Petersburg.

Lönnqvist says that the confectioner Lundberg was right to claim that pastries are primarily public cakes, intended for enjoyment outside the home. "The national aspect meant only that an internationally known pattern was given symbolic values that appealed to people, places, and events in history closer than Africa and Turkey. The luxury gave a dash of civilization to the national." This is a thought-provoking formulation in a book that is as delicious as a pastry.

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Lund

The Festive Year

Iørn Piø, Det festlige år. Sesam, Nørhavn. 1997. 169 pp. Ill. ISBN 88-7801-407-7.

■ *Det festlige år* was to be Iørn Piø's last book, yet the text shows no traces of a tired and sick author. On the contrary, it is taut and full of good Danish humour. A festive farewell to readers, listeners, and viewers throughout Denmark, for Piø had enjoyed a virtual monopoly for forty years, spreading knowledge about Danish festive traditions to the people of Denmark.

Det festlige år ("The Festive Year") is a wittily ambiguous title for a book in a classic genre of ethnology. Piø has written it with a light hand, in the form of a series of essays on old and new festive traditions. As in the choice of illustrations, he has taken the trouble to dig out unused material, so that even readers who are familiar with the genre will have a chance to hear new voices in the generous quotations from early and more recent sources.

Where should one start a cavalcade of annual feasts? Martin Nilsson started with May Day celebrations, while Albert Eskeröd followed the calendar and I myself chose the ecclesiastical year. Iørn Piø starts with Lent, and since Danish Lenten customs are so richly developed, the book immediately takes on a distinctly Danish profile. As Gullan Gerward has recently shown, Lent is in fact the seedbed of a number of customs later associated with other special days in spring. A series of festive elements followed in the wake of Hanseatic trading connections, later in combination with Dutch influences, which formed a distinct pattern of culture in the southern Baltic.

A reader from Skåne notices at once the similarities with Danish traditions. These include the celebration of St Martin, the brownie known as *goenissen*, the Lenten customs of knocking the cat out of the barrel and "stabbing the Prussian", and the *væddeløb*, the race of the boys and girls, described by Linnaeus on his tour of Skåne in 1749. The custom of hollowing out sugar beets or turnips in the autumn and using them as lanterns is something I remember from my own childhood in northern Skåne.

Although Denmark is a small country, there are regional differences. In southern Jutland, traditions of German origin have a stronger foothold. The use of lanterns on St Martin's Day, for instance, spread from Germany.

Denmark was one step ahead of us when it came to adopting international trends. The Gregorian calendar was introduced in Denmark in 1700, while Sweden did not change until 1753, which must have complicated Danish–Swedish contacts for half a century. The "great holiday death" occurred in Denmark in 1770 and in Sweden in 1772, but the reform was implemented in slightly different ways, so we still have lasting differences in Danish and Swedish holidays. It was not until the twentieth century that customs began to spread from Sweden to Denmark; Lucia is the prime example.

Some festive customs originated at the royal court, and in the age of absolutism there was a degree of centralized control not witnessed before or since. This was the origin of New Year fireworks, Bengal lights, and rockets, according to Piø. *Den Store Bededag* (Great Prayer Day) is

yet another still surviving example of central control by the absolute monarchs. A royal edict of 1689 assembled the numerous prayer days into a single large national prayer day on the fourth Friday after Easter. In popular consciousness this is still associated with the eating of plain buns. Piø says that the bakers had only one free day each year, Great Prayer Day, so they baked buns in advance, and people could freshen them up or eat them in warm milk.

The customs of the court influenced festive life in the capital, and it is striking that Piø often returns to bourgeois festive patterns in Copenhagen, which were sometimes engaged in a negative interplay with those of the "rabble". The students exemplified bourgeois customs in their own way. The picture of the game *bide til bolle*, when students at Regensen let down bread on strings to the street urchins, automatically made me think of the pranks enacted on Great Toddy Day in Lund.

The dual role of folk customs – marking a distance from other groups and strengthening the cohesion of one's own group – is brilliantly illustrated in Meïr Goldschmidt's (born 1819) description of how the village farm hands simply rode past his childhood home in Valby, ignoring the house because his parents were newcomers from Copenhagen. The annual visit by young men demanding a treat was a confirmation of village solidarity. This is the same pattern that Carsten Bregenhøj has demonstrated in the Epiphany custom of *Helligtrekongersløbet* on the island of Agersø.

Piø naturally bases his account on earlier research as well. For example, he uncritically repeats C. W. von Sydow's view that Lucia was modelled on the German Christkindlein, a thesis that I have rejected in an article in *Arv* 1998. The essay form used by Piø makes the presentation rather bitty. The tradition of the Lord of May and Epiphany customs, which have been so important in Denmark, are ignored here. The role of the medieval church is described in a railing fashion that reminds one of Pontoppidan. More informative, for example, is the chapter on the spread of the Christmas tree. One of the essays – on the customs of lighting candles on Liberation Day – shows how difficult it is to reconstruct what happened as recently as 4 May 1945. Were the candles lit in city windows as a spontaneous expression of joy, or was there an underlying festive pattern?

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Lund

Between Tradition and Modernization

Bjarne Rogan, Mellom tradisjon og modernisering. Kapitler av 1800-tallets samferdselshistorie. Novus forlag, Oslo 1998. 366 pp. Ill. ISBN 82-7099-292-5.

■ After having been a largely neglected topic as far as the historical perspective is concerned, research into spatial concepts and attitudes has experienced a significant development during the recent decade. This is true of ethnology as well as history; a number of pioneering works have been written and the topic has surfaced at one symposium after another. However, there is still so much work to be done that any new book that is published on the subject has a good chance of influencing the current state of research to a high degree. Therefore, a recent attempt by Professor Bjarne Rogan (Oslo) to analyse and describe the history of travel in nineteenth-century Norway is per se an interesting event that deserves our attention.

Due to the well-known structural (technological, political, etc.) changes, the nineteenth century is often regarded as a key period in spatial studies. However, despite the wealth of material at our disposal, there is as yet no scholarly consensus concerning the spatial views of ordinary people during this age of supposed transition. For instance, studies of the Midlands in England have demonstrated that the coming of the railway had profound effects on the rural mobility. The villagers began to discover the world around them. Studies of nineteenth-century diaries from rural Sweden, however, have yielded very different results: the farmers appear to have grown more isolated than before as they learned that they could let the trains carry their goods to the ports or the cities instead of transporting it themselves. Are we seeing true regional differences, or should these diverging trends be interpreted as simply the result of diverse scholarly methods? Was the

nineteenth century in truth an age of transition from "medieval" isolationism to modernity, or is the change merely a myth? We will never know until more research is carried out.

Bjarne Rogan freely admits that, by writing this book, he is trying to do many things at the same time. *Mellom tradisjon og modernisering* is intended to be a textbook for students as well as a general overview and a reference work. That is not to say that the book is confusing to read; on the contrary. Rogan's text is never boring, and the book is richly illustrated. Anyone remotely interested in what life was like in nineteenth-century Scandinavia is bound to enjoy it. However, it is impossible not to notice some discrepancies between the manifest purpose of Rogan's study and the finished product. He makes a point of the fact that he is chiefly interested in the element of change (whether actual change or the absence of it), but some of the technological innovations that he admits to having been of paramount importance are only hinted at, such as the bicycle. Generally speaking, there is a certain focus on the first part and the middle of the century (especially the 1840s and the 1850s – the age of liberal reforms, the first Norwegian railways and telegraphs, the expansion of road construction, the development of early tourism, etc.), while the last decades receive considerably less attention. It also comes as something of a surprise that Rogan concentrates on inland traffic and refrains from making a broad analysis of travel by sea – despite the well-known fact that sea-travel has been essential to Norwegian society since pre-historical times.

One of the most important results from Rogan's study is that we should differentiate not only between the socio-economic strata of the population but also between the various elements of modernity that appeared on the scene in the nineteenth century. As far as the social dimension is concerned, Rogan demonstrates that the majority of the population displayed a reluctance to change that has been all too easily condemned as conservatism. In fact, as Rogan convincingly argues, what appeared to Norwegian government officials as old-fashioned conservatism was usually a very rational response to reform attempts that had little meaning to most Norwegian farmers. For instance, the farmers continued to perform most of their heavy transports during winter, and they preferred to continue to rely on their horses, since the local geography as well as the economy made these "conservative" choices appear by far more logical than the "modern" alternatives.

Turning to the various elements of modernity, the differences between the ways in which these were received by the population were enormous. For instance, the telegraph, although often praised as one of the chief heralds of the new age, had very little effect on the mentality and the daily habits of the people in Norway. Likewise, the changes in the peculiar Scandinavian state system of travel by horse carriages (No. *skyssplikt*) had little or no effect. The coming of the railway and the steamers meant little initially but would eventually, after several decades, transform the travel habits of many Norwegians. Before the turn of the century, these new ways of transportation were of interest primarily to the elite, not to the majority. Far more important was the revolution that occurred within the postal system, a change that affected everyone. On the symbolical level, Rogan stresses the fact that the newly built bridges were very significant. Whether they affected everyday life or not, they automatically became symbols of the new age.

Rogan's conclusion is that old ways and new ways co-existed throughout the nineteenth century since both ways appeared as rational choices and since both of them worked. Unfortunately, Rogan does not make as much use of his results in order to speculate on changes in the mentality as he could have done. It might reasonably be argued that his results hint at a growing divergence with regard to the social dimension of spatial conceptualisation, and that some aspects of space would appear to have undergone profound changes in the minds of ordinary people while other aspects did not. If Rogan had chosen to enter more clearly into this discussion, his contribution might have been considerable. In any case, his results provide an interesting basis for further speculations along these lines. Needless to say, my remarks on what Rogan could have done if he had written another 100 pages is wishful thinking rather than traditional criticism. As an analysis of travel patterns in a traditional

agrarian society that has just begun to evolve into something new and different, Bjarne Rogan's book is to be highly recommended.
Dick Harrison, Linköping

The Culture of Aging

Pigga pensionärer och populärkultur. Owe Ronström (red.) Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 1998. 304 s. Ill. ISBN 91-7203-305-3.

■ In 1993, a group of Swedish scholars received funding for a broad study on the impact of the increasing amount of elderly people in Sweden, seen from a cultural perspective. The research project was called "åldrandets kultur" ("The Culture of aging").The study involved researchers from several fields, primarily folkloristics and ethnology, and together they have produced a line of publications within the topic of Aging in Sweden. This anthology, on "Spry Seniors and Popular Culture", should be read as a joint statement from seven of the scholars involved.

This is a very needed book. Internationally, cultural gerontology *is* a field, since approx. 20 years, but most studies within this discipline have been done on aging in "foreign" cultures, as is the classical anthropological topic. Then again, most of the few cultural studies done within scholarly "homeland" has been concerned with old people in nursing homes and day-care centres; people hit by diseases and in need of care. – Another kind of exotic "otherness". The widespread, gerontological trap is the ultimative focus upon old age *as* weakness, and upon old people as a category, suffering from the supposed weakness of old age. By this statement, I do not intend to promote a superoptimistic view of old age as non-age. The common denunciation of old age by means of activity, sports, "young" looks etc. is in close inherence to its opposite, pessimistic view of old age as weakness, the latter, however, being the strongest implication when it comes to a foundational view upon old age. These two mutually dependent images of old age, the pessimistic and the optimistic presentations, often seem to represent what *is* to say about old age in common discourse. What is seldom said, or studied, is the many possibilities in between the poles.

How do people, who consider themselves being "elderly" – but neither sick nor super – live, act, talk? How do these people organize and enjoy themselves? What do aged persons do to create cultural coherence? Seldom questions like these are discussed in *Pigga pensionärer och populärkultur,* including chapters on seniordance, -singing, -travelling, and reminiscense workshops. As gerontological issues, such perspectives are very important, because they help directing away the attention from rigid notions of old age.

Two chapters are devoted to senior dance, singing and reminscence: Sverker Englund *Det gemensamma minnets melodier. Musik, minne och aktivitet för äldre i vård och föreningsliv* (The melodies of common memory. Music, reminiscence and activity for elderly people in institutions and organisations), and Owe Ronström: *Pensionärsnöjen och modernitet* (Senior amusement and modernity). These two articles focus on the making of meaning through nostalgic, musical reconstructions of the past. Both dancing and singing are activities which create community among the persons involved. The singing and dancing itself is supposed to enhance optimistic ideals in virtue of physical and mental maintainance. As Englund writes: "Is it maybe so, that passivism is viewed as a disease among elderly people; activity it's prophylaxis?" In his very well-written, and interesting article Englund discusses how the "Nostalgoteque" is constructed in order to refine a certain kind of music as representing the past in the ears and minds of elderly people of today. Hence, such refinement is relating not only to music, but also to certain ideas, representation, and identity in nowaday's elderly people. Music from the "nostalgoteque" is used also in work with reminiscence; actually there is a Swedish education for people who like to work with this purpose. But an interesting point is the questioning of *how* and *why* certain music is chosen in preference to other kinds? When scrutinizing the material, Englund finds that "the past" seems to be empty of e.g. workers, Jews, communists, and other more varied perspectives. The constructed past is represented as being only *Swedish*. A nice, homogeneous, and completely undangerous material for the construction of a common identity of today. He also poses the

question of who is given the power to define the past in constructing the present? Carrying the power of defining the past, for instance through music, is also a power of which way people should be viewing their own pasts. And how will this definition game develop in the future, considering the complexity today – will we in fifty years see different reminiscense groups with punk persons, academics, ethnic groups etc.?

Power relations is an issue also in Ronström's engaging article. He states that dancing as a phenomenon is connected to women, youth, immigrants, seniors, but never to the ones in power: white male middle-aged persons. Ronström also gives interesting suggestions to why so many elderly women are dancing senior-dance; and so few elderly men. Ronström finds that the dancing occupation is closely connected to female expression. On top of that, senior-dance is instructed by women, and the male partners are "played" by women due to lack of men, so, taken together there is not much respect left for any male power. Owe Ronström's prime discussions, however, touch upon the relation between work-leisure time, and on movement as an ideal within modernity, which is of course also seen among elderly people, who do a lot of dancing and other bodily moving, in order to be healthy and fresh.

Seniors on the move is the theme of an article by Karin Wahlström: *Resa med vuxen smak. Om att bli pensionär genom att resa.* (Adult taste Travelling. Becoming a Senior through travelling.) Wahlström participated in a bus-tour for seniors, going from Stockholm to Skagen in Denmark, four days in all. This study resulted in some interesting observations, especially did the author focus on words spoken and images represented. For instance she studied the catalogue, selling a senior-tour (where the word "Senior" was never mentioned) in comparison with another catalogue from Kilroy Travels for youth. Exciting to see how old age and youth is represented differently, and what kind of values and interests are laid upon people because they have certain ages. Another interesting point in Wahlström's study is the self-representation in the elderly travellers. They talk about themselves and their age in various ways, connoting to a complex view upon themselves. They seem to carry ironic distance to being "elderly" themselves, well aware of the general negative images of old people.

Leaving the hotel in Skagen, one of the participants said:

"'Finally, I guess they are happy to get rid of us pensioneers.'

'Yes, they probably never had worse guests' a man in the bus says, and everybody is laughing."

The over-all images of old people and old age are studied from various perspectives in other articles in this book. Charlotte Eklund presents an entertaining – hence depressing – article on jokes about old persons, mostly erotic jokes. She demonstrates how elderly women can be represented in folklore – whether from the past or of today – as being surprisingly dangerous. The surprising effect reveals that we normally expect old women to be somehow nice, and harmless. Eklund does not conclude that this perceived harmlessness could be translated into social seclusion or ignorance, which I could add from my own studies of old women in Denmark. She finds, however, that in many jokes, old persons – mostly demented persons – are represented as being like animals. This is a perspective which is taken up by David Gaunt also in his study of greeting cards made for people leaving the workingforce in order to become pensioneers. In his article Gaunt applies a semiotic perspective and offers interesting readings of the symbolic representation in these greetings cards, which Gaunt has collected all around the world. – Certainly a man on the move!

Finally, Charlotta Mannerfeldt has done a study on the representation of elderly people in the radio, connected to programmes on politics concerning old people.

The seven articles are all based on interesting empirical material, which makes it readable for a wide range of people. As a non-Swede, however, I would have liked more thorough introductions to e.g. Swedish music-makers, radio-hosts, and dancing-bands, who do not create lively pictures or voices in my mind. But I imagine such references do appeal very much to Swedish readers, giving the book a taste of liveliness and maybe a tune to follow.

Anne Leonora Blaakilde, Hellerup

A Woman in the Museum World

Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen, Kvinna i museivärlden. En studie i Irja Sahlbergs museisyn. Etnologiska institutionen vid Åbo Akademi, Rapport 7, Åbo 1997. 232 pp. Ill. ISBN 952-12-0084-7.

■ The history of the Finnish museums goes back about one hundred years. Many of them were built and run without subsidy from the state, which meant that that the individual museologists played an important role in the design of the work. It is obvious that both men and women participated in this work, but the women seldom received any recognition for it. In this master's thesis Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen has used Irja Sahlberg (1904–1972) as an example of one of those hidden female museologists, and her study can be labelled as a piece of women's history. The sources consist of interviews, archive material and texts.

Irja Sahlberg worked at the Historical Museum in Turku from 1937 to 1968, and the aim of Sjöberg-Pietarinen's study is to delineate her view of museums. One crucial point to the author is that there is an interaction between the individual's experience and what is expressed in his or her work. To interpret this interaction Sjöberg-Pietarinen has reconstructed the course of Sahlberg's life; to make her visible as a woman in the organization of museums, the author has worked with a gender perspective; and finally Sahlberg's frame of reference, the sum of her knowledge and experience, is discussed. Sjöberg-Pietarinen also has the aim of reflecting upon her own role as a female museologist and researcher studying the life of a colleague.

The first three chapters of the book present the aim of the study, the sources, theoretical and methodological questions. In the next chapter Irja Sahlberg's life course is described, then we can follow her professional career as a museologist, and finally her view of museums is discussed.

Irja Sahlberg was born in Turku as the youngest of the four Sahlberg children. Her Swedish-speaking father had spent eleven years in the United States and was working as a kind of architect after his return to Finland. Her Finnish-speaking mother was born in the countryside and her task in the family was that of housewife and mother. Irja, her brother and sisters learnt to speak Swedish as well as Finnish, and this turned out to be important to Irja in her future profession. As a child Irja learned that the male sphere was more extensive and extrovert than the female one, and during her lifetime she crossed several borders between male and female spheres. Her first step in gender boundary transgression was when, with the support of her father, she had the opportunity to pursue higher education. In May 1924 she passed the higher school examination and now her academic career began. As a young woman in an academic world dominated by men, she needed what we may call male sponsors such as her father and her teacher, Gabriel Nikander. Another boundary transgression was when she later in life became the keeper of the museum in Turku. The fact that in 1960 she took a step back in the hierarchy of the museum in favour of a younger colleague – a man who just had finished his doctoral dissertation – tells us a lot about the complicated web of professional position, gender and power.

Chapters 5 and 6 describe the museological frame of reference of the 1930s, when Irja Sahlberg entered the museum world. Her work at the museum in Turku is then presented. With this work and her publications as the point of departure, Sjöberg-Pietarinen reconstructs Sahlberg's view of museums and she declares – not surprisingly – that Sahlberg's background in a general setting of craftsmen in combination with her academic education is crucial to her work as a museologist. On the one hand her education had prepared her for the professional tasks and provided her with the actual museological frame of reference, on the other hand she took advantage of her perspective from within. Since her childhood she was familiar with the way of thinking and living among people whose life situation she tried to describe in her museological work. Other crucial elements in her work were the concepts of time and social setting.

The generation that Irja Sahlberg belonged to was not "gender-reflective" in our sense of the term. Therefore most often the male sphere in the museological work is presented as the official and outward one, whilst the female one is de-

scribed as the private and inward sphere. Incidentally, interior settings were the best form of expression for Irja Sahlberg.

Chapter 7 is devoted to the strong and the weak characteristics of Sahlberg's work. Her professional strength was her intimate knowledge of folk culture, her professional weakness was her reluctance to appear and speak in public. Sjöberg-Pietarinen's interpretation is that this was the result of Sahlberg's socialization into traditional gender patterns. The official sphere was in Sahlberg's view a male one, the private sphere a female one, and Sahlberg herself was acting like a kind of housewife in the realm of the museum. With this background in mind it may be understandable that Sahlberg left her post as the keeper of the museum to a younger, better-educated man.

Only four years after her retirement she died, but as a pensioner she carried on with her work as much as possible. And two of her most fruitful ideas are still vital in the museological work, especially Turku and its surroundings: "Handicraft Day" and the famous "Christmas Tables" that she introduced.

After reading this book, some questions arise: one is what kind of a gender perspective Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen is dealing with. Her presentation of the international gender debate, for example, is not very deep, and one gets the impression that the author is not so familiar with the latest feminist studies. For example, the critical debate on the sex/gender distinction or the discussion of "the heterosexual matrix" are not even mentioned. Perhaps one could say that Sjöberg-Pietarinen has chosen to focus on the German field of women studies rather than the international gender debate. Even if I think that some links to the international debate should have been useful, I appreciate Sjöberg-Pietarinen's references to German ethnological research, references that are seldom found in current Swedish ethnological studies. In her study Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen says that she wants to use gender as an analytical tool, but as a matter of fact she uses it in a more descriptive way.

It also striking that one cannot find the usual references to well-known scholars like Bourdieu, Foucault, Giddens and others, so self-evident in a Swedish dissertation today. This gives evidence of a certain degree of scientific maturity. To do a good piece of work, you do not necessarily have to wave the most popular signal flags.

The main problem with Sjöberg-Pietarinen's study is that she neglects some aspects that could have made the analysis even more interesting. As already mentioned, the gender perspective clearly is a more descriptive than theoretical one. Sometimes one gets the impression that it was added after the empirical work was done. The author refers to scholars such as Yvonne Hirdman, Harriet Silius, Lissie Åström and Britta Lundgren, and here she is fairly well read. Nevertheless, she seems to have missed an article that could have provided her with new perspectives on women's professional careers, namely Britta Lundgren's "Kön och genealogi i etnologisk ämneshistoria" (1996) in *Åtskilja och förena: Etnologisk forskning om betydelser av kön*, where Lundgren describes and analyses the lives of three female ethnological pioneers. Another scholar whose work could have been useful is the museologist and ethnologist Kerstin Arcadius, who has written about the "creation" of the Swedish museums, and about some of the crucial persons involved in this process (*Museum på svenska: Länsmuseerna och kulturhistorien*, 1997).

Another question that appears after reading Sjöberg-Pietarinen's book is why the author has not gone more carefully into the discussion of positional power versus gender power. In this field there are a lot of international studies to consult, studies that could have been useful for Sjöberg-Pietarinen in her analysis of this complex. And here, once again, we have touched on the heart of the matter: is this a piece of women's history or a more gender-problematizing study? One easily gets the impression that the author promises to do something that she actually does not do, namely, a theoretical gender analysis of her material. This does not mean that Sjöberg-Pietarinen has not done good work, rather that it should have been labelled differently. I would characterize this study as a piece of "dignity research", where the life and work of the female museologist Irja Sahlberg is scrutinized.

To conclude, this study has its strength in the following aspects: it is valuable as a piece of

women's history and as a piece of Swedish-Finnish history of museology. It also has the advantage of being the result of good study of original sources, one cannot say that Sjöberg-Pietarinen is an "armchair ethnologist", and that is worth praise these days, when some of us are too fond of sitting at our desks.
Birgitta Meurling, Uppsala

Industrialism in the Museum

Eva Vikström, Bruksandan och modernismen. Brukssamhälle och folkhemsbygge i Bergslagen 1935–1975. Nordiska museet, Stockholm 1998. 276 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7108-427-4.

■ Where is the boundary between industry and society? How are visible and invisible bonds formed between the enterprise, the person, and the environment? This diffuse relationship is the subject of the art scholar Eva Vikström's survey of the built environment in the Swedish mining and ironworking district of Bergslagen between 1935 and 1975. The book is about the housing question in Swedish industrial communities of the twentieth century, about the buildings erected by the companies, and about the emergence of the urbanized industrial community from the 1940s to the 1990s.

The material representation was expressed in a transformation of the buildings: the industrial town with its own distinctive spirit became a residential town. The democratization of the industrial communities in the era of the welfare state and the economic boom primarily transformed the physical environment, while the character of industrial community was maintained by municipal control: "A strong municipal boss could have just as much authority as a managing director in the 1890s."

The companies considered in the book are above all Uddeholms AB and Gränges AB. These companies financed architects and housing programmes to construct their respective industrial communities, and Vikström argues that the companies' housing policy was an important part of the rational industrial production in places dominated by a single company.

The early Swedish welfare state – "the people's home" – had many corners. Industrial towns such as Karlskoga, Fagersta, Hedemora, Avesta, Hagfors, Degerfors, Sandviken, and Hallstahammar were modernized by means of architecture which was intended to raise both the living standards of the workers and the capacity of the company. The merger of *traditionalism* – the authoritarian and patriarchal industrial community – and *modernism* – the changing and democratic welfare state – meant a division in the built environment of these industrial towns. The growth of the public sector was particularly soulless in places whose public sphere had previously been the company and the parish.

In the 1960s and 1970s our family trips often took us to relatives in southern Dalarna. Moving here in the 1950s, my uncle had found a job as an engineer at Avesta ironworks and my aunt worked in the telephone exchange. As a child I found Avesta safe and easy to survey. Compared with the big town of Lund, the few streets were straight. It was easy to find one's way, and one could go into town alone. The landmark by which I found my way back to my uncle and aunt's house was the Blue House; this was the biggest building I had ever seen, looking like nothing else. The façade was covered with shiny blue porcelain. Alvar Aalto's azure-blue project in Avesta was realized in 1961 in cooperation with the builder Ernst Sundh. Before this, however, the town council had proposed a cooperative venture. In 1944 there were plans for a new town centre, and the architects Alvar Aalto and Albin Stark were invited to submit proposals. The new project resulted in plans for an exclusive complex that was to house a tall town hall, a hotel, a library, a theatre, and a People's Hall. The townscape was to be held together as an organic unity, with a large, open "Citizens' Court" in the centre. This grandiose proposal went under the name *Akropolis*. No new town centre was built in Avesta, however, but the proposal did lead to the construction of meeting places. The lack of interest in the shaping of the public space was perhaps the main reason why the industrial and urban environments became separated, in Vikström's opinion. The desire to shape a sense of community was instead concentrated on the residential area.

The transformation of industrial communities

between 1945 and 1975 was characterized by higher material housing standards. A good home has a powerful symbolic value in welfare-state Sweden. In the 1930s the cooperative housing association HSB – "the social lifting crane" – had campaigned for democratic housing, which was realized in the 1950s. The HSB blocks of flats embodied the breakthrough of democracy in housing, and the new society built in the 1960s was adapted to motorized consumption. The public vacuum left room for practical solutions as regards public places and traffic, with broken-up town centres and pedestrian shopping streets as the concrete result.

Eva Vikström's comprehensive documentation is an important piece of work which makes great demands of the reader. No detail is too small for her to omit. It is easy to become disoriented among all these men, buildings, and dates. In the final chapter, however, the analysis of the industrial community as a historic monument actually leads to a desire to read the whole book once again. The present is often the most important entrance to an understanding of the past.

As a result of the decline of industry in Sweden in the 1970s and 1980s, the industrial community became a historic monument, according to Vikström. Industrialism created a romanticism around the ironworks which could be used by the companies to legitimate their own renewal and progress. In the 1960s the watershed between early and later industrialism was set in the years around 1935. In the 1980s this watershed was moved forward to the post-war era.

The construction of history and a cultural heritage meant that the industrial communities became monuments that communicated knowledge but required conservation. The expansion of the public sector in Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s created a solid platform for cultural heritage management. The popular local history movements which encouraged people to "dig where you stand" acquired an important therapeutic function when industries were closing down all over Sweden. When "workers' history" merged with the history of the companies, this led to a heroization of the labour movement and a romanticization of the industrial community.

Above all it is the homes that have become the focus of cultural heritage management. When it comes to exposing the history of everyday life in an industrial community, the worker's home, especially the kitchen, is an unbeatable key symbol. Ever since the end of the Second World War, the kitchen has communicated the sense of authenticity that the sitting room and heavy industry may have lacked. The worker's kitchen symbolizes intimacy and community in the cramped flats. The neat kitchen becomes an object for the construction of the folk aesthetic and pride that have become such an important part of our cultural heritage.

The industrial settings that are ranked most highly today are the mines in Falun in Dalarna and the ironworks of Engelsberg in Västmanland and Lövstabruk in Uppland. Engelsberg has now been inscribed on the World Heritage List; it represents "the little industrial community" in Bergslagen, offering an eighteenth-century atmosphere, red-painted timber, and glittering cinder-stone. Eva Vikström says that the museum representation of Engelsberg is both unusually true to life and unusually pretty. Bringing the past to life is much easier than filling contemporary industrial settings with people.

Cecilia Fredriksson, Lund

Instructions for submission of manuscripts to *Ethnologia Scandinavica*

Articles should if possible be sent on diskette together with a printout. Manuscripts should preferably be in English, although German may be accepted; if necessary the language will be edited by a native speaker. Articles may be submitted in the Scandinavian languages for translation, but articles in Finnish should be translated in Finland before submission. We reserve the right to revise and cut the texts, and to ask authors to make revisions.

Articles should not be longer than about 20 pages of typewritten text with 1.5 line spacing. Please aim for clear, concise language, remembering that you are writing for a non-Scandinavian audience. To make the translator's work easier and to avoid misunderstandings, authors are recommended to add technical terms and expressions in English in brackets or in the margin. Quotations should not be too numerous nor too long.

Legends to figures should be brief, not including anything that is not discussed in the text of the article. Legends should be written on a separate paper and clearly numbered. The illustrations – photographs, drawings, and tables – should be clearly numbered. Credits (archives, photographers, etc.) should be stated at the end of the legend. Figures should be referred to by their number, not "the table below" or "the photograph above". The placing of the figures in relation to the text should be clearly marked in the margin. Figures should be submitted along with the manuscript.

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Frykman, Jonas 1988: *Dansbaneeländet. Ungdomen, populärkulturen och opinionen*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur.

Löfgren, Orvar 1992: Landskapet. In *Den nordiske verden* I, ed. Kirsten Hastrup. København: Gyldendal.

Reviews of new dissertations and other books of broad general interest should be 4–5 A4 pages long with 1.5 line spacing. A review should consist of a brief presentation of the content and method of the work, followed by a comparison with similar significant works, and ending with a personal evaluation.

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It is a paradox that as the nation-state declines in importance, it becomes stronger as a source of identification. As people are getting more identity-choices, the more they embrace collective identities. Where are the identity training camps, the ritualistic playing grounds? How much stereotyping and change is embedded in distinct cultural forms? This year's Ethnologia Scandinavica continues the discussion of how identities are produced from ready-made templates such as the nation, the family, or the gang in different ways, embodied and ingrained as habit; how they at once contain tradition and break away from tradition.

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