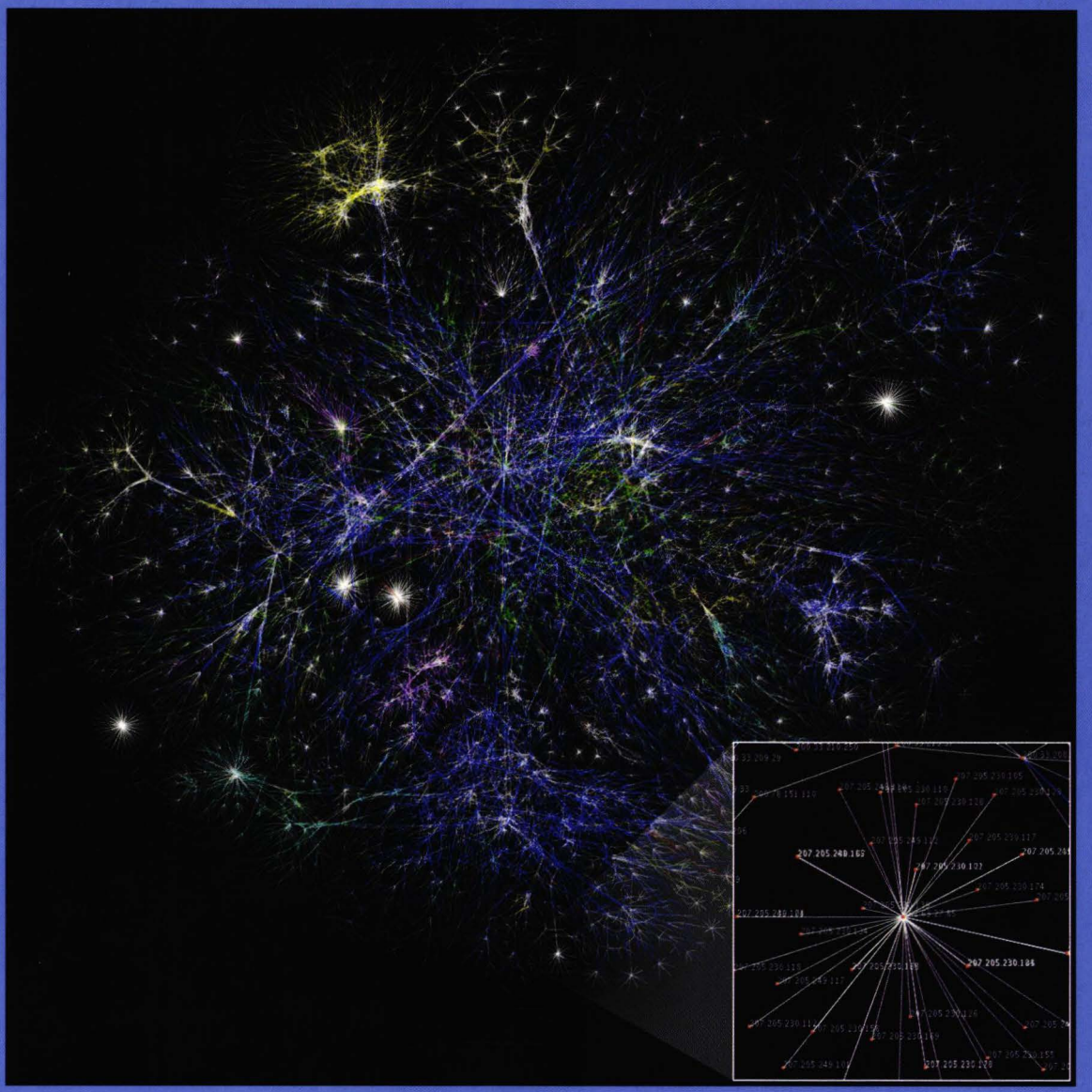

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THE ROYAL GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS ACADEMY FOR SWEDISH FOLK CULTURE

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Editorial
By Birgitta Svensson

Communicating in cyberspace has become an everyday reality. This creates research material for ethnologists. What does the use of the Internet mean for theoretical development in the subject? How does it affect the research process? Information communicated via the new technology does not automatically become knowledge. It must be interpreted and put into a context if it is to be used. The shrinking space for the humanities forces us to cross subject boundaries if we want to join in the analysis of problems and opportunities in society, not least the field of information technology. The articles in this year's *Ethnologia Scandinavica* have IT as their theme, but several of them also point the way to collaboration with other subjects, which can strengthen our own subject and pave the way for new ones.

The world's biggest arena for dialogue is the Internet, where people chat and connect with others under cover of anonymity. Tove I. Fjell, in a comparative study of Britain, the USA, and Norway, examines the cultural foundation of voluntary childlessness. She has surveyed web-based discussion forums to see how the phenomenon is presented there. Social networks are created on the Internet, where one can establish an affinity not based on geographical proximity but on a community of interest that is as real to participants as face-to-face networks.

Does cyberspace allow us to choose how we present ourselves, Ann-Charlotte Palmgren wonders when she studies how the body is portrayed in blogs. She shows the ethnological theory and method that can be applied to Internet use. In a detailed study of previous research on the topic and of the performative possibilities of the real versus the virtual body she indicates the theoretical openings that the study of online diaries can give. Although the body is communicated on the Internet via words and not as a physical reality, it plays the most important part in the contemporary shaping of the self.

What happens when we transcend the boundaries of our subject? Does it lead to better analyses of contemporary society? Jessica Enevold and Charlotte Hagström, each grounded in her own discipline, show that this is the case. Studying gaming in relation to the players, the political economy, and society in general gives interesting results. Emphasizing the everyday practice of women playing computer games, they develop new methods involving both offline and online research. They see an important distinction between "real" life and the cyberworld. Their fieldwork takes place in concrete physical settings where people meet, and the theoretical angle calls for multifaceted strategies to bring out the complex motives the mothers have for their gaming.

Heli Niskanen starts her article with a critique of earlier research about the Internet, and welcomes the change in recent years that allows an ethnological focus on everyday life. Doing Internet ethnology means being on the net, studying what happens in real time and not only saving downloaded documents. She herself, however, uses text-based material, online diaries. She stresses the importance of distinguishing between the different kinds of material. Online diaries and the discussion forums examined in Tove Fjell's article are not at all the same type of material; nor are games, websites, etc.

We all use the Internet in our research today, and Morten Krogh Petersen discusses in his article what the distinction between virtual and real means in ethnographic research. He talks not just about IT but about ICT, thus stressing the communicative aspect. ICT makes it easier

for ethnographer and informant to interact at a distance, so it is inadequate to regard the field as something that can be visited and then left. He considers how this affects the creation of ethnographic knowledge, rejecting the old home-field-home model in favour of a circular-flow model. The challenges and problems that ICT has created for ethnographic research have led to a techno-deterministic approach based on the dichotomy of real and virtual. Instead of focusing on differences, our ethnographic methods should seize on what he calls heterogeneous associations.

When objects, photographs, and texts are digitized, not only is this cultural heritage made accessible for wider use, it has also led to the creation of a new context: a digital cultural heritage research field. Dagny Stuedahl discusses what that means for ethnological method. How is the research process affected by the use of digital technologies and media as tools to build new relations with audiences, communities and new forms of interaction? Perhaps the entire complex digital world will give ethnology a new way to analyse the relationship between past and present categories as regards artefacts and relations between people. A discussion of the relationship between the practice of heritage institutions and theories of digital culture is taking shape, and Stuedahl shows how it affects documentation, registration, archiving, and consumption of digital content. Social communication has developed in several digital forms, and museums are beginning to adopt this, which means that the museum profession involves interpreting rather than legitimizing.

Niklas Hansson describes the Gothenburg Social Forum as a cultural process. He has studied the role played by IT for the everyday mobilization of a social movement. Using Actor Network Theory he shows how different actors in the network are mobilized to facilitate communication and create the organizational framework and a meaningful content in a social movement. IT is the central actor in this network politics.

Ulf Stahre looks at the effect of urban social movements on larger processes of globalization, so that we can better understand the seedbed of such movements and the conditions that allow them to change over time. His article is based on findings from three research projects about Stockholm's urban social movements from the 1960s to the present. He reveals their potential as counter-forces in broader global processes. If we are to be able to talk about global justice in civilized societies, citizens must be able to express their opinions about how society is organized.

The last article in this year's *Ethnologia Scandinavica* is more philosophical and theoretical in character, although it too starts with protests in an urban context. Twenty years ago people in the cities of East Germany protested against the communist regime under the slogan: "We are the people". This was welcomed politically in the West, unlike similar movements a few years later in the West's own liberal-democratic societies where it was interpreted as populism. Populism is an issue that has not been considered in the research field of social science or culture theory, according to Søren Christensen, who examines the relationship between politics and populism proceeding from Ernesto Laclau's book *On Populist Reason*. With Rancier's concept of "the people" he wants to initiate a discussion of whether Rancier might have developed a theory of populism that is more useful than Laclau's.

Different Voices on Childfreedom (Voluntary Childfreeness) in the Media and on the Internet

By Tove Ingebjørg Fjell

People with no children are asked to account for their choice and explain themselves to relatives, colleagues and even distant acquaintances (Fjell 2008). "Why have you got kids?" is an unimaginable question which is hardly ever asked, unless the child's parents have behaved particularly badly or have a low or no income. The fact that parenthood is rarely made an issue, suggests that parenthood is considered to be inevitable (cf. Bartlett 1994: xi), something people have the right to try for (cf. WHO), and something natural and normal. Heteronormativity, understood as mainstream discourses and culturally based views, presents a certain type of heterosexuality (a heterosexual couple living together ought to have children) as a matter of course, naturalised and privileged (cf. Fjell 2008, Nordin 2007). In this article I will be raising issues associated with culturally based perceptions of childfreedom, or voluntary childlessness.

Norwegian media carry few stories about childfreedom compared to the rest of Europe and particularly the USA, where this is much more of a hot topic. Internationally, scholarly research articles have been forthcoming on the issue since the 1970s onwards, and there are works of fiction which explicitly deal with childfreedom. Furthermore, there are web-based discussion forums in English as well as associations established specifically for the childfree. The domestic situation is very different within each of the nations mentioned, and it would have been interesting to involve a wider context in order to obtain a better understanding of the differences between countries. However, I will not be doing so here, but rather look to the rest of Europe and the USA to deliver the premise for the discussion on childfreedom in Norway. In the following I will be looking at how childfreedom[1] is presented in different media. How are childfreedom expressed in Norwegian media and Internet forums compared to Europe (mostly Great Britain) and the USA? What are the grounds on which the various expressions are based?[2]

About the material

For some years I have been following newspapers, magazines and television to establish what they say about childfreedom. In general, the Norwegian stories stem from national newspapers, weekly and monthly magazines and the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (the NRK). Stories from foreign media stem from the European and American press. Most were found by making use of Internet search engines.

There are locally based childfree organisations in the UK as well as on the American continent, i.e. they offer a social network that facilitates weekend and holiday meets. But most meeting places for the childfree are globally oriented and web-based. The associations tend to present general information about being childfree, and literature on the subject. I have been following subject-specific discussion forums on the web, thereby gaining important insights into childfreedom issues. Web discussions tend to deal with life as a childfree person and how to deal with frustrations that arise in relation to families with children and a child-centred society. My own role has been as a *lurker*, i.e. someone who does not introduce herself and take an active part in the debate, but restricts herself to reading the posted opinions[3]. I've also read commentaries in web based newspapers. These are almost always anonymously written, and therefore from time to time biased and insulting. There is an ongoing debate in Norway on ethical guidelines in online newspapers and one of the questions asked is whether web debates are signs of freedom and democracy or signs

of an intellectual breakdown. In the meantime editors disagree on whether they have the same kind of responsibility for the content in online newspapers as for the printed newspapers. If editors were to agree on not allowing totally anonymous comments and further on a higher degree of control and rejection of insulting comments, the commentators might restrain themselves. The online comments that I refer to in this article are however written anonymously and are sometimes insulting.

Fertility Rates in Norway and Europe

Norway and other Scandinavian countries differ from large parts of Europe and the USA in relation to fertility rates. Birth rates may give an indication of how "child friendly" a society is. The main changes are associated with a decline in the number of children per woman; postponement of motherhood, which is linked to financial changes (increased level of education, financial independence and political power); cultural changes (more individualistic attitudes which emphasise personal development); and technological changes (contraception) (Lappegård 2006:1, 3, 4). Women's decision to have children late in life or not at all is also affected by their terms of employment (temporary employment, project employment, etc.) (Lappegård 2006:11).

The USA differs from large parts of Europe in that as a nation, it does actually reproduce itself. In Europe, the Scandinavian countries stand out by virtue of their high ranking in European fertility statistics. In 2005, Iceland could announce a fertility rate of 2.05 children per woman and is now one of the very few countries in Europe to be reproducing its own population (Gislason 2007). Iceland has also worked to induce responsibility in fathers. Under a law introduced in 2000, the entitlement to parental leave was increased from 6 to 9 months, of which 3 months must be taken as maternity leave and 3 months as paternity leave, whereas the remaining 3 months are optional. 90% of fathers take advantage of the offer of leave, which in turn affects the labour market in terms of equal opportunities (Gislason 2007). In his study, Gislason demonstrates that government support to parents has a significant impact on birth rates.

Over the last 15 years, the Norwegian fertility rate has remained stable at 1.8–1.9 children per woman, but this is nevertheless below the reproduction level of 2.1. Government support is likely to be playing a key role in terms of maintaining the high birth rate. Norwegians are offered 43 weeks maternity leave on full pay, or they can opt for 53 weeks maternity leave on 80 % pay as well as 5 weeks paternity leave; a cash allowance is payable to anyone who stays at home with children under 3 years of age (USD 5,800 or approx. NOK 35,000 per child per year); child benefit is payable until the child turns 18 (USD 1,700 or approx. NOK 10,000 per child per year); and mothers enjoy free medical care until the child turns 7 years of age. Furthermore, the government is constantly working to provide kindergarten places for children whose parents apply for them. This strategy appears to sustain the willingness to go ahead and start a family, and the expectation is for women to continue working after the children arrive, and that everyday life is a combination of child care and employment (Esping-Andersen 2003:14).

In Southern and Eastern Europe the combination of child care and work is not as common. In these countries, more people give up their career when their children arrive; they opt for *either* a career *or* a family. Consequently, these countries have a higher rate of childless/childfree women. Countries with a low

fertility rate, like Italy, are now introducing isolated measures. The Italian government has tried to alleviate the country's "postponement syndrome" by passing a Baby Bonus Act which offered 1,000 Euro to anyone who gave birth to or adopted their second child between 1st December 2003 and 31st December 2004 (Krause and Marchesi 2007:353). In Germany, which also ranks very low in the fertility statistics, the combined problem of childfreedom and an aging population has become a major political issue. Germans worry about who will look after their growing group of elderly, and who will pay for pension payouts if fewer and fewer people have children. *Der Spiegel's* front page in March 2006 carried the headline: "Jeder für sich. Wie der Kindermangel eine Gesellschaft von Egoisten schafft" (*Spiegel* no. 10, 6 March 2006). The publication's main feature article of the week discussed the falling birth rates in Germany and the consequential problems caused for the growing group of elderly Germans, and how for the first time in German history, their population has fewer children than pensioners. Not even during the Black Death was this the case, nor during or after the two world wars. The following week, *Der Spiegel* carried an article which suggested that childless people ought to receive a lower retirement pension or be subject to a higher rate of income tax, because they fail to contribute to the common good the same way as people who give birth to children who in turn will be making payments to the public purse (www.spiegel.de/wirtschaft/0,1518,406227,00.html). Simultaneously, there is blogging to be found on *Der Spiegel's* website under the headline "Sterben die Deutschen aus?" The Greeks ask themselves similar questions: "In our country, in which today the fertility rate is among the lowest in Europe, the demographic problem reaches terrific national proportions that can threaten our national independence and territorial integrity" (Greek parliament quoted in Paxson 2004:162). Others consider the low birth rates a threat to the Greek nation and the Greek "race" (informant quoted in Paxson 2004: 160). Greece has one of the lowest birth rates in Europe with 1.4 children per woman in the 1990s, furthermore their usage of oral contraception is low, and 50% of all pregnancies end in termination (Paxson 2004).

France is an interesting exception in this part of Europe, as the French are currently implementing a range of pronatalist schemes. Pronatalism is a policy which encourages reproduction and glorifies parenthood, which promotes a cultural notion that women are strongly associated with motherhood (Peck and Senderowitz 1974:1), and which forms part of a major European debate concerning falling birth rates and whether they undermine national economies and social stability in an aging Europe (Moore 2006). The French education system makes it easier for couples to have children. Nursery school (*maternelle*) is mandatory for all children from the age of 3, it is state run, free, and stays open from 7 am to 6 pm. The French government also contributes with financial support, such as child benefit and family allowance. New French legislation has introduced improved maternity leave arrangements, tax relief and other incentives for families who have their third child. This has caused France to climb further up the birth rate statistics.

Childfreedom in the Norwegian Media

Norwegian media touch on childfreedom in a number of different ways. At irregular intervals stories appear about living without children, and the topic surfaces more often today than a couple of years ago. Most often,

these stories look at the problems involved with postponing pregnancy; health workers explain that women should have children early in life to avoid involuntary childlessness (see e.g. Skjævesland 2007). One of those who view childlessness from a different angle is sociologist An-Magritt Jensen, who point out arguments similar to those presented in the German media. Who is going to pay for the elderly and the infirm if more people choose not to have children, asks Jensen. She goes on to say that childfreedom, as a choice, must be respected, but also points to the problem caused by so-called "freeloaders" – those who will be needing care in old age, but have had no children who may help fill the vacancies in the care sector (Jensen 2004). However, the counter argument is not only one of demography, i.e. the pensioner boom and the future shortage of labour. Issues associated with gender are also presented, if rarely. One of those rare voices belong to political scientist Jill Loga, who questions whether *absolutely everyone* ought to have children, and whether perhaps children constitute a loss project for ambitious women (Strand 2005).

Norwegian television and newspapers tend to deal with childfreedom by presenting childfree couples or women who are given the opportunity to talk about their choice of life. TV programmes specifically about childfree people are few and far between. I am only aware of a single programme, *Women ... that's mothers*, which featured women from different age groups who have chosen a life without children (NRK 1999; see also Fjell 2005 b). The programme focused on their chosen life style and what their relatives and friends felt about their childfree status. The newspaper article headed "Når to ikke vil bli tre" [When two refuses to be three] tells the story of two childfree couples, one of which live in a small house in the wood with their two cats, Knut and Lars (Korneliussen 2004). The woman interviewed says she decided not to have children at an early age, and thus appears as a representative of the small group of *rejectors* rather than the somewhat larger group of *postponers*. The couple take care to emphasise that neither of them are typical career people: they do not work a lot of overtime, and point out that they prioritise friends and home improvements. Also, the couple are happy to look after their friends' children.

Celebrity interviews tend to focus on topics other than childfreedom, but will touch on children in passing. Famous childfree Norwegians include athlete Grete Waitz and artists Anne-Kat. Hærland and Ingrid Bjørnov. The summer of 2007 saw a feature on Bjørnov. We were told already in the introduction that Bjørov has no children: "Ingrid Bjørnov (43) is enjoying the good life. With broadband. Without children", and the topic of childfreedom appears early in the interview: "- You have been together for fifteen years, yet have no children ... Her hand strokes her chin and slides up towards her mouth and nose. – No, she says slowly" (Larsen 2007). We learn that Bjørnov believes she has never wanted children, that she kept waiting for the desire for children to overwhelm her but that it never did; that she enjoys spending time with her nieces and nephews, but that she also enjoys being able to send them back home; that her childfreedom is not caused by concerns for her career, but simply that she and her husband are both the spoilt youngest child of their respective families and are content with their own company; and that the motherhood hassle peaked 5–10 years ago. Now that she is 43, people tend not to keep nagging her about motherhood.

Childfreedom in European and American News Media and Fiction

While Norwegian media presents the childfree as relatively friendly people who are more than happy to look after their sister's or neighbour's children every once in a while, who have nothing at all against other people's children, and who are not particularly career-oriented, there is a somewhat different tone and focus to be found in European and American media. One can also there read about statistics, that more people choose not to have children, about the new word *childfree*, about books on the topic of childfreedom, about segregated *leisure-villes* where residents under 18 are banned (see e.g. Blechman 2008), and about the fact that a number of American girls with good university degrees choose to have children rather than a career, because they, in their own words, cannot be brilliant career women as well as good mothers.

However, we also find that the childfree *themselves* voice their annoyance with children's place in society. One of them is Charlie Brooker, who lives in London. He once started his column in *The Guardian* by saying "I hate kids" and "I hate parents too" and continued by explaining that he lives in a part of London which has "one of the heaviest kiddywink-and-parent populations in the universe":

> Wherever I go, there's a repugnant Jake nearby; shrieking, kicking the table, bellowing its hot little face off. And sitting beside Jake is Jake's moron parent, dot on his every noise, dribble and splurt, as though he's something special or charming. Well, he isn't. Jake is a selfish, dot-eyed machine hell bent on sabotaging whatever scraps of tranquillity remain in this pitiful world, and every right-thinking person within earshot despises him with a coal-black intensity that would make your head spin like a centrifuge if you ever got wind of it (Brooker 2005).

Brooker has considered wearing an "I HATE CHILDREN" T-shirt, or perhaps just asking the parents to make their children be quiet while at his premises. But Brooker feels that approach would only end in a fistfight. Perhaps, he writes, it would be better for him to fire a distress flare to warn parents that he's just about to kill Jake, which would also hopefully make Jake shut up for a moment in share amazement over the glittering fireworks. And should the flare set fire to the whole café, it's only an added bonus.

There is probably no reason to believe that Charlie Brooker will ever attack either this Jake or the next, but by his artful use of exaggeration he makes his point in a way which I have yet to see in a serious Norwegian newspaper. Occasionally, American papers carry columns and letters on the challenges involved with small children in public places, like in a café as described above. The owner of a café in Chicago put up a sign saying: "Children of all ages have to behave and use their indoor voices when coming to *A Taste of Heaven*" (Wilgoren 2005). Other proprietors have tried signs such as "No life guard on duty" and "Well behaved children and parents welcome". They maintain that the principal problem is that of a new generation of busy, affluent, slightly older parents with children. The reactions were not late in coming, the proprietors lost some of their customers, particularly mothers with small children. The owner of *A Taste of Heaven* was forced to move premises to a less attractive area, yet he says that he would rather close down his business than going back to things the way they were: "I can't change the situation in Iraq, I can't change the situation in New Orleans. But I can change this little corner of the world" (Wilgoren 2005).

The childfree themselves often bring up the topic of parents who have blindly followed the pattern and produced babies more or less on autopilot, thus causing problems for the children

who were never really wanted. In Norwegian media I have never come across an interview with people who regret having children, but in a British newspaper Laura Bannister wrote anonymously about her experience as a regretful parent in her article "I felt it had all been a terrible mistake" (Taylor 2005). Bannister is introduced as a woman who in her teens was uncertain whether she really wanted children. She became a successful lawyer and felt no envy when her friends started falling pregnant and having children. At the age of forty she met a man with whom she fell in love; they moved in together and married a short while later. He was keen to have children and could not comprehend that she had never given it any thought. Soon after the wedding she fell pregnant and her husband was jubilant. She herself felt as if she had walked into an exam for which she had not done any revision. The child was born, Bannister felt no joy, she panicked. The child kept crying for several months and Bannister felt enormously tired. A short while later she fell pregnant again and gave birth to a second daughter. She loves her children, she writes, anything else would be culturally unacceptable once you have had your children. However, she draws a more nuanced picture by emphasising that they also represent a major challenge:

> It's just that I feel that motherhood has subsumed my whole being and has wiped out all my individuality. (...) I love my children dearly and devote myself to them but my life with them is like wading through thick mud. I can't see any part of the former, efficient, competent me. I feel a sense of loss of myself (Taylor 2005).

Bannister is careful to stress that she loves her children. She knows just as well as anybody else that her initiative may start people wondering whether she is really a good mother (cf. Hjemdahl 2003) – which is why she writes her piece anonymously. However, she also says that her old self, which she clearly appreciated, is gone. What remains is a female identity she does not care for, but which she will have to put up with, not least out of consideration for her children who never asked to be born.

Bannister's voice is one of very few. Another example of critical questioning of parenthood is the British documentary *Having a Baby Ruined My Lives*, which was shown on British *Channel 5* in 2005. The viewers were introduced to a group of parents who explained how their lives had been ruined when their children were born. The programme write-up introduces us to one of the families in the film: mother Sarah, father Andrew and 13-month old twins Jenson and Harvey. Before the children arrived, Sarah and Andrew were social butterflies. They were eating out, met up with friends and enjoyed holidays abroad. After the two boys were born, life has been turned up-side-down:

> For the first four months after they were born, Sarah survived on three hours' sleep a night. Over a year on, Harvey still wakes up around seven times a night. They are shattered. And during the day, things aren't much better. Whilst one twin is fairly well behaved, the other is "a nightmare child". He doesn't like his brother near him and craves attention all the time. If he doesn't get it, he'll just scream. Often, Sarah will sit and scream too. When Jenson and Harvey turned one, Sarah and Andrew threw a party – more to celebrate surviving the year than anything (www.five.tv/programmes/hiddenlives/babyruin).

One of the children keeps his parents awake day and night, and we understand that this is the boy who has been given the somewhat derogatory label of "nightmare child". The children scream all the time and Mum looses control and joins in. Presenting this desperation and lack of control to the general public is highly unusual, at least while still in the state of non-control.

Several novels have been written about difficult and strained relationships between parents / mothers and children, e.g. Elfriede Jelinek's *The Piano Teacher* (2001), where we meet 35 year old piano teacher Erika who shares a flat and a double bed with her dominating mother. In Lionel Shriver's book *We need to speak about Kevin* (2003) is however the actual plot on having a child without giving it much thought in advance and how that lack of reflection has to be paid for later in life. Shriver's book is in the same spirit as the film *Having a baby ruined our lives*, about having children when you do not really want to, or before you are ready for it. According to the author, writing this book was a process she needed to go through in order to decide whether she herself should embark on having children. The book about Kevin was given much attention when it was first published; the story is about a couple and their discussions for and against having children. They are really quite happy on their own, but the husband exerts a mild pressure towards parenthood. More or less by chance, perhaps because their friends become parents, they end up with the decision to have children. From day one, Mum feels that the child, Kevin, seems to be more relaxed and behave more appropriately in the company of his Dad. When he is with is Mum, his very worst features appear to dominate, and this tendency is further bolstered as he grows up. The mother despairs over never being able to reach through to her son, and Kevin despairs over his own existence. Four hundred pages later the chilling story ends with Kevin killing some of his family members and a handful of his school mates in a classic school massacre.

The story is propelled by thoughts around the factors that shape the maladjusted young people who end up killing their school mates. But to an even greater extent, the book deals with what happens, in a worst case scenario, if people have children "just because everyone else does", without giving serious thought to questions such as: Do I really *want* children? Do I have anything to offer a child? Will I be a good parent? Is this what I want from my life? The writer forces her readers to reflect on their responsibilities vis-à-vis children. The book sees Kevin's family and acquaintances being brutally punished for his parent's failure to think things sufficiently through before choosing pregnancy. In the words of the dust cover review:

> It's a book about the dangerous distance that exists between what we feel and what we are prepared to admit when it comes to family life ... it's a book about what we need to talk about but can't (Shriver 2003).

One of the focal points is the need to talk about a topic which is impossible to talk about because its taboo status has made it a non-topic. Even if similar books and media stories are found in Europe and the US, they make up the exception and generally take the form of fiction or anonymous documentaries. The usual approach, as maintained by Toril Moi (2004), is for the media to feed their readers and listeners with articles and reports about happy parents and how life has eventually become meaningful after the child arrived (Moi 2004, Schmidt 2004). Even furniture giant IKEA has launched the BedAid campaign which makes use of large posters and full-page adverts to invite people to lie down in their (IKEA-)beds to boost the population figures. According to Moi, this is an *indirect* form of motherhood nagging. The more *direct* form, which is found in Norwegian, European and American media alike, is typically the voice of the medical profession telling us that the risk of disease generally, and especially

the risk of cancer, increase if you postpone pregnancy or choose not to have children, or that the likelihood of involuntary childlessness increases if you wait too long before becoming pregnant. There is even political pressure, as good citizens are encouraged to give birth to more children, in order to ensure that there will be someone to look after the growing group of pensioners.

Web Organisations and Discussion Forums for the Childfree

There are numerous websites where the childfree can read about childfreedom and meet up with other childfree people. The Internet offers web-based social networks, a type of grass root network based on a common interest (Rheingold 2000). Many websites work as an extension of existing communities, like when people who move away from a certain place keep in touch with their old mates through synchronous and asynchronous chat rooms (cf. e.g. Bævre 2005). Generally, this is not the way that childfree websites work. The development of these communities is not based on earlier geographic proximity, but a shared interest in phenomena relating to childfreedom. At an abstract level, the communication is considered *disembedded* from time and space (cf. Giddens 1990), but in practice it turns out that, in the words of cultural researcher Håvard Bævre:

> The fact that the media facilitates (...) "Giddensian" disembeddedness, does not mean that (...) communication *is* actually disembedded from time and space. Human beings tend to have a sense of local belonging which will apply even if we communicate by means of a "placeless" medium (Bævre 2005:151; my translation).

On the contrary, we can see that over time, the most frequent users develop a level of familiarity and closeness to one another, much the same way as in a face-to-face situation. In other words, the web-based social networks are no less real than face-to-face networks, maintains Howard Rheingold, who is also known as the First Citizen of the Internet. Internet conversation, the world's biggest conversation, covers a need that arose as access to small, local meeting places became more difficult, and the opportunity to express oneself at home, in the comfort of one's own living room and frequently but not necessarily hidden behind a nick name, makes it easier to share more personal information than in a face-to-face encounter (Rheingold 2000, p. 12; see also Fjell 2005 a).

Examples of web-based childfree associations include *Kidding Aside. The British Childfree Association* (www.kiddingaside.net), which has discussion groups, pages on reproductive rights (e.g. rights in connection with sterilisation and abortion), pages on population statistics, and a bookshop specialising in titles on childfreedom. The *Happily Childfree* (www.happilychildfree.com) website offers a listing of frequent comments encountered by the childfree, and suggests appropriate responses. For instance, an appropriate response to "Why don't you have kids?" could be "Why aren't you in law school? Oh, you don't want to be a lawyer? Well, I don't want to be a parent"; a comeback for "When are you going to have kids?" could be "When are you going to lose weight?"; and the suggested answer to "Who will take care of you when you grow old?" is "The same people who will take care of you – the nursing staff". The site also offers a number of other facilities, such as general information, links to 16 different discussion groups, articles about contraception, holidays abroad and recommended reading. *World Childfree Association Incorporated* has bulletin boards, suggestion boxes, stories,

topical literature and even pages in Norwegian (norsk.worldchildfree.org) which offers Q and A sessions for the general public and support for the childfree. *Moral Childfree* (moralchildfree.tripod.com) has links to topical articles and news about childfreedom. *No Kidding*, a social club established in Canada in 1984, involves groups that meet offline as well as online (www.nokidding.net). These groups are exclusively for the childfree and are intended as sanctuaries for adults who like to meet socially without having to relate to talk about children or grandchildren.

Because the childfree repeatedly are required to explain themselves (cf. Fjell 2008), the Internet forums are considered sanctuaries for a growing number of childfree users. They provide an opportunity for virtual meetings and discussions on the challenges of a pronatalist society. The website contributors tend to be families which in American specialist literature are referred to as DINKs (Double Income No Kids), LINKs (Low Income No Kids) and PFAs (Pre-Family Adults). The topics are many, and at times, the tenor of the conversation can be rather harsh. The discussion forums in particular feature some derogative slang terms for parents, who may be referred to as *breeder*, *überbreeder*, *Moo* or *tit-nazi* (someone who campaigns vigorously for the right to breast-feed in public) and for children, e.g. *calf*, (as in *Moo and calf*), *ankle biter* or *fuck trophy*. The choice of words on this website tells us something about ardent involvement as well as a desire to draw a line between Us and The Others, between the reflective childfree and the frequently thoughtless parents, between those who are in a position to taunt, and those who are being taunted.

Certain conversation topics recur frequently on these sites, like f.ex. www.childfree.net, such as *child-centeredness*, i.e. annoyance that the world appears to be customised for children. Why does everything need be so child friendly, be it the supermarket or the television programmes? Why should children have padded seats in shopping trolleys? If we survived without padded seats, why are today's children unable to cope without them? Why do people take it for granted that children are always welcome at dinner parties and weddings? How do you avoid half your relatives walking off in a huff if you want to organise a wedding where no children are welcome? How can you best explain to your friend that it would be better if she left her toddler at home to make sure the two friends have a chance to talk when they meet up over a coffee? Moreover, the site provides tips on how to make sure you surround yourself with childfree service providers, like hair dressers, to avoid listening to the hairdresser's stories about the latest antics of her little brats.

Another major topic is *parent annoyance*, an issue which has also been dealt with by the newspapers. Why are the parents of toddlers unable to understand that they cannot allow their children to scream and run about in public places such as cafes, restaurants or the zoo? Why do parents allow their children to stay in the water with full nappies on public beaches? Why do parents treat their kids as trophies and why are they judgmental vis-à-vis the childfree? One contributor tells us about her "weekend from hell", a visit to her brother, sister-in-law and their child. The parents relaxed once the visitors had arrived and expected the contributor and her husband to look after the child. The house was a tip, and as if that was not enough, 25 people had been invited to a 3-year birthday party. No-one had given any thought to where the food would come from, so the contributor had to

make sure this was all sorted out. The child was free to scream as loud as he pleased; the parents maintained they could not hear it anymore, but how about considering the plight of others who had yet to accustom themselves to the noise? All conversation generally centred round potty training. When the contributor and her husband eventually drove home after their weekend with the family, they thanked the Lord above for their choice not to have children of their own. Discussions of this nature are often found in connection with an expression of sadness caused by the loss of one's circle of friends. They cannot cope with talk about children: they have no experience of the bodily changes involved with pregnancy and giving birth, and have no experience of living with children. In a way, they become invisible. However, they have no wish for such experience either, as it is of no interest to them. This means that the childfree are both being excluded by others and exclude themselves from the company of their friends and acquaintances.

The Guilt Trip is another significant topic on this website, i.e. discussions on how to handle relatives who are unable to refrain from nagging about when to expect the patter of little feet; how to respond when people refuse to *believe* that you actually prefer to live without children, when they *believe* you don't know what is best for you, and when they *believe* that you will change your mind once you are old enough. Some suggest responses to the frequently asked question of "why haven't you got any children". The options are many: "I don't have a child, I have a life"; "I choose to do other things with my life"; "I would prefer anal cancer"; "I'm allergic to children"; "I don't want children"; "My cat is allergic to children"; "That's quite a personal question"; "I prefer dogs; you don't need to send them to university and they guard the house"; "Why would anyone want children?"; "It's not a cost-effective investment"; "Because I know how to use contraceptives"; "I haven't got children, I have a pet"; and "Isn't that the Pope over there handing out condoms?"

Some times it is the parents of the childfree who receive the critical comments, for having allowed their daughter or son to have no children. This criticism is often voiced by the childfree person's grandparents. Others are 60 years old and childfree, yet the questions never cease, they merely change from "Why don't you have children?" to "Why didn't you have any children?" One contributor professes to have become increasingly intolerant over the years, and that an appropriate response may be: "Why did you never manage to loose weight?"; "Why did you never get yourself an education"; or "Why did you never get rid of that idiot you call a husband?"

There are no special sites or associations for childfree Scandinavians, and the above types of virtual conversation are generally found on Anglo-American websites. In Norwegian public debate the closest equivalent to this strident tone of argument is found in anonymous comments made in connection with internet newspaper articles. At the turn of the year 2007–2008 a couple of articles were published about the decision taken by the Men's Panel to propose a 30-hour working week for fathers of small children, and about the fall in birth rates in Europe (see Ertzeid 2008; Skjæveland 2007 and *Dagbladet* 2 January 2008). Readers were given an opportunity to comment. Many made the most of this chance to "speak their mind," and their contributions reflect the same type of candid tone which is in evidence on the Anglo-American websites. The Men's Panel's proposal triggered a number of questions, like who should pay for the fathers' 6-hour

day, the government or the employer; others commented that people without children are the ones who do most of the work anyway, while some looked for the introduction of child accounting, as an equivalent to immigrant accounting, to demonstrate the total cost of children. The main thrust of some of the comments was that if self-interest makes you choose to have children, you should be paying for it yourself.

The same type of response was triggered by the article that recommended an earlier start to child rearing (Skjæveland 2007). The comments touch on the difficulty of finding child care; what incredible "career killers" children are; and the off-putting effect of overly desperate old women who want nothing but children. Some point out that the world is overpopulated, so what is the point of producing more people and why not celebrate the fact that the population is decreasing. Others ask why it is necessary for *white* Europeans to look after the growing group of elderly people in need of care and why not allow for increased immigration to Norway instead. Following the article about Europe's dramatically decreasing population, which was printed in connection with Nordic Fertility Society's international conference in Oslo (*Dagbladet* 2008), the number of contributions increased, and their character and content became more vociferous. This particular article triggered few comments about nursery places and the difficulty of combining children with work, but all the more about how many *more* people there are in poorer countries, and that it would be better to reduce the birth rate *there*, or to castrate Asia, as suggested by a few, rather than putting a halt to having children in Europe. Many asserted the importance of Europeans having children, not least in order to balance out the continent's growing Muslim population. One specific proposal was "3 before 30", i.e. 3 children before turning 30, either voluntarily or as the result of forced pregnancy or public rape. Someone else identified women's liberation as the problem: if dad goes out to work and mum returns to being a housewife, Europe will find that more children will be produced. In other words, this latter round of discussion is not really about childfreedom as a phenomenon, but about how to ensure that the white European population increases. In this context, childfreedom has become a threat against the survival of the nation of white men and women.

From the "Friendly" to the "Militant"

In Norway, expressions of childfreedom differ from those in other European countries and in the USA. Norwegian newspapers carry material about childfreedom in the form of presentations of individuals who have chosen to live life without children, or in the form of advice from experts who feel Norwegian women wait too long before having children, thus increasing the risk of cancer and involuntary childlessness. In the European and American media, interest groups are much more prominent and there appears to be a different level of awareness and identity associated with being childfree. Some comments are borderline militant, particularly those voiced by minority groups and campaigners for rights based on e.g. ethnicity or sexuality, which involve the exertion of pressure by individual groups against hegemony (Eriksen 2006:14). Norwegian media appears to be more preoccupied with showing that the childfree are completely normal, friendly people. Exceptions are the anonymous comments posted in response to Internet newspaper articles, in which the tone may well be rather harsh. The low level of problem-orientation

in presentations of childfreedom, and the lack of childfree contributors to the debate, may be explained by the diminutive number of childfree Norwegians and that childfree Norwegians have yet to perceive their choice of childfreedom as a possible identity. The transnational or trans-local orientation under which the development of community takes place either locally or across national borders (cf. Breivik 2007:15) is not significant to them and the Internet has not triggered the development of a group identity, as evidenced in some European countries and in the USA. Childfree Norwegians appear not to be establishing their own networks, although this may well change should their numbers increase. However, anonymous comments submitted to Internet newspapers make it clear that people hold a range of different opinions about childfreedom, and some of them are even asserted in a rather harsh tone of voice. Opinions which people find it impossible to publish under their full name in a child-friendly, child-rich Norway, find an outlet, nevertheless, through anonymous Internet comments.

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Notes

1 I choose to use the terms *childfree* and *childfreedom* (Cooper, Cumber and Hartner 1978:72), because their positive connotations imply a positive stance, thus matching my informants' understanding of the matter. I prefer not to use the term *voluntarily childless* because this implies that something is missing (Morell 1994:21); the childfree would never describe their choice as such. However, childfreedom is not necessarily a rational choice made at an early point in life. I make use of sociologist Jean Veever's categorisation of the childfree into rejectors and postponers (1980:157 f.). *Rejectors* are women who reject a life with children before they enter into a cohabiting relationship. Their decision is made irrespective of their current situation with respect to relationships and work, and their partners agree with the decision. *Postponers* are women who gradually defer pregnancy, their partners are not necessarily in agreement with the decision, and a pregnancy may become acceptable if their life situation (partner, work, housing) should change.

2 This article has been written in connection with a research project entitled "Unfulfilled women and men? A cultural study of childfree (voluntarily childless) couples", which is headed by the author. The project is funded under the Research Council of Norway's Gender Research Programme 2005–2007. Large chunks of the text has already been printed as a chapter in a book on childfreedom (Fjell 2008).

3 Because I have not introduced myself and asked for permission to use the Internet material, I will not be using direct quotes from the forum. Consideration for the participants in synchronous and asynchronous chat groups makes the use of direct quotes from posted contributions ethically questionable research practice. This is because a simple nickname search will make it possible to establish profiles and by searching for parts of quotes these would be traceable in a couple of keystrokes. I have previously addressed these issues in the article "Offentliggjort, men inte offentligt? Några tankar om bruket av Internetkällor" [Published yet not made public? Some thoughts on the use of Internet sources.] (Fjell 2005a, Hine 2000:23 f.).

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Bodily Lives in Virtual Worlds

Theoretical Approaches to the Self and Body in Relation to Blogs in a Swedish Context

By Ann-Charlotte Palmgren

The reason I wanted to write a blog, was that I had a mission. I wanted to mediate the naked truth about being fat. I wanted to explain. I wanted to be seen. But it is the wrong people who understand. I didn't accomplish my mission. Or am I blind? Why should it be so damn difficult to amaze the world? (Maria, 15 February 2005).

The quotation above is part of an introduction to a blog. Even if the physical body is invisible in the blog, Maria refers to her body. If Maria decided not to have a picture of herself in the blog, we would only know what she chooses to tell us about herself and her body. In early Internet research (see e.g. Turkle 1997) the focus has been on role playing online. According to this, cyberspace could be seen as a promise of freedom to choose the manner in which we represent ourselves and our bodies. My ongoing ethnographical study of the body in blogs in a Swedish context has led to an interest in discussing theoretical matters related to my study. Furthermore, the article can be seen as discussing attitudes toward our bodies in late modernity. Many of the published studies on blogs have been quantitative, which is a reason for this being a theoretical introduction to a forthcoming qualitative study. It is interesting to look at bodies in blog texts since the body is often very visual, not textual. The extract from Maria's blog shows one representation where Maria chose to present her body as fat.

I will start with a short introductory presentation of important concepts and theories I use. After that I will give a presentation of earlier research about blogs and the history behind them. Furthermore, I will discuss the remediated and performative body, the virtual vs. "real" body, and end by discussing the relationship between the body and self in blogs. I have chosen to start this article with a quote from one blog. The most important concepts for the article are the body, identity, performance and performativity.

Gloria Mark (1997) has claimed in one of her articles that as virtual worlds develop on the Internet and become more integrated into people's daily lives, we need to examine issues concerning how people are represented, and how these representations through the electronic medium affect people's social relationships and personal identities. Dennis Waskul (2003:75) has argued that the body is not simply a fluid set of meanings. Unlike selfhood, the body clearly manifests itself in empirical qualities that occupy space in time. Waskul, for instance, has stated that in any form of interaction, the body is an object to one's self and others. The body is therefore always both a physical, tangible, corporeal object that may be seen and acted upon by one's self and others, while it is also a subject that is experienced and filled with various social and cultural meanings. It is in how we uniquely manipulate and configure relationships between the appearance of our body as an object and the experience of our body as a subject that we can achieve a distinct embodied self (Waskul 2003:72).

Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (1998) have stated that we see ourselves today in and through our available media. This is not to say that our identity is not fully determined by media, but rather that we employ media as a vehicle for defining both personal and cultural identity. As these media become simultaneously technical analogies and social expressions of our identity, we become simultaneously both the subject and the object of contemporary media. Furthermore, Bolter and Grusin (1998:231) state that new media offer new opportunities for self-definition, for now we can identify ourselves with the vivid graphics and digitized videos of computer games as well as the swooping perspective

of virtual reality systems and digitally generated film and television logos. We can define ourselves through the converging communication technologies of the telephone and the Internet. Whenever our identity is mediated in this way, it is also remediated, because we always understand a particular medium in relation to other past and present media. Waskul (2003:3) has stated that, although the Internet can be used for all kinds of communication, it remains a distinctive disembodied context for social interaction. There are lots of things on the Internet, but co-present corporeal bodies have yet to be included. In my forthcoming study, however, I aim to show how the body actually is present in blogs, as different forms of bodily presences exist when people meet online.

The body in the blogs can be seen both as a product (the physical body with a sex) and the body as a process (a way to feel and tag the self through the body) (see e.g. Balsamo 1996). The physical body is present while writing or surfing on the Internet, but the body in the blogs can very well be seen as a process, since the blog writers express their self by also writing about their body. At the same time as I focus on the body, I cannot ignore the identity or the self in the blog, since the self and body can be seen as linked together. Bolter and Grusin (1998:237) claimed that many theorists reject Cartesian dualism with its notion that the self can be defined in the absence of the body (see e.g. Hayles 1993; Balsamo 1996 & Haraway 1991). I am also of the opinion that both have to be taken into account. This is the reason why I include both the self and the body in my analysis. Judith Butler (1993) has stated that discourses about the body, sexuality and gender are not opposites of one another, but exist because of one another and are a mix of each other; this is one reason why I examine both identity and the body. One way to see identity is to see it as something essential in the individual, as something that exists without a physical location. Another way is to see identity as a series of repetitions of identical acts. The former builds on a metaphysical base and the latter builds on performativity. I think that we mostly have to see identity as socially constructed and therefore performative (cf. e.g. Woodward 1997; Jenkins 2004). The individual's self is constructed through the performances that he/she does in social life. The term performance has its origin in theatre science, but is today commonly used in ethnology, folklore, sociology and gender studies, to name just a few. The term performativity, when it comes to gender studies, could be explained as gender as something you do instead of just are. Butler (1993:2) claims that performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate "act", but, rather, as the reiterative and situational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names.

The researcher Marja Kaskisaari (2000) has stated that performativity can also be a method for analysing. In this kind of method it is very important to notice repetitions, silences and confessions, because the subject and identity in autobiographical texts are produced through these three things. The subject representations are produced through repetitions that are already present in our culture. This means that when we write about our lives, we do not write entirely freely, but depending on the premises that already exist in our society and culture. This also means that we cannot freely construct ourselves as subject beings. Sidonie Smith (1998:108f.) has stated that people construct a temporary life through narrative context and meaning, and through this life they position their selves in a

historical and cultural specific identity. Smith says that this means that the autobiographical writer or storyteller becomes a performative subject.

Studying Online Diaries

The remediation of self is also evident in "virtual communities" on the Internet, in which individuals stake out and occupy verbal and visual points of view through textual and graphical manifestations, but at the same time constitute their collective identities as a network of affiliations among these mediated selves. The virtual community is the community as both subject and object of the process of remediation; it remediates the notion of community as defined in and through such earlier media as telegraph, telephone, radio and television (Bolter and Grusin 1998: 232f.).

Even if the diary is traditionally seen as private and as an project for an individual, the blog can be seen as both public and as a community for several persons. Since the blog is a community where people communicate, interact and are socially and culturally constructed we can in some ways talk about a collective identity, or identities networked to each other.

As Ryan Hawaiian Ozawa has written: The debate over the difference between blogs (or web logs) and web journals is destined to be as varied and endless as the one over the difference between a journal and a diary, in part because the terminology, tools, and purpose also overlap almost completely. Jorn Barger was the first to use the term blog in December 1997. In a Swedish context the term has been commonly used since around 2004. In the middle of the 1990s people started to write diaries on the Internet, available for anyone to read. By the year 1997 blogs were appearing more often on the Internet. During 1998 Jesse James Garett, editor of the website Infosift, started assembling a list consisting of all the blogs he had found, and the next year the list consisted of 23 blogs. The list of 23 blogs can be assumed to have consisted of those written in English and furthermore well-known blogs, since there were 250 Swedish diaries during the year 1999 in the Swedish web ring *Dagbok på nätet* ("Diary on the Web"). Many of these Swedish diaries existed already in mid-1996 and 1997. The web ring *Dagbok på nätet* was just one of several web rings or communities for online diaries; others were *Dagbok Direkt, Geografidagboken, Postludium, Succé, Sapto, Reload, Refresh Total, Carpe Diem* and *Ringringen*. Writing a diary on the Internet is therefore not a new phenomenon. The thing that is somewhat new is the tools with which one can publish the blogs; today you do not need to know how to code a webpage to publish a blog (Palmgren 2005).

The diary genre traditionally contains the following elements: the diary is a result of regular writing, it is private, it has a single author, it is written in dated chapters, it is written in the first person and it describes a period of 24 hours. The blog fulfils all of these criteria, but I think that there is one more criterion for being a blog: it is a medium to communicate with other people and get confirmation from other people. The online diaries are a space where people can write about themselves, their everyday lives, their environment and their feelings, at the same time as they establish contact with people and affect other people's opinions and thoughts in a public space. The blog offers incredible potential for self-expression in public but also communication with others through the blog readers.

Most previous qualitative research on online diaries has been done by literature researchers who have conducted narrative

analysis on various aspects of online journaling. Lejeune (2001) has studied both online and offline diaries, McNeill (2003), Sorapure (2003), Kitzmann (2004), Serfaty (2004) and Kennedy (2003) have examined personal self-expression and the impact of the audience in blogs, and researchers such as Cohn, Mehn and Pennebaker (2004) as well as Kawaura, Kawakami and Yamashita (1998) have conducted empirical studies of blogs. Among Scandinavian researchers, Lena Karlsson (2003, 2005 and 2006), Jill Walker (2003, 2002) and Lisbeth Klastrup (2003) have also studied blogs and Internet textuality from different perspectives.

Rebecca Maxwell and Susan Klein have done a quantitative study to better understand why people keep blogs and how these affect their lives. Maxwell and Kline came to the conclusion that the blogs saw their writing as reflecting on life, as enabling them to keep in touch with their significant others and friends, as helping them feel included and helping them develop their opinions. They also used their diaries to vent, to archive their experiences, and to receive responses from others. Blog writers mostly identified their blog with confessionals, autobiographies, and memoirs, and identified their blogs least as promotional or creative forms of expression.

The Virtual vs. "Real" Body

The blog that I quoted at the beginning was written by Maria, who has been writing a blog since 1999. She was born in 1971 and has a son. She lives with her son and cat in Stockholm, Sweden. She works in the chemistry business and mostly writes about her thoughts about her body and everyday life. These are the facts she wishes to present about herself and her everyday life, which could also be referred to as real life.

Mark Hodges (1993) asks: "What kinds of bodies reside in cyberspace?" and answers the same question with: "None". Hodges explains that the virtual environments normally provide "out of body" experiences that suppress all senses but the visual. Another researcher who has discussed the virtual body is Anne Balsamo (1996). She concerns herself with how deviant bodies are reconstructed, restaged, disciplined and redeployed. She has written six essays about the body, gender and technology and shows in what complex and intimate ways the body, culture and technology are intertwined. Anne Balsamo's essays discuss cosmetic surgery, bodybuilding, artificial insemination, the body in media and the body in science fiction. In the essays Balsamo asks what kind of bodies there are in cyberspaces and when she answers this question she states that cyberspace seldom consists of bodies. Virtual environments are normally outer-body experiences according to Balsamo. However, the introductory quotation shows that the body is present in virtual environments, such as blogs, as one of the purposes for Maria was to write the naked truth about being fat.

Maria also expresses another reason for publishing her blog:

> Today it is exactly six years since I started to write a diary on Internet. I was inspired to start because I found a diary that delivered the most fantastic texts about the diarist's everyday boredom. The texts just went right to my heart; straight to my consciousness [...] I made the mistake of believing that I knew the person behind the words. We met once, but now I'm blocked from reading his words in a community we both belong to (Maria, 15 February 2005).

The extract shows that you cannot be certain that you know the person behind the text, even if it is a diary text that could be said to express the self of the writer. The diary is performa-

tive because it consists of repetitions but also silences. The writer can choose what he or she writes and leaves out the things that he or she does not desire to acknowledge; these things show the way the writer wants the reader to know the writer. You could also say that by writing online you become someone. By being public you exist. This could also refer to the public space becoming privatized, or the private life stepping into the public space; such phenomena can also be exemplified by reality shows and webcams. The extract also reveals a wish to meet someone in real life after getting to know the person online. Through a meeting the person obtains a physical body. The same thing applies to letter writers; after exchanging letters for a while the writers usually ask for a photograph of the other person.

In most of the blog entries that Maria publishes where the body is mentioned, she writes about the feeling of being fat, while many other blogs I have come across refer to being tired or ill when writing about their body. This could be related to Hodges (1993), who asks to what extent we project our own bodies into a virtual world. He answers the same question by claiming that conventions and standards of bodies in the real world are too often carried over into virtual environments: the beauty myth is manifest in descriptions of bodies as sexy and beautiful; similarly, many examples of virtual characters represented as strong and powerful bodies also exist. Are we too deeply infused with the notions of beauty, power, and status that our virtual characters must also represent these conventional ideas? This is, however, not apparent when looking at blog, where the relationship to the, in some way, problematic body is expressed.

Since the blogs in this case mostly consist of text, the body must be constructed with words. By describing their physical body with words the diarists let their body become real online as well. But it is not only the physical body that is present online; also the feeling of the body is present. As in research about cybersex (see e.g. Waskul 2003), a reference to the "acting" or "aching" body is necessary and means that senses and feelings are activated.

The Performative and Remediated Body in Online Diaries

In my opinion the body is used for controlling other people's impression of ourselves. Even if people have always used their bodies in this way, the difference is the means available today: e.g. surgery implants, make-up, piercing, tattoos etc. In general the standard techniques of dress, make-up, gesture have been available for a very long time, but they are different because of the possibilities of the Internet.

One of the most influential feminist philosophers of our time is Judith Butler. Her texts and articles have challenged and changed our view on identity, sexuality, politics and power. In the book *Bodies that Matter* (1990) Butler has described gender as a performance that anyone can do regardless of sex. Others identify us through our theatrical repetitions as a man or woman. These repetitions must be constantly performed, so that the individuals fit in the roles that society has given them. Butler argues that

> if the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called "sex" is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all (Butler 1990, 7).

Butler states furthermore that "once 'sex' itself is understood in its normativity, the materiality of the body will not be thinkable apart from the materialization of that regula-

tory norm". Butler continues her argument by stating that "sex is, thus, not simply what you have, or a static description of what you are: it will be one of the norms by which a person becomes viable at all, that which qualities a body for a life within the domain of cultural intelligibility" (Butler 1993:2). The description of gender as a performance deconstructs the connection between an essential gender (being a woman) and the expression a cultural gender takes (being feminine). Some bloggers have expressed their gender with a photograph. By showing the picture the bloggers embody their self as a female.

The idea that gender is a construction should not be misunderstood as meaning that the construction is less real; people define themselves and are defined according to established categories. This does not mean that a person can freely choose an identity or a gender, because we are constructed through discourses in the society and culture. Another reason why we can't construct ourselves is because we are constructed through performances, and the performances are performed by repetitions, and we cannot repeat something in entirely the same way time and again. Gender is produced culturally through signs, behaviour and gestures that are both gendered and gendering. Judith Butler says in *Bodies That Matter* (1993) that the performance refers to a bodily meaning, and performativity refers to a discursive level.

Bolter and Grusin (1998:232) state that because we understand media through the ways in which they challenge and reform other media, we understand our mediated selves as reformed versions of earlier mediated selves. In my opinion this also applies to the media: blogs. The blogs can be seen as remediations of the traditional offline diaries. But at the same time the selves in the blogs can be seen as remediations. The self is understood by us when we write and read. As performances can never be identical, neither can the remediations be identical.

As Bolter and Grusin (1998:238) point out, the body is also a medium that is remediated. When it comes to bodybuilding and cosmetic surgery in the contemporary, technologically constructed body, the body recalls and rivals earlier cultural versions of the body as a medium. The body as enhanced or distorted by medical and cosmetic technologies remediates the ostensibly less mediated bodies of earlier periods in Western culture. In my opinion the bloggers can be compared with bodybuilders, in the way that they both construct and build a body. The difference is that the bodybuilders build their physical body, while the bloggers do it in cyberspace, and can be said to build a virtual body. One thing that they have in common is that they are attempts of control of their own remediation.

Balsamo (1996:56) writes that the new visualization technologies transform the material body into a visual medium. In the process the body is fractured and fragmented so that isolated parts can be examined visually. At the same time, the material body comes to embody the characteristics of technological images. Another thing that the cosmetic surgery users and the bloggers have in common is that they rely on video and even computer graphics. Both surgeons and bloggers use computer graphics to show how they can improve their appearances or how they would look if they had their ideal body. The computer graphics are widely used by bloggers who write about their weight. They use the graphics to visualize the body and show the ideal body. The ideal body does not have to be the ideal body as the media and model industry portray the body, but as the individual wants to look like.

The Relationship between Self and Body

Ethnologist Lena Gerholm (1998) has stated that the concern of and work on one's appearance and health has become a way for many people to create a self-portrait, a self and identity.

On the Internet, the self is clearly something that is not contained within individuals but communicated among people, largely by typed words (Waskul 2003:14). Accordingly different forms of the presence of the body are anyhow included when people meet over the Internet. The body does matter on the Internet. The sociologist Anthony Giddens (1993) has argued that the way one uses one's body as a medium to express a self is specially developed during the postmodern age. Giddens even states that the project of creating a self has been synonymous with the project of creating a body. Sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) very early discussed the body as the carrier of the self, and this aspect has grown to the proportions it has today, as can be seen on the Internet and in this case the online diaries. It is definitely a place for the performance and staging of the self.

Postmodern selfhood reflects the very same qualities of the postmodern world: it is depthless, transient, radically multiple, hyper-fluid, and decentred. The postmodern self is ultimately rooted within the shifting tides of unstable, ever-changing social relations, often made possible by an expansive network of communication technologies. On the Internet the whole of one's self and experiences of social interaction reside in fleeting words communicated in an electronic space without place (Waskul 2003:15). Waskul writes that because chat environments deny physical presence, nothing can be directly observed – everything must be communicated; all elements of selfhood must be presented to others; one must literally write one's self into existence (Waskul 2003:42). The same thing applies, in my opinion, to the body in blogs; if one only reads the blog and does not look at possible visual pictures on the homepage, then the body has to be found and seen presented within the blog entries. This is what the writers start from, the absence of the gaze. Waskul (2003:45) states, however, that selves are communicated but bodies are nowhere to be seen, and with the corporeal body hidden behind the scene of interaction, participants are free to be without being. The blogs that are quoted in this article show, in contrast, that the opposite is revealed by the speech about the body.

Judith S. Donath has considered the assumption that one body means one identity. In the physical world there is a unity of self and body, for the body provides a compelling and convenient definition of identity. Even if the self and identity can be very complex and shifting depending on the situation, time and place, the body is being considered as a stable anchor. But Donath points that it is somewhat different in the virtual world, because the body is built on information instead of flesh. It is true that a single person can create multiple electronic identities that are linked only by their common progenitor; that link, though invisible in the virtual world, is of great significance. This means that the identity is considered more fluent and staged in the virtual world than in the physical world, but not that the body is absent.

As I have tried to point out in this article, the body and self are connected. Even if the Internet can in some ways be seen as a place where the body does not matter, the bloggers, while constructing and presenting their self, also present and construct a textual body.

Their physical body is present all the time because they use it in typing the text, but as I have shown it is also present in their text when they write about their appearance or how they feel in their body. This can in some ways be interpreted as showing that the "virtual" and the "real" body in these two cases are actually the same thing. Mind and body belong together, creating the space called cyberspace. Furthermore, it seems as if, after looking at the two blogs, that the relationship to the body is in some way problematic when it is mentioned. In the two randomly found blogs the bloggers never mention their body to say that they feel satisfaction or comfort.

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Mothers, Play and Everyday Life

Ethnology Meets Game Studies

By Jessica Enevold & Charlotte Hagström

The socio-cultural practice of gaming has taken a giant leap out of the cultural closet. Gaming is becoming a mainstream activity in many Scandinavian homes with a player base that is growing in size and diversity. Contemporary living-room and everyday culture is changing and developing; the new LCD or plasma-TV that many families bought last Christmas will this year be used as much for console gaming as for watching DVD or blu-ray movies. Simultaneously, public discourses on media-use adjust to reflect the currents of transformation. The view of gaming as leading to addiction and violent behavior is slowly, but gradually becoming nuanced[1] and the formerly dominant image of the computer-game player as a boy has changed to include the whole family, with "Mom" being the most recent addition.

As gaming these days is taking a more and more prominent place as a pastime not only for children but also adults, across cultures and income brackets, it becomes imperative to study. Gaming is not a fleeting phenomenon, but an *everyday practice* with great social, cultural and economic impact that is here to stay. The family, and particularly adult females with children, is a largely neglected study object where gaming is concerned. Although the "daughters" of the gaming generation now have received some attention, its "mothers" have been largely unattended to and are, by far, the least researched game practitioners and consumers of this digital culture. To remedy the lack of knowledge on this particular group and the bearing gaming has on everyday culture, we have launched the project "Gaming Moms: Juggling Time, Play and Family Life" in which we center on women who play computer games (www.gamingmoms.wordpress.com).

This article should serve as an introduction to a relatively new topic requiring very specific methods as it involves both offline and online research. How do we embark on an interdisciplinary venture such as this, and be sure to produce qualitative research of high standard? How should gaming mothers best be studied?

In what follows, we try to answer that question. We also assume that not all of our readers are extensively familiar with games and game culture or have engaged with computer games first-hand or as scientific object of study. We thus begin with a short assessment of its current status as a growing genre, whose image is changing as gamers and game culture become increasingly diversified. We also briefly situate games as an academic subject and outline some of the central concepts focused in the field[2] called Game Studies. Furthermore, understanding the ideological underpinnings of *play* is vital to understanding the contexts in which games and gaming exist because they constitute some of the fundamental conditions of games research. To explain this, we relate the ambiguous status of game/play to the usage of the term "the magic circle" and of historically ingrained rhetorics of play. In our survey of the theoretical land, we notice an increasing attention among games researchers to players in addition to the games themselves. We thus assert that ethnologists have a particular methodological edge and a role to fulfill as games research more and more means studying games in relation to gamers, society and political economy and not only the game itself.

Introducing our research project "Gaming Moms" we explain why it is interesting – and now possible and highly apposite – to study gaming from the perspective of culture, the family and the everyday. We give our rendition of how to best study a particular category of

players such as mothers and why a marriage between ethnology and the interdisciplinary field of Game Studies is necessary and useful. In doing so, we give specific examples from our ongoing project thus presenting a selection of the various methods we apply in our research. Our examples are chosen around two themes – gaming and time management and representations of mothers in the context of gaming. We conclude with a brief discussion of our findings, having thus proposed an answer to our methodological question, and outline some missing perspectives and future challenges.

From Pong to Buzz – The Current State of Affairs

For many, computer games mean shooting, violence, blood and gore. For others, games mean cartoonish, Italian plumbers Mario and Luigi jumping over pipes and turtles to rescue Princess Peach. Some may even reminisce their arcade days playing games like *Space Invaders* or *Pong*. And, even if gaming is not what they like best, most people will recall PacMan – the first game character to gain world fame. Since these early productions, the gaming industry has come a long way. As Internet technology has become available to the general public, and hardware and graphics engines have become more and more sophisticated, games have become increasingly complex and accessible to millions of people. Most Scandinavian, US and UK families these days have at least one PC or console at home (Entertainment Software Association 2008; Krotoski 2004). Millions of people play the extension of former day's adventure games and MUDs[3], so called MMOGs – Massively Multiplayer Online Games. These are 3D graphical virtual worlds into which players can log 24 hours a day seven days a week for a monthly subscription fee to engage with game content and chat and adventure with other people around the world. The development of online gaming has significantly changed the scene; MMOG-players are often older (Yee 2003) and of both genders; web-based casual games are supposedly attracting a lot of female players. On-line game practices have also altered the common view of gaming as a solitary, asocial activity.

The past few years, the gaming industry has transformed the playing field again by embarking on a new significant trend, with Japanese gaming company Nintendo as one of the principal actors on the market. As *Edge*, the world's leading computer game magazine, recently declared in a feature article: "Nintendon't Care About Hardcore" (sic, 2008) the big game companies are turning towards a mass-market, using new super-market outlets such as Woolworths in addition to the usual more specialized retailers. The huge success of the Wii, a TV-based videogames console released in 2006, and the small handheld console Nintendo DS, released in 2004, speaks of a major shift in focus. These consoles had as of September 2008 sold in 34.55 million and 84.33 million units respectively (Nintendo 2008). In Japan, a vast number of the latter were bought by females, allegedly causing a DS "girl fever" (Kohler 2007). The diversification of game types accompanying the hardware development makes it possible for all to find an appealing game; Nintendo's repertoire now includes activities such as brain training (*Dr. Kawashima's Brain Training: How Old Is Your Brain?*, 2005), pet-care (*Nintendogs*, 2005) and fitness (*Wii Fit*, 2007) while Sony can boast with the immensely popular and successful musical karaoke game *SingStar* (2004) and the quiz game *Buzz!* (2005).

The broadening of the console repertoire seems to have paved the way for new user groups, attracting more females and other non-stereotypical game-consumers, including mothers. As this happens, the former categories of hard-core and soft-core players, often used in discussions of who is a gamer or not, break down and become questioned. In sum, games and gaming are approaching the consumer and cultural midfield at a breakneck speed.

From Game Studies to Gamer Studies

In 2001, Espen Aarseth, a pioneer within the field of studying games and one of the founders of the first journal entirely dedicated to the scientific study of games, *Game Studies,* proclaimed that games now could be said to have an academic field of their own. Games programs were being established all over the world, a journal was launched and DIGRA – the Digital Games Research Association – was formed and the field had begun organizing its own game-centered conferences (Aarseth 2001).

How games should be studied – and perhaps the real issue was by whom – had been, and continued to be vividly debated, most notably perhaps in terms of ludological versus narratological arguments. This was mainly a debate where so called "ludologists" protested against "narratologists" (see e.g. Frasca 2003; several of the contributions in Wardrip-Fruin & Harrigan 2003) carelessly applying concepts from, for example, film studies and narratology, to the studies of games, supposedly usurping the topic. Games were claimed to be something very specific requiring their own terms of study due to their *ludic* element—the element of *gameplay.* Games are not to be treated as 'ordinary' texts; Aarseth defined them as "ergodic works". They are productions differing from, for example, books in that they require "non-trivial effort to traverse", that is, more than turning a page or moving the eyes to engage with. In his groundbreaking Ph.D. thesis from 1995 he called them "cybertexts", discarding the loose and general term "interactive" privileging the more specific "ergodic" to characterize the distinct nature of games, MUDs, hypertexts etc. (Aarseth 1997). In short, games should first and foremost be studied as games (see also Frasca 2003).

Since then, this debate has abated somewhat and there has been less focus on establishing Game Studies as a specific discipline. The area of *games research* – which may be a less charged and more accurate label to use if a wider range of perspectives on games and gaming are taken into consideration – has expanded and rather than being a single discipline, it must be seen as a multi-disciplinary field, whose major branches tentatively can be divided into three major ones: the humanities, the social sciences and computer sciences. Although the tag "Game Studies" with capital letters is still, to some extent, associated with humanistic analyses concerned with the structural characteristics of games, for example how play and games should be defined or categorized, so called game ontology or typology (e.g. Juul 2005, Aarseth, Smedstad & Sunnanå 2003; Elderdam & Aarseth 2007), it is safe to say that games research encompasses several disciplinary branches. These bring their own methods and interests to the field focusing on a variety of aspects from design and AI, over games as tools for education to games as sites of social processes.

All in all, the awareness of a need for methodology has increased over the years (Konzack 2002; Consalvo & Dutton 2006), and the efforts presented reflect the fundamen-

tal standpoints of its advocators. In "Playing Research: Methodological Approaches to Game Studies Analysis" (2003) Aarseth, who is firmly rooted in structuralist analyses of games and very focused on the games per se, presents his suggestion. We see as the most fruitful contribution of his article his pinning highest on the agenda the necessity to play the games that we want to analyze; even when the researcher is primarily interested in, for example, the players' social realm or the economy of games distribution. As we explain below, we firmly believe in including the study of gameplay in a comprehensive cultural analysis.

Aarseth attempts to categorize the ways of approaching game analysis by setting up three main areas of focus for game analysis that he calls "gameworld", "game structure" and "gameplay", and then he sorts a number of disciplines into these various categories whose main interests tend to fall within them. Although Aarseth himself points out that his categorizations are in no way exhaustive or definite, his disciplinary indications have been criticized by, for example, New Media researcher Sybilles Lammes (2007) who remarks that several disciplines may be interested in the gameworld (semiotic, fictional content, representations) or the game structure (rules and AI) while also focusing on gameplay (the players and their actions).

We do not perceive Aarseth's suggestions as prescriptive, rather that he is right in his observation that the focus of certain research ventures often coincide with these interest areas. What is significant is the striving for methodological clarity that can be seen in light of both the newness of the field and a recent perceivable expansion of focus in games research that moves also gamers into the analytical spotlight. In short, the horizon has widened – from looking at the semiotics and mechanics of games to what players actually do with games, what social meanings they have, how they use them and what they may learn from them. It thus comes as no surprise that anthropologist Tom Boellstorff (2006) argues for the benefits of anthropological methods, including observations and interviews, to be added to the agenda, or that Sybille Lammes (2007) endeavors to synthesize Aarseth's and Boellstorff's efforts by discerning what they have in common that might be beneficial and productive for games research.

Lammes' main point is that both Aarseth and Boellstorff, each from his own angle, emphasize the need to "go native" but fail to stress what she calls the situatedness of both researcher (who plays the game) and the local nature of the game, and the gamers who are under scrutiny. Gaming is an outcome of local cultural practices. Aarseth's stress on gameplay, Boellstorff's call for anthropological methods and incorporating games into a much larger (political) cultural picture, and Lammes' emphasis on reflexivity and situatedness together lie at the core of our approach to studying gaming mothers. In all fairness, it should be noted that MMO-researcher T.L. Taylor brought such issues on the table in terms of embodiment already in 1999 when she did fieldwork investigating how people presented themselves through their avatars in game-like communities online.[4] Moreover, methodological discussions of ethnographic endeavors have of course been going on all along in other fields – ethnology being one of them. However, we believe the unique qualities of games oblige anybody who wants to study gamers to take the specific concerns of Game Studies – games and play – into account. Next, then, we delve into the issue of "play".

How to View Play – Theories of the Magic Circle and Rhetorics of Play

We believe gaming is an activity that offers a particular challenge to traditional approaches to studying everyday life. Play has been perceived as a "voluntary" and "unproductive" activity (Callois 1958/2001), as something that takes place within a space separated from "real life", a "magic circle" with its own rules. The concept of the magic circle (Huizinga 1938) is a much referred to but also debated concept in the field of Game Studies (Salen & Zimmerman 2004). With the advent of MMOGs, most notably *World of Warcraft (WoW)*, and other multi-player on-line games this has become an increasingly questioned notion; games and gaming have become part of everyday life for many people. In these worlds and games people meet, communicate and interact with others, sometimes in ways that have little to do with play or game in a traditional sense and thus call for refined understandings of what a game is or what it means to play one.[5]

It is here important to differentiate between the perceptions of the general public or media representations and research that explicitly refutes the separation between game and non-game illustrated by the magic circle (Taylor 2006; Malaby 2007, Pargman & Jakobsson 2008). Judging by the most sensational media perspectives and a generalized view of the layman, playing games is still an activity that does not, or should not, overlap with "real" life. Media coverage of games and playing tend to maintain sharp distinctions between good and bad activities; gaming tends to end up either on the bad side of the fence as a practice leading to addiction and violence or, on the good, as a tremendous tool for learning and breaking isolation. In most cases, the connection between games and players is stereotypically viewed as one between the young and their leisure activities. These conservative but seemingly pervasive perspectives on play have bearing on how studies concerned with games are evaluated and understood and it should be safe to say that only recently have computer games and play come on the agenda as a truly "worthy" object of study.

Seen from an ethnological perspective, perhaps we should say that games and play *again* have come on the agenda? To simplify crudely, once upon a time games and play were "natural" topics of investigation for ethnologists and anthropologists, since playing games were seen as an intrinsic part of culture and culture formation. For example, in the Folklife Archives at Lund University, can be found a great number of records of old games and play. But these types of game activities (e.g. Forsgård 1987) seem to have more or less disappeared from the research agenda the last couple of decades. When Swedish ethnologists have studied play more recently, they have mainly studied sports (Schoug 1997; Fundberg 2003; Fundberg, Ramberg & Waldetoft 2005). It could be argued that these studies are concerned not so much with the playing activity itself but with issues of cultural identity regardless of the game played. What is significant in the context of computer games is to note that, as a rule, playing football has positive connotations whereas playing computer games does not; doing sports is good and healthy because it involves physical movement, and is perceived as leading to social fostering. On the other hand, non-athletic games and play – perhaps with the exception of chess – have historically not been regarded in this way, particularly if the players were adults, in contrast to children who "should" play. Brian Sutton-Smith's historicizing analysis

of play from a broad cultural perspective, *The Ambiguity of Play* (1997) can be used to understand the multiple possible positions that play can occupy in public discourse. He describes seven rhetorics of play among which the rhetoric of *play as frivolous*, oppositional, revolutionary and conflicting with a "work ethic", and thus a "useless activity", easily can be recognized as the rhetoric employed when computer games are referred to in a negative way. When media and research attempt to promote computer games, it is often heard in terms of the rhetoric of *play as progress* that is associated with children's play; "play turns children into adults" and is valuable because it is educational and developing. It can also be done in terms of *play as imaginary* meaning innovation, imagination and creativity, a rhetoric associated with the improvisational play of literature and theater. Depending on whether play is to be promoted or refuted, different ideologies underpinning these are employed. These various rhetorics are signs of the deep-rooted ambiguity of play, which in turn is reflected in the way play, here in the form of computer gaming, is conceived in everyday life and, as a result, often viewed as a contentious activity and controversial object of research.

The ethnological focus on cultural identity mentioned above, corresponds well with the terminology Sutton-Smith terms the *rhetoric of play as identity*. Play is thus talked about as a means of confirming, maintaining and advancing the identity of a community of players. The activities he refers to, though, are traditional celebrations, festivals and ceremonies. We can see, then, that alongside the trend described above in the field of game design – the broadening of the market and target audiences – computer-game play is becoming increasingly legitimate to perform and to study. We see this as play becoming re-introduced into the general concept of everyday culture and everyday practice even for adults, and consequently in cultural research. This means that more "positively tainted" rhetorics are again used to describe also computer game play – as social, as identity forming and as community building. We can begin to speak of gaming as popular culture, a "folk"-tradition even.

Gaming Moms – the Project

As we write this, the interest in the everyday practices of gaming is increasing among researchers interested in computer games and gaming. So is the awareness of the significance of videogames to other player groups than young males, for example "gray-haired" gamers (Quandt, Grueninger and Wimmer 2009) and "baby-boomers" (Pearce 2008). However, there is still a lot of work to be done when it comes to mapping out its cultural patterns and impact. Though statistics and data, produced by the game industry as well as through research, confirm that women do make up a large proportion of the gaming community, this does not necessarily imply that women are socially and culturally acknowledged as gamers. Thus, when WomenGamers.com on their web site introduces the forum's merchandise, ranging from t-shirts to coffee mugs, with the rhetorical question "Tired of explaining to sales clerks that you're not buying gifts for your boyfriend or husband?" we understand that it is based on an experience shared by many female players. Their slogan, "Because Women DO Play", says it all.

The phenomenon of mothers who play has not previously been examined. A lot of games research has been limited to teenagers and young, mostly unattached women (Schott and Horrell 2000; Royce et al. 2007; Jenson

and de Castell 2008). Women with families usually play in a very specific socio-cultural situation. As we pointed out in a previous article (Enevold & Hagström 2008), women in affluent Western society do, as a rule, not struggle to put food on the table, but they still seem to go home, as Arlie Russell Hochschild once put it, to a second shift (1989). One of the hard currencies in today's society is time, and gaming takes time from other everyday activities. For mothers these include somewhat different tasks and roles than it does for women without children. One of these roles is being the domestic guardian. Women, especially when they enter into relationships and have children, are still assumed to take the main responsibility for organizing the domestic sphere including upholding routines, cultural traditions, social relations and fostering the kids. Among these 'duties' have been policing the play activities of others; mothers are said to complain, apart from calling the game companies about their no-good games (Cassell & Jenkins 1998), about their children watching too much television or playing too much videogames (Kerr 2003). Thus, a mother who plays computer games challenges cultural norms, claiming time for an unproductive activity only for her, and she acts in contradiction to what the concept of "mother" implies.

Turning our interest to this group of players we tap into the area of gender roles, family time management and issues of equality. Our project, "Gaming Moms", aims to examine the role of gaming in families where the mother is an avid gamer. Female gamers with families play in distinct situations involving normative gendered ideas of family roles, time and place. Games, seen as personal time-consuming pleasures, may cause conflict with other everyday activities. Gaming moms do not stereotypically support or deny the gaming of the rest of the family; they join and engage in the gaming themselves. But how is this role negotiated and contested, what does the fact that the mother is a gamer mean to the structure of everyday life? How do gaming moms juggle time, play and family life? The project has just begun and this article presents no final findings. Below, we will account for some preliminary results based on a small sample of interviews and observations and discourse analysis, to mention a few of our methods.

Aiming to illustrate how gaming must be understood as an aspect of everyday culture, affecting and involving not only the actual players, we will in the following section use two themes – perceptions and management of time and representations of gaming moms – as examples when describing our methodology. We believe applying several strategies and combining various methods is crucial for understanding the situations in which gaming moms play and live, and how the fact that they are at the same time both mothers and players affects their experiences. After accounting for our methods, we will resume our methodological discussion and conclude.

Methods: TV, Music Videos, Game Advertisments

As part of the methods that we in our project have ranged under the bigger heading of discourse analysis, we are always on the lookout for representations of mothers in the context of gaming. One notable case that reflects the dominant picture of mothers as non-playing beings is the *Southpark* episode # 1008, "Make Love, Not Warcraft" where a mom is remarkably supportive towards her gaming son and his friends and brings him both food and potty whenever demanded during an extended ses-

sion of *World of Warcraft.* Another case is the music video "Vi sitter i Ventrilo och spelar DotA" by Swedish D.J. Basshunter in which an incredulous and irritated mom angrily complains over her son and his friends doing nothing but play computer games all day long.[6] One of the initial inspirations for our project was actually our sighting of a mom that supposedly *was* gaming in an advertisement by Microsoft, a cartoonish picture of a smiling woman holding a videogame console. The picture featured in a campaign launched around Mother's Day 2007 that encouraged children to enter a writing competition where the best story about a "gaming mom" would win an Xbox 360 Elite. The woman is drawn with a characteristic 1950's hairdo, a pearl collier, make-up and spotless apron seemingly the perfect housewife. We have analyzed this picture in greater detail elsewhere (Enevold & Hagström 2008), but, in essence, what this and all of the above mentioned representations tell us is that a lot of the mothers in the popular gaming discourse still are rather traditionally portrayed.

News Articles and Blogs

Included in the discourse analysis is also scanning news articles and blogs on a daily basis using keywords such as "mom" and "mother" in combination with "gaming", "computer games", "Wii", etc. As was indicated above, the content analysis of the material so far reveals that "gaming mom" most often is equivalent to "hockey mom", which does *not* mean a mom who plays hockey. The hockey mom was recently glorified by Governor Sarah Palin's portrayal of herself as "your average hockey mom" (Welin 2008): she drives the kids to games and washes their gear, takes pride and invests time in her family but does not play herself. By invoking the concept of the hockey mom Palin tried to present herself as a responsible ordinary mom, but in the process reinforced the stereotypical view of the mother as supportive – even though she is a successful politician or businesswoman. The dominant interpretation of "gaming mom" we have found so far seems to go hand in hand with this view. Another example of the supportive mom was found in the line to a game shop on the night of the release of the latest expansion to the game *World of Warcraft*; a teenage boy queuing outside was asked by a journalist whether he wasn't getting cold standing there? No, not a problem, the boy answered, mom has been here with hot chocolate and saffron buns (Lundell & Mattsson 2008).

But are there then no moms who play games themselves? Well, when a mom who games appears in media it is often as a member of a family or a group rather than as a single individual: she is implicitly included in games directed to families or in articles on gaming in family life. The author of the blog "Ancient Gaming Noob" (2009) tells a story of how his mother started playing with him and his daughter and many of the replies speak of parents "drafted" to play online to bridge long distances. A games journalist writes on the website straight.com about the game *World of Goo:* "Rarely does a game come along that appeals to both casual and hard-core gamers alike". He concludes his article by emphasizing: "This is a game you can introduce to your mother. With its delicious atmosphere, simple controls, and inventive gameplay, it's very easy to recommend *World of Goo*" (Bassett 2009). Thus, a gaming mom is seen as somebody who requires simplicity and she is the implied "soft-core" player playing short games. This is one way the concept of time is related to mothers – mothers need

shorter games. Nobody ever really questions why though. It is also incorporated in various articles, such as this from *Aftonbladet*: a 23-year-old new mother, who wants to lose weight, has problems finding time to work out having to care for her baby. Her solution is long walks with the pram and an audio book in combination with X-box *Dance Stage*. One hour on the dance mat, she explains, is more demanding than an hour of spinning at the gym (Berge 2007).

Web Forums

Web forums are scanned on a regular basis. These include forums directed to games in general, such as *Games.Forum.com*, to specific games, such as *The Official World of Warcraft Forums*, and to female gamers, such as *WomenGamers.com*, as well as forums directed to parents such as *Familjeliv* [Family Life]. In all of them we have found various representations of mothers: as passionate gamers, as ignorant adults, as forbidding guardians, as caring parents. An interesting approach is a post by a player in a gaming forum who suggests fellow players to "Get your mum to draw the Lich King", which is a creature in *World of Warcraft*. The response is massive and lots of drawings are posted. The majority is drawn by mothers who obviously have no idea of what the Lich King looks like but nevertheless happily have engaged with the task. There are also several posts in various forums related to time: one expectant mother writes about how she has found a way to be able to play and breastfeed at the same time with the help of a special pillow (see Enevold & Hagström 2008 for a more detailed account), while another one explains she has grabbed the chance to set her talent points while the kids are currently playing with their toys.

Interviews

So far, five interviews have been carried out, all with mothers in their forties. The games they play stretch from casual single player games on the PC, such as *Mahjong*, over online games like *Betapet* to multiplayer games like *World of Warcraft*, requiring extensive cooperation and communication with others. They also play social TV-based console games such as *SingStar* and *Guitar Hero* as well as small and quick games on social sites like Facebook and on their mobile phones. Representations of gaming moms is one of the themes in the semi structured interviews, revealing that a majority of the informants consider themselves exceptions as they do not know any other mothers who play. One informant describes arguments going on in the in-game chat channels about playing mothers who are not considered to act "motherly" enough. These disputes concern, for instance, time management: in a *World of Warcraft*-guild some players have reservations about female powergamers who they think are spending too much time playing and thus neglecting their children. Time also features as a theme, as the informants sometimes feel they have to defend their gaming from others who judge it a waste of time or have to battle with themselves about the clash between play and household chores. But, some mothers also slot gaming into the schedule of domestic life without any obvious conflicts: they play short games while cooking, thus seemingly taking for granted the limits housework and family life set. Also, we noted that in order to make time for gaming, something else was cut back – often the time watching TV, not family life.

Observations

When "Wrath of the Lich King", the latest expansion of *World of Warcraft*, was released

the 13th of November 2008 an observation was carried out in Uppsala. Outside a game shop over 200 people lined up waiting for the doors to open at 00.00, the majority being young men in their early twenties. Walking along the queue and talking to several groups of people revealed different experiences of mothers and gaming: there were those who had mothers who did play themselves, those whose mothers found the whole idea of playing dubious, and those with mothers who did not play but who were genuinely interested in learning more about their children's activities. Two people stuck out in the crowd: one was a mother waiting with her 13-year-old son and his friend, the other was a mother at the very front together with her husband and teenage son. Though obviously both were gaming moms, their relation to gaming was entirely different, representing the two concepts of the gaming mom found in the discourse analysis. The first one did not play but was supportive of her children's play, emphasizing among other things how gaming had improved their English. A certain amount of control was, however, deemed necessary: one must find time to play not only *WoW* but football as well. A similar example of motherly encouragement could perhaps be the practice of the woman who is the Godmother of one of our children; she, who is an avid gamer, provides this boy and her other godchildren who play *WoW* with in-game presents, including game gold and mechanical animals, on their birthdays. The ritual of gift-giving has thus crossed the border into the virtual world – another sign of gaming becoming part of everyday cultural practice. To return to the other mother in line, she was an active and passionate player as was the rest of her family that she had been waiting together with for over six hours, well prepared with chairs and blankets. She nevertheless explained that her playing habits had changed over time and that today she had found a balance, in contrast to some time ago, when she felt she played too much which lead to consequences for her family. To her, playing *WoW* involves a lot of communication and she often comes to take the role of nurturing and motherly listener, sometimes spending a considerable time not actually playing but listening to other players in need of counseling or just someone to talk to.

Participation, Observation, Coplay

Besides observations of events such as the one described above we also work with participant observations, both offline and online. These include playing together with our informants, thus being able to observe, as ethnologists and anthropologists often have acknowledged, the gap between what people say they do and what they actually do. A very telling study was recently concluded by Williams et al. (2009) who had permitted access to the game-time logs of several thousand players of the game *Everquest*. One of the big surprises was the discovery that women severely underreported their time played. Similarly, an observation may reveal that an informant who states there is no conflict between play and family life, or who on the contrary says she seldom finds time for gaming, in fact is playing more or in a very different situation than what she states in an interview. Methods thus need to complement one another, sometimes in unanticipated ways. Our intention is not to question the gaming mother's experiences but to analyze the circumstances under which she plays and to understand her interpretations of what is and what is not happening. This also includes playing ourselves, in the process performing an auto-ethnography. Following the discussions going on in general chat of

an MMOG, or talking to fellow players, lets us understand the diverse conditions under which different players participate that may not be easily accessible by other methods. The same relates to in game-experiences of playing together with a group of other players. It can happen that one player suddenly has to leave, or that you (the researcher) have to, because a child needs to be attended to. The reactions of others and the feelings of the player cannot be thoroughly understood without the researcher having experienced it.

Blogging

At an early stage we decided to set up a blog, "Gaming Moms: Juggling Time, Play and Family Life" (2008), as a means for communicating with our informants. It is used for sharing information, reporting on how the project progresses and for posting the most interesting or relevant articles related to mothers and gaming that we find through our examination of forums, news articles and blogs. Next, our plan is to set up an online survey on mothers and gaming, drawing on our findings from interviews, web discussions, news articles etc. Since the project aims at examining the specific situation of mothers, a group of players who seldom is recognized as *players*, we find that recounting and sharing our clips and thoughts through the blog is both important and productive. Mother or not, a visitor to the blog should gain some understanding of the interrelation of gaming, motherhood and everyday life.

Playing analysis

Our view is that to be able to understand, interpret and analyze the place gaming has in the everyday life of our informants we must place ourselves in their position. Playing Analysis (Aarseth 2003) that was first mentioned in the beginning of this article to a large extent concerns being acquainted with the game itself, its semiotics and mechanics; how does the game work, what can be done, what does it look like and what features does it contain? Do you plant flowers or shoot terrorists? Do you conquer continents or solve riddles? Do you play alone or together with others? Do you have to use devices other than a mouse such as a board, a guitar, a nunchuk, a steering wheel, a laser gun? All these elements affect gameplay and consequently the gamer and her experience. Nevertheless, playing analysis is also related to participant observation in-game and co-play as discussed above. Classic ethnographic methods such as participant observations – through play – can thus be seen not only as one of several possible methods but as paramount. As Aarseth points out, "informed game scholarship must involve play, just like scholars of film and literature experience the works first hand, as well as through secondary sources" (2003:3). He also states that "what takes place on the screen is only partly representative of what the player experiences" (ibid.).

In the interviews the women name a lot of different games that they play. It is important to be aware of the characteristics of these games, how they function, what kind of demands they put on their players. As indicated, there is a huge difference between playing a round of the single-player game *Sudoku Master* on a Nintendo DS in bed while feeding your baby or alone, and participating in so called end-game raiding in an online game investing many hours. In short, we play to understand the informants' accounts of how, when and why, they play.

Conclusion

In their article on ethnographic approaches to the Internet and computer-mediated com-

munication (CMC), Garcia et al. posit that ethnographers who are faced with the "current blending of online and offline worlds" are required to incorporate CMC and the Internet "to adequately understand social life in contemporary society" (2009:53). The new media require the researcher to learn new skills, among them: textual and visual analysis; impression management, that is presenting oneself properly on websites, through e-mail communication and chats and to take into consideration the different ethical demands these contexts pose. The cultural competence these environments may require a researcher to acquire, in order to at all gain access, may also include learning new technology. A similar claim about ethics and impression management, "establishing online presence" is made by Hookway (2008). It is also important to remember what Nancy Baym emphasizes. She states that studying website texts and images is not enough, interviewing people is a must, or, in some way, having "access to their points of view" (2006:85). When studying games, all these points become necessary to take into consideration in a number of ways – belonging to a guild or a clan in a game, or to a forum community may alleviate access; knowing how to communicate through IRC or the voice chat program Ventrilo (which a lot of game clans require their members to use), recognizing what a game bot is or how to ban a player from a game means possessing cultural and technological competencies that help in accessing, grasping and interpreting players' realms of practice. As Williams (2005) and Baym (2006) have pointed out and Garcia et al.'s survey confirm, multiple strategies vouch for higher quality studies. "Multi-method, multi-theoretical approaches" is the best way to "advance understanding" (Williams 2005:458).

In our study we will employ as many methods as we deem necessary and possible to adequately graph our subjects multidimensionally. Here we have accounted for some of them. Nevertheless, in our endeavor to understand the everyday experiences of gaming mothers we will implement even more; among these are diary-keeping. A small number of participants will get to use a recording instrument of their choosing, whatever tickles their fancy: video, audio, writing or collage-making (Mikkelsen 2008; Sotamaa et al. 2005). We will also throw pizza parties, a kind of group interview, inspired by Sherry Turkle (1995) who would always interview as many as possible of the people she first had only interacted with online. This is not necessarily the order of recruitment in our project where some of the women we have interviewed will be asked to participate in such a game and pizza meeting. As we mentioned above, mothers who play do not open know any other mothers who play. Pizza parties thus have manifold potential outcomes – meetings such as these can be consciousness-raising, they generate new insights for the researcher as well as the participants and, perhaps, lead to new friends and networks, to name a few. We are also considering experimenting with co-constructed narratives working with the entire family of the gaming mom.

To study gaming mothers means taking on several fields at once. Similar to Nieborg and Hermes who in a recent theme issue on games *European Journal of Cultural Studies* (2008:11) wrote that the history of the development of Cultural Studies should serve to inspire game studies to "remain open-minded and not get bogged down in untimely orthodoxies", and Cultural Studies to learn from game studies how to be truly interdisciplinary, we see that Game Studies and ethnology need to learn from one another.

When you find a picture of a young woman among birthday greetings and wedding pictures on the family pages of a daily newspaper with the text "Congratulations on level 80", which means that a relative or a friend is publicly acknowledging the fact that she has achieved the highest level a player can reach in *World of Warcraft*, you know that games and gaming are becoming routine activities integrated into contemporary social life and everyday culture (*Göteborgs-Posten* 2008). We are just beginning to realize the scope of the everyday life ramifications gaming may engender in contemporary society and we are here to study them. In doing so we need to join forces and pool our resources with other research traditions and stay open-minded before the challenges digital media culture pose. We aim to contribute to the generation of high quality studies of digital culture, a culture in which reaching level 80 now seems to have become a rite of passage worthy of ceremony and celebration.

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Notes

1 To give an example, the Norwegian resource network for the computer game industry, research, education and press, *JoinGame*, recently arranged a workshop that featured a panel debate debunking some of the "myths" about computer games as violent, addictive and only for boys (www.joingame.org).
2 Some would argue it is a discipline rather than a field; what follows should explain some of the debate.
3 Multi-User Dungeon: basically a text-based computer program in which you can play a role, build things, solve puzzles together with other people online.
4 It seems that Taylor has never entered the debate of how Game Studies should be conducted, most likely, we assume, because she is already firmly embedded in the field of sociological ethnographic research and as such never felt the need to stake out the borders of the field in the same way as the more "ludologically inclined" researchers would.
5 In this article there is no space to go deeper into the discussion of the blending of offline and online worlds. Several researchers have talked about these phenomena. In addition to the ones mentioned in this article (e.g. T.L. Taylor, Thomas Malaby) we have Julian Dibbell and Edward Castronova.
6 DotA (Defence of the Ancients) is a custom map of a game called *Warcraft III*; Ventrilo is a so called voice-over-IP program that enables players to talk to each other while playing games online.
7 http://www.xbox.com/en-US/community/events/mymomsagamer/default.htm

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New Acquaintances. An Attempt to Introduce Online Diaries into Ethnology[1]

By Heli Niskanen

Generalizing a little, it can be said that ethnology has been a stranger to the Internet. This is a severe shortcoming, since the Internet is a phenomenon which is more and more common and connected to people's everyday life – a field that is an essential and integral subject of ethnological study. In this article, I want to build a bridge between the two by taking an ethnological approach to online diaries.

The Internet was not discovered in ethnology until quite recently. Especially in Finnish ethnology the study of the Internet is quite rare. Self-evidently, this has to do with the fact that the Internet was invented only a while ago, and it came into popular use in Finland as recently as in the 1990s. But there are more reasons. When ethnology has previously and traditionally often been defined as the study of "folk culture", it has excluded popular and mass culture. This has presented an obstacle for the widening of the field of research to information and communication technologies. (For similar observations concerning anthropology, see Wilson and Peterson 2002:450.)

Besides the way ethnology has defined itself as a discipline, reasons for the lack of ethnological studies on the Internet can be found in the discipline of Internet research. In practice, Internet research began in the 1980s. In the early days of the Internet, a lot of popular literature and reviews were published. These described the Internet as unconnected to and separated from the 'real world'. The online world – the world which could be accessed through a telecommunication connection – was seen as a place which enabled people to break away from their everyday life and their bodies and to be free from the reality of the offline world (Wilson and Peterson 2002:450 f.). This approach distinguishes between the virtual and the real, which led researchers to ignore the meanings, differences, hierarchies and relationships of power existing in the 'real world', meaning the everyday reality of people, and the different skills, information, experience, practices etc. people have (Wilson and Peterson 2002:452, 460 f.; Paasonen 2004:10 f.; 2006:37).

These studies began to be criticized in the 1990s. There arose a need to detach the research from the popular discourses and ideas about the Internet. Researchers started to acknowledge that the Internet is a part of our everyday life, and consequently studies have started to focus on the connections between the online and the offline (Wilson and Peterson 2002:451). The connections between the Internet and everyday life are now discussed by researchers, and the Internet is studied increasingly from the viewpoint of embodied and active users who are located in a specific time and place and who also are part of social relationships and processes (Consalvo 2004:1, 4). I claim that this change in the field of Internet research has opened the doors for ethnologists and enabled, slowly but surely, the arrival of ethnological research of the Internet. Since the Internet is now seen as included in everyday life and not disconnected from it, it has earned its place as a research subject in ethnology. There is also a need to go further than to merely explore the connections between the Internet and everyday life. Instead, we should study how the Internet and the "online world" actually are nowadays essential parts of everyday life (see e.g. Laukkanen 2007:195 ff.). It could be said that the online and the offline are not separate, parallel and interconnected worlds, but instead, the online is inextricably included in the offline.

Wanting to Have a Baby – Online Diaries

My research focuses on what kinds of conceptions and ideas women have about fertility,

conception and getting pregnant. The Internet is the source of my data, which consists of 37 online diaries written in the early 21st century. The online diaries were collected from a Finnish family-themed website in summer of 2005, from two different categories of diaries. One was classified as "baby fever diaries" and the other as "childlessness diaries"; the classifications were made by the writers themselves.

Online diaries in general are diary-like, focusing on things such as their author's thoughts and feelings (Sundar, Edwards, Hu and Stavrositu 2007:91), and therefore online diaries have been seen as bringing out the importance of individuals' everyday life (McNeill 2003:26). They resemble diary/journal blogs, but even though they have many similarities with blogs, they are not the same thing and should not be confused with each other. Blogs are usually defined as "frequently modified webpages containing dated entries listed in reverse chronological sequence" (Herring, Scheidt, Kouper and Wright 2007:3), whereas in the online diaries in my data the posts are not in reverse but in chronological order. However, in practice the difference concerns only the form and not the content (Östman 2007b:49 f.), and therefore many studies of blogs can be used and referred to when discussing online diaries if some degree of criticism is kept in mind.

At this point I have to note that, although I acknowledge the importance of ethical questions concerning the use of Internet data, I will not discuss them in this article. I simply mention that I have approached the writers, and they have approved of my use of their online diaries as data. In addition, to protect their anonymity I will not describe the online diaries in further detail, nor reveal the Internet addresses of the online diaries or the discussion forum. In this article, I refer to the online diaries by using BD for the baby fever diaries and CD for the childlessness diaries; the date that follows indicates the day the post in question was written.

To characterize my data, it is actually 'located' on both the Internet and the World Wide Web (from now on www) even though I often use the term 'Internet' in this article. The Internet, that is, the infrastructure and uses of the global computer network, is not the same thing as www, "data in the form of a text and graphic 'page' stored on hard drives pr web servers, available to anyone running protocol-translating web browser software" (Wilson and Peterson 2002:452; for more about the Internet, www and digital culture in general, see Gere 2002). Nevertheless, they often get mixed up with each other.

In addition to being located on the Internet and www, my online diaries are part of a phenomenon called the social web or social media or Web 2.0. These terms emphasize the role of the user, who actively participates and produces content. They also involve ideas of interaction, equality, communities and a sense of community, open communication and distribution of information. Users are seen not only as members of passive audiences but as active agents (e.g. Multisilta 2007:265–269). This can be seen clearly in my data. The writers tell in their online diaries what new has happened in their lives, whether their 'baby project' has made any progress, what kinds of problems they have faced, and what feelings they are experiencing. Women can also ask readers to comment, help and give advice. To illustrate, in the following there are two extracts from one online diary:

> So, now it is kp 18/25–26 [the 18th cycle day of the menstrual cycle which is 25 or 26 days long in total], I felt the ovulation more than a week ago and obviously

I have had symptoms since the last millennium. My stomach has been hurting since ovulation, I feel cold (I have been showering many times a day to warm myself up), my nerves are on edge and I'm tired. So just normal pains before menstruation, I guess. However, I do not recall anything like this from the last cycle (BD11 12.3.2005, transl. H.N.).

I really don't understand my [menstrual] cycles, this year's cycles have been: 26, 25, 26, 24, 27, 24, 28, 26 [days long]... they are not all that irregular, but I just start to wonder if I ovulate at all anymore :sad: [a sad smiley] in every cycle we have spent time between the sheets diligently exactly between days 10 and 18 [of the menstrual cycle] and still nothing happens... I'm so furious again!! (BD11 2.7.2005, transl. H.N.).

From Sources to Subjects

The focus of my research is on the written texts and the meanings they contain and not on the specific persons who have written these online diaries. Despite this, I want briefly to address the question of source criticism. This is because at various congresses and seminars I have been – and usually still am – confronted with lots of questions about studying the Internet and online diaries specifically. While the field of Internet research has mostly passed these questions, in the field of ethnology they still persist, containing assumptions about the connections between the Internet and everyday life.

Usually, the big question is, how do I know who the writers 'really' are? Do I know if the things and events they tell about have 'really' happened? What I do know is that in the spring 2005, 73% of Finnish people aged between 15 and 74 had used the Internet, and over 95% of people aged between 15 and 39 had used it sometimes (Nurmela 2006:54, 59; Nurmela uses statistics of Statistics Finland.). I know that the proportion of women using the Internet has increased rapidly (Nurmela 2006:57), and they use the Internet differently from men, since the use of the Internet is gendered (e.g. Vehviläinen 2005). Sari Östman has studied online diaries, blogs and home pages written by Finnish women. She says that writing and publishing personal documents on the Internet seems to be a women's practice in Finland (2007a, 2007b). In sum: young people and women use the Internet increasingly and women often write personal documents. On the basis of this, it seems plausible that the writers may actually be who they say they are: adult women (aged between 20 and 30 plus years), who live in a stable relationship with a man and who do not currently have any children but wish to have them.

However, I cannot verify any of this or be sure about the authenticity of the things told in the online diaries. Source criticism is traditionally considered important in ethnology in order to find out if interpretations and results can be generalized and to what extent. This approach carries within itself a question about the equivalence between everyday life and the Internet and the assumption that the content of the Internet *should* coincide with everyday life. That is not relevant here. I am not that much interested in who the writers 'really' are – the real people behind the online diaries – and therefore I do not see my data simply as a source nor focus on the possible biases or incorrectness of the data. This difference in approaches is similar to what Finnish ethnologist Pirjo Korkiakangas has written about oral history and the shift from seeing the data merely as a source to studying it as a subject (Korkiakangas 2006). Likewise, I claim that it is important to note that online diaries do not tell about reality as such, but about an experienced and interpreted reality and the meanings given to things. My interest lies in how things such as fertility or conception are represented in the online diaries.

The difference in these approaches can also be clarified by using media researcher Marjo Laukkanen's (2007:48–51) division between material (*materiaalinen*), described (*kuvattu*) and imagined (*kuviteltu*). What I work with is the described person, meaning what the writer says about him/herself, not with the material person behind the screen. In addition, I certainly cannot avoid making assumptions about the writer, so there is also an imagined person involved in the process.

Constructing Everyday Life in Online Diaries

Nowadays one of the popular ways in which anthropologists and ethnologists have approached the Internet is by practicing so called Internet ethnography (e.g. Miller and Slater 2000). This means spending a considerable time in the field observing what happens on the Internet in real time, not only browsing through web pages and saving documents (Hine 2000:4f., 21–27). This approach emphasizes the connections between the online and the offline, and it is used when studying how the Internet is used as a part of everyday life.

I focus my research differently, since my interest does not lie in the use of the Internet as such, but in the textual/written data collected from the Internet and how everyday life is constructed in online diaries.

My data, online diaries, resemble traditional diaries in many ways even though they are clearly two different genres (Karlsson 2006; Östman 2007a; 2008; note that Sorapure (2003:18) rightly points out how "other reference points might yield different insights into the writing and reading of online diaries"). Furthermore, I claim that the online diaries in my data are more diary-like because of their location and the way they were classified on the website. As mentioned, my data consists of 'baby fever diaries' and 'childlessness diaries'. What is important is that this classification was made by the authors themselves. Due to this, the writers clearly perceived that online diaries should in some way be like diaries. This means that writers were expected to tell about their personal everyday life, their emotions and thoughts from their own subjective perspective (Vatka 2005:52–57). It was thought that the online diaries should proceed at the same pace as the life of the writer.

But the idea that the text of an online diary equals the life of the writer is a common misconception. The expectation and assumption is that an online diary represents the person as who they really are since it grounds the narrative in the 'real world', although the things written may have nothing in common with it (McNeill 2003:38–39, 43). Similar observations have been made about diary/journal blogs – many blog writers themselves state that "my blog is me" (Reed 2005:226f). But as has been stated in the case of diaries, the writer constructs a role which is not equal to the writer, but instead may even differ from her/him in some ways. The writer controls what she/he tells about her/his life (Vatka 2005:142–147, 268). Even though it is represented as the 'real me' and it refers to the offline context, an online diary can be said to be a performative presentation of oneself (Schaap 2004; Ibrahim 2006; also Östman 2008).

This is visible in my data in many ways. Sometimes the language and the style of the text are in the focus, and the aim seems to be to write a good and easily readable story (Östman 2007a:38, 45). The aspect of secrecy and ethics also affects what the writer considers she can and should write. One may hide something and leave some information unmentioned. These occasions are often connected to other people's private issues, but references to the

writer's private things can be found in my data as well. BD22 does not want to tell the date of her wedding day (17.8.2004) or detailed facts about the contraceptive method she has been using (23.11.2004). The writer controls what is and what is not revealed (Östman 2007a:21, 38, 42–43; Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrech and Swartz 2004:42–43). This can be perceived for example in the following citation: "I'm not going to analyze those problems here because of protection of privacy but it feels difficult that everybody else is finding it difficult to cope" (BD1 4.2.2005, transl. H.N.). The writer may also edit the text or remove a part of it afterwards, which is obvious when the writer brings this up in the text (Östman 2007a:21, 38), for example "edit. Misspellings and one insertion" (BD5 27.5.2005, transl. H.N.).

Writers also clearly avoid mentioning or writing about certain things. Subjects that may have undesirable effects on either the writer or the readers are avoided. In the former case, this means restricting writing about the hope of having a child or things about the child in general, since this may generate unfounded hope of succeeding in having a child and stress. As BD18 writes, thinking about trying to have a baby causes stress about the baby "or actually stress about not having a baby, so that's why I'll take a small break from [the website]. Hope it will help in some way" (BD18 23.5.2005, transl. H.N.). In the latter case, avoidance means for example not writing inappropriately or in coarse language, which might offend readers. "My moods are changing drastically, suddenly things fuck me off (I'm sorry, I don't usually swear... :sad: [a sad smiley]) so much that I'd like to tear apart the next person who says something to me" (BD15 10.5.2005, transl. H.N.)."I'll stop whining and go away now. Nobody wants to read this" (BD18 31.10.2004, transl. H.N.). In general, opinions and subjects which may offend the readers are usually explained and apologized for. For example BD1 explains her negative opinions about cats by writing: "Please, cat people, don't get angry, I myself am a person who loves animals and I love my granny's cat" (BD1 3.12.2004, transl. H.N.), and BD24 later apologizes for writing about bodily functions in a detailed way: "I'm disgusted about writing these sort of things here, pretty personal and graphic stuff - - - the [menstrual] flow has turned light brown, like 'old blood'" (BD24 7.3.2005, transl. H.N.), or "No more cabbage. I feel like farting :embarrassed: [a smiley indicating embarrassment]. And why for goodness sake do I tell about it here?!" (BD24 12.5.2005, transl. H.N.).

In my data, the online diaries are deliberate and target-oriented constructions, focused on the life of the writer. However, they do not describe the life of the writer as such. They are written from the perspective of trying to become pregnant as the writer takes the role of a woman wishing to become pregnant. The writers restrict themselves to writing only about their trying to have a baby and how they go forward in the process and not about other aspects of their lives. This means that for example men are usually referred to only in connection with conceiving. Men are often mentioned at the time of ovulation as either being around or as absent due to their work. They are constructed either as potentially capable of impregnating the woman or as unable to do this because of being absent, sick or tired. These references strengthen the role of the writer as a person actively trying to become pregnant. Online diaries are therefore reflectively produced to achieve a certain goal, a goal of presenting oneself as a person craving to become pregnant and doing everything possible in order to make it hap-

pen. This means that also the meanings given to conception and pregnancy are constructed from this viewpoint.

Discourse theory (see e.g. Howarth 2000) is a useful theoretical approach to help the interpretation in this case. The starting point of discourse theory is that discourse is a system of meanings which gives meanings to reality and objects, actions and events in it by positioning them in different relations with each other. The relations are defined so that only specific positions, relations and practices are possible. Discourse also defines the subject positions which individuals can identify with (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000: 2–4; Howarth 2000:101f.; Torfing 2005:14).

Using the concepts of discourse theory, I define the online diaries as follows. Each diary forms its own discourse. In the 'baby fever diaries' the meanings of reality are constructed through the 'baby fever discourse', and likewise in the childlessness diaries the meanings are constructed through the 'involuntarily childless discourse'. Moreover, I define the single entries in one online diary as articulations which form the discourse by attaching meanings to the elements (objects, actions and events).[2] This is achieved by positioning them in relation with each other (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000:7; Torfing 2005:15).

To give an example, in the first entry of one baby fever diary it says:

> There is a plateau in being baby feverish. My 11th menstrual cycle of trying to become pregnant has started, and sunny summer days direct my interest occasionally to other things, luckily. At this moment I don't even know what kp [cycle day of the menstrual cycle] it is and it feels somehow liberating! (BD2 29.5.2005, transl. H.N.).

Later when the menstrual cycle is ending and the writer is trying to find out if she is pregnant, she writes:

> kp 27/30, and since ovulation test was positive around kp 15, it will be about three days to go until the menstrual cycle either ends or there will be exciting moments! :madhair: [a crazy smiley] If the absolutely wonderful thing happened that my period didn't start on Thursday or Friday, I could dare to do the test during the weekend (BD2 13.6.2005, transl. H.N.).

If we look at the first citation, the writer states that it is not ordinary that she has not counted the dates of her menstrual cycle. In the discourse, baby fever is thus connected with being conscious of one's body and one's menstrual cycle. The body is defined as an object that the author can become aware of and obtain information about through various methods, such as observing the body (whether the menstrual flow begins), measuring how it functions (the length and phases of the menstrual cycle) and testing it (ovulation tests). Moreover, the body *should* be known – and specifically quantitatively. This is demonstrated for example in the remark "kp 27/30", which highlights that the woman should know how long her menstrual cycle is (30 days in this case) and what day of the cycle she is currently on (the 27th day of the cycle). It is also important to notice that these methods are used to understand one's body as a regular and smoothly functioning object and not as changeable and irregular by default. A regular and foreseeable body is the basis of the ability to know one's body in a quantitative way. Positioned outside the baby fever discourse are sunny summer days and feeling liberated, for example. While baby fever is connected with being conscious of one's body and menstrual cycles and using various methods to achieve this information and working actively to enable the body to conceive, outside the discourse the body and its functioning – pregnant or not – seem meaningless.

Online Diary as an Enabling and Restrictive Discourse

Besides the question of what kinds of meanings are given to conception, the theoretical viewpoint of discourse theory can clarify the question of the construction of an online diary and what is being written in it. They can be seen as a way to define experiences, things and events from a specific subject position. Baby fever discourse offers the writer of the baby fever diary a subject position of 'a baby-feverish woman' and the childlessness diaries the position of 'an involuntarily childless woman'. This positioning is connected to the construction of the discourse.

Online diaries are usually intentionally written in public. The writer acknowledges that her/his online diary can and probably will be read and takes the reader – imagined or sometimes real – into consideration while she/he is constructing the text and her/his role (Sorapure 2003; Östman 2007a). The text is directed to a certain readership, which is often clearly addressed in the text, for example when wishing all welcome to read the online diary: "Hugs to all my lovely visitors!" (BD2 7.6.2005, transl. H.N.), or when asking for advice: "Could somebody wiser tell about these [body] temperatures? I have no idea how it works..." (BD5 16.5.2005, transl. H.N.).

In the case of my data, the imagined readership consists of the writer's peers, meaning the other members participating in the website. The writer presents herself as a woman wanting to become pregnant and wishing to have a child of her own and readers are expected to be alike. The readers may be addressed as "dear fellow baby-feverish [people]" (BD28 25.4.2005, transl. H.N.). This also contributes to what is being written and what is not. Sometimes things are written in such a way as to make the reader grasp them in full: things and events are explained in most detail so that the reader could understand the feelings of the writer. On other occasions, the writer clearly assumes that the reader knows and understands things already and offers only a brief summary of or reference to the things discussed. (Cf. Vatka 2005:136–138, 160, 165–188.) What is the point of explaining ovulation pains to readers who most presumably have experienced them themselves and know exactly what it is all about? The reader is expected to have similar experiences and feelings to the writer and to share a common knowledge: "In my stomach (or actually it is not stomach, but I say it in general like that without specifying, you know [what I mean]) in the right side I have felt - - - " (BD17 22.5.2005, transl. H.N.).

Obviously there may be other readers as well, but the imagined reader was nevertheless constructed as having similar experiences, objectives and opinions to the writer. It was in a sense forgotten that there might be unknown and strange readers, different from the writer. The imagined familiarity of the readers is related to safety. Both diaries (Vatka 2005:95–98) and the Internet (e.g. Grisso and Weiss 2005; Mazzarella 2005) have been defined as public places which writers consider to be safe enough to express their thoughts and feelings. By writing an online diary one may find support to the construction of one's self in a new way that is not possible or usually accepted in public. Writers can for example tell about their lived and embodied experiences, which are not usually dealt with in the dominant biomedical discourse. Also, the writers in my data often wrote that they felt unable to express their baby fever in their everyday life, in 'real life'. In this way, the Internet enables the agency of writers.

But since the online diaries were actually

open to a wider public than just the fellow baby-feverish and involuntarily childless women, the similarity between the writer and the readers was a construction which was emphasized in the texts in order to increase the feeling of safety. The writers themselves in a way created into the public space their own safe, private place in which they could construct their lives through their baby project and bring up personal experiences. Thus, connecting the readers to herself discursively enables the writer to identify herself with the subject position of a baby-feverish woman.

However, in an online diary, the possibilities are also limited. As any discourse, an online diary refers to other discourses and is situated in a specific historical, cultural and social context (Howarth 2000:114, 131; Torfing 2005: 19). The context of the online diary has an influence on what the writer can tell and write and therefore on how the text should be interpreted. Here, I mention briefly two important contexts of the online diary data: the offline context and the context of the website. The social control, norms and conventions of the website and the context of present-day Finland contribute to how one can and should write about trying to conceive.

The first important context is the offline context. The online diaries were written in Finnish and apart from one writer, all the writers claimed to live in Finland. This way they locate their online diaries to the context of present-day Finnish society, in which pregnancy and having children are strongly defined as connected to health issues and discussed through biomedical discourse (Riska 2005:144f.). This biomedical discourse directs the way authors write about their attempts to get pregnant. For example, they write about measuring their body temperature and using ovulation tests. In such posts, the body is not seen through feelings or personal experiences but instead as divided in different parts, measured and calculated.

The second important context is the context of the website where the online diaries were collected from. On the Internet, there are power relations which limit and affect the possibilities of writing (Paasonen 2003:6, 14). The website supports certain discourses instead of others, and the writer has to take these into account while creating her own discourse, the online diary (see McNeill 2003:34f.). This particular website is non-commercial and created by private persons. They define the norms and policies of the website, and they also work as moderators. They therefore have a strong influence on what and how people can write in their online diaries (cf. Gustafson 2002). For example, as is usual, the website contains a 'vocabulary' of the frequently used terms on the site. This forms a sort of collection of directions of what words should be used and how (Laukkanen 2007:44–48). This list contains several terms which have their background in biomedical discourse, such as 'kp' meaning 'kiertopäivä' ('cycle day'), the day of the menstrual cycle. Here we can see that the biomedical discourse can be perceived not only in the context of Finnish society, but also in the context of the website. This is one way the website guides the way writers tell about their lives and experiences: it instructs the writers to use certain terms and not others.

In addition to promoting biomedical discourse, the website directs the authors to write in a pro-children manner. Besides online diaries, the website contains numerous discussion forums, which cover topics such as baby fever, pregnancy, childbirth and taking care of the baby in various discussion threads. All of these involve the underlying idea that all

the visitors to the website want to have a child and a family; they love children and want to take care of their child as best as they can. It is obvious that this particular site looks very kindly on things such as children and family. It is taken as a self-evident fact shared by all the visitors to the website, and hence the writers have to follow this norm in their online diaries. Of course as mentioned, the site probably attracts people who are already interested in these kinds of things. One writes about wanting to become pregnant and to have a child of one's own, and such thoughts as not wanting a child are missing, as are thoughts of not doing everything one can in order to get pregnant. In my data, the role taken by the writer in the text is restricted to representing oneself as a woman who tries her utmost to become pregnant, and the social control as well as the netiquette of the website insures that writers conform to this norm.

To conclude, in my online diary data, the writers connect their individual experiences about trying to become pregnant to cultural discourses and ideas about conceiving. The writers interpret their personal experiences using these cultural and collective ideas as a resource to which they refer in order to make their experiences understandable and meaningful (cf. Laukkanen 2007:14–16, 53f., 60f.). The online diary as a discourse is an enabling possibility: the writers can intentionally construct and write about their lives from the perspective of one specific role, the role of a woman wanting to become pregnant.

On the other hand, it is also restricted. The context as well as being confined to one subject position and one subject limits the possibilities of writing. This can be seen in the data. If nothing happens with the baby project, there is nothing one can write about: "The beginning of the menstrual cycle is a bit quieter time as is well known so there is not always something to write about" (BD10 6.6.2005, transl. H.N.). The writers themselves sometimes mention that they do not think it is appropriate to write about other subjects:

> And then I could probably tell you about how other things are going. There's enough work but now it seems that I'll get a proper holiday for Christmas without the stress of the things waiting to be done. Well, I know that this does not interest anybody for real :roll: [a smiley rolling its eyes] You're waiting for news about being baby feverish, don't you? :wink: [a smiley winking its eye] (BD22 21.12.2004, transl. H.N.).

One has to keep to the subject position of wanting to have babies and trying to become pregnant.

Everyday Life, Internet and Ethnology

In the beginning of this article, I mentioned the idea of building a bridge between ethnology and the Internet. The way I have connected them can only be one bridge out of many. Focusing on the everyday life, ethnology is capable of studying the Internet from various viewpoints since the connections between everyday life and the Internet can be complex, diverse and variable. Moreover, being full of texts, images and other sort of material which contain cultural meanings, the Internet should be discussed more extensively in ethnology and we should try to grasp the differences between online diaries and discussion forums, home pages and games – just to mention a few possible subjects of study. Ethnologists have before themselves a vast and rich field to study. Internet ethnography can and has been used to contribute to our knowledge of the connections between the Internet and everyday life, but we may use other approaches as well. With the help of discourse theory one can study

how the writer of an online diary constructs a discourse and his/her subject position as well as how he/she connects these to wider shared collective cultural ideas.

The Internet is always in touch with our everyday life, starting from the fact that we use our computers and the Internet in our everyday life, as a part of it. The online is inseparable from the offline and vice versa, since we structure, analyze and think over our daily occurrences on the Internet and are in contact with our friends and families on the Internet. Online diary especially, seemingly grounding itself in the real world and everyday life of the writer, at least seems to bind these two together.

Besides the connections, we have to notice the gaps. When, for example, the writer does not want the people who know him/her in the 'real world' to read his/her online diary, he/she wants to separate the real offline world from the online world. However, writing about his/her daily life means that "The act of keeping a diary on the Web is thus both grounded in daily life and dissociated from it". The writer may reach "beyond the people with whom one has daily contact, perhaps to discover and perform some different version of oneself. The online diary enacts a certain escape from the everyday, even as it takes the everyday as its topic" (Sorapure 2003:12f.).

Subjects ethnologists can direct their focus on are the different groups that emerge and are formed on the Internet. There exists a possibility of creating communities, networks and groups on the Internet. People can interact with each other by creating a home page, writing an online diary or writing in a discussion forum, for example. Expressing oneself and interacting may enable people to construct one's self in a new way that is not possible or accepted in public, transgress cultural and social boundaries, challenge existing categories and definitions and interpret the cultural order differently (e.g. Mazzarella 2005). The online diaries I have chosen as my data are only one example of groups of people who express conceptions, norms and values individually as well as collectively when writing their online diaries in the partly restrictive context of a single website and commenting on each other's writings. When it comes to the connection between everyday life and the Internet, it is there – but not as a case of simply transferring one's everyday life onto the Internet. Instead, it is a case of constructing a discourse from the subject position of a baby-feverish woman, which takes place in a many-layered context of an online diary, website, Internet, and everyday life in Finland.

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Notes

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2 It has to be mentioned that articulations in one single online diary can also belong to different discourses since it is possible that the writer has moved her online diary (and all the entries in it) for example from the group of baby fever diaries to that of childlessness diaries, in which case all the entries written within the baby fever discourse would seem wrongly to have been written within the childlessness discourse. However, usually this can be taken into account since the writer often mentions in her entries that she has moved her online diary from one place to another.

Unpublished Sources

Baby fever diaries (BD), numbered 1–28 (28 online diaries in total)

Childlessness diaries (CD), numbered CD1–9 (9 online diaries in total)

Downloaded from a Finnish family-themed internet website in summer 2005. In the possession of the author. In the text, I refer to a specific post by its date, for example BD3 25.3.2005 would mean a post made on March 25, 2005.

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ICTs' Doings in Ethnographic Research Practices

By Morten Krogh Petersen

In her article "Virtual Methods and the Sociology of Cyber-Social-Scientific Knowledge" (2005) Christine Hine states that today "there are few researchers in the social sciences or humanities who could not find some aspect of their research interest manifested on the Internet" (Hine 2005: 1). With Hine as one of the leading figures, this has led to extensive discussions about how social scientific understandings of social interactions mediated by Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) can be worked up methodologically (see e.g. Hine (ed.) 2005). With the term "Sociology of Cyber-Social-Scientific Knowledge" (SCSSK) Hine seeks to focus less on the problems and more on the possibilities that new ICTs and computer-mediated communication (CMC) create for ethnography. To practise SCSSK is to "capitalize on the potential that new technologies provide for social science itself" (Hine 2005:9). According to Hine, one central part of this potential is that new technologies can lead social scientists to examine and question epistemological and methodological commitments that may no longer be fruitful. This is an important point, but the discussion about the challenges new ICTs create for ethnography rests on the ontological assumption that "the virtual" is one distinct sphere whereas "the real" is another. As I will argue in this article, this is problematic. The reason is that if new technologies are to catalyse a thorough discussion of ethnography's epistemological and methodological commitments then this ontological assumption of the virtual as opposed to the real must be questioned as well. By way of notions taken from the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) I will do away with this ontological assumption and discuss the central implications this has for how we can conceptualize and understand ethnographic research practices.

In carrying out this argument I will draw upon experiences from the fieldwork I am conducting as part of my ongoing Ph.D. project. I will seek to present and use these as a "critical case" (Flyvbjerg 2001:78), i.e. as experiences that are important to the general problem of how ethnography methodologically is to handle the growing importance of ICT in everyday and thus ethnographic research practices. The critical case's focal point is a website that was established along with my project. In order to situate the critical case I will begin by giving a brief sketch of my project. Then I take a closer look at the discussion concerning what challenges and problems new ICTs create for ethnography and argue for the presence of the aforementioned ontological assumption; this assumption has led to a techno-deterministic approach to how ethnography is to be conceptualized. Thirdly, I will therefore question this approach by showing that technology neither is – in and by it self – a driving force nor can it be bracketed from the ethnographic research practices. Fourthly, I turn to the field of STS and from there I work up an alternative constructivist position. From this position I suggest that the idea that as an ethnographer one can go to a given field of practice, do fieldwork, and go back to the research office again to analyse the ethnographic data collected might be one of the central epistemological and methodological commitments that new ICTs not only make it possible but also make it crucial to examine and question. Lastly, I will sum up and put forward John Law's notion of "method assemblage" as a valuable starting point for rethinking ethnography's epistemological and methodological commitments.

Technologies in Departmental Working Practices – and in Ethnography

With New Public Management (NPM) (see e.g. Osbourne & Gaebler 1992) and its strong call for transparency, the communications units in the Danish public sector have to find answers to a new type of questions: how to measure and thereby make tangible the impacts that communicative efforts have in citizens' everyday lives and/or in employees' working lives? How to measure whether a website that has cost, say, €50,000 to develop has the desired impacts in the citizens' everyday practices and/or the employees' working practices? What communication is, is not easy to define. It is a fuzzy phenomenon and to find answers to these questions is therefore a daunting challenge for the communications units.

In my project I investigate how five Danish ministries and agencies[1] respond to this challenge by developing and using methods and techniques that can render their communicative efforts in "calculable form" (Rose & Miller 1992:185). These methods and techniques can in Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller's understanding, be termed "governmental technologies", i.e. "the complex of mundane programmes, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which authorities seek to embody and give effect to governmental ambitions" (Rose & Miller 1992:175). Further, I seek to understand how the specific responses of the ministries' and agencies' communications units alter the ways the organizations carry out their work. In other words: I seek to understand how the various new measuring activities partake in the departmental organizations' continual organizing and reorganizing practices (Hernes 2008). How do, for example, information and knowledge gained in the measuring activities partake in establishing and re-establishing the relation between the public sector and the citizens?

To do this I build up analytical resources mainly from the organizational studies branch of the research field Science and Technology Studies (STS). More specifically, I utilize John Law's analytical resources "modes of ordering" (Law 1994, 2001). With them two important points concerning how the departmental organizations under study work – literally – can be made. First, NPM has transformed the public sector dramatically but this transformation can by no means be understood as being from an old homogeneous situation to a new homogeneous situation. As John P. Olsen notes, it is "unlikely that public administration can be organized on the basis of one principle alone" (Olsen 2005:23). Law's modes of ordering are able to handle analytically this situation of heterogeneity diagnosed by Olsen. Second, Law states that his modes of ordering "recursively organize the full range of social materials" (Law 1994:109). This means that not only humans but also non-humans can, potentially, do something in the organizations' working practices. It means that the organizations' working practices are understood as sociomaterial (Mol 2002). This I deem valuable when working with departmental organizations' communicative practices, where e.g. documents are crafted on the computer and circulated both by e-mail and by moving printouts around. Collaborative work is impossible to imagine without a computer connected to the intranet. And sophisticated pieces of software that can count and trace traffic on websites are used to generate data that subsequently can be used in creating the desired relations to the citizens.

So, the departmental organizations' communicative practices that I seek to describe by

way of ethnographic fieldwork and analytical resources built up from STS are loaded with ICTs. I deal analytically with this by focusing on what it is they do in the communicative practices when they become associated with other non-humans and humans. How, e.g., are the numbers concerning traffic on a website that a piece of software has generated understood and used in the process of developing new communicative solutions?

But what about "my own" ethnographic research practices? Aren't they full of ICTs as well? Yes, they are, so the question is how one as an ethnographer can deal with these technologies. I am aware that there are classical and tricky methodological questions at stake here: Can the ethnographic research practices be separated from the practices under study? If not, how can the relation between the ethnographic research practices and the field of practice under study be described? I will argue that ICTs do something in and to the relation between the ethnographic research practices and the field of practice under study. In order to do this I will first discuss two techno-deterministic versions of the approach to how ethnography is to be done in a situation where ICTs are used to an increasing extent. In the first version ICTs determine how ethnography is to be done – a new ethnography is developed as an answer to a changed world. In the second version ICTs are rendered unimportant for ethnography, as they are not part of ethnography's units of analysis – a traditional ethnography triumphs.

Version 1: Technology Determines How

The Internet and the subsequent rise in CMC have brought along what is often talked about as new ways of doing ethnography. This "new ethnography", labelled virtual ethnography, online ethnography, or, more daringly, netnography, is if not supposed to eradicate, then at least to supplement the "old ethnography". The old ethnography's centre of attention is face-to-face interaction located in specific places and it is therefore no longer fit for studying everyday lives having CMC as an integral part. What is needed is a netnography that is able, by way of new methods and techniques, e.g. chatting with informants online (Hine 1998), creating websites that are co-produced by researchers and informants (Forte 2005), or hanging around in and becoming part of local cultures in cyberspace (Guimarães 2005), to study mediated communication.

So, the rise in CMC has demanded a new ethnography and a number of ethnographers have reacted to this demand and created a new ethnography. Or, that is at least the techno-deterministic way to tell the story about how netnography came about. This way of telling the story can be described as epochalist in that it is based on "a logic of overdramatic dichotomization" (du Gay 2003:664). This dichotomization is underscored with volumes that simply are entitled *Virtual Ethnography* (Hine 2000), *Virtual Methods* (Hine (ed.) 2005) or *Qualitative Research and Hypermedia: Ethnography for the Digital Age* (Dicks, Mason & Coffey 2005). These titles give the impression that on one hand there is the new and on the other there is the old. There is CMC and then there is non-CMC. There is the virtual and then there is the real. When it comes to ethnography it seems that the idea of the virtual as "opposed to and disembedded from the real" (Miller & Slater 2000:4) is still quite attractive and powerful in discussing and determining how ethnography is to be done.

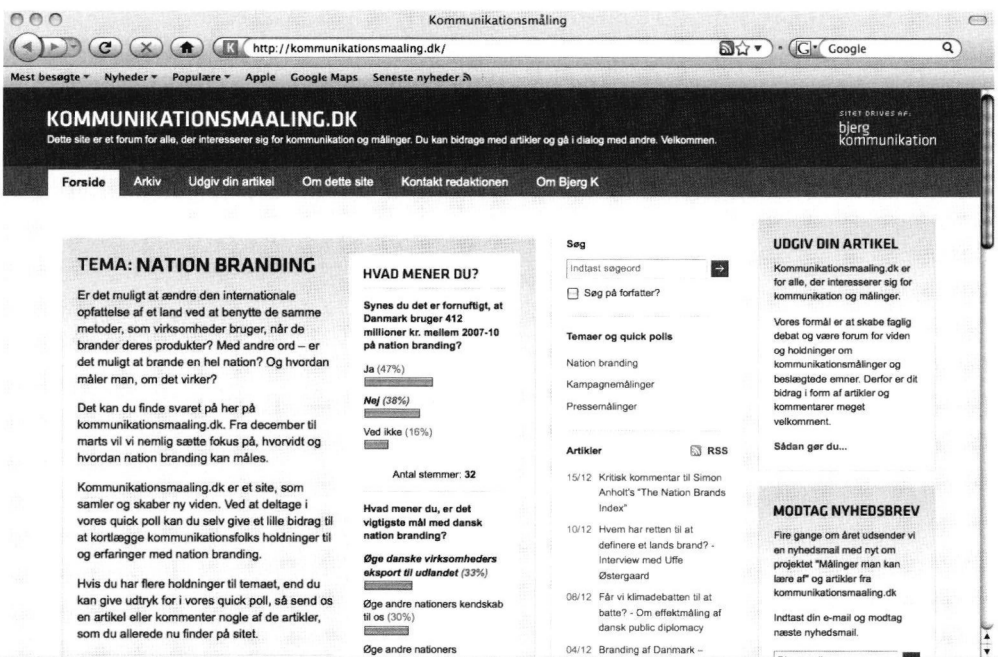
Christine Hine mentions that, within the field of inventing and practising a new ethnography more adept at studying communication

as mediated, it is not uncommon to exaggerate the newness and unique importance of ICTs in order to secure research funding (Hine 2005:6). This explains to some extent why Hine in her writing often seems to turn "new technologies" into phenomena that should be studied in their own right. New technologies become something that in and by themselves pose new problems for the ethnographer. An example of this is the research questions Hine formulates in her paper "Virtual Ethnography":[2] "how is it that laboratory technologies, particularly information technology, are integrated into the scientific research and fact construction process" (Hine 1998:4). With this question "laboratory technologies, particularly information technology" is turned into the unit of analysis and the ethnography conducted by Hine is moulded around this unit. By isolating technology in advance, Hine risks overemphasizing the impacts these technologies may have in the fact construction process.

Version 2: Technology is Bracketed

In this first, techno-deterministic version of an ethnographic approach to new technologies, technology is deciding how ethnography is to be done. In the second version technology is bracketed, and in describing it I will draw upon experiences from the early parts of the fieldwork I am conducting as part of the project sketched in the above.

The project I am engaged in is an Industrial Ph.D. project, which means that the project is carried out in collaboration with a company, in this case Bjerg Kommunikation, a small communications agency. Alongside with the



The entry page of the website kommunikationsmaaling.dk as it was laid out in January 2009. During the first year the topic has changed from "Measuring media coverage" via "Measuring campaigns" to the current "Nation branding".

project Bjerg Kommunikation decided to develop and run a website, kommunikationsmaaling.dk. On the entry page it says: "This website is a forum for everybody who is interested in communication and communications measurements. You can contribute articles and enter into dialogue with others. Welcome" (my translation from Danish). Also on the entry page is a call for articles. It says: "Our aim is to create a professional debate and to be a forum where knowledge and opinions about communications measurements and related subjects can be exchanged. Your contribution in the format of an article is very welcome" (my translation from Danish). The website of course also has a business-oriented aim: It is to brand Bjerg Kommunikation as a communications agency that bases its products on the latest results from research, i.e. from the Industrial Ph.D. project.

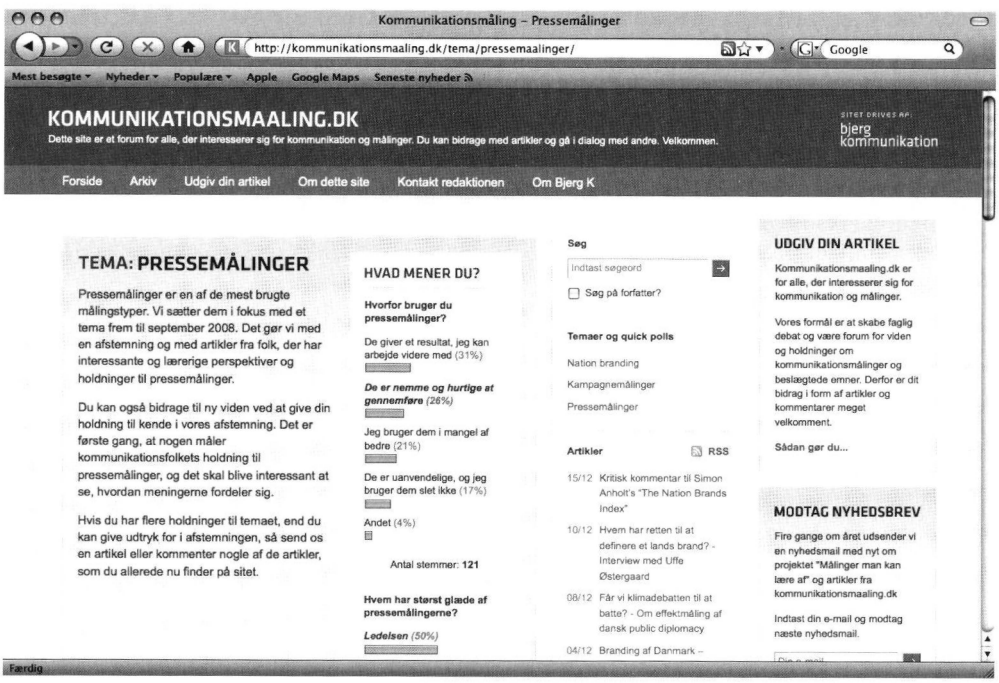
There is a striking similarity between the aim of the website and the aim of my fieldwork: to learn more about how professional communicators think about and undertake communications measurements. During the first year about 30 articles written by professional communicators and communications researchers about various aspects of communications measurements were published on the website. Reading and analysing these articles would be a great supplement to more traditional fieldwork techniques like observations and interviews. I just didn't see it that way at that time due to certain epistemological and methodological commitments. But what are these commitments? In her article "Mediating Ethnography: Objectivity and the making of ethnographies of the Internet" (2004) Anne Beaulieu argues that within the discussion about netnography there is a position from where it is claimed that technology is forming a barrier for ethnographic approaches. This barrier is created by an understanding of CMC as not being rich enough to sustain meaningful social relations, which again is taken to be ethnography's indisputable object of study. CMC lacks face-to-face interaction and it lacks a clear definition of place and therefore no adequate object of study, no adequate way of relating to informants, and no adequate place to ground the fieldwork can be found.

Without being too aware of it, at this point in my ethnographic research practices I was committed to meaningful social relations both between my informants and between my informants and me, to face-to-face interaction, and to grounding my fieldwork in a defined place. This was my indisputable object of study. With its relatively short and sometimes rather outspoken articles, bright colours, and, most importantly, its business-oriented agenda, the website was not, in my view, a technique that could generate any ethnographic data of relevance to me. The website was too far away from meaningful social relations and too entangled with business. As a technique for doing fieldwork it produced bad representations of the communicative practices I was interested in describing, whereas traditional and well-tested techniques produced good representations, I thought. The ethnography I sought to practice was not interested in CMC and it was not interested in the representations of how communicators think about and do the communications measurements the website had to offer. Therefore, in the first months of doing fieldwork, kommunikationsmaaling.dk was simply not allowed access to the project's ethnographic research practices and did not partake in the process of constructing my object of study. I was clinging on to an old ethnography with "pure" face-to-face interaction as the gold standard and the website was therefore deemed inadequate as a technique

for doing ethnographic fieldwork. As a new feature was added to the website, however, this changed.

A Visualizing and Relating Technology

This new feature was a mini-poll. With this mini-poll surveys concerning various aspects of communications measurements could now be carried out. The first mini-poll concerned "Measuring media coverage"[3] and it asked who primarily benefits from measurements of media coverage: The whole organization, The communications unit, Management, Nobody or Others. The mini-poll had a surprising result: Half of the 122 people who participated in the poll answered that it is Management that primarily benefits from measurements of media coverage. This result was sent to the recipients of a newsletter established in connection with the website. One of the editors of K Forum (www.kommunikationsforum.dk), a website for people working within communications and a hugely popular one at that, found the mini-poll's result interesting and asked us at Bjerg Kommunikation to write an article for K Forum about it. We did, and our article, "The Seven Deadly Sins of Measuring Media Coverage", was published shortly thereafter. A fortnight later an article entitled "Measuring Media Coverage is the Sin – Media Analysis is the Virtue", written by a communications analyst employed at Infomedia, was published on K Forum. In their own words Infomedia is "the leading Danish provider of 'media intelligence', i.e. media search, media monitoring and media analysis" (www.infomedia.dk). The article comments critically upon our article and it is critical of the Industrial Ph.D. project as



A page on kommunikationsmaaling.dk in January 2009 presenting the topic and the results of the related mini-poll.

a whole: "At Infomedia we become a little nervous if this project takes 'measurements' as its point of departure. From our perspective the next step is already taken. Media analysis is – and should be – the standard of the branch and the point of departure for the project" (my translation).

I have told you this story because neither of the two versions of the techno-deterministic approach can be used to understand what happened here. In response to the first version that puts technology in the driving seat when it comes to discussing how the ethnography is to be carried out, it can be said that there is nothing ethnographically interesting about the mini-poll technology in itself. It is unproductive to look for answers to how this particular ethnography is to be done by isolating the mini-poll. The important question is: How is the mini-poll in somewhat uncontrollable fashions associated with other technologies and with humans and their opinions and/or practices? As a fieldwork method and compared to more traditional fieldwork methods, the mini-poll with incredible speed becomes associated to and works up information and knowledge about 122 people and their opinions about and/or ways of doing communications measurements. It also visualizes the opinions about and/or ways of doing communications measurements, which makes it possible for the editor at K Forum to associate himself to them. Because of these new associations, and in response to the second version that deems technology unimportant to ethnography, it becomes impossible to uphold the epistemological and methodological commitments the second version entails, as this would imply dismissing both the visualization of 122 people's opinions and/or practices and the editor at K Forum's definition of the mini-poll's result as interesting. There has been no face-to-face communication with either the 122 people or with the editor at K Forum but, nonetheless, they all strongly point to "Management" as an important phenomenon to understand when seeking to describe how communications measurements are done. This cannot be disregarded if a certain amount of sensitivity towards what goes on in the field of practice under study is to be upheld. Further, there is the transformation of our article from being about the mini-poll's results to being a representation of the project as a whole. This transformation is what makes the critique of the project possible and the transformation occurs, as the article via the website K Forum becomes part of the Infomedia analyst's practices, i.e. the practices of one of Bjerg Kommunikation's business competitors. A response is needed in terms of a sharper formulation of what the project takes to be its object of analysis. The mini-poll has enrolled the analyst and his opinions in the process of constructing the object under study.

To sum up: In relation to the first version of techno-determinism is not necessary to find new ways of dealing with the mini-poll in the ethnography carried out here because of its status as a "new" technology. Neither is it possible to bracket the mini-poll, as the second version of techno-determinism would have it, because it visualizes and brings into the project what a great number of people think about communications measurements and how they do them. What is possible, though, is to follow how the mini-poll is associated to other technologies and humans, and this is necessary as these new associations partake in constructing the object under study. In the following I will establish and discuss an alternative to the techno-deterministic approach that can do this, namely a constructivist approach.

To Do Ethnography Is to Interact at a Distance

How to transgress the two versions of the techno-deterministic approach to how ethnography is to deal with new technologies and the mediated communication they make possible? How can a new and more fruitful approach be developed? Inspired by Bruno Latour and his article "On Interobjectivity" (Latour 1996) one can begin by asking: Are social interactions, for instance the scientific fact-construction processes, not always mediated? Is there anything inherently special about relations mediated by ICTs? Does it make sense to uphold the a priori distinction between social interactions that are and social interactions that are not mediated by ICTs, the distinction upon which the two versions of the techno-deterministic approach is founded? Latour's answer in "On Interobjectivity" is no: when studying humans as opposed to baboons it is very difficult to find interactions that are not, in some way or another, mediated. Humans associate themselves with non-humans and it is by this constant association and reassociation what we call society is produced and reproduced. Interaction is, in other words, dislocated, and therefore "we can endure beyond the present, in a matter other than our body, and we can interact at a distance, which it is difficult for a baboon or a chimpanzee to do" (Latour 1996:239). Examples of this are the 122 people who participated in the mini-poll. By participating they interacted with me and took part in constructing the object under study "at a distance". More generally speaking, Latour's line of reasoning makes it possible and relevant to ask how ICTs in ethnographic research practices let both the informants and the ethnographer endure beyond the present and how they let both the ethnographer and the informants interact at distance.

In "On Interobjectivity" Latour also makes a crucial distinction between objects, including technologies, that act as intermediaries and objects, again including technologies, that act as mediators. This implies a sensitivity towards the fact that some ICTs enter ethnographic research practices not as mere intermediaries, as means for transferences of force, but as mediators, that do not always "transmit our force faithfully" (ibid.:240).[4] This unfaithful transmission of force was exemplified in the above by way of an article that in one setting, Bjerg Kommunikation, discussed the results of the mini-poll while in another setting, the competing communications analyst's working practices, it was a representation of the project as a whole. Also, because of this unfaithful transmission of force, which applies not only to new ICTs but also to all other objects when we as humans become associated with them, it is important not to deem old or new technologies in advance as being more or less faithful. We have to be careful to examine in which ways specific objects are faithful or unfaithful in specific relations. This is difficult to do if you work from the assumption that something is old or new, or the assumption that something is the virtual as opposed to the real.

From Latour's work on mediation a constructivist approach to discussing ethnography's dealings with new technologies can be developed, and Daniel Miller and Don Slater's ethnographic study of the Internet in Trinidad can be seen as one, although not fully realized, attempt at this (Miller & Slater 2000). Miller and Slater have a lot to offer when thinking about how humans associate themselves with technologies such as the Internet. The reason for this is to be found in their main insight, namely that the Internet is used by a variety of humans in a variety of everyday practices. By focusing on the usage of the Internet

they succeed in transgressing the distinction between the virtual as one sphere and the real as another. The Internet is used in and becomes part of particular practices and in different ways becomes meaningful in these practices. There is sensitivity towards differences here – both among people and among the usages of the Internet. As a result the Internet multiplies: "the Internet is not a monolithic or placeless 'cyberspace'; rather it is numerous new technologies, used by diverse people, in diverse real-world locations" (Miller & Slater 2000:1). Miller and Slater are concerned not with what the Internet is but what it becomes when humans associate themselves with it in various ways.

Surprisingly, Miller and Slater cling on to one of the epistemological and methodological commitments discussed in the above and therefore they do not realize the potential in Latour's work. The two argue that ethnographic fieldwork needs to be done in a specific place: "It should be clear by now that for us an ethnographic approach to the Internet is one that sees it as embedded in a specific place" (ibid.:21). Further: "an ethnographic approach is [besides using immersion in a particular case as a basis for generalization] also one that is based on a long-term and multifaceted engagement with a social setting. In this regard we are both relatively conservative in our defence of traditional canons of ethnographic enquiry" (ibid.:21). Following Latour one can say that Miller and Slater's commitment to traditional ethnographic canons makes it difficult – if not impossible – to conceptualize and discuss one important difference between humans and baboons, namely that, by way of associations to non-humans, e.g., as we have seen, a website that features a mini-poll, we can interact at a distance. This in turn makes it difficult for Miller and Slater to discuss the alterations in the process of doing ethnographic research that new ICTs might bring because they make it possible to interact at a distance. It is to these alterations I now turn.

From "Home-Field-Home" to a Circular Flow

To do fieldwork has often been and quite often still is described as a specific part of the ethnographic research process in its totality. You start at home in the research office preparing your fieldwork. Then you go into the ethnographic field and do fieldwork whereby you generate ethnographic data. Once the data is generated and made transportable by way of writing, photography, or filming you venture back to the research office to do your analysis and write it all up (cf. Gupta & Fergusson 1997). This way of conceptualizing and constituting an ethnographic research process has recently been challenged. The field is described as a phenomenon that is performed in ethnographic research practices (Coleman & Collins 2004). This means that the field is not a place you visit and then leave again with a suitcase full of ethnographic data under your arm. The field is continually evoked in the ethnographic research practices, i.e. reading, writing, giving presentations etc., and can therefore best be understood as an event: "Thus the field as event is constantly in a process of becoming rather than being understood as fixed ('being') in space and time" (Coleman & Collins 2006:12). But what does this mean? What does this "process of becoming" involve?

Drawing upon the story about the website's mini-poll, one can say that this particular ICT makes it quite obvious that the field under study in this particular project is constantly in a process of becoming. More generally speaking it can be argued that because ICTs

make it not only possible but also easy for the ethnographer and the informants to interact at a distance, it seems more and more inadequate to conceptualize the field as being something that can be visited and then left behind. What implications does this have for the process of creating ethnographic knowledge? To think about this we need to reject the "home-field-home" model and substitute it with a model that allows us to understand ethnographic fieldwork as an endeavour that entails mediated communication and interactions at a distance. Again, STS has some concepts in store that are of help. In his article "Ordering and Obduracy" (2001) John Law, drawing upon Bruno Latour and his notion "centre of calculation" (Latour 1986, 1990), describes how a manager at a research laboratory, Andrew, is constituted as a large-scale strategist. Andrew is made into a centre of calculation as information in the format of various reports is "being created, collected, assembled, transcribed, transported, to, simplified and juxtaposed" (Law 2001:8) in his office. At the same time Andrew is made into a "centre of translation": "crudely, this means that when he issues orders something happens" (ibid.:8). Representations of practices are transported to Andrew's office, while commands are transported from Andrew office to the periphery, i.e. the working practices in the laboratory. This means that Andrew succeeds in being a strategist because there is a circular flow of commands from his office and representations back to his office. He attracts representations and sends out commands.

I do not wish to suggest that the ethnographer's aim is similar to Andrew's. The difference between Andrew and an ethnographer is that whereas representations are sent to Andrew and Andrew sends out commands to the periphery, representations are what is sent to the ethnographer and representations are also what the ethnographer sends back to the field under study. This may always have been the case: it is common to send the result of one's work, i.e. the finished monograph, report, article etc., to the people with whom one has interacted during fieldwork. But with new ICTs this can be done at any point during one's fieldwork and as we have seen one can be more or less forced to do so. As noted, ICTs make it possible for the ethnographer and the informants to interact at a distance, and this alters the ethnographic knowledge creation process from a "home-field-home" model to a "circular flow" model.

When Coleman and Collins describe the field as a constant process of becoming, in my interpretation this means that ethnographic knowledge is created in a process where representations are sent from the field under study to the ethnographer, the ethnographer responds to these representations and thereby creates new representations that are sent to the field and so on. With ICTs the "sending" parts of this process are first of all fast and easy. Second, they can, as we saw with the mini-poll, visualize what is being sent and make it possible for others to associate themselves to the project and become part of the field under study. When the ICTs involved in this process act as intermediaries they make this process flow in foreseeable ways – both ethnographer and informants respond to the representations as intended. Often the ICTs, when they become part of ethnographic research practices, act at mediators, and this results in a process that flows in unforeseeable ways. To embrace this uncertainty that ICTs potentially bring into ethnographic research practices as they create unforeseeable associations, instead of seeking refuge in more well-tested and controllable fieldwork techniques, I sense is important if

we are to benefit from the possibilities new technologies bring to ethnography. Returning to Andrew, his goal as a strategist is to obtain and stay in control over the laboratory's working practices. What is the goal of the ethnographer? Why do fieldwork? One central goal, I claim, is to challenge commonsense understandings of both the ethnographer and the field under study. If we as ethnographers, by leaving techno-determinism behind and, e.g., taking in the constructivist position discussed here, can learn to conceptualize and use ICTs less as mere intermediaries and more as mediators, they might be able to help us reach this goal.

Conclusion

In this article I have shown that the discussion about how ethnography is to deal with everyday practices filled with mediated communication rests on the assumption that on the one hand there is a real world and on the other there is a virtual reality. This has fostered what I have termed a techno-deterministic approach to this discussion, and using a website that is part of the fieldwork I am currently conducting as a critical case I argued for the inadequacy of this techno-deterministic approach if we are to understand what ICTs do in ethnographic research practices. In order to reach a better understanding of ICTs "doings" in ethnographic research practices I have developed a constructivist approach. This constructivist approach seeks to treat humans and non-humans symmetrically. It focuses not on what humans and non-humans are respectively but on what they do when they become associated to each other. Within the techno-deterministic approach it is difficult – if not impossible – to think about ICTs as nothing else but what Latour has termed mere intermediaries. The ICTs become black boxes and "defining its inputs is enough to define its outputs" (Latour 2005:39). This might be the case for some ICTs – that they are intermediaries – but in the ethnographic research practices the website was a full-fledged mediator that associated, transformed and modified a number of human and non-human actors and thereby took part in the process of constructing the object under study. One of the vital implications of taking in this constructivist position is that the traditional "home-field-home" model becomes inadequate. As a substitution I suggested a "circular flow" model that highlights how ethnographic knowledge is created as ethnographer and informants interact at a distance. One can claim that this "circular flow" model has always been the case but ICTs make this interaction at a distance happen faster and more often, which thoroughly alters the knowledge creation process.

In brief: this article has highlighted the importance of employing notions that are able to conceptualize various new visualizing and associating technologies as mediators. This is no small and easy operation, as the application of these notions will question classical epistemological and methodological commitments. To capture this "stir" I wish to suggest Law's notion of "method assemblage" developed in his book *After Method* (2004). One central insight that functions as a point of departure for Law's discussions in this book is that in scientific practices realities are not only described but are also produced. This production of realities happens by enactment of a hinterland that consists of pre-existing social and material realities and the ramifying relations between these. Following this, Law defines method assemblage as "the process of enacting or crafting bundles of ramifying relations [i.e. the hinterland] that condense presence and (therefore also) generate ab-

sence by shaping, mediating and separating these" (Law 2004:122, italics in the original). Along these lines, doing ethnography can be understood as practices that bundle certain relations and thereby condense certain presences. ICTs are more often than not part of ethnographic method assemblages and this begs the question: How do ICTs – e.g. as ethnographic methods, as technologies that are integral parts of the practices under study or as associations between ethnographic research practices and the practices under study – as mediators partake in the processes of condensing presences? The field, as it is also hinted at by Coleman & Collins in the above, can be said to be such condensed presences and if we as ethnographers are not able to transgress the techno-deterministic approach to how ethnography is to be done we risk condensing presences that do not take the intricate relations between humans and non-humans, between humans and a variety of new ICTs, into consideration. So, ethnography's method assemblage needs to be reworked in a manner that transforms its hinterland from one that focuses on distinctions to one that focuses on heterogeneous associations.

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Notes

1 The ministries and agencies are The National Consumer Agency, The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, The Ministry of Taxation, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and The Danish Agency of Governmental Management.
2 To avoid confusion: Hine has published a paper and a book that both are entitled "Virtual Ethnography".
3 These types of communications measurements come in many forms but they have a defining feature which is that they try through various, primarily quantitative, measurements to calculate how much media attention a given communicative effort has generated.
4 Latour has discussed the distinction between intermediaries and mediators many times. This quotation from a later publication might shed some more light upon what he analytically achieves by upholding this distinction: "A properly functioning computer could be taken as a good case of a complicated intermediary while banal conversation may become a terribly complex chain of mediators where passions, opinions, and attitudes bifurcate at every turn" (Latour 2005: 39).

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Digital Cultural Heritage Engagement

A New Research Field for Ethnology

By Dagny Stuedahl

Digital cultural heritage extends the cultural heritage from being solely an issue of definition in museums and heritage institutions to concern practices in all kinds of heritage organizations and engaged private contributors that are active in the field. Besides supporting new practices related to documentation, collection management and analysis of cultural-historical texts, photos, objects, processes and places, the digital also brings new forms of collecting, categorizing, understanding and reflecting upon cultural heritage. New forms of participation and engagement are introduced by virtual spaces, mobile media and interactive tools inside museums, archives, libraries, galleries as well as outside these institutions. This participation also invites new social groups to engage in both physical interactions and digitally enhanced interaction related to heritage sites.

The research field of digital cultural heritage currently has discussions of the interchange between heritage practices and theories of digital culture, theories of institutional transformations, theories related to documentation and archiving practices, new communicative practices and the development of genres in public heritage communication – as well as new relationships with the audiences. In the background to these discussions, transformations of concepts related to representation and interpretation of cultural heritage are at work (Cameron & Kenderdine 2007). Interactive tools, mobile media, web-based services and other digital tools and solutions bring to the forefront, in a practical way, issues of social, cultural and political power in the cultural heritage. Interestingly, the relation between communities and heritage institutions mediated through digital technologies is emerging, thus constituting a particularly interesting research issue for ethnology. This article will describe different ways of using digital technologies and media as tools to build new relations with audiences, communities and new forms of interactions. Issues such as access, convergence, digital literacy, categorization and social media that will be taken up here will only to some degree give an impression of the research topics that this broad and complex field of digital cultural heritage represents.

Access to Digital Heritage

A major motivation for the transformations inside heritage institutions has been to establish public access to cultural heritage material (e.g. Lund principles 2001), as well as meeting the growing expectations *vis-à-vis* archives, museums and libraries on a public level (Usherwood, Wilson & Bryson 2005). It is argued that publicly accessible heritage archives, museums and collections will increase interest in the original collections, and this is desirable for visitors because it raises their cultural and historical awareness as well as their literacy in the information society (DigiCULT 2002).

One consequence of this is that cultural heritage institutions are being transformed from focusing on collections to being focused on making narrative connections with heritage content. In some institutions this has taken the form of inviting audiences and visitors to participate in narrative activities, either online or in the museum space. This also involves a focus on learning and experience as part of new communicative practices. It is presumed that "In the future, users of cultural resources will be able to enjoy new interactive cultural heritage services and products that relate to their personal lives. They will able to manipulate digital artefacts online and participate in communities of interest" (DigiCULT Report

2002: 8). This vision is expressed by one of the larger European digital cultural heritage projects, and illustrates the expectations connected to the role of digital technologies for a broader and more involving cultural heritage communication in future.

The vision can be recognised in several countries and in numerous national and regional projects, and is based on the fact that a large amount of cultural heritage content in libraries, archives and museum collections is made accessible by digital and interactive technologies, solely because it is represented in digitalized forms. The UNESCO Charter on the Preservation of Digital Heritage defines a new legacy based on this, where digital resources of information and creative expression produced, distributed, accessed and maintained in digital form are defined the digital heritage (UNESCO 2003).

On the audience side we only have few indicators that could help us establish a more general understanding of what engagement and participation in managing cultural heritage in digital ways consists of. One current example indicating the power that public interest and engagement might have is the popularity that Europeana, the portal for local and regional cultural heritage, experienced during the launch. Europeana is financed by the eContentplus programme of European Commission, and the portal is a cross-domain portal that gives access to books, maps, recordings, photographs, archival documents, paintings and films from 27 European member states. Europeana has as its goal to connect digital content from countries participating in the project, linking institutional and multidisciplinary content mediated by digital technologies in the field of cultural heritage.

The amazing interest from the public during the launch of the Europeana portal clearly illustrates the reshaping of engagement in relation to cultural heritage issues – which

Europeana, the European digital library, museum and archive was launched in 2008 with the support of the European Commission.

at the end of the day might indicate directions for institutional transformations. The story goes like this: When the Europeana site was launched, the portal experienced 5 million hits per hour, which in fact required a technical remodelling of the portal to sustain such massive interest and access. Europeana had to be closed and redesigned to be able to service access from much larger user groups than originally planned for. The large interest indicates that access to digital cultural heritage content does engage audiences internationally, and that the convergence between institutions and their content fills a meaningful mission for people in general. Digital cultural heritage services, like the Europeana portal, can thus be understood as common cultural spaces for collecting, connecting, communicating and preserving digital cultural heritage and memory (Forster 2006). This leads us to the next issue of digital cultural heritage.

Convergence in Cultural Heritage Networks

Many institutions have made their collections partly or wholly available on the web, being searchable by private users and giving insights into categories and taxonomies, photos and information that previously were used only by professionals. In reality these publicly accessible collections and archives build on convergence between databases, systems, disciplinary categories and taxonomies, as well as between sectors and institutions. In Norway the idea of convergence became a reality in the heritage sector on a policy level in 2003 when the Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority (ABM) was established. This involved a fusion of the major governmental institutions in the field of museums, archives and libraries, and ABM is expected to meet with cross-sectional challenges and cooperation. One of the main challenges is to establish better collaboration in developing standards for cultural heritage content crossing traditional institutional borders, and to take care of material that is created in digital form (Østby 2006).

Several reports show, however, that the convergence on the level of institutional practices is problematic and filled with difficulties (Milekic 2001). There seem to be obvious challenges on an international level, for example in the lack of sufficient appreciation of the implications of cultural diversity for ICT systems, the challenges of multilingual and multicultural thesauri (EPOCH, 2007, D2.11) as well as the issues of multiple standards and taxonomies for multidisciplinary based documentation and archiving (Stuedahl 2007; Stuedahl & Smørdal forthcoming). On a concrete level, some of the challenges are also related to the inability to meaningfully work across collections placed in multiple institutions (Goldman 2005), and to shortcomings of standards and divergence of database systems (Wilson 2005).

The crossing of institutional and national borders between different heritage institutions means that a considerable amount of resources has to be spent on "translations" between technological systems, standards and categories of archiving. This translation also has to relate to public discourses, genres and knowledge to suit future audiences and their activities of engaging with, and making sense of, cultural heritage content in multiple ways. This is why archives and museums are of specific interest for understanding the role of convergence in digital cultural heritage.

Convergence in museums is thus the process that makes old and new media meet, where documents on papyrus are represented in digital platforms and where wooden fragments

from Viking times, for example, meet with current public expectations about access and interaction. Such expectation has to be met with a focus not only upon the digitization of collections and the accessibility of databases; it also has to be met with an emphasis on the role of communication. It seems that museum institutions are currently experiencing convergence between practices inside the institution, as, for example, when new standards are integrated to categorize digital cultural heritage for the purpose of public access to collections. This convergence brings the multiplicity of knowledge related to the museum's objects to the forefront.

Categorizing Heritage in New Ways

Cultural heritage institutions and museums have currently become more and more responsive to the communities and the cultures they represent (Message 2006). While heritage institutions have until now been shaped as physical buildings, where objects and narratives are displayed in decontextualized ways – the trend towards re-contextualizing and re-localizing cultural heritage objects and knowledge has taken many and diverging forms. The convergence of digital tools and systems has meanwhile brought to the forefront other and more serious divergence processes related to documentation and communication practices: the standards for metadata that are linked with categories, taxonomies and typologies used to tag digital cultural heritage objects and documents, and as tools for search and access from multiple institutions as well as the public. To establish common standards and categories across institutions and countries is seen as an essential part of achieving an integrated world of cultural heritage content. But this calls for an international process of integration on the level of knowledge definition: "A huge amount of effort is needed to achieve agreement between a representative international group of experts on the specification of any standard" (EPOCH, 2007, D2.11: 109).

It is clear that documentation, registration, archiving, and consumption of digital content is based on categories that are reproduced from existing ones – if they are not actively transformed. In projects where ICT is used to categorize knowledge from a non-western and non-institutional perspective, it becomes clear how strongly standard categories build on central western scientific knowledge traditions. These in fact exclude knowledge coming from indigenous people. Several studies have shown how digital technologies, rather than merely representing objects, open up for a multiplicity of knowledge. Reports from projects show groups of indigenous people pointing out the inadequacy of standard collection documentation based on Eurocentric chronologies and categories, and starting to categorize cultural heritage according to their own knowledge (see Verran 2006 & 2007; Brown 2007; Witcomb 1997, 2003; Cameron & Robinson 2007). These studies clearly show how multiple categories can be integrated and play a major role in the digitization of objects. Interestingly, the studies also show how categorization of cultural heritage content might influence public engagement and interest in digital cultural heritage content. This makes categories and standards interesting points for a reflexive discussion on the knowledge and conceptions that make up the background to our conception of digital cultural as such, as well as the concepts that inform practices in the field.

Categories and standards of documentation and collections can easily be understood as objective, and as traditional communication of cultural heritage knowledge has been

focused on the material qualities of cultural heritage objects, the context of categories used for indexing and interpreting them has been only weakly questioned (Witcomb 2007). The emerging extended conception of cultural heritage challenges this and calls for us to revisit "the current epistemological foundations on which documentation is formulated and to consider how diverse cultural and theoretical ideas [...] might revise documentation, taking account of these technological potentialities" (Cameron & Robinson 2007:168). Digitization represents transformative possibilities for indexing, archiving and mediating cultural heritage (Mannoni 1996). One of these transformative possibilities is in fact related to a revision of existing categories (Ore 2001), as digitization makes it feasible to collect multiple contextual knowledge and interpretations of the object. This makes it possible to connect material and immaterial cultural heritage knowledge in digital collections and archives.

The possible new categories, as well as the possible mediation of connecting multiple knowledge related to a cultural heritage object, also changes the status and authority of the object in communication. This becomes clear in the exhibition of cultural heritage objects in a digital environment: "The status of the objects and their authority to speak is questioned by the inclusion in exhibitions of non-objects, mock-ups, audio-visual technologies and interactive computer information points" (Witcomb 1997). The cultural heritage objects can be exhibited based on multiple knowledge and interpretations related to them, which in theory can open up the interpretative process and bring in multiplicity into cultural heritage classification and communication.

Meanwhile, in studies of classification systems outside the cultural heritage field, a more pragmatic view of classification systems is put forward. Approaching classification systems as working tools, the studies show how understanding of categories might be heterogeneous in that they work as boundary objects, in the sense of flexible concepts and a common framework for classification in defined communities. An example is used in the classification of race, diseases in medicine or taxonomies and in zoology or botany (Bowker & Star 1999; Star 1990, 1995). The development of categories in the digital cultural heritage field might be informed by the concept of boundary objects, in the attempt to establish flexible categories that can work as a common framework both inside defined cultural heritage communities and in social groups that base their interpretation of heritage on existing cultural conceptions outside communities and institutions.

Social Media and Communication in Digital Cultural Heritage Sites

Apart from the development of digital cultural heritage, discussions of multiple narratives and individual construction of meaning have become an overall issue inside cultural heritage institutions and museums (Hooper-Greenhill 1992). The changing museum practice and curatorship related to this, and the changes to do with developing museums as arenas for audience participation, can be connected to the discussion of the new museum (Vergo 1989), where special attention is devoted to cultural diversity and cultural sustainability by designing exhibitions related to the formulation of social policy goals and contemporary cultural conditions. Cultural diversity and multiplicity play an increasing role – and the museum visitor is conceptualized as influenced by multiple social belongings and identities. This also brings a focus

on audience engagement and participation, which with the support of digital media has been realized as projects on co-creation and sharing of cultural heritage content. Digital technologies build an infrastructure for the co-creation of cultural heritage content between institutions and audiences, which opens up for online and onsite participation by visitors with competencies and knowledge that are not part of the official expertise of the institution. In this participation, the construction of identity, memory and narratives is an important issue for understanding how digital cultural heritage content becomes part of socio-cultural processes of transformation.

Social media and social networking have become a central focus in digital cultural heritage communication, especially related to media phenomena such as web 2.0, with blogs, wiki, Facebook, Myspace, YouTube etc. The character and technical possibilities of these diverse media types clearly show how different forms of participation and co-creation can be integrated into cultural heritage communication – while challenging existing communicative practices inside the institution. Some examples of this will illustrate the variety of ways in which different institutions integrate this in transforming their communicative practice.

A study based on the use of blogs in communication between museum curators at Sydney Observatory, Powerhouse Museum, and the community of people interested in astronomy indicates that there is an innovative and effective role for social media to play in evolving a many-to-many communication model within the museum whilst it maintains and perhaps even strengthens its voice and authority (Russo *et al.* 2006).

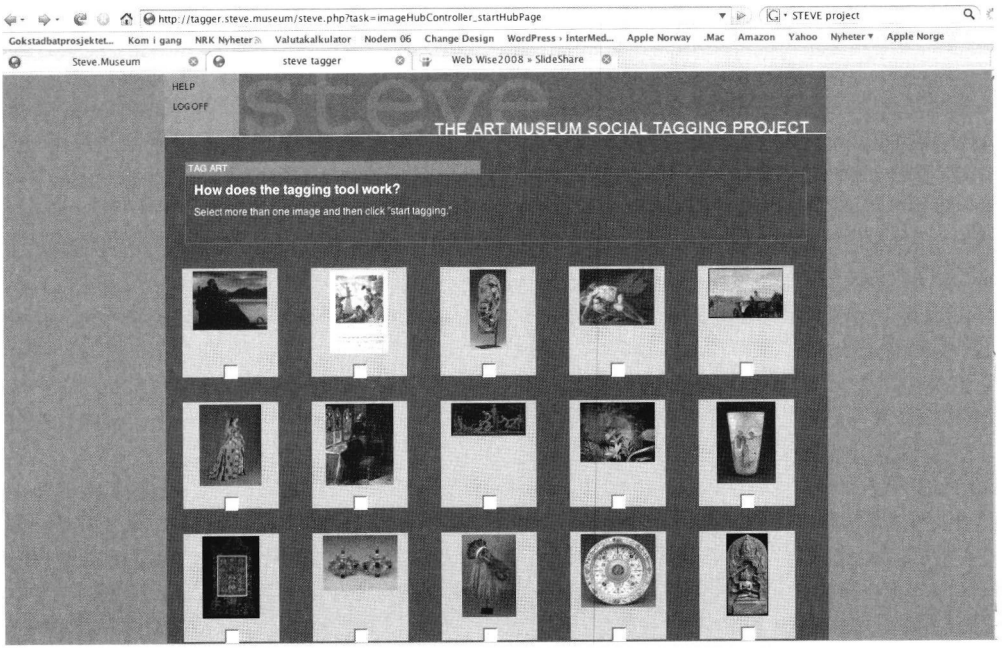
A museum curator meets the audience at Sydney Observatory blog.

Using social media such as blogs (see www.sydneyobservatory.com.au/blog/) has for some time been part of the Sydney Observatory strategy for building new relations with their audience. The blog is related to events and news about astronomy as well as ongoing work at the observatory. This covers content that is not necessarily mediated in the museums exhibitions. Visitors to the museum website are invited into discussions and dialogue with the curators at the observatory. The museum has registered an increase in online visitors as well as a general interest among the audience based on this service (Chan 2007). In addition, the dialogue on the blog has reinforced the authority of the museum, and the study suggests that "social media can be used to enable cultural and scholarly dialogue while strengthening the veracity of museum knowledge. The subsequent communication demonstrates how the many-to-many model can enhance both audience interaction and experience and museum authority" (Russo *et al.* 2006).

Using a blog for curatorship changes the one-to-one and one-to-many communication model that has been the framework for museums. This communication model has also been part of museums' authority, establishing their role as gatekeepers of object collections and expertise knowledge. While museums traditionally have been providers of both authoritative and authentic knowledge, their organization of collections and narratives into recognizable and authoritative narratives has in addition mediated the relationship between visitors and objects (Russo *et al.* 2006). The example illustrates how a cultural heritage institution can use social media to build new relations with its audience and even with new communities of potential visitors. The blog medium opens for this in a controlled way, as the curator edits the blog and can even edit comments from users. The example also shows how cultural heritage institutions can take part in public dialogue, based on their authority and competencies, but without involving their body of collections and exhibitions.

Another project based on social media involves people in a co-creative way to a higher degree in the reflection upon objects of museum collections. The research and development project called STEVE – The Art Museum Social Tagging Project (see http://tagger.steve.museum/) – funded in part by a grant from the US Institute of Museum and Library Services, focuses on how non-professionals' descriptions of artworks may differ from professional categorizing, as well as how by tagging artworks they may experience the activity of looking at and describing museum collections (Trant, Bearman & Chun 2007). The project is based on open software developed for the project, called STEVE, where users can tag representations of artworks from museums involved in the project. The museums involved cover a broad spectrum of collections, making it possible for users to explore museum collections across disciplinary borders. The project is based on users tagging museum objects with their own keyword or categories. These categories are exhibited on the STEVE website as tag clouds. Tag clouds are visualizations of keywords, where the number of uses of a keyword is visualised by font size.

The tagging activity is based on a scheme connected to the objects exhibited on the website. The scheme registers the keywords, or tags, that users relate to the object and serves as a project that opens museum collection for folksonomy – another concept for this kind of social tagging (Trant, Bearman & Chun 2007; Wyman *et al.* 2006). Folksonomy is



Using social tagging to understand people's understanding of artworks. http://tagger.steve.museum/.

defined as a social and collaborative practice of categorizing, indexing and classifying that stands in contrast to traditional indexing by experts. Folksonomies are categories that are aggregated by non-experts and are closely related to the possibilities of web 2.0 technologies.

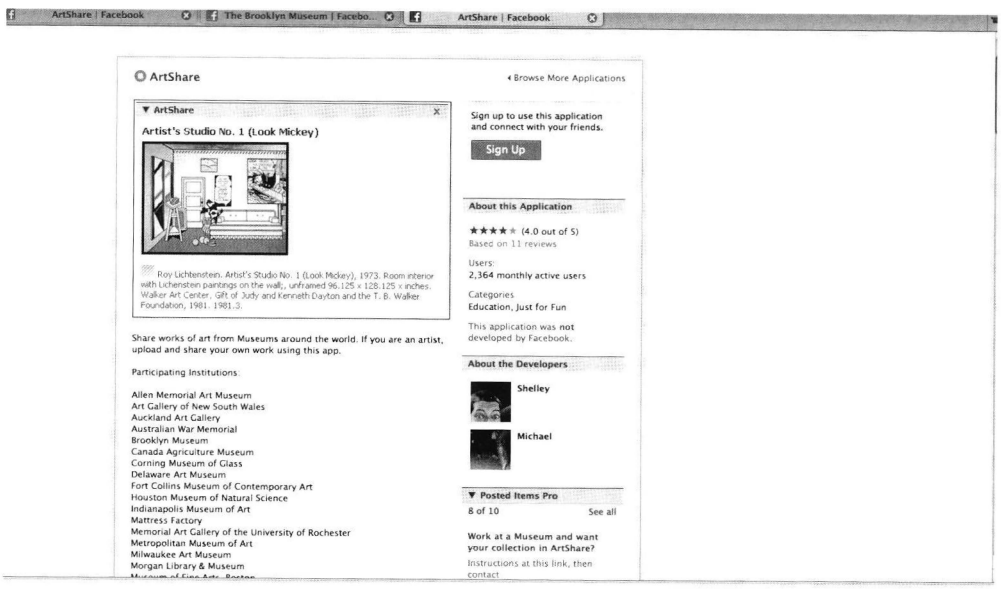
The STEVE project, with its over 850 permanently registered users, has collected 51,477 tags related to 300 artworks, and thus constitutes a most interesting corpus of research material that serves as an important contribution to the work of semantics and categories in the field of digital cultural heritage. The project joins a growing number of projects in the heritage field which demonstrate that "social networking sites outside of museum control, such as Facebook, YouTube, or Flickr, should be viewed as strategic points of presence for the institution. This, in effect, focuses their judgments of success on reading the impact of their external activity on programmes within the museum" (Trant & Bearman 2008).

Several projects point in this direction, that social media seem to become more meaningful for users when connected to other social media. One clear example is the ArtShare project on Facebook created by Brooklyn Museum Information Systems department. ArtShare enables Facebook users to select works of art from the museum's collection and shuffle them on their personal profiles on Facebook; "ArtShare allows them to display their favourite paintings, photographs, and objects on their own terms and in their own social spaces. Browsing through Facebook users who have installed ArtShare, one begins to get a sense of the personal tastes and interests they have, just by looking at the works of art they've selected for their profiles." (Bernstein 2008). ArtShare makes the sharing of art become part of social networking in online communities

that connects to museum collections – and at the same time shows a way for cultural heritage institutions to connect with new groups of audiences in so-called external activities. ArtShare does not only provide the sharing of artworks on Facebook, but also representations of cultural heritage objects that can be shuffled into personal profiles and shared. This gives a possibility for cultural heritage objects to be part of social activities online that was not so evident when access was given only in the museum institution. Also, ArtShare is a good example of how digital media open up for new communicative practices – giving the institutions new roles and missions.

The third and last example of social media technologies that will be presented here is a Norwegian project, Lokalhistoriewiki.no, a participative project on local history that was launched by the Norwegian Institute of Local History in 2008. The project is based on wiki technologies, which are open for content creation from users that have registered online as a member of the wiki. The online encyclopaedia on Norwegian local history is based on voluntary contributions as well as on contributions from professional historians. In a short time the amount of articles in the wiki has grown to an extent that makes the wiki an interesting place to search for information related to local history in Norway. An extended amount of search categories related to themes, issues and geographical places has grown with the articles written. Texts about buildings, people and places, representations of old topographic documents – as well as personal narratives of memory communicate local history in multiple ways, from voluntary local historians as well as professionals.

An interesting point of the wiki technology is the collective way the texts are written. Several articles have multiple contributors who have developed the articles in collaborative ways based on their local knowledge. In many ways the wiki technology opens up for a kind of collaborative writing of history that



ArtShare on Facebook; www.facebook.com/apps/application.php?id=7723691927&ref=pr.

fits well with an ethnological understanding of history. The collaborative writing of history on the wiki gives space for multiple voices and interpretations related to historical objects, people and events that may remind us of the content of numerous ethnological collections that are based on personal memories and narratives. On the wiki, though, this material is not collected by expert categories and not with a project-based approach. The written local histories of the wiki communicate multiple and even, in some cases, internally contradictory narratives related to one issue. This makes the wiki project an extremely interesting case for ethnological studies in the field of digital cultural heritage.

Understanding Digital Cultural Heritage

Having traditionally referred to monumental remains of culture, the conception of heritage has gradually included new categories such as intangible, ethnographic and industrial heritage. Conceptions of heritage today therefore are more open and reflect living cultures. This goes parallel with the changes that are affecting the conception of culture as such. The gradual integration of social participation and the procedural conception of culture opens the heritage field for multiple definitions. Consequently, the extended conception of cultural heritage in some cases represents a conflict with established conceptions that are vigorous in cultural policy and institutions.

From an ethnological perspective, however, digital cultural heritage points to interesting empirical issues that can provide a new understanding of cultural processes and relations to heritage and the past. As shown above, the use of social media in cultural heritage communication ultimately points to the concept of the collective, central for ethnology. These collective activities related to cultural heritage are based on the communication of multiplicities rather than sameness or otherness. The phenomenon of multiplicity that comes to the forefront in collective activities might supplement existing theories about the collective in ethnology – as well as demonstrating the need to further develop the understanding of collective processes and memory related to cultural heritage that ethnology can supply.

In his studies of historical understanding in Russia, James Wertsch, professor of anthropology, revealed how a society in reality can continue several versions of the same historical process: the official version and the alternative as well as the oppositional one. The versions have the same status and can be part of the same meaning-making processes related to history. The multiple versions are in fact, Wertsch argues, integrated into the collective memory that builds a historical consciousness among people (Wertsch 2002). Without continuing the discussion of collective memory and historical consciousness here, the two concepts do raise interesting issues that might inform studies of cultural heritage communicated by social media and digital technologies. As these technologies bring to the forefront social activities related to history, memory and historical interpretations, this calls for the elaboration of concepts and theories that involve technology as tools for social and cultural activities.

The field of memory studies, with its multidisciplinary origins, proposes an interesting approach to digital cultural heritage based on the integration of the social activities of people. The growing field of digital memories invites research from media studies, as well as anthropology and ethnology. It is interesting to notice that digital technologies, with their inherent capacity to document and

communicate instantly – this goes especially for mobile technologies – provide new types of memory activities. The study of memory therefore needs to be developed within a rapidly developing techno-social context (Reading 2008).

From an ethnological perspective, the study of memory is established as an analytical means to understand the personal, collective and social sides of culture as a process. In a world where digital technologies make the documentation of memories a common activity that everybody participates in, it is even more urgent to understand the role memories play in establishing the collective. Memories in this context are not only influenced by social context, but also by the technological tools and activities proposed by the digital. Both the use of memories to structure knowledge and the use of memories as a resource for interpretation are in fact influenced by this tool.

Some perspectives from media studies can be relevant for integrating these communication tools into digital memory studies. In media studies the focus on digital media has extended the scope of media reception studies to also involve people's ability to access, analyse and create messages across a variety of media forms and contexts (Livingstone 2005; Russo 2007). This moves towards an understanding of the complexities of reception of mediated content, based on relations between media types, the form of the content and the involvement of different media. Media use is now more related to competencies in handling multiple media sources, or mixed media environments that together lay the foundation for meaning-making.

Several theoretical approaches within the humanities highlight this multimodal and mixed character of digital media use and competencies, with an understanding that rhetorical forms as a connection between language and image (Fagerjord 2003) offer a valuable direction for understanding digital communication connected to digital memories and cultural heritage. Further, the focus on genre development articulates "the way in which the media elements are combined to form conventions, structures and messages (documents) of certain types (genres)" (Liestøl 2006:262), and is important for understanding how forms of memories and digital cultural heritage can communicate to heterogeneous groups of visitors, and serve as a means to meet the challenges of making connections to multiple individual interpretations of cultural heritage narratives and objects.

A New Research Field for Ethnology?

The list of various ways in which cultural heritage institutions integrate digital media and digital technologies in their communication practices could have been longer, even when focusing solely on interesting Scandinavian projects (see also Møhlenfeldt Jensen 2008). The goal here has not been to give a full overview of these, but rather to describe some current changes in cultural heritage practice and communication that bring up new phenomena that are relevant for an ethnological perspective. The changes are not related to cultural heritage institutions only, but to cultural communication as such.

Meanwhile, the focus on converging practices and collaboration paves the way to an understanding of cultural heritage institutions as networks (Russo 2007) rather than institutions with clearly defined borders. New relationships between museums and their visitors are built in these interactive situations. These are based on a convergence of various disciplinary activities inside museums, as

exhibitions designers, collection managers, public and educational professionals and information departments at the museums will collaborate in new ways. In addition to the convergence of professional practices related to collections and exhibitions, the onsite museums might provide learning resources solidly based on visitors' own activities. We also see that the introduction of social software and social media, such as blogs and wikis, builds relations between communities outside the cultural heritage institutions and professionals in ways that are totally new. Social media like wikis and blogs help to create a museum that is based on a many-to-many communication model that integrates museum visitors with museum websites, with the museums' presentation of knowledge (Russo *et al.* 2006). With the aid of digital technologies, cultural heritage institutions have the potential to create trusted heritage networks where audiences and visitors can follow themes and associations free of the institutional systems and collecting practices inside institutions (Trant 1998; Russo 2007).

Historically, cultural heritage institutions and museums build their authority by defining legitimate cultural knowledge based on their authentic collections of objects. From this standpoint, interpretations of the past are mediated with authority based mostly on the primacy of the museum's collection. The question of what authority museums will have in a future society characterized by convergent and participatory media is therefore a highly important one. As a part of institutional changes in the cultural heritage sector, digital cultural heritage involves a wider change that also concerns new levels and forms of institutional authority. The role of the museum professional is redefined as an interpreter rather than a legislator of culture (Ross 2004). This indicates a growing understanding of cultural heritage institutions as reflexive, and as facilitators rather than centres with defining power.

Several ethnological studies have been concerned about the new conditions that digital media and digital technologies pose for cultural processes such as identity shaping, youth culture, gender shaping (see e.g. Stuedahl 1996, 1998, 1999; Svenningson 1999, 2002; Kaare 2002, 2005). The entrance of digital media into the cultural heritage field, into the practices of institutions, and into people's engagement and participation reveals a connection between these studies and the field of ethnological studies of cultural heritage as lived and experienced connections to the past. Issues such as the digital influencing or even transforming cultural processes like continuity and change, the relation between the collective and individual, and the topic of belonging and multiplicity pose new questions related to memory, heritage and history. These issues are, as the examples above illustrate, in transformation and call for an understanding of communicative activities as well as meaning-making enhanced by technology.

The varieties of digital technology used in cultural heritage communication show that technology achieves meaning when users actively relate to the content and participate in the transformation of cultural heritage knowledge by way of digital tools. Many issues related to digital cultural heritage have not yet been fully imagined, understood, or critically explored in relation to the communication and knowledge practices that are developing in the field (Cameron & Kenderdine 2007). Clearly these entail new social practices that involve new processes of knowledge – but we know less about the power of these digital technologies to promote new types of

interpretation, understanding and building of relations to cultural heritage objects, places and narratives.

The Danish anthropologist Kirsten Hastrup points out that knowledge is based on a specific perspective. This underlines the social aspect of knowledge rather than knowledge as an absolute object (Hastrup 2004). The concept of relational knowledge defines knowledge as the relation between objects and humans beings, as well as between humans. This stands in contrast to encyclopaedic knowledge, which is based on seeing, studying and systematizing. Being part of the enlightenment, Hastrup argues, has made the encyclopaedic concept of knowledge a framework for cultural heritage knowledge on an institutional level, while knowledge about cultural heritage outside institutions could be understood as based on relational knowledge. This is the reason why cultural heritage, whether material or immaterial, is a field characterized by conflicting understandings and complex knowledge.

Is it the case that, when digitized and communicated by way of digital media, these conflicting understandings are brought to the forefront? Perhaps they highlight the complexity and give ethnology a new way of understanding the relation between past and present, categories and objects, as well as between people, places and narratives.

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Network Politics Online

The Gothenburg Social Forum-process, IT and Actor-Network Theory[1]

By Niklas Hansson

Introduction

This article focuses on the importance of a functional and well-integrated material infrastructure for communication-processes within contemporary political network organizing. I will argue that IT (information- and communication technologies) in forms of for example e-mail lists are of great importance for upholding information – and meaning production within social movement-organization. To this aim I draw on the Gothenburg Social Forum-process (the GSF), an example of contemporary political mobilizations organized in network-type of organization. The ethnographic content in this text rests solidly on one and a half year of conducted fieldwork among Leftist or, rather, progressive Swedish social movements participating in non-routine or extra parliamentary political networking. The analysis focuses on everyday organizing, e-mailing practices, rules for interaction, the ethics of sharing information and collective production of communication or meaning. All of this is done with a close reading of the role played by IT and the Internet in political organizing. Thus, one of the purposes of this article is to bring light upon such things that are often left out in analysis of social movements and politics, specifically objects and (non-human) actors that play material roles in organizing. The GSF is analyzed through its coupling together of information technologies and social networks, structures and (collective and individual) subjects. Communication technologies greatly reduced the necessity of face-to-face interaction within the GSF-network.

My main theoretical toolbox is Actor-Network Theory (ANT), a school of thought originally developed in Science and Technology Studies (STS) and later spread to areas such as ethnology, sociology of social movements, Anthropology, and organization theory. ANT is well-known for keeping analysis close to the empirical world of interactions, mobilizations, and translations – the messy world as it is presented – and fits nicely together with ethnographic approaches in parts of contemporary ethnological work. Actor-Network Theory is supplemented in the article by media theorist Marshal McLuhan's famous theorem of "the medium is the message", where the materiality of the medium is at the fore of analysis. Moreover, the GSF is conceptualized as part of a large infrastructure for production, distribution and consumption of alternative political information. Thus, the GSF is placed within the context of geographer Manuel Castells' famous notion of the world as a networked "space of flows".

Towards an Actor-Network Theory Approach for Analyzing Social Movement Organization

In a short text written within the field of Social Movement research, Colombian anthropologist Arturo Escobar draws heavily on several concepts collected from newer Social Systems Theory and Actor-Network Theory (ANT). Escobar argues that ANT has several advantages for researchers in this field with its focus on concrete world dynamics and with several years of developing an analytically rich methodology along with a highly sophisticated theoretical toolbox for studying various sorts of social assemblages, or actor-networks as ANT-researchers call their object of study. The text was dubbed with the, for the time being, symptomatic title *Notes on networks and Anti-Globalization Social Movements* (2000). Escobar's main argument was to show how the newest social movements (late 1990s to early 21st century) forced researchers to question well worn in

conceptual toolboxes and theories in their study of social movements, since previous conceptual categories did no longer apply to empirical reality. A common metaphor used to characterize these new social movements was *networks*; network-like or network-type of mobilizing structures. The difference between these new actors and older ones was that the new ones had a pluralistic network character and they were often supported by the decentralized technological network of the Internet.

Escobar presents ANT or a network-ontological perspective as a fertile new theory in this field. His starting point is several canonical figures repeatedly mentioned in this context: Bruno Latour, John Law, and Michel Callon, names that work as focal points for what has developed into the Actor-Network approach. Several important texts in the field are presented, for example Latour's book *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993) wherein Latour argues that modernity in large parts has been about drawing clear cut demarcations between what counts as human and what counts as non-human (nature–culture, subject–object, economic systems–subjective reason etc.). But, Latour argues, in well versed ANT-prose, that power, order and organization is generated in processes that necessarily include a multiplicity of materials, not solely humans. Latour writes that the social ought to be thought of as constantly being re-assembled, not something existing in clear-cut categories such as subject and object, things counted as culture and nature, or economic law-like behavior distorted by subjective reason and politics (represented as naturally functioning fully fledged economic laws). John Law, presumably even more so than does Latour, speaks of aspects of power and the pivot role played by power in the constitution of reality through actor-networks (2000[1992]).

In this article I will use concepts from the Actor-Network Theory in the analysis of source material collected during fieldwork for a period of a case study of the Gothenburg Social Forum-process (Hansson 2008). In the first section I will present some of the ontological presumptions at work in ANT, secondly, this is followed by the analysis of what I have named *Network Politics*. "Politics" in this context is termed as relations of power among the heterogeneous parts that collectively made up a socio-technological actor-network called the GSF-network (the Gothenburg Social Forum). It has not so much to do with ordinary concepts of politics as something that happens between political parties in government; rather, it has everything to do with how things come into being and sustain themself in time and how elements are mobilized into actor-networks. Power is defined as something that happens in relations and what something can do (power to act and connect) without discriminating along ontological categories such as subjects or objects. I will present an analysis of how heterogeneous parts: technical artifacts, social networks, practices, norms, texts and documents, were brought together and ordered into a functional actor-network for meaning –production and distribution of alternative– or activist political information.

Actor-networks

Bruno Latour argues that the world, or better, the real, is best understood as a network effect (1993). Reality emerges through assembling of heterogeneous social, technical, biological and textual (knowledge, documents, actors etc.) materials in networks and ordered relations between these heterogeneous actors. Reality becomes the end-product of actor-networks (networking) that are put together with a lot

of work invested in the process. Latour argues that the aim of ANT is not to add *social networks* to an analysis of the social or society (i.e. social network analysis), but, rather, aims for explaining society (if such a thing exists) or the social by tracing the networks that assembles "it" over and over again (2005). This means to build a theory out of networks – a theory about the network-character of the social (Latour 1997).

This difference can be explained by a short example. Geographer Manuel Castells takes the network as point of departure in his work on the emergent Network Society, as the paradigmatic principle of organization (1998). We have entered the era of a networked society, Castells argues. Corporations, economics, and the media and so on, all seem to be organized in networks, forming a networked elite. Castells does not use the network as a principle for his social theory of the Network Society; it is an analytical concept. Furthermore, he argues that new information and communication technology (IT) supports networks. According to the ANT-approach promoted here, Castells' "network society" (a global space of flows and elite structure) would be constituted as an actor-network, with key actors such as finance capital, management technologies (theories, knowledge, professionals), and capitalists. They would be concretely embedded and embodied, not abstractly nested in a global space of flows, possibly projecting an image of "globality". In the same way we can understand actor-networks (AN) that in various ways resist and make use of the components that are included in Castells' logic of dominance. In his critique of abstract globalization theories, Latour argues that according to ANT the global is understood as material practices with effects in forms of what is called the global. But these images or projections (Latour calls them panoramas) can be explained empirically and theoretically as they become "local-global" actor-networks. Globalization is too abstract and structural ("globalocentric") to fit neatly together with assumptions made in ANT. Latour himself prefers empirical studies of every middle range levels or scales that amount to macro structures. This is usually called a "flat ontology" because it renounces any pre-determined and over determining structure to do all the explaining that the social scientist is trained to trace empirically and historically.

The parts of an actor-network are never fully defined by the role it plays in a particular AN, but can become parts of another and even opposed AN:s. This gives them a certain level of autonomy and ANT becomes a non-essentialist ontology: no things-in-themselves, socially determined objects or inert materiality, and the network would be defined as a: "[...] group of unspecified relationships among entities of which the nature itself is undetermined" (Callon 1993: 263).

Thus, it becomes an empirical affair whether a human or non-human actor collaborates, or better, is made to collaborate, to make up a durable AN (and what kind of position it acquires) or not. To trace the network of relations becomes the analyst's (in this case the ethnologist's) task. A scientific text conceptualized as a network mobilizes heterogeneous elements (people, other texts, equipment, procedures and methods, institutions etc.) to accomplish a particular goal, develop a product, introduce a procedure or propose a scientific explanation. In a similar manner this article will articulate particular scientific references, be produced within a cultural science discipline and a particular history of the Departments of Swedish Ethnology, make reference to empirical phenomena,

observations and recorded practices – all of which provides strength to the new "article-actor-network", a network where I myself is mobilized as an actor (together with my laptop, concepts, theories, word processor, as a writer).[2]

Network Politics Online and Material Prescriptions

The Gothenburg Social Forum-process was part of the global social justice movement (Hansson 2008:10). This movement is a multifaceted social movement without central control or a unified political program (Hansson 2008:221). The Social Forums were initially launched in Brazil in 2001, and have since been imitated and multiplied all over the world, ranging from World Social Forums with hundreds of thousands of participators and visitors, to Local Social Forums with hundreds of participators (Hansson 2008). Below follows an excerpt where the GSF presents itself in one of its "call for participation letters" that were distributed among local social movement organizations in Gothenburg, Sweden:

[Document: *Call for participation letter* distributed for participation during the GSF-event 2004, my translation]

Since the first World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2001, the Social Forum-process has been a vital part in the struggles against the contemporary militaristic, neo-liberal world order and an arena for articulation of alternatives to this order. The Social Forum's goal is to put light on social questions, in front of destructive thinking for economic value and profit, and to elevate discussions about democracy, power and the possibility for change. Social Forums have since their inception been organized at many different levels all over the world and in Sweden.

During the two Social Forums that have been organized in Gothenburg, 2004 and 2005, participators ranged from small collectives and direct action groups (local environmentalists, networks such as *Planka.nu*, a part of the free public transport movement), socialist organizations (*Young Socialists*, the *Swedish-Cuban Association*), Non Governmental Organizations or NGOs (*Red Cross*, *Africa Groups*, *Amnesty International*), to Leftist progressive groups like *Attac Sweden* and alternative news media (*Gothenburg Free Newspaper*). The Forums were characterized by a multiplicity of both organizational forms and political goals or agendas. During my fieldwork in the Local Social Forum and throughout preparatory work it became clear to me how closely interconnected the political organizations were with the decentralized technological network; i.e. the Internet (Hansson 2008:143–174).

Inspired by previous ANT-studies I have chosen to put extra light upon material prerequisites or elements that provided for the actor-network's material infrastructure. By focusing on material things, objects, artifacts, technologies, and even biological processes, ANT has developed a program to explicitly describe and analyze these actors roles (in the production of the social) and their *prescriptions*; that is, what they make possible and what they proscribe according to their capacities for entering relations with other things, humans, machines, and systems. Prescriptions are [...] what a device allows or forbids from the actors (humans and non-humans) that it anticipates: it is the morality of a setting both negative (what it prescribes) and positive (what it permits) (Akrich & Latour 1992:261).

Computer-mediated communications nested through e-mail lists used for everyday planning, and for arranging information, are examples of practices that sustained the GSF-

network. Information was distributed and filtered through e-mail lists by members of the network and available for all members to use. The interconnection of a multiplicity of different organizations through e-mail lists made it possible for everyone to take part of the same information, regardless of their geographical position or position within the network. The assemblage of activists, organizations, cables, concepts, and computers, as well as capacities to store, send, receive, display, write, read, interpret, and arrange, constituted a network with a functional political agency.[3]

Political Networks as Actor-networks of Heterogeneous Materials

The "network" is a common metaphor both in empirical descriptions and theoretical work on social movements. Already back in 1994, in an article called *The Chiapas Uprising and the Future of Class Struggle in the New World Order* (1994), activist and economist Harry Cleaver describes how an Internet-connected Sub Commandant Marcos distributes orders and strategies among groups in the Mexican Zapatista-movement (EZLN), and among activist organizations all around the world. Marcos fed them with information and updates on the current situation in the Chiapas jungle in Mexico (Cleaver 1994). Thus, future social struggles were pictured in terms of networks supported by the Internet, and loosely connected activists and movements. Ethnologist Ulf Stahre (2007) summarizes tendencies within the contemporary global social justice movement:

> In addition to their critique of global neoliberalism adjacent elements in this movement have been repetitive protests at international political and economic summits of various kinds – i.e. Seattle in 1999, Washington DC in 2000, the Prague in 2000, Gothenburg in 2001, and Genoa in 2001. Coordination of these protests has taken place on the Internet [...] The movement's self organized world-wide summits have also had great impact. The so called "World Social Forums" have become large annual gatherings for all kinds of movements and people's initiatives. [...] The globalization movement differs from what traditionally is implied by a social movement, mainly through its extremely loosely put together assemblage of independent groups. [...] The emergence of these new fleeting movements would hardly have been possible without new Information Technology and the Internet, and they force social scientists to invent new definitions and explanations [...] (Stahre 2007:186f., my translation).

The Internet has played many different roles in this context: as support for flexible and decentralized local–global activist-networks, for example in the PGA (*People's Global Action*); a long distance communication-tool; an information channel used in large political mobilizations (such as the anti-war protests against the war in Iraq in February 2003 with approximately 14 million participators); an infrastructure for the production of activist- and alternative news (i.e. the Indy Media network); for coordination of common resources, collective action, planning and decision-making processes (Juris 2005; Escobar 2006).[4] Technical formats such as e-mail lists can become key elements for the exchange of information and sustaining network communication. But they are also system-stabilizing components. E-mail lists afford geographically dispersed actors to connect with each other and function as material infrastructures for maintaining both everyday – and temporarily intensive communication flows (Lanzara & Morner 2005:67-90). Actor-Network Theory can shed light upon this material production of communication and, to paraphrase media guru Marshall McLuhan, elucidate how the medium seems to mesh with the message (1994). Digital media's message (*its prescription*) is

its capacity to connect nodes, its technical protocol for "many-to-many" communication, and "write-read-write" functionality. It is in relation to the GSF's set of norms, values, actions and structure that these properties become interesting for further examination. The GSF was launched as a meeting place, a place where you could participate in discussions, debate and collectively join alliances with other organizations in a "many-to-many" kind of communication; i.e. an open forum for debate:

[Document: *The Gothenburg Social Forum's Charter of Principles* 2004, my translation]

The aim of the Gothenburg Social Forum is to become a democratic and open space for reflection, debate, to formulate and to deepen suggestions and proposals, provide for exchange of experiences and for alliance-building between groups, movements [...]

The aim of the social forum-organizers was to support interaction between participating organizations within the GSF-process. Openness was a feature meant to characterize the work of the GSF. In order to reach this goal the organizers developed opportunities for participators to read e-mail messages, have parallel discussion sessions, to post, read and reply to e-mail messages in "many-to-many" form of communication. This was accomplished by using e-mail lists for internal communication between participators.

The GSF and E-mail Lists: Key Material Resources

Towards the end of 2004, at the start up of my fieldwork, I registered on one of the GSF's two e-mail lists: the GSF-list. Through the list it was possible to know when and where meetings were planned to take place and the status of ongoing preparations in support of the forum. Soon I got a pretty good view of the activities as documents and texts became available to me. These documents presented the GSFs' overall organizational structure and how it was currently organized. This information was open and available for everyone registered on the e-mail list. About two and a half years later, during an interview conducted with one of the forum-organizers, let's call him Christian, I had the chance to talk to him about the role of e-mail lists in their organizing efforts. The impression that they were crucial components in the GSF-organization became stronger as Christian affirmed the centrality of e-mail lists in their work.

Christian informed me regarding how information with reference to social forums and its success as a model for organizing spread fast across Europe, and how this came about by the use of e-mail lists within "activist milieus", as he put it. Information about the forums was deemed interesting in these milieus, furthered distributed and copied, and later materialized into ideas and local activist's own local social forums. Reports and information about the social forum process were distributed and copied in newsletters and published on activist websites, and was also diffused within the activist network that Christian used to be a part of, *Studenter mot Krig* (Students against War, launched autumn 2002).

During the interview I asked Christian whether it would have been possible to arrange the social forums in Gothenburg had it been without access to the Internet and the e-mail lists. He meant to say that it would have been impossible without these resources. The GSF never had access to any financial budget or economic funds of any kind, thus a relatively cheap and easily accessible resource such as the Internet was important for a project that never had these kinds of economic budgets.

The e-mail lists were important tools for fast distribution of information to every member of the network, for example foregoing hastily announced meetings and quickly made decisions. Moreover they were used for assembling and storing large amounts of information (*information as mass*): documents, texts, communication and messages. In the GSF-network there were only a small number of active organizers who handled large amounts of information.

The GSF's e-mail lists brought together hundreds of e-mail addresses, including other e-mail lists that in an indirect manner were connected to the GSF. They were used for dissemination of messages and texts. Relatively soon organizers were able to register and gather quite a few local political organizations in the Gothenburg area that had shown prior interest in an initiative to organize a local version of the social forum-model, and they catalogued these organizations by setting up a new e-mail list. As a result they could reach out to hundreds of e-mail addresses and a large number of organizations with a single "click on the mouse". But, first the organizers had to get hold on these e-mail addresses and that was accomplished by means of an old list of e-mail addresses used for communication between the organization's previously members of the political action-network called *Göteborg-saktionen 2001* (Gothenburg Action 2001).[5] Information was also distributed reaching about 300 e-mail addresses registered on e-mail lists used by the organizations *Attac* and *Forum Syd* (the Forum South).[6] This way a collection of local member-organizations was registered on the e-mail lists. When organizers distributed a call for participation prior to the GSF-event in 2005 there were about 240 e-mail addresses that got invitations for participating during the social forum-event.

The GSF functioned as point of convergence and as a tool used by local organizations without discriminating along ideological-political programmes as long as they agreed on the GSF's Charter of Principles and the World Social Forum's Charter of Principles.[7] The list of organizations added up to a diverse assembly of actors: *Ekosofen* (ecosophically inspired organization), *Attac Sweden/Gothenburg*, *Internationalen* (a newspaper connected to a local Socialist Party), *Studenter mot Krig* (Students against War), *IKFF* or *Internationella kvinnor för fred* (Swedish section of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, WILPF), *ISM* or *International Solidarity Movement*, *Arbetarmakt* (Workers' Power), *Revolution* (socialist revolutionary youth association), *Exil Filmfestival* (a film festival called "Exile"), *Iranska Kvinnoföreningen* (Iranian Women's Movement), and many more. The open e-mail list used by the GSF was also registered to an e-mail list used by Swedish social forum-organizers on the national level and an e-mail list used on the European level focusing on the European Social Forum-organization. This generated a large flow of information through the GSF-e-mail list.

Generally speaking, e-mail lists can be moderated, which means that one or several individuals control incoming messages sent to the distributor-address approving further distribution. This means that there is a control mechanism supervising distribution of messages to subscribers registered on such e-mail lists. The GSF-e-mail list was close to non-moderated, even though a low degree of control of incoming and outgoing content characterized the network. Being an open access e-mail list meant little or no control over content, a feature that offers interesting characteristics regarding what kind of acts

these information-technology systems afford its users. It was possible to post messages, either as a reply to previous posts or as a new message with a new subject headline. One could reply to messages using the e-mail list either reply personally to the actual e-mail address used by a person posting a message to the e-mail list or reply directly to individual organizations. The registered user address was visible in the program-display on the computer screen while using the e-mail list, which provided an opportunity for direct reply to the e-mail address that sent the message or contributed with a post to the list. It was possible to send regular texts or patched-in texts, links, attached files or documents, protocols, and articles (some of them were stored inside the message for a longer period of time). A user could include parts of a text, for example parts of a message used for quotation in a reply or a complete new message. E-mail lists, like the ones used by the GSF, were actually hybrids made out of e-mail lists used for distribution of messages to registered users, and Internet-forums, so called Web-mail applications.[8] It was a web-application that supported ongoing discussions and negotiations, and was used for posting user-produced content. As a user a person or organization could choose between receiving e-mail delivery in a synchronized manner, weekly delivery or by visiting the shared e-mail list inbox: the digital storage.

Organizing – Threads and Focal Points

Internet-forums and e-mail lists such as the GSF-list are spaces on the Internet where people, groups and organizations can send messages, and later on these are exposed in an open manner to the totality of subscribers to such spaces. Within such spaces users are able to read visualized messages and their subjects, "headings" or titles by means of the program interface and choose to open any one of these. Messages on the GSF-list were organized in forms of "*threads*" or, rather, message-threads. When subjects (i.e. the title of the message that you send to an e-mail list) heading reply-messages were presented underneath the originally posted message, a "thread" of traceable discussions, communications or conversations was constructed. These threads could serve as units for the list-moderator (one or several activists from the "organizing-group" within the GSF-network) for organizing or distributing communications, or as points of reference for other users. For example, such threads contained information about decisions, goals, rules or purposes for the use of the e-mail lists. I will give an example of a thread displaying a discussion regarding the GSF's call for participation-letter, or to be more precise, the size of the files used for distributing this letter on the e-mail list. The "thread effect" is revealed as similar ingresses repetitively "heading" added messages posted as replies to previous ones, thus creating a nested thread of messages (figure 1). The excerpt is consciously kept in the original Swedish language because it does not diminish the value of the visualized *thread effect* emerging from these posted messages. I am particularly interested in analyzing materially constructed communications, and therefore, do not use the source material for detecting semiotic content within this thread:

Several individuals participated during the discussion and by this thread effect a linear text mass formed out of messages following each other. A perfect overview of conversations was constructed. In the article *Artifacts rule! How organizing happen in open source projects* Lanzara and Morner (2005) write about how threads of discussions and negotia-

inbjudningarna mm inbjudningarna mm Hej! Tack för de kommentarer till inbjudningsbrevet som jag fått. Jag snackade med några (de jag hade telefon nummer till) i programgruppen och vi beslöt...	person@epostadress	Feb 7, 2004 8:28 pm
Re: inbjudningarna mm Re: inbjudningarna mm Hej! Jag tog just emot inbjudan till "organisation.web" och måste komma med några invändningar vad gäller utskicket. Mailet inkl. de bifogade filerna är 135 kb...	person@epostadress	Feb 8, 2004 1:01 pm
Re: inbjudningarna mm Re: inbjudningarna mm Hej! Jag instämmer. Jag kunde inte öppna de bifogade filerna. (Är det samma intresseanmälan-blankett som delades ut på mötet, fast med ny deadline? I...	person@epostadress	Feb 8, 2004 8:11 pm
Re: inbjudningarna mm Re: inbjudningarna mm Hej! Trodde inte att 135 kb var såpass mycket att det ställde till problem (jag har en rätt stor mailbox själv vilket gör attt jag ofta glömmer bort att...	person@epostadress	Feb 8, 2004 9:40 pm
Re: inbjudningarna mm Re: inbjudningarna mm ... From: Person To: GSFlistan Listan Sent: Sunday, February 08, 2004 9:40 PM Subject: Re: Re: Re: [GSFlistan] inbjudningarna mm Hej! Trodde inte att 135 kb...	person@epostadress	Feb 8, 2004 11:17 pm
Re: inbjudningarna mm Re: inbjudningarna mm Jag tycker inbjudningar ska gå till följande organisationer också (om jag anger två adresser, skicka till bägge) organisation avd 1 ordförande x...	person@epostadress	Feb 10, 2004 1:25 pm

1. Computer screen shot displaying the construction of organizing-threads.[9]

tions anchor people's attention, focusing on a particular subject or problem. They argue that this actually characterizes open, co-operative and collective projects such as the GSF. This feature is clearly depicted in the figure above. They name such threads of discussions "*focal points*", whilst focusing on technological affordances that assist organizing collective efforts and human attention (Lanzara & Morner 2005:71). Such focal points directed attention among users towards a reduced number of objects and this in turn condensed the total sum of variation. As an effect collective attention steered towards certain problems or questions during organizing. Pre-programmed functions designed for communication steer our perceptions and direct users' attention (focal points). This affected the GSF in the way that individuals could choose to participate in ongoing deliberations while reading messages. Several individuals could add new posts to such threads, thus adding arguments and perspectives. The excerpt above presents a discussion about the file-size used for distributing attached files on the e-mail list, and led to adjustments according to user's demands for smaller files. If member organizations couldn't read the attached files containing information and the call for invitation-letter, they couldn't possibly follow ongoing organizational work. Thus, it would have been to actively exclude parts of the network-members to make use of

too large files. And, that kind of actions did not go together with GSF's norms, such as openness, previously inscribed in the Charter of Principles. Consequently, pre-programmed technological capacities help steer attention towards collective issues by coupling together technology and a social network of e-mail list users.

Network Transparency and the Ethics of Sharing Information

It was of great importance that participant member organizations of the GSF had access to up to date information, and preparatory work became a lot easier through habitual incorporation of the decentralized technical network. It was always possible for participant organizations to get access to updated information, for example last minute changes by the forum-organizers on the scheduled forum-timetable, either through direct communication with organizers or visits to the e-mail list and the GSF website:

Reply: [GSF-list] the Programme-schedule and next preparatory-group meeting: how do you enter?

Hi
Excuse one ignorant computer-geek; how do you enter the [anonymous...] group-site to read the programme-file?[10]
[Anonymous activist name]

Hi!
Tomorrow at 18 pm the preparatory-group (programme) will meet at Världshuset and an additionally added meeting for last minute changes before the programme is sent for printing are made. The programme is available at the [anonymous...] group-site for everyone to read (the file is too large to be distributed on the e-mail list). Caution that the available file is not the final programme, we are still making changes, for example there is text missing and pages will be in another order. But, all in all everything is in there. When the programme is complete it will be on the web-site. Printed programmes will be ready approximately next week.

2. Excerpt from e-mail list displaying digital communication regarding availability of information in the GSF-network (my translation).

In order to make essential information about organization-work easily accessible to the totality of organizations connected to the GSF-network, the e-mail lists and their "group-functions" were used analogously to a suggestion board.[11] They were used by member organizations for submitting suggestions for presentations during the forum-events and to increase overall transparency in the GSF. They afforded the GSF-network members documents for downloading and therefore ensured organizers that everyone had access to shared resources. Also, prior to meetings interactions between organizers and participant organizations were pre-arranged through the use of e-mail lists, a feature made visible within the communication-sequence presented in the excerpt above. Consequently, if the whole of the GSF-network collectively took part of the same information, it made it a lot easier for making last minute changes, for instance in preparations before meetings. The organizers continuously published document and texts that affected the whole of the network, and in the excerpt below (figure 3) one of the organizers reassures member organizations that several important documents were available for downloading. Interestingly, the organizer also guides other users in how to find specific information and which documents that had recently been updated:

Hi!
I have compiled call for participation letters, the Charter of Principles, and the document for filing interest for participation on the [anonymous...] group-site. Also, I have compiled samples for funding-applications that

[anonymous activist] distributed. All of them are in rft-format. Previously the Charter of Principles, the call for participation letters, and the document for filing interest for participation were available in pdf-format. You will find the files under Files-menu on the left. The web-address to the GSF-group site is http://groups.[anonymous].com/group/GSF

Regards,
[Anonymous GSF-organizer/e-mail list-moderator]

3. Excerpt from e-mail message highlighting forum-organizers' attempts to make important documents and other text-files available to GSF-members (my translation).

This means that the documents were available for downloading by paying a visit to the GSF website (www.gbgsocialaforum.se) or the e-mail list webmail account, and they were mass-distributed via e-mail messages to every GSF-network member organization. Transparency and availability were core values in the GSF during preparatory work and strongly associated to the ideal of openness. This was expressed through organizing-practice; the distribution of important documents and information about progressions in organizational and preparatory work, continuous updating of information on how to become a participant member organization and how member organizations and individuals were supposed to act according to the networks Charter of Principles etc. The use of e-mail lists for increasing transparency-value came about through distributing protocols from meetings and the forum-organizers were keen on reminding each other that such protocols were distributed throughout the network:

I have said it before and I say it again, do not forget to distribute calls to meetings and protocols from meetings on the large list, the GSF-list@... Otherwise it's not possible for them [i.e. member organizations] to know what's going on... [...]

Apropos "the GSF-organizing group e-mail list" [anonymous]; It would be practical if one of you who are located in Gothenburg also was the list-moderator, then you could add new members [...] (another reason for using the large e-mail list, since I easily forget to add people, and new members of the organizing group won't know about the next meeting if we don't use the large list...) Tell me who/whom it's going to be and I'll fix it!

See you!
[Anonymous GSF-organizer]

4. Excerpt from e-mail message where one of the forum-organizers reminds other organizers of the necessary work of distributing such protocols for maintaining network-transparency (my translation).

Transparency within the GSF-process was an emergent property. It developed through continuous updating of documents and the ethics of sharing information: organization-manuals, protocols covering meeting procedures and decision-making negotiations, and this made it possible for the singular participant to be updated with relevant information and informed on the overall progression of the network organization. Also, this feature was further increased as a prominent network-property emerging out of critical self evaluation among the most actively engaged forum-organizers, reflecting on their positions within the organization and the work that they put into the GSF. *Legitimacy* was tightly knit together with the practice of sharing information and making sure that every node of the network had access to information. We can see this in the excerpt presented above, as one of the forum-organizer activists puts extra weight on the importance of distributing information for the whole network to read. These features characterized several conversations among core-activists [organizers] at preparatory meetings that I visited; the sharing of information and critical self evaluation among forum-organizers (Hansson

2008:223ff.). It was part of the stabilization of the GSF-network and expressed in easily accessible information about who to contact for instructions or help, how to get in contact if you were interested in participating during the GSF-events, and the GSF-network's internal organizational responsibilities. In the excerpt below (figure 5) one of the forum-organizers explains that they are in the process of building the new website and how it is supposed to function as a tool in the collective production of the GSF-event in 2005:

> We are currently in the process of building the new website. It will be a tool in the production of GSF 2005 [i.e. the forum-event] and to keep you updated on the GSF as well as the overall Social Forum-process. At present we are updating documents as the Charter of Principles, call for participation applications and call for participation-letter. Furthermore, we are trying to work out an organization-plan and a comprehensible blueprint for differentiations of work- and responsibility within the GSF, so that it will be easier to figure out what needs to be done and who's supposed to do it. In this way we hope we will be able to be more efficient and to increase transparency, and to make it easier for those of you who would like to be engaged in the preparations before the GSF 2005 event. Every document will be available on the new website, hopefully launched before next year, and they will be distributed on the e-mail list when ready. It is our wish to introduce them to you at the upcoming meeting.

5. Distributed e-mail message from the forum-organizers on the GSF-list containing information about the new website (my translation).

The property of network-transparency, an assessment expressed both in words and action, became a prominent feature of the GSF and as always, it is a lot easier to express something in linguistic form rather than by concerted action and mutual support.

Collective Intelligence in Networks: the Production of Main Themes and Many-to-many Communication

The e-mail lists were activated during collective processes of document revision and consultations for production of common "main themes" or political demands (i.e. "*justice*" and "*welfare*"). These themes or demands were later used as mobilization-tools, possibly attracting political organizations not yet part of the GSF-network (Hansson 2008). Such processes actualized a collective intelligence involving the sum total of GSF-members. On these occasions ideas were distributed among GSF-members and suggestions were shared horizontally throughout the network. Such processes incited a feedback process: e-mail lists made possible continuous articulation and re-articulation of various issues and problems that organizers and participant member organizations specifically needed to address during the forum-events. And, decisions were made based on collectively produced information:

> Regarding this year's main theme for the forum there is a proposal that was up for discussion during the last meeting. It boils down to try to put together a positive theme and to focus this year's forum around the welfare-issue, and to shed light upon this issue from various angles. That way we can debate issues such as health care, public transport and the situation on the housing market, all of these are issues that are still on people's minds and connected to welfare as well as questions on justice. Also, we could connect to issues such as workers' rights and union rights (very significant issues right now!) and global processes such as peace and social change. Simply put such a theme could be Welfare-Peace-Change, or something along these lines. We think such a theme would be specific enough, and at the same time it provides opportunity for many issues to be brought up. More on this at the next meeting! If you can't participate, but still have opinions on this, send them to us on info@...

(Distributed e-mail message from the forum-organizers on the GSF-list)

6. Excerpt from e-mail message containing a summary of previous discussions on the GSF's annual "main thematic" (my translation).

Thus, e-mail lists made it possible for the GSF-network to constantly reformulate issues, to include new commentaries and ideas in a collaborative co-production of themes within a networked sociality that effectively originated from connections with decentralized technology in this context; "many-to-many" communication. References to previous themes and issues in the excerpt above inform about updates of such features and that they were re-articulated to 1) suite newcomers or new members to the GSF-network, 2) focus on current political events and 3) potentially have a mobilizing effect, increasing the number of members in the network. Electronically supported decentralized communication and interaction worked hand in hand with face-to-face routines such as regular meetings. The two levels of interaction worked synergistically, adding to a durable form of communication.

Network Links

The coupling together of network-members and registering them on the GSF-list created a network whose strength was measurable by how fast and effectively news could travel the network, and the potentially large number of organizations getting access to the information. This logic was exemplified by a co-arranged meeting between local social movement organizations and *Göteborgs Folkhögskola* (Gothenburg's Folk High School), where students and organizations could exchange experiences and knowledge, and there was a scheduled session for questions for the students interested in these organizations:

Hi!
I would like to invite the GSF to our school, Gothenburg's Folk High School, October the 26th. [...] the purpose is for the students to get in contact with associations and subjects that they could get involved with. I have also invited Attac, Amnesty, Ofog [civil disobedience group], Women's International Peace Organization, and a couple of others. Hopefully questions about power relations between State, market and the civil society will come up. Our plan is for the students to ask questions and take a tour around the invited organizations, and after lunch we will split up into smaller groups and deepen discussions. The actual form is not finished. Have a good one!
[Anonymous]
I would be grateful if you replied before long
Sunny regards
[Anonymous 070-cellphone number]
Hi!
The IKFF [Swedish section of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom] is happy to join in! Get in touch and inform us on the time and place and what we are supposed to do! Regards [Anonymous] The Gothenburg group/IKFF telephone number: 031-[...]

7. Excerpt from communications on the e-mail list regarding invitations for a co-arranged meeting (my translation).

Novel opportunities for collaborations, such as the one in the excerpt presented above, or invitations to participate during seminars, organized political events and various dialogues were frequently posted on the GSF-list. In this way the GSF-network repetitively organized, in a distributed manner linking diverse actors, sequences of messages and information being sent between senders and receivers. Thus, the e-mail lists connected persons and groups, but also disconnected them from the totality of Internet users, and specific issues or subjects were focused or narrowed down. At the same time as e-mail lists introduced users to a large variety of views and masses of information, they filtered and re-arranged the available chaotic information on the Internet. Selection processes like these produce

segmented islands of information, with links reaching from different external web-sites, news-groups, and other e-mail lists, sorted by interest or by theme. Specific information was distributed to the GSF-list from various sites: the Swedish Social Forum-e-mail list (an e-mail list for organizers on the national level), and the European Social Forum-e-mail list, mainly from the local forum-organizers distributing information concerning the Social Forum-process on national and regional levels. The GSF e-mail lists thus organized information and usage (i.e. actualization or meaning) of Internet-distributed material through the coupling together of the two processes: 1) circulation of information and 2) circulation of interpretations and evaluations from locally, nationally and globally dispersed political organizations. The flow of information was not limited to a local Gothenburg context, but expanded and contracted in a stretched out global frame of reference. There was a mixture of concrete Gothenburg-located activities (i.e. seminars, events, days of action and dialogues), and "virtual" forms of engagements, such as the example presented below about a report on the situation on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. This message spread between organizations in Sweden and the GSF-e-mail list was one of many information channels reproducing this message (figure 8):

spread please!
Salamat,
So finally some news about the Naher El-Bared attacks, the situation is extremly urgent for the people in the refugee camp and for those who are becoming refugees once again.. a long list of urgent needs was provided by the Naher El Bared Relief Campaign and is ATTACHED to this e-mail. Please help raise donations or send supplies. A quick note that Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are not suffering the islamic militias repression and violence, but also the violence andracism of the Lebanese society. Urgent support and help is needed.Electronic Lebanon http://electronicintifada.net/lebanon/Nahr El Bared blog http://www.nahrelbared.info/Nahr El Bared Relief Campaign http://nahrelbareddonations.blogspot.com/By 23/5/2007:a. 25 Palestinian civilians killed, 250 injured (80% civilians)b. No possibility to enter the camp. Evacuation of civilians is underprocess.c. 200 houses destroyed (either partially or totally)d. UNRWA clinics are closed, no medical attention available.e. Around 1157 families displaced on 23/5/2007

In solidarity and rage,!-Mad (http://[anonym].yahoo.com/group/GSF-listan/message/591) Sun May 27, 2007 1:39 pm

8. Excerpt displaying a distributed e-mail message that was copied, reproduced and distributed on the GSF-list and other computer supported e-mail lists, containing information on the situation of refugees in Lebanon (English in original).

At the same time as this text was distributed on the GSF-list it circulated on, among other sites, http://www.kibush.co.il/show_file.asp?num=20191 (26th of May 2007) and on the global alternative media network *Indymedia* (http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2007/05/371686.html 27.05.2007 14:34).[12] The text was distributed via the *Indymedia* network by an organization called *Queers Without Borders* and commented on another initiative called the *Nahr el-Bared Relief Campaign* which was a petition for supporting refugees and people in need in Lebanon. The information-routes and the circulation of messages between dispersed nodes: news media, groups, individuals and organizations that circulated information across territorial borders, mirrored the emergence of a decentralized self-referencing organization of information. Reports and translations of globally distributed texts materialized into what geographer Manuel Castells has described as an emergent global network society (1998). Such processes operated as selection

processes, thus prescribing materials for specific users or subscribers. Anthropologist Jeff Juris (2005) has written extensively on how the Internet has changed the conditions for political activity and argues that global social justice movements be categorized as "*computer-supported social movements*":

> Despite the shrinking yet formidable digital divide, the Internet facilitates global connectedness, even as it strengthens local ties within neighborhoods and households leading to increasing "Glocalization" (Wellman 2001, 236; cf. Robertson 1995). Similar trends can also be detected at the level of political activity, where Internet use – including e-mail lists, interactive Web pages, and chat rooms – has facilitated new patterns of social engagement. Anti-corporate globalization movements thus belong to a particular class of CSSN [computer supported social networks, min anm.]: *computer-supported social movements.* Using the Internet as technological architecture, such movements operate at local, regional, and global levels, while activists move back and forth between online and offline political activity (Juris 2005:191).

Notes on a Political Actor-network, Network Politics Online and Information

The GSF was installed as an information-disseminator, information-producer and a political network with preferences for specific patterns of information. Movement-specific and self-produced information were preordained to attain wide-ranging dissemination to the largest extent possible among member-activists and organizations within the GSF, and as such the GSF repetitively organized meetings between senders of information and its receivers. This process was reliant on the signal to reach its destination and that the contact between sender and receiver could be kept intact and not drowned out by interfering noise such as spam mail or simply too much information (Hansson 2008). In short, this amounts to a feedback loop: the circulation of information and the circulation of meaning-production, including information technology (computers, cables, modems, infrastructure, and bandwidth) and users (activist subjects, human agents) collectively enabling the common production of information.

In this article I have presented how these actors were mobilized to function together constituting an actor-network for distribution of extra parliamentary or social movements' information, supporting organizational work and meaning-production. For this purpose I made use of concepts worked out in the language of Actor-Network Theory and the ontology of networks. I have analyzed the role of information technology, as an actor, in network politics. On several instances Bruno Latour has dubbed the constituting parts of actor-networks *actants* in order to try to get rid of the dominating role given to human actors, often portrayed as the only active parts of socio-technological systems (Akrich & Latour 1992). Instead of stipulating acting capabilities to human agents only, often in the form of human agency, we can write about *actancy* (*actant agency*), thus giving "voice" to different but never the less really existing forms of agency in a somewhat more horizontal manner.

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Notes

1 Parts of the content in this article is further developed in my Ph.D. dissertation "*Nätverkspolitik – organisering, öppenhet och kontroll i Göteborgs Sociala Forum-process 2003–2005*" (2008).

2 Latour's analysis of texts as parts of actor-networks is developed, for example, in his book about Pasteur, *The Pasteurization of France* (1988).

3 Processes that stabilize or *translate* heterogenuous actors into convergence (linking together or ordering previously non-related entities) are called "translation" processes within Actor-Network Theory. It is a translation whereby actor A translates its goals, inscriptions or agenda by forcing actor B to act according to A:s' prescriptions and co-act in stabilizing the actor-network. It's a non-reductionist micro-power analysis focusing on small scale translations that make possible large scale actors and stable structures.

4 The PGA or People's Global Action is a political action network that has played a signifiant role in coordinating and mobilizing protests against economic and political summits around the world, such as the protests against the WTO (World Trade Organization) in Seattle in 1999.

5 The Gothenburg Action 2001 was one out of two activist-networks that organized demonstrations during the EU-summit in Gothenburg 2001.

6 "The Forum South gather 205 Swedish organizations working internationally with solidarity aid and mobilizing public opinon on global issues. Among the member-organizations are popular movements but also small associations organized by idealist forces." (http://www.forumsyd.org/, 2008-04-28) The Forum South focuses its efforts on North-South collaborations and different kinds of solidarity work. Member-orgnizations are for example Attac, Africa Groups, World Shops (Fair Trade), TWIGA, International Workers' Team, Färnebo Folk High School and many more.

7 The most important ideas directing the social forums or the social forum-process were dictated in the Charter of Principles, for example the work against militarism, a neo-liberal world order, sexism, racism, and homophobia. Also, issues such as the economy, the environment and peace, and the internal forum organizational structure were elaborated in the Charter of Principles.

8 Web-mail is a web-application that provides users with opportunities to write and read e-mail on the Internet using a web-surfer program, for example the Internet Explorer web-surfer program.

9 One of the referees has questioned the value of the excerpt presented as Figure 1, arguing that it was unnecessary to use the excerpt in the text because it didn't really add anything to my argument in this section. My defense is that I present this computer screen shot in a similar way that ethnographers make use of interview-excerpts: in order to produce transparent texts and analyses, and to allow their empirical data to have a say or "voice" in the presentation. The shot sheds light upon the active participation of technologies in shaping and aiding the ordering of social communications developing over time. It draws on the insights of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), and in particular the claim that non-human "actants" play important organizing roles in structuring social knowledge (Latour 2005). Technology is understood as a *mediator* and *modulator* of social communication, not a sterile object without agential power. Like buildings, a website or e-mail list is active mediators of experiences and practices. They need to be ethnographically available to readers and to ethnographers as methodologically stimulating graphics, and in order to further the development of ethnography of non-humans, being present in text. Everything that enters into an actor-network redistributes the whole set of relations between the active elements. Thus, by adding this computer screen shot the ethnography of human interaction and communication is supplemented by the present masses (a large part of the article focuses on these usually missing masses), and the ethnography of non-human actors enters the textual presentation. The ordering of interactive space was dependent on this particular technological contribution.

10 On several occasions I have consciously left out the real names of activists- and organizers, and put in the word "anonymous" instead. This includes other sensitive data, for instance the real name of the e-mail list provider used in the GSF.

11 The name of the web-application is kept anonymous in the text. It was a commercial web-application providing free group-e-mail accounts, e-mail lists and private e-mail services, for example services for registered users to set up e-mail lists and share a common inbox space.

12 Kibush was presented in the following manner: "The Occupation Magazine was established in October 2004 by a group of Israeli anti-occupation activists who were disturbed by the growing discrepancy between the grim reality which they observed in the Occupied Territories , and the way in which it was (and is) reported in the main stream media. The ongoing colonization policy in the Occupied Territories is being misrepresented by the Israeli and US media as "fight against terror" and a "struggle for Israel's existence / security". This is while in reality, the colonization policies promote terror, and endanger the future of both nations in this country. The aim of this website is to provide information and commentary on the ongoing developments in the Occupied Territories in Hebrew and English. The Editors of the Occupation Magazine represent a range of opinions as to the optimal solution for

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, we are united in the belief that a viable solution must be based on the unconditional end to the Israeli military occupation, and on principles of equality, justice and mutual respect." (http://www.kibush.co.il/about.asp?lang=1 20080110) Thus, Kibush was an alternative media initiative for disseminating and production of news on the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

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Stockholm's Urban Social Movements

A Study of Change, Political Influence and Global Connections

By Ulf Stahre

Social movements act in societies that are now heavily affected by global flows and influences, and this has consequences for democracy.[1] Globalization is not a new phenomenon, but the processes are now faster and more powerful than ever before in history. International contacts have increased in scope, as is also reflected in the latest development of social movements. Generally speaking, the global openness and especially the new information technology have led to greater understanding across borders, although in some respects there has also been a growth in antagonisms, particularly in the wake of the conflicts in the Middle East. When viewed in a longer perspective, however, we see that different affinities arise across national boundaries. Some of them follow a long historical tradition by being based on ethnicity or religion, as global diasporas. Others build instead on new social formations, exemplified by international bureaucrats, businessmen, and technologists, by professional sportsmen, musicians, and entertainers, by international criminals and drug dealers, and by young globetrotters and activists. Great importance has accrued to the new international economic, political, and technological elite, whose interests are more global than national or local. Moreover, the interests of present-day social movements have become increasingly international. This development leads to shifts in loyalties, identities, and ties to place, but also to the rise of a new international and global political repertoire. The prolongation of the development towards increased international loyalties can be discerned as the rise of an alternative global civil society, as a more stable counterweight to the economic and political globalization than the hitherto turbulent protests of the social movements.[2] In a global and globalized perspective, the traditional policies of nation-bound parties can then be confronted with a new global civil society focusing on the world and with completely different values than those based on national loyalties (cf. Cohen & Rai 2000:13ff.).

This whole development leads to problems for traditional democracy. In his major work on the information age and the network society, Manuel Castells writes about what he calls the crisis of democracy (Castells 2004:402ff.). He argues that political democracy, as it was perceived by the liberal revolutions of the nineteenth century and spread to the whole world in the twentieth century, has now become an empty shell. The existing party system and the current competitive system have become antiquated mechanisms for political representation in the network society. But there are positive tendencies towards a new democratic development, according to Castells. The international political mobilization on humanitarian issues is one of the strongest proactive and mobilizing factors of "informational" politics. Humanitarian issue arouse broad consensus and are not necessarily linked to specific political parties.

For today's social movements, the democracy issue is of crucial significance. The sociologist Alberto Melucci and the political scientist Leonardo Avritzer have asserted in an article that if democracy in complex pluralistic societies is to retain its legitimacy it must take on new forms (Melucci & Avritzer 2000). Here social movements offer an important alternative. By spreading information and exerting pressure on decision-making bodies, the movements challenge the decision-making process and question conventional solutions. Examples from the eastern USA show how the participation of environmental movements in decision-making led to highly varied solutions to environmental problems, very different

from the usually inflexible solutions of bureaucracy. The authors say that this shows how movements break the compatibility between a complex society and political representation, since they so obviously challenge the consequences of limiting participation in decisions on complex issues.

Special conditions prevail in big cities, setting their stamp on the urban social movements that act there. An important factor for understanding these movements is the transformation of the cities in the last fifty years. Modernistic large-scale urban construction and other transformations of society have created metropolises that have radically changed urban life. This is the theme of the book by the French sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre, *Le droit à la ville* (*The Right to the City*) which has attracted considerable attention since it was first published in 1968. The Swedish translation came much later (1982). The book, palpably influenced by the Zeitgeist prevailing around 1968, raised the question of local democracy and the influence of the inhabitants on the design of the city. It was written against the background of contemporary developments in cities, above all Paris, where a growing proportion of the population were directed towards the suburbs and separated and alienated from the traditional inner-city neighbourhoods. *The Right to the City* was a political manifesto and a contribution to the public debate, in which the radical Lefebvre criticized the ongoing development and asserted the right of ordinary people to the city and to urban life. Here Lefebvre meant the right to *appropriate* urban space, that is, the inhabitants' right to full use of the city, and the right to *participate* in the production of urban space, that is the inhabitants' right to take part in decisions concerning the city. In later works Lefebvre elaborated on his philosophical analysis of contemporary cities, especially their spatial forms. His theses are still highly relevant in our day and have received new attention in community planning and research (e.g. Mitchell 2003; Purcell 2003, 2006). The relevance of Lefebvre's works was dramatically displayed once again through the youth riots in the suburbs of big French cities in the autumn of 2005.

There has been extensive research on present-day social movements, chiefly in political science and sociology. This is also the case in Sweden and the other Nordic countries. In Swedish and Nordic ethnology it is not very prominent as a research field, which is unfortunate since the close-up perspective that characterizes much of ethnology is largely absent from the extensive literature on social movements. In Sweden there are only two doctoral dissertations in ethnology about present-day social movements: my own *Den alternativa staden* about residents' associations in Stockholm 1968–1980 (1999) and Niklas Hansson's *Nätverkspolitik* about the Gothenburg Social Forum (2008). In Norway the ethnologist Connie Reksten Kapstad has written the dissertation *Når handling tar plass* about the actions of the Norwegian environmental movement against a gas-power station (2001).

Other works that may be mentioned are Veronica Abnersson's licentiate thesis on veganism and animal rights, *Djurrättsveganism* (2004), Maria Zackariasson's book *Viljan att förändra världen*, about groups in the Global Justice Movement (2006), and my studies of Stockholm's new movements (Stahre 2004a, 2004b, 2007, 2009). A dissertation about historical Swedish movements is Fredrik Nilsson's *I rörelse: Politisk handling under 1800-talets första hälft*, which demonstrates how information technology has given movements greater potential (Nilsson 2000).

Against this background, the present article aims to examine the emergence of different social movements in Stockholm, their composition and changed circumstances. Ever since the end of the 1960s, movements have acted in different periods against the ongoing transformation of Stockholm. The conflicts have concerned a range of issues which have varied through time. The movements have also differed from each other in various respects, reflecting changes in time. The new information technology with the Internet, new forms of networking, and globalization processes have been of crucial significance, in various ways, for the development.

Stockholm's Urban Movements

In Western Europe at the end of the 1960s, a wave of conflicts arose about the rationalistic urban construction of the time with its radical transformations of cities and large-scale new housing estates (cf. Köhler & Wissen 2003). Counter-movements were formed by young people with alternative lifestyles and values, or through cooperation among the residents of the affected areas. In Germany "Bürgerinitiative" of this kind become the core of the German Green Party, "Die Grünen". In Denmark their counterpart was the form of residents' associations known as "beboergrupper". In Sweden the equivalent in Stockholm, "byalagsrörelsen", became the biggest movement attracting the most attention. These urban movements were supported and propelled by the wave of radicalization and new social movements that was sweeping over the Western world at this time.

The neoliberal urban policy that had such a widespread impact in the Western world during the 1980s and 1990s changed the circumstances. The policy was now geared to promoting the local economy and creating attractive cities which could succeed in the international competition for investments. This led to more or less far-reaching restructuring of urban structures and investment in megaprojects and major events as part of the marketing. Urban policy also meant that welfare systems were increasingly eroded and private actors were engaged in public service (cf. Mayer 2000). Socio-economic and spatial polarization and segregation were the consequence in the big cities of the West.

This development had the result that urban conflicts changed, becoming more complex and focusing on new things. Existing urban movements consequently changed while new and different movements arose (Mayer 1999, 2003). In Western Europe these movements mainly acted against the new competitive urban policy. The movements had a variety of goals: to counteract growth or gentrification, to protect urban environments, to safeguard special interests, and to counteract initiatives for festivals and mega-events. The many different kinds of movements also showed that not all movements were that progressive. There were locally based groups with distinctly xenophobic elements. Another focus for present-day movements was the erosion of the welfare state. It was not uncommon to see affected categories of people becoming active, such as the new poor and the homeless. They often received support from autonomous and anti-racist movements, from churches, charity organizations, and even some public bodies.

Today's urban movements are much more differentiated than yesterday's, just as the present-day global urban structure, especially in the West, is much more differentiated than before. Cities that are now at the top of the global hierarchy have other movements today than the big factory cities from the days of industrialism, which are now being de-industrialized and are

seeking new positions in the urban system. As cities become increasingly complex, today's diversity of urban movements also becomes more composite and contradictory. Today's urban conflicts are enacted against the background of a complex structure of institutions, organizations, and actors, which shape conflicts, especially in globalized cities, in very specific ways (cf. Hamel *et al.* 2000).

The urban field comprises a broad spectrum of movements. Today's urban systems and new forms of urban policy also provoke antagonisms between movements. Movements can express both progressive and conservative demands as to how the city should be shaped. In addition, there can be diametrically opposed claims as to *whose city* it should be. There are international examples of how groups engaged in urban renewal and the preservation of urban neighbourhoods have conflicted with "autonomous" groups and squatters protesting against urban renewal and gentrification (Mayer 1999:230).

An important factor for the formation and development of the urban movements is that the big metropolises enable the growth of a *critical mass*, which is essential if movement cultures are to be built up and collective projects and identities are to be formed (Mayer 2000:151). In the big cities there are cultural structures that facilitate these processes in the form of political and non-profit organizations, cultural institutions, universities, media, creative environments and meeting places, protest traditions, etc. An interesting and significant example of how vigorous movement cultures can be built up is Italy's social centres (cf. Maggio 1998). Many of them arose through house occupations, which were later more or less accepted by society. They have developed into places where economic, social, and cultural alternatives to the established society are free to play. Italy's social centres have become an important infrastructure for protests against economic globalization and an international source of inspiration for radical groups of an anarchistic character, such as Globalization From Below in Stockholm.

In Stockholm a decidedly urban movement arose very quickly in 1968, mostly as a reaction to the radical reconstruction of the inner city that was in progress at the time. The movement of residents' associations (*byalagsrörelsen*) had all the typical characteristics of the new movements of the sixties (Stahre 1999). The strange thing about the movement was that it succeeded in gathering such broad categories of people of different ages and with differing political opinions. The core of the groups, however, consisted of young left-wing activists, often students or academics. The movement's ideology and vision of an *alternative city* included demands for a more "human" and less commercial urban environment with limited motor traffic and increased citizen participation in the transformation of the city. Cooperation and community between the inhabitants of different parts of the city were important elements in the ideology.

The movement enjoyed considerable success at first and even garnered international attention through the struggle over a group of elms in Kungsträdgården in 1971, when the workers who had started felling the trees were stopped by an angry crowd. The battle of the elms achieved broad public support and was a turning point in the transformation of the city. Other important victories were that the movement's protests helped to stop some major road-construction projects in the inner city. An economic decline in the first half of the 1970s led to a change in course for the redevelopment of the city centre. The most controversial projects were abandoned.

To what extent the actions of the movement contributed to this is difficult to assess. The movement came to an end around 1980, at a time when there no longer seemed to be any more threats to the urban environment.

The residents' associations were clearly influenced by the spirit of the time, with its radicalization, internationalization, and powerful new movements. In other respects it was a very Swedish movement. The organization was inspired in major respects by the form in which peasant villages used to organize cooperation, the *byalag*, which also gave the movement its name. With these traditions as a foundation, the residents' movement aimed to establish similar cooperation among the inhabitants of the city's neighbourhoods, blocks, and buildings. The visions of cooperation, of a sense of neighbourhood and community, were never realized except to a limited extent. An important activity for the movement, however, was the communal celebration of Christmas, which appealed to all citizens under names like "Alternative Christmas", "Community Christmas", or "Neighbourhood Christmas".

The new movements of the 1960s, such as the residents' associations, undoubtedly had an influence on society and politics in Sweden, although it is not entirely easy to assess their significance. It is possible, however, to point out some concrete changes when it comes to increased citizen influence. In 1976 a new law was passed about codetermination in certain decisions in private and public organizations. Decisions on matters of urban construction were regulated in a similar way, especially in a new Planning and Building Act. The right to participate in planning and to appeal against decisions was now extended to tenants.

A palpable result of the environmental protests in Stockholm was that no thoroughfares were either planned or built for more than fifteen years. The fact that no major roads were built during such a long time, despite the troublesome traffic situation, gave Stockholm's politicians a reputation for being passive and scared of public opinion.

The battle of the elms in May 1971 was a symbolic as well as a real turning point in the city planning. Activists climbed the trees and even slept there in order to prevent new attempts to cut the trees down. Photo: Bengt af Geijerstam.

The most significant contribution of the residents' movement in the longer term, however, was that it helped to generate greater awareness of the value of good urban environments and old buildings. In addition, the movement showed, not least through the battle of the elms, that it paid to protest. It thereby also laid the foundation for the rapid growth of the next urban movement in Stockholm.

The 1980s was a calm period. The 1990s, by contrast, was a decade filled with conflict, when the physical environment of the city was once again the focus of debate (Stahre 2004a). The

reason for this was a drive by the government and the city administration to improve the infrastructure of the Stockholm region, especially communications, that is, road and rail traffic. The guidelines were established in the large-scale "Dennis Package", an agreement between the three biggest political parties in the Stockholm region in 1991/1992. This policy can be understood against the background of the international trend towards an increasingly competitive urban policy aimed at attracting international capital in the ongoing economic and political globalization.

The new policy and the planned road and rail projects in the Stockholm region were felt by many people to be a threat to the existing cityscape and parks. A movement arose very quickly to protest against the planned transformation of the city. The rapid formation of the movement was partly due to the fact that it emanated from a large number of existing organizations. The many voluntary organizations and associations are typical feature of Swedish society and have long been an important base for local democracy (cf. Putnam 1992). In Stockholm the local organizations geared to environmental conservation and local heritage management were a particularly important platform for the movement that arose, along with a number of youth organizations, mostly political.

The scope of the urban environmental movement in the nineties, its rapid rise and vigorous actions, testified to a strong commitment. Never before in the modern history of Stockholm had so many and such different groups, organizations, and individuals been united in a joint action to change political decisions after they had been taken.

The movement clearly reflected several typical features of present-day society – fragmentation, individualization, and globalization. The movement was very heterogeneous, split into a large number of organizations differing greatly in character. According to one calculation, during the years 1992–1996 no fewer than 120 different organizations took part in the movement in one way or another (Wohlgemuth 1997). They comprised a broad spectrum, with everything from radical groups on the far left to people with an interest in preserving the cultural heritage. The diversity of the movement was also reflected in the methods, which displayed great variation, from lobbying and opinion moulding in different forms to acts of sheer sabotage. It was striking that individuals took on such prominent roles. An influential stratum had key positions in several organizations simultaneously. Some people pursued campaigns of their own through debate articles in the press or through other initiatives. Some organizations were virtually individual projects. International contacts occurred on a much larger scale than in the residents' movement, although this was mainly in left-wing and environmental groups. The international contacts in the movement were in large measure a generation issue.

After years of conflicts, the urban environmental movement of the nineties achieved concrete results through its actions. In 1997 the Social Democratic government decided to abandon some of the important roads in the Dennis Package. A changed attitude among decision makers was the direct reason for the reappraisal. What effect the movement had in changing this attitude, however, remains to be studied in detail, although it may be assumed that the movement's protests were of great significance. A written statement by one of the ministers responsible suggests this, as does the growing internal opinion against the Dennis Package among the Social Democrats in power.

In the years around the turn of the millennium, a number of new organizations were formed in Stockholm with an orientation to quite different issues (Stahre 2007). These new movements were mostly opposed to the neoliberal urban policy, which meant cutbacks in the public sector and welfare systems, while public measures were transferred to private actors through sell-offs, privatization, and outsourcing. The critique became particularly clear after 1998, when a non-socialist coalition dominated by the Conservatives came to power on the Stockholm city council, resulting in a more pronounced neoliberal urban policy. This policy was not unique for Stockholm but part of a universal development, which was now also having an increasing impact on cities in Sweden.

The most important thing in the initial phase was the network "Stockholm Not For Sale". It was founded in 1999 by about twenty organizations on the political left. The aim was to strengthen resistance to "the neoliberal change of system, which is laying the foundation for a new class society with social and ethnic segregation".[3] The general election in September 2002, however, returned the Social Democrats to power in Stockholm. This meant the start of a new policy which sought in part to regulate and neutralize the effects of the free market. As a consequence, "Stockholm Not For Sale" ceased to exist the following year.

In autumn 2001 a much more radical organization was established, "Planka.nu". They argued that public transport should be free and therefore called for a fare strike, that is, refusing to pay and instead jumping the fence (*planka* in Swedish) to get into the metro and commuter trains. A special fund was set up, using membership fees to pay the fines for people who were caught. Through time the aims of the organization were widened considerably.

The organisation Planka.nu (i.e. Jumping the Fence now) at a demonstration in Stockholm Underground March 2008. Photo from http://www.yelah.net/images

Refusing to pay fares was viewed as one stage in the purpose of making the city's communal facilities open to everyone. Despite dogged attempts, the public transport authorities were unable to stop the free riders.

During 2003 the Global Justice Movement began to act on local issues in Stockholm through "Globalization From Below", an organization with international experience. The entry of this movement had the effect that other organizations were activated too. With clear inspiration from international texts, the concept of "commons" (*allmänningar*) became something of a key word for various organizations in Stockholm – a key word with a broad meaning. According to the publication *Kampen om allmänningarna* the issue concerned "the streets, the air, knowledge, public welfare, the square, water, and the public sphere" (Alternativ stad 2004). The local commitment of Globalization From Below meant that the conflicts in Stockholm were put in an international context. Attempts were made to establish "social centres" according to the Italian model, a consequence of contacts with the "Disobbedienti" in Italy. The conference "Stockholm's Social Forum", which was held in the spring of 2004 by a large number of organizations and movements,

was a follow-up to the global and European social forums.

A remarkable and unusual group was "Husby Unite". For the first time in Stockholm, people living in a suburb dominated by immigrants began to get involved in their housing. Through protests and demonstrations in 2005 against the two dominant property owners in Husby, the movement succeeded in bringing about improvements in the housing in the area. Husby Unite displayed something new – that immigrants had now acquired a local foundation and a sense of being at home in their neighbourhood, and they were prepared to act.

A movement that caused much trouble and attention in Stockholm was "Reclaim the Streets". A closer presentation will be given later in the article.

The critical mass that is essential if movements and their cultures are to arise was undoubtedly present in Stockholm. The intensive left-wing culture around 1968 contributed to creating the mood and shaping the critical individuals who enable the rapid growth of the residents' movement. Because the movement showed that extra-parliamentary protests paid off, it engendered an important protest tradition and served as a model. The battle of the elms in 1971 stood out as the great victory over autocratic politicians. Later on, the diversity of existing organizations, groups, and dynamic individuals in Stockholm provided a foundation for the urban environmental movement of the 1990s. The groups that were creative in this movement then served in some measure as a base for new movements at the turn of the millennium. Another basis for the shaping of the more radical elements in the new movements was various groups of young anarchists in Stockholm, a source of recruitment for the action-focused parts of the new movements – the free-rider movement, the Global Justice Movement, and the movement behind the street festivals.

Compared with the residents' movement and the urban environmental movement of the nineties, the latest movements in Stockholm, with certain exceptions, have not had any success to speak of, and it is doubtful whether they ever will. The movements have nevertheless put new urban issues on the agenda and attracted new categories, chiefly young people but also in some cases immigrants. It is striking how extensive the international influences and contacts have been compared with Stockholm's earlier movements.

Cycles, Networks, and the Importance of IT

There are several links between the different movements that have succeeded each other in Stockholm ever since the end of the sixties. Research has presented different opinions about these links. The Italian sociologist Alberto Melucci's thesis is that movements have phases of mobilization and latency. When a movement is mobilized, it exposes the hidden networks that have existed latently. During phases of latency the movement lives on in everyday life, in networks of social relations, and in attempts to practise alternative lifestyles (Melucci 1992:82f., 210). The American political scientist Sidney Tarrow's somewhat different view of social movements is that they are parts of recurrent protest cycles (Tarrow 1991). In a later work Tarrow states that the peak of a protest cycle is formed by networks of activists who then sustain the movement during periods of decline. Tarrow exemplifies this with Rupp and Taylor's study of the American women's movement. After an initial active phase in the suffrage campaign, the movement was kept alive during a period

of decline until the start of the sixties through small networks in the form of personal contacts and secondary organizations (Rupp & Taylor 1987; Tarrow 1994:185).

The fact that movements are not visible need not mean that they have ceased to exist. The essence of a movement can live on in people's consciousness and values. If these values are threatened, there is a potential to remobilize the movement. The survival of networks and organizations, and the everyday practice of latent networks, can be significant for a movement in periods of decline, as Tarrow and Melucci have shown. The fact that a movement's values have made an impact on society, however, may in many cases be at least as important a factor for the survival of a movement. The fundamental values can be what persists, holding a movement together during alternating phases of visibility and invisibility. The important contribution of the residents' movement was that it fostered increased awareness of the value of good urban environments in Stockholm, which was also embraced by many in the surrounding society. This greater environmental awareness was a basis for new and revitalized movements in Stockholm, when it was felt once again that urban environments were under threat, for example, when the Dennis Package was launched.

Many of the actions mounted by today's movements have taken place in the form of organized cooperation in different kinds of networks, which is new compared with the movements of 1968, and which can be explained by the new information technology. In the urban environmental movement of the 1990s there were several such networks, of which by far the most important was the network *Ur tid är leden* – a punning rewrite of "The time is out of joint" to give "The joint is out of time", where the word meaning "joint" can also mean "thoroughfare". This network assembled about forty organizations in its most active time. *Ur tid är leden* arranged several large demonstrations against the Dennis Package and also pursued other outreaching and internal activities. What is remarkable is that the network managed to unite such different groups and organizations. Among the most active were the respectable Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, the association for cultural preservation Friends of Haga-Brunnsviken, and the anarchist youth group Social-Ecological Action.

The new movements at the turn of the millennium have also collaborated in networks. The most important network of the new movements was Stockholm Not For Sale. Stockholm's Social Forum should also be mentioned. In the Global Justice Movement, networks have been crucial for the ability to mount large-scale actions against international summits and to arrange their own mass meetings such as the social forums. People's Global Action – PGA – has been a particularly significant global network for the more radical groups. The Stockholm group Globalization From Below took part not only in the PGA but in yet another international network – North European Anticapitalist Network. Reclaim the City in Stockholm can also be regarded as part of a loose network originating in Reclaim the Streets in London.

The movement networks have differed considerably in structure and coherence. The most successful of them in the opposition to the Dennis Package – *Ur tid är leden* – had coordination with a very firm structure including working committees and its own office premises. The network was formed as what may be called a *coalition* (Tarrow 2005:163f.). The antithesis to such coalitions is a network with an extremely loose Internet-

based structure like the PGA. The networks have been strategically important because they have enabled vigorous action, such as the big demonstrations in Stockholm by *Ur tid är leden* and the large protest meetings of the Global Justice Movement at the international level. The networks have also been important by creating personal meetings and contacts between the active participants in different organizations, which was significant for the organizations' own activities and for the development of new operations at different places within the movements.

The Internet has brought about a dramatic change in the potential to transfer information and news quickly, which had a crucial impact on the actions and structure of the new movements at the turn of the millennium, especially as regards the networks. E-mail and mailing lists became important because they could rapidly convey instantaneous and comprehensive information to selected circles of activists. Virtually all the organizations in today's new movements have had websites of varying scope and quality. Their news, text archives, and later also often picture archives have presented the organizations' activity and ideology.

Globalization From Below had a large collection of ideological texts of different kinds assembled on its website, most of them of international origin. The website, like the organization itself, is now closed. Planka.nu has not had any such texts on its website. Instead it presented detailed instructions about how to ride for free on buses, commuter trains, and the metro. In addition, several news agencies on the Internet have functioned as important sources of information for the left-wing activists in the new movements. Here we may mention the independent Swedish news agencies *Motkraft* and *Yelah*, the former on the radical extra-parliamentary left, the latter libertarian. These exist exclusively on the Internet and started their operations in the nineties. Alongside its website, *Motkraft* has a widely spread newsletter, which became a major information channel for the extra-parliamentary left. Another news source on the Internet is *Indymedia* – an international news network in different languages, including a Swedish version.[4]

Mobile phones have also become very important, especially during actions. Through phone calls and text messages it is possible to coordinate actions and maintain contact between participants. The significance of mobile phones in such contexts aroused attention at the summit meeting in Gothenburg in 2001, when they were used by activists in connection with demonstrations and confrontations with the police. In recent years the built-in cameras have given the movements new possibilities, as have digital cameras. Digital images can now be published quickly on the Internet. Films on YouTube have become a common way for activists to present their actions.

When it comes to the internal work in the new movements, however, meetings and personal interaction are still in many ways the foundation of the activities (cf. Zackariasson 2006:127). For cooperation with other organizations, personal contacts have likewise been important because they have fostered personal ties and networks. Nor has the Internet been able to completely replace personal contacts and networks for spreading information to wider circles of activists. In a German study of a demonstration in 2003 against the war in Iraq, it turned out that the most important source of information about the demonstration was "friends, acquaintances, and neighbours". Internet websites and e-mail were of little significance (Tarrow 2005:137).

Communication technology, however, was often decisive for the spread and success of movements. The Internet made its breakthrough as an information medium in the mid-nineties. Certain groups in the urban environmental movement at the time were pioneers in the use of the Internet, for instance, the youth-dominated movement Social-Ecological Action, but the majority of the organizations in the movement had not yet started to exploit the potential of the technology. The new movements in Stockholm at the turn of the millennium were the first to use it on a large scale. It is striking how significant international role models and contacts became, largely as a consequence of the vastly improved potential for communication via the Internet. The movements were heavily influenced by the Global Justice Movement, the social forums, the Italian Disobbedienti, Reclaim the Streets in London, and international discourses about "commons" and "precarization" (uncertain labour conditions).

If we go back further in time we find more examples of the significance of new media for the development of movements. One example is television and the USA's war in Vietnam 1965–1975. Through news broadcasts on television, with direct reports from the theatre of battle, world events moved into people's living rooms. This contributed to a shift in opinion and the rapid growth of a powerful international movement against the war.

Media coverage has sometimes been problematic, however. A famous example of a movement being steered by the media is Todd Gitlin's now classical *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and the Unmaking of the New Left* (Gitlin 1980). SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), an American student organization in the sixties, originally a small, uncontroversial organization, was presented by the mass media as a dangerous political force. Through the media, SDS developed into a mass movement. Some of the leaders became celebrities as a result of the media coverage. Other consequences were an escalation in the rhetoric and greater militancy. The movement became a force that SDS finally could not control. Today the situation is completely different, since the new medium of the Internet has given movements efficient information channels of their own through websites and e-mailing lists, thus enabling the rise of alternative Internet-based media such as Indymedia.

Protests, Influence, and Significance

In Sweden there are several examples of movements that have put forward new and initially inconvenient opinions in the political debate and finally managed to gain a hearing for them in politics and society. In the latter part of the twentieth century the women's movement, the environmental movement, the Vietnam movement, and the new anti-authoritarian left of 1968 enjoyed considerable success. Equality between women and men, increased environmental awareness and co-determination in different forms are some of the major social issues initiated by these movements, which had a tremendous effect on policies and have now become established values. With the exception of the 1968 movement, these movements were also largely concerned with a single issue, which meant that all their strength could be focused on certain questions in the extra-parliamentary actions. The difficulties for such movements to act as conventional political parties are illustrated by the initial problems of the Swedish Green Party to maintain its original ideals of direct democracy and to broaden its operations to the whole political sphere.

The history of Stockholm's urban movements clearly illustrates how movements can take up new political issues and formulate alternatives to the prevailing policy. The residents' movement of 1968 is an example of this. The movement arose with astonishing speed as a protest against the ongoing rationalization of the inner city in Stockholm. This comprised a number of large-scale projects such as the reconstruction of Norrmalm, the construction of suburbs as part of the drive to build one million new homes, the expansion of a system of thoroughfares, and the grandiose metropolitan visions of the regional planners. The transformation of Stockholm was being pursued under virtual political unanimity in the city council. There were no political alternatives for those with differing opinions about the future of the city. Thanks to its swift growth, the residents' movement formulated an alternative and a route away from rationalism and the destruction of the city centre.

The 1990s' urban environmental movement arose as a protest against a single major project – the infrastructural venture of the Dennis Package. That agreement was signed by the three biggest parties in the city and county of Stockholm: the Social Democrats, the Conservatives, and the Liberals – a compact parliamentary majority. The situation was thus the same as twenty years previously. This time too there were no real political alternatives for those who wanted to use parliamentary channels to change the envisaged expansion of road and rail traffic routes. In a situation like this the protest movement of the nineties became a realistic possibility. In a similar way to what happened in 1968, the 1990s' movement formulated an alternative to the Dennis agreement, namely, to tear it up. Through extra-parliamentary means, the parliamentary system was affected so that many of the plans in the agreement were abandoned.

The new urban movements at the turn of the millennium can also be understood from a similar perspective, even though their attempts to influence policy were not successful. The ongoing transformation of the city and the neoliberal elements in urban policy have negative consequences chiefly for marginalized people and those with scant resources. This development is part of an international trend that is determined by global processes such as economic and political deregulation and the increased influence of market forces. Local urban policy in Stockholm can possibly modify development but can hardly stop it. The new protests are nevertheless concrete efforts to influence and correct the undesired transformation of the city – undesired by those who cannot pay what is required if costs are to be fully covered, those who do not fit the accepted social pattern, those who are young and frustrated about their present life and their future prospects, and who often lack the ability to make themselves heard in party politics. The explicit demands for the right to the commons and the right to the city are expressions of their protests.

The new movements at the turn of the millennium have brought up new issues and attracted new categories, chiefly young people but also to some extent immigrants. Through the movements the suburbs have also acquired a voice. Above all, the movements have raised the fundamental question about Stockholm and the future of the city: *Who does the city belong to*? They have thus taken up the same important question that Henri Lefebvre discussed nearly forty years ago.

The history of Stockholm and its urban movements in the last few decades illuminates

how the globalization processes has grown in significance for the development of Stockholm and the movements.

Stockholm has many of the typical features that can be seen in today's global cities: an expanding international economy, especially in the IT sector; increased polarization in the city with gentrification, segregation, and the new poverty; a neoliberal urban policy, and a political aspiration to make the capital more attractive through major infrastructural projects and spectacular events. Neoliberalism has increasingly set its stamp on Stockholm's development during the last decade, although Social Democratic rule in 2002–2006 led to a modification of policy. The new non-socialist majority in the City Hall in 2006 meant a fresh start for the neoliberal urban policy.

Many of the economic, social, and cultural changes taking place in big cities today can thus also be observed to a great extent in Stockholm. At the same time, Stockholm is different in some ways due to local structures and factors. The polarization that has become so clearly visible in many of the world's big cities is less pronounced in Stockholm, and the new poverty is not so serious. The most important explanation is the long tradition of welfare policy in Sweden and the consensus prevailing about it. The old rhetorical and symbolic political vision of *the people's home* is an expression of this, even though the term is not so often used today. There is a long-standing and deep-rooted pattern of social equality in Swedish society and culture. Moreover, the institutions for social security still work fairly well, as do housing provision and the labour market. Important actors in maintaining the values of the welfare state have been the Social Democrats and their allied trade unions, who have dominated politics for a long time in Sweden and Stockholm, with a few interruptions. Compared with other countries, social movements have always had a strong position in Sweden, as in the other Nordic countries. They have long been an essential part of Swedish civil society. There is a tradition of cooperation between political parties, state bodies, and popular social movements in Sweden, which was also significant for the new social movements. In some cases this has meant that those in power have been willing to listen to and heed the opinions and demands of the movements. In other cases there has been competition and conflict between these movements and the traditional popular movements, for example, between the residents' movement and the labour movement in Stockholm (Stahre 1999:198ff.).

The globalization processes and the transition to a new and much more flexible post-Fordian economy has the result that development in the Western world in many respects is going in the same direction. States and cultures, however, are far from being obsolete. The situation in Stockholm show that the course of development can be modified by local actors, circumstances, and traditions. Local influence on globalization processes reshapes them into what Roland Robertson calls "glocalization" (Robertson 1992).

Actors who have contributed to modifying development in Stockholm are the urban social movements that have protested to an increasing extent against the consequences. The urban environmental movement of the 1990s acted vigorously against the proposed infrastructural projects that were an important part of the endeavour to create an internationally competitive metropolis. Two decades earlier, the residents' movement also mounted actions against comparable projects, in some cases even the same projects. Today's new movements have instead protested against

polarization in the city, against the global market economy and the neoliberal urban policy. The movements have often been influenced by international models and contacts. The global and local dimensions in the local conflicts and processes are not always obvious. The urban movements in Stockholm have been influenced as much by their local situation as by international influences.

The interesting thing about the urban movements in Stockholm is that they so clearly articulated the claim for the right to the city that Lefebvre put forward in 1968. The residents' movement explicitly demanded increased participation in decisions about urban construction. Their demands, moreover, involved the right to a different kind of alternative city, where people's housing and city life took precedence over motor traffic, office blocks, and concrete. The 1990s' movement likewise demanded, albeit less explicitly, increased democracy in urban development. Just like the residents' movement, they claimed that people's right to the city must come before the needs of motor traffic, a more limited ambition than the 1960s' vision of the alternative city. Today's new movements, in a different yet comparable way, have formulated their special demands in aggressive tones in recent years, explicitly claiming the right to the commons and the right of the underprivileged to the city.

Reclaim the Streets and the Global Justice Movement

A distinctive and innovative international movement is "Reclaim the Streets" (Stahre 2009). It came to Stockholm from the London group of the same name, which had started to arrange large street parties in the mid-nineties, to demonstrate their aim to reclaim the city and the streets (cf. Wall 1999). The first street party in Stockholm in May 1998 was a peaceful event full of festivity and joy. The following year the initiative was taken over by more hard-core activists in the group "Parliament of the Streets", which in September 1999 arranged a street party in Götgatan in the Söder district, with the motto "Reclaim the City". It was a protest against mass motoring, zero tolerance, racism, and violence. The street party was celebrated with music, food, fires, dancing, and jugglers, blended with slogans painted on banners and on the street. It was broken up by police intervention and fighting, which attracted a lot of attention and vehement debate in the media. In the following years the Reclaim the City festivals on the First of May became a recurrent but problematic tradition. The street festivals were moved to the city centre: Hötorget in 2002, Stureplan in 2003, Karlaplan in 2004, and in Odenplan 2006. This move to the city's commercial and economic heart and the most exclusive residential areas was a deliberate provocation. In these years the street festivals ended in uncontrolled tumult, smashed shop windows, and police intervention. In subsequent years the activities cooled down considerably.

The Reclaim movement's street parties have been a mixture of youth carnival and political demonstration. The suburbs and immigrants have been increasingly visible in the texts and statements, and the proportion of suburban adolescents with an immigrant background seems to have increased over the years. The demand of the underprivileged for *the right to the city* is the most important message of the movement, which is mostly forgotten in the media sensationalism. The problem of the Reclaim movement has been that it has lacked, long-term endurance in its organization and strategy. Nor has it functioned very well as a political pressure group. The turbulent outbursts have generated articles in the press

and anxiety and anger among politicians and the general public. But not much longer. By claiming a place with temporary occupations of public spaces in order to hold their street parties, the Reclaim movement has made itself visible in society, not least through the extensive media publicity. The history of the Reclaim movement has in large measure concerned the media. The media helped to make the movement visible and cause talk about it. Yet the media also helped to give the movement a bad reputation and pull it down in a spiral of failures.

The significance of the street festivals has been on a different level from that of urban politics. As festivals they have been attractive events gathering large numbers of young people. Big, self-organized festivals at public places in the city have become a new element in urban life. They have shown that young people exist and have a right to occupy a place in the urban public sphere. The street festivals have evidently filled an important function as major youth events. They have become a kind of modern-day anarchistic carnivals where spontaneity, joy, and chaos have been among the main ingredients. In the playful abandon of carnivals in history, hierarchies were turned upside down and power was challenged. Today's street festivals also have this challenge to power, but in a more aggressive way in the form of provocations of the police and the choice to hold the festivals in financial districts and posh residential areas. The street festivals' mixture of festivity and politics and turbulent discharge has made them into *moments of madness*, to use Aristide Zolberg's term (1972).

There is a close association between big cities and the occurrence of urban movements. As we have seen, cities like Stockholm enable a critical mass to arise, giving a foundation for movement cultures and collective projects.

Reclaim the City's street parties often took place in the very heart of Stockholm. Here on Stureplan Mayday 2003. Photo from http://bildarchiv.mob-action.de

Cultural structures, creative environments, protest traditions, and the like in such cities contribute to this. History clearly shows how present-day movements have mostly arisen in metropolitan settings and then spread to other cities. The development and spread of Reclaim the Streets (RTS) is an example. The movement arose in London and spread from there to a number of other cities through a series of simultaneous "global street parties" on 16 May 1998. They were all more or less initiated from RTS London in collaboration with the Global Justice Movement, in which RTS London was initially a driving force. From Stockholm the Reclaim movement was later transferred to other Swedish cities, especially Malmö, but also to places with universities. In Malmö, contacts with nearby Copenhagen have also been significant. The development in Sweden shows that the urban movements of recent decades have mostly arisen in Stockholm and then inspired the formation of similar movements or groups elsewhere in the country.

The spread of Reclaim the Streets from London to Sweden illustrates how the process can take place. On a visit to London in 1997 activists from Stockholm established contact with RTS London. English activists came the

following year to Sweden and took part in a "weekend of resistance" on the island of Lidingö, where they informed about their work. This was the starting point for the movement in Sweden, where the first street party in Stockholm was held in May 1998 as a "global street party". The initiating contacts thus took place through special mediators, in the form of a few English and Swedish activists. Continued contacts were maintained via the Internet and sporadic return visits to London, through already established channels.

Not only the Global Justice Movement and Reclaim the Streets have been impelled by globalization. Other social movements have been influenced by the forces of globalization to become transnational or global. Today the movements and their ideologies are spread much faster than in the past, within countries and across borders, with the aid of the new information technology.

The new transnational movements are characterized by special features not foreseen in the definitions and analyses of previous research on movements (cf. Rucht 1999). Reclaim the Streets and the Global Justice Movement are structured as loose international networks of independent groups with a shared ideology, with the Internet as the source of diffusion and also the unifying link. Mass meetings have a similar function. The Reclaim movement has mostly been held together by the big street festivals. The Global Justice Movement has similarly been based on mass meetings and protest storms at international summits and the annual gatherings at the World Social Forum, the first in Porto Alegre in Brazil in 2001. The Global Justice Movement is a typical example of a new kind of social movement. The strength of the movement is its diversity, with everything from anarchist groups looking for violence, to humanitarian and religious organizations. It has sometimes been rightly called a movement of movements.

The great significance of the Internet for today's transnational movements is stressed by Manuel Castells in his work *The Internet Galaxy* (2003). Castells says that the Internet corresponds to the basic structure of the type of social movements that have emerged in the information age. Loose coalitions, semi-spontaneous mobilizations, and temporary movements of a neo-anarchist kind are replacing the permanent structured organizations. The Internet is becoming a crucial medium of expression and organization for the movements. Large demonstrations create effects that influence public opinion via the media. These movements want to "seize the power of the mind, not state power", Castells writes (2003:138ff.).

Transnationality and Global Action

The way in which movements and conflicts are spread has not been a subject of any great interest in research. In an empirical and theoretical analysis, however, Sidney Tarrow and Doug McAdam have presented a model for the diffusion of movements (Tarrow & McAdam 2005). The authors say that many conflicts start locally but never go beyond their own locality. All significant social movements, however, spread in some way. But transnational movements do not arise automatically through increased global awareness or economic integration. They have to be deliberately built up through coalitions and new identities, and through "scale shift" from a local/national level to an international one. Tarrow and McAdam argue that scale shift of movements and conflicts takes place through three different kinds of diffusion: (1) *non-relational diffusion*, i.e. through impersonal channels like the mass media; (2) *relational*

diffusion, i.e. the transfer of information along established lines of personal interaction; (3) *brokerage*, i.e. the transfer of information through the linkage of previously unconnected sites. The authors sum up by observing that the first two methods of diffusion via established channels are most common. In cases where boundaries are crossed and distant actors are linked, brokerage is the most probable mechanism for scale shift.

The most influential social movements that act transnationally or globally have their base in local contexts yet aim for a global effect (cf. Castells 2003:143). Local groups and organizations give legitimacy and support. But the movements cannot be just local; they must also become global or transnational if they want to combat the real power that exists in the globalized world community. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri formulate this in their own way in their controversial work *Empire*. They likewise state that global conflicts to a large extent have their origin in the local. Present-day conflicts which are rooted in local circumstances are quickly moved up to the global level, where the scale shift attacks the "imperial" order as a whole. They are "constituent" struggles that create new public spaces and new forms of community (Hardt & Negri 2000:56).

The most striking example of movements that have emanated from the local to become global is the ecological environmental movement. Since it has so many different dimensions and segments, one should perhaps talk of environmental movements (cf. Doyle 2005). Many environmental problems have their roots in local issues but have global consequences – the greenhouse effect, acidification, overfishing, nuclear power, rainforests, to name just some of the most burning issues. Solving these problems requires both local and global measures, which means that the movements must have a local and global focus.

Specifically urban movements have evidently had difficulties achieving a scale shift from local to transnational level, chiefly because they did not have any superordinate transnational goals. There are some exceptions where movements, although mainly acting on local issues, also attained transnational diffusion. Reclaim the Streets is one such movement, with its focus on local urban issues. The Critical Mass movement with its opposition to car traffic has achieved an even greater, virtually global, spread and is similarly geared to local issues. The broad diffusion of the movements is due to their inspirational basic idea and effective planning and organization, along with the fundamental importance of the Internet for spreading their message. For such transnational movements the Internet is more than a form of communication – it is the node for movements of a new kind (cf. Tarrow 2005:136f.).

Scale shift can also take place in reverse, that is, to lower levels, as movements free themselves from international coordination. Examples of this are the World Social Forum, which now has successors in several European Forums and also at local level (Tarrow 2005:132f.). A European Forum was arranged in Malmö in 2008, for example, and there have been forums at local level in Gothenburg in 2004 and 2005 as well as several other Swedish cities (Hansson 2008). Another scale shift is illustrated by the development of the Stockholm group Globalization From Below. This was founded in 2000 for the international protest demonstrations in Prague for the meeting of the IMF/World Bank. There was strong commitment at this time to globalization issues, but there was no base in local involvement. Globalization From Below therefore became

active on local Stockholm matters: cooperation with the association of the homeless, creating a social centre, and arranging the Stockholm Social Forum. But it was evidently problematic to shift the global commitment to the local. The organization ceased to exist after a couple of years.

Today's problem, however, is that there is still no real global civil society as a counterweight to the new global and transnational decision-making structures. New international and transnational organizations are increasingly making the crucial decisions in the world. The World Bank, the IMF, WTO, and NATO are bodies whose decisions are made without public transparency. The United Nations, the European Union, and their organizations are supranational bodies which, although they are based on the political participation of the constituent nations, have great deficiencies as regards transparency and democracy. The low turnout at elections to the European Parliament is a clear sign of this. Both Europeanization and globalization lead to talk of a "democratic deficit". The legitimacy of democracy today chiefly depends on the participation of the people within the framework of the nation states.

The increasing significance of humanitarian issues is nevertheless an important signpost on the way to a new informational democracy (cf. Castells 2004:402ff.). One example of this is the Global Justice Movement, which is driven by a will to achieve a more just and humanitarian global society. The protests at international summits and the large gatherings at World Social Forums are clear manifestations of this. There is reason to emphasize that humanitarian commitment in a broad sense is one of today's most important political forces.

To be able to talk of a civil society there must be some form of public sphere where the citizens can talk freely about the norms and institutions of the political community without restriction by the state or market actors. One such public sphere is crucial for civil society and has been essential for the development of democracy in different countries. It has long been a serious democratic problem that the new transnational and global institutions have functioned largely without the scrutiny of a critical press and without critical dialogue with the population (Dahlerup 2001). In the last decade several important meeting places and arenas have arisen for discussions of global and transnational issues through the annual World Social Forum and European and local social forums. Social movements, popular movements, and NGOs have found a place here for discussing the world's future, alongside the protest meetings in connection with political and economic summits. In addition, new and independent media such as Indymedia have arisen and achieved a worldwide spread via the Internet (Nogueira 2002). As the sociologist Magnus Wennerhag says, there is today a global public sphere, although it seems far more fragmentary than the national public spheres ever were. It is perhaps more correct to talk of transnational public spheres since they act on a great many different geographical levels (Wennerhag 2008:156).

Guidry *et al.* (2000) have pointed out that globalization offers "contradictory" possibilities for social movements, as the ability of states to introduce new regulatory systems of their own has been reduced with the coming of supranational bodies like the EU. This means that international contacts and solidarities are becoming more important for movements. There is a certain risk that they will become less independent through cooperation with other movements or organizations. At the same time, the movements gain new pos-

sibilities to affect both states and non-state actors through international channels and the emerging transnational public spheres. This favours social movements with a high degree of professionalization, whereas grass-roots movements find it more difficult to affect decisions which have been moved to supra-national bodies.

In Stockholm the urban movements used to be geared in large measure to issues concerning the physical environment of the city, which it would hardly have been possible to raise to an international level. Today's new urban movements have turned to the new issues of the globalized metropolis, especially the neoliberal urban policy which has also been debated internationally. The movements have thereby been able to apply other strategies. They have, to a much greater extent, both used and been influenced by international contacts.

Globalization processes are now increasingly affecting the development of nations and cities. Social movements are a counter to this development, while simultaneously being affected themselves by global influences. In a big city like Stockholm, the meetings and mergers between the global and the local are becoming increasingly obvious. This is an ongoing process that has come to stay.

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Notes

1 A social movement is defined here as a collective action involving solidarity between the participants, social conflict, and social change. The term urban movement is defined as a social movement acting to change urban society. This means that it does not include movements which, although urban-based, are primarily active in other issues, such as racist and anti-racist movements. Nor is the women's movement considered here. The movements described in Stockholm are designated as urban movements.

2 Civil society is usually portrayed as a different sphere alongside but simultaneously linked to the state and the economy, and containing a different logic of action from other spheres of society (Wennerhag 2008:155).

3 According to a flyer for a demonstration in 1999.

4 See www.motkraft.net, www.yelah.net, and http://sweden.indymedia.org. Here is what Motkraft writes in the introduction to its newsletter in 2006: "Motkraft consists of submitted material, press releases, and action reports written by those who stage the actions – without the intermediacy of journalists." Indymedia was founded in connection with the WTO protests in Seattle in 1999. According to the Indymedia website, it is "an international network of media organizations and hundreds of journalists, offering activist-based, non-commercial news coverage. Indymedia is a democratic news channel for the creation of a radical, correct, and impassioned account of reality".

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Collective Identities and Popular Excesses

Laclau and Rancière on "The People" and "Populism"

By Søren Christensen

Twenty years ago a supposedly archaic political figure suddenly reappeared in the European public sphere. In the streets of East German cities protesters started marching against the Communist regime under banners claiming "We are the people!" In Western Europe this was greeted with great enthusiasm as the appearance of a democratic people claiming, against an oppressive regime, the very rights and freedoms of Western liberal democracy. Enthusiasm was significantly more muffled when, a few years later, "the people" reappeared in Western Europe itself, this time as a contestation of the systemic workings and governing elites (both national and European) of these liberal democracies themselves. This people was not interpreted as a democratic people, but on the contrary as a threat to the very fabric of democracy. One word in particular came to sum up this threat – *populism*. In numerous European newspapers and magazines one could read concerned commentaries under headings like "Populism: the European evil?" (Taguieff 2007:95). Ever since then the spectre of populism has been hovering on the European political horizon, conjured up on a regular basis by two types of political events that have by now become routine features of European political life – the noes in EU referendums and the election victories of "right-wing populist" parties.

This flurry of concerns over populism has not been accompanied by a similar scholarly attention to populism in the field of social and cultural theory. There has been a significant reticence to take up the issue of populism – either because the phenomenon itself has been considered too repulsive for scholarly interest or, more importantly, because the term is considered too pejorative and ideologically burdened for the purposes of social and cultural analysis. As a result the issue has to a large extent been left to political science.[1] In 2005, however, this situation was significantly remedied by the publication of Ernesto Laclau's *On Populist Reason*. This book not only presents a comprehensive theory of populism – in itself an unusual accomplishment within the under-theorized field of populism. It also frames this theory within a very strong thesis – namely, that all politics is in a certain sense populist and that radical (and not just reactionary) politics must therefore itself assume a populist form.

The aim of this paper is to explore further this relation between politics and populism. For this purpose I confront Laclau with a philosopher to whom he acknowledges a certain affinity – that is, the French philosopher Jacques Rancière who, while refusing the pertinence of the category "populism", has developed perhaps the most original concept of "the people" to be found in contemporary philosophy. In *On Populist Reason* Laclau gives a few indications of the ways Rancière's concept of the people might be criticized from the vantage point of the theory of hegemony (Laclau 2005a: 244-249). In this paper I turn the tables and explore some of the ways Rancière's concept of the people might be exploited for the purpose of a criticism of Laclau's concept of the people – and, specifically, of his thesis on the relation between politics and populism. In the process I also try to provide some reasons to believe that there might indeed (Rancière's own dismissal of populism notwithstanding) be something like a Rancièrian theory of populism and that such a theory would in certain respects be more satisfactory than Laclau's.

The paper is divided into four sections. The first section shows how Laclau's theory of populism is framed within the conceptual apparatus of the theory of hegemony and

explores the reasons for Laclau's quasi-identification of populism with politics. The second section discusses the way the concept of antagonism functions in Laclau's theory of populism. Drawing on Chantal Mouffe's analyses of right-wing populism and, in particular, on Slavoj Žižek's criticisms of *On Populist Reason* the section questions the ontologically radical nature of the concept of antagonism as used in Laclau's theory of populism. The third section lays out the basic contours of Rancière's concept of the people. In addition, it argues that this concept of the people is significantly more radically antagonistic (in Žižek's sense) than Laclau's to the extent that it does not conceive of the people as an incomplete identity, but as an act of dis-identification. The fourth section attempts in an exploratory manner to show that Rancière's concept of the people is indeed highly relevant for a theory of populism since it brings the radical dimension of the populist notion of "the common people" to view. In conclusion it is argued that from a Rancièrian perspective populism might be viewed not as the epitome of politics, the way Laclau does, or as a kind of "proto-fascism" the way Žižek does, but as an example of "para-politics" – that is, a peculiar compromise between the excess of the people and the kind of integrated systemic order which Rancière calls "police".

Populism and "the Absent Fullness of Community"

Laclau starts out in *On Populist Reason* by noting that the existing literature on populism is consistent in only one respect – the vilification of populism. Populism is variously described as an agrarian ideology, as a call for participatory democracy, a form of charismatic movement, or as mere rhetoric (Laclau 2005a:8ff.). Invariably, however, it is concluded that populism (as a phenomenon and thus also as a term) is vague, imprecise, if not shallow. As such it has nothing of the dignity of the great ideologies of modernity such as liberalism, socialism and communism.

Far from setting out to provide populism with that ideological dignity which conventional theories of populism deny it, Laclau's approach consists in taking the denigration of populism at its word. If populism seems to its detractors vague and imprecise, the reason for this might indeed be that vagueness and imprecision are the keys to the very efficacy of populism (Laclau 2005a:18). This possibility, however, only emerges once the analysis of populism is shifted to a new terrain – that of ontology (Laclau 2005b:34). When populism is dismissed as vague and imprecise this is because these features are viewed in purely ontic terms – as a simple lack of determinate social or ideological content. By displacing the analysis to the ontological level, Laclau gains a different perspective on these features. At this level vagueness and imprecision can be positivized as the peculiar kind of social reality constituted by populism. If populism can seem intellectually poor, it is because it is a logic which constitutes collective identities by simplifying social space, by reducing it to the vague, yet highly emotionally charged dichotomy of "the people" versus an unresponsive, if not suppressive "establishment".

This approach to populism is fleshed out in terms of the logics of differentialism and equivalence which have been central to Laclau's theory of discourse and social identity since *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*.[2] Since this theory is about the constitution of social identities, Laclau cannot, unlike most theoreticians of populism, take any such identities (peasant life-forms etc.) as given building blocks of his account. Instead, he settles for the

category of "social demand" as the elementary unit of his analysis of populism.[3] In accordance with the distinction between logics of difference and logics of equivalence, Laclau goes on to distinguish between "democratic demands" on the one hand and "popular demands" on the other hand (2005a:74). These are not demands which are different in nature, but demands which have different destinies – which are articulated in terms of different social logics. Laclau explicates this by staging an "original scene" (2005a:85) of populism. His point of departure is the simple making of a demand – e.g. in a Third World shantytown a demand for better housing is made (2005a:73). This demand may be met by the appropriate authority and thus answered in specific terms – that is, within a differentialist logic. There is, however, also the possibility that it may not be met. In that case it may simply be abandoned or, more likely, persist as a lingering frustration. It is, however, also possible that it may instead be connected to other demands. People may see that there are other demands which are equally unmet. Thus, the differential content of individual demands may retreat to the background in favour of their equivalential dimension. In addition to their individual, differential content, demands acquire an equivalential dimension to the extent that they are all viewed as equally frustrated by an unresponsive "system" (which itself becomes ever more all-embracing through this formation of equivalences).

This equivalential chain is entirely negative since it is held together only by a common opposition to the system. This opposition must, however, itself be signified within the equivalential chain. This is accomplished by an "empty signifier" – that is, a signifier which is (partially) emptied of its particular content and instead takes up the task of representing the equivalential chain as a whole vis-à-vis the antagonized other. Thus, in Poland in the 1980s the demands and symbols (as well as the very name) of *Solidarność* became the signifiers of popular resistance to the Communist system (Laclau 2005a:81). It was through the hegemony of these signifiers that scattered perceptions of "deficient social being" were condensed into a popular identity antagonistically related to a "system" demonized as the very root cause of social negativity.

As should be clear from this example, we are here far removed from any narrow or regional notion of populism. Laclau's notion of populism is an ontological notion which concerns the way social experience is hegemonically and antagonistically constituted. One important consequence of this is that populism becomes almost indistinguishable from the notion of politics itself. As has correctly been observed (Marchart 2005), there is a certain ambiguity in Laclau's account of the relation between populism and politics. In the preface to *On Populist Reason*, populism is introduced as "quite simply, a way of constructing the political" (2005a:11). In other contexts, however, he unambiguously affirms that populism is quite simply synonymous with politics (Laclau 2005b:47). As suggested by Oliver Marchart (2005), this apparent contradiction between populism as *a* way and *the* way of constructing the political is readily understandable in Laclau's own terms – that is, as a hegemonic relation. In Laclau's theory of politics populism functions as the particular which stands in for the universal – which embodies the "absent fullness" of politics. Thus, as aptly phrased by Slavoj Žižek, "in a nice case of self-reference, the very logic of hegemonic articulation applies also to the conceptual opposition between populism and politics" (Žižek 2006a:553).

As pointed out by Marchart, however, this logic of self-reference even goes one step further. In the case of populism the hegemonic relation is more specifically a relation between *plebs* and *populus* (2005a:93). Here it is not only a part, but a particularly low and denigrated part which claims to be the totality. The same applies to the relation between populism and politics. As Laclau himself argues in considerable detail in *On Populist Reason* (pp. 1–65), populism is not simply one form of politics among others; it is a particularly despised and denigrated form of politics. It is the underdog of political theory. It is so because of its lack of ideological sophistication – its "intellectual poverty". It consistently simplifies the complexity of social reality into the Manichean antagonism between the virtuous people and the evil system. This, however, is exactly the reason why Laclau chooses populism to stand in for politics as such. What the detractors of populism call "simplification" and "intellectual poverty" is nothing but the logic of antagonism. Populism is scandalous because, more radically than any other form of politics, it lets logics of equivalences take precedence over differentialist and institutionalist logics. It condenses all of social space around two antagonistically related poles. Populism thereby exposes that dimension of social division which is the condition of possibility, not just of populism but of politics as such (Laclau 2005b:48). In this sense populism is the "royal road" to the ontology of politics. And it is therefore no wonder that populism is denigrated in all those forms of politics (from Third Way politics to Habermas and Rawls) which deny the constitutive role of antagonism and view politics instead as a matter of administration, consensus or rational deliberation.

Populism and the Ambiguities of Antagonism

In view of this quasi-identification of populism with politics as such, it should come as no surprise that, according to Laclau, "the construction of a people is the main task of radical politics" (2006). However, if "radical" politics is necessarily populist in nature, there is no inherent reason why populism should necessarily be radical in any normative sense of the term. In fact it might as easily be reactionary – or racist for that matter. This is fully acknowledged by Laclau himself (he even deploys this point as a criticism of Rancière (2005a:246)), but it does not lead him to question the identification of populism with radical politics. Apparently, to Laclau "radical" should be understood in purely ontological terms. That populism may be reactionary as well as progressive only confirms the ontological radicalism of populism – its inherent indifference to specific ontic contents and the concomitant "floating" character of the specific signifiers in terms of which "the people" and "the system" oppose each other.

If the thesis that the current preponderance of right-wing populism questions the identification of populism with politics is dismissed by Laclau, this is exactly the thesis which has in various ways been advanced by two authors with whom he has been affiliated through most of his career – that is, Chantal Mouffe and, most explicitly, Slavoj Žižek. In her recent writings on European right-wing populism (2005a; 2005b) Mouffe much like Laclau conceptualizes populist movements as eruptions of political antagonism. According to Mouffe, what differentiates populism from Third Way politics, or consensual democracy more generally, is the Schmittian realization that "politics always consists in the creation

of an 'us' versus a them' and that it implies the creation of collective identities" (Mouffe 2005a:55). Unlike Laclau, however, she views populism not simply as the authentically political alternative to post-political consensual democracy, but rather as the direct outcome of the consensual style of politics.

The reason for this is that even post-politics is a form of politics and it therefore remains fundamentally antagonistic in nature (2005a:56). Since, however, the denial of antagonism is the distinguishing feature of post-political reason, post-politics necessarily displaces antagonism from the political level. Instead it reappears at the level of morality. In order to uphold itself, post-political consensual democracy needs to mobilize against an enemy, an immoral "Other" that is seen as threatening the very fabric of democracy and human rights (2005a:58). "Right-wing populism" is one of the major forms currently taken by this otherness. It is to a large extent through the moral condemnation of "racist" and "intolerant" right-wing populism that the project of consensual democracy achieves whatever coherence it has. Furthermore, to the extent that right-wing populism itself relies on the Manichean division between the virtuous people and the evil, parasitic elites, it is itself part and parcel of this moralization of antagonism. Thus, whereas Laclau considers populist Manicheism politics at its purest, Mouffe views it rather as a Freudian "distortion" in which the repressed of political antagonism can only be articulated at the price of extensive moralistic de-politicization.

Thus, in contrast to Laclau, Mouffe views right-wing populism not as properly political antagonism, but rather as a displaced antagonism conjured up by the post-political repression of antagonism. A similar point has been made by Slavoj Žižek according to whom Haider is "a kind of uncanny double of Blair, his obscene sneer accompanying like a shadow New Labour's big smile" (Žižek 2006c:41). In his acerbic recent exchange with Laclau over *On Populist Reason* (Žižek 2006a, 2006b, Laclau 2006) Žižek explicates this point in terms of a general argument against populism. According to Žižek the de-politicizing displacement of antagonism is the defining feature not simply of current right-wing populism, but of populism as such, and there is therefore no relation whatsoever between populism and radical politics. *Pace* Laclau, radical politics should resist "the populist temptation" altogether.

This argument is presented by Žižek in the garb of a supplement to Laclau's theory of populism (2006a:557). To the series of ontological features of populism elaborated by Laclau, one should according to Žižek add that in populism "the enemy is externalized or reified into a positive ontological entity (even if this entity is spectral) whose annihilation would restore balance and justice; symmetrically, our own – the populist political agent's – identity is also perceived as pre-existing the enemy's onslaught" (2006a:555). In good Žižekian fashion this supplement effectively destroys the whole series to which it is a supplement. It does so because it turns populism from the paragon of radical politics into a prime example of "ideological mystification" (2006a:557). Populism locates the source of antagonism in the "pseudoconcrete" figure of the intruder (the Jew, the communist, the financial exploiter etc.) supposed to be behind all threats to the people (2006a:556). According to populism, were it not for the intruder the identity of the people would be complete and unhindered. By reifying the enemy as a "positive ontological entity", populism thus shows itself able to articulate antagonism only

in the form of a cover-up of antagonism. The fundamental mechanism of populism is the displacement of "immanent social antagonism into the antagonism between the unified people and its external" and in this sense, far from being "radical" in any progressive sense, populism is not only inherently right-wing, it even "harbors in the last instance a long-term proto-fascist tendency" (2006a:557).

In his response Laclau clearly perceives the devastating potential of Žižek's supplement which he completely rejects as a crude Marxist attempt to reduce populism to a simple form of false consciousness (Laclau 2006:650). Basically, however, Žižek's criticism does not concern populism. It concerns instead Laclau's concept of antagonism. In that regard there is nothing new to Žižek's argument. On the contrary, it reiterates almost to the word a criticism of Laclau which Žižek made almost twenty years ago in a paper originally published by Laclau himself in *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (Laclau 1990).

In this short paper – called "Beyond Discourse Analysis" – Žižek explored Laclau's and Mouffe's notion of "social antagonism" which he hailed as "perhaps the most radical breakthrough in modern social theory" (Žižek 2006d:249), but nevertheless viewed as hampered by a deficient theory of the subject. In the discourse-analytical framework of *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* subjects appeared solely in terms of subject positions ordered relationally in specific discursive fields. According to Žižek, the consequence of this conventionally poststructuralist concept of the subject was that Laclau and Mouffe tended to conceive of antagonism in terms of antagonistic subject positions (Žižek 2006d:253). The problem with this was that antagonistic subject positions are symmetrical (p. 253) – "all the positivity, all the consistency of our position lies in the negation of the adversary's position and *vice versa* [...]" (252f.). At the level of subject positions antagonism appears in terms of the "external enemy who is preventing me from achieving an identity with myself [...]." (p. 251). In that sense the antagonism of subject positions amounts effectively to a cover-up of antagonism in its radical dimension – that is, the antagonism of the subject as such, its constitutive traumatic self-blockage and non-identity. Thus, what is covered up by the interminable identity dramas of antagonistic subject positions is ultimately "the fact that the negativity of the other which is preventing me from achieving my full identity with myself is just an externalization of my own auto-negativity, of my self-hindering" (p. 253).

It is in this sense that Žižek can claim the dichotomy between "people" and "system" is an ideological illusion rather than a radical antagonism. Even if we accept this argument, it does not, however, prove by itself that there is nothing ontologically radical about populism. It only proves that the radical dimension of populism has to be construed in terms which are not exhausted by the dichotomy between the people and the system. It demands that the notion of the people be conceptualized in terms which are much closer to Žižek's notion of antagonism as constitutive non-identity. Since the French philosopher Jacques Rancière has gone a long way in this direction, I shall now turn to his reflections on the relation between the people and politics.

The People as Political Subjectification

In a series of books written over the last 15 years – most notably *Disagreement* (1998a) – Jacques Rancière has developed a highly idiosyncratic concept of "the people". It is

idiosyncratic in the sense that it is a philosophical concept which is in some respects rather different from the notion of the people established within ethnology, within *Begriffsgeschichte* and within the history of ideas more generally. As conceptualized by Rancière the people is quite simply the subject of politics – that is, the subject which institutes politics by opening up a disagreement concerning the community and its parts. As such the people is a generic subject which can appear – and has appeared historically – under a variety of different names, from "third estate" to "proletarians" and "women".

The reason why Rancière settles for "the people" as the generic name of this subject is that this is the name under which it first appears in Plato and Aristotle (p. 36). It is precisely by way of an analysis of the paradoxical status of the people in Aristotle's political philosophy that Rancière works out the basic contours of his own concept of the people. He starts by noting that in Aristotle's version of a *mixte politeia* there are three kinds of *axiaï*, three kinds of entitlements to political power corresponding to the three parts of the *polis*: the wealth of the few (*oligoi*), the virtue of the best (*aristoi*) and the freedom of the *demos* (p. 6). On closer look, however, the neat symmetry of this triad turns out be spurious. There is an element which sticks out, which does not fit and this element is the freedom of the people. Only the few are wealthy and only the best are virtuous, but the people are not the only ones who are free. The wealthy and the best are free as well and in that sense the people is free in the same way that anybody (provided he is a male citizen!) is free. In short, whereas the entitlements of the wealthy and the virtuous are proper to them, the entitlement of the people is not proper to them. It is in this sense that Rancière can characterize the people as the "improper part". The people has no part of its own and as such it is "the part of those who have no part" (p. 30). In that sense the people is inherently antagonistic to the communitarian order understood as an order of proper parts – of occupations, functions and entitlements. It is this order which Rancière – borrowing rather idiosyncratically from Foucault – calls "police". According to Rancière, police is "an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task" (p. 29). Police is a distribution, a "counting" of proper parts in which the improperty of the people is necessarily "miscounted" (that is, neither counted nor not counted, but counted wrongly) (1998a:6).

This improperty of the people, however, is also what constitutes its true universality. Precisely as the part which has no proper part, but only the part of anyone at all (p. 16) the people can identify themselves with the community as a whole. Thus, those who have no merit, no wealth – "the mass of men without qualities" (p. 9) – can claim for that very reason to be the whole of the community. "In so doing, this party that is not one identifies its improper property with the exclusive principle of community and identifies its name – the name of the indistinct mass of men of no position – with the name of the community itself. [...] Whoever has no part – the poor of ancient times, the third estate, the modern proletariat – cannot in fact have any part other than all or nothing" (pp. 8–9).

The structure of this argument has been described by Slavoj Žižek as "profoundly Christological" (Žižek 1999:228). His point is that just like Christian theology Rancière "offers as this singular point, which stands for the true Universal, not what is 'the highest of

Man' but the lowest excremental remainder" (p. 228) – that is, the figure of the miserable, excluded people. While this interpretation may find some measure of support in Rancière's work – as when he characterizes the people as "the outcasts" (1998b:119) – it seems to miss what is most original in Rancière's conceptualization of the people.

In this respect it may be useful to compare Rancière's concept of the people with that developed by Giorgio Agamben in a few, extremely dense pages of *Homo Sacer* (Agamben 1998; also in Agamben 2000). Agamben takes as his point of departure the well-known fact that in most modern European languages the term "people" simultaneously indicates the political subject (the people as sovereign) and the poor, the miserable (the people identified with those excluded from the political domain). In this split between "People" ("the total state of integrated and sovereign citizens") and "people" (the wretched, the oppressed and the defeated") (1998:177), Agamben easily recognizes "the fundamental biopolitical fracture" (1998:178) of the entire Western political tradition – that is, the split between political existence and bare life, inclusion and exclusion, *bios* and *zoe* (1998:177). These two poles of the concept are locked up in a potentially fatal *tête-à-tête* in which the obsessive effort (from Nazism to humanitarian developmentalism) to eliminate the wretchedness and misery of bare life and thus realize the undivided and integrated People ends up producing ever more miserable and excluded bare life (1998:178f.).

Whereas Agamben conceives of the people as a fateful dialectic between radical inclusion and radical exclusion, Rancière's concept of the people articulates the relation between inclusion and exclusion in an entirely different manner. As the improper part, the part of indistinction which is at once nothing and all, the people cannot even be properly excluded. In this sense Rancière's concept of the people has very little to do with the figure of excluded and victimized bare life which is so important to Agamben and which Žižek imputes to Rancière. As the improper part of community the people is not excluded from community – it is, in Žižek's words, "the element that sticks out of the existing order, which, while internal to it, has no proper place within it" (2006a:564). The people is a relation between part and non-part – as in the case of "the proletarian" who is a relation between "work as a social function and the having no part of those who carry it out within the definition of the common of the community" (1998a:36). For this reason the political struggle of the people is as much a struggle against its inclusion within as against its exclusion from police order. The people is a "supplementary" or "supernumerary" political subject that comes into being by exceeding its own definition (as group, function or identity) within police order: "It inscribes a subject name as being different from any identified part of the community" (1998a:37). In that sense the logic of political subjectification is profoundly de-naturalizing: "The familiar police logic that decides that militant proletarians *are not* workers, but déclassés, and that militant feminists are strangers to their sex, is, all in all, justified" (1998a:369; italics in original).

The crucial differences between Laclau's and Rancière's theoretical approaches to "the people" should now be visible. In both Laclau and Rancière the concept of the people is predicated on the relation between *plebs* and *populus* – on the coincidence of the part of the people with the community as a whole. But whereas in Laclau this coincidence is about the formation of "collective identities" (2005a:ix),

the reverse is the case with Rancière. The appearance of the people is not an act of identity formation, but an act of dis-identification. A political subject emerges only to the extent it simultaneously undoes itself as a group with a distinct identity (such as a "workers' culture" in the proletarian case, Rancière 1998a:36f.). In short, the people appears as a political subject only in so far as it assumes its own improperty and indistinctness. Thus, the people is not so much a relation of part and whole, but rather of nothing and all (1998a:9), an impossible conjunction – "a name written in the sky" (Rancière 1998:25) – which ruins the counting of proper parts of police order. If the people always emerges as the "class of the wrong that harms the community", this should therefore not be understood in the terms of identity politics. The people is not the subject of a politics of recognition. The demand for recognition is a demand to be included as a proper part of the community. But the people does not want to make good on the claim that it is in fact a proper part, but on the claim that it is in fact an improper part.

Even if Rancière only incidentally uses the notion (see, e.g. 1998a:21), it can be argued that his concept of the people is much more resolutely antagonistic in the Žižekian sense than Laclau's. It is a basic assumption in both Laclau and Rancière that the people can never amount to a full identity, but this assumption has a very different status in their respective conceptions of the people. In Laclau, the people is basically the attempt to fuse *plebs* and *populus*. Since, for ontological reasons, the "absent fullness of community" is a condition that cannot be overcome, this fusion is impossible. This does not, however, change the fact that the logic of the people (and of hegemony in general) is a logic of totalization (hence Laclau's insistence that the construction of the people is a matter of "collective identity"). The emergence of the people is the emergence of a totality – however precarious, incomplete and contingent. And this totality is strictly correlated to its condition of possibility and impossibility – its enemy, "the system".

In Rancière, on the other hand, the logic of the people is fundamentally a logic of division. The people is not the part which hegemonically totalizes the whole of which it is a part, but the part which subverts the whole of which it is a (non-)part. The appearance of the people is the division of the community with itself. The crucial point, however, is that this logic of division applies no less to the relationship of the people with itself. In Rancière – in clear contrast to Laclau – the counterpart of antagonism with the system (police order) is not the (however precarious) totalization of the people. On the contrary, it is only through self-division – by being in excess of itself, by dis-identifying with itself as a part within police order – that the people can demonstrate the wrong done to it by police order. It is here that Rancière's concept of the people dovetails with Žižek's understanding of antagonism as self-antagonism. In Rancière, antagonism is inherent to the people in the fundamental sense that its antagonism with police order is nothing other than its antagonism with itself. The people does not challenge the institutional order in the name of a denied identity. It does so in the name of the excess of non-identity ("these speaking bodies doomed to the anonymity of work and of reproduction", 1998a:7) that has no proper place within the institutional order. The people is the pure improperty which, by dis-identifying with itself, deadlocks the whole logic of identity. If, to Rancière, there is "a Real of the 'people' which resists symbolic integration" (Laclau 2005a:152), it is nothing

but this improperty, this irredeemable split between part and no-part.

Proper and Improper Peoples of Populism

At this point, one is justified in wondering what this whole logic of the improper people has to do with the question of populism. One should start by noting that, according to Rancière himself, the answer is "not much" – for the simple reason that, in Rancière's view, there is no question of populism. According to Rancière the charge of "populism" is nothing but the latest manifestation of an age-old "hatred of democracy" (of which the originally equally disparaging term "democracy" itself was born). It expresses "the difficulties that the government of knowledge has in accommodating itself to the manifestations of democracy" and it "simultaneously reveals and masks the great wish of the oligarchy: to govern without people, that are without division of the people; to govern without politics" (Rancière 2005:88).

This does not mean that Rancière ignores or trivializes the mobilizations commonly labelled as right-wing populism. On the contrary, he conceives of them in even more dramatic terms. According to Rancière they emerge as a violent response to consensual democracy and its elimination of the excess of the people: "Whenever the people *en trop* of democracy disappears, another people appears: namely, the corps of those with the same blood, ancestors or identity" (2004:8). These mobilizations therefore amount to a kind of pathological substitute for the excess of the people – they are the abhorrent, retrogressive form which the people assumes when it has, finally, been properly excluded: "In effect, identitarian extremism restages the archaic power of birth as the only alternative exactly when democracy is reduced in the name of consensus to the simple power of wealth" (2004:8).

For once, Rancière seems here to fall prey to the kind of facile dismissals – "extremism", "archaism" – for which he rightly takes to task the enlightened liberal elites. By denying to these mobilizations any genuinely political dimension, Rancière commits to them the wrong of police order itself – that is, of denying that there is in them any part of no-part (but only its demonic reversal). This wrong should be corrected by exploring the peculiar (and contradictory) way in which the excess of the people manifests itself in such mobilizations. Rancière's objections notwithstanding, "populism" might be a useful concept for this purpose since it indicates at the same time the excess of the people (popul-) and its absorption within something else (-ism). In this final part of the paper I shall therefore suggest – in an admittedly very preliminary fashion – a few of the ways in which Rancière's concept of the people might be relevant to a theory of populism.

The first thing that should be noted is that anything resembling the Rancièrian concept of the people seems to be quite marginal and under-theorized in most theories of populism. As for concepts of the people, they mostly rely on the division, inherited from theories of nationalism dating back to Hans Kohn, between *demos* and *ethnos*, between a people defined in terms of political belonging and a people defined in terms of cultural, if not racial belonging (see, among others, Hermet 2001:164; Taguieff 2007:217). In one version populism is interpreted as a demand for faithful political representation of or direct political participation by the citizen body ("protestatarian populism" in Taguieff's terms (2007:219-231). In the other version it is interpreted as an

assertion of exclusive cultural identity against the threatening figures of cosmopolitan elites and foreign intruders ("identitarian populism" in Taguieff's terms). With Rancière in mind one might, however, venture the thesis that there is in fact "one-more", a supplementary people which is miscounted by this double concept of the people. It is miscounted to the very extent that the people is counted in a police manner – that is, entirely in terms of entitlements, of qualifications. However opposed these peoples are in other respects, in both cases the people is identified with a specific entitlement – in the first case (*demos*) the entitlement of citizenship, in the second case (*ethnos*) the entitlement of birth. Both are thus "proper" peoples – peoples which are entitled to be counted as peoples.

What is miscounted here is thus the people which is not the people by entitlement, but by sheer lack of entitlement. In populism this people is called "the common people". The huge importance in populism of appeals to the common people has, of course, been noted by numerous observers. But in most cases the common people has been reduced to a more or less plebeian version of the two "proper" peoples (the common people as "the citizen base" or "the cultural core" of the nation). With Rancière, however, it is possible to view the common people as an improper people who are in an inherent relation of contestation with the proper peoples of *demos* and *ethnos*. The common people is the mass of all those who do not stand out, who have no special properties or qualities. What makes the common people fundamentally different from the two proper peoples is that it is a people to which one cannot belong. It is a people which cannot be delimited and therefore has no identity. Since populism invokes the common people more consistently than any other kind of political mobilization, it can, at one level at least, be viewed not as a particular manifestation of identity politics, but as the very obverse of identity politics. The people is that which is not accounted for and cannot be accounted for in identity politics. It is the remainder – what falls out of and thus cannot be made visible in identity politics.

If populism does indeed have a truly political core, it is because there is no populism which does not invoke this people. The people in this sense appears not least in the notion of (silent) majority so often appealed to in populism. In one sense the majority is a proper part structurally related to a variety of minorities. In another sense, however, the majority is the improper part, the part which has no part in the game of qualifications and entitlements. In this second sense the majority is nothing but the residue of the counting of minorities and their entitlements. Thus, the silent majority is the majority silenced (miscounted) by the very logic of entitlements. It is the part which is not disadvantaged and therefore cannot lay claim to benefits – the part that, being just "ordinary", does not have an identity and for that reason cannot be recognized. In short, the people is the improper part that is not properly excluded but for that very reason cannot be included either.

This is the logic so masterfully exploited by contemporary right-wing populism, starting with Alabama governor George Wallace's presidential campaigns in the midst of the civil rights turmoil. Traditionally, the minorities against which American populism had historically positioned itself were the financial aristocracy and the federal bureaucracy. With Wallace these minorities were supplemented, if not eclipsed by the racial minorities. In the context of the civil rights movement Wallace could brand the racial minorities as power-

holders through their very predicament. As disadvantaged they were accorded privileges, as different they had access to recognition – unlike the anonymous "Middle American" who could make no claim on the compassion of the liberal elites. In this sense Wallace's populism amounted to a large extent to the assertion that the truly (improperly, and thus irredeemably) excluded, "the outsiders, the scorned" (Lowndes 2005:149), were those who could not claim to be excluded – that is, ordinary, average Americans.

If this conception of the people is indeed at the heart of populism, it would indeed seem that the widespread tendency to assimilate the people of populism to that of nationalism, if not of fascism should be corrected or at least modified. One of the most recurrent *topoi* of theories on populism is that the populist people should be understood in terms of Claude Lefort's famous totalitarian "People-One" (Lefort 1981, 1986) – that is, as a substantialized and organically integrated body (e.g. Panizza 2005:29; Arditi 2005:27; Mény & Surel 2000:221; Ihl *et al.* 2003:19). This view is also echoed by Žižek when he characterizes populism as "proto-fascism" and claims that the core of populism is the illusion of the people as a "substantial identity" (Žižek 2006b:198).

The claim that the populist conception of the people is in fact much more complex than this can be corroborated by a brief consideration of Scandinavian (that is, Norwegian and, above all, Danish) populism. First, it should be noted that neither the Danish and Norwegian Progress Parties, nor the Danish People's Party[4] affiliate themselves with the anti-democratic, let alone fascist traditions of the European Right. On the contrary, anti-fascist and anti-Nazi posturing plays a very important role in the rhetoric of all of these parties. In this sense it is not fortuitous that the history of contemporary Danish populism can plausibly be seen as beginning with Mogens Glistrup's incongruous comparison – which in 1971 sent shockwaves through the Danish political system – of tax evaders with railway saboteurs fighting the German occupation forces during World War II. Through this strategy the political elite itself was turned into the heirs of Nazism – oppressors if not foreign occupiers and tyrants who despise the common people whom they have subjected to their rule.

With the steeply rising salience of immigration in Scandinavian populism, this reference to the German occupation – with its concomitant themes of collaboration, treason and heroic resistance – has only increased in importance. In the columns of *Dansk Folkeblad* (the monthly magazine of the Danish People's Party), immigration-friendly policies are constantly compared to the controversial Danish "policy of collaboration" during World War II, if not to outright treason. It is, of course, also this importance of the immigration issue which makes it so tempting to identify the populist people with a nationalist, if not fascist organically integrated people. But the people to whom the Norwegian Progress Party and the Danish People's Party appeal is not just a people defined in positive terms as a wholesome and culturally unified people. It is also a people defined in negative terms – as an excluded and despised common people. This is the people that has "no part in anything" (Rancière 1998:9) – those who are ignored and scorned as lacking in lofty humanitarian values and proper cultural and aesthetic qualifications.[5] This people exist only in terms of the wrong done to it by the elites. Here it may be hypothesized that if populist leaders such as Pia Kjærsgaard in Denmark

and Carl I. (and Eli!) Hagen in Norway are highly effective in articulating this wrong, it is also because they succeed to an extraordinary extent in embodying it themselves. Their peculiar charisma resides to a large extent in their ability to attract elitist contempt and rage. In Denmark, the massive vilification of Pia Kjærsgaard in Danish newspaper cartoons – as a witch, a snake, a rat, as excrement etc. – was meticulously documented some years ago by one of her supporters in a book significantly entitled *The Icon of Evil* (Cain 2000, 2006). In the context of this unbridled vilification Pia Kjærsgaard could only appear as a kind of people's martyr who, by assuming the ridicule, contempt, if not outright hatred of the elite gives body to an otherwise inarticulate scorned and excluded people.

To the extent that populism consistently feeds on scorn and vilification, it must also be viewed as the art of generating scorn and vilification. Hence the importance of provocation in much contemporary Western European populism.[6] The people of populism manifests itself, to a large extent, as a provocation of elite taboos – of "political correctness". In Denmark this art of provocation has been a crucial dimension of populism ever since Mogens Glistrup whose political career can be viewed as a series of (increasingly less effective) provocations. Today this brand of populism is articulated most consistently by Søren Espersen, MP and former press secretary of the Danish People's Party, who extols on a regular basis the salutary effects of provocation – of vulgarity, profanity and bad taste.[7] Paradoxically, this has led him into embracing the very tradition of leftist provocative art against which Danish populism started to mobilize in the 1960s (Klingsey 2006). Thus, the people promoted here is not a wholesome organic people. It is an unpolished, incorrigible people, unreceptive to elitist efforts at moral uplifting.

The importance of this conception of the people is evident from the fact that it forms the crucial background even for the prominence of nationalism in the Danish People's Party. The Danish People's Party never tires of reminding its adherents that the elite scorns the very idea of national belonging (see, e.g., Krarup 2006). The elite views national belonging as vulgar, if not morally unacceptable. In this sense national belonging is by itself popular. Attachment to the nation is an attribute of the scorned and excluded people, and in this sense the Danish People's Party's conspicuous manifestations of national belonging are not just an illusory belief in substantial identity – in a homogenous national people – but also provocative assertions of an incorrigible common people unashamed of its simple, if not vulgar national instincts.

Conclusion: Populism and Para-politics

In the preceding section I have argued that the people of contemporary right-wing populism cannot be reduced – as Rancière seems to do himself – to "the archaic power of birth". I have tried to show that, in addition to this people, there is a "supplementary" people of no entitlement which is not unrelated to Rancière's people of democratic contestations.[8] In that sense populism would seem to be at least as close to democracy as it is to fascism. This point can be corroborated by empirical observations. If one takes a quick look at current Western European right-wing populism, it should be clear that it has not (any amount of xenophobia notwithstanding) degraded into a delirious project to create a glorious and uncontaminated "People-One". What today seems most remarkable about

right-wing populism is not its "extremism", but rather the extent to which has become a part of political normalcy in Western European democracies (Denmark would be a prime example of this). Here, Rancière might be exploited for one last thesis – i.e. that the reason for this slightly surprising compatibility of right-wing populism with liberal democracy is that populism and liberal democracy are both versions of that kind of politics which Rancière calls "para-politics". In Rancière, para-politics (which appears first in Aristotle) is basically a compromise between politics and police, between the excess of the people and the integrated order of proper parts (1998a:72). In modern so-called democracy (so-called, not because it is fake, but because, to Rancière, democracy is not a form of government) this compromise assumes the form of popular sovereignty (2005:84). Through popular sovereignty the excess of the people is included within police order. From being an improper part it is turned into a proper whole. Even if populism is in most cases a denunciation of the illusions (or frauds) of popular sovereignty, it can itself be considered as an instance of this para-political logic. It manifests the excess of the people, but it simultaneously turns this excess itself into a principle of sovereignty. If right-wing populist parties can claim to represent "the people" and if this claim is surprisingly rarely contested in spite of the fact that they represent only relatively small numerical minorities, this is because they embody "commonness" and succeed in turning this commonness into the exclusive principle of community.[9] It manifests the sheer facticity of the people, but simultaneously naturalizes this facticity as the givenness of tradition and culture. In this sense populism is neither a form of proto-fascism, as Žižek believes, nor the epitome of radical politics, as Laclau believes, but a particular version of that para-political compromise between politics and police which constitutes the mainstream in modern democracies. If there nevertheless is a certain discomfort with populism, a certain feeling that it is "at the edges of democracy" (Arditi 2005: 7) that may be due to the very para-political nature of populism. Put differently, it may be due to the fact that since populism manifests the excess of the people in a particularly strong way it also has to absorb that excess in a particularly strong way – that is, in a way that is especially if not brutally exclusionary.

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Notes

1 Here lots of studies have been devoted to populism in terms of the dynamics of electoral behaviour, the position of populist parties within party structures etc.
2 On the logics of differentialism and equivalence, see also Laclau 1996.
3 As Laclau himself notes (2005a: 85f.) this choice is significant in at least two respects. First, you only demand what you miss and social demands therefore point to a dimension of social lack. Second, a demand is always addressed to some kind of power figure supposed to be able to remedy this lack. In this sense the very choice of social demands as the elementary category foreshadows the basic structure of Laclau's theory of populism.
4 The Danish Progress Party was founded by Mogens Glistrup in 1972 while the Norwegian Progress Party was founded by Anders Lange in 1973. In the politological literature on populism these two parties are often cited as the first instances of neo-populism in Western Europe. In 1995 a faction of the Danish Progress Party led by Pia Kjærsgaard broke away from the Progress Party to form the Danish People's Party. In subsequent elections they decisively

defeated the Progress Party which has today all but disappeared from the Danish political scene. While the anti-taxation, anti-bureaucracy agenda of the 1970s Progress Parties is still very much alive in the Norwegian Progress Party, the rhetoric of neo-liberalism has largely been abandoned by the Danish People's Party which focuses instead on promoting a nationalist version of welfarism in direct competition with the Social Democrats. It may certainly be argued that the consistent support of the Danish People's Party for the reforms of the Liberal-Conservative government is evidence that, in spite of its welfarist rhetoric, the Danish People's Party is still permeated by neo-liberal thinking. So far, however, the Danish left has not been very successful in questioning the welfarist credentials of the Danish People's Party.

5 On this subject, see Marsdal 2008 on the Norwegian case and Lykkeberg 2008 on the Danish case.

6 Outside Scandinavia, examples such as the late Jörg Haider in Austria and, perhaps most extravagantly, Umberto Bossi in Italy could be cited. As shown by Andre Gingrich, Jörg Haider consistently cultivated an image as the rebel of Austrian politics ("Better to be a wolf in a sheep's clothing than a sheep in a wolf's clothing" – a phrase which featured prominently in the so-called "Haider rap" played at Haider's public meetings (Gingrich 2002: 77).) Haider's controversial comments on the Nazi era should probably be understood in terms of such an art of provocation rather than as the expression of an unrepentant Nazi worldview. As for Umberto Bossi, he has cultivated his own brand of obscene political rhetoric referred to in Italy as *celodurismo* (derived from one of Bossi's most infamous pronouncements, "La Lega ce l'ha duro!" – "The League has a hard-on!" (McCarthy 1997: 343)). As a result of his delirious discourse and extreme rhetorical violence, Bossi has himself been exposed to an extraordinary amount of contempt and ridicule. For a time, at least, this allowed him to play with some success the role of "martyr of the North". For a detailed account of Bossi's political performance, see DeMatteo 2007.

7 This celebration of vulgarity forms an important undercurrent of the uncompromising stance in favour of "freedom of speech" dominating the Danish public sphere during the Mohammed cartoon crisis in 2006. On the one hand freedom of speech was defended in universalist terms – as a universally valid principle of democracy and civilized society. On the other hand it was defended in populist terms – as a Danish popular propensity for direct, artless if not rude speech unacceptable to the piety of Islamic fundamentalists as well as to the political correctness of leftist elites. Thus, freedom of speech was celebrated at once as a requirement of civilization and as a right to unrestrained vulgarity (see especially Klingsey 2006). Like any other empty signifier, the commitment to freedom of speech probably drew much of its strength from being interpreted in such contradictory ways.

8 As a further way to disentangle populism from totalitarianism one might hypothesize that the claim of movements of a more or less totalitarian bent (from Jacobinism to Communism and Fascism) is not, in fact, that the people exists as a substantial identity. Their claim is that the people *shall* exist as a substantial identity (this is acknowledged by Žižek himself on various occasions, e.g. 2006a: 559, 2002 (1991): 261-262) Thus, the substantial identity of the people is to be created and this creation always entails, to a greater or lesser extent, the destruction of the people in its facticity. To totalitarianism the facticity of the people is a residue or an impediment. In contrast, populism is always an insistence on the dense facticity of the people – on the people in all its bruteness and incorrigibility. This does not, however, prevent populism from turning this facticity itself into a principle of substantial identity. This is exactly what happens in national-conservative populism where the *facticity* of the people becomes the *givenness* of tradition and culture. This kind of articulation is fundamental in populism, and it is for this reason that, as I shall briefly suggest below, it may be considered a form of "para-politics" in the Rancièrian sense.

9 This logic is especially clear in the slogan of the Norwegian Progress Party: "For folk som de er flest" ("For people as they mostly are"). The Progress Party is not, exactly, "for most people" but "for people as they mostly are". "The people" emerges not from any kind of numerical considerations, but from commonness as a (non)-quality. In this sense, the people of the Progress Party is, in the terms used earlier, basically the improper rather than the proper majority. But the point is that this improper majority is immediately turned into an exclusive principle of community.

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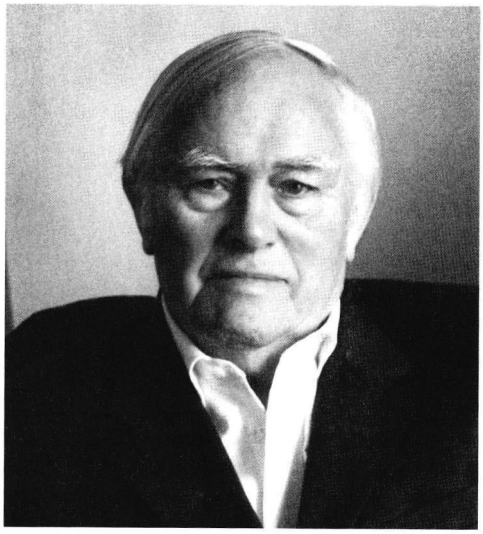
Brynjulf Alver 1924–2009



In *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 1983 I had the pleasure to present Brynjulf Alver, then newly appointed professor of folkloristics at the University of Bergen. It now brings a sense of sadness to have to announce his death in the same journal. He was born on 28 September 1924 and passed away on 21 February 2009.

He used to call himself "Old Brynjulf" in his capacity as *senex* in the department that he helped to create. He nevertheless retained his often burlesque wit throughout his life. During a couple of periods when I was visiting professor at the department I met him almost every day, and a meeting with Brynjulf could not leave anyone unmoved. Alongside Bente Alver and Reimund Kvideland, he had built up a department that, in terms of social competence, was unparalleled in Scandinavia. Anyone who entered the door at 19 Olav Ryes Vej in Bergen immediately sensed that, whether in everyday life or on festive occasions. This did not mean that internal differences of opinion did not occur at times, but outwardly the department showed its strength and individuality, not infrequently as a polemical contrast to Oslo.

Brynjulf Alver was a *Stril* and thus bore the stamp of his West Norwegian cultural heritage. Although his roots went back a long way, the culture was very much alive, and it was the living folklore that Brynjulf wanted to capture. This gave research in Bergen its profile, as expressed, for instance, in the journal *Tradisjon*. Whereas many older folklorists searched for origins, Brynjulf was interested in the contemporary function of folklore. This is particularly exemplified in his studies of the ballad *Draumkvedet,* the origin of which he sought in the living ballad tradition of the sixteenth century and not, as earlier scholars had done, in the Middle Ages.

Not least of all, the living tradition included folk music, another of Brynjulf's research fields, as strongly expressed in the book *Og fela ho let: Norsk spelemannstradisjon*, produced in collaboration with the fiddler Arne Bjørndal (1964). This orientation also made him an important pillar of the Ole Bull Academy.

Brynjulf Alver played an important role as a publisher of folkloristic texts. His last and perhaps most important contribution is the publication of Olea Crøger's collection of songs from Telemark in the 1840s and 1850s, which was given the beautiful floral title *Lilja bære blomster i enge* (2004), written along with Reimund Kvideland and Astrid Nora Ressem.

Brynjulf Alver became known to a wider audience through his book *Dag og merke* (Day and Designation), based on a very large corpus of material, which appeared in two editions.

The large number of visiting scholars over the years in Bergen was in no small measure due to Brynjulf's efforts. As director of the Nordic Institute of Folklore 1968–69 he had striven to create a broad network of contacts. This was reflected at his funeral at Alversund church on 3 March 2009.

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Lund

Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Professor in Åbo

The chair of folkloristics at Åbo Akademi is unique, being probably the only one in the world where tuition is in Swedish and most of the research concerns Swedish-language material. In Sweden the subject has been amalgamated with ethnology. Moreover, the history of the chair has been chequered. First it was linked to musicology, then it was detached from that subject and led a languishing life. In 1981, when Ulrika Wolf-Knuts came to the subject as part-time lecturer, it began to gain stability. She became full-time lecturer in 1985 and professor in 1999.

Ulrika Wolf-Knuts is now about sixty. She grew up in Åbo and studied history of religion. Folk beliefs began to interest her at an early stage. As a student she wrote essays about the werewolf and about the symbolism of the tree in Siberian votive cults. In her licentiate dissertation from 1974 she investigated the concepts of folk religion, universal religion, and folk belief, with special reference to beliefs about the Virgin Mary in Nordic spells. Here she was able to combine, in an eminent way, her knowledge of history of religion with an interest in folklore.

Wolf-Knuts took her doctorate at Åbo Akademi in 1991 in the subject of folkloristics, with a prize-winning dissertation on beliefs about the devil. The material consisted of records of folk tradition mainly from Vörå in Österbotten. An interesting observation she made was that the devil did not have wholly negative features in folk belief. He could even help humans in some cases. The devil can therefore be perceived as a trickster with both negative and positive properties.

Another sphere of interest is research history. She has written about Johan Oskar Immanuel Rancken, one of the pioneers of folklore studies, and about folk poetry and its recorders. Yet another research field is nostalgia. She has written about Finland-Swedes in South Africa, about their emigration, memories, and nostalgia. She has written about the multivalent character of identity in the article "Den mångbottnade identiteten" in the volume *Finlandssvensk identitet och kultur* (1995).

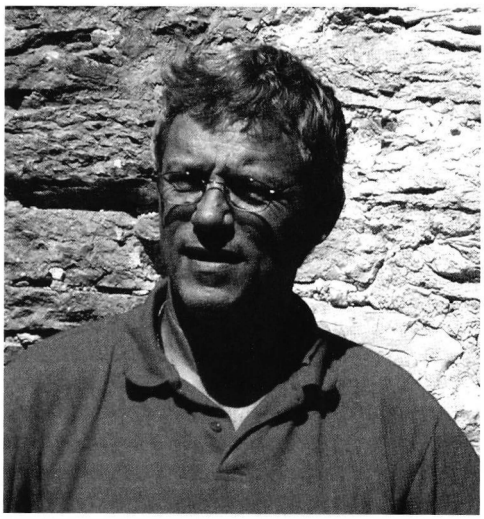
Wolf-Knuts' efforts on behalf of folkloristics at Åbo Akademi cannot be overestimated. It is she who has built it up into an independent subject, preserving the subject's research traditions while simultaneously giving it the potential for development that it offers today. She has demonstrated great breadth as a researcher and has developed folkloristics into a contemporary branch of the cultural sciences. Her versatility has had the result that staff and students at all levels are happy with the subject and the work environment. She is very well liked by the students. She has taken pains to develop the teaching and she introduced alternative forms of examination early on. She is an exceptional supervisor at doctoral level as well.

Wolf-Knuts has been awarded several prizes for her research, both in Sweden (Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademiens Fond and the Artur Prize from Skansen and the Nordiska Museet) and in Finland, including the Mauritz Hallberg Prize for her dissertation. As lecturer and professor at Åbo Akademi she has established a large network of contacts with scholars in Finland, Scandinavia, and the rest of Europe. She was coordinator of the Nordic Network of Folklore 1997–2001 and coordinator of the NorFa project *The Folklorist's Fieldwork and Archiving as a Process* 1998–2001. She has also coordinated the EU Commission's project *Migration, Minority, Compensation* 1999–2001. Since 2006 she has been chair of the working group for Ethnology of Religion. She was editor of *Arv – Nordic Yearbook of Folklore* 1993–2002. Since 2002 she has been a member of the Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters.

Alongside all that she has had a great many positions of trust at Åbo Akademi and is at present first vice-rector. We have here, then, a professor who has made a solid contribution to folkloristics at Åbo Akademi, and also to the subject at a Nordic and international level, and will continue in that spirit for several years to come.

Nils G. Holm, Åbo

Owe Ronström, Professor at Gotland University



Owe Ronström was promoted to professor of ethnology at Gotland University in 2003. Before he returned to his home town of Visby as a university lecturer in 1998, he had studied and worked in Stockholm. In 1992 he got his doctorate in ethnology at Stockholm University with a dissertation entitled *Att gestalta ett ursprung. En musiketnologisk studie av dansande och musicerande bland jugoslaver i Stockholm.* (Giving form to an origin: an ethnomusical study of dancing and music-making among Yugoslavs in Stockholm). He has led and worked in several research projects, linked to different institutions such as Institutet för folklivsforskning, Stockholm University, the University College of Dance, the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, and the Multicultural Centre at Botkyrka, just to give some examples. His latest project has resulted in the book *Kulturarvspolitik. Visby. Från sliten småstad till medeltidsikon* (Cultural heritage politics. Visby. From worn-down small town to medieval icon, 2007).

Ronström is a diligent researcher and writer in several fields, which he himself summarizes as "music, dance, ethnicity, multiculture, age, and heritage", topics which are often linked together in different, interesting combinations such as music, dance and the formation of identity among pensioners in Sweden; music, media, multiculture: changing musicscapes in Sweden; making use of history: the revival of the bagpipe in Sweden in the 1980s. He has always worked internationally, mainly in Eastern Europe, as shown by articles about for instance Bulgarian weddings, a village feast in Macedonia, and dancing in Hungary. He has edited several books, both on his own and together with other researchers from different disciplines, and has published many articles in Swedish as well as international journals and books. In brief, Ronström's list of publications shows that he is a scholar with many contacts, ethnological and interdisciplinary, Swedish and international. His research is characterized by a stimulating curiosity, intellectual appetite, and a high degree of independence in relation to main-stream research.

Ronström has also got other qualifications than the purely academic ones, even if the two are linked. He is an active musician, who writes music, plays in the bands "Orientexpressen" and "Gunnfjauns kapell", and is director of "Gotlands Balalajkaorkester". For the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation Ronström has produced several hundred radio programs about music in different parts of the world. He has also made a film about Calus, a dance and music ritual in Romania. My personal opinion is that in the Swedish academic landscape today ethnology at Gotland University is highly interesting, as regards both research and teaching, thanks to Owe Ronström as well as his colleague professor Ulf Palmenfelt and other Visby ethnologists.

Birgitta Skarin Frykman, Göteborg

Tove Ingebjørg Fjell, Professor in Bergen

Tove Ingebjørg Fjell has been promoted to the rank of Professor of Cultural Studies University of Bergen, from September 2008. Professionally, she began her career as an anthropologist, earning her *cand. polit.* degree at the UiB in 1989, moving on as a research fellow in the Department of Ethnology and Folkloristics. In 1990, she earned her doctoral degree at the UiB. She has served as Assistant Professor (1996–98) and Associate Professor (1998–2008), at the as of now Department of Archeology, History, and Cultural Studies and Religion.

In her research, she has been concerned mainly with three domains: cultural perspectives on health, illness, and body; gender and family; and research methods and ethics of research.

Her doctoral thesis, *Blikket vendes: Fødsel i endring,* was a study of the formation of the birthing system in late modernity, based on interviews with midwives and women giving birth and observations of modes of interaction between them. Looking at developments in Norwegian maternity wards from the 1980s onwards, she saw growing opposition to the modern birthing service and its emphasis on efficiency, rationality and risk awareness. She pursued the rising demands, within the professional sector, for non-biomedical features of closeness and individual attention and considered the tensions between the demand for individual solutions and unique birthing experiences, and the desire for that which is considered original, natural, genuine, general and thus inevitably conventional. Her work furnished deeper insight into issues relating to reproduction in a comparative perspective, and led to the development of research networks and comparative studies within the Nordic countries and internationally.

Increasingly, Fjell's research has focused on issues relating to voluntary and involuntary childlessness. She has approached the issues from a variety of angles in a series of projects, resulting in, for example, an article entitled "Childfree women – desirable or deplorable? An essay on women who live their lives happily without giving birth and how they are perceived." (*Ethnologia Scandinavica* 2005). This article is based on interviews with a group of childfree women and a group of *formerly* childless women who have since become adoptive mothers. Here, she looks at perceptions of parenthood within the two groups, and whether the childfree informants consider their childfreedom to be a matter of choice, and how they feel they were perceived by the people around them. In a book published in 2008, *Å si nei til meningen med livet? En kulturvitenskapelig analyse av barnfrihet* [Saying no to the meaning of life? A cultural study of childfreedom] themed on normality and the choice to remain childfree], she has given further elaboration of problems associated with childfreedom. The book has received considerable attention and has generated public debate.

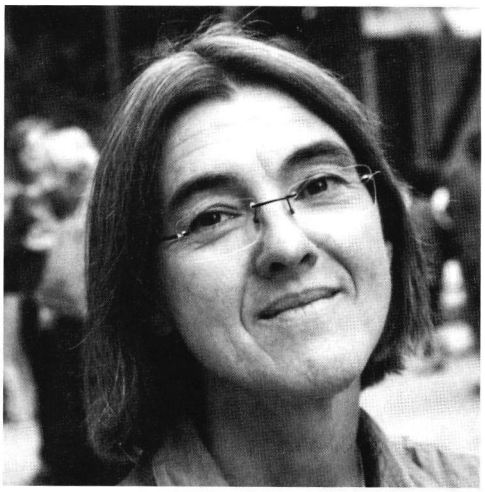
Throughout her research career Fjell has maintained an interest in new perspectives of qualitative methodology and ethics of research. An article entitled "Research in the minefield of privacy and intimacy: About the problems of consent" appeared in an FFC publication, *Research ethics in studies of culture and social life* (2007), a collection of articles by an international group of scholars. She was also a co-editor of this anthology.

In her research, Fjell has made good use of various forms of internet sources and has become particularly concerned with ethical challenges raised by their use in research. She has raised questions of the relationship between what is published and what is made public in virtual space, and the challenges associated with the anonymisation of internet sources.

Generally, Tove Ingebjørg Fjell is a brave and innovative researcher, bringing up new and significant questions contributing to stimulating debate among students and researchers as well as in the public domain. For the research and teaching environment of her department at the UiB she is a resource person of high standing.

Bente Gullveig Alver, Bergen

Barbro Blehr, Professor in Stockholm



Barbro Blehr received her Ph.D. in European ethnology from the Department of European Ethnology at the University of Stockholm in 1994, where she has been teaching and doing research since 1990. In 2000 she was made associate professor and since then she has also been visiting professor of folkloristics at Oslo University.

Her dissertation is a study of the social life in a rural community in Northern Sweden (*Lokala gemenskaper: En studie av en nordsvensk by på 1980-talet*) from 1994. It is not a classic community study but rather a discussion of the conditions for local togetherness and interaction. What is a local community and how are cultural worlds built and delineated? These are the general questions she applies to her material in a very reflective way.

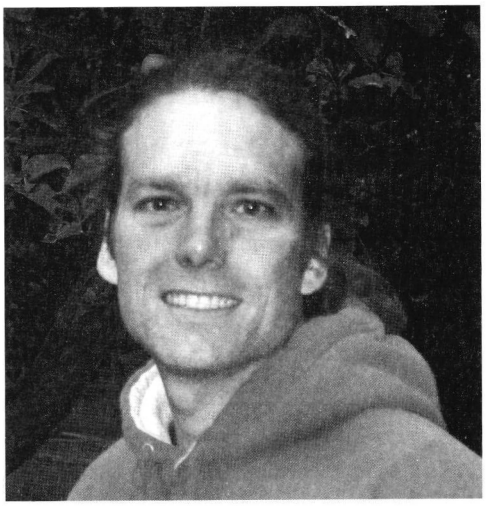
The dissertation mirrors the profile of much of Blehr's research and writings, her interests in questions of reflexivity, in methods and culture theory. The theme of social inclusion and exclusion is carried further in her studies of Norwegian national day celebrations. In her book *En norsk besvärjelse: 17 maj-firande vid 1900-talets slut* ("A Norwegian Invocation: Celebrating May 17 at the End of the Twentieth Century") from 2000 she focuses on the tensions between rhetoric and practice in this public event. She shows how different experiences and interpretations are hidden behind a façade of togetherness and historical continuity, and how participants charge this ritual with different meanings. For example, she explores to what extent and in what ways immigrants are allowed inside this symbolic space. She examines experiences of taking part in the parades and the ways in which they are sedimented in the body, as feelings and memories

The interest in public rituals is carried further in a study of Norwegian royal weddings, where she shows how such events can serve as a seismographic terrain, where feelings, political ideas and public opinions surface and are confronted. In a later paper, *Working, moving, visiting: On the quality of everyday rituals,* she discusses the differences between routines and rituals.

She has edited a Festschrift for Åke Daun on the theme of "critical ethnology" and there she returns to her general interest in the production of knowledge, discussing problems of ethics, politics and objectivity in ethnological research.

In Swedish ethnology Barbro Blehr takes the role of a sharp and inspiring debater of theoretical and methodological issues, as well as a reflexive critic of new and old trends. This is not only evident in her publications but also in her very readable reviews. She has constantly been engaged in a fruitful discussion of the dialogue between anthropological theory and ethnological research, but has also worked as a link between Swedish and Norwegian research settings.
Orvar Löfgren, Lund

Thomas O'Dell, Professor in Helsingborg



Tom O'Dell has been appointed professor of ethnology at Service Management, Campus Helsingborg, Lund University. He was born in 1962 and grew up in the small town of Andover near Boston, Massachusetts. His mother was Swedish, and after a career as bass guitarist in the hard-rock band SinnerzToyz and jobs in a computer factory, an advertising agency, and a bank, Tom moved to Sweden to become an anthropologist. In 1986 he attended Wik Folk High School in order to learn Swedish. One of the set books was *Den kultiverade människan* (*Culture Builders*), which prompted him to choose ethnology instead. But before that he took his M.A. at the University of Minnesota and worked in long-stay care in Östersund.

In 1997 O'Dell took his doctorate in ethnology at Lund University with the dissertation *Culture Unbound: Americanization and Everyday Life in Sweden*. It deals with the way everyday life in Sweden has undergone influence from the USA and how these influences have been Swedified. The monograph *Spas and the Cultural Economy of Sensuous Magic and Hospitality* (in press) is a study of spas in Sweden as part of the so-called experience industry. Two collections of articles on the same theme, *Nonstop! Turist i upplevelseindustrialismen* (1999) and *Upplevelsens materialitet* (2002), are used as textbooks at Service Management and elsewhere.

O'Dell's articles, not least "Øresund and the Regionauts", about a bike race at the opening of the Öresund Bridge, show his ability to combine lively accounts of his own participation in events (on commuter trains, in bowling alleys, at spas, or among tens of thousands of expectant cyclists) with a well thought-out theoretical discussion. O'Dell is highly skilled in the ethnological art of discovering the remarkable in the seemingly trivial and examining such things with the concepts of cultural analysis.

In some texts O'Dell problematizes simplistic ideas about the meanings of "Swedishness". Above all he is critical of the role played by media and culture research in maintaining a stereotyped image of Swedish mentality. What happens to those who do not conform to it?

Since 2000 O'Dell has worked on developing a master's programme and new postgraduate education at Service Management. He has simultaneously directed an interdisciplinary Swedish/Danish research project on the study of tourism in the Öresund region.

Billy Ehn, Umeå

Hanna Snellman, Professor in Jyväskylä

Hanna Snellman, born in Sodankylä, Finnish Lapland in 1961, completed her Ph.D. in Ethnology from the University of Helsinki in 1997. She was appointed Professor of Ethnology at the University of Jyväskylä in 2009. She has had a long career as a university teacher and researcher. She has been Research Associate / Research Fellow of Finno-ugric Ethnology at the University of Helsinki, an Academy Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland, a Visiting Researcher at CEIFO, University of Stockholm, a Visiting Professor (Finnish Chair) at Lakehead University, Canada and a Collegium Research Fellow at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies.

Snellman's Ph.D. Dissertation *Tukkilaisen tulo ja lähtö* [Lumberjacks of Finnish Lapland: Requiem of an Era] analyzes the occupation of forest and river-driving workers from different perspectives combining various types of source material. Such topics as the vicissitudes of the occupation as well as the status of the workers are discussed over a time period of a hundred years, the era when being a lumberjack was a common occupation in northern Finland. This study already foreshadows Snellman's future interests in how incipient globalization reverberated in ordinary people's lives, especially among those whose livelihood was based on forestry in one way or another. Alongside classical ethnological questions, the dissertation includes theoretical contemplation with particular inspiration from cultural analysis. The same also applies to her other monograph, *Sallan suurin kylä – Göteborg* [The Largest Village of the Salla Parish – Gothenburg] (2003), which is mainly based on Snellman's fieldwork in Gothenburg. This study deals with immigrants from Finnish Lapland, in particular from the parish of Salla by the Russian border, who resided in Gothenburg, Southern Sweden. For the first time, two strong Finnish research traditions were combined, labor history and migration history. Snellman is also a pioneer in the sense that she studies immigrants both from the emigration and immigration points of view. Snellman's small-scale monograph *Khants' Time* (2001) is an address on the topical question of how fieldwork material collected by the pioneers of ethnology can be re-read and interpreted again. *The Road Taken* (2005) sketches a picture of rural Finnish workers first being settled and then becoming desolated. In her articles Snellman deals with very different topics varying from the coat of arms as an identity project to the chainsaw revolution.

Snellman is a member of various Nordic, European and North American research networks and projects, and is also funded by international research councils. She is also very active in learned societies. She is on the Editorial Board of the Hiidenkivi journal and is the Editor-in-Chief of Studia Fennica Ethnologica and the Associate Editor of the Journal of Finnish Studies, which is published in Michigan, USA.

Juhani U.E. Lehtonen, Helsinki

New Dissertations

Musik und Politik im Schatten des Nationalsozialismus

Petra Garberding, Musik och politik i skuggan av nazismen. Kurt Atterberg och de svensk-tyska musikrelationerna. (Music and Politics in the Shadow of Nazism. Kurt Atterberg and Swedish-German Musical Relations). Sekel Bokförlag, Lund 2007. 293 S. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-85767-08-3.

■ In ihrer 2007 erschienenen Dissertation widmet sich Petra Garberding den schwedisch-deutschen Beziehungen in den Jahren des Nationalsozialismus, indem sie ihren Blick konkret auf die Zusammenarbeit der Länder in Sachen Musik richtet. Als Fallbeispiel dient ihr hierbei der schwedische Komponist Kurt Atterberg (1887–1974).

Im Laufe der Untersuchung veranschaulicht die Ethnologin, wie Musik als politisches Werkzeug eingesetzt wurde, welche Vorstellungen über ethnische und nationale Identität existierten und wie nationale Geschichtsschreibung – ausgehend von diesen Vorstellungen – gestaltet bzw. umgestaltet wurde.

Garberdings Untersuchungen verdeutlichen, dass die bilateralen Musikbeziehungen stark durch sich unterscheidende Auffassungen des Zusammenhangs von Musik und Politik geprägt waren. So wurde Musik in Deutschland als politisches Werkzeug benutzt, mit Hilfe dessen nationalsozialistische Ideologien ausgedrückt und untermauert wurden. In Schweden hingegen wurde Musik nicht als Teil eines politischen Diskurses verstanden. Aus diesem Grund konnten schwedische Musiker ihr Engagement in Deutschland als einzig im Dienste der Musik stehende Tätigkeit auffassen, einzig im Dienste der Musik stehende. Da kulturnationalistische Vorstellungen in Deutschland jedoch innerhalb eines politischen Diskurses benutzt und mit rassenbiologischen Argumenten legitimiert wurden, bekam Atterbergs musikalische Arbeit in Deutschland, die ebenfalls auf einer kulturnationalistischen Überzeugung fußte, notgedrungen eine politische Dimension.

Das Beispiel Atterbergs scheint besonders geeignet für diese Untersuchung, da er eine zentrale Stellung im schwedischen Musikleben einnahm und ein wichtiges Verbindungsglied innerhalb der schwedisch-deutschen Musikbeziehungen darstellte: Außer als Komponist und Dirigent war er als Musikkritiker einschlägiger Zeitungen tätig, hatte eine führende Rolle in wichtigen Zusammenschlüssen wie etwa dem Verein Schwedischer Komponisten (FST), dem Internationalen Musikbüro Schwedischer Komponisten (STIM), der Königlich Musikalischen Akademie (KMA), war der Korrespondent in Schweden für musikalische Ereignisse in Deutschland und war als Repräsentant Schwedens im Ständigen Rat für die Internationale Zusammenarbeit der Komponisten vertreten, einem von den Nationalsozialisten initiierten Organ der Reichsmusikkammer.

Auch die Quellenlage um Atterberg bietet einen optimalen Ausgangpunkt für eine gründliche Untersuchung: Material zu ihm befindet sich in Archiven in Schweden, Deutschland, Island und Österreich. Im Zentrum der Beachtung steht selbstverständlich das reichhaltige Material des Atterberg-Archivs im Musikmuseum Stockholm. Es beinhaltet die gesamten Memoiren und rund 10.000 Briefe des Komponisten. Zusätzlich zum schriftlichen Primärmaterial benutzt Garberding mündliche Quellen wie beispielsweise Radioprogramme und zieht außerdem Interviews mit heute lebenden Komponisten heran.

Methodisch baut die Untersuchung auf einem von Ruth Wodak ausgearbeiteten Modell der kritischen Diskursanalyse auf. Dabei wird der Inhalt des Textes berücksichtigt und dessen argumentative Strategien beleuchtet. Schließlich ist die sprachliche Realisierungsform Gegenstand der Analyse.

Garberdings Buch ist in sieben Kapitel aufgeteilt. Eingeleitet wird es von einem Kapitel, das auf den theoretischen Ausgangspunkt eingeht, und einem weiteren, das dem Leser einen historischen Überblick über die allgemeine Situation des Musiklebens dieser Zeit gewährt. Garberding sieht eine Verwandtschaft zwischen der Problematik, der sich die Komponisten in Schweden und Deutschland gegenübergestellt sahen. Damit sind unter anderem die schnellen Veränderungen auf technischem Gebiet gemeint und eine schnellere, sowie leichtere Verbreitung der Musik, die sich der Kontrolle der Komponisten entzog. Die Folge war eine verstärkte Bürokratisierung des Musiklebens in Form von Musikerorganisationen und das Streben nach einer stärkeren internationalen Verankerung der Rechte zum Schutze der Komponisten.

Anhand der Berichterstattung über konkrete Ereignisse, wie etwa dem deutschen Komponistentreffen in Berlin 1934 oder dem Musikfest in Hamburg 1935,

zeigt Garberding in Kapitel drei, dass die nationalsozialistische Anreicherung deutscher Worte bei einer Übersetzung ins Schwedische nicht mittransportiert wird. Der deutlich rassenbiologische Akzent der deutschen Berichterstattung entfällt somit bei Atterberg.

Kulturnationalistische Vorstellungen, die zu dieser Zeit in vielen europäischen Ländern tief verwurzelt waren, begünstigten eine internationale Zusammenarbeit, da diese als Stärkung der eigenen nationalen Kultur und des nationalen Bewusstseins gesehen wurde. Musik als Exportware warf jedoch Fragen auf und führte zu Konflikten innerhalb Schwedens, da keinesfalls Übereinstimmung über die richtige Repräsentation im Ausland herrschte. Garberding beleuchtet Atterbergs Haltung in der Sache: Er benutzte die Musikfeste dazu, die von ihm bevorzugte Musik zu verbreiten, und wurde folgerichtig als undemokratisch kritisiert.

Kapitel vier beschäftigt sich mit der Rezeption nordischer Musik in Deutschland – wiederum konkretisiert durch Atterberg als Fallbeispiel. Von einer populären Vorstellung über den Norden als schönes, unberührtes Paradies genährt, wurde skandinavische Musik als „gesunde Injektion" verstanden. In vorliegendem Kapitel geht es außerdem um die Problematik, die im Umfeld von Atterbergs Zusammenarbeit mit jüdischen Librettisten entstand, sowie um die ambivalente Haltung des Komponisten in dieser Frage.

In Kapitel fünf nimmt Garberding die Gestaltung des nationalen Musiklebens in Schweden unter die Lupe. Am Beispiel von Atterbergs Agieren im Falle Moses Pergaments und Issay Dobrowens zeigt sie, wie Atterberg zwar keine offen antisemitische Haltung einnahm, sich jedoch aus vermeintlich musikalischen Gründen in gewissen Fällen gegen jüdische Musiker entschied. Sobald Atterberg das schwedische Kulturleben zu Gunsten eines „falschen" Musikgeschmackes bedroht sah, bediente er sich eines an den Nationalsozialismus angelehnten Sprachgebrauchs und hatte somit teil an einem rassistischen Diskurs.

Das folgende Kapitel dreht sich um die Geschichtsschreibung der Nachkriegszeit und die Verwaltung des Erbes von 1933–45. Veranschaulicht wird dies durch eine Diskussion über die Nazivorwürfe gegen Atterberg, die von der KMA untersucht und in deren Folge er freigesprochen wurde. Die Schwierigkeit und gleichzeitig der Unterschied zur Entnazifizierung in Deutschland bestand in den fehlenden, offiziell festgelegten Richtlinien, die darüber Auskunft gaben, wann Verhalten oder Sprachgebrauch als nationalsozialistisch zu werten waren. Atterberg, der – wie viele weitere Künstler – in seiner nachträglichen Argumentation völliges Desinteresse an der Politik angab, benutzte nationalsozialistische Musikpolitik als Werkzeug, um die eigenen musikästhetischen Überzeugungen zu verbreiten. Auch wenn er niemals aus einer grundlegend nationalsozialistischen Haltung handelte, teilte er gewisse kulturpolitische Ansichten mit den Nationalsozialisten und bewirkte durch sein Handeln eine Legitimierung der nationalsozialistischen Ideologie. Atterberg kann als Fallbeispiel für einen „unpolitischen" Musiker begriffen werden, der einerseits innerhalb des nationalsozialistischen Systems agierte und andererseits selbst zum willkommenen Werkzeug der Propaganda dieses Systems wurde.

Bald nach Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges verschwand Atterberg fast vollständig von der Bildfläche – bedingt durch eine neue Gesellschaftspolitik und neue musikästhetische Vorstellungen. Trotz seiner Rehabilitierung haftete ihm der Nazistempel bis zu seinem Tod an. Die Ursachen sind vielschichtig. Garberding sieht einen Grund in Atterbergs zuweilen undemokratischer und intoleranter Haltung denjenigen Kollegen gegenüber, deren Musikgeschmack er nicht teilte. Einen weiteren Grund sieht sie darin, dass eine gründliche Aufarbeitung von Schwedens Verhältnis zum nationalsozialistischen Deutschland lange auf sich warten ließ und einstweilen mit einer Reinigung durch Ausfrieren einzelner Personen ersetzt wurde. Doch lag in den Anklagen gegen Atterberg zuweilen auch eine Spur Rache – was die Nazivorwürfe zum Werkzeug in einem Machtkampf werden ließ.

Atterberg selbst reagierte auf die Vorwürfe mit seinen Memoiren, das heißt mit einer persönlichen Geschichtsschreibung. Darin bagatellisierte er mitunter die Problematik, womit er sich eher noch eindrücklicher in der nationalsozialistischen Geschichtsschreibung verewigte, als dass er sich daraus befreit hätte.

Bereits mit dem Umschlagsbild wirft Atterbergs Haltung Fragen auf: Das Ölgemälde von Jenny Lagerberg zeigt den Komponisten wie er – vom Betrachter aus nach links, von seiner eigenen Position aus nach rechts – schaut. Eine rote Koboldgestalt, die auf seiner Schulter tanzt, will sich nicht so recht in die naturalistische Gesamtdarstellung einfügen.

Atterberg steht nach wie vor als kontroverse Gestalt da, deren Haltung selbst nach seiner Rehabilitierung

durch die KMA und nach der Niederschrift seiner Memoiren, schwer zu fassen ist. Nach dem Lesen von Garberdings Abhandlung sind seine Motive durchsichtiger geworden, und seine Haltung ist eher zu verstehen – wenn auch nicht zu entschuldigen. Die Verantwortung wird ihm nicht abgenommen, doch statt ihn weiterhin vorschnell in die Ecke des Bösen abzuschieben, um sich der Aufarbeitung abermals entziehen zu können, wird uns ein Mensch vorgestellt, der in allen Schattierungen und widersprüchlichen Haltungen zum Greifen nahe scheint. Dies bereitet Unbehagen, da er in seinen Irrungen so menschlich ist. Und damit sind wir selbst betroffen: Eine Vergangenheit zu betrauern, die uns nahe kommt, sofern wir dies zulassen.

In ihrer Dissertation plädiert Garberding für eine Überarbeitung nationaler Geschichtsschreibung, die Schwedens Verwicklung in den Nationalsozialismus thematisiert und dieser Problematik nicht mehr aus dem Weg geht. Eindrücklich zeigt sie, wie dies weder in Selbstkritik oder Rechtfertigung münden muss, noch dass die Diskussionen durch die Frage nach der Schuld gelähmt werden müssen. Anstatt zu urteilen, ruft sie unterschiedliche Aspekte heran und lässt diese nebeneinander stehen. Wieder einmal wird deutlich, wie facettenreich das Leben ist und dass sich Widersprüchliches in einer Person vereinen kann.

Garberdings Dissertation ist eine ethnologische Studie, in der sich die Autorin eines Musikthemas annimmt. So liegt die Stärke der Arbeit auch auf der ethnologischen, weniger auf der musikwissenschaftlichen Seite. Dies zeigt sich etwa in der ungenauen Verwendung musikalischer Begriffe – wie beispielsweise Atterbergs Kategorisierung als Nationalromantiker – die im Gegensatz zu der sonst so gründlich durchgeführten Untersuchung steht. Doch gleichzeitig ist es genau der interdisziplinäre Charakter, der die Arbeit auszeichnet.

Da Garberding Atterbergs Leben als stellvertretendes Beispiel für „den Geist der Zeit" versteht, stellt ihre Dissertation keine personenhistorische Untersuchung dar. Folglich fehlen ausführlichere biografische Daten. Dies mögen diejenigen Leser bedauern, die über kein größeres Hintergrundwissen zum Komponisten verfügen. Angesichts der Tatsache, dass es sich um eine ethnologische Abhandlung dreht, ist zu vermuten, dass es sich dabei um die Mehrzahl der Leserschaft handelt.

Das Besondere an Garberdings Dissertation liegt in der Aktualität des Themas. Sie stellt einen wichtigen Baustein in der Aufarbeitung der schwedischen Vergangenheit dar. Die heutigen Debatten um das ambivalente Verhältnis wichtiger Kulturpersönlichkeiten zum nationalsozialistischen Deutschland verdeutlichen Schwedens Bedarf an Klärung zur Bewältigung der Vergangenheit. Durch Garberdings Beschäftigung mit Atterberg ist ein Stück schwedischer Geschichte erhellt worden und kann als Grundlage dienen, allmählich damit Frieden zu schließen.

Durch ihre Verwurzelung in beiden Kulturen ist Garberding besonders geeignet, sich dieses Themas anzunehmen. In Deutschland aufgewachsen und seit langem in Schweden lebend, hat sie einen Zugang zum Material aus beiden Ländern, der nicht durch Studium angeeignet, nicht angelesen werden kann. Dass dies ihre Position als Wissenschaftlerin durchaus beeinflusst, legt sie auf anschauliche Weise dar und problematisiert ihre Rolle.

Garberding hat diese Untersuchung äußerst gründlich durchgeführt. Sie lässt den Leser nie im Unklaren über jeweilige Informationswege. Ihre Art, sich dem Objekt ihrer Forschung zu nähern, wirkt respektvoll.

Die vorliegende Dissertation ist in ihrer übergreifenden Thematik von allgemeiner Relevanz: Sie ist nicht nur ein Beitrag zu den schwedisch-deutschen Beziehungen und zu Schwedens Verhältnis zum Nationalsozialismus und zum nationalsozialistischen Regime in Deutschland. Sie ist auch ein Beitrag zur Forschung über Musik und Politik, zur Rolle der Musik beim Erschaffen einer Gemeinschaft.

Vor allem aber ist die Dissertation für deutsche und schwedische Leser von ganz besonderem Interesse: Ein Grund zu hoffen, dass sich Garberding bald zu einer Übersetzung ins Deutsche entschließen wird!
Verena Jakobsen Barth, Göteborg/Glasgow

Truck Drivers and Safety Culture

Sisse Grøn, Sikkerhedskultur og arbejdspraksis hos lastvognschauffører – en fortælling om frihed og tanketorsk. Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Arbejdsmiljø og Institut for Miljø, Samfund og Rumslig Forandring, Roskilde Universitet 2008. 252 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss.

■ There is frequent talk about the benefit and necessity of interdisciplinary research. It is easier to talk about than to achieve it in reality. It is therefore particularly gratifying to note that Sisse Grøn manages to ac-

complish this project so successfully. Her dissertation links three research traditions: ethnography/ethnology, safety science, and work environment studies. The aim is to shed light on safety practice and to investigate the potential to build a safety culture in the part of the transport industry where truck drivers work. The questions considered by the author are the following: what perceptions, rationalities, and possible differences of opinion concerning safety are expressed by people who work with goods transports? Is it meaningful to try to develop a safety culture in a business where people work alone? What preventive strategies can be identified with the aid of a safety culture analysis?

The material has been collected through interviews and participant observation. The author has spent five months more or less continuously together with different categories of truck drivers working in the Copenhagen area. One of the chief merits of the dissertation is the ambitious ethnographic fieldwork, conducted and presented with exemplary clarity in the text. Grøn shows good powers of observation, and judging by the extracts from her field diary, the author also has a well-developed sense of what it is important to notice in order to fulfil the aim of the study.

The analysis starts in a kind of intermediate position between an ethnographic scholarly tradition, safety science, and work environment studies. Grøn discusses a number of new and significant ideas as to how one could think and work preventively to increase safety on the job for truck drivers. The dissertation has a lucid structure leading the discussion logically to the conclusion, the most important point of which is that truck drivers can be addressed as a collective. This is despite the widespread opinion, among the drivers themselves and the general public as well, that drivers are loners. Yet Grøn shows that the group is well defined and that the drivers can be said to belong to the same culture, which is an important insight to take into consideration in the work of finding strategies for increasing safety in the profession. The author argues, however, that one must proceed from a concept of culture that is not confined to specific organizations, since the business has a high degree of self-employment.

Things that can be discussed – for there is always something – are the author's choice of and attitude to earlier research and other references. Above all in view of the fact that the research is related to three different fields, one may wonder about the relatively short bibliography. Moreover, the cited references are not used to the extent that could have been possible in the analysis. As regards theory, the dissertation could also have been developed more, especially in the discussion of globalization, where the author makes an effort but does not pursue it all the way. This is not a serious criticism, however. One can detect from the text that, because the work was done in relation to three different research traditions, with different demands and views of knowledge, the author has been forced to make a number of compromises. Perhaps that is the price you have to pay for interdisciplinary work?

The final verdict – with reference to the author's ambitious and extensive fieldwork and the well-found observations in the study that lead to important answers to urgent questions concerning safety in the haulage industry (not just) in Denmark – is that the dissertation is a good piece of craftsmanship revealing the author's highly developed ability to combine different scholarly traditions. This is important not least for the future, when we will presumably see more interdisciplinary research. Grøn also deserves praise for demonstrating that the well-tested methods of ethnology for collecting material work well and can further the development of knowledge in other subjects.

Eddy Nehls, Lerum/Trollhättan

Friendship Albums and the Reproduction of Gender

Blanka Henriksson, "Var trogen i allt". Den goda kvinnan som konstruktion i svenska och finlandssvenska minnesböcker 1800–1980. Åbo Akademis förlag, Åbo 2007. 292 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-951-765-384-8.

■ Friendship albums have been perceived as trivial and kitschy exponents of popular culture, both due to their glossy bookmark aesthetic and penchant for 'inferior' poetry (the latter is not quite true, as many friendship verses are actually derived from the works of respectable poets), and – as the author argues – to their status as a form of folklore. Henriksson compares friendship albums to other neglected genres of folklore, such as obscene folklore and graffiti, and champions the necessity to study 'trivial' forms of culture in order to understand the overall culture and historical period in which they are current. Friendship albums have clearly

filled a function in their users' lives, and Henriksson believes that the tradition expresses a common theme appealing to users over and over again.

The need to justify friendship albums as a serious object of scholarly inquiry seems to run like a thread through much of the research history. A common strategy is to point to their illustrious forbears, the *Stammbücher* of the nobility, implying a decline in status and importance as they descended first to the young women of the bourgeoisie, and then to the school girls of the modern era. Though Henriksson is unwilling to comply with the unspoken disparagement inherent in these manoeuvres, she readily concedes a similar urge to justify her choice of material, embodied in her defense of the trivial as a legitimate field of research. As for viewing friendship verses as folklore, even when they appear in albums with an attribution to the original author, she solves the problem of having to assign them to either the category of folklore or that of literature rather elegantly by strictly stressing their function within the context of friendship albums. A verse appearing in a friendship album is folklore, whether the original author is known to the contributor or not. The aim of the thesis is to study friendship albums as products of their time, more specifically by focusing on the construction of womanhood in them, and to demonstrate that their potential messages go far beyond the most immediately obvious ones. This statement of purpose comes in the very last lines of chapter 1, and personally I feel it would have been easier to orient myself in the text if it had been given a more prominent position in the beginning of the chapter. But this is a very minor remark.

Henriksson then proceeds to outline her material, methods and theoretical tools. The investigation is based on 262 friendship albums, 132 of them from the Swedish-speaking parts of Finland and 130 from Sweden. They cover the period 1800–1980, which provides the author with the opportunity to examine potential changes in the tradition, though she does not state this explicitly. The great body of material constituted by these friendship albums gave Henriksson the incentive to create a data base in order to gain an overview of them, and she describes her work with constructing the data base. She emphasises the analytical and interpretative nature of this work, likening it to the transcription of an interview.

The author relates her study to the concerns of Swedish cultural analysis with its focus on everyday culture. She attempts to investigate the shifting relationships users have had to friendship albums, and the conscious as well as subconscious conceptions they articulate. The principal method employed in the analysis of the material is close reading. Here Henriksson gives a valuable account of this much-used, but seldom explicated method, based on Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin's version of grounded theory, which delineates the process of identifying and interpreting features of the material by endowing them with the form of a concept or code, and then grouping them into broader categories according to their mutual similarities and differences. This process is governed by the individual store of knowledge of the scholar. The categories thus arrived at are construed as important constituents of people's world view, revealing fundamental values and attitudes. In this context Henriksson links grounded theory to cultural analysis and narrative theory, and their respective concepts of thematisation and theme analysis, or content analysis as it is usually called in English.

The creation of the image of the good woman in friendship albums is examined from a constructionist point of view; the basic premise is that the ideal of the good woman is reproduced in friendship verses and contributes to the creation of a social reality in which women and girls conform to this ideal.

The secondary material used to contextualise the albums consists of interviews with album users, questionnaires and folklore records in the case of the younger tradition, and scholarly studies of young women's situation and education as well as contemporaneous literature about them or directly intended for them in the case of the older one. In the interviews, friendship albums emerge as a representation of childhood, and users tend to reminisce more about themselves and their own childhood than about the friends who wrote in them. In the older literature, the good girl and the good woman are characterised as submissive, supporting prevalent gender norms through their adaptation and obedience to society. By comparing the construction of the good woman in the literature and in friendship albums, Henriksson raises the question of what qualities the good woman was thought to possess and what her ambition in life was supposed to be, as well as how the construction of the good woman was reproduced and what the sources of its constituents were.

The tradition of keeping friendship albums has often been vertically transmitted, from older female relatives to young girls. The contributors have also

generally been female, as men and boys have not been well-acquainted with the tradition and its conventions. Breaches of generic norms have been frowned upon by users, and in the recent tradition such lapses could consist of writing too religious verses or factual accounts rather than friendship verses, and simple misspelling. The selection of contributors was part of a social game in which some were excluded from writing while others were much sought-after, and those who were asked to write could signal their own attitude to the owner through their choice of verse or illustration. Henriksson views the act of keeping and writing in friendship albums as part of the construction of the good woman; the good woman keeps track of her friends by collecting their verses in her album, a pastime parallel to the feminine duty of upholding social contacts through letter-writing. The strong emphasis on modesty in the writing of friendship verses – even though it tends to be a rather false modesty – is also conceived as an element in the construction of the good woman.

The last three chapters present the analysis of the themes current in friendship verses. The first of these focuses on the qualities ascribed to the good girl/woman, which the album owner is either said to already possess or which are depicted as generally worthy of emulation. These qualities include innocence and virtue (primarily in the older friendship albums), a cheerful disposition, health and industriousness. These characteristics are important to cultivate as they enable the young girl or woman to realise her dream in life: to get married and create a family of her own. The theme is particularly preponderant in the verses of the 20th century, which invests them with a highly conservative bias. Henriksson notes that the leverage for opposition to pervasive norms regarding the good woman is very restricted in the friendship verses, even when users toy with the rules of the genre. The bad woman is never portrayed, for example, and in accordance with the bourgeois ideal, the home is the chief arena for women's activities.

The second chapter relates to the function of friendship verses as concrete memories of one's friends, and how this is expressed in them. Naturally, remaining true to one's friends and cherishing their memory are prominent themes, and the friendship verse is a metaphorical gift requiring a gift in return, being remembered or included in the circle of friends. In some verses, God or Jesus are said to be the best friend, and the album owner is exhorted to remain faithful to Him as well, and to her country. Thus, the good woman honours and pledges her faith to three homes: the small-scale home, the childhood home, looked back upon with nostalgia, and the new home with a husband; the large-scale home, the native country; and the eternal home, the realm of God.

The third chapter explores the manifestation of the qualities attributed to the good woman in metaphors of a young woman's life in the verses. The dominant metaphor is that of a journey, through space or time. Life is a path, or a sailing tour across stormy seas. It can also be envisioned as a day, a year, or a succession of seasons. In order to cope with the unpleasant aspects of life's journey, the album owner is encouraged to exercise the female virtues outlined previously: faithfulness, cheerfulness, charm, industriousness and contentment. Above all, she must, once again, remain true to God, her protector.

The thematic analysis is very detailed and well-argued. The author has clearly taken pains to locate the sources of the friendship verses when they derive from the literary tradition – neatly summarised in a number of appendices – as well as parallels to their themes and messages in other cultural contexts. Relations to the religious tradition receive considerable attention, for instance. The actual process of reproduction of established gender norms in the friendship verses is not analysed in quite as much detail, but the conclusion Henriksson draws is no doubt correct: girls were socialised into a conservative system of norms through friendship verses.

Camilla Asplund Ingemark, Lund

Travel Habits of Stockholmers

Greger Henriksson, Stockholmarnas resvanor – mellan trängselskatt och klimatdebatt. Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan, Stockholm 2008. 193 pp., ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-628-7611-1.

■ Henriksson's doctoral study examines Stockholmers' travel patterns at a time when, he suggests, climate change makes reducing 'the dominance of the car' important. It discusses data from a number of complementary 'case studies' he conducted whilst employed on a range of cross-disciplinary projects. The first, and most extensive, deals with the introduction of congestion charging in Stockholm in 2007, after a seven-month trial period, expert evaluation and referendum in 2006. Next come studies of car-

owning and non-owning families, followed by an examination of technologies and developments which might decrease work-related travel. These include phone and e-mail, the suburban 'office-hotel', and the *distansmötesplats*, a piece of equipment trialled in Dalarna [not Stockholm] allowing jobcentre staff and clients to see and hear each other when located in different places. The final investigation, drawing on respondents from some of the other studies, is of travel changes over the life course.

Henriksson is clear that he wants to move beyond traffic surveys' focus on *what* people do to *understand why* they do it. And that this will involve considering how people's behaviour is conditioned by contexts of social, cultural, material and economic factors. He is particularly interested in the role of *habit*, which he suggests has been obscured by contemporary social theory's emphasis on the way late modernity encourages reflexivity. He notes habit has been used differently in different intellectual traditions, but is especially concerned with the 'taken for granted' repeated behaviour of individuals which derives not just from personal repetition but from participation in a culture that assumes that this is the way that things are always done. Within this kind of behaviour, however, he doesn't go on to distinguish between those unreflexive, routine acts for which rational grounds can easily be provided if asked, and habits whose origins are more difficult to bring to consciousness. Henriksson mentions Bourdieu's habitus, as linking the character of habituated action to class location. But he doesn't fully bring out how Bourdieu relates habitus to deep structural principles of a culture, largely unrecognised by those who belong to it, but profoundly affecting their actions in a wide range of circumstances. [Propensity to forward plan could be one such principle.] This means proposals for change which run counter to a deeply engrained and not immediately visible habitus will probably be resisted, arousing strong emotions which those expressing them may find hard to explain. Bourdieu sees any particular habitus as hard to change and habitus in general as always with us. Henriksson similarly sees habit as endemic to social life because it is functional when time is too short to continually weigh up every action. Routinising some, provides space for more careful thought about new, non-standard or more serious situations.

Henriksson also draws on Actor Network Theory, which similarly challenges romantic conceptions of the uniquely powerful rational individual actor, by stressing the causal significance of non-human factors and of the interconnections which link people to people and to things in *networks* which simultaneously shape their elements. Though often fluid, networks can attain some kind of stability and thus taken for grantedness [become 'black boxed']. For example, equipment to read number plates [and devices to conceal them], together with less easily changed material factors such as housing density, road and rail layouts, play a role in constraining and enabling the actions of individuals and collectivities, thus shaping contemporary outcomes which will then affect future possibilities. Although ANT permits this sensible orthodoxy it comes at a price not mentioned here, of ontologically eradicating the qualitative distinctions between the material and human elements of networks and the modes through which their causal powers operate.

In line with his aim of *understanding* behaviour, Henriksson seeks qualitative data, which he gained through semi-structured, face-to-face and telephone interviews, and discussion with a number of respondents around their 'travel diaries', supplementing this with some apparently opportunistic conversations with people met 'out in the town'. Perhaps as a consequence, the sample for some case studies was fairly small. Twenty were interviewed 'in depth' and around fifty 'more briefly' in the congestion charge investigation, where data from the official evaluation is also mentioned. But the car-owning non-owning family comparison involved only nine families overall.

Possibly more problematic is the sampling framework. Respondents were often drawn from personal or work networks, which might compromise their representativeness. Moreover, examination of the relationship between car ownership and residential location is limited by deliberately seeking out the car-reliant and car-less families in, on the one hand high-income villa suburbs and on the other the inner city and a small densely populated inner suburb with concentrated services and a train station. We don't learn if there are any Stockholmers living in distant suburbs without a car and if so, what their experiences were like. Henriksson acknowledges that his respondents were weighted towards the well-educated and reasonably well off, but justifies this by claiming they are likely to contribute most to environmental damage. However, this will depend on their relative

proportion of the population, and the experiences of the less advantaged are interesting in themselves. We never learn if the congestion charge really was the devastating blow to struggling single mothers that some of its opponents claimed. And are the financially secure the best test case for the impact of economic disincentives on travel? Limiting the sample to 18–65 year olds also weakens consideration of travel patterns over the life course. Respondents do discuss their childhood retrospectively, but the elderly and their possibly distinct travel experiences are entirely ignored.

What of the findings? These confirm that Stockholmers' travel patterns are multiply caused. And that many influential dimensions are not totally determining since people in similar circumstances may make different choices, often because of habits previously acquired in different situations. Rather surprisingly, Henriksson seems not to have directly asked his subjects if environmental concerns influenced their choices – and he provides very little evidence that they did. Key factors associated with car use appear to include presence/absence of work-based incentives for driving, public transport availability and distance between i) home and ii) work and routinely used shops and leisure facilities, although as indicated, sample-choice may have influenced some findings. What's clear is that *once* you have a car its immediate availability can encourage use for a wider range of activities than it was originally bought to meet. Car ownership can *lead to* more distant shopping and leisure practices as well as vice versa. Similarly, the car-free tend to shape their practices to this state, deliberately seeking out local facilities.

Flexibility of working hours and conditions and of family commitments is also significant. Every totally car-free family had a member currently a student, on parental leave, or self-employed, whilst those reducing their commuting by using office-hotels were typically self-employed or in jobs not rigidly requiring co-presence with other workers [some of these had rejected home-working to escape their families]. Strongly committed motorists felt car use required least forward planning, something particularly desired when other parts of life had little 'give' in them and/or required complex co-ordination of different family members particularly at short notice. Henriksson agrees cars are useful for 'unscheduled' activities, but his car-free families also attained a kind of flexibility through their knowledgeable use of a range of different transport types [bus, train, taxi, bike, foot] for different purposes, as did the car-owners Henriksson describes as having 'mixed' travel patterns. Some of these limited their inner-city car use because of difficult driving and unpredictable parking conditions. Only an immigrant family, saving for their own house, specifically linked their carlessness to the overall cost of motoring. Car-dominated childhoods could affect current behaviour, although respondents moving to the inner city after a car-bound suburban childhood sometimes became car-free. Respondents varied in how routinised their use of particular transport methods for particular types of journey was.

Henriksson usefully reminds us that environmentalists should be interested in preserving good practices as well as changing bad. He shows it is easier to get mixed-use than car-dependent travellers to cut back their driving – which underlines the strategic importance of getting people to retain even small amounts of non-car use. We can guess that once knowledge of public transport times and routes, or access to a bike is lost it will be very difficult to ever get people out of their cars. Sudden, and particularly, comprehensively changed circumstances, appear key instigators of new transport behaviour, demanding a re-evaluation of old habits. One such scenario is when the birth of children coincides with a new job and/or a move from inner city renting to house ownership in the suburbs – typically increasing car use. However, Henriksson suggests that change can provide a window of opportunity for beginning more environmentally-friendly practice.

The congestion charge trial, aimed at 'reduc[ing] queues and emissions of environmentally dangerous substances' provides a case in point. Henriksson calls it an artificially-created crisis for people, designed to alter their routines by appealing to individual economic rationality and stimulating community debate. He touches briefly on the messy political process around the introduction of the trial and the subsequent decision to make it permanent. Politicians who had earlier promised not to introduce the trial subsequently did so, whilst outlying municipalities resented not being included in the consultative referendum in which inner city dwellers narrowly voted to perpetuate the scheme. Where the excluded municipalities organised their own referenda, small majorities were against. Nonetheless the trial succeeded in shortening rush hour queues and cutting inner city traffic around 20%. Suburban car use also

decreased while increased congestion on alternative, non-charging routes was less than feared.

Interestingly, Henriksson found people more likely to limit non-routine, occasional car use, than car-based commuting or shopping, though some changed journey times to avoid the highest charging periods. Far more Stockholmers reduced their car travel a bit than cut it altogether and when weighing up public transport prices versus car travel, seldom factored in the fixed costs of car ownership. Saving time was more important to some than saving money, though often money savers remarked they could afford to pay. Henriksson notes that men were the most likely to pay high congestion charge bills, and that middle income groups changed their behaviour most. He might also have added that women changed their patterns more than men. [www.stockholmsforsoket.se] Public transport use increased slightly during the trial, probably encouraged by new park-and-ride schemes and some increase in bus services partly funded by the new charges. [Subsequently revenue was diverted, despite protests, to road improvement schemes.]

Traffic reduction remained, though not at the same level, once the toll was permanent. This was probably because its initial 'shock effect' eroded. Moreover, protest through avoiding the congestion zone [which ironically contributed to its appearing a success] became less relevant after the trial period. Those respondents who had disliked the trial and the charge, mentioned the former's expense, and perceived inequalities in the distribution of costs and benefits - rich inner city dwellers gaining a less congested environment whilst poorer suburbanites were burdened with new charges. Some viewed the toll as just another unwelcome tax and disliked any state disincentive to freely travel, particularly when coupled with a billing system documenting every toll crossing and linked to personal bank accounts.

So Henriksson does show that the character of the activities people want, or have to engage in, and their range of potential transport options reciprocally affect each other to shape actual travel patterns. And he does usefully begin to investigate how people's travel 'choices' can slip below the boundaries of the fully rational through habituation. But there are limitations to his investigation, which may be partly linked to constructing it on the back of research for other institutions. Some of these shortcomings have been indicated above. I further suggest that Henriksson insufficiently investigates how *affect* as well as habit can reduce instrumental rationality. We learn relatively little about his respondents' *feelings* towards their cars or the experience of driving them. Other studies have documented how they can become objects of affection and desire; emotion-laden symbols of cherished values [freedom, privacy, safety] and are used to express often gender-related aspects of identity.

Of course car manufactures, well aware of this, contribute to the *cultural meaning* of cars through their modes of marketing, which Henriksson doesn't mention – an instance of his general failure to address the importance of economic interests. For example, discussion of the congestion charge trial is not significantly placed within the context of long-standing conflicts over road building and worries about the adequacy of the capital's road network for the region's economic competitiveness and increasing population. Nor do we learn how industrial and commercial interests felt about the tolls or expressed their position within media debate [possibly influencing individuals' understanding of the issues]. We are [rightly] reminded that availability of public transport and form of urban layout influence people's choices but not that the motor industry and construction companies may lobby to affect these in their own interest [the public transportless and widely dispersed American suburbs provide a classic outcome]. At a time when car manufacturers are successfully demanding vast sums from governments to bail them out because of their central role in their national economies, it's clear their influence is great [and that we need to do more than understand and influence private individuals to reach sustainability].

A further lacuna in the analysis, already touched upon, is lack of focus on the respondents' general attitudes and knowledge about the environmental costs of their behaviour. Henriksson recognises that cultural factors [which tend to become taken for granted] can influence behaviour, but his examples tend to relate to culturally-given obligations to family and friends and to culturally-influenced leisure choices. Sweden is widely considered a country with strong environmental values. Did this influence the respondents? Did they feel cross-pressured by pro-environment norms and engaging in environmentally damaging action to meet other culturally-given goals? Strangely, though holiday travel within Sweden gets a mention, we never learn if respondents' leisure patterns included highly environmentally damaging

flights and if so, how these were justified.

However, despite some shortcomings Henriksson's work is timely and should stimulate readers to consider further how more environmentally-sustainable travel can be effected. They are likely to agree with him that change demands both short and long-term measures [immediate economic incentives/disincentives and altering the urban structure, for example]. His suggestions for decreasing work-related travel are perhaps more plausible than those to establish collectively agreed times for key leisure activities to avoid those 'clashes' which people now use their cars to solve. An unmentioned alternative might be pay-to-use car pools which could allow people to integrate tricky demands on time, but not tempt them like their 'already paid for' private cars to extend their travel. Developing less polluting cars [would people freely pay more for them?] is also possible – though this would not solve the negative impact of extensive car use on urban design and urban public interaction. Should we be attempting to establish new, sustainable, forms of *habitual* behaviour, or get people to be more *reflexive* about the environmental consequences of their actions? Yes, this book gets one thinking!
Hilary Stanworth, Swansea

Faith and Narration

Tuija Hovi, Usko ja kerronta. Arkitodellisuuden rakentuminen uskonliikkeessä. Annales Universitas Turkuensis. Ser. C 254. Turku, Turun Yliopiston julkaisuja 2007. 260 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-951-29-3275-7.

■ Narratives of public and private, social and personal, official and unofficial, spiritual and material call for interdisciplinary approach. Tuija Hovi's dissertation, entitled "Faith and Narration. The Narrative Construction of Everyday Reality in the Faith Movement", answers this call. The book provides a straightforward and insightful investigation of how religious conviction is constructed and maintained in the process of personal narrative in a charismatic Christian Faith Movement. Hovi's work is located in the discipline of comparative religion, but it also draws its theoretical and methodological sources from folkloristic and socio-psychological approaches to narrative.

In her research Hovi addresses questions familiar to folklorists: She examines (1) how tradition steers experiencing and telling and (2) how personal narrative constructs the identity of a group member. These questions are discussed from two directions simultaneously. On the one hand, the research utilizes social-psychological explanatory models for religious experience, and presents the role theory of Hjalmar Sundén, Nils G. Holm and Lauri Honko and the attribution theory of Wayne Proudfoot, Phillip Shaver, Bernard Spilka and Lee A. Kirkpatrick as theoretical points of departure. According to role theory, religion as literal and oral tradition provides roles for a believer. Attribution theory sees people interpreting experiences within a frame of a plausible meaning system and thus controlling their environment. On the other hand, Hovi's research offers the constructionist view of the identity-building function of narrative by applying speech act theory (J. L. Austin and Pierre Bourdieu) and narrative psychology (Jerome Bruner, Kenneth Gergen, Charlotte Linde and Derek Edwards). Briefly, speech act theory claims that saying is doing, and narrative psychology sees narrating constructing reality.

Hovi builds her dissertation on empirical research material. She conducted her fieldwork in The Word of Life congregation in Turku in 1991 and in 1998. The Word of Life congregation was established in Turku in 1990. Hovi traces its roots back to the American charismatic revivals of the late 19th century and the later Pentecostal healing revival. Closer roots are in Sweden: The Word of Life congregation in Turku is an offspring of the Livets Ord congregation in Uppsala. Hovi employed the method of the open thematic interview and used participant observation to collect contextual information. She shows readers her thoughtful reflexivity and makes clear her role as a researcher, not as a religious seeker or participating believer. Yet, the author recognizes that she is a target of mission witnessing and that there are hopes for her conversion. To the members who agreed to be interviewed, an interview is a chance to witness. Actually, more than a chance, it is an obligation to witness about one's personal faith. Mission, conducted both in Finland and abroad, is considered valuable in the congregation.

Hovi observes that there are two main categories of personal narrative that recur in the interview material: stories about healing and stories about God's guidance. Both these story categories discuss the experiences of supernatural powers in everyday human life. In the Faith Movement, man is seen as a battleground

of the powers of God and Satan. When analysing the healing stories, Hovi found out that the definitions of illnesses and accidents, stories of personal healing and another person's healing, physical healing and inner healing are given religious interpretations. In these embodied experiences Satan causes illnesses and accidents, whereas God heals and saves. Besides bodily attacks, Satan can also attack the soul and cause disturbing feelings and thoughts.

Hovi divides the guidance stories into two main categories: life-history stories and single-event stories. Life-history stories construct either a unidirectional view of God's plan in one's life or a view of the previous life seen through the lenses of a later conversion. Single-event stories are either individual and focused on the believer, or collective and discussing outsiders. Stories of God's guidance tell about blessings, answers to prayers and escapes from dangers. Hovi points out that most of the stories about answers to prayers deal with material issues such as finding a job or another way to ease financial difficulties. This shows the reader how narrative intertwines spiritual and material realities, and how economic and social themes are included in religious interpretations. The movement's discussion of material blessings and healing being available for true believers has caused the general public to call the movement "prosperity theology".

The overall narrative of a believer being targeted by the two contradictory supernatural powers is interesting and Hovi narrates it fluently. Story examples illustrate the choices group members make, whether the question is about one's recovery from homosexuality or negotiations between congregational activities and work obligations. These narratives clearly illustrate the co-existence of individualism and collectivity – charged co-existence in some cases – in the Faith Movement. Hovi points out that "In the Faith Movement, the right kind of individualism seems to be the kind that can be carried out collectively" (p. 237).

In addition to the themes in personal narratives, Hovi discusses other narrative strategies that are used in maintaining the religious conviction. These strategies include normative utterances that refer to God's will and the Bible; confessional utterances that refer to doctrine and community; and legitimate utterances that justify and give reasons. Furthermore, Hovi differentiates between two narrator types: one who focuses on telling personal experience narratives and others who focus on facts. Another interesting point that Hovi makes is that misfortunes, failures and difficulties in faith are left untold or only hinted at.

Altogether, Hovi interviewed thirteen women and seven men for her research and she says that the research material gives a democratic picture of the gender roles in the congregational activities. Hovi notes that the research is conducted among a relatively young congregation where this situation is common. Yet, the social expectations of genders are fixed in the Faith Movement, and the reader is curious to know if this is expressed in the narratives. According to Hovi, the ways both men and women talk about God and faith are alike. Yet, the narrative strategies to construct collectivity may differ. Hovi reminds us that there are other factors that need to be considered here, such as the occupation of the narrator and the fieldwork context. The question of how the socio-economic status of the narrator affects the narrative construction of conviction is hinted at by a young woman who notes that in the congregation, it seems to be more accepted to be unemployed than committed to work.

Hovi's theoretical and methodological choices are well reasoned; she offers clear arguments and pays a good deal of attention to provide illustrative examples to justify them. The language used in book is clear, and the concepts conveyed are easy to grasp. Hovi articulates her research in an uncomplicated style accessible to scholars in multiple disciplines.

Kirsi Hänninen, Columbus, Ohio

Conductors of Memory

Adriaan de Jong, Die Dirigenten der Erinnerung. Musealisierung und Nationalisierung der Volkskultur in den Niederlanden 1815–1940. Waxmann Verlag, Münster/New York 2007. 701 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-3-8309-1667-3.

■ When the museum in Arnhem in the Netherlands opened its doors to the public in 1918, it was the first national open air museum in the world, outside Scandinavia. The background is the great interest in folk culture that developed in many European countries during the 19th century as a reaction against the explosive growth of towns and cities, manufactured goods, and destabilized social patterns that threatened the former agrarian society.

Despite the fact that the Netherlands had adapted and materialized the ideas from the source, Skansen in Stockholm, so early, it has until recently been

shown limited interest by Dutch historiography. The museologist Adriaan de Jong has changed this by publishing his PhD dissertation in 2001. Fortunately it is now available in a German translation. It is an impressive work, over more than 700 pages, where de Jong surveys how Dutch folk culture was given a unifying role as a creator of identity, becoming a cultural factor and a symbol for tourism. From a Swedish point of view it is of course especially interesting to see how strong the Swedish and Scandinavian cultural influences have been in the Netherlands.

The role that the representation of folk culture has played in shaping a national identity in the Netherlands is a central thread throughout the book. It is not primarily folk culture in itself that is focused upon but the representation of folk culture on a national level, which also explains the title "Conductors of Memory", that is, the organizers, the ideas and their roots and the cultural circles that surrounded them.

The book consists of three parts. Starting with "Folk Culture Nationalized", de Jong describes what he calls the process of "museumization", where during the course of the 19th century local cultural expressions was defined as national heritage and collected at a national level. The province of Friesland was very important in this process as an area where objects were collected and exhibited from the perspective of folk culture for the first time in the Netherlands. In Sweden a similar role was played by the province of Dalarna.

The first part of the book also deals with the relationship between folk culture and the study of Germanic antiquity. At the end of the 18th century, de Jong can trace an interesting change when it comes to searching for cultural roots; they had previously been found in classical Greek and Roman antiquity, but from this time on an interest arose in searching for the origins of one's own people in the early Germanic past. Folk culture was thought to carry traces of that past. This transformed folk culture from something rough and uncivilized into something that was to be worshipped and preserved.

Part two, "Folk Culture Enclosed", concentrates on the representation of folk culture in the Dutch Open Air Museum in Arnhem. The idea of establishing the museum was connected to a deep interest and admiration for Scandinavian nature and culture that peaked in the decades around 1900. Scandinavia was a favoured destination, Selma Lagerlöf had many readers, Ibsen was popular and Scandinavian folk art was highly appreciated.

Hazelius, of course, has a place of his own in this part, along with the discussions of preservation versus education also known in the Swedish debate since the foundation of Skansen.

This part also introduces, among others, the strong men behind the museum: the founder Frederic A. Hofer, the director August van Erven Dorens, and Dirk Jan van der Ven, the museum's propagandist.

De Jong shows the museum's development over the years, through thick and thin. Over the years folk culture was driven from the centre to the periphery and during the 1920s the study of folk culture became limited to rural culture of the archaic countryside. Once again we can see similarities to Swedish conditions where the avant-garde of the 1920s left folk culture and saw a future in functionalism.

In the part called "Folk Culture Mobilised", de Jong shows how folk culture was used for social purposes in the period between the World Wars. Van der Ven, the museum's propagandist, saw a danger in democracy, mass culture and modern cosmopolitan society and was dominant in the mobilization of the circles that supported him, claiming that folk culture should be a model for society. Representing a diametrically opposing movement in the museumization of folk culture, the museum director Van Erven Dorens wished to offer protection for authentic relics within the museum. Van der Ven, on the other hand, took them into the streets during the Historical Patriotic Festival.

The same conflicting attitudes were also evident towards Nazism and the occupying power; while Van Erven Dorens was extremely cautious about Nazi contacts, Van der Ven was enthusiastic. De Jong claims that Van der Ven thereby spoiled the reputation of folk culture in the Netherlands.

Adriaan de Jong concludes with an epilogue where he reflects on the museum of folk culture today, its place and role in society. He underlines "the urgent need for the study of folk culture to occupy itself with contemporary ways of life." Even if that will change the character of the museum, he is sure that it will present a more representative picture of living conditions in the Netherlands.

"The Conductors of Memory" is a rich and fascinating work, with many dimensions. It is a unique monograph about one open air museum, but it is also a vibrant fresco of ideas of and about folk culture, and how it can be used or misused, depending on

the purpose of the conductors. And last but not least, it is a story that connects continental Europe with Scandinavia.

Göran Hedlund, Lund

Social Interaction in the Care of Dying People

Eva M. Karlsson, Livet nära döden. Situationer, status och solidaritet vid vård i livets slutskede. Mångkulturellt centrum, Botkyrka 2008. 268 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-88560-83-X.

■ In her dissertation, Eva M. Karlsson studies the palliative home care of dying people. She concentrates on the social interaction of the care situation. Karlsson sees caring as more than physical contact, as a social and communicational relationship between people. In these intimate situations, the approaching death brings together different individuals, professionals and institutions: nursing staff, dying people and their relatives meet each other, forming different social positions and relations. Social hierarchy and power are very much present.

It is obvious that everybody hopes for a good death. But what is a good death? Does it mean dying peacefully at home surrounded by close relatives and friends? This is what palliative home care aims at. Yet every dying person, every death is different. Karlsson analyses care situations by looking critically at the concepts of good care and good death.

Eva Karlsson starts her book by describing one touching case that nurses discuss, a wrong kind of death. The story draws us into the topic, close to dying people, their relatives and the nursing staff. The researcher positions herself as an outsider but gently and discreetly gets the reader involved in intimate accounts. Karlsson bases her study on fieldwork experience, visiting patients' homes with nursing staff. She concentrates on the home care of cancer patients who have a terminal diagnosis. These patients are relatively young and for this reason death comes earlier than expected. Karlsson's research process also includes interviews with relatives and nursing staff and it started from contacts with professionals. First, Karlsson asked palliative home care units if she could follow their work. She sent letters to patients through the caring staff, who already knew them and could say if they might be willing to participate in the study. After receiving permission to study the caring situation in the patient's home, she went along with the professionals as an observer. She did not take part in caring unless she was asked to help in some way.

In Karlsson's study, research ethics are carefully reflected upon. The researcher protects the informants' anonymity and does not even mention the names of the care units she has observed. I think this is a good decision. As she points out, these professionals do important work in their own way which should be respected. By taking part in the study both the caring staff and the patients expose themselves to other people, to outsiders like the researcher and to the academic audience. Karlsson has also thought of patients' condition and willingness to be studied. Seriously ill patients often depend on caring staff and their opinions. Therefore they might have participated in the research if their caring unit had supported the idea. In some cases, the patient's state deteriorated after the first meetings with the researcher. In these situations, Karlsson considered each case one by one and approached each patient as an individual.

Karlsson analyses caring situations with concepts such as status and social solidarity, applying the ideas of sociologist Randall Collins (2004). According to Collins, situation is tied to time, space, actors, laws and processes. Situations constitute interaction ritual chains that are often repeated. These interaction rituals keep up the social order and create new symbols which bind people together. In these accounts, people share social solidarity and emotional energy. Collins states that "human beings are emotional energy seekers". Caring of dying people is also about sharing emotions. Karlsson emphasizes that, even if emotions coming up in caring situations might at first sight look negative, they often connect nursing staff, patient and their close relatives and create social solidarity between people.

In caring situations, there are several different actors, institutions and organizations involved. Interaction rituals may set asymmetrical hierarchical positions, such as doctor–patient. The more formal the situation is, the clearer the positions and hierarchies are.

In the healthcare system, patients are observed and documented by the nursing staff. On the one hand caring activities objectify patients, but on the other hand enable staff to get to know patients as individuals. Karlsson finds that the patients oscillate between object and subject in the eyes of nursing staff.

The theories of social interaction and dynamics that Karlsson uses come from sociologists. I could have included some other aspects in the study as well. Randall Collins points out that things (artefacts) are also important aspects of communication between people, and so is bodily presence, which intensifies social interaction. Finnish scholars of folklore and religious studies have studied gendered practices of death dying and bereavement (e.g. Nenola 1986). Terhi Utriainen (1999), who studied gendered care of dying people, states that imminent death makes people quiet. There are no words that give comfort; the only option is to stay present. Utriainen sees *bodily postures* as a way to communicate with a dying person: the way to be with them is to *stay present.* This phenomenological side of caring and social interaction is also central in Arthur W. Frank's theory of communicating body. Frank, a former cancer patient himself, has studied stories of cancer patients who have survived and continued their life. He claims that serious illness such as cancer makes us rethink ourselves in relation to our bodies and other people. The ideal he holds up is called *communicating body*, which opens up to other people by telling one's own story and listening to others' stories as well. Communicating bodies could have been involved in the study. But let us not go too far from Karlsson's main topics, good death and good care.

Historians, sociologists and scholars of cultural studies have long been interested in interpreting cultural meanings of death. It has been claimed that death is no longer a natural part of our life as it used to be in the early modern era, but more like something that happens to individuals for some particular reason that has to be found out. Death has become something unique, an individual project. Karlsson's empirical research shows that home care staff try to get to know the dying person as a whole. This is how the researcher herself carries out her research process, by trying to get to know her informants and by describing individual cases.

In her text, Karlsson discusses, among others, Zygmund Bauman's and Tony Walter's ideas about different attitudes towards death. Both scholars have introduced their theories of modern and postmodern death that are somewhat different but contain an idea about individualized, more open and expressive death. In the past, there used to be professionals, doctors and priests who knew about rituals and norms surrounding death. Nowadays, the dying person can decide how to die and where to die. In Karlsson's words, people of today "die and mourn in their own way". But how can we know what a good death is? And can we all really decide how we would like to die? There are people who want to die in a hospital instead of getting home care. Do we think it is the wrong way to die? How about different cultures and religions, do we accept their ways of thinking? Karlsson has also included immigrant patients in her study. The nursing staff in care units naturally categorize patients and are interested in their (cultural) backgrounds, but they do not necessarily emphasize the non-Swedish aspects. The distinctions are made with several factors in mind, not only ethnicity. Actually, it seemed that the staff were well aware of the population of their area and did not want to highlight ethnic differences.

Even if patients have more freedom to choose their treatment, all the people and institutions around death, including home care, set up norms for a good death. The values of palliative home care include the patient's participation in the process, a holistic view of the patient and expression of emotions. Patients' autonomy should be respected, yet many of the patients Karlsson studied had not chosen to be treated at home. Somebody else had made the decision. Can professionals in medical care really listen to people? Or could it be that people still would like to build upon some rules? I think it is really important to ask these questions. It is the only way we can develop health care and get good care when we are dying. Karlsson's dissertation is a good example of an ethnological study that can be applied to other fields. It meets high ethical standards and concentrates on human interaction, an important part of medical practice and the basis of our discipline, ethnology.

Eerika Koskinen-Koivisto, Jyväskylä

Creating Wedding Performances

Eva Knuts, Något gammalt, något nytt – skapandet av bröllopsföreställningar. Mara förlag, Göteborg 2006. 175 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-974674-1-3.

■ The cover of Eva Knuts' doctoral thesis, "Something Old, Something New – Creating Wedding Performances", is adorned with a decorative photograph of the author herself in a wedding dress. The book looks like, and is meant to look like, a bridal magazine. This thesis about today's lavish wedding ceremonies is in

many ways a controversial product. The delicious package is misleading. The contents of the stylishly illustrated 175 pages are by no means characterized by shallowness or easy comprehensibility.

As is already announced on the cover, the book is "a thesis about dresses, rings, makeup, hair-dos, photographs and much more". The research material is rich. Knuts uses films and television programmes about weddings, wedding videos, questionnaires, wedding books and wedding magazines. She has attended weddings, studied wedding sites on the Internet, interviewed seven bridal couples, visited bridal fairs and even posed as a bride-to-be trying on dresses in bridal shops. She also interviewed a hairdresser, a priest, bridal shop assistants, two goldsmiths and observed wedding photographers at work. Furthermore Eva Knuts lists herself as an important ever-present part of the building of the thesis.

As a reader I also experience presence in this review. During the last year I have followed the making of a big wedding in the role of mother-of-the-bride. As a folklorist I have marvelled at what goes on today, and wondered about the mechanisms behind this aim to create the perfect and totally individual variant of the wedding concept.

What drives bridal couples today to the endless hunt for perfection on every level? What makes brides-to-be test hairdo after hairdo? What motivates the search for the perfect invitation card in the wedding theme colour, or for the perfect photographer who will be able to interpret and preserve the wedding day according to the bridal couple's personalities and wishes.

Researchers in different areas have not been slow to pay attention to this rewarding new object of study, an object that is not easily interpreted. The Finnish researcher Susanna Paasonen, who has studied modern weddings as a media spectacle created in close interaction with the images created by romantic fiction, literature and film, comes to the conclusion that weddings of today are a challenging phenomenon in popular culture, a phenomenon that is impossible to define comprehensively. Cinema and television studies, media studies and women's studies only partly explain this object that certainly deserves constant scholarly interest.

How does Knuts deal with the problem? In the chapter "My Toolbox" she describes her theoretical framework and scientific connections. Her theoretical thoughts are those of Bruno Latour, whose Actor Network Theory has been discussed at a seminar in Gothenburg. In Knuts' toolbox we find ANT-related terms like connections, clusters, intermediators, black boxes, sediments and inscriptions, all terms given philosophical interpretations. The footnotes link this world of ideas to a heap of dead and now-living philosophers and sociologists, and the metaphysical connections of this theoretical construction make rough reading for a classically schooled folklorist.

Knuts states that the aim of her thesis is to study how human and non-human actors come to create wedding performances in the consumer society of today. She describes her work in these words: "Weddings are created from a vast amount of connections translating what is communicated. If actors work together they form clusters. Clusters and connections are composed in certain but not determined ways. If something is 'blackboxed' or becomes sedimented it is even harder to change."

The author states her ambition that her "tools", once thoroughly introduced, will continue their work in the backstage, and I was pleased to note that no theoretical jungle hindered the reading until the tools were produced again in the concluding chapter.

The thesis is very systematically and clearly structured. The terminology of the wedding music's "prelude", "interlude" and "postlude" structures three blocks: "Manual", "Planning the Performance" and "Performance".

Today's weddings are changeable feasts that require both knowledge of the old customs and an innovative touch. The biggest change in comparison with wedding ceremonies in older days is that the feast was formerly a collective event manifesting a static regional tradition. Today individuality is the key word. Every wedding planner aims at the unique, the personal and the specific. The central question asked in wedding magazines today is "What type of a wedding do you want?"

Wedding descriptions is a traditional genre in ethnology. Knuts presents a sample of texts written about how weddings have been celebrated (and *should* be celebrated) through the ages. The descriptions have varied through time, and today the texts unintentionally form an ethnological contribution to creating ideas and presenting elements that can be used when planning a wedding. Old ethnological texts can often be found in today's wedding magazines.

Knuts also examines the focus of wedding research through the ages. The studies written by ethnologists

and folklorists over time were intended to describe local traditions in great detail. In the 1910–20s came a time with a more objective scientific approach. The time of structuralism and functionalism was followed by a period of low scholarly interest in ritual studies, during the era when marriage as a social norm was questioned in the late 1960s and 70s. This period was followed by the great comeback of weddings that forms the background to this thesis. The revival's connection to the consumer society is of special interest.

The author has entered into her study in an exceptional way. She describes how it is possible to wallow in wedding accessories and even confesses that her own study is filled with film posters, videos, piles of wedding magazines, Barbie dolls dressed in bridal gowns, wedding invitation cards and so on. This "ethnology of involvement" flows through the whole thesis and is in my opinion its strongest quality. Knuts herself describes her work as that of a detective, tailing her object of study from text to text, from statement to statement, from place to place.

The search is structured by using wedding checklists as interludes combining the empirical chapters. Interlude 1 deals with choosing the date of the wedding, the church and the place for the wedding reception. The first chapter deals with clothes, bodies and dressing rooms. The description is detailed and concrete. Today's wedding fashion is dealt with in a tangible way when the author herself, posing as a bride-to-be, tries out wedding-dresses. Her comment, true to the theoretical vocabulary – "The dress is a cluster, the result of many connections" – tells me nothing. But Knuts' own thoughts in the bridal shop, the remarks of the shopkeeper and her sister posing as bridesmaid, and her feelings experiencing the white dress on her body constitute informative ethnological description at its best.

Interlude 2 is about choosing flowers and invitation cards and about the most important artefact: the wedding ring. The ring is studied in great detail as a stabilizer of relations, as a symbol and as a thing of particular material and design. Interlude 3 is about wedding gifts and chapter 3 about wedding photography, also seen from the view of the professional photographer striving to strengthen the role of the photography in the wedding performance. In chapter 4 hairdos, makeup and transformation in general are described and then the description finally reaches the wedding day when all the elements in the checklists have to come together and be fulfilled.

Knuts concludes by saying that some of the early decisions such as date, type of wedding and wedding venue give directions to certain paths. From the beginning the wedding could potentially take any form at all, but as soon as a path was trodden and as soon as materiality was involved, the decisions were narrowed down. Everything, every actor and every connection that was chosen has transformed the wedding and made it unique in its composition. Knuts has given an answer to the question *how* these magnificent weddings are created, but I'm still puzzled about the question *why* we choose this lavish ceremony today.

She concludes her study by returning to the metaphor of the "meandering path through the wedding fields" towards the consequence of all the actors' work, the wedding performance in its unique form. "I have shown how research which crosses boundaries of discipline and bridges dichotomies like human and non-human, material things and social influences can give new perspectives to a classical ethnological topic like weddings."

And has she? Due to my metaphysical limitations I cannot be a judge of that. Speaking as a folklorist, however, I find that Eva Knuts has not got lost on her meandering path. Her study is based on solid fieldwork and she has even managed to reform and renew field methodologies. Doing this she has created an ethnology of self-experience, observing her object with the eyes of a skilled tradition researcher.

Carola Ekrem, Helsingfors

Communication Across the Oceans

Seija-Riita Laakso, Across the Oceans. Development of Overseas Business Information Transmission 1815–1875. Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki 2007. 459 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-951-746-904-3.

■ *Across the Oceans* is a dissertation in history submitted to Helsinki University in 2006. The title indicates that shipping and overseas communication were intimately connected in the nineteenth century, before the development of the telegraph and the aeroplane. Quick and regular postal traffic were important for newspapers and businessmen, but also for civil and military authorities.

The study examines the efficiency of information transmission on the world's most important postal routes in the period 1815–1875. In this era Britain

dominated shipping all over the world. The author also considers trans-oceanic postal traffic run by American, French, and German lines. To be able to follow the post boats over the oceans it would be helpful to have a map of the world and an English reference book handy. The dissertation mentions so many people, shipping companies, and geographical places that it is interesting and perhaps sometimes necessary to find out more about them.

Technical improvements played only a partial role in the development of international trade, and other factors, according to the author, should be examined by historians. The source material used by the author is business correspondence. Collections of letters are preserved from trading houses in Liverpool and London, and from the English East India Company. The author, who is a philatelist, also has a letter collection of her own. The total number of letters analysed is over two thousand.

To measure the speed and regularity of postal communication the author studies the information cycles. By this she means the total time it took for a letter to be sent to a recipient until the answer reached the original sender. The content of the letter, the dates, and the envelope with postmarks and details of the route are the facts used to analyse the information cycles. The author illustrates the cycles with several diagrams.

The dissertation tells how technology and organization developed in trans-oceanic postal traffic, revealing it to be a process with both progress and setbacks. Postal traffic by packet-boats from Falmouth on the south-west coast of England started at the end of the 17th century, but it was not until the start of the 19th century that the packet-boats began to sail according to a timetable, with fixed departure times.

After the Napoleonic Wars the British navy took over the packet-boats. It was hoped that unemployed sailors would get jobs with the mail transports, but the navy men were not suitable. The Royal Mail then realized that it made most sense economically to give private entrepreneurs the contract for traffic across the Atlantic. Several well-known shipping lines were founded at this time, some of which are still active. In 1825 it took 105 days to send a letter across the Atlantic and receive a reply. In one year it was possible to complete three information cycles.

The development from sail to steam came to transatlantic traffic in the 1820s. The early steamships consumed huge quantities of coal, and the salt water damaged the boilers. Many people claimed that steamship traffic over the Atlantic could never be profitable, but the ships became faster and better. The sailing packet-ships managed five information cycles in 1838, with an average of 64.4 days, while the steamships were able to do six a year, with an average of 41.5 days. To ensure the quickest and most reliable mail transport, businessmen sent two or three copies of a letter by different ships.

In the 1850s it was decided in both Britain and the USA that mail transports should be handled through open competition between shipping companies. The intention was to reduce the cost of postage, which resulted in an increased quantity of letters. The decision was good for commercial life, but the shipping companies' income fell. Emigrant traffic gave them an upswing, and they could then transport the mail without state support.

Comfort, speed, reliability, and safety were important for passenger traffic, but the latter was not a high priority for the shipping companies in the increasingly tough competition. There were many cases of engine breakdown, mishaps, and shipwrecks. The author asks how the shipping companies could survive after all the tragedies, but the general public forgot the accidents surprisingly quickly.

The author shows that in many contexts the organization was at least as important for efficient mail traffic as technical improvements were. One obstacle, for example, was that the post stations closed several hours before the departure of the mailboats and no letters could be handed in. In New York a service was established for businessmen in 1853, which meant that the mail could be sent on the same day, up until ten minutes before the ship set sail.

In 1859 they began sorting the post on the English boats between Alexandria and Southampton in order to save time at the post office in destination harbour. At the same time it also became common to sort the mail on trains.

A major technological change came when the telegraph cable across the Atlantic was completed in 1866, but this meant that the steamships lost their significance as the most important conveyor of news. Although the ships became faster, letter conveyance did not become more efficient since the shipping companies were no longer interested in organizing the departures efficiently.

The need for efficient transports over the isthmuses at Suez and Panama became increasingly important,

which led to the construction of the canals in 1869 and 1914 respectively, but long before this the mail, passengers, and goods had been transported by land at both places. The Panama route was used for traffic between the eastern and western sides of the USA. The railway connection across the isthmus was built in stages between 1850 and 1885. This was a way to avoid the dangerous land route across the USA, before the transcontinental railway and the telegraph line were completed.

At the start of the 19th century it was only through the English East India Company that letters could be sent to India and other destinations east of the Cape of Good Hope. The East India Company lost its monopoly due to antiquated administration and inefficiency, and when private merchant ships took over the traffic, the number of postal connections increased. To shorten the distance, the land route over Suez was used more frequently. The author writes that this period in postal history has not received much attention in research. Passengers travelled by barges and steamboats on the Nile, and cargo was transported with camel caravans. The British built a railway over Suez, which was opened in 1858, but it was the French who realized that a canal was the best technical solution.

Postal connections between Britain and Australia were very slow since the ships took the route via China and India to ensure full cargoes. The journey became shorter thanks to the land route over Suez, but Australia was equally far away whether one sailed via Suez or Cape Horn. When post traffic later departed from the port of Galle in present-day Sri Lanka, the costs could be shared with the traffic to India and China. Galle became an important strategic centre for steamship traffic in the Indian Ocean.

It was not the telegraph that took over the important postal traffic across the oceans but the aeroplane, which became dominant in transatlantic traffic in the 1950s. When I read the book I am reminded of our own times, when voices claim that public services such as transport should be run under private management. Not so long ago, in the 20th century, this was regarded as a state concern. For much of the 19th century, at least the British post office reckoned that private entrepreneurs and free competition was the best method for achieving efficiency in trans-oceanic postal traffic. British postal history reflects a parallel in the way people argue today, for instance the need to have strong private financiers and to reduce costs through competition.

This is an interesting book in that the author uses soft data to investigate a macro-perspective. The list of sources and references shows that the analysis has required a large amount of comparative material.

The book is illustrated with pictures of ships arousing associations with this pioneering age of shipping and the adventure it meant to start new connections and develop new technology.

Göran Sjögård, Lund

Finnish Swamp Experiences: From Toil and Sweat to Aesthetics

Kirsi Laurén, Suo – sisulla ja sydämellä. Suomalaisten suokokemukset ja -kertomukset kulttuurisen luontosuhteen ilmentäjänä. (Putting One's Heart and Soul into Peatland. The Finnish People's Peatland Experiences and Narratives as Indicators of a Cultural Relationship to Nature.) Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2006. 243 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 951-746-847-4.

■ Were you to travel in Finland, you would soon notice one typical characteristic of Finnish landscape: swamps. Approximately one third of the country is covered with swamps, making Finland the number one country in Europe in that respect. In the whole world there are only four countries which have more swamps than Finland. Natural swamps have been utilized in various ways: people have picked berries and hunted game there. These areas have also provided farmers with wild hay for cattle and bedding for farmhouses. Throughout the centuries large swamp areas have been ditched and dried for agricultural use. After the Second World War resettlement plots in swampy areas were given to men who had lost their farms because of the terms of peace, or had spent their best years on the front. Hence, thousands of Finns have either cleared their fields or seen their parents toiling in the peatlands.

Berry picking is still a leisure activity for many, and it is of remarkable economic importance especially in the rural northern and eastern parts of the country. Peatlands also provide arenas for artists; swamp art is a concept of its own, ranging from paintings to performances. In Finnish literature and cinema swamps have always been important, usually illuminating melancholy, comfort, nostalgia and sanctuary. Nowadays sports events are also arranged in swamps, including cross-country running, football, floorball, volleyball

and wrestling. In those events the stereotypical image of a Finn is displayed: there he – usually it is a he – is, so close to nature that he is wallowing up to his eyes in it. Ability to move around in the swamps is still surprisingly appreciated in Finland; certain woodcraft is often considered a benefit even in an urban context. A peatland forest can be an extreme experience for today's urban dweller.

A folklorist, Kirsi Laurén from the University of Joensuu, has done a fascinating study of the swamp experiences of Finns. The study is based on narratives collected by the Finnish Literature Society in 1998. Altogether 945 writings written by 489 women and 290 men were sent to the Finnish Literature Society, and Laurén selected 237 texts for her study; the selected essays mainly concentrate on the writers' personal swamp experiences. She used grounded theory in the process of inclusion and exclusion, and also in the analysis of the texts. The narrators came from different areas of Finland, Sweden and Canada. They were from all age groups, from teenagers to elderly, and they also represented various kinds of occupations and socio-economic groups.

The selected texts answer the following questions: What kind of swamp experiences are thought to be worth telling, and therefore significant enough? How does one tell about experiences of nature? How do people experience the swamps? How do personal experiences of nature have an effect on one's relationship with nature? How does a narrator's personal past have an effect on his or her relationship with nature? The key question was: "What is your swamp experience like"? Laurén's aim is to analyse how people remember the experiences they have of nature. She is looking for culturally shared meanings which are attached to the way in which the narrators relate to swamps. Her idea is to look into swamp narratives and investigate the features, values and attitudes that are characteristic of Finnish culture and reflect the narrators' personal signifying processes which repeatedly come up in different narratives.

The texts reveal the writer's life-long relationship to nature, which is narrated in a biographical context. Several narrators thus chose to describe their swamp experience by telling their life story even though this was not especially encouraged in the call. Laurén found five different types of swamp life stories:

1. The narrative usually starts by describing the first personal experiences that the narrator has of swamps, usually childhood memories. There is a distinct division between memories of the past and how it is today.

2. The narrator tells about significant experiences or simply recollected experiences that have something to do with swamps. The experiences can be negative or positive, and so can the narrator's opinions of swamps.

3. The narrator describes the swamps experienced in the past, and the feelings and thoughts he or she has about it when comparing the past to present. Feelings, especially nostalgia, are strong, and people can be almost poetic when describing their experiences and images of swamps.

4. If the personally important swamp has changed, vanished or is beyond reach, the narrators describe feelings attached to this process: anxiety, sorrow, hatred, nostalgia. They can also feel relieved at the fact that swamp experiences belong to the past. Their relationship to nature might have changed, too.

5. The narrators ponder on what some specific swamp, or swamps in general, mean to themselves, other people and nature as a whole. They also pose personal opinions about swamps today and wishes concerning the use and conservation of swamps.

Referring to Lavile d'Epinay (1995) and Juri Lotman (1986), Laurén argues that a life story always a includes narrator's view, even if the life story is partly or even completely imagined. Its proof as a testimony is no less, because even a fantasy has to feel right, and it has to have elements from the narrator's own experiences. Often narrators want to add fictional style to their narrative, describing and explaining the era in detail. These also expand on the choices of people described in the story. Sometimes the era and region are more important than the personal experiences of the narrator.

In Finnish there are two words for "experience", one meaning what you have been through in a practical sense (*kokemus*) and one denoting the emotional response provoked by this (*elämys*). Swamp experiences of Finns include both elements: when narrators reminisce about their lives, they usually first start with childhood memories of picking berries and other compulsory tasks involving toil, and as they approach the present, narrators describe more recreational and aesthetic side of swamps. At the beginning of the narrative they describe how difficult it was to walk in the swamps, how the sun burned the skin, mosquitoes pestered them and their bodies were aching. Towards the end of the narrative the turf in swamps

is soft and easy to walk on, the sun cuddles the skin and the physical strain is pure pleasure. Often the swamp itself is the same, just the narrator ages as the story reaches the time of writing. Several narrators honour the work that was done in swamp fields by their forefathers – for many it was their childhood reality – and several narrators are worried about the change to the landscape because of drainage and the use of peat for industrial purposes.

Their sorrow is not only about losing scenery, it is also about losing an identity. Narrators do not question the importance of swamps as a symbol of Finnish mentality and the Finnish guts, the famous *sisu*.
Hanna Snellman, Jyväskylä

Discourses about Immigrant Women

Anna Lundstedt, Vit Governmentalitet. "Invandrarkvinnor" och textilhantverk – en diskursanalys. Arbetslivsinstitutet, Stockholm 2005. 328 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7045-766-2.

■ This book is Anna Lundstedt's doctoral dissertation in ethnology. As the title indicates, it is a study of white governmentality illuminated through analyses of discourses about "immigrant women" and textile craft. The main concern of the study is thus neither the immigrant women's lives nor the textile projects aimed at immigrant women. Rather, the focus is on the volunteers who initiated the textile projects and how different discourses assist in legitimating their implementation and steering of the projects and the immigrant women; it is the construction of their white governmentality that Lundstedt examines.

This is an ambitious dissertation filling 328 pages, consisting of three parts divided into several chapters along with an introduction and two concluding chapters. After an initial justification for the study we are introduced to the theory and the analytical tools of discourse analysis, which guides the author's choice of problem and the subsequent reading of the material. We are also introduced to the methodological challenges that Lundstedt encountered in her fieldwork on one of the textile projects for immigrant women, and that led to the premature termination of the fieldwork and a long series of reflections on research ethics.

The empirical material for the dissertation is concentrated around textile projects started on a voluntary basis, organized as a combination of education and work, and geared to immigrant women. The material consists of field records produced during two months of participant observation of a textile project, written documents from other similar textile projects, interviews with nine people who launched different textile projects on their own initiative, and about 120 newspaper articles about the projects. In addition the author has used research literature dealing with various types of textile projects in the past and other types of projects. This is a very large corpus of empirical material, which the author unfortunately does not describe in detail. The reader is not given a clear sense of the content of the material or of what Lundstedt was particularly interested in when she created the different types of material. For example, what did she register and what did she not register during the roughly 25 days of participant observation of the textile project, and why? It may be indirectly implied that what she observes and registers is the use of the categories she wants to deconstruct, but it is not clear what kind of systematic work she developed to create data suitable for the discourse analyses.

In the analyses the different kinds of material are primarily linked together on a discursive level. Lundstedt performs a very stringent analysis, building up knowledge of how different discourses construct the people who initiate the textile projects, in their positions of power, through counter-images and simultaneous construction of the target group of the textile projects – the immigrant women – as those who are to be guided by the powerful ones. The whiteness of these powerful positions not only refers to skin colour, but also draws upon the historical construction of Western civilization in a position holding the right to control the Others, the colonialized. The first part analyses the arguments of the initiators and the ideas behind the textile projects as being based on a discourse about textile craft as something specifically female, as opposed to woodwork as something specifically male. This is a heteronormative discourse, which Lundstedt, citing research literature, traces back to Victorian England, but which she simultaneously, with the aid of Judith Butler, shows not to be an essential condition but a category discursively constructed and put forward. It is simultaneously a construction of the initiators' whiteness *vis-à-vis* a colonialized immigrant woman, where textile crafts as work are linked to tradition and the immigrant women's homelands, in contrast to the initiators' more modern forms of work. In the second and largest part of the book Lundstedt analyses the

initiators' descriptions of themselves and how they are described in the media, in relation to both the established state and municipal system and its handling of immigrant women, and in relation to the immigrant women themselves. As discourses, the descriptions make up a position for the volunteers initiating the textile projects as an alternative white aristocracy opposed to the established white aristocracy, but with the common unproblematized feature that they both exist to lead the immigrant women on the right trail. Lundstedt thus shows that the discourse reformulates the established perception of the immigrant women through the use of alternative stereotypes, while simultaneously these stereotypes maintain the white powerful subject positions for the initiators through the construction of and relation to the immigrant women as people who need this support. The third part of the book – about the "white" multicultural nation – wraps up the analysis by showing how the immigrant women, who were at first constructed as segregated through the white heteronormative discourse, are now subjected to attempts to become disciplined into Whiteness, for example, through theatre and role play.

Applying the theoretical term "white governmentality" Lundstedt refers to Judith Butler and the anthropologist Ghassan Hage. With inspiration from Butler's concept of performativity, Lundstedt is able to denaturalize the characteristics that are empirically attached to both the project initiators and the immigrant women. This opens for an examination of the shifting and current meanings that are ascribed to and construct the categories. In a similar way, Lundstedt brings in Hage's concept of white governmentality, which enables her to highlight the dichotomies that are established in connection with the textile projects, placing the initiators in a subject position that is counter to, superior to, and simultaneously created through the opposite position that is assigned to the participants in the projects – the immigrant women. Lundstedt thus inscribes herself in an emergent theoretical orientation that seeks to explore complexity through intersectionality and power through constructions of whiteness. At the same time, the discourse perspective makes it possible for her to show that the discourses which create the controlling white subject position in the textile projects do not just emanate from the projects and the initiators themselves, but from the emergence and elaboration of the different discourses that meet and thus enable this subject position.

The analysis is divided into a great many sections on many different themes, bringing in many types of material. While this ensures that Lundstedt keeps the analysis on a discursive level, it also renders the analysis less transparent. We are only given brief opportunities to dwell on the initiators and the textile projects, which makes it difficult to assess the foundation of the individual analyses and the connections that are established between them. But even though Lundstedt's analyses sometimes appear slightly disconnected, the constant citing of material from different times and places is also a strength as it enables her to anchor the study in a specific societal context and thereby also hint at the significance of the historical context for how and as what subject positions are constructed. It is a book that, through its many analyses, exposes and deconstructs the taken-for-granted things embedded in and legitimizing power relations between the initiators of the textile projects and the target groups, thus establishing a critical awareness of the ideas that are assumed to legitimate voluntary, municipal, and state projects. Lundstedt's dissertation can thus be read as a critical analysis of the many alternative projects that have arisen in recent years, not only in Sweden but also in the neighbouring countries, parallel to and as critiques of many state and municipal initiated integration projects.

Tina Kallehave, Copenhagen

The Making of a Folk Music Icon

Niklas Nyqvist, Från bondson till folkmusikikon – Otto Andersson och formandet av "finlandssvensk folkmusik". Åbo Akademi, Åbo 2007. 310 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-951-765-374-9.

■ Niklas Nyqvist's doctoral dissertation deals with the transformation of Otto Andersson from a farmer's son into a folk music icon who shaped "Finland-Swedish folk music" as one of the greatest collectors in Finland and the Nordic countries as a whole. Otto Andersson was born in 1879 on Vårdö and died in 1969 in Åbo. He was extremely versatile, working as a musicologist, folklorist, author, composer, arranger. He was professor of musicology and folklore at Åbo Akademi 1926–46 and vice-chancellor of that university 1929–36. In 1923 he presented his doctoral dissertation on the crwth-like instrument called *Stråkharpan*. Otto Andersson was a central

figure in Finland-Swedish cultural life. During his years as professor at Åbo Akademi he founded the music history collections which became the Sibelius Museum in 1949.

Nyqvist's work is related to many different problem fields in Nordic and international musicology. One important field is the role of music as an identity marker in the Finland-Swedish context; another is the revitalization that takes place when the music is moved from one context to another. A recurrent theme is the process of establishing a musical canon through selection during collection, and in Otto Andersson's extensive publication of arranged folk music.

The dissertation focuses on Otto Andersson's work with folk music, collecting, revitalizing, and researching it – as described in his own writings. These texts, both unpublished and unpublished material, are analysed in relation to trends in cultural history, and also with a biographical dimension. The dissertation thus studies how an individual, through his work and his publications, can contribute to the shaping of what is regarded here as a Finland-Swedish folk music canon.

The fact that Otto Andersson was a very important person in the Finland-Swedish context makes this type of biographical study even more complicated. Nyqvist has nevertheless succeeded in balancing his study and painting a credible picture of Andersson.

Nyqvist's dissertation is strong in many ways, especially when it comes to his work with textual sources, which is also the central part of the book. He is slightly weaker as regards theory, problematization, and the discussion of where to draw boundaries. One essential part concerns the concept of canon. The canonization process is crucial for the execution of the dissertation. Otto Andersson's work, according to Nyqvist, is to be examined in terms of its importance for the foundation of a style and a canon, crucial for the very significance of Finland-Swedish folk music. Yet there is no penetrating discussion of the term canon – as regards both its semantic definition and its use in relation to other closely related concepts such as cultural heritage, musealization, musical commodification, etc. Nyqvist does not make a satisfactory distinction between different levels of canonization.

From my point of view, the following model could be applied to the world of Finland-Swedish folk music:

Everyday level

a) Reality and music-making

In everyday music-making there are certain valid practices, certain styles, instruments, repertoires used in musical contexts.

b) Tradition

The fact that some music lives longer than other music, or that some styles and forms of expression survive while others disappear quickly, is a type of canonization at an everyday level. This is often called *tradition.*

Representative level

c) Symbolic charging of music

Some music from the everyday level can be given particular value in special situations. I am thinking here of contexts such as museums and archives. Through special processes, music styles and artistes are selected to represent the culture, the nation, or the era. This selected music is what we often call *cultural heritage.*

d) Music as pattern

On this level, perhaps, people are not content to "exhibit" the music. It may even be perceived as being so good or aesthetically valuable that it acquires a kind of normative value. A style of music can thus give guidance as to what should be regarded as good taste. This type of selection process is often called *canonization.*

Using this model, a canon becomes a special case of cultural heritage, the aristocracy or elite of the cultural heritage. Naturally, it does not have to be like this. What is called tradition above also corresponds to a type of canonization. The symbolic charge can also be regarded as a type of canonization process. The problem in Nyqvist's dissertation is that the levels are not distinguished.

Furthermore, one can see that Nyqvist does not really carry through the discussion of how Andersson's work was returned to music-making practice, influencing musical life in Swedish-speaking Finland – and this is a fundamental part of a canonization process. There is much more to be said here. With the present arrangement of the dissertation, the focus is on the description of Otto Andersson's career and work. The actual effect of the canonization process – how his writings, arrangements, etc. have really become

normative in Finland-Swedish folk music – gets rather little discussion. This should have been expanded in the concluding section.

To sum up, one can say that Nyqvist's work is a good foundation for a study of how one person can set his stamp on a people's music. We have plenty of parallels in other countries at roughly the same time: Béla Bartók (1881–1945) and Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967) in Hungary, Constantin Brailoiu (1893–1958) in Romania, Cecil Sharp (1859–1924) in England, and of course Armas Otto Väisänen (1890–1969) in Finland and the Folk Music Commission with Nils and Olof Andersson, and others, in Sweden. Otto Andersson's part in a national project is in fact an example of something highly international.

Niklas Nyqvist has delivered an insightful and detailed study of one of the most important Nordic collectors and researchers of folk music. The strong points of the dissertation are the meticulous and critical analysis of the background material concerning Otto Andersson's life and work. Nyqvist also has practical musical competence, which enhances the relevance and credibility of the study. Nyqvist cites apposite Nordic and international research in a satisfactory way.

Dan Lundberg, Stockholm

Searching for Something

Erik Ottoson, Söka sitt. Om möten mellan människor och föremål. Etnolore 32, Etnologiska institutionen, Uppsala universitet 2008. 192 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-506-2008-5.

■ Erik Ottoson's thesis, "Seeking One's Own: On Encounters Between Individuals and Objects", is, as the blurb has it, a study of different places where people are searching for something. The places in question are mainly of four different kinds, shopping centres, a big city, flea markets and refuse skips, all of them located in central Sweden (Mälardalen), except for two visits to London and some days of intensive shopping (and shopping studies) in different shopping streets in the metropolis.

Describing the speciality of this thesis is not an altogether easy task, but it is worth the reviewer's efforts, simply because the book in itself is so highly readable and fun to "promenade or run or slowly walk through". The book is packed with acute observations on the daily life of human beings in collaboration with things, searching for them, thinking about them and disposing of them in a constant, often quite exciting flux, sometimes stopped by various nuisances, bottlenecks of fatigue, lack of money, the end of business hours and so on.

Ottoson, the ethnographer, travels light when looked upon as a theoretically informed researcher. His bag of theoretical tools is a small but powerful selection of existential and phenomenal philosophy – mainly Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty – giving him a free hand to delve into the open and complex nature of these encounters. Some keywords in his thesis are serendipitous searching and the hap-tic, also various forms of horizons, both physical and mostly mental ones which these "thing searchers" (*sakletare* to use Astrid Lindgren's word; Ottoson does not refer to her) are faced with. Typically, he avoids going into any long theoretical discussions of the tools he is applying. Also, his reference material is generally rather thin, e.g. on the hap-tic he does not mention Giuliana Bruno's important book *Atlas of Emotion* from 2002. Instead he seems to use these theoretical keywords largely in an intuitive way, which also is, I think, something which applies to his methods as a whole.

There is an interesting connection between this kind of ethnography and adjacent types of explorations and storytelling, in the forms done by writers of fiction and artists. The kind of impressionistic ethnography – a term obviously coined by Ottoson's mentor, Professor Gösta Arvastson at Uppsala University – which Ottoson's thesis is a prime example of, has been described by Arvastson in an interesting little volume, *Det urbana rummet* (1999), written after some earlier studies of London as a modern/postmodern big city. Arvastson speaks of a type of ethnography interested in forming the pictorial composition of voices and milieus. The difficulty, Arvastson notes, lies in the descriptions themselves, which are a vital part of the experiences from the fieldwork and which have to be made accessible to the reader. That means that the experiences and the notes from the researcher's notebooks must be translated into an understandable language. They have to filter away a lot of less valuable material and distil the essential from the research being done, he says.

And, Arvastson adds, the postmodern text allows a certain degree of "padding". This means that the important things which are stated can also lie outside the text. In my view one of the strengths of this thesis

is Ottoson's ability to narrate stories of excitement, joy, frustration, hope, anger, which all deal with one of the most common human activities, seeking and finding various things.

This means that this kind of ethnography is looking for researchers who are really a combination of scientist and artist. When reading Ottoson I often come to think of the French writer Georges Perec, who in his day made field trips oddly reminiscent of the things Ottoson is doing. It should be noted that Ottoson's brand of ethnography is no single swallow. There is on the contrary a whole group of Swedish ethnographers working roughly in this mode. Besides Ottoson's two coaches Arvastson and Orvar Löfgren, other important proponents of this mode of Swedish ethnography are Billy Ehn, Lynn Åkesson (who was opponent at the disputation), Jonas Frykman and Rebecka Lennartsson. On the whole this specific way of doing impressionistic ethnography seems to have an especially strong position in Sweden. It is also, I think, no coincidence, that the works of Perec and some other writers of the same type are now being discovered by ethnologists and sociologists.

In Ottoson's work one of the main inroads into his field is something he calls walkabout-interviews, interviews he does on the spot, on the move, e.g. with his sister Emma, on her shopping tour through some London streets, or, with a fellow "skip diver" in Ottoson's hometown Uppsala.

In a way one could say that there is a "childish" or naïve element to be found in this kind of setup. The important thing for Ottoson is obviously to be as unprepared as possible, to be open to the possibilities of serendipity and the hap-tic, those elements he is searching for in the searchers he is examining. The thought process of his work is then worked through by way of a series of variations of, if not an anti-intellectual, then a non-intellectual (physical/mental/hap-tic) approach. Words like magic, secrets, the magnetism of things, the musicality of searching, gut feeling and so on are rather frequent in his narrative and actually add up to some of the excitement and suspense of the story.

Another thing is the question of "resolution" or results of his journeys. If one is expecting to find some grand narrative of the complexities of searching and finding as an existential and philosophical project, this is not the book to read. But if one is ready for a ride into a land which seems both well known and unknown then the book is a treat. As already indicated by the citation from Arvastson, this kind of text works very much by allusion, by opening up ways of seeing things, ways of grasping things, ways of asking questions of things and how they behave.

So, in a way it is the reader in the final analysis who actually provides much of the thought material here, thoughts or hunches which Ottoson for his part brings forth and gives away, just as his fellow skip divers do with abandoned bicycles, old furniture found in skips and so on.

Beside notions of magic and the inexplicable, it is obvious that his research is very much concerned with mobility, the mobility of things, the various tempos of these things and milieus. Words indicating temporal aspects are quite frequent. There are many freezes, compressions, accelerations, stops, halts, changes of focus, frictions, smoothness, attractions, flows involved here. In a way his research adds up to an investigation of various temporal flows among things and people, how they are born, live, die, are put away, haunt us, start a new life as memories and so on. Things do all sorts of things with us, and Ottoson is always there with his eyes registering what happens. His investigation thus has a decisive visual aspect which sometimes tends to obscure the other sensory experiences.

The hap-tic is a way to deal with this kind of visual reign but may not be fully satisfactorily used in this case, although there are some fine descriptions of how bodies move in various ways through and into the world of things, e.g. in the shopping streets and in the flea markets.

But the, relatively speaking, "failure" of the researcher's grasp of the situations in all their complexities is quite understandable, since the methods used, i.e. participant observation, notebook writing and interviews, still leave a space which is not approached, what could be called the level of almost ungraspable consciousness, between impulse and cognition, between non-reaction and focus etc., something which, incidentally, the two ethnologists Orvar Löfgren and Billy Ehn try to pinpoint in *När ingenting särskilt händer* (2007, a volume of which an English version is under way as I write).

Ottoson's strikingly visual approach is here seen to great effect in his analysis of a photograph used in an advertising campaign for a shopping centre. He deftly analyses the symbolical orders of the photograph, its ways of moving the viewer and he gives this reader a glimpse of an understanding of

the complicated relationships between shopping, spatiality and horizons of anticipation which are embedded in the picture.

When focusing on actual shopping experiences, above all studying Emma, who as noted, is the researcher's sister, there is a problem concerning the emic-etic aspect. In a way a sister might be, as an informant, both too close and too distant to fully function as a "partner" in this type of ethnography. That means that maybe too many things are taken for granted between the researcher and the informant. On the other hand, other things might not be brought up, due perhaps to the close kinship involved.

In his dealings with the flea markets (of which he has observed several) Ottoson is in my mind generally at his weakest in this project, which also might have to do with the question of cultural proximity and distance. Contrary to the notion of "fantasy or imaginary" shopping, he puts himself into in the London-based experience, a sense of non-involvement, of not being able to move behind some general ideas and expectations of flea markets, creeps in at this point and leads up to a slightly less interesting read. Being a regular flea market shopper myself, focused mainly on searching for old vinyls, I found the observations on this point a little less focused, not least on all sorts of problems facing a flea market shopper. These are questions of tension, fatigue, frustrations, stress and disappointments at home when noting that the records bought might be (a) other than those noted on the record sleeve (if one has not checked the actual record on the spot), or (b) too worn-out to be enjoyable, and other such things. Also, the quite complicated terrain of cultural history and personal memory which the flea market opens up in most interesting ways are underplayed in his analysis.

It is when Ottoson moves to the skip divers in his home town that the narrative really starts to click and move in a way which is quite extraordinary for an ethnographic report. The text is now almost literary in the sense that the reader is sucked into a world which is at the same time exciting (some of the skip divers consider themselves semi-outlaws), intellectually stimulating (the question of dirt, pollution, is treated in a most delicate, fine-grained way, avoiding the pitfalls of overtheorization) and above all emotionally involving. This is, I think, a result of two things. Firstly, Erik Ottoson knows what he is talking about. He is actually also observing himself as much as the other two or three main persons in his skip research. He touches upon major existential questions, of wealth versus poverty, ecological values in a consumer society, the meaning of material things and values, and above all this kind of activity as a form of hobby, passion which in some cases, which he also describes, turns into an obsession when the junk "rescued" actually suffocates the rescuer, growing out of all proportions. Secondly, his descriptions of, in particular, a bicycle "raid" on some skips with a friend, and another searcher's bicycle-finds in the small river running through Uppsala, are extremely well done and quite exciting. Not least the way in which the persons and the things (bicycles, furniture etc.) move in the environments, between the houses, and in and out of the small river adds up to a wonderful read, fresh, vivid and insightful.

Sometimes the style can even become a little bit too literary for its own good, as when, in a summarizing passage about one of the flea markets, he notes that the crows are gathering at the end of the day, and, he writes, probably thinking that the place will soon be empty enough for them to catch something to eat. The question of whether or not crows actually can think pops up in the reader's mind.

When Ottoson moves from these kinds of descriptions to more speculative writing, mainly in the concluding part of the book, where he discusses concepts such as presence/absence, fullness/emptiness, the speculative mode does not seem to fit the writer as well as the more descriptive parts do. His conclusion about the meaning of emptiness in the field is, in its "semantic openness" perhaps revealing (my translation): "Emptiness showed itself to be important also in another way. The *serendipitous* searching was looking for the accessible, but at the same time a negative offprint emerged. Searching was a way of creating and moderating a desire for things and something which gained a material form in the moment of finding the thing was the absence of the thing which was searched for. When this absence was to be changed into the presence of a real thing a new set of difficulties emerged. A melancholy of searching could be called forth if the emptiness and the thing did not match. The search for something was sometimes charged with more energy than real things could hold."

Maybe so, but wouldn't another solution to the philosophical problem also be possible, hinted at in a long poem by Ralf Andtbacka, who also happens to be an intensive collector and frequent flea market shop-

per. In the poem (from the collection *Wunderkammer*, 2008) Andtbacka notes that collecting is about moving, thing by thing, towards what one is not. Maybe the two stances are not in effect far off from one another, but the question is also very much one of verbal clarity. Questions of presence and absence are of course extremely difficult to handle, not least verbally, as they consist of some of the most intricate and complicated of all problems concerning our place in the world.

Due to the method chosen, any emphasis on factors such as gender, power, cultural anchoring is generally weak or lacking. Whether this is a disadvantage or an advantage might be a question of personal taste and cultural leanings on the part of the reader. In my view it does not diminish the value of this book. Erik Ottoson has written a thesis which expands the field and methods of ethnography, while simultaneously being quite mind-bending and a joy to read.

Sven-Erik Klinkmann, Vasa

Tools for Creativity

Helena Pettersson, Boundaries, believers and bodies: A cultural analysis of a multidisciplinary research community. Institutionen för kultur och media. Umeå Universitet 2007. 209 pp. Diss. ISBN 978-91-726-4297-3.

■ This dissertation analyzes Tools for Creativity, a publicly-sponsored Swedish enterprise intended to leverage new Information Technology-related products out of multidisciplinary collaboration between artists and IT specialists. The analysis is developed out of long term *in situ* fieldwork in the enterprise, the analytic tools deployed being derived from the field of Ethnology in Sweden.

Of course, my response to the analysis is colored by my own experience of and familiarity with participant observation methodology, ethnological analytic tools, and field sites like Tools for Creativity. I have also done fieldwork in cyberspace. I am an information ethnographer in the sense that, since the early 1980s, my ethnography has focused on the relationship between automated information and communication technologies and social change.

Helena Pettersson says "The present thesis is a cultural analysis of people's experiences working in a multi-disciplinary research community producing ICT research and prototypes." The author sets out to answer several important questions, including:

- Can creativity be promoted by mixing artists and AICTers?
- How does research change when made multi-disciplinary?
- How does research change when state, academy, and industry are mixed?; and
- What is the "Knowledge Society"?

The chosen field site in Umeå, Tools for Creativity, was one of several brought into being though funding from the Swedish Interactive Institute. It was selected because social dynamics relevant to all these questions were present and accessible to her to study. Her chosen methodology was long term participating observation, including open-ended interviews. This enabled her to see how this unique situation was experienced by those in it.

Helena Pettersson's analytic approach in the dissertation begins with the identification of two cultural constructs that provide the pivots around which site dynamics revolve, technology and research. She proceeds to use them to "map" the coherences and contradictions manifest in the various practices she observes and participates in. In classic ethnographic mode, she uses several other notions from her field experiences in drawing her maps. These include, with regard to technology,

- "Us vs. them," which she analyzes in "boundary object" terms borrowed properly from Susan Leigh Star;
- "Being with" IT;
- Techno-romanticism, an attitude toward technology which takes it as unproblematic and likely to have substantial social impacts while itself being largely independent of the social;
- A progressivist ideology, both in general and specifically in regard to technology; and
- A presumption that technology is innovative by nature.

The author is alive to the contradictions manifest in these technology-related practices: e.g., while all informants shared the notion of "being with" technology in the abstract, what this meant (as in terms of status) was differently experienced depending on field of academic training and gender. Similarly, convictions about the inherent speed and novelty of AICTs (automated information and communication technology) meant a need to always be on the "cutting

edge," which interfered greatly with opportunities for the kinds of reflective practices especially associated with the arts.

She is also sensitive to possible technology discourses which were not present in the field discourse, such as AICTs as electronic prostheses or users as cyborg. Given their prevalence elsewhere, I would have appreciated an exploration of the reasons for these silences.

With regard to research, she explores:

- Similar "us as one sort vs. us as another sort" boundary object, and
- A very broad, innovative, "outside the box" concept of research.

She is similarly alive to contradictions in the research arena:

- On the one hand, an ideology that all the members of the organization do it vs. a natural science-oriented prestige hierarchy borrowed from academia;
- A conflict over policy vs. individually-determined research program;
- The ideal vs. actual; and
- Again, gender.

Like many Swedes who read this work, I was aware that Tools for Creativity no longer exists in this form. Given Pettersson's analysis, it is not difficult to come up with several reasons why this might be the case, many of which come down to basic contradictions in conception, let alone execution. One "chap" summary of the dissertation would be that Tools for Creativity did not have a well-worked out organizational strategy.

Of course, as ethnology, the dissertation delivers much more than this. I see several implications that can be drawn from its analysis. One intellectual lesson concerns the deep complexity of engineering IT creativity. While Pettersson's research illuminates several steps that might be taken were one to attempt this again, it in no way suggests that this would now be an easy task. At a more general level, like all good ethnography of technology, Pettersson demonstrates again the deep relevance of the cultural to the technical, as well as the pitfalls of acting in ignorance of this relevance.

On a practical level, Pettersson's analysis directs our attention to the centrality of carrying through structurally on any challenge to change the nature of "research." Minimally, for example, this would mean making the reward structure not only visible but also reflective of notions like each staff member's research is of equal value, at least potentially. It also suggests the limits to conceiving of research in only multidisciplinary rather than transdisciplinary terms. To do the latter means not only broadening the range of skills that "count" as producing research; it also demands good answers to questions like, "Newness" for what?

In addition, several other important issues are flagged by Pettersson's work. One is why these practices, especially in the arts and in Sweden, remain so substantially gendered. Another is the complex, reflexive role of the ethnographer in the study of techno-sciences; in this case, as equally both "artist (humanist)" and researcher (scientist). C.P. Snow's "two cultures" split is alive and well in this contemporary Swedish organization, and when one does ethnography of techno-science, one is likely to embody the contradictions manifest in workspace like these.

There are several reasons for complimenting Helena Pettersson's work. One is on her selection of an important site for her research. Tools for Creativity might even serve as an equivalent for technology of the site for "laboratory life" chosen by Latour and Woolgar. She is also to be praised for her sensitive, well-worked out entry to the site. The dissertation manifests good, well-articulated familiarity with a broad range of usefully applied and relevant literatures. It is also marked by effective analysis and a rich analytic frame.

At the same time, more could have been made of the opportunities the research provided. I feel the conclusions were too brief. Perhaps they should have included and amplified the reflections on the ethnographer's role presented in the introduction. (Here, they could not be easily grounded in the research experience, with which the reader was not yet familiar.) Additionally, the analysis could maybe have been more dynamic. One way this might have been done, even a bit dramatically, would have been to relate the analysis to the fate of this organization. The analysis is very suggestive of why it failed to thrive, and conclusions might have been framed in part in terms of hints at how future efforts to foster creativity, or to overcome two culture divides, might be pursued. Where possible, I think we need to

show the practical relevance of well-done academic research. When we don't do this enough, when we can, we put our access to field sites at risk.

Finally, I think the payoff of certain analytic elements could have been more explicit and drawn out in greater detail. That this worksite was gendered is clear, but not what we learn about gendering or technology in general from this case. Another writing suggestion is to use more description, especially in the beginning. This is a way to introduce an author's own understanding of what is going on and make them a greater presence in the analysis to come. This helps avoid an over-reliance on the quoted language of other, perhaps more well-known analysts, which often obscures rather than sharpening analytic claims. Finally, I draw on "opponent privilege" to ride a personal hobby-horse and object to the analytic use of the concept, "social capital" as a gloss on the perfectly fine notion of "resource." At least one of Tools for Creativity's problems was the contradictions in its relations to the reproduction of "real" capital. I understand that, while it was supposed to make an eventual contribution to the Swedish market economy, it was prevented from developing and marketing commodities in the short run. Getting straight just what can reasonably be expected from such enterprises in relation to the reproduction of capital is an important issue in understanding the role of research in the reproduction of contemporary social formations. Fuzzy talk encouraged by imprecise notions like social capital may even have been another problem with which Tools for Creativity was not able to deal.

I concluded my opponent presentation with the following questions for Helena Pettersson: So, why didn't Tools for Creativity succeed? How relevant were the contradictions in cultural constructions identified in the dissertation to its demise?

What insights can be gleaned from this research into how to create transdisciplinary collaboration between those trained in natural science and in the humanities? Specifically with regard to Swedish Ethnology, what, if anything, is Swedish about the experiences recounted? On reflection, are there problems (e.g., of "auto-ethnography") that arise from having this research on research in Sweden being done by a Swede with academic training in Sweden?

David Hakken, Indiana University

Children's Birthday Parties

Erika Ravne Scott, Bursdag! En samtidsstudie av fødselsdagsselskapet som rituell handling. Acta Humaniora no. 322. Universitetet i Oslo, Oslo 2007. 316 pp. Diss. ISSN 0806-3222.

■ This dissertation is about something that, at first sight, seems banal and pleasant, but when the theme is tackled as the author does here, turns out to have great existential depth and potential to affect people. The theme is birthday parties for schoolchildren in grades 1–6, as these parties are arranged by the parents, with the school class as the prescribed framework for recruiting guests. The parties are a well-established ritual in contemporary Norway. There is a widespread notion that children's birthdays should be celebrated with friends from school, and there are also firm ideas about what a proper party should contain: presents, cakes and other refreshments, and games. This set of principles has been examined by Erika Ravne Scott in a previous degree thesis. In her doctoral dissertation she goes further and problematizes the persistence and modification of the parties from an actor perspective, with the focus on three sets of actors: parents, children, and representatives of school. A recurrent theme is "challenge"; the ritual challenges people to act, but exactly how they should act, and why, is open for negotiation and thus also for variation in the performance of the ritual, and for further development of its forms.

The background to this focus is that birthday parties are one of the few arenas where school and home meet. They are based on ideals of equality and general inclusion. In practice, however, they have to be held in a school reality that can display a large measure of cultural, social, and ethnic heterogeneity, and the ideals of inclusion can be confronted both by desires to keep out of these activities and by the wish to choose whom one wants to invite when arranging a party. The ritual as it is actually accomplished takes place in this tension – between a prescribed form of behaviour on one hand, and on the other hand different actors' views of what is meaningful, desirable, and practicable. It is also worth noting that the actors are of three kinds: parents, children, and representatives of school, and that their priorities do not always coincide.

The dissertation is typically Norwegian, in the sense that the introductory account of the problem, the material and methods, the theoretical background, and

previous research is detailed and divided into several chapters (in this case four, filling a total of 107 pages). This is followed by the analysis, 151 pages divided into five chapters (the last of which contains reflections on differences and similarities in the answers given in the interviews and the Internet questionnaire that supplemented the interviews), and finally a 17-page conclusion summing up the dissertation.

Chapter 2 presents the history of birthday celebrations and previous research on the topic. This ranges from ancient forms of celebration (both Greek and Roman), Catholic saints' days, and the significance of the Reformation for the forms of birthday celebrations, to the circumstances in modern society which have led to increased celebrations. It is doubtful whether this long journey through history is strictly necessary as a backdrop to the problem studied in the dissertation, but the sections that specify the modern premises for birthday celebrations – which include a linear perception of time and a strong focus on the individual – are definitively interesting and would have deserved to be recapitulated later in the text. The chapter ends by summing up the author's degree thesis, which identified and surveyed children's birthday celebrations as a secular, collective festive ritual for children, with special focus on three elements: invitations, presents, and meals. The author singles out the things in the degree thesis that enticed her to study the topic further: the realization that, even though birthday celebrations are a well-established phenomenon, there are great variations in the way people relate to it and how they hold their own parties, and the realization that the ritual can create specific tensions in multicultural settings.

Chapter 3 is a detailed account of the material and methods. It comprises both the material that was used for the degree thesis (collected in 1995/96) and the material that has been added for the doctoral project. The main source is interviews with children aged 12–13 (who look back on their birthday celebrations all the way up through the school years) and with parents and class teachers, along with an Internet questionnaire in which fifth- and seventh-graders took part. The Internet questionnaire includes general questions, while the interviews allow the possibility to be more specific, to go into detail, and to pursue reflections that arise in the conversations. In the round of interviews in 1995/96 the ambition was to capture all the children in two final-year classes, while the additional interviews in 2001 and 2002 were with 12 pupils selected from six classes. The selection was done by the class teacher, and one of the criteria was that they should have other than a purely Norwegian background, in that at least one parent had to be from a different country. Six of these children were Muslims, with parents from various countries.

Chapter 4 presents the theoretical tools of the dissertation, with special emphasis on perspectives and concepts that shed light on the relationship between actor and ritual. It is a densely written chapter, which in my opinion would have gained from a clearer articulation of how the author has combined the different sources of inspiration into an integrated perspective. It is interesting to compare the restrained style and tone in this chapter with the far more independent reasoning in the chapter on method. A possible interpretation is that the author does not fully dare to trust her own capacity for theoretical prioritization and combination. If so it is a pity, for I think that her capacity for independence is fully sufficient in this field too.

The analytical part of the dissertation is divided into four chapters, structured according to a chronology of practice: the first is about whether parents feel obliged or not to hold a birthday party for their children, the second is about deciding whom to invite, the third is about the form of the party, and the last is about how people – chiefly the children themselves – tackle both good and bad experiences of birthday celebrations.

Chapter 5 lets us meet parents who have grown up with Norwegian birthday parties themselves, and also parents who grew up in other countries. For the former category, the children's parties feel obligatory, something they hold almost out of a sense of duty; for the latter category the parties are an element of Norwegian culture which they can either choose to adopt for the sake of the children, or else refuse to accept. It is worth noting here that the former parents tend to reproduce the children's parties whether they themselves have good or bad memories of them from their own childhood, and that they initially find it difficult to say in words why birthday parties are important. This means that they act out of habit rather than on the basis of deliberate reflection or choice. But when they have to express themselves on the subject in the interviews, the reason they state is often that they want to ensure that their children have fond memories of their birthdays. On the other hand, parents who have not grown up with Norwegian

birthday celebrations act after having reflected, no matter how they choose to act. Those who refuse do so primarily with reference to religion, specifically Islam; some of the Muslim informants claim that Islam prohibits birthday celebrations. Others interpret the same religion as preaching that Muslims are free to decide whether they want to celebrate or not, and the author, on the basis of the interviews and the Internet questionnaire, can refute the widespread belief Muslim children do not celebrate birthdays. One conclusion in this chapter is that the parents think that they arrange parties out of consideration and love for the child, even when the party is held against the child's will. It is observations like this which turn the dissertation into existentially fraught reading.

Chapter 6 deals with the premises for invitation; full inclusion versus selection. The foundation in both cases is a division according to gender, which never seems to be questioned. Including everyone, in other words, means including all the girls in the class if one is a girl, or all the boys if one is a boy. It is clear that this principle is maintained primarily by class teachers and parents, sometimes against the wishes of the birthday child. The principle is generally ignored when the children grow older; it then becomes more acceptable to make a selection among the guests, as long as the selection can be justified or defended. Friendship is a crucial variable in this context. But partial inclusion, according to the author's summary, is a complicated game where many variables are relevant: age, gender, cultural affiliation, and – last but not least – practical possibilities and limitations (the latter are often related to social and economic conditions in the home).

Chapter 7, one of the longest in the dissertation, gives an account of what the informants regard as an ordinary birthday, that is, the set of conventions that constitute, for them, the patterns of a normal party. There is also discussion of what qualifies as good old-fashioned and proper celebration; these adjectives seem largely synonymous. A characteristic of a proper party is that it takes place in the home, that traditional elements in the food that is served – the buns and cakes – are home-made, and that nothing is extravagant. The parties thus seem to be subject to strict norms of moderation. The only thing that can be used lavishly is the kind of parental creativity that does not cost money but requires time and serious involvement. The antithesis of good birthday celebrations, on the other hand is to make things too easy for oneself (buying cakes instead of baking them, letting the children watch videos instead of arranging proper games), and to hold a party where one's own work is minimized but no expense is spared. The ideals for children's parties are thus inscribed in established perceptions of core values in Norwegian culture; moderation stands out both as a value in itself and as a premise for ideals of equality. In this connection it is particularly interesting to note that the author sees a difference between the two sets of material collected with five or six years intervening: the tolerance of extravagant parties is greater in the early 21st century than it was when she did her first collecting in the mid-1990s. Another interesting conclusion in the chapter is that the transition phase, when the children orient themselves towards an adolescent identity and reject everything they associate with children's birthdays, occurs as early as the age of 10–11. At this age they also begin to give force to their protests against full inclusion and insist on celebrating their birthdays with friends that they have chosen themselves.

Chapter 8 is comparatively short, concentrating on expectations and experiences of the parties, thematized in a series of conceptual pairs: order and chaos, nostalgia and change, joy and trauma. Even shorter is the methodological reflection that comes as a kind of appendix to chapter 9, comparing the responses to the interviews and the Internet questionnaire. The final chapter, sums up the main findings, but without much further discussion of them. What is especially interesting in this chapter comes in the last pages, where the author formulates a hypothesis that an ongoing change of the Norwegian school system, involving a break-up of the class as a unit, could have the result that parties lose more of the inclusive function – for better or worse – that they must be regarded as having had in the period covered by the dissertation.

This a solid piece of work. The book is written in a sober, restrained style, with sentences that are often short, and with an occasional tendency to repeat the same key words, as if to hammer in what is important. The interviews are also cited in short fragments, with single sentences rather than long, coherent passages. The style is expressive, and in a way rhetorically effective. The disadvantage is that it can sometimes appear as if the author releases insights only in highly condensed form, blocking the way for further digging and sniffing in the situations that are analysed. One variable that strikes me as not being sufficiently analysed in the dissertation is gender. It is quite clear that

gender is a central dimension in the celebrations, but the dissertation does not examine much how gender operates in, or is produced by, the birthday parties. Are the same things done, for example, on a boy's birthday as on a girl's? How is gender articulated in details such as decoration, clothes, presents, and games? In what way do the parties reproduce gender, or, more specifically, normative/stereotyped expectations of gendered behaviour? And to what extent do they allow for different ways of being a girl/boy? Questions like these could have been interesting to consider as regards both the strictly gender-segregated parties for children, and the mixed parties for children who are approaching adolescence. Among the particularly good analyses, on the other hand, I may mention those which show how the parties articulate, and maintain, ideals of simplicity, solidarity, and equality (for better or worse), and those which demonstrate a distinct tendency towards change on this point in such a short time as six or seven years.

The strongest impression that remains with me has to do with what I wrote at the beginning about existential depth and the potential to affect people. In some way or another the dissertation stimulates me to reflect on (and not least of all to feel) how merciless it is to be a person, big or small, among other people, and how much can go wrong even when people act with the best intentions and with a desire to do good. It may not be automatically expected that a study of children's parties should remind us of this. But Ravne Scott, as an alert researcher, has managed to bring this out clearly.

Barbro Blehr, Stockholm

Archipelago Identities

Katriina Siivonen, Saaristoidentiteetit merkkien virtoina. Varsinaissuomalainen arki ja aluekehitystyö globaalisaation murroksessa. Kansatieteellinen Arkisto 51. Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistys, Helsinki 2008. 408 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-951-9057-70-5.

■ Katriina Siivonen's doctoral dissertation *Saaristoidentiteetit merkkien virtoina. Varsinaissuomalainen arki ja aluekehitystyö globaalisaation murroksessa* (Archipelago identities as streams of signs. Everyday life and local development in Southwest Finland as a part of global transition) takes a look at the Southwest Finland archipelago, the everyday lives of its various population groups, the new forms of organisation brought by regional development and their impact on archipelago identity. The archipelago off the city of Turku in SW Finland is an interesting region for research in that it has both Swedish- and Finnish-speaking populations living in their own linguistic areas; most of the outer islands, but also some of the inner ones, are inhabited mostly by Swedish speakers, whereas the Finnish speakers tend mainly to inhabit the inner islands.

Ethnologically the research falls within the category of the study of everyday life and ethnic encounters. Many Finnish ethnological dissertations of the present and last decade have focused on the localness and functionality of everyday life and the politically-oriented processes of ethnicity, or on the contexts of and backgrounds to cultural encounters. While the same can be said of the work of Katriina Siivonen, it nevertheless has many new special features.

First, Siivonen's dissertation sheds new light on one branch of ethnological research: study of the archipelago. The archipelago constitutes a special geographical and cultural entity that, as is evident from Siivonen's dissertation, is also on the physical periphery and is thus more strongly tied to nature than many other contemporary communities. This has been noted in research in Swedish into the archipelago, especially the works of Nils Storå. Archipelago communities have been the subjects of ethnological examination for a long time in Swedish research, from Orvar Löfgren's *Fångstmän i industrisamhället* (Maritime hunters in industrial society (1977)) onwards, and this research has also paid attention to the social structures of the local community and their links with other structures via summer residence, nature paradise, etc. The archipelago may thus rise above its natural state to acquire a high symbolic status. Being somewhat inaccessible, an archipelago lies on the "margin", but if there are urban centres nearby, or the transport service improves, it may be exploited for purposes of tourism, in particular. Both the tourist trade and the development projects launched in the region in recent years have shown an interest in this.

Siivonen chooses to study questions arising from research into the cultural transition taking place in the archipelago both now and in the past. I quote: "The administration and NGOs acquire a more central role in the cultural identification process" and there is a striving "to compare the identity constructs at

organisational level and the perspective of the 'ordinary' people, and to see what sort of scope the identity production governed and planned at different levels gives to the way people experience their own identity". The analysis thus addresses the interpretations of individuals. Hence Siivonens earliest approach, examining the discourse around the different languages, continued to closely direct the research.

The work falls into two sections, a theoretical one providing the research tools and presenting Siivonen's concept of culture, and an empirical one investigating archipelago identities at different levels. It also examines two different levels, the everyday one and regional development, the diverse old archipelago definitions and the new, emerging ones. The third is the macro-level, in this case the national and EU level – both levels that are repeatedly mentioned in examining regional development work in particular.

Siivonen's theoretical frame is explicitly semiotic and she has accordingly set her sights high. She seeks, by means of Charles S. Peirce's semiotics, to demonstrate that culture can be conceived of as a way of operating by means of signs. Since the theory is very profound, even addressing the very existence of the individual and culture, not all its elements can be explicated in detail. To my mind it is, however, important to stress that Peirce's semiotics regards culture as a global, constantly-changing process that can be understood via the individual observing and interpreting the world. This is a shifting, nebulous process, anthroposemiosis, but it is also a sort of interactive network operating at three levels, in the course of which awareness and self-awareness grow and consolidations of similarities emerge. Great expectations may be levelled at such theory formation, and in one sense it strongly resembles that of Deleuze and Guattari nowadays widely used, in which cultures or other consolidations form crystallisations or assemblages. This way of examining culture again involves various networks acting as cohesive forces, and nature is not forgotten; it is part of the theory formation.

Analysis of the regional, intermediate level dealt with in the second part of the dissertation concerned with regional development and the launching and administration of projects may also draw on many other approaches, such as Fredrik Barth's theory of the different levels of culture, and this Siivonen does. She could also have made use of the various late-modern approaches stressing agency and communication, and theories describing ethnic processes and the construction of ethnicities I already mentioned; a fine example of these is the doctoral dissertation by Marjut Anttonen examining the identity policy of the Kvens of Finnish descent in Northern Norway. Fredrik Barth already works on the assumption that a community always understands its ethnicity in relation to some other group, i.e. that cultural encounter is the mechanism that makes that community aware of its own special features. This observation can also be used in seeking to understand the self-images of the archipelago regions and particularly of the archipelago ethos of SW Finland and its different language groups.

The actors in this process may be both insiders and outsiders economically and culturally empowered to define the region. The archipelago is just such a region, and one point which Siivonen makes very clear is that the Swedish-speaking actors began creating an image of the archipelago and its ethos long before the Finnish speakers. This has hindered the incorporation of Finnish speakers as archipelago actors, because it is always more difficult to establish something new than to join in existing well-tried forms of organisation. Such initial setups are often also the seeds of conflict in seeking to engage in partnership, in this case across linguistic borders, for example, and especially when the entire archipelago, the Åland and Stockholm islands included, is involved. The dissertation gives a very detailed account of the difficulties encountered by organisations and actors in SW Finland in making their own views sufficiently clear in such partnerships.

Among the great merits of this study are the collection and analysis of a varied corpus of interview material, its methodological meticulousness at every stage of the research and its good command and subtle interpretation of the interview material. A small fault can be found in the representativity of the interviewees; only one couple represents the vast population of the Swedish-speaking islanders. But the work is to be praised for the vast amount of space it allots to the interviewees and their numerous and richly-nuanced quotations, which are also most creditably analysed. Siivonen is also aware that there are many interests involved in defining the symbolic archipelago, and that these may to some sense be conflicting.

The model in Siivonen's dissertation does not touch on the longing for the simple, to some extent unassuming and unadorned lifestyle of the archipelago versus the leisure, tourism, experiences and authenticity

of the globalising world; instead it serves as a sort of other subconscious world that nevertheless gives direction both to everyday life and especially to those engaged in regional development work.

Siivonen demonstrates that on the one hand the local identities may still be closely tied to the immediate environment, even nature, family and occupation, but on the other hand that the new potential identities born of globalisation may, when they exist in the same environment, engender not only new tensions but also new livelihood opportunities and thus the promise of continuity for the inhabitants of a marginal society.

Compared with ethnological research in the other Nordic countries, Finnish dissertations have mostly focused on modernisation via communities that have been trodden underfoot rather than on its motors or the new symbolic fields or images ascribed to places. In Katriina Siivonen's study new postmodernist motors are present in the form of regional development work and workers, thus placing her research more in line with corresponding European and Nordic studies. Her dissertation has a strong academic approach yet also originality. It thus introduces new ideas into ethnological research. These may be used by both Siivonen and others in their semiotic search, also drawing on down-to-earth empiricism in the way that Katriina Siivonen has done.

Anna-Maria Åström, Åbo

Folklore Collecting from an Ideological Perspective

Fredrik Skott, Folkets minnen. Traditionsinsamling i idé och praktik 1919–1964. Institutet för språk och folkminnen i samarbete med Göteborgs universitet 2008. 386 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-7229-049-5.

■ In 1996, more than twelve years ago, Agneta Lilja wrote a doctoral thesis that studied the ideas and practice at the Dialect and Folklore Archive in Uppsala. Now we have a counterpart for the West Swedish Folklore Archive in Gothenburg, written by Fredrik Skott. Both have had the advantage of studying archives where they themselves have worked and know the material well. Lilja confined her study to the years 1914–1946, while Skott examines the Gothenburg archive from its foundation in 1919 until 1964, when the archivist C. M. Bergstrand retired. Whereas Lilja restricts her account to ULMA, Skott broadens the perspective to include the collection of traditional material as a national political issue. This gives his dissertation a more general interest.

Both the officials of the archives and the local informants perceived their collecting as a rescue action. But how did relations between these two categories develop? Agneta Lilja stresses the role played by professionalization in Uppsala. In Gothenburg, where the entire staff consisted of a single archivist, there was neither need nor opportunity to develop any policy towards the informants.

Although cooperation was essential, the archivists and the local informants represented two very different camps. The latter were in large measure rooted in the farming class, while the archivists, according to Lilja, represented the bourgeoisie. This particular question is crucial for Skott, who gives a detailed analysis of where the archive staff and the local informants belonged on a political right–left scale. Although there were individual deviations, he thinks that the archive side, if anything, was more to the left than to the right. Whereas Lilja believes that working-class culture was neglected in the archives, Skott is able to show, for example, that C. M. Bergstrand compiled a questionnaire about working-class culture as early as 1926. Gothenburg was much more of a working-class city than Uppsala. The Gothenburg folklorists, according to Skott, were also aware that the good old days were not just good.

Skott shows how folklife studies had powerful advocates on the left in national politics, and he points out the contributions of such important politicians as P. E. Sköld, Ernst Wigforss, and Fredrik Ström. It was not romantic notions but realism that was the foundation for the collecting policy, although a romantic outlook could be expressed in the actual propaganda work. Yet even collectors with left-wing sympathies could have different purposes for their recording, as Skott demonstrates through two case studies of highly productive local informants. One of them wanted to elevate working-class culture from its socially inferior position, while the other wanted to highlight a neglected province: Dalsland.

Lilja's examiner, Staffan Bohman, said (*Rig* 1996:87), that the leaders of the labour movement largely shared the values of the ULMA officials. Skott shows that many of the values of the informants of the Gothenburg archive were shared by the representatives of the archive and of folklife research.

Skott finds no counterpart to the bourgeois ideology at the Gothenburg archive (with the exception of Waldemar Liungman) that Lilja assumes to have prevailed in Uppsala. The study of Åke Campbell that I am currently conducting gives no support for this either. On the other hand, ULMA had two main aims, focusing on both word and thing, and different informants were evidently differently equipped to satisfy the archive in this. This problem did not exist in the Gothenburg archive, which did not need to try to train its informants in the way that was felt to be necessary in Uppsala. Skott cites Bergstrand's often repeated statement: "In this archive of which I am in charge, we do not care very much about the linguistic form; it is the content that matters" (p. 158).

With the temporal perspective we now have, it is clear that Lilja was highly influenced by the contemporary left-wing movement. Skott – although his personal sympathies may be to the left – has written in a different climate, and does not try to conform to the theoretical models that influenced the time when Lilja took her doctorate. He cites the recent debate about the use of history and reflexivity as sources of inspiration. Skott's dissertation is more thoughtful, with a firmer empirical foundation, but also more cautious and not as colourful as Lilja's. On the other hand, he has had the advantage of dealing with a problem that has already been raised by Lilja, and that he has seen as his task to nuance. One topic that neither he nor Lilja considers, however, is the relationship of the respective archives to research and teaching. If one brings in the Lund archive one can understand how crucial this link has been here, actually without counterpart anywhere else in Sweden.

I might have expected Skott to consider some of the criticism from various quarters that was levelled against C. M. Bergstrand and his attitude to the work of recording (e.g. books of questions that generated more breadth than depth), but he prefers to stress the good points of this rather odd Gothenburg figure. The rich gallery of people presented by Skott is particularly effective for giving the Gothenburg archive a face. Employees such as Johan Kalén, David Arill, and others exemplify the excellent staff the archive had in its early phase. It is also pleasing to see photographs of these people. Hilding Celander's role, however, has been confined to the background.

Because of the admittedly well-justified chronological limits, Skott has not considered the period when Ejdestam and Wall headed the archive in Gothenburg. It is all the more gratifying that the archive now has vigorous representatives and that cooperation between the archives in Sweden has again been encouraged.

Skott concludes his dissertation by pointing out that many questions remain to be answered about the study of the work of the folklife archives, such as the collection of people's memories as a way to create local identity. The constant flow of books on local history, based on people's recollections, shows how relevant this task is. Skott has made a valuable contribution to the study of the forces that impelled the collection of traditions in our country, and he is the right man to continue describing the work of the Gothenburg archive up to our own days.

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Lund

Hidden Publicity in Noble Female Spheres

Marie Steinrud, Den dolda offentligheten. Kvinnlighetens sfärer i 1800-talets svenska högreståndskultur. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2008. 309 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-7331-117-5.

■ The main research field of ethnology until the 1960s was traditions and customs of the peasants. Today it is mainly phenomena in contemporary human behaviour that interest ethnologists. Alongside the development of the discipline, however, there has always been a smaller group of scholars who have found the complexity of manorial culture and nobility fascinating to analyse. The gentry lifestyle and the manors as social arenas have formed environments, with components from the surrounding community and culture, on a micro level and are therefore interesting research targets. Ways of mixing in society, celebrating feasts, keeping a household, or forms of marriage, dress, amusement, relationships – it is all there but with codes of its own, like a society in miniature.

The thesis "Hidden Publicity: Female Spheres in the Nineteenth-Century Swedish Nobility" by Maria Steinrud focuses on the dichotomy public and private in the lives of four sisters. The dichotomy also consists a question of gender, how men and women acted in different arenas according to sex. The introductory chapter deals with different theories about, and approaches towards, matters that can be seen as public or private in everyday life. Previous researchers have

given different meanings to the dichotomy, since every period has its own definition and therefore the line between public and private is drawn differently from time to time. Steinrud prefers to use the search instruments *access*, *agency* and *interest*, introduced by Stanley Benn and Gerald Gaus, to encircle the distinction and hierarchy between the concepts in the dichotomy. She underlines that neither public nor private can be seen as something fixed, but these spheres, and the manner of acting in them, shaped the lives of the four Tersmeden sisters. Joan Wallach Scott's analytical approach to gender, in combination with the private–public dichotomy, is also used by Steinrud in her dissertation.

The material consists mainly of letters written in the Tersmeden family and especially the correspondence between the sisters. Biographical notes, parish registers and especially probate inventories are also used when material culture comes into focus as Steinrud analyses "the home". As ethnology today focuses very much on contemporary society, Steinrud points out the problems of using historical material as an ethnologist and therefore perhaps not feeling quite comfortable in the discipline. However, since the focus is on the individual and on human life stories as a way to understand cultural behaviour, the perspective can be considered ethnological even if it concerns a social elite in the past. Using historical material often means that fragmentary knowledge and different sources are put together in order to form a context. It can be compared with detective work, and Steinrud describes it like fieldwork in historic time. The past must be defined and every phenomenon and pattern of behaviour must be understood in its own temporal dimension. Society, gender, hierarchy and class impact behaviour differently in different times. Therefore cultural analysis also require analysing society, and in that respect Steinrud is inspired by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz's conception of "thick description".

The lives of the four sisters are followed through four themes: *sociability*, *friendship*, *work* and *home*. Previously researchers have often studied the gentry in terms of oppression, whilst nowadays it is common to romanticize the nobility, perhaps as a result of the popularity of Jane Austen's literature. Steinrud wants to stay neutral, and the dissertation as a whole truly gives an impression of a sober researcher's perspective, although this left me as a reader quite neutral about the sisters and their milieu.

The thesis is logically structured, starting with a chapter on theories, methodology and parallels in the research field. Then follows a brief presentation of the Tersmeden family and their kin, which leads on to the four main themes. The first one, *sociability*, is about the importance of creating and maintaining social networks. Since this networking and any communication to a great extent was done in writing, the theme is central considering the sources, letters. Besides aspects of amusement, sociability also contains training in social and domestic skills, often passed on to the girls by relatives. The next theme, *friendship*, can also be seen in the correspondence, which shows us that the four sisters had a very close relationship throughout their lives. Steinrud points out that sociability and friendship were kept quite separate, and refers to the historian Eva Österberg who has defined friendship as unrestrained, free-willed, equal, informal and non-hierarchical.

The theme of *work* focuses on the women's role in the home and family. The work often consisted of being an organizer and supervisor, ensuring that every thing flowed smoothly, both practically and socially. The woman's role was to be a model but her chances to develop her talents were almost exclusively limited to the mansion's household, later also charity work. Legal rights, inheritance right, the right to work outside the home or to own property were restricted until the middle of the 19th century. This is naturally a well-known fact, but it still strikes me that it is not very long since women in Scandinavia lived in conditions similar to those still applying to many women in other cultures today, whatever their class.

The spheres of private and public are the main objects in the dissertation. They are discussed throughout the themes mentioned above, but are perhaps best seen in the last theme concerning the *home*. The description of the home is somewhat different from the previous chapters in a way that I personally found interesting. Perhaps it has to do with the expansion of the material to include probate inventories, which enriches the analysis. Also, the Tersmeden manor as a case study gives the analysis a deeper dimension. Using Jessica Kross's concepts of homosocial and heterosocial spheres, Steinrud analyses how the women used their home and identify the female areas. According to how the rooms in a manor were used, and the interior decoration in relation to the status of the objects, Steinrud refers to the concept of "conspicuous consumption". Clothes,

jewellery, textiles and meals as social markers are also part of this consumption of status. In my opinion the parallels and associations with previous research in relation to the empirical material are more distinct in this chapter. Parallels to our modern-day consumption are not pointed out, but the book aroused historical associations for me.

The last chapter, on "spheres of womanhood", concludes and also repeats the discussion outlined in the introduction and in the themes. Steinrud's conclusions regarding private and public spheres are not actually surprising, although she points out that the dichotomy in the lives of noble women are more complex than first meets the eye. It is not about two opposite poles but the two as terminals on a sliding processual scale. The concepts male and female are also complicated fusions of power and powerlessness, of public and private in a different time and space.

Maria Steinrud's thesis can be easily read even by people outside the discipline. It sheds light on a historical period and milieu that is near enough for reflections to be made on contemporary women's lives, and how the patterns of sexes and classes have developed. The four themes of sociability, friendship, work and home could actually also be used when analysing a contemporary woman's life. The private and public spheres still exist, even if they have changed.

The many quotations from the letters illustrate the atmosphere that Steinrud wants to emphasize. Sometimes, however, I had a feeling that the writer during her research has established a closer relationship to the sisters than the text and quotations from letters are able to transmit to the casual reader. The notes are numerous and frequently contain a lot of information that sometimes could have given a more intimate touch to the material if they had been incorporated in the text. I read the notes intermittently and therefore caught up information more by chance at the right time. These reflections may come from the fact that I perhaps read the book as a book rather than as a dissertation. As a dissertation it is, however, a solid piece of work, logical and simple in a positive sense, but from time to time also a little repetitive and predictable.

Yrsa Lindqvist, Helsingfors

The Language of Meals and Food

Richard Tellström, The construction of food and meal culture for political and commercial ends: EU-summits, rural businesses and World Exhibitions. Örebro Studies in Culinary and Meal Science 5, Örebro, 2006. 116 pp. Diss. ISBN 91-7668-492-X.

■ The dissertation explores the hitherto seldom researched problems, namely the ways in which food and meal culture are perceived and presented by professionals; the cultural meaning and value of food culture; and what food specialists define as local, regional, and national dishes – in other words, what, to them, represents a local or a regional characteristic of a meal. The text is comprised of four shorter studies in which Tellström conducted interviews with the following four groups of professionals: those who participated in the preparation of food for official meetings and summits of participant countries representatives during Sweden's first Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2001; those engaged in organized production and sale of food in rural areas, for example restaurant owners, food producers, event organizers, etc.; marketing consultants branding food products and selling of local products; and political civil servants whose task had been to include Swedish foods and food products in World Fair exhibitions (EXPO) in the period between 1851 and 2005.

In his investigation, the author has employed mainly qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interview, different observation techniques, and analyses of historic and recent governmental documents on foods served at receptions for participant EU members. The interviews, obtained by the snowball sampling technique, selection of respondents in a given situation, and reference interviews, were conducted between 2001 and 2006. All in all, the author interviewed 47 respondents, 32 of which were males, 15 females. The majority were from the group involved in local food production, food marketing, and restaurant management.

Analytical research methods were employed to analyze the material that was to provide answers as to how cultural elements, for example meals, were used as representation symbols.

At the beginning of his dissertation, Tellström discusses basic concepts and theoretical models used in the study of food and meal culture. According to him, food and meals represent a well-researched segment within ethnology and other, similar disciplines,

especially anthropology and sociology. As French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss has already pointed out, in order to speak of food fit for human consumption, raw ingredients need to be defined and transformed into edible food. In addition to fulfilling basic needs, in many countries food is connected in the system of sharing, exchange, receiving, and offering. Food represents an expression of a given society with which its members, be it individuals or groups, wish to distance themselves from other social groups, and indeed also from other species (Douglas). Food preparation as well as the act of cooking not only indicate that humans do not equal animals, but complex manners of food preparation, consumption, and serving also set apart the so-called civilized societies from savages. Food preparation is therefore more than transformation of raw foodstuffs into cooked, edible food, but a transformation of the natural to the cultural.

Another concept of Tellström's scientific interest is culture, which is a fundamental concept in ethnological and anthropological research. Since his dissertation examines primarily food culture the author analyzes meals rather than dishes since the former comprise a larger number of cultural acts and values than mere food products. In order to do this, he first has to explain certain concepts that are specifically connected with the problem of political and commercial construction of food and meal culture. These concern primarily the concepts of local, regional, and national food and meal culture; tradition versus innovation; authenticity versus fabrication; and urban versus rural. In his investigation of local, regional, and national foods in the four studies, Tellström introduces the term LORE food, which is an abbreviation of the terms **lo**cal and **re**gional food and meal culture. The dissertation and the complementing articles do not merely explore how respondents use these terms; Tellström's principal objective is to indicate that these concepts have been insufficiently differentiated also in professional studies.

In the central segment of his dissertation the author argues that the food that had been served at select events, for example at the 2001 Sweden's EU Council Presidency or during World Fairs, followed professional trends and objectives. While on the one hand it was selected and prepared in order to be embraced, and ultimately purchased, by Swedish citizens, i.e. consumers, it was to indicate a high status of Swedish food culture and high quality of its local foods and meals on the other. Although professional agents concentrated on traditional foods and meals they had largely neglected historical and academic findings on food and meal culture in the Swedish past. Results indicate that modern interpretations of traditional food and meal culture are mainly the domain of political and commercial agents who neither include academic findings nor cooperate with experts from this field. Rather than this, they perceive food and meals as an intensive part of official meetings, summits, and socializing; in EXPO exhibitions, Swedish food and meal culture was presented as a social and entertaining event based on stereotypes of Swedish foods and meals of the past.

In their interviews, marketing experts stressed primarily the importance of meeting consumer needs for local products and their authenticity. It is namely this emphasis on authenticity that increases consumer interest in food products that are already on the market, or heightens the expectancy of new ones. In meeting these demands, marketing experts need to skillfully balance between tradition and innovation. A good example of this strategy is how to present local rural products to urban consumers in a modern and acceptable manner; how to sell them to tourists visiting Sweden; and how to market them abroad. The marketing specialists' concept of this subject thus corresponds with the traditional background on the food and meal culture of their customers as well as the customers' needs and understanding of this segment of culture.

In conclusion of his book, Tellström argues that local, regional, and national food and meal cultures have to be understood as a result of a combination of values, and in relation to the concept of how to use cultural heritage for commercial and political purposes. Even though the text focuses primarily on Sweden and Scandinavia in general it applies to international political and economic contexts as well. Contemporary food and meal culture is namely always an international phenomenon regardless of the fact that it is defined on a local, regional, or national level.

Tellström's book represents a successful blend of two areas of his scientific interest, namely ethnology and culinary arts and meal science, the latter being an entirely new discipline. Since the use (and abuse) of cultural heritage for commercial purposes and for political aims is practiced universally the text is highly current and widely applicable. Both

this and its multidisciplinary character vouch for interesting reading for all interested in the marriage of cultural values and traditions with economic and political factors.

Maja Godina Golija, Ljubljana

A Genuine Sami

Christina Åhrén, *Är jag en riktig same? En etnologisk studie av unga samers identitetsarbete.* Institutionen for Kultur och medievetenskaper, Umeå universitet 2008. 199 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-7264-692-6.

■ The title of this Ph.D. thesis is in English "Am I a genuine Sami? An ethnological study of identity-work among young Sami". As I saw the title, I expected to be reading a thesis which deals with balancing between Saminess and Swedishness, i.e. how to be both a member of the Sami minority and a Swedish citizen. These kinds of identity studies have already been part of mainstream research for two decades all over Scandinavia and elsewhere.

However, this thesis turned out to be focused on internal definitions of Saminess within the Sami society. Instead of repeating the often-asked question of how to be both Sami and Swedish in a modern society, the question is how to be a young Sami in the Sami society. Christina Åhrén has interviewed young people who have different relationships to Sami culture due to their different backgrounds. Some of them have grown up in the traditional Sami areas, while others have grown up in urban environments having no contact with the Sami culture. Some of them have had the opportunity to learn the language; others do not speak a word of it. They all have different possibilities for creating their identities. In her thesis Åhrén sheds light on some very interesting aspects of the Sami society.

Åhrén has collected the material for her thesis in three stages. During the first fieldwork period in 2001–2002 she had interviews with 26 young persons, 14 women and 12 men. All of them were under 30 years of age at that time. Some of them were students; some others were in the beginning of their working life. Later she returned to some of her informants for further interviews and discussions in 2004 and in 2007. All informants are Southern Sami (*sydsamer* in Swedish) from the area between Västerbotten and Härjedalen. The author is a Southern Sami herself; part of the methodological chapter is devoted to her own positioning in the field.

Problems of identification became evident early on when Åhrén looked for informants. She met persons who were willing to participate, and some of them also recommended their relatives for interviews. However, some of the relatives refused the invitation by saying that they do not identify themselves as Sami. The situation was interesting; siblings of the same family could insist on either being or not being Sami. This is a good example of how self-identification is a question of personal choice, and people can have a variety of reasons for choosing or not choosing certain identification in a certain situation.

The core question of being a Sami in Sweden revolves around the reindeer grazing legislation, which stems from the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Åhrén describes the history of this legislation pointing out how it has influenced the development of social hierarchy in Sami society. The law defines the preconditions for reindeer herding; the grazing area is divided, and the herding rights are given only to members of a *sameby* (a Sami village). This means some families have herding rights, while some others are excluded by the reindeer grazing legislation.

Åhrén gives a very detailed description on how children of the reindeer herding families are enculturated and socialized into the Sami way of life. Reindeer husbandry is one of the few occupations where children can follow their parents from a very early age – it is actually also an occupation where a researcher can follow her informants to the workplace. As Åhrén correctly reminds us, it was not possible for her to do the same kind of participant observation with those Sami informants who worked in other jobs outside a *sameby*.

I found it very interesting to follow her description on how children gradually become enculturated, i.e. how they learn the cultural competence of reindeer herders. Starting at an early stage of childhood they gain a lot of cultural capital of what is considered "real" or "genuine" Saminess. At the same time they gradually learn the professional skills of reindeer breeding (reindeer husbandry is big business, to put it short). The cultural competence of Saminess is highly appreciated in the society, and the position of an individual within the society depends on the cultural capital that s/he has acquired in the Sami culture.

Some of her young informants told Åhrén how they

would not have had the opportunity to become reindeer herders even if they had wanted to, and even if they had lived in the neighbourhood, because their families were once left outside the reindeer grazing legislation. Åhrén shows how these families have experienced being outsiders and how they have created a way of being Sami with alternative values and norms.

Some of the informants have grown up in families which have not had any contact with their Sami background. The elder members of the families, usually grandparents or greatgrandparents, belong to generations which grew up during the time where there was great pressure upon assimilation in mainstream culture. At that time Sami culture and language was stigmatized and made these individuals feel ashamed of their origins. It was normal that they did not teach Sami to their children because it was generally considered better to be monolingual in the majority language. Instead, they left the Sami culture behind and wanted to become ordinary citizens. Some of them have hidden their background totally and never talked about it. Finding out about the family secret of Sami ancestry has been a real surprise to some informants.

For the present-day younger generation the old stigma does not exist. On the contrary, they are interested in finding their Sami origins. In migration literature this kind of search is known as Hansen's law of third generation, which expresses the idea of "what the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember". This notion can be applied to many minorities as well; while the earlier generation is anxious and insecure about their background, the younger generation, in return, is proud of it and wants to learn more about it.

Åhrén says that nowadays many of these young seekers, the so called "new Sami", have started to look back to their origins in order to learn more about their Sami heritage. For them it is an adventure – but not an easy one, because many of them have found that they are actually not welcomed in the *sameby*. They may also have other values and ideas which are not always in tune with the main ideology of reindeer herding. Åhrén has empirical material – interviews and participant observation – describing the clashes between the reindeer herding youth and some of the new Sami seekers. She has even registered signals of intolerance and mobbing; she calls these attitudes ethnocentrism in the Sami society. In her thesis she describes the underestimating comments and negative and pejorative names that some of the members of the Sami elite use when they look down on those who are not so familiar with all traditional features of Sami culture. These episodes are interesting since they reveal aspects of the inner hierarchy of the *sameby*.

The struggle for acceptance into Sami society is one of the aspects of this thesis, but the struggles of opposites is also a current topic. That is to say, there are some young informants who have wanted to desert the *sameby* environment leaving all the tradition-bound expectations. Some of Åhrén's informants have grown up in a reindeer herding family, which means that they would have all the necessary skills for becoming reindeer herders. Instead, they have decided to distance themselves from their family's traditions. Modern society offers a lot more possibilities for choice, and some persons have left the Sami society in order to seek another future.

This book is definitely worth reading. However, while reading I repeatedly pondered over the evaluation of this piece of research as an academic Ph.D. thesis. I would say that formally and theoretically this work does not belong to the strongest examples of academic research. The theoretical frame of reference is thin, and so is the use of referential literature. Making a judgement from this point of view I would regard this thesis as a somewhat lightweight piece of research. Christina Åhrén could have benefited from the theoretical work of many researchers, both ethnologists and anthropologists, both from within and outside of Scandinavia. Many researchers have recently discussed minority issues and questions of identity, as well as politics of identity, and there is a lot of current literature which could have supported Åhrén's analysis.

I actually thought that this thesis seemed more like a well-written pamphlet on a very important and current topic instead of a solid academic piece of research. In particular, the very last sentences of the last chapter leave the reader with this kind of aftertaste.

However, when it comes to the empirical material, this thesis presents an interesting example of internal cultural diversity and many alternative ways of being a Sami. Åhrén has given young people an opportunity to speak about their experiences, and there is a polyphony of diverse Sami voices. The importance of this thesis lies in the fact that it breaks down essentialized and homogenized images of "typical" Saminess. There is no unanimity on what is "genuine", i.e. there is no

right answer to the question stated in the title of this thesis. Åhrén says that the differences between the Sami are so remarkable that one might even wonder if one can talk about them as a group. They are all Sami, but in very different ways.

Åhrén brings up sensitive questions within her own society, and she doesn't hide her own position on these either. She is part of Sami society herself, which means she writes her thesis on the emic level, from the insider's point of view. I would not be surprised if this thesis arouses strong opinions in the Sami society. It is quite common within minority research that there are strong reactions, both in favour and against the thesis.

Finally, I would like to comment on the English summary at the end of the book. I get the impression that the author has written the summary in a great hurry, more or less at the last minute, and no native speaker has checked the language. There are many mistakes. For a non-Swedish speaker the summary is the only entrance to the book, therefore one should be careful with the quality of translation, no matter how short the summary is.

In summary, despite some critical words, I consider this thesis definitely worth reading for anyone who is interested in Sami matters in present-day Sweden.

Marjut Anttonen, Turku (Åbo)

Book Reviews

A Proper Family

En riktig familie. Mellem nye og gamle idealer. Lene Andersen & Palle Ove Christiansen (eds.). Dansk Folkemindesamling/C.A. Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen 2007. 176 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-7876-502-4.

■ The title of this book means "A Real Family: Between New and Old Ideals", and it concerns people's conceptions of a proper family life and how images of the family are created and used. The book contains a lengthy introduction by Palle Ove Christiansen, one of the editors, and six separate chapters. Some of these have a clear historical orientation, while a couple focus above all on our own times. The running theme is family life as ideal and practice, and the significance of history and tradition for how life is understood and lived.

Karin Lützen gives examples of how earlier research described and interpreted the composition of the family, its importance, and how concepts such as family and household have been perceived. Viewed from a long historical perspective, our present-day ideals about the family derive from different social classes and different eras, she writes. At the same time it is also striking, in her opinion, that family and relatives play an important part in people's lives despite major structural changes. It is no longer a matter of providing for the family, however, but of bonds to bygone times. People want to know their roots and be a part of history. But today there is also scope for putting one's own family together based on other principles than kinship. Here Lützen introduces the term "family of choice" to express the flexibility of the family concept.

Today more women have children than in, say, the late 19th century, when many women remained unmarried and had no children. Having children is a part or our modern normality. Almost everyone wants to be part of a real family, as Palle Ove Christiansen also points out in the introduction. Childless couples want to be able to adopt or get help with artificial fertilization, and those who live in homosexual relations also want to be parents. Two chapters deal with issues like this.

Tine Tjørnhøj-Thomsen's chapter about involuntary childlessness has an intimate quality and raises several interesting questions. Having followed a group of childless couples for several years, she has

found that they redefined the concept of family, from biological parents and kinship to an emphasis on everyday family life. It is the child (and the routines that come with the child) that creates the family. Another aspect she touches on is that childlessness also affects the older generation's view of themselves and their place in society – they do not become grandparents and thus differ from many others in their generation. Marsuska la Cour Mosegaard claims in her chapter about homosexual fathers that homosexual women and men seem to have different views of what is a real family for a child. According to her, lesbian couples stress the importance of being two persons, while homosexual men emphasize that there should be two genders, that there should be both men and women around the child. They think that ideal parenthood consists of adults of two sexes. She writes that the homosexual men inscribe themselves in a specific political image, but simultaneously emphasizes that the everyday care of the children is the same regardless of whether it is a homosexual father or the child's mother that is responsible for it. One may wonder whether the homosexual men differ in this respect from divorced men in general.

One chapter discusses marriage traditions (Else Marie Kofod), another the significance of people's childhood circumstances for the way their marriage or partnership is shaped and develops. What does the background mean for harmony and conflict in the home? Britta Bjerrum Mortensen presents stories from three different families and three generations – a total of twenty people. In the chapter on "Incomplete existences" Bjarne Kildegaard presents concepts with different designations for people's gender and position in the family system. This chapter has an exciting touch but is a little disconnected.

The articles are written in an easily accessible style, and photographs and other illustrations give extra life to the text. The book will be well suited for use in teaching. Like many other edited volumes, it goes in many directions, but unlike many others there is variation in the length of the chapters, which is good. Together the chapters in this volume show how strong the concept of family is, but also its changeability. What is perceived as a real family is always defined in a context. The book is an example of how central the family as an institution is in and for society, and the self-evident place that family issues have in research and debate.

Ingrid Söderlind, Stockholm

Painters and Paintings of Dalarna

Roland Andersson, Rune Bondjers, Johan Knutsson & Margareta Andersson, Dalmåleri. Dalmålarna – deras liv och verk. Dalarnas Fornminnes- och Hembygdsförbunds skrifter 38, Falun 2007. 607 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-87466-85-4.

■ This magnificent work, published in collaboration between Dalarnas Fornminnes- och Hembygdsförbund, Dalarnas Museum, and Nordiska Museet, fills over 600 lavishly illustrated pages and has a format that makes it virtually impossible to read lying down. In other words, the painting style of Dalarna now has its bible. The aim has been to survey what we know today about the painters and their work.

Roland Andersson is the main author. He begins with a discussion of designations and definitions. Here the reader is given good insight into the discovery of Dalarna painting among bourgeois writers and travellers in the 19th century and an overview of the concept of "gourd" (*kurbits*), the vegetable decoration that has become perhaps the most important distinguishing mark of the style. The signing of the paintings is also discussed. It was the practice of the painters to sign their work, albeit usually only with initials, which posterity has not always been able to interpret. But because painters who decorated entire room interiors were content to sign just one of the paintings and these interiors could later be split up and appear on the market as separate objects, in practice many paintings are unsigned.

In the chapter "Where are the Dalarna paintings?" Roland Andersson discusses the association between the local building culture and the occurrence of paintings. The growth of a special style of folk painting on the walls in Dalarna after the second half of the 18th century went hand in hand with improvements of housing standards and the spread of the double house. The fact that the paintings did not gain much of a foothold in the parishes north of Siljan is explained by Andersson in terms of the dominance there of the single house, with lower housing standards. There was also an important market for the painters on big farms in the neighbouring provinces, especially Hälsingland. Andersson also discusses possible links between adornment with Dalarna paintings and weddings on the farms.

Another of Andersson's chapters is about the Dalarna painters and their labour migrations. Instructive maps show the painters' home villages

and the geographical distribution of the paintings, and the painters' permanent moves from their native district to other provinces (and later in many cases to America). Rättvik stands out as the main parish of the paintings, closely followed by Leksand. In addition there were occasional painters in some of the neighbouring parishes. The Rättvik painters spread their works eastwards into Gästrikland and northwards to Hälsingland, while Leksand painters seem to have headed west along the river Västerdalälven to farms in places like Floda, Nås, and Lima. Some painters decorated in more distant parts, such as Värmland, Norway, Härjedalen, and Uppland. Andersson also considers the painters' social background and their other roles in the home district.

The chapter on motifs is also by Roland Andersson. It is interesting that the small, oblong format was common in the earliest paintings, at the end of the 18th century. This suggests that they were intended as hangings to be put up for seasonal decoration, roughly like the painted wall hangings of southern Sweden. It was not until the start of the 19th century that whole rooms in Dalarna were filled with paintings. Andersson reckons that 39% of the paintings registered today depict scenes from the New Testament, 30% scenes from the Old Testament, and 27% secular motifs, chiefly royals and scenes of folk life. The small remainder are paintings based on other edifying religious literature. The paintings always have textual explanations: for the dominant biblical motifs passages from the Bible, but more everyday and dialectally coloured texts for the secular motifs.

Andersson provides a highly valuable index of motifs, classified according to the different books of the Bible and, for secular motifs, by categories such as "royals", "buildings and historical places", "folk life", and "folk beliefs". One can also get an indication of which motifs were most popular. Biblical ones predominate, if we ignore the "stylized flower urns", which perhaps should not be regarded as a narrative motif. There are 122 examples of the Wedding at Cana, 103 examples of Jonah's prophecy in Nineveh and 98 examples of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon. Yet there is no discussion of the more hypothetical question why certain motifs were more popular than others. Is the leading position of the Wedding at Cana due to the fact that so many paintings were made for weddings on the farms?

Rune Bondjers contributes several essays. One deals with the initial phase of the painting in the 18th century. The flower urn, which would become the "gourd", first developed in cupboard painting. Gustav III's proclamation from 1773, aimed at Dalarna, is believed to have been significant for the rise of the painting. The king advocated various crafts suitable for women and children, to help the peasantry out of their economic misery. The background was that the country had been hit by terrible crop failures in 1771–1772. Bondjers' idea is that the proclamation led to an upswing for furniture painting, which then led to painting on fabric and later paper.

Bondjers also considers the closing phase in the chapter "Dalarna painting after the 1870s". In the mid-19th century the painters encountered overwhelming competition from printed wallpaper. Biblical motifs and gourds became old-fashioned. Some painters were able to continue to earn a living by painting decorative townscapes or landscapes, which were now coming into demand, above all in Hälsingland. Others switched to making stencil-painted roller blinds. As the Dalarna paintings began to disappear from the walls of farmhouses, there was a burgeoning interest among the bourgeoisie, particular artists and museum people. Bondjers has an entertaining account of how Dalarna painting entered bourgeois culture around 1900.

Rune Bondjers has also written about the paints, giving the technical background to the painting style. This chapter is based to a very large extent on the workshop left behind by the Bjursås painter Mats Persson Stadig, an outstanding piece of evidence now preserved in Dalarnas Museum. It includes not only artefacts such as jars, brushes, stamps, and stencils but also the painter's recipe books. The paints consisted of pigments – which the painter himself could to some extent make from the products of nature, but as a rule they had to be bought in cake form from merchants in the towns – and binding agents, such as glue, eggs, oil, or small beer. During the 18th century pictures were painted on stretched pieces of linen, but from 1800 paper began to dominate; this was bought from the nearby Grycksbo paper mill.

Johan Knutsson, curator at the Nordiska Museet, puts the work of the Dalarna painters in a broader context in the history of style in two chapters, "Dalarna Painting in Comparative Perspective" and "Dalarna Painting in the History of Art and Interior Decoration". In the former chapter he surveys the artistic profiles of different provinces or regions in comparison with Dalarnas. When it comes to the choice of motifs,

Knutsson states that portraits of contemporary Swedish monarchs (most characteristic of the Leksand painters) were rather special for Dalarna. According to Roland Andersson's index of motifs, there are 13 paintings showing Gustav IV Adolf and 82 with Karl XIV Johan and his family, "the last fairytale king in old Sweden", as Karlfeldt put it. Knutsson regards the gourd plant and portraits of kings as the hallmark of the Dalarna style. In addition it is characterized by an unusually free relationship to upper-class and ecclesiastical art, and by the close interaction between furniture painting and wall painting. Knutsson also has an interesting analysis of the differences between the works of painters from Rättvik and Leksand, for example, in their choice of colours, their borders, and the design of certain motifs. He also examines the individuality of the leading painters.

In his other chapter Knutsson discusses folk art as a phenomenon. He opposes the view of folk art as "gesunkenes Kulturgut", although it is a long time since that was prevalent, so here he is kicking in an open door. He discusses the significance of the models copied by the painters, a classical topic in the work of art historians researching Dalarna painting. He follows the development of the gourd motif and distinguishes features from the rococo, Gustavian style, and empire style in the decorative repertoire of the different painters.

What I have said hitherto is an attempt to survey the different authors' ways of illuminating Dalarna painting from very different angles. One may say that the aim of the book – both to sum up the findings of classical research and to add the new discoveries and perspectives of recent decades – has been convincingly achieved. Perhaps it is especially Roland Andersson's articles about the link between the painting and the vernacular architecture, and about the geographical mobility of the painters, that seem like the most interesting new perspectives in ethnological terms. This has admittedly been presented before, in his contributions to the book from the symposium on Dalarna painting in Falun and Leksand in 1992, *Dalmålningar i jämförande perspektiv*, but it is further elaborated here.

The most innovative part of this thick book is nevertheless the biographical section at the end, almost 400 pages about all the known painters (and some unknown, whose initials have not yet been interpreted). Roland and Margareta Andersson are responsible for the lion's share of this, above all for the parishes of Rättvik and Leksand, while Rune Bondjers has written about some parishes in western Dalarna, where it was mostly furniture painters. This section, which will be a goldmine for everyone with an interest in Dalarna painting, to say nothing about all the owners of paintings, begins with a survey of research. The pioneers in the study of this painting were Gustaf Ankarcrona and Ollas Anders Hansson, who were active around 1920. Then the art historian Svante Svärdström was the big name for many decades, with his doctoral dissertation *Dalmålningarna och deras förlagor* from 1949 as his central work. His collections, now in the National Archives, are still unsurpassed basic material for research in the field.

In the biographical section the painters are divided according to their home parishes, and within the parishes they are presented in chronological order, but kept together by family. The trade was often passed on from one generation to the next. Their names, which could vary after marriage and moves, are stated, along with parents, siblings, wife, and children. There is a brief biography, sometimes more detailed if the church records or eyewitnesses had more information. Ankarcrona in particular seems to have interviewed people around 1920 who were able to recall childhood memories of painters who were still working in the mid-19th century, in the closing phase of this style of painting.

Each biography is followed by a list of works, with all the known and registered paintings by the artist. We are given the year of the work, its original location (in many cases still the same today), the present owner, the wording of the text band, whether it is signed or not, what it is painted on (fabric, paper, or panel), its dimensions, and the source where the painting is registered. The biographical section is rich, almost too rich, and not exactly suited to reading from start to finish, but it will be of immense value as a reference work. It is particularly interesting, of course, to read the biographies of the remarkable painters, men like Hans Wikström, Jufwas Anders Ersson, Kers Erik Jönsson, or Winter Carl Hansson. All are represented with a large number of paintings in colour. We become familiar with the individual characteristics of their art. But the reader can also make discoveries among the less famous names.

The quality of this work is very high. The illustrations are outstanding. It is of course inevitable that minor errors can sometimes be found in 600 fact-packed pages. The "Crown Prince" on the painting from 1831 on page 121 is not, as it says, the future

Karl XIV Johan but the future Oscar I, and Gösta Berg has become Gustaf Berg on page 212. But these are exceptions that prove the rule. *Dalmåleri* is a work of high and lasting value.

Mats Hellspong, Stockholm

Contemporary "Fireworks Old Age" in a Focus

Når pensionister flytter hjemmefra. Ressourcer og risici ved migration i det moderne ældreliv. Anne Leonora Blaakilde (ed.). Danish Institute of Gerontology, Copenhagen 2007. 195 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-91970-01-06.

■ Contemporary ways of life have continuously captivated ethnologists and other cultural researchers for more than 30 years. The explorations have mostly been framed by a rapidly changing society which constantly prepares the ground for new modifications of the individual's everyday life. At the same time it shapes the link between traditional ways of living and the new forms of the normative life course in (post)modern society. The study at hand, "When pensioners migrate" (*Når pensionister flytter hjemmefra*), fits comfortably into that research tradition and not only discusses ways of life but also fruitfully addresses the field of cultural gerontology and touches on tourism studies as well in order to explore the ways of life of those elderly people who have either moved away from their home permanently or for long periods each year.

Moving away from home in old age is actually not a new phenomenon, even though it might seem so at first glance. After all, elderly people have for a long time and almost self-evidently been expected to leave their homes and move to nursing homes, old age homes or hospitals when they become too frail to live at home independently and without intense daily care. Usually this kind of "migration" could be characterized more or less as constrained. What is new – and an important starting point in this study as well – is the notion of the increasing amount of elderly people who voluntarily choose to migrate for various reasons. We presumably consider these pensioners "active seniors" who live a richly deserved and healthy "third age" filled with individually determined options for choosing their way of life. Similar stereotypes describe these active seniors as people who at the same time try to fulfil demands set by consumer and health society bluster before they reach the next life phase, the "fourth age" marked by frailty and dependence in old age.

The meanings of the third age are also discussed in the study at hand, but in addition the authors emphasise questioning our presuppositions and stereotypes concerning (post)modern third-agers. As a matter of fact, they explore whether those migrating seniors indeed make their old age a kind of "fireworks old age" (*fyrværkerialderdom*), searching continuously for new fountains of well-being, amusement and positive experiences in their everyday life. To overcome a holistic picture the researcher group also tries to chart other perspectives contesting these assumptions and illuminating the phenomenon.

Previous studies of migration in old age have mostly been based on statistical surveys that constitute an important part of the study of migration and its social impacts in general. In ethnology the focus has chiefly been on migration and movements of social groups, e.g. refugees, occupational, ethnic or other groups in order to investigate the consequences of migration in terms of acculturation, transformative identities, experiences of alienation, and so on. Moreover, some ethnological, qualitative analyses of migration touch on old people from one perspective or an other, but thus far only a few studies in Scandinavia have addressed voluntary migration in old age. For instance, in Finland the social gerontologist Antti Karisto recently published (2008) the first extensive, ethnographic study, *Satumaa (Fairyland)*, which explores the life of Finnish elderly people living in Costa del Sol, Spain. *Når pensionister flytter hjemmefra* is thus a welcome counterpoint to this new scholarly discussion.

Når pensionister flytter hjemmefra consists of three independent and separate case studies with their own research aims, questions, materials and, finally, researchers. In the introduction to the book its editor, Danish folklorist and well-known cultural gerontologist Anne Leonora Blaakilde, explains the frame of reference of the book linking the three studies together and steering their perspectives in one shared direction. These unifying starting points include the following: first, all researchers and persons under study are Danish and the country of departure or that in which migration occurs is Denmark. Second, all cases study such elderly people who have voluntarily moved (permanently or for longer periods per year) from their home after they retired. Third, all analyses apply the life course perspective, which emphasises continuity/breaks of life course. Fourth, all three

cases focus on social relationships and their new formations after migrating, in particular on the advantages and risks of migration in old age.

In addition the study group presupposes that most of those pensioners under study realise their hopes and dreams of an active, social, enjoyable and healthy old age lived in a pleasant and friendly environment. But at the same time the research group emphasises that migration in old age may also entail risks concerning e.g. social security and economic well-being, especially if migration means the break-down of social networks of relatives and friends who formerly acted to support old persons. Hence, experiences of isolation, loneliness and insecurity may menace these individuals. When analysing new forms of social relationships in detail, the research group employs explanations provided mostly in the social sciences and applies such analytical terms as inclusive and given social groups/open groups; expectations/social responses, and responsible/social groups.

The first and most extensive case study in the book is carried out by Anne Leonora Blaakilde and explores those emigrants who moved to Costa del Sol in Spain and permanently reside there. This group of elderly immigrants has increased substantially in the last ten years: for instance, there were more than 4 200 Danish inhabitants in the Málaga region in 2006, of whom about 2 000 were 60 years of age or more. Blaakilde's study is based on the ethnographic observation of various groups of Danish immigrants and interviews of 28 persons, which constitutes her main research material. In addition, she conducted "side interviews" of 30 other persons, which provides supportive material to her study.

Blaakilde begins her analysis by exploring the main reasons for the migration of elderly people. In this respect all the interviewees seem quite unanimous: they wish to improve their impaired health in a warm and sunny climate. The inspiration to begin thinking about moving usually comes from their own experience as tourists in the Costa del Sol region or from their friends who had already migrated there. Many of these elderly migrants also "commute" between Spain and home for years and finally end up as a permanent resident in Spain in order to reduce their taxes or get other benefits. These are in any case secondary reasons for emigrating, not the main causes. In her analysis Blaakilde explores the backgrounds of her informants in a diverse manner and concludes that it is impossible to outline a single typical pensioner immigrant in Spain, even though most of them seem to be optimistic, bold and willing to take the plunge and move. In spite of this fact, nearly all of them could be characterised as "climate refugees".

The formations and changes in social relationships after migrating are addressed in detail when Blaakilde specifies the organisations pensioners belong to. There are clubs based on assigned identity factors such as nationality and language (e.g. the Danish church, Danish women's and men's clubs, other national clubs) as well as such societies that rely more on the personal preferences and interests of their members. In her analysis Blaakilde shows that all of them may be characterised as "social" rather than as societies that might pay more attention to caring for their members. Still, a couple's relationship forms the most important supportive net in the Costa del Sol, rather than old friendships in their home country, which seem to deteriorate the longer one remains abroad.

The formation of relationships between the migrants and their family members is a complicated process. Family relationships are often defined as responsible and reciprocal in which both parties help and support each other. This interaction, which is perceived as "natural" or "normal," is shaken or at least changes form after migration in various ways. For those grandmas or grandpas who can visit home and family often enough and have their grandchildren visit their new home, relationships with family members usually continue to be satisfying. But Blaakilde also finds such cases where interaction becomes short and the gap between generations increases. One important conclusion drawn by Blaakilde approaches the risks of migration in old age and stresses that those elderly people who reach their fourth age – marked by frailty and incapability – have the highest risk of feeling lonely, isolated and insecure, and especially in case of feeling embarrassed, suffer from insufficient daily care in their new home country.

The second case study consists of Lone Ree Milkær's exploration of pensioners who have chosen to live year-round in their summer cottage in Denmark. This group of migrants comprised more than 13 000 elderly people in 2006. Milkær interviewed 14 migrants who were 61–84 years old with average incomes, married or widowed and lived in different parts of Denmark. Most of them had been socially active earlier and still wanted to sustain their social activities in later life. Thus the interaction with their families and e.g. grandchildren and friends were of great concern to

them. Some of them had owned their cottage and visited it in their leisure time for years; others had bought theirs with a view to move there permanently. All had moved voluntarily in order to seek a better and higher quality of life in their retirement years.

Milkær draws interesting conclusions when interpreting the conversations of the interviewees. It is no revelation that nature and the symbols and memories related to it were especially significant to those under study; actually this is the case with almost everyone who loves to spend their free time in a summer cottage – like most Finns, I think. This means that natural environments are experienced as treasure troves of recreation, relaxation and freedom. Thus living close to nature links cottagers to pleasures, activity and healthiness intertwined with life history memories and childhood – an "enchanting land" to those under study. As Milkær puts it, living in a summer cottage represents and symbolises an abstract longing for childhood's sunny and cheerful days, in something obscurely defined as the "countryside". But in this case the risks of living in a summer cottage were also analysed. Namely, those living in a summer cottage in wintertime were at risk of isolation and loneliness due to long distances and sparsely populated summer cottage districts and may finally have had difficulties in getting social support or proper health care in the countryside.

The third case study by Sidse Schoubye Andersen and Rikke Nøhr Christensen examines the ways of life of pensioners who live four months or more a year in their caravans. The researchers lived at caravan sites three times and made observations and interviews there. Most of the interviewees noted that they had stayed for long periods of time at the same caravan site relatively close to their families and friends since they did not want to isolate themselves from their families; maintaining an interplay was valued by the informants. Living at a caravan site could be characterised as migration or mobile living as well as a desired and determined active way of life marked by the outdoors, and austere, social living close to home, friends and nature. Many of them felt they were well-preserved by living at camping sites. Even though the recurrent camping life was of great concern to those under study and constituted an important part of their identity, it may also be described as a "part-time way of life" because those living the camping life had two homes to choose from. Therefore living at a camping site could rather easily be left behind and everyday life in a mobile caravan could shift back to a permanent dwelling.

In their concluding remarks the research group summarises their notes about everyday life in modern old age and especially elderly migrants. Modern old age is in general marked by better living conditions including relatively free opportunities to channel one's way of life after retiring, better health and financial positions, and expanding possibilities for moving and migrating. In this study the modern "third-agers" proved to live their lives as a "fireworks old age", i.e. retired people are searching for individually chosen possibilities to find new experiences and produce a higher quality of life, better health conditions and a comfortable living environment. For them, living in Spain, in a summer cottage or in a caravan constitutes an important and meaningful part of their identity as active and energetic seniors, as present-day old people. In addition the research group found that migration indeed had a positive influence on their self-esteem and self-respect and thus suggest that this way of life should be sufficiently supported by the welfare society and social networks in order to enable elderly people to live a fulfilling and enjoyable old age.

On the other hand, the study group emphasises that also decline, bereavements and interdependence constitute important parts of modern older age. Thus the older we become the greater the risks of losing our social networks and family members, and our health as well. From this point of view migration in old age may be seen as a denial of and an escape from these negative prospects. Still, the research group states that migration and attempts to achieve a "fireworks old age" is also a tool for controlling one's way of life in order to make the everyday as enjoyable as possible despite all the losses and decline experienced or expected in the near future. It is thus important not to perceive a confrontation between those living the "fireworks old age" – seen as individualistic, hedonistic, or even irresponsible old people – and those whose everyday life is labelled more in terms of responsibility, stability and a traditional way of life. Both aspects should be accepted and included in our concepts concerning modern old age. In conclusion, both alternatives should be supported equally. – This is not always a clear standpoint in political and social policymaking and this is one reason why *Når pensionister flytter hjemmefra* is a remarkable contribution to the discussions and study of old age.

Sinikka Vakimo, Joensuu

Studying Musical Instruments

Musikinstrument berättar. Instrumentforskning idag. Stefan Bohman, Dan Lundberg & Gunnar Ternhag (eds.). Gidlunds förlag, Hedemora 2007. 217 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7844-734-3.

■ Old musical instruments are not just antique curiosities gathering dust; attempts to examine and understand them better can be of concrete significance for the way music should (or can) be played. We can learn how instruments were intended to be handled when they were built and music was written for them. Old musical instruments live on because they are played, either as copies of an old instrument or as newly made, and perhaps improved, variants. No one can know for sure how they sounded back then, but we can obtain many clues to this with the aid of research. This applies to composed music and folk music alike. Research on musical instruments seems to be a kind of detective work, but it is also a creative pursuit. In Sweden there are interesting examples of attempts to recreate old musical instruments. People are busy experimenting, measuring, and documenting.

Gunnar Ternhag sums up the research field of organology, an umbrella term for the study of musical instruments. This covers, above all, the systematics and morphology of musical instruments and cultural analysis, which in turn spans a wide range of research fields. Ternhag discusses how relevant it is in today's research to use such a broad term; all research seems to have become so specialized, and nobody has an overall grasp. One can approach organology from different angles: as a museum worker, musicologist, instrument collector, musician, or instrument builder. With musical instruments as material, from everywhere and every age, there arises a need to systematize. The question is, how? One way is to look for similarities between instruments in order to group them. Another way is to describe them in detail in order to distinguish them. Various attempts have been made to systematize musical instruments, but the most viable model is still that of Hornbostel and Sachs from 1914, with additions (and with Mahillon's basic idea). In morphology one studies musical instruments as physical objects: how they are built, how they may have sounded, and how they were played. This can also involve presenting an instrument in the form of a monograph. A cultural analysis can give information about the role and symbolic value of an instrument, who played it and in what context. A musical instrument has more functions than just being played.

This book is a collection of articles on musicology, museum collections, and the performance of music. Organology is a field where music and musicology can meet, and the results of research can be applied in practice. Besides Ternhag's introductory and concluding articles about research on musical instruments from a general and historical perspective, the book has eight articles focusing on different examples, chiefly Swedish, of research objects. They represent in different ways the subdivisions of organology, with morphology and cultural analysis in particular being interwoven. The articles give examples of what research on musical instruments can entail. To some extent one can follow the authors' methods of achieving their results, including dead ends and breakthroughs.

People performing music today want to make it as authentic as possible, so they should be informed about acoustic ideals, playing techniques, and the practice of performance. Yet it is precisely such information about what it actually sounded like, and how people in the past interpreted the sheet music, that is rarely preserved since it was self-evident to the practitioners and instrument builders. On close examination, musical instruments can give many answers. These can be supplemented with iconographic material, but this requires penetrating source criticism. Leif Jonsson firmly advocates using illustrations more often as evidence in the study of musical instruments, and he himself gives examples of how pictures from art can be interpreted. Another form of supplementary material is written historical sources and sheet music or the like, but no great space is devoted to that in this volume. Perhaps it seems to belong too closely to the domain of musical history. Otherwise it certainly is possible to do research on musical instruments from very different disciplines. Particularly relevant is the scientific perspective, with new technical means of investigating instruments. There is not much of that in the book either, other than that the radiocarbon method has been used to determine the age of instruments. To some extent, however, we are in the field of science and technology in the acoustic discussion of temperament, and intervals.

Helén Lindström (the only female author in the book) contributes a perspective from the museum world. Museums collect, conserve, and exhibit musical instruments. There are different conceivable ways

of systematizing them, and Lindström puts forward one proposal for categorization. In the article she examines why musical instruments have been donated to Swedish museums to such different extents, especially during four periods in the last 150 years, and what this says about the development of society.

The rest of the book is devoted to specific instruments: Bjørn Aksdal writes about the Norwegian Hardanger fiddle and a project he led in Norway to document the origin and development of the instrument, reflecting on and evaluating the process. Stefan Bohman performs a cultural analysis of the accordion, or rather accordion playing, describing how the function and symbolism of the instrument (the playing) have changed over time. HansErik Svensson writes about his study of a clavichord, in an attempt to ascertain how it was tuned. He also describes how he examined the mechanism of a harpsichord to see what information it can give about playing techniques in the 18th century. Svensson's article may seem rather too technical when he discusses specific parts of clavichords and harpsichords. Sverker Jullander reflects on how the organ differs in many ways from other instruments. The organ is a large and complex instrument, almost like an orchestra, and it has both possibilities and limitations when it comes to resonance and tonal quality. Dan Lundberg describes his project of reconstructing a folk flute from an unplayable original, with all this involves, from deciding on a suitable tuning, to wondering about the repertoire of the person who made, and thus also played, the flute; finally, the instrument has been given a name: *bjårskpip*, a north Jämtland word for "birch pipe". Krister Malm and Gunnar Ternhag write together about the record player as a musical instrument. They tell the story of how rap as a genre arose. Although the record player is a machine, it is used in that context as an instrument when rhythmic scratches are created in combination with singing (or rapping) and music. This is the most modern instrument described in the book.

A wish is expressed in the book that it can be used as course literature. Can it be difficult for an interdisciplinary book to serve as a textbook? This is not a book about organology and thus not exactly a primer. Nor is it a comprehensive reference work. Yet it paints a picture of what the study of musical instruments can be about. Most of the articles are easy to grasp. The authors do not try to show their brilliance but to arouse the reader's interest in the research. The text can sometimes get a little technical in its descriptions. It requires a knowledge of instrument building and theoretical knowledge of acoustics to be able to assimilate the information about how the instruments function, how sounds are produced, about scales and tuning. While these things are explained when they come up in the text, it may well be incomprehensible for people with no prior knowledge. More illustrations would have been needed to understand the technical and acoustic details. On the other hand, the idea of the book is probably not that the reader should memorize all the details, but that one can see methods and processes in research. However, there could have been information about Swedish literature where one could obtain more exhaustive descriptions and explanations of "equal temperament" and the "balance pin" of a clavichord.

The book is appropriate as course literature in the sense that the articles have a narrative form. References are stated in footnotes and therefore do not break up the texts. As a set book in musicology and for musicians, however, the book could suitably be supplemented with literature about basic instrument knowledge and acoustics. For education in museology the book can be used by those who want to deepen their interest in music or as an example of how much a category of objects can tell us. For other readers the book, with its varying themes, has something to suit every taste in music. The articles about the different instruments can be particularly appreciated reading for anyone interested in music.

In his article Ternhag arrives at the conclusion that organology as an umbrella term is no longer useful. Instrument studies continue, but there is hardly anyone with an overall grasp. It certainly seems to be the case that the research fields are becoming increasingly narrow and specialized. This is illustrated by this very book: a variety of articles on matters large and small, written by authors from different fields and with completely different interests. Together they give an impression of a fascinating research field where there is still a great deal left to discover. The authors each add a piece to the jigsaw puzzle. This is an interdisciplinary area, but I wonder how much historians of music take part in research on instruments. With the exception of Leif Jonsson's article about musical iconography, instrument researchers seem to have a comparative-systematic approach. At the same time, they all have a historical aspect to their research. In this interdisciplinary research

field it should be a matter of course that historians of music talk about their research methods. Is there still a gap here?

The instrument is the medium in music-making, and knowledge and research about musical instruments should really have a central position in the education of musicologists and musicians alike. This is where scholars and practitioners can meet. The knowledge that can be derived from old instruments can also, together with other objects, say something about the development of our society and its cultural values. There are instruments in Swedish museums waiting to be examined, and a hope is expressed in the book that the formerly well-established research field of musical instruments will attract greater interest.
Magdalena Tellenbach Uttman, Marieholm

Festivals of the Life Cycle

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Livets högtidsdagar. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2007. 332 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-088-8.

■ In 1987 Nils-Arvid Bringéus published a book, *Livets högtider*, on the festivities of life based on material mainly from Sweden (rev. in ES 1989). Now, twenty years later, in 2007, he has published another book on the same theme consisting partly of texts from the former edition. However, to a great extent this new book contains recent or updated articles. The new ones concern marriage before the registrar, partnership and rituals for separation. These topics reflect changes in society and the need for markers for special occasions that were hardly recognized some decades ago. The rewritten texts have also been updated to conform to the Swedish society of today.

Certainly, the great changes during the 1960s and 70s and the reluctance to celebrate nearly anything influenced the knowledge of historical and theological matters which are quite important ingredients in our festivals of the life cycle. This soon meant that crucial symbols in language, behaviour and objects became unintelligible to many people. In this book the readers are given information on historical facts and thorough explanations together with descriptions of the recent ways of celebrating. The book is informative for those who want to enrich their knowledge of how and why our festivals are performed in a given way, but it also underlines that there are no wrong and no right ways of celebration. The book is richly illustrated with both old and new photographs, and the reference list is updated with recent books and articles, arranged thematically and with extremely few bibliographical details.
Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Åbo

A Biographical Approach to the History of Ethnology

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Åke Campbell som etnolog. Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademien för svensk folkkultur, Uppsala 2008. 218 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-85352-76-0.

■ Nils-Arvid Bringéus is a prolific and indefatigable contributor to the history of ethnology and folklore. In 2006 he published a monograph on Carl Wilhelm von Sydow – *Carl Wilhelm von Sydow som folklorist* – and only one and a half years later comes his monograph on von Sydow's pupil Åke Campbell. The two books are constructed as biographies; they have a similar structure (a mixture of life course, professional career and thematic chapters) and are both based mainly on epistolary sources. Even the titles bear witness to the close relationship – the former "as folklorist" and the latter "as ethnologist".

Åke Campbell (1891–1957) is a highly interesting actor in Swedish ethnology, but at the same time one who seems to have ended up in the backwater of the discipline. In my student days in Oslo, at a time when Swedish ethnology had already executed most of its forefathers, we still had to read "classic" texts in Nordic ethnology (those days are over now!) – Campbell's name never appeared on our reading lists. We became acquainted with Sigurd Erixon, of course, as well as with Sigfrid Svensson, John Granlund, Ernst Manker, Mats Rehnberg, Ragnar Jirlow, Albert Eskeröd, Gösta Berg and others – but to my memory not with Campbell. It was not until I had to read a handbook on Irish ethnography that I became aware of this rare bird who had been just as interested in the ethnography of other European countries as of his own, and who had on set out a genuinely comparative programme for his research, across geographical and political borders.

Why has posterity seemingly overlooked Campbell's efforts and results, at least for a period – if I am right in this supposition? Was it because he was the first one to really insist upon the unity of the discipline and to practise it at a time when most of his colleagues

were much more specialized in either folklore or ethnology? Trained as a folklorist, Campbell began in the 1920s with thorough investigations of topics in material culture, such as vernacular architecture and agricultural landscapes, but returning regularly to folkloristic issues. Or is the (relative) oblivion just an illustration of the old saying that one never becomes a prophet in one's own country? Anyway, in Scotland, and even more in the young free state of Ireland, Campbell seems to have come as close to beatification as a researcher could ever hope for! Compared to his stay-at-home colleagues of the next generation, such as Svensson and Rehnberg, Campbell was a dedicated internationalist. Or was there perhaps a grain of truth in the judgement of his close friend von Sydow, who wrote that, "For the archive in Uppsala I consider him [Campbell] invaluable. They might perhaps have got a better researcher. That is not impossible. But they will certainly never get one who is so good at research and at the same time so clever in practical matters and who works so energetically" (quoted after Bringéus 2006:155)? Well, Campbell perhaps did not leave behind theoretical scholarship of the type of, say, von Sydow's, and his name was perhaps too closely associated with ethnology's rather futile efforts with mapping and atlas questions. But as a fieldworker and an archivist Campbell certainly was not only a pioneer, but also one of the leading Swedish ethnologists from the 1920s to the 1950s. And some of his publications, like *Från vildmark till bygd*, represented a rare freshness in the 1940s. Also, it is interesting to note that the present generation of Swedish ethnologists has taken a renewed interest in Campbell's cutting-edge studies of the cultural landscape.

The book is divided into seven sections. The first two sections deal with Campbell's biography: his personal background, his student years, marriage and early career as a folk college teacher (*folkhögskollärare*). Section three treats the work on the doctoral thesis on Scanian-Danish farm architecture and his years as an archivist in Uppsala, with substantial discussions on his pioneering work on questionnaires and archive cataloguing, especially on Campbell's development of the factual catalogue (*realregistret*) at ULMA, based on a classification system which at the time was highly innovative, even though posterity has deemed it less rewarding for more holistic research approaches. Through the correspondence we can follow the professionalization of the Swedish archives of popular culture. As for his fieldwork, his bicycle trips were impressive. It is one thing to cross Scania and Denmark on two wheels. But his ride from Sweden to Paris, in order to survey, measure and compare vernacular architecture, reveals a pioneering spirit that is hard to grasp today.

Section four is entitled "International Activities" and includes Campbell's fieldwork in Ireland and Scotland/the Hebrides during the years 1934 to 1948, his support for archive-building in Ireland and the UK, and his efforts for international cooperation in research, collecting, surveying and archive questions, through the various international bodies and organizations of the time. Even if his old master von Sydow had a clear international orientation, it was definitely Campbell (together with Erixon) who was the most dedicated internationalist among Nordic ethnologists and folklorists, both before and after World War II. His early efforts to collaborate with Germany in mapping and atlas questions were for obvious reasons gradually replaced by his interest in the British Isles, where he was held in very high esteem, especially in the free state of Ireland. As for the problem of the Nazification of German *Volkskunde*, Campbell saw the problems much earlier – and much more clearly – than his old master von Sydow. However, the recent independence of Ireland had created a very favourable climate for research on popular culture, as a means to support a new national identity. And Uppsala gave the most important impulses in this process.

In section five, Bringéus picks up different strands of Campbell's professional life: his research topics and approaches, his teaching and national engagements, etc. Campbell, who had experimented with mapping as early as the 1920s, when studying farm buildings, was one of the main initiators (if not the main one) of an atlas for Swedish folk culture. He became its secretary from 1931, and typically for his international outlook he tried to keep contact with the much more advanced German atlas work and he argued for a Nordic atlas. It is also interesting to learn that Campbell was one of the first to warn against seeing the atlas as an end in itself, but rather as a tool or a step towards a fuller understanding of popular culture. In his studies of the cultural landscape Campbell probably stretched the frontiers of the discipline too far for his contemporaries and for the immediate posterity, but they have – as Bringéus points out – received renewed interest in recent years. Among other activities initiated by Campbell were the start of manor investigations (*herrgårdsundersökningar*) which, due to the outbreak

of the war, had to be abandoned, and the far more successful town investigations.

Another interesting feature is Campbell's "holistic" view, that the study of popular culture (*folkkultur*) should cover both spiritual and material aspects, a view that he not only professed in theory but also practised. Of his two seniors, von Sydow saw these two fields as subjects of two different disciplines, whereas Erixon tended to see folklore as a minor branch of European ethnology. As mentioned above, Campbell was trained as a folklorist, but over the years he showed a predilection for material culture topics. Still, his relations to the "disciplinary purist" and rather quarrelsome von Sydow were much closer and warmer than to Erixon. Actually, my impression after reading this book is that the relations to Erixon were characterized by a certain distance, in spite of their concurrent interests in material and social studies, in international cooperation, in the atlas work, etc.

On the same pattern as in the book about von Sydow, Bringéus has allocated much space to Campbell's academic career, to his teaching in Lund and Uppsala, to the succession in Lund in 1947 (after von Sydow) – a fight which Campbell lost and Sigfrid Svensson won, and to the final success in obtaining the new chair in Uppsala in 1952. The reader may perhaps sometimes feel in these chapters that Bringéus might have economized more with the wealth of details. On the other hand, these presentations give a realistic view of life in Academia, including academic infighting, and of the institutionalization of the discipline. And it should be stressed that Campbell was a peaceful and conciliatory person. He could be clear enough in his verdicts, but he seemingly behaved like a gentleman – compared to von Sydow and some other colleagues.

The next section treats Campbell's visits to Wales, Ireland and Scotland after the war, as well as to the United States, where he did extensive lecturing and served as a popular and even beloved advisor on archive and collecting questions. The final part of the book discusses Campbell's main research findings in later years and their reception in present-day and recent scholarly communities – that is, his comparative historical-geographical studies of Swedish bread and his important research on the cultural encounters of the North, between settler and Sami cultures in Lapland, in an acculturation and ecology perspective.

To conclude: Even if Bringéus has used a broad spectrum of sources, it is the extensive use of correspondence that gives this book its richness and its strong qualities. Through hundreds of quotations of letters to and from Campbell, many of them very long (and a few perhaps too long), Bringéus has once more succeeded in giving life to an important protagonist in Swedish and European ethnology. It is Åke Campbell in person who stands up and relates to us his professional life, his visions and strivings, his hopes, disappointments and happy moments as a fieldworker, a collector, an archivist and a researcher.

Is the book too myopic, too detailed, too subjective, too personal and too little analytic? I think not. Bringéus stops from time to time, lifts the perspective and conducts the reader through a complex academic and disciplinary context. Campbell was perhaps not as colourful as von Sydow. Still Nils-Arvid Bringéus has succeeded once more, by means of rich epistolary sources, in giving the historiography of a discipline a human face and a touch of life.

Bjarne Rogan, Oslo

Bringing a Town to Life

Palle Ove Christiansen, Smeden & Skaberværket. Tanker om tilværelsen i en vestjysk fabriksby. C.A. Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen 2008. 167 pp. Ill. ISBN 987-87-7876-521-5.

■ That ethnology provides tools which, in the right hands, can generate fantastic stories was something I already knew, but during my reading of Palle Ove Christiansen's book I have been struck more than once by the strength to be found in a good narrative, and what a multifaceted and exciting subject ethnology/folkloristics can be. Christiansen succeeds in bringing a whole town and its history to life with the aid of glimpses into the lives of a few, but important, people. My thoughts during the reading have gone more than once to Mats Lindqvist's portrait of Engineer Fredriksson, in the book *Modärna Tider*. That is high praise indeed.

The title of the book means "The Smith and Creation: Thoughts about Life in a West Jutland Factory Town". It is divided into eight chapters. The first describes how everything started. And in the case of Lem, a small town on the west coast of Jutland, there is in fact an identifiable start. In 1898 a 22-year-old got off the train to buy the town forge. Hans Sørensen Hansen was his name, and today there is a statue of him in Lem. Hansen "came, and in his own modest way, he saw and conquered", as Christiansen writes.

Hansen represented a special masculine worker's ideal, the smith, and this has really set its stamp on development in the little community, and still does. Lem, as I understand it, shows many similarities to the Swedish Gnosjö. Hansen started as a farrier, but soon switched to making machines. He died in 1953, at the age of 77, but his spirit still hovers over the town and its inhabitants.

Chapter two deals with the (industrial) history of the town after Hansen, in a more general way. According to the author, the original forge, after the journeymen had been trained and become independent master craftsmen, hived off new activities. This is an important feature of Lem. The principle of one man (or in some cases a couple of brothers), one company, still applies to some extent, although Lem has now been incorporated in the global economy. Just as in Gnosjö, entrepreneurs in Lem cooperate with their competitors. The codex that has emerged in the community states that no one should start a company producing anything that can threaten the operations of the established businesses. Lem contains many different companies, precisely because of the inventiveness dictated by this cooperative competition. And virtually all the companies build on and proceed from the special craft skills possessed by "the smith". It is consequently metal workshops that dominate the townscape and provide a living for the majority of the inhabitants. The level of education in Lem has therefore been relatively low, right up to modern times. It is manual knowledge that is prized and idealized.

Chapter three paints the background to place Lem on a cultural map. It was when the community acquired a railway station that development gained momentum, largely because many poor people in the area moved to the central place and provided the foundation for the growing industry. They had to find some means of livelihood other than farming, and this is held up as a major explanation for the distinctive character of the town. But that is just one side of the matter. To understand the special climate that has emerged in Lem one must understand the part played by religion, and here as in many other coastal communities, it is a serious, revivalist form of religion that is cultivated.

Chapter four continues painting the background, focusing on the distinctive workers' culture. This has grown up from a series of favourable circumstances. At the workshops in Lem there was a special competition situation that arose from Hansen the smith's workshop, and then lived on in the companies that were hived off. Any man, for it has been only men, who succeeded in this environment acquired valuable experience which was of benefit when he himself was fully trained and able to start his own business. The smith's "rough but hearty male lingo" is not unique to the companies in Lem, but here it has developed into a distinguishing mark of the whole community. The aim of all upbringing in Lem has been independence. It is only in recent years that women have been able to break into the labour market, and not without problems. And the fact that it has become possible at all, according to the author, may be explained by an old West Jutland tradition of women performing heavy chores on the farm.

Chapters five, six, and seven constitute a portrait of a modern figure who is relatively well known in Denmark, Christian Ølgaard. It is he who has best been able to embody Hansen's ideal in modern times, and he has also passed on the inheritance. Christian carried on working until a high age, and he could never really relax. If he was not brooding over some technical problem, he was writing polemical letters to newspapers about various topics. Ølgaard had a home-made religious belief that he put forward in his letters. In Lem his name is mentioned with respect, although he was a character. He almost always wore working clothes and a cowboy hat. He was also known as the West Jutland cowboy, which is a masculine ideal not far from the smith. Ølgaard loved competition and never shied away from a challenge, whether it was technical, political, or religious. Chapter five is mainly about Ølgaard's working life and chapter six more about his unusual private life. He devoted a great deal of his time to finding meaning in the different spheres of life, and he arrived at the conclusion that the foundation of a good society is a balance between the family and work. It is clear from the account how these private beliefs emerged in and through his close relation to the local community that he rarely left. His life in Lem influenced him just as he influenced life in Lem. The interesting thing about this part of the narrative, chapter seven, is that the author informs the reader of a person's innermost ruminations in a way that is personal but still of universal relevance. Ølgaard's religious outlook is described as a kind of folk religion, built up of personal experiences and memories from religious instruction in school, which he took very seriously. He constantly grappled with the difficulty of incorporating the words in the Bible with the distinctive work morality of the town

and his personal view of the family. The aim of his endeavour was to make life coherent.

Chapter eight sums up and looks beyond. The special mentality that has set such a heavy imprint for so long in the town is under hard pressure today. As the manual skills of the smith decline in significance with the automation in the engineering workshops and the use of robots for routine chores, it is difficult to maintain the old ideals. But they still persist, and in this last chapter it is put forward as one of the explanations why the most famous company in Lem today, Vestas, the manufacturer of wind turbines, has succeeded as well as it has. The author wonders whether one can explain this success, and the fact that people dared to invest in this manufacture – which was initially new and unknown, and suffered from severe teething troubles – by ascribing it to the special mentality maintained and passed down for generations in Lem, and embodied in Hansen the smith and his successors.

The only critique I have against the book is its almost total obsession with the men in Lem. This leaves a slightly stale taste in the mouth, since everyone knows that it is not possible to run a successful engineering workshop without someone to take care of the reproduction. What was life like for the women, and what did they do while the men were working? How did they help to make Lem the special place it is? What is the author's justification for this ignorance, for that is what I think it can be called? Unfortunately, we do not know. Today one both can and should demand equal attention to both sexes, especially since this is not a study of masculinity. The subtitle clearly shows that the book presents "Thoughts about Life in a West Jutland Factory Town". Christiansen does not live up to this. The men are given a prominent role and are described in detail, while the women are left invisible. This is unfortunate, but perhaps it can be balanced by the fact that the analysis is otherwise multifaceted and penetrating. Although the men embody a traditional masculinity, other sides of them are illuminated as well. In addition, the book is fascinating, showing the uses of ethnological methods and analytical tools. The author also deserves praise for not weighing down the book with a lot of academic jargon. Christiansen shows that it is possible to present a captivating *narrative* without compromising the demand for scholarship. That is something that I certainly will allow myself to be inspired by.

Eddy Nehls, Lerum/Trollhättan

The Sought-after People

Det ombejlede folk. Nation, følelse og social bevægelse. Palle Ove Christiansen & Jens Henrik Koudal (eds.). C.A. Reitzels forlag & Dansk Folkemindesamling, København 2007. Folkemindesamlingens kulturstudier 12. 163 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7876-509-9.

■ The people as a concept is the theme of this collection of articles, *Det ombejlede folk* (The sought-after people). Most of the six articles consist of well-edited presentations held at a theme day in 2006 at Dansk Folkemindesamling (The Danish Folklore Archives). The articles span different areas and together give a good overall picture, although of course not complete, of how the concept of "the people" was understood and used, from the French Revolution until the second half of the 20th century. Palle Ove Christiansen and Jens Henrik Koudal, both researchers at the above-mentioned archives, are the editors.

With his article Palle Ove Christiansen provides a good input to the study of nationalism as well as different views and uses of "the people" in the Western world, from the 18th century on. His empirical examples mainly come from Denmark. Christiansen focuses on the perceptions of the concept of the people as invented or discovered. He starts from those who historically created the national motivations through struggles about attitudes, politics and cultural symbols. The focus is on how the people was created by intellectuals and politicians but also, in a way, formed itself using linguistic and historical elements. Particularly interesting is Christiansen's account of the German philosopher Johann G. Herder's thinking, the basis for a new describing and broad cultural concept and its consequences. Christiansen points out how intellectuals began to show an interest in oral peasant culture, which was seen as older and more connected to the tradition than their own culture. Extensive collecting and publication activity regarding folk culture was started and became of great importance for the legitimacy of nations. Christiansen also gives a concise overview of various Danish collecting projects, from N. F. S. Grundtvig to Dansk Folkemindesamling.

After being a part of the Danish kingdom for four hundred years, Norway became independent in 1814. Although Norway was soon forced into a union with Sweden, a national romantic mood swept over the country. Who were the sovereign Norwegian people, whose symbols were included in their self-understand-

ing, and how did they define themselves in relation to others? Rasmus Glenthøj asks these questions in his very interesting article about the nation-building blocks of the new Norwegian self-understanding in 1814. Above all, conceptions of a specific Norwegian people existed among the elite – officials and citizens. The landscape, the peasants and not least the history were highlighted. On the basis of Norwegian as a language and national symbols such as the flag and the national anthem, Glenthøj shows how the young Norwegian nation was legitimated, both inwards and outwards. In his article Glenthøj further clarifies how a struggle about defining the Norwegian took place within the elite, regarding how the time together with Denmark should be interpreted and not least who was the enemy – Denmark or Sweden. According to Glenthøj, the creation and maintenance of these enemy images was central in the Norwegian nation-building process.

Søren Frost discusses conscripts' patriotism during the Schleswig-Holstein war in 1848–1851. It is often claimed that the war led to a patriotic revival among the peasants, who are said to have fought for Denmark as a nation. By proceeding from and frequently quoting rarely used material, 800 uncensored letters written by peasant conscripts, Frost gives us another picture. He compares letters written by these conscripts with letters written by volunteer soldiers, often students, artists and others from the upper bourgeoisie. There were striking differences between the groups. The peasants did not write about the nation in the same way as the volunteers did, Frost shows, but instead about God's providence, the trust in the King, and matters at home. The romantic view of war that the volunteers often expressed is, on the other hand, rare in the conscripts' letters. Nor do they seem to have the same ideas about the nation, for example they usually do not appear to have shared the common idea within the bourgeoisie about the nation as a language-based community. Further, Frost points out that the peasant soldiers only to a limited extent identified themselves with national community; rather they emphasized regional areas. For them the war was about defending the borders, showing loyalty to the King and defending his rights. It is doubtful, Frost emphasizes, whether there was a sense of national solidarity between the different regions of Denmark.

In his article Jens Henrik Koudal focuses on national anthems. Like other symbols, the songs are ascribed special attributes and thereby the national anthems can be used to illuminate the relationship between nation, state and people. Koudal describes three different types of national themes and their different characters: the royal anthem (e.g. "God Save the Queen"), the revolutionary march (e.g. "La Marseillaise") and the folk song (e.g. "Du gamla, du fria"). With Denmark as the main example, Koudal gives a detailed explanation of how national anthems could be created, while Germany and Russia provide examples of how the anthems can be quickly replaced after changes of system, wars or revolutions. In order to function as national symbols the anthems, Koudal emphasizes, must not only be written but also reach out and be accepted by the population.

Two of the articles in the volume directly concern the 20th century and the political left. Nils Finn Christiansen creditably deals with social democracy, its relationship to and use of the concept of the people up to the 1930s. He notes that the early labour movement had an ambivalent attitude to the concept. Leading social democrats proceeded from classes – the working class and its relation to other classes – although there were exceptions, such as the editor and parliamentarian Fredrik Borgbjerg. Borgbjerg argued instead that the labour movement was the genuine heir of Grundtvig's project of popular freedom. The people, according to Borgbjerg's definition, also covered both the working class and other "small people", but excluded the upper classes. Around the First World War the party accepted the nation state as the primary framework for its political strategy. Based on the Social Democrat Thorvald Stauning's program *Danmark for folket* ("Denmark for the People") Christiansen elegantly shows how the workers over time also were made a part of the people. In Stauning's programme the working class, the people, the nation and the state were depicted as one whole, which was to work in harmony for the common good under the management of the Social Democrats.

While Christiansen focuses on social democracy, Morten Thing concentrates on more radical parties and movements, primarily on Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti (Danish Communist Party, 1917–), Socialistiskt Folkeparti (The Socialist People's Party, 1959–) and Venstresocialisterne (The Left-wing Socialists, 1967–). He gives a good overview of their approach to and use of the concept of "people". With great clarity, he shows how national symbols and the "people", albeit with varying degrees of success, were also used by parties on the extreme left wing from

the 1930s onwards. Both Christiansen's and Thing's conclusions agree with similar investigations regarding conditions in Sweden, where social democracy's equally ambivalent and changing relation to the "people" and nationalism have been discussed, among others by Christer Strahl (*Nationalism och socialism*, 1983), Lars Christian Trägårdh (*The Concept of the People and the Construction of Popular Culture in Germany and Sweden 1848–1944*, 1993), Åsa Linderborg (*Socialdemokraterna skriver historia*, 2001) and also by myself (*Folkets minnen*, 2008).

Det ombejlede folk is an exceptionally interesting volume. Its articles are well-written and without exception give good insight into the concept of the people, its different meanings and in particular the constant struggle about its definitions. "As a concept 'the people' is elastic to such degree that almost any political significance can be attached to it", Morten Thing concludes his article. His words are well chosen and summarize in many respects the whole anthology. *Det ombejlede folk* adds new knowledge to the general understanding of the concept people and thus is an excellent complement to an already extensive area of research. The book can be warmly recommended for specially interested researchers but also, I believe, to a broader audience with an interest in history.

Fredrik Skott, Gothenburg

Children at Work

Children's Work in Everyday Life. Kristina Engwall & Ingrid Söderlind (eds.). Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm 2007. 171 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-89655-98-0.

■ The book *Children's Work in Everyday Life* approaches children's work from Swedish, English and Northern Irish points of view. In addition to the introduction article by the editors, the book contains ten articles by researchers from different fields (history, economic history, ethnology, law, sociology, pedagogy, etc.). The authors are brought together by their interest in childhood research.

The short introduction to *Children's Work in Everyday Life,* written by the editors, Kristina Engwall and Ingrid Söderlind, is concise and enlightening with regard to the book as a whole. They note how children's work has recently been discussed mostly in the context of problems in the so-called Third World; industrial child labour, child prostitution and child drug couriers. In spite of the fact that children conduct various jobs in the Western world as well, their work is not necessarily thought of as work. This brings us to the main question of the book: how is children's work defined; are, for example, household chores labour? To an ethnologist, studying children as workers is familiar especially in the context of an agrarian lifestyle, in which children were a natural and necessary addition to the workforce to get through whatever jobs needed to be done. Working was considered a positive thing for children; it educated them into responsible and capable citizens. These goals were set by the adult world, the community and parents.

The ideas about children being social actors and even taking part in economically profitable work are questions that are handled in the first two articles. Martin Woodhead approaches children's work both locally (Sweden) and globally. He studies how ideas about children's work have shaped (family) politics on an international level. According to him, for example the ILO (the International Labour Organisation) has emphasised children's rights and efforts in protecting children from work. Little by little it has been admitted that children, too, are active citizens and that working is not only harmful for them, but a part of their identity. Studies have also proved that children are able to recognise the risks as well as the benefits of working. Virginia Morrow, on the other hand, points out how in the early 1990s, mostly in the area of sociology, people started to emphasise that children were self-directing and not only the products of education by adults. People recognised that childhood is socially construed and that children's social relationships and culture are worthy of study in themselves. Morrow also presents three of her research projects on the everyday life of English children. These projects used different methods to find out what children's days consist of outside school time (e.g. working) and what kinds of ideas of a family and social networks (social capital) they have. Morrow examines the methodological carrying out of the projects, but does not present any research results.

Nowadays children's work is essentially defined through their going to school. The following two articles, which are based on the same ethnological study material, tackle this relationship. The material was collected in two Swedish municipalities and a hundred 9–16-year-olds took part in it. Tobias Samuelsson's article studies the relationship between children's school

going and working from the viewpoint of children, whereas Ingrid Söderlind looks at what parents think of their children's work both inside and outside the home, and of work in their own childhood. According to Samuelsson, children perform various jobs, even ones they get paid for. Children themselves feel that working is a natural part of their everyday life, and thus also a part of childhood. However, children did not see a difference between a job and a workplace. In Sweden, too, children are a part of the employment market, but not in the same way as adults. Söderlind writes that in contemporary Sweden, working is a part of children's everyday life, but in parents' view, it must not interfere with school going. Children's work was seen as educational; it maintained the cohesion of the family, was a mark of solidarity and mutual respect and taught responsibility. On the other hand, children taking part in household chores were seen as relieving the burden of the parents. According to the parents, approximately a third of the children had some kind of experience of working outside the home, boys more than girls. Children did not usually get paid for household chores, but parents found it important that children got paid for the work they did outside the home and could use this money according to their own wishes. Parents even complained about how difficult it is nowadays to find work for children outside the home.

Kristina Engwall's article continues with the study of the relationship between children's school going and working. The article is based on an interview study conducted in two Swedish schools. One of the schools was a suburban compulsory school with a great number of immigrant students. The students were 13 to 16 years old. The other school was an upper secondary school located in the city centre whose students were 16 to 18 years old. The starting point was the question whether modern schoolchildren have the opportunity of doing paid work. The teachers were asked about their opinions and ideas on schoolchildren working and on their own experiences with work during their childhoods. Generally, teachers felt that in their childhood it was easier to find paid jobs than it is now. This was seen to be partly due to the legislation which is nowadays very restrictive with regard to the age and the kinds of jobs at which children can work. On the other hand, teachers seemed to know little about their students' work, but were better informed about their time-consuming hobbies. Even though the secondary school teachers felt that working might disrupt studying, they still thought that they did not have the right to interfere with what their students did outside school. At the same time, teachers thought that working had positive effects, such as gaining experience and a sense of responsibility. Teachers were accepting towards students working, as long as it did not disrupt studying.

Thus, children's work is still needed, even though – according to Barbro Johansson's study – Swedes feel that children's working belongs to another era ("the childhood of times past") and another place (less wealthy countries). However, the same children narrated their experiences of various jobs, both at home and occasional working with their parents at their workplaces. Parents find their children's work important: there are always jobs around the house that need to be done, by an adult or a child. In parents' opinion, children learn that mastering work benefits their future life. Working together makes the family and community stronger, and acquiring money from work outside the home makes children independent of their parents and also strengthen their self-esteem. Many parents paid their children for doing household chores. According to them, this will teach children to handle their money and the value of money. Paying for doing chores also legitimises the parents' status as parents who have the power to make decisions.

When working is defined through age, a job may be conceptualised as adults' work, whereas when conducted by children the same job is defined as a hobby; an example would be stable girls described as horse aficionados – when adults do the same, it is considered working. In her article, Susanna Hedenborg looks at how work in the stables is organised by gender and generation. This divides it into children's work and labour. Before, work in the stables was very male dominated, but nowadays it has turned into women's work. Hedenborg interviewed adults who had lived their childhood in the 1940s and had experiences of work in the stables. The most common feature was the feeling that when children worked in the stables, it was not considered labour because it was done voluntarily. Nowadays children also work long days in the stables even though they go to school as well.

Mats Sjöberg's article looks at children and young people working through three questions: what kind of possibilities do young people have at getting a job, what are their rights when it comes to payment and work environment, and what kinds of jobs are young people permitted to have according to the law? In his

article, he examines contemporary Swedish law on the health and safety of young (aged under 18 years) workers. It is interesting that laws on age restrictions and the length of the working day were sparked by the status of children and young people as workers; only after this were the same things considered with respect to adult workers. According to Sjöberg, the laws also show the typically Swedish characteristic of work being a positive thing. This is partly to do with the workers' movement and the Social Democratic Party as well as the historical Lutheran work ethic. The Swedish economy was for long tied to agriculture and forestry, which required work from people of all ages. This has also directed the legislation towards pragmatism and flexibility. Marianne Dahlén's article expands the question of child labour to international problems. She looks at the struggle that the ILO directives were faced with in 1919–1973 to prevent children who were too young from being used for child labour. She relates the ILO directives to modern Western ideas about childhood and its definitions. The largest difficulty the legislators met was finding a universal consensus on the minimum age of child workers. Here, different solutions had to be made according to different cultural conventions.

The book ends with Madeleine Leonard's article, which emphasises the differentiation between work and employment. According to her, work is usually defined as productive labour, which excludes many non-productive jobs and narrows the idea of children's work. The most common form of children's work is chores, which Leonard analyses on three levels: general chores, looking after younger siblings and taking care of sick or otherwise disabled parents. General chores are determined by the family's needs and are often reciprocal; children do not usually get paid, nor expect to. Looking after younger siblings is hard to define as work or employment, and often it is not considered work even when it is conducted outside the home. On the other hand, it has been estimated that one-fourth of European children live in a family where at least one adult is physically or mentally ill. Some children have to take care of their parents, and this kind of work should be considered labour also when done by children. Leonard also looks at children's work outside the home and notes how some jobs are categorised as characteristic for children, such as newspaper delivery. This is seen as a way for children to gain some pocket money instead of proper paid work, unlike when it is performed by adults. Leonard's article connects with the preceding ones in many ways and makes a good ending for the book with its questioning of conventional ideas.

The articles in this book deal with many factors that define children's work culturally, economically and legally. The articles cross over with one another so that similar questions are looked at from different points of view and with different emphases. In this way, the ideas the editors present in the introduction article that problematise children's work are shed light upon and even answered in the different articles. The book's structure would have been clearer if the articles had been grouped under thematic headlines. However, the collection of articles is successful and multifaceted, and made more interesting as it forms an entity that contains research and views of writers from different fields.

Pirjo Korkiakangas, Jyväskylä

The Danish Manor House

Herregården. Menneske – samfund – landskab – bygninger. Bind 3. Drift og landskab. 2005. 299 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7602-026-6.

Herregården. Menneske – samfund – landskab – bygninger. Bind 4. Moderne brug og bevaring. John Erichsen & Mikkel Venborg Pedersen (eds.). Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen 2006. 334 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7602-027-4.

■ In the major Danish project "The Manor House: People – Community – Landscape – Buildings" the last two volumes of the planned four have now been published. The first two, with the subtitles "Estate and Society" and "Buildings, Interiors and Gardens" were reviewed in *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 2006. Each volume moves the perspectives and the chronological framework without losing sight of the manor house as a total environment and culture. The main aim of the project has guided the work through all the parts and deserves to be repeated: The 27 authors aim to capture in words and pictures the significance and role of the manor in the landscape, in history, and in the present day, in historic, aesthetic, social, and economic terms. Another aim is to survey and rescue the cultural traces of manors which are in danger of disappearing.

It should immediately be said that the National Museum in Copenhagen has accomplished a magnificent project with this modern successor to previous

series about castles and stately homes, a genre that has always had its readers in various circles ever since the second half of the 19th century. It is a solid piece of work, put together by learned writers from the museum world and the academic community, who know how to write with exemplary simplicity even about heavy topics. The numerous illustrations contribute to the aim of the work, matching the main and subsidiary themes in each volume. On one hand, the pictures have a value of their own, being appropriate, sometimes beautiful, sometimes deceptive, as in elegant coffee-table books. On the other hand, they are closely interwoven with the learned texts which they illuminate and supplement through their motifs and perspectives. They give the reader a view of the Danish manor-house landscape with its farmland and forests. We are then invited to come close, into parks, manor houses large and small, family archives, cottagers' homes, and churches, byres and dairies, and we get insight into this complex social and symbolic universe which is bringing its deep historical traditions into the future. It is especially meritorious that the editors and authors have included so many maps and plans. These take on a special quality through the way they depict the manor house from all its social, cultural and ideological angles, a representation of reality in graphic form which gives a further dimension to the work.

The editors, John Erichsen and Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, start each volume by presenting the focus of that particular part. Volume 3, "Farming and Landscape", deals with the manor house and the landscape in their down-to-earth and pragmatic reality, charged with symbolic markers, signs, and values which are perceived and interpreted differently by different social groups in this hierarchic world where the boundaries may be blurred in modern times but certainly have not been erased.

The polyvalent manor-house landscape contains several layers of meaning, physical, symbolic, and political, along with strata of legal and administrative circumstances going back far into history. Among the many human footprints in the landscape, some of the authors show that the lord and lady in the manor house are present everywhere in the surrounding settlement and scenery. The buildings on the estate – the poorhouse, smithy, church, school – speak of social care and responsibility. The lands tell of the landscape of production, which changed after the enclosures around 1800, when peasants cultivated small areas. The conversion of entailed estates into fee simple (*lensafløsningen*) in 1919 (examined in detail by Ditlev Tamm in volume 1) changed conditions and privileges for the very large estates. Despite reduced acreage, parcelling off, sales, and death sentences pronounced on the traditional estate system, the manor house still differs through its exclusive character. In Denmark this is visible, among other things, in the large expanses of land where forests, hedges, and avenues are timelessly recognizable symbols.

The landowner, the manager, inspector, forest warden, gamekeeper, farmers, and day labourers had their specific duties on the estate and roles in society. It is still the land that is the foundation of the estate and therefore the focus of the manor-house landscape. Throughout *Herregården* the forest stands out as an essential element in this landscape. From the 16th century the forest was regulated by law: the undervegetation for the peasants and their swine, the overstorey for the landowner. The forest provided game and fishing waters, and the rights to hunting and fishing are important parts of the estate economy, besides being a source of constant conflict. The gentry's hunts set their stamp on the landscape at an early stage, through hedges and fences, paths and roads for hunters, beaters, hounds, and horses. Through time hunting clashed with modern forestry. The game damaged the forest, and in the conflict between hunting and forestry the old clashed with the new. Modern agriculture, efficient forestry, and appropriate drainage made different demands of forests and open land than hunting and fishing had done. Landowners looked for supplementary sources of income, including churches with the right of patronage, which brought in revenue for the landowner.

In "Field and Meadow" Karl-Erik Frandsen describes the development and change of the estate economy. Field and meadow were the traditional base of the farming. At the start of the period they were worked with simple methods and implements, requiring many people and draught animals. These later gave way to complex and technically sophisticated machines with steadily fewer workers, and the emphasis was shifted from vegetable production with many harvests to dairy products, pig rearing, and bacon export. The author looks at some specific points in time to show how each change led to new patterns and sometimes increased income for the estate. There was no shortage of initiative or inventiveness. One example is the trend away from stabled oxen, which

gave easily accessible manure that the owner could sell at a good profit. Frandsen shows in an interesting way how everything solid and liquid was put to use in the ecological cycle before the days of artificial fertilizer. Using a large amount of archival sources, he has analysed the actual costs of labour. He holds up the estate owner as an innovator who tackles problems and obstacles by experimenting and testing new ways to make ends meet. There are several portraits of skilled entrepreneurs on large estates, including Count Christian Rantzau in the 17th century. He was well educated, had close links to the royal court, belonged to the stratum with power, and led his landed empire with scientific precision.

An engrossing section deals with how the Reformation in 1536 affected the ownership and management of estates. The great switch from Catholicism to Protestantism allowed the crown plenty of scope to expand its land holdings. It confiscated the large estates of the bishops and the monasteries. The estates of local churches were left untouched because the income from them was supposed to maintain the churches and pay the priests. Many small manors (including those with the right of patronage) were sold or parcelled off to farms. The kings increased their ownership and the group of large landowners increased through purchase after the Reformation. The article examines the estates historically and from different angles, as commodities, as rewards for services to the king, the crown, and the state.

In the article "The Forests" Bo Fritzbøger and Helle Serup shift the focus from agriculture to survey how the estate economy utilized and depended on the woodland for forestry, hunting, and fishing. Houses were built of timber and heated by wood; larders and stores were filled with the yield from hunting and fishing. Everyone wanted a share of these resources, but the right to seize what the forest gave was not granted to all. It varied between different social strata on the estate. With a chronological perspective spanning several centuries, the authors highlight the forest in all its multifunctionality as an arena for open and latent conflicts between the common people and the gentry, between king and subjects. The words *underskov* (underwood) and *overskov* (upper storey) function on several levels here, as descriptive terms for a concrete administrative reality and symbolically as powerful metaphors for the power barriers that regulated relations in the social hierarchy within the kingdom and the estate. The authors have succeeded well in bringing out the tensions that vibrate in the forest as a workplace, as a hunting and fishing ground, and as a social arena. Forestry machines have eliminated the need for large numbers of labourers. The work has become less dangerous since high technology takes care of the felling and limbing of the trees and their transport out of the forest. Fritzbøger and Serup have provided the grand survey of the forest. The next article focuses on an important sector of the forest economy, hunting.

Jesper Laursen's essay on manor-house hunting is inspired. It captures the hunting in all its social aspects and historical eras up to the inter-war years, when the traditional manor-house hunt changed. For a long time the king and the aristocracy had the sole right to hunt. In the 19th century hunting became one of the most important ways by which the aristocratic landowning class expressed their social status, an unsurpassed manifestation in the symbolic universe of the manor house, and also important for the estate economy. For social self-esteem and confirmation within the group, an invitation to the hunt, spending a night or two in the manor, having picnics in the forest and splendid dinners in the banqueting hall, was at least as important. If the large manor-house hunt in its classical ritualized form was a broad social sweep and a collective activity, then poaching was the most solitary hunt of all. Laursen expertly sheds light on this darker side of the manor-house hunt. Illegal hunting or poaching developed parallel to harder rules as to who could hunt what and where. The portraits of the cunning poacher "Hjortedræberen fra Rold" (The Deer Killer from Rold) or Skytte-Lars are captivating. Today's variant on the dual economy of hunting is the custom of renting or selling hunting and fishing rights to someone other than the owner.

In "Manor House and Industry" Torber Ejlersen examines the willingness of the estate owners to test new ways to stabilize the economy of their properties. He concentrates on the industrial activities that have been developed using the estates' own raw materials. Such projects include facilities for manufacturing paper, copper, textiles, bricks, tiles, and faience. Stoneworks and glassworks competed with sugar refineries, cooperative dairies, and corn mills. The estate office became the heart of the administration, where all the work was structured by forward-looking estate owners, omnipotent inspectors, managers, and other high-ranking people on the estate. The enterprises involved building harbours, roads, and

railways in the zeal to modernize and create new income niches.

"Manor House and Church", the final essay in volume 3, is by Ebbe Nyborg and Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen. The theme is the relation of the manor house to religion and the church, the link between the estate owner and Our Lord. Who has the lordship? Cult and power set their stamp on the church's inner and outer symbolic language, in ecclesiastical architecture, in the actual building and what it represents. Clear messages are proclaimed in the church, and the buildings are distinctive features in the diverse landscape of the manors. The church has a function, also symbolizing the manor house in that the church contains a number of marks of identification to remind people of the landowning families.

In the fourth and last volume the perspective is shifted from the economic and social foundation of manor-house culture to the present day. The editors declare this change in their introduction to "Modern Use and Conservation", the subtitle of volume 4 of this impressive work. The essays link history to the present and discuss future prospects. This is not the endpoint of a major project but a promise of survival – the manor house as a physical setting, as a symbol and idea.

After the historical surveys we now end up in our own time, the 20th century and the start of the 21st. The authors answer questions about how a modern manor-house family lives today, what alternative functions the manor house can serve, and what new sources of income can be found to supplement or replace agriculture and forestry. The image of the idyllic and romanticized manor house was blurred and shaken on several occasions in the 20th century. Global economic crises, changed inheritance laws, amalgamation into large units or division into smaller ones, heavy tax burdens, and German occupation during the Second World War and later flows of refugees from Germany took a heavy toll on manor houses and parks. Later in the studied period, institutions and businesses took over manors, partly because many of the properties no longer function as a combined dwelling and production unit. At the same time, many estate owners strive to hold their properties together and make them profitable by finding different solutions in connections with death and inheritance.

Farm management has undergone radical changes, as Peter Bavnshøj discusses in "Modern Agriculture". He shows how progress and setbacks in farming have varied on different estates. The general tendency is for farms to specialize increasingly, rationalizing and experimenting with new forms of management and production, stockbreeding and tillage, and for cooperation between estates in the sale of ecological products (vegetables, goat meat, etc.).

Luise Skak-Nielsen shows how the manors open their properties to the public. In "Experiences – The New Markets of the Manor" she presents the manor house as a business enterprise which does not sell mainly agricultural produce or timber but instead experiences, opportunities, and activities. The owners rent out cottages, hunting and fishing rights. They arrange weddings, family parties, and company meetings in the big house. The manors exploit their historical aura and reinforce cultural tourism when they open the gates and doors to their properties. This sideline income hives off other activities at the local level but also entails greater pressure on nature when cars and busses have to be parked and cafeterias, toilets, and other services have to be arranged for the tourists. In favourable cases this business brings in millions.

Lone Rahbek Christensen's article, "Modern Family Life", presents the manor house as a business enterprise for the modern manor-house family. There are no boundaries between work, leisure, and family life. Economically stable properties have employees, while highly mortgaged estates get family members to perform all the tasks. The common feature is that the property is the centre of and the frame around family life. The author examines in more detail the place and role of women in modern manor-house society, how those who marry into this life (including those with a profession of their own) handle the task of looking after large, impractical houses, preserving and managing property, and carrying on a traditional social life with hunts, fancy dinners, and overnight guests. She also looks at the cultural and social encounters that take place between old elites with their weight of tradition and rich newcomers who become estate owners. Property becomes a bone of contention in connection with inheritance, changes of generation, and divorces. The predominant model is the idea that the manor house is not something one owns, it is a loan that one is looking after for future generations. The future is an important element in modern manor-house discourse.

The break-up of the Danish majorat system through the act of 1919 led to a redistribution of acreage and a

changed ownership structure. Many castles and stately homes were sold, a process hastened by economic crises in the 1930s. Brita Andersen illuminates a distinctive consequence of these fundamental changes in the article "The Entry of the Institutions", namely, the completely new functions of the properties. They became old people's homes, psychiatric institutions, youth prisons, and children's homes. Some became museums and historic buildings open to the public. Folk high schools and schools of domestic science took over the manors. It is mostly the main house and nearby buildings that have become institutions, transformed for their new functions. The beautiful, healing nature surrounding a country house and the restful seclusion are held up as an important factor in the choice of an aesthetically pleasing manor-house setting for psychiatric care or the rehabilitation of prisoners.

Peter Bering takes the reader along on a fascinating quest in history and restoration in the article "Restoration of Buildings". Above all we gain insight into the difficult balancing act between requirements for modernization and remaining faithful to the original when decisions have to be made about reconstruction or recreation, imitation or something completely new. The author sums up how discussions have sounded in the last hundred years as regards definitions and classifications of protected buildings. There are examples of castles and stately homes with traces of a series of different styles, testifying to waves of restoration based on changing aesthetic ideals in the 19th century.

Line Bregnhøi, Søren Møller, and Verner Thomsen give detailed descriptions of present-day restoration projects in "With Magnifying Glass, Brush, and Scalpel". They reflect on necessary decisions, searches in archives, and surveys of historical traces when conservators face the task of restoring a historic building. This raises questions about conservation problems and makes high demands of the restorers' competence and professionalism.

To conclude, I will borrow some questions with which the editors, John Erichsen and Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, round off this four-volume *Herregården*. They wonder whether manor houses in the future will be tourist attractions and course centres, or if they can survive as large landed properties, keep buildings and cultural traces alive, and simultaneously provide a framework for the owner's everyday life in a way that is meaningful for modern people. *Herregården* as a whole has given us a solid historic and cultural foundation, a wealth of learning, and substantive arguments for hoping for a future for manor houses. This work is indispensable for all those doing research on manor-house culture in all its forms and expressions.

Angela Rundquist, Djursholm

Integration in Denmark

Integration. Antropologiske perspektiver. Karen Fog Olwig & Karsten Pærregaard (eds.). Museum Tusculanums Forlag, Copenhagen 2007. 278 pp. ISBN 978-87-635-07387-7.

Den stille integration. Nye fortællinger om at høre til i Danmark. Marianne Holm Pedersen & Mikkel Rytter (eds.). C. A. Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen 2006. 144 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7876-457-2.

■ The main aim of these two edited volumes is to investigate the concept of integration and contribute to an understanding of how processes of integration work in everyday life.

Like all scientific and political concepts, the concept of integration has a history and is closely connected to the society which it is used to explain. The background to the first of these volumes, "Integration: Anthropological Perspectives", is a seminar about integration arranged by the Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen in January 2006. The seminar started the same day as the political crisis which followed on the publication of the Mohammed caricatures. The researchers suddenly felt how very urgent and also tangible the theme of the seminar was. They realized that integration is a very well-founded concept in political arenas as well as in everyday life. It is much more than a scientific abstract concept used by anthropologists. But, and this is important, the researchers make a distinction between how the concept is used in political arenas and everyday life and how they use it in research.

When it comes to the concept of integration in a Scandinavian context, the word today in the official media debates or political documents means the process of immigrants fitting into Danish (or other Scandinavian) society. The opposite of this is segregation, when immigrants end up unemployed, uneducated, unable to speak Danish, and living in segregated housing areas outside the cities. The political challenge then is to stop segregation through

different kind of financial and educational support and projects.

Hanne Overgaard Mogensen captures these differences between research and political debate successfully in her chapter about HIV-positive African immigrants in Denmark. To start with she explains how the Danish debate about integration could be explained by a picture, where those who are "different" and "foreigners" are a problem as long as they don't fit into the existing harmonious entity called Denmark. Integration in this sense is very much about becoming the same, the same as a Dane. This is obviously very difficult for many reasons. Mogensen underlines how structures of racism and stereotyped representations of African people stigmatize and also organize the African immigrants' everyday life. The HIV-positive African, male or female, is a risk to the whole African immigrant group in Denmark since they are carriers of diseases connected to promiscuity and thereby confirm some very strong stereotyped imaginations about black and African people being super-sexualized. As a consequence, not just Danish people tend to seem distant towards HIV-positive African persons but also the African Danish immigrant group excludes them.

These processes of exclusion are very complex and have many different angles which Mogensen scrutinizes. In doing so she states that, from a sociological and anthropological perspective, for example, that of Emile Durkheim, integration is something that starts whenever people, no matter who they are, whatever their sex, class, ethnicity, age, form a group and a society. Processes of exclusion are also a kind of integration. From that perspective, Mogensen writes, her research persons are not non-integrated, but a part of the already existing Danish community.

Therefore, from an anthropological perspective, the question is not whether we can have the HIV-positive African persons in Mogensen's chapter integrated in Denmark or not, but to analyse the process of integration in which they are already involved. That is, all people in Denmark are part of diverse and multifaceted processes of integration. An anthropologist can analyse these kinds of processes and thereby contribute to a better and more complex understanding of integration.

In the introduction to the book the editors write a very instructive comparison between the situation in the USA and Denmark/Scandinavia. Karen Fog Olwig and Karsten Pærregaard make it clear that, to understand a nation and how a nation deals with questions of migration and diversity, we have to make international comparisons and outlooks. For example, they show how the concept of "the immigrant" in the USA is something positive and a part of the development, the future and the national self-understanding, while in Denmark it represents problems and negative development.

Part one deals with integration as a political project in Denmark from different perspectives, for example, a religious perspective where the Danish church plays a role in understanding diversity (Rubow, p. 87). Another issue is raised in the light of the philosophical discussion about aboriginal people's rights to protect their cultures. Kvaale (p. 113) asks whether the Danes might be an aboriginal people. The five chapters in part one investigate, explain and give an understanding of why an excluding and one-sided picture of integration is so strong in a Danish context.

In addition to this and besides describing different models and theories for understanding society and integration, as Rytter, Kvaale and Sjørslev do, there is another theme that appears in many of the chapters, namely the history of the Danish welfare state. One dominant conceptual framework is the understanding of equality mentioned above. Steffen Jöncke poses the question: How is it possible that some of the people who live in Denmark are not recognized as Danish (p. 38)?

In Denmark, as in Sweden, equality has been very closely connected to being identical, to sameness. Having equal rights thus means having identical rights. Being treated as an equal means being treated as identical. Connected with this understanding of equality is the notion of the nation. All citizens are parts of the same project, and in the growing welfare state the slogan "Welfare and equal rights for *all* Danes" was important. As more immigrants came to Denmark before the end of World War II and afterwards, the notion of nation and identicality grew stronger and the slogan changed slightly into "Welfare and equal rights for all *Danes*" (Jöncke, p. 56).

Within the different chapters the concept of integration is understood through the theories of Durkheim (mentioned above) as well as Luhmann's theories of inclusion and exclusion, Mauss's theory of reciprocity and exchange, theories of identity as something relational and situational, and basic cultural theory about how an "us" always presumes a "them".

Jöncke also reminds the reader of how influential Social Darwinists such as Herbert Spencer used

theories of society as a developing organism when trying to understand integration. This development from simple homogeneous societies towards more complex heterogeneous societies is positive in the sense that complexity requires greater efforts from every single individual but also offers more opportunities. Because of that, experiences of community between people will increase in a very functionalistic way. The members of the society will have more and more possibilities to distribute and build up relations between each other. Jöncke states that Spencer was rather unique in his positive analysis of growing prosperity as a consequence of integration and more complex heterogeneous societies. Many other researchers and politicians from the same period instead worried about this development and talked about disintegration and about homogeneous societies falling apart as they grew more complex.

These two models of development that point in two opposite directions towards integration and prosperity or disintegration still are very influential and are perhaps most dominant in the debate about multiculturalism and whether a multicultural society is a threat or a cure.

Mogensen's chapter (mentioned above), represents the second part where ethnographic case studies give the reader a diverse picture of different immigrants and immigrant groups in Denmark, e.g. Pedersen's interviews with an Iraqi woman. The woman refers to her migration and journey to Denmark as a class journey, where she moves from the Iraqi middle class and ends up as a refugee at the bottom of Danish society. Danneskiold-Samsøe writes about Iraqi immigrants meeting Danish institutions and how they strongly feel that they are taken care of by Danish administrators who pity them for their losses without ever really understanding or even wanting to understand what kind of suffering they have gone through. This causes many possibilities because the immigrants receive help to become established, but it also creates feelings of dissatisfaction. On the other hand, the second part deals with how the Danish welfare state works with categories which simplify and stereotype, for example, in Johansen's chapter about categories in psychiatry and Jensen's about being Danish and Muslim, which seems to be almost impossible even if you are a native Dane.

"Quiet Integration: New Narratives about Belonging in Denmark", also starts with ethnographic cases and individual experiences and life-stories, with a stronger focus on being a migrant in Denmark. All of the five chapters were presented at Dansk Folkmindesamling's annual meeting in 2004. Marianne Holm Pedersen and Mikkel Rytter start with the same curiosity as Olwig and Pærregaard about why immigrants occupy so much space in the official political debate when in 2005 they actually only were 8 per cent of the total Danish population. This book was written to play down all the expectations and dominant conceptual frameworks about integration by telling, in a highly anthropological and ethnological traditional way, the stories of everyday lives and struggles. Ritter, for example, describes how cultural patterns of marriage change among Pakistani immigrants in Denmark as a consequence of integration but also as a consequence of Danish laws. Pedersen writes about an Iraqi family's changed approach to traditional celebrations, Grünenberg about how different generations in a Bosnian family develop diverse feelings about the homeland and the "new" country, and Kleist problematizes the quiet discrimination felt among Somali-Danish people. The chapters pose questions about belonging, being at home, being a part, having one identity or several etc.

So, the subject of this volume is about being an immigrant in a nation like Denmark and questions about whether it is possible to become a Dane or not. In this book we find the only contribution that not just criticizes the dichotomies of "Dane" and "Immigrant", "us" and "them" but also in a very instructive way deconstruct the concepts. In her chapter about *storbymennesker* (inhabitants of a big city, metropolitans) Sally Anderson (who also contributes to *Integration: Antropologiske perspektiver*) analyses her fieldwork at a sports club in central Copenhagen. She starts with the conceptual framework of sports as the ultimate universal meeting place for all people regardless of class, ethnicity, age or sex. This has been a very strong framework and a tradition in Sweden too during the last 150 years. If people cannot be integrated elsewhere they can always be integrated through sports.

Anderson starts by seeking to see how immigrants get integrated through sporting activities. She ends up with a study of multiple and complicated identifications and processes of integration where her starting point has a low rank. Instead of looking at a group of representatives of Danish people and immigrants integrating at the gym class, she starts to look at them as male and female, cosmopolitan and rural,

representing different locations in Copenhagen or different kinds of sports, professions, ages etc.

It was with curiosity I started my reading of the two books. For the last ten or fifteen years Denmark has politically been much more radical within the field of migration and integration than Sweden. There have been several situations, which have drawn attention worldwide; the controversy provoked by the Mohammed caricatures is just one of them. Denmark is known to have much more restrictive policies on refugees and migration than Sweden. The topic covered by Rytter in both volumes is the law on marriage which was tightened in 2002 with requirements concerning age, living circumstances, etc. Act 365 made it very difficult to marry across national borders, and because of that several immigrants from Denmark moved to Sweden.

Therefore I am really surprised that the very forceful critique against integration politics that is being heard in Sweden is not apparent in these anthologies. To put it briefly, just as in the Danish context, in Swedish/Scandinavian politics the focus has been on the migrant as a problem. If a migrant does not get a job he/she will not have a proper living, he/she will not learn the Swedish language and will finally have great difficulties being integrated and becoming a part of society. This explanatory model for segregation shows that it is the migrant that needs support and measures, for example, education in the Swedish language, to be able to change the process of segregation to a process of integration. This model, called the minority model, focuses on the migrant as a problem.

However, under the influence of international studies, researchers in Sweden have raised the challenge of turning this model upside down. Perhaps, they say, it is not the migrant's lack of skills or language that is the problem, and what keeps them out of employment. Maybe it is the employers and the labour market that is built on structures and imaginations about migrants that is the problem. What if we turn our eyes towards the majority and the majority society instead to understand segregation? The keywords used are structural discrimination, institutional discrimination and structural racism. These concepts are related to a postcolonial understanding that goes back through the long history of European racism, colonization and exploitation, and the belief in European superiority, which today structures every country in the world and every society and institution.

Hand in hand with this racial heritage there is a long tradition of research about how Swedish welfare institutions with the aim of integrating and treating people equally have rationally been excluding certain groups during the 20th century, e.g., working class, women, youth, old people, handicapped people, and of course immigrants. These kinds of processes within a Danish context are also described in the two volumes, especially in part one of *Integration: Antropologiske perspektiver.*

This kind of rational exclusion to make equality possible has had a counter-effect in that these groups have come to be understood as not fully capable. Another consequence is that there is only one group in society that the welfare institutions do not have to worry about, and that is the group of male ethnic Swedes aged 25–55. This group overlaps with the dominant groups from the postcolonial perspective. From this point of view I could add words like white, Christian, European, Westerners to the term male Swedes. These theories of how a racist/colonial heritage as well as a Swedish welfare institutional heritage is working and creating different opportunities for different groups and individuals are not treated in these books about integration, and there is a big difference between Swedish and Danish research which it would be interesting to scrutinize further. I would say that Swedish researchers more forcefully criticize Swedish integration policies, while the Danish anthropologists, at least in these books, are just as "quiet" (Danish *stille*) as the integrations processes they describe in the ethnographic case studies.

On the other hand, what is still lacking in Sweden is the kind of empirical studies about how people deal with structures, stereotypes, racism etc. in everyday life. I like the idea of letting integration include all parts of a society and how it is used in the anthologies as a way to criticize the dominant one-sided picture of integration as something that has to do with immigrants fitting into the Danish society. This critique is important but could have been even more interesting if at least some of the chapters in the volume had abandoned the focus on immigrants and ethnicity and whether they fit in or not. Perhaps it is with a special purpose, but the chapters wear a "national coat" supplemented with a focus on immigrants and ethnicity. We don't get a picture of a complex society marked by diversity and integration (except for Anderson's contribution about *storbymennesker* mentioned above) but a Danish society marked by migration. We get a lot of diverse perspectives and

aspects of being *an immigrant* in a Scandinavian country. In any case, between the lines we also get to understand that it is not just a question of being an immigrant but also living at the intersection of gender, class, age, religion and so on, as well as being an individual with dreams and expectations.
Kristina Gustafsson, Lund

Åland Sailors' Wives

Hanna Hagmark-Cooper, Avsked och återseende. Sjömanshustruns liv under 1900-talet. Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland 704, Helsingfors 2008. 171 pp. ISBN 978-951-583-1576.

■ When doing fieldwork among seamen as part of a study of Åland shipping, the maritime historian and now director of the Åland Maritime Museum, Hanna Hagmark-Cooper, also met some sailors' wives, including Märta Olofsson. This led her to understand that sailors' wives also deserve to be studied, because Märta Olofsson said: "It's us you should be interviewing. We're the ones who were left at home to look after everything while he was away for long, long periods. We took care of everything and then when he came home we just had to let go of everything and let him take over. He was used to being in command at sea, so he wanted to command at home too."

The meeting with Märta Olofsson inspired Hagmark-Cooper to collect material from sailors' wives in Åland during the summer of 1999 via questionnaires and interviews. Seventy-five women answered questions about what it is like to have their husband at sea and what life was like when the women had to take sole responsibility for the home, the economy, and the children. The questions also concerned what it is like to live a life oscillating between departure and reunion, between living alone and living as a couple.

Hagmark-Cooper divided her collected material into three groups according to the women's age: the first group consisted of women born 1912–1935, the second was women born 1940–1954, and the third was women born 1948–1969. The majority of the women were born in Åland, the rest in Finland (24), Sweden (3), and England (1). Fifty-nine of them were married, seven were cohabiting, five were divorced, and four were widows. Surprisingly many had received education beyond compulsory school, and most of them were in gainful employment or had worked at some time.

In 2004 Hagmark-Cooper presented her findings in a doctoral dissertation entitled *Women in Maritime Communities: A Socio-Historical Study of Continuity and Change in the Domestic Lives of Seafarers' Wives in the Åland Islands, from 1930 into the New Millennium*. In this new study she presents a revised version of the dissertation in Swedish. The result is an interesting and accessible book about women's experiences of being seafarers' wives in different periods.

Hagmark-Cooper openly declares that her starting point has been a pre-understanding of the seafarer's wife as an energetic, strong, and independent woman. The author thus adheres to a discourse according to which a sailor's wife is used to assuming responsibility for most things and therefore does not need to rely on her husband. She can even find it problematic to share the responsibility when the husband is at home. The image of this kind of woman can also be found in literature: Sally Salminen's *Katrina* and Anni Blomqvist's *Maja* are well-known examples.

These ideas are confirmed in the collected material, but there is also room for other perceptions, such as feelings of disillusionment, disappointment, weakness, and failure. Not all the women see themselves as secure and strong; on the contrary, many feel helpless and vulnerable in the absence of their husband. This means that the author – and no doubt many readers – must modify the image of the strong and independent sailor's wife. Instead we see the emerging contours of a kind of double life for the women – one where the husband is at sea and one when he is at home – and the problems of balancing between these extremes.

We also see great differences between the attitudes of different generations to the man's absence. These differences particularly concern the opportunities for communication. In the oldest generation, letters were the only real way to keep in touch, which meant that a long time often passed without contacts. For the intermediate generation the telephone became the most common means of communication. This meant that contacts became more frequent and reliable. The telephone – especially in its mobile form – is still an important channel for communication with its function for text messages, and the computer with e-mail allows people to reach each other in a few seconds, even across large geographical distances.

Naturally, these changes are significant for contacts between the women and the men, and ultimately for the division of responsibility and labour between the

spouses. The transition from long-distance shipping – the only kind of shipping in Åland until 1959 – to ferry traffic between Åland, Finland, and Sweden also brought changed conditions. When the profession of seaman changed character and the men's absence was shortened, it sometimes led to a radical reorganization of everyday life for the seamen's families. The women in the study testify to these and many other changes.

The book, which undoubtedly deals with an important sphere of women's history, unfortunately tends to have more statistics than living women. I would have liked to see more and longer quotations from the women themselves. I miss the women as subjects and beings of flesh and blood. I also miss pictures which could have added a further dimension to the texts, offering the possibility of different and alternative interpretations. Now readers have to content themselves with some photographs on the cover and a diagram in the text.

The book is also written in a rather dry style, leaning more towards presentation than vivid cultural reasoning. This leaves me with questions that I would have liked to see answered, such as how the women reacted to the author's analyses. Did they recognize themselves? But – even more seriously – it leaves me with a feeling that the results cannot really be questioned. Perhaps it is the author's matter-of-fact tone that leaves no room for alternative interpretations?
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Underwear: A Cultural History

Britta Hammar & Pernilla Rasmussen, Underkläder. En kulturhistoria. Bokförlaget Signum, Stockholm 2008. 251 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 978-91-87896-93-4.

■ "Underwear is the first thing we put on in the morning and the last thing we take off in the evening. We wear underwear closest to the body, and probably all of us relate to it in some way." With these introductory sentences the Swedish textile researchers Britta Hammar and Pernilla Rasmussen put forth their objective: to tell the cultural history of underwear in the Western world, primarily women's and primarily viewed from a Swedish perspective. The result is an informative story that touches upon themes such as fashion, body ideals, morality and technological developments, and that covers underwear from the Middle Ages until today, with an emphasis on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Reading through the book's sixteen chapters and additional material documenting a few 18th- and 19th-century corsets and the dressing of an 18th-century doll, the reader learns about the many fantastic pieces of underwear kept in Swedish costume collections, about the construction of men and women's stays and the reasons for their use in terms of fashion, and about how different people express their experiences of wearing underwear.

The strength of the book is in the descriptions of the construction techniques and materials used in making stays, corsets and crinolines in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It makes for fascinating reading to follow the technological developments of industrialization, including machine sewing and textile manufacture, and how they have affected underwear preferences and fashions. Further, it is informative to read about the impact of textile innovation from natural to artificial, man-made fibres on the underwear industry. The chapter about linen and *tvättkläder* (Eng. washable clothing), worn not to shape the body, but to protect it and the clothes worn on top of it from sweat and the like, is similarly enlightening. Since the Middle Ages, when laundry and bathing were rare occurrences, linen tunics, shifts, chemises, and shirts have formed an essential part of most people's wardrobe, seen today in the shape of the T-shirt worn 24 hours a day by many people.

Having said that, the book lacks more inside knowledge about men's underwear. It is mentioned in the introduction that the book is limited by what source material is kept on men's underwear in museum collections. But even if this is the case, it would have been interesting if the reader could have learned more about contemporary men's underwear (as well as women's), where source material is not lacking, and also about why keeping and collecting women's underwear has turned out to be more attractive than the situation of the opposite sex. There might not have been room for such explanation in an exhibit text, but in this book these details would have been welcome. The final chapter "Documentation", for instance, could have lost a few pages, as it is unclear why the reader would need a detailed introduction to a few corsets and one doll's dresses. This chapter is essentially a look inside the work of museum curators and conservators. Though fascinating and well written, this material seems somehow misplaced in the context of this book.

However, the large number of chapters in the book

allows for a wide range of perspectives on underwear. The source material is a mixture of primary and secondary sources, including diaries, commercial advertisements, trade journals and magazines. This creates a challenge for the story told (as is the case of many works on cultural history), not to end up in anecdote, but critical and factual scholarship. In the end, the reader misses a further understanding of what socio-economic group would wear the kinds of underwear highlighted in the book, and how this has changed over the course of time. Are the stories told exceptions or general facts? And how comparable are the Swedish cases with the situations in other countries such as France, Britain or North America, to which most of the secondary sources on the reference list belong?

The main challenge of the book seems to be its premise. The book is based on the research and text for the exhibition *Underbart – underkläder formar kroppen 1750–2005* ("Wonderful – Underwear Shaping the Body 1750–2005"), shown in 2005–2006 at both the Textile Museum in Borås (Sweden) and the museum of cultural history *Kulturen* in Lund (Sweden). The less in-depth and nuanced text of the book seems due to the genre of exhibition text writing, where the goal is to write short texts that are both broadly informative and linguistically condensed. The book *Underwear: A Cultural History* has ended up as something in between the two.

Taking into account these premises of the book, Hammar and Rasmussen have written a knowledgeable book introducing the cultural history of underwear. This book can be recommended to readers wishing to learn about underwear past and present, the fashions and dress practices of people of the Western world, and it can be seen as a Swedish supplement to the Danish ethnologist Marianne Thesander's book *The Feminine Ideal*, first published in 1994 (which to my surprise is not mentioned in the list of references).

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Men in Movement

Män i rörelse – Jämställdhet, förändring och social innovation i Norden. Øystein Gullvåg Holter (ed.). Gidlunds förlag, Hedemora 2007. 362 pp. ISBN 978-91-7844-380-2.

■ In my bookshelf at home there are four volumes of essays about men and masculinity in Scandinavia, all of which have appeared in recent years. Do we need another one? Perhaps. Unfortunately, the book reviewed here does not really live up to my expectations. I cannot say that I have any outright objections to the content, for the book is good in many ways. But there are things that can and should be discussed. I shall return to this.

A positive aspect is that the project is ambitious and that it considers interesting issues. The authors also deserve praise for having succeeded in finding an angle on the topic of masculinity in Scandinavia that has not been researched hitherto. The theme of the volume is, as the title suggests, "Men in Movement: Equality, Change, and Social Innovation", which is examined in relation to the trend towards increased welfare and the relation of masculinities to equality.

The book is divided into three sections which are linked in different ways to the overall themes. Part one, entitled "Category and Institution – Masculinity as Institutional Pattern", is about masculinities illuminated in relation to societal institutions, the welfare state, work, and parental leave, and how these have changed.

The first chapter, by Ingólfur V. Gíslason and Øystein Gullvåg Holter, is about how the norms for men and women are drastically changing in the Nordic countries. The authors argue that this can be associated with increased equality. They show that equality can play an important part in the development towards increased prosperity, but simultaneously argue that, to achieve this goal, we need to develop a holistic view of the concept of welfare. The authors hold up the Icelandic model for parental leave as a good institutional guide.

The next chapter, by Johanna Lammi-Taskula, considers an interesting observation concerning fatherhood at Finnish workplaces. Based on quantitative and qualitative studies, the author points out that men in Finland actually do take part in child care, but they do not talk openly about it at work. By politicizing fatherhood, so to speak, Finland has been successful in achieving a change in action, but it has still not had an impact socially.

Chapter three deals with the situation in Iceland and the so-called Icelandic model. Here Gíslason confirms the hypothesis put forward in the first chapter, that using equality as a method has been successful in getting men to assume a large responsibility for care and the home. The key to success is believed to

be the support that both sexes receive. The women therefore do not feel threatened in the home, and the men dare to conquer new arenas, for the benefit of society. It is important to notice, according to the author, that any ideas that might exist today (in the Nordic countries) about masculinity are no obstacle to looking after children. Yet this is something that researchers in gender studies find difficult to accept, and therefore attention is focused on Iceland, where there are very small differences between men and women as regards attitudes and behaviour. The author shows how important it is to realize that structural changes today go much faster than in the past, and that this has an immediate impact on the attitude to equality. In the Nordic countries as a whole, according to the author, it is therefore above all rules and not norms that are the obstacle to the development towards increased equality.

Part two, "Life Patterns and Social Psychology – Masculinity as Subjective Orientations", focuses on life-course analysis and everyday practice. The first chapter here is based on newly collected material demonstrating men's changed patterns of action in the family and the household. Helene Aareth argues that an older complementary gender division of labour has been replaced by of a strategy of "both/and", where the demands of the job, for both men and women, are balanced against the musts of home and family. In this chapter we follow couples who are endeavouring – with a large measure of success – to create gender-neutral lifestyle projects. If one wants to understand these new patterns in relations between the sexes it is important, according to the author, not to reduce the new contribution of the men to a kind of cultural modernization of an older masculinity. What we see is instead that men, within the framework of the prevailing masculinity, are working to change conditions. Masculinity, in other words, is no longer an obstacle to equality. But to be able to understand this we need new theories of masculinity.

The next chapter, by Bente Marianne Olsen, presents a large qualitative and longitudinal study from Denmark about middle-class parents and how they decide priorities between children, leisure, and work. The study shows that it is above all changed demands at work which, together with traditional notions about gender, give rise to changed priorities, which in turn leads to change in the gender division of labour in the family. The author claims that fathers in Denmark, by virtue of their historically unique position between the family with its demands for care, and working life with its demands for profit, have the potential to renew both fatherhood and working life.

The last chapter in this part sheds light on contemporary men and masculinity from the perspective of social psychology and culture studies. It turns out, according to Claes Ekenstam, that both the concept of masculinity and men as individuals are differentiated and undergo change. The theories that are normally used, both internationally and in Scandinavia, are therefore no longer adequate. Yet there remains a fear of falling, of losing control. But this, the author argues, is no longer as closely connected to gender identity as it used to be. The fear that is exemplified by the empirical material is more about falling outside the framework of performance on the job and not being able to live up to the expectations of a normal family life. The conclusion of this study is that, if one wants to understand men and masculinity, it is important to focus research more on individual properties and less on gender norms.

In part three, "Innovation, Discourse and Learning Theory – Masculinity as Performative Structure", the emphasis is on discourses and theories of learning and knowledge development. The first article here, by Øystein Gullvåg Holter, puts forward the term social innovation as a new and untested approach to understanding the concepts of gender and equality. Based on empirical material, he identifies a number of shared features in social innovators, but it turns out that there are also patterns in the invention of social innovations. It is important to notice in this connection that it is above all "cross-gendered" patterns of innovation that deserve attention if one wants a greater understanding of gender and of how to work for increased equality. This article also discusses the role of increased paternity leave for the development of welfare. The author argues that, even though innovation can be perceived as a diluted concept, it nevertheless entails a significant challenge for research. Relational gender studies, according to the author, has the potential and also the readiness to provide the knowledge that society needs about these issues.

In the next chapter Steen Baagøe Nielsen elucidates men's strategies for "getting into care" and having their competence in the care of children acknowledged as actual caring competence, based on a learning perspective. The men in the study testify to considerable difficulties and ambivalence, which is alleviated to

some extent by the new understandings put forward concerning children's needs and their situation. But women's increased participation in working life has also led to a change in conditions. It turns out that learning and changes in practice are facilitated by the increased legitimacy of fathers' interpretation of children's needs and their own competence in looking after them.

The last chapter is about men who strive to combine family life with a full-time job, showing that these men often end up in the same situation as women used to do, with the difference that men find it hard to free themselves from the demands placed on them as the main breadwinners. This causes stress and ambivalence, according to Marie Nordberg, but the situation also proves to be a driving force for social innovations. She shows examples of men forming small groups to establish rules in working life which make it easier for them to be away from work to look after sick children. But there are also ever-present stereotypes here which function as efficient border guards preventing change. The conclusions drawn by the author, however, are that change cannot be stopped, and, as many of the other articles show, that welfare, masculinity, and social innovation belong together, and that these associations deserve more study.

This volume is coherent and therefore functions as a collection of articles should, as a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. In other words, the book is a solid example of good scholarly handicraft. Nordic research on masculinity acquits itself well in international competition, with a great deal to contribute for people who want to work for increased equality, above all, perhaps, for those living and working outside Scandinavia. That is where the book, regarded as a book, shows its shortcomings. It is a shame that it is preaching to the converted. The volume clearly shows that the work for equality has come very far in the Nordic countries. I therefore wonder why it is not in English. There must surely be a global need and thirst for the knowledge presented here.

Another point on which one can be critical is the length of the articles. Two thirds of them fill more than 40 pages, which is far too long. The book has a lot of summaries of other research and long presentations of empirical material, which could have benefited from being abridged. Having achieved a common theme and succeeded in getting the authors to stick to it, the editors could also have considered the size of the articles. This could have increased the readability and ultimately the spread of these important results.

The final verdict on the book is that it is important and interesting, but that it is aimed at the wrong target group and that it is too long.

Eddy Nehls, Trollhättan

Music and Nationalism

Musikk og nasjonalisme i Norden. Anne Svånaug Haugan, Niels Kayser Nielsen & Peter Stadius (eds.). HiT skrift 3/2008. Høgskolen i Telemark, Porsgrunn 2008. 161 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-7206-287-2 (printed); ISBN 978-82-7206-288-9 (electronic).

■ This publication on Music and Nationalism in the Nordic countries is the offspring of a Nordic conference at Bø, Norway, in 2007, initiated by the Nordplus network "Nordic Experiences" as a follow-up to an earlier conference on "Language and Nationalism". However, of the twelve papers given at the conference, only six are published here, alongside two other articles that have been added. Furthermore, summaries of the two days' programmes and discussions are also appended to the papers. Three papers are in English, two each in Swedish and Danish, and one in Norwegian.

Despite the title and some signs of theoretical reorientation, it is the nationalisms of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland that are addressed. Examples from Iceland, the Faroe Islands, the Inuit and Saami peoples would have been interesting in this context.

The format of the contributions varies; some are full articles in their own right, others are short and seem to be the actual presentations given at the conference. The result is a mixed impression, as some texts stand out, others merely give a foretaste. Still, the shorter papers also have some interesting points. Altogether, the book may be viewed as a report from an established but not exhausted research field (rather than the definite statement the title may suggest).

The three initial papers actually also deal with German nationalism and symbolism. Linda Maria Koldau presents some German political songs used against the Danish in Schleswig-Holstein in the 1840–60s, and this is coupled with Inge Adriansen's (added) paper on the South Jutish *Blaa Sangbog* (Blue Songbook) and its function under German rule in the same area 1864–1920. Ursula Geisler in her contribution studies

how musical actors (musicians, critics, officials etc.) in Nazi Germany drew upon and re-coded ideas of "Swedish", "German" and "Nordic", and how this discourse was received in Sweden.

Anne Svånaug Haugan makes a historical survey of how folk music was used in the nation-building processes in Norway during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By narrowing this down to the region of Numedal, she shows how a general cultural nationalism in the 1800s changed into a 20th-century "regional nationalism" (*bygdenasjonalisme*). A goal of *restitution* of folk music, giving it official recognition on a national level, was followed by a goal of *reconstruction* where the folk music interest was to be anchored on a local level. The Gothenburg musicologist Karin Eriksson (now at Växjö University), drawing upon her dissertation *Bland polskor, gånglåtar och valser: Hallands spelmansförbund och den halländska folkmusiken*, points out a similar development in Sweden where the inauguration of regional folk music organizations in the 1930s led to a narrowing down of folk music genres recorded regionally, according to national discourses on "authentic" folk music.

A short paper by Glenda Dawn Goss discusses Jean Sibelius' music in terms of "hot" and "banal" nationalism, following Michael Billig's concepts. Works like *Finlandia* and *Song of the Athenians* were "hot" in evoking national emotions in public discourse at their first performances, but sooner or later turned "banal" (the former has served in many contexts, for instance as Biafra's national anthem and as the soundtrack to *Die Hard II*). A longer text by Stine Isaksen is methodologically interesting; she compares the contemporary national music criticism of Sibelius with that concerning the Danish 19th-century composer Jacob W. Gade, pointing out four distinct themes: the national concert (as distinct from the ordinary symphony concert), the idea of a national music, the composer as personification of the national, and recognition by other nations. Furthermore, some discordances in Finnish nationalist criticism are also discussed: was Sibelius music to be understood as anti-Russian? Was he to symbolize an ethnic Finnishness, or a combined Finnish/Swedish Finnishness? In her conclusion, Isaksen points out the differing contexts: Finland as a nation-state under construction, Denmark as an established state-nation – thus, music was given quite a different position as the essence of the national soul in Finland while music in Denmark merely confirmed an existing national identity.

Two interesting theoretical points are made in this book. One is about the importance of studying the connections between popular music and nationalism, instead of assuming it to be an international phenomenon in distinction to folk and art music. Unfortunately, only one out of the four presentations dedicated to popular music is published here. This is Janne Mäkelä's rather short but interesting reflection on the international aspirations of the Finnish popular music business, where a certain envy of Swedish international success (as in the Eurovision Song Contest) has eventually faded with the breakthrough in the 2000's of several heavy metal groups (Lordi, Nightwish and others). Here, the national in music is constructed not in stylistic terms but in success in an international style.

The other point is stated by Niels Kayser Nielsen in his summary of the second conference day, and is a critique of the Marxist stances of Hobsbawm, Gellner and Anderson for conflating nationalism with national identity. Instead, Nielsen sees rising interests in historically situated studies where the specific actors and their driving forces are closely examined. There is no cause to presuppose all nationalistic expressions to have an independent state as their goal; rather, nationalism can be considered as a field with several competing actors in different positions. (This would be an interesting path to continue on, particularly by also taking "ethnicity" in consideration.) And to further alert against musical essentialism, Nielsen brings out Dmitry Shostakovich's music as an example of how music can be heard in different times and societies as carrying different ethnic and national qualities, or as having none at all.

Alf Arvidsson, Umeå

Open Air Museums on the Way to the Future

On the Future of Open Air Museums. Inger Jensen & Henrik Zipsane (eds.). Fornvårdaren 30. Jamtli Förlag, Östersund, Sweden 2008. 147 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7948-213-8.

■ It is a generally known fact that the future will bring great challenges for the world's open air museums. When Sten Rentzhog, retired director of Jamtli and former director of the Nordiska Museet, launched his comprehensive monograph about open air museums, their work and problems, he did so at a fantastic semi-

nar at Skansen in the spring of 2007. The book was entitled *Open Air Museum: The History and Future of a Visionary Idea* and was issued simultaneously in Swedish and English. In it he describes a large number of open air museums and their problems, arriving at the conclusion that what will save the museums is their educational activity.

The 2008 issue of Jamtli's annual, *Fornvårdaren*, serves as a publication of the Skansen seminar in 2007. Fifteen papers are included together with the arrangers' comments. The seminar was jointly organized by the museums that belong to the Nordic working group for open air museums, which has been active since 2002. When Rentzhog's book was launched, a number of colleagues from important open air museums in Europe and the USA were also invited, and at least one representative from Australia was among the guests.

The publication is entitled *On the Future of Open Air Museums* and basically follows the structure of the seminar. It is divided into four sections. Sten Rentzhog opens the first part with an account of what he learned during the work on his book. As pensioner he is in the fortunate situation of possessing a broad knowledge of open air museums and being free from economic responsibility and all the worries about how to preserve the collections. He is free to be a visionary. His book on open air museums is commented on by Thomas Bloch Ravn, Den Gamle By in Aarhus, Denmark, Jan Vaessen, director of the Netherlands Open Air Museum, Professor Debra Reid from Illinois, USA, and Professor Thomas Hylland Eriksen from Norway. The second part provides a survey of the current situation of open air museums in the USA, while the third discusses modernization and increasing the number of visitors as a way to compensate for reduced finances. The final section is about lifelong learning.

In his commentary, Thomas Bloch Ravn places Rentzhog's book in its historical context and mentions previous publications on the subject. What is new about the book, in his opinion, is that Rentzhog views open air museums as a global phenomenon. He then presents the museum founders, analyses the development of the museums, and shows visions of their future. One phenomenon that is not so well known to Europeans is the great influence of the Disney Corporation on the American open air museums. One thing that the audience of Sten Rentzhog's lecture will remember is that he told how Hazelius's motto "Know thyself" had been taken down at the Nordiska Museet, but the first thing he did when he became director in 1988 was to put it up again.

The next commentator, Jan Vaessen, also alludes to Hazelius's motto by entitling his paper "Know Thy Neighbour". The essence of his paper – where most of the examples come from his own museum, the Netherlands Open Air Museum – concerns the issues of the museums' history and future. "We do not want to become a museum that has more history than future", Vaessen writes, and goes on to consider the museums as heritage institutions. On the concept of heritage he cites Alan Gailey from Northern Ireland: "Heritage is the presence of the past in the present." Vaessen continues: Open air museums are vulnerable and are often left to solve all their problems by themselves, without public support. We would need a manifesto for open air museums to clarify their unique mission and their valuable contribution to society. The historic mission of open air museums was "Know thyself". For those living in today's society he suggests a new motto: "Know thy neighbours."

As this is being written, Debra A. Reid has already published a similar version of her comments in *Nordisk Museologi* 2007/1. She sums up her critique and additional views in seven points. First, she wonders why a study of open air museums "must" proceed from Hazelius and she asks: "What happened during the late 1890s that made nationalism such an all-consuming goal? What happened to those who did not fit the national identity created at Skansen, or at other 'skansens' around the world?" She would also like to see information about the role of the people in the creation of open air museums. She adds examples from America. She also emphasizes the invisibility of women in the book, citing the case of Ann Pamela Cunningham, who worked at grass-roots level to initiate the preservation of George Washington's home, Mount Vernon. This falls outside Rentzhog's definition of open air museums since Mount Vernon is preserved *in situ*, "but this history is important for two reasons, women drove the effort, and the folk supported it. The role of women, or specifically, the way gender affected the open air museum movement, deserves attention."

Among the valuable aspects of Sten Rentzhog's book she mentions his positive outlook on open air museums, and she cites Rentzhog's idea of teaching people to see themselves as a link in a chain of generations: "if they also manage to get people to respect

earlier generations instead of looking down on them, they will be helping to counteract the present day hubris, the arrogance, which is one of the greatest threats to the future of mankind" (Rentzhog p. 377). What Debra A. Reid could well have said more clearly is that the open air museums, with their holistic approach, are among the institutions that are best suited for showing how previous generations found good solutions to problems. This was one of the arguments put forward by the cultural personalities at the start of the 20th century who advocated the preservation of Klosterbacken in Åbo in Finland.

Thomas Hylland-Eriksen reflects on the future of the open air museums and warns against them being turned into a uniform narrative about life in the past. "The very idea of a single, unified (and unifying) narrative about who we are and where we came from, has been compromised and can no longer be defended intellectually. The past has bifurcated into a number of alternative pasts: the past of minorities old and new, of women, of homosexuals; the past of the coast and that of the hinterland, the past of the town and that of the country, and so on." Describing all this is too much for one open air museum founded in an age when a more uniform perception of culture prevailed.

The tasks of the open air museums should be redefined, in his opinion. The concrete suggestions that he puts forward concern experiences of smell and taste, but they contain nothing new. Letting visitors taste samples, or selling bread, drinks, and sweets has long been part of the programme for events at many museums. When Romania hosted the conference of the Association of European Open Air Museums in 1993 the delegates were treated to drinks that had been distilled in the museums, and traditional food and fruit grown in the museum grounds. Hylland-Eriksen even compares open air museums with Harry Potter's fantasy world and regards them as living archives for skills and functions that would otherwise be forgotten.

At Skansen there has been discussion for some time about how an open air museum should meet the demands of the future. The report by Eva Kron and Cortina Lange about how they have held workshops in an attempt to find solutions is among the most interesting papers in the third part of the book. At Skansen they have worked with a hypothesis that fundamental human needs are always relevant. They started with concepts such as food, heat, security, love, confirmation, and the need to see a meaning in life. These key words can be combined with other words and in this way one can get at current problems that interest today's visitors. The first example was working with the combination of safety and the concept of savings bank. An interesting result was the presentation of bank books as a way of portraying people's living conditions.

One question that often causes people to sigh, at least at museums *in situ*, is that legislation makes it increasingly difficult to look after the museum as one should, when various materials are prohibited and safety regulations require changes, for example, to the way doors open. Ian N. Walden from the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, England, asks: "Will legislation stop us doing our work?" He sees the danger in legislation applying to the whole EU or the world. With the future of open air museums in mind, perhaps it could be a task for the European Association of Open Air Museums to try to influence the authorities.

The fourth part is devoted to issues of museum education. As expected, the paper by the director of Jamtli, Henrik Zipsane, is here. He discusses museums and heritage institutions as learning environments in a time of lifelong learning, citing as examples his experiences from Jamtli, where they have also worked with different age groups. Jamtli's educational approach is perhaps best summed up in Zipsane's own words: "At Jamtli we describe our learning efforts and pedagogical work in the following way: we are creating special learning experiences designed to develop competences that are needed in a life-long and life-wide perspective!"

The title of this publication emphasizes that it is about the future of open air museums. The papers ask questions or try to sketch future scenarios. We all know that it is a highly uncertain pursuit. We can only guess about the future. A very interesting paper was given by the Danish consultant Maria Therese Hoppe. The presentation was of the type that occurs in management training, dealing with how to "school" one's staff into accepting changes. It was entitled "The only permanent is change". We can safely say that about the future. It is a pity that Hoppe's lecture is not included in the seminar report.

Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen, Åbo

The Myth of the Happy Freeholder

Paw Stylsvig Jeppesen, Myten om den lykkelige selvejerbonde. Studier i fæste- og selvejergårdmænds vilkår i de midtfynske sogne Gestelev og Vantinge. Landbohistorisk Selskab, Auning 2006. 157 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7526-204-5.

■ The valuable thing about this dissertation is that it sheds light on a central problem in Danish agrarian history. The result brings nuanced and revised perceptions. The dissertation grapples with the idea of "the happy freeholder" and views of the significance of the great agrarian reforms. The aim is to clarify the real and concrete consequences of the introduction of freehold property (*selveje*), and whether it was an improvement on copyholding (*fæste*). The discussion leads to the conclusion that it was not always an advantage to change status from copyhold to freehold. The study can be described as a microanalysis, the areas selected for investigation being two parishes in central Fyn, Gestelev and Vantinge. The period covered by the study is 1830–1920.

The book is a slightly revised version of a thesis from 1991. That sets its stamp on the disposition and form of the book, which is severely academic. The detailed survey of the research situation in this field, the definitions of concepts, the description of methodology, and the presentation enable readers to follow the reasoning and the conclusions, but for non-specialists it will probably be hard work to keep up and maintain an overall view in the detailed discussions.

As a background to the study the author discusses the concept of freeholder and the development of freehold tenure locally, regionally, and nationally. The dissertation has an economic orientation and uses economic standards to measure whether there were differences in economic development between freehold and copyhold farms. One indicator that is used is the dues and taxes that both types of farms had to pay to the state. Another way of measuring any growth in prosperity on a farm can be gained by investigating the development of buildings. A variety of factors may be influential here, but the author claims that if one looks at the relative development in the stock of buildings on freehold and copyhold farms, one gets a good impression of the relative prosperity of the individual farm. Using the development of farm buildings provides a foundation for assessing whether the freeholders' allegedly more efficient agriculture was able to generate more capital for investment in buildings. The author concludes by discussing how the farmers financed their purchase of freehold properties.

The source material mostly comes from public archives such as registers of property mortgages and assessments for fire insurance. This information is supplemented with printed statistical data and topographical literature. This type of source material provides the numbers for quantitative analyses, with the results presented in tables and diagrams. The strength of the analysis is the solid empirical foundation and the precise conclusions that the quantitative calculations allow.

At the end of the book the author sums up the results and puts them in a wider national and historical perspective. He concludes that there was no great difference between freeholders and copyholders if one looks at the dues the two types of farmer paid for the right to farm their properties. In good economic times, however, it was probably an advantage to be a freeholder, whereas in times of crisis the copyholder could benefit from the fact that the rent, which was paid in kind, remained unchanged. This observation, however, must be viewed in a broader cultural and societal context including psychological and social factors. One such factor the author singles out is that paying off the mortgage represented a saving and an investment in a personally owned property even if the freeholder in some periods had larger expenses than the copyholder.

The perspectives in the dissertation are rather one-sided, those of agrarian and economic history. When viewed in a wider context of cultural history, however, they provide useful background material and are a reminder that established opinions constantly need to be challenged and revised.

Ragnar Pedersen, Hamar

Ethnological Uses of Life-Mode Analysis

Verden over. En introduktion til stats- og livsformsteorien og dens aktuelle anvendelse i etnologien. Astrid Jespersen, Marie Riegels Melchior & Marie Sandberg (eds.). Museum Tusculanums Forlag, København 2006. 325 pp. ISBN 87-7289-862-3.

■ Danish ethnology in the last few decades has been dominated by a specific cultural theory: the state- and life-mode theory. This perspective on culture is particularly associated with Professor Thomas

Højrup, the originator of the theory. In 1983 Højrup concluded an initial phase of this theoretical development, when his book *Det glemte folk: Livsformer og centraldirigering* was published.

In the new anthology *Verden over* we have an instructive and penetrating introduction to this theoretical process that Højrup once initiated. The book is written by a group of ethnologists connected to Copenhagen University. Although he is just one of several co-authors in this production, Højrup still has a key role for how the theory is presented. He is referred to continuously through the book, and he also contributes his own texts. The vast majority of the authors of the anthology are, however, quite a bit younger than Højrup, born in the 1970s as they are. In that sense *Verden over* can be seen as a new step in the transformation process of the theory, a step taken by a new generation of scholars.

The book is divided into three major parts. The first part is the introduction, written by the editors Marie Sandberg, Astrid Jespersen and Marie Riegels Melchior. In the second part we are given some examples of how state- and life-mode theory can be applied in different contexts from all over the world (*Verden over)*. Three of these seven chapters focus on issues in the midst of Danish society: Inge Adriansen, Peter Dragsbo and Thomas Højrup write about the role of the national cultural heritage in the Danish/German borderland of Sønderjylland/Schleswig; Marie Riegels Melchior discusses a certain kind of state aesthetic within architecture and social policy, and the representations of this aesthetic in a specific form of material culture – the Danish *kollektivhus* ("collective house") in the period 1930–60; and Anja Olsen dwells on how the construction of cultural landscapes and milieus on the one hand and nation building in an international context on the other, can be seen as two sides of the same coin. The other four chapters examine topics beyond, but, if we are to take the state- and life-mode theory seriously, not unrelated to, Danish society: the 9/11 terror attack on the World Trade Center and its parallel symbolic assault on the particular state form of the USA (authors Nicolai Carlberg and Søren Møller Christensen); the role of culture in the integration projects of the European Union (Helene Rasmussen and Marie Sandberg); the historical and conflict-ridden formation process of the state of Israel (Signe Boeskov); and ethnicity policy in Malaysia (Pia Kjær Jensen). In the third part of the book, the main theme becomes more evident again. In one chapter Højrup writes about the successive, cumulative development of the state- and life-mode theory, and in another one he gives a summary of how the particular theory has been applied by different (mainly Danish) ethnologists, and how, simultaneously, the character of different state-forms and life-modes has been revealed and determined. This third part of the book also contains an interview with Højrup, with two of the editors, Jespersen and Sandberg, as interviewers. "What is good ethnology?", "Do you as an ethnologist have a political project?" and "In what way is the state- and life-mode theory ethnology?" are just a few of many highly relevant questions that Højrup is confronted with in this chapter.

In the introduction it is established that the state- and life-mode theory, in contrast to more traditional ethnology, has its primary purpose in developing theoretical concepts. Sandberg, Jespersen and Melchior distinguish in this regard between two different epistemological and philosophical positions: those of Thomas Kuhn (1922–1996) and Gaston Bachelard (1884–1962). The state- and life-mode theory, which aims at developing a structure of concepts that relate to each other in a logical and formal way (p. 11), is an expression of the epistemological position of Bachelard. Accordingly scientific concepts have a kind of autonomy in relation to their social context. They are in themselves the content of science, and as such they can be circumscribed and differentiated from the social conditions of the scientific practice (pp. 26–27).

The epistemological position of Kuhn tells us the very opposite: Scientific concepts are not autonomous in relation to their contextual surroundings; they should rather be seen as a mixture of social conditions, power relations and scientific knowledge (p. 27). The three authors identify Swedish cultural analysis as a representative of Kuhn's epistemological tradition. Two aspects that pinpoint this proposition are the scientific ideal of eclecticism that usually runs through a study based on cultural analysis, as well as the mandatory attention of this very same approach to the role of the researcher in the production of scientific facts (p. 28).

What sorts of autonomous or general concepts have then been developed within state- and life-mode theory? In the introduction the concept of "culture" is understood as one of the general concepts of the theory (p. 13). As such, culture is equipped with four different dimensions: the individual subject, the life-modes, the state subjects and the state system. These

four dimensions relate to each other structurally and dialectically. They form the necessary conditions for each other, at the same time as they can also be separated from each other as individual perspectives on cultural forms (p. 13).

Recognition (*anerkendelse*) is another foundational concept in the state- and life-mode theory. The concept in question is absolutely crucial for how the four dimensions of culture can be understood in different contexts. The global state system, for example, is determined by how the multitude of the individual state Subjects relate to each other by mutual recognition (p. 14). And within each state formation, another level in the theory, there are additional relations of recognition, now between a sovereign state Subject (spelled with an initial capital, since the state has its sovereignty) and its different groups of dependent citizens or subjects (with a lowercase initial, because of the dependence of this subjectivity) (p. 21). Even though this latter relation of recognition is stamped with asymmetry, the state- and life-mode theoreticians do not want to categorize state forms as an example of a bureaucratic power apparatus that enforces rules and regulations on its citizens. The two subjectivities, the Subject and the subject, may have asymmetrical ingredients in their interrelated formations, but still they rely on some sort of mutual dependence (p. 17).

This paradoxical, uneven but mutual, relationship between the state Subject and the individual subjects is explained as a result of *interpellation*. This latter word was not part of the theory in the beginning of the conceptual development. However, interpellation has successively replaced the concept of production mode, which was very central in the early versions of the theory (p. 24). The concept of interpellation is borrowed from the French philosopher Louis Althusser (1918–1990), and it describes the ideological and subjective formation of individuals and groups when these are, in the words of the authors of the introduction, "called upon or called for" (*påkaldes*). The individual subjects are in this way always under the influence of state Subjectivity, but "see themselves as self-conscious subjects with their own will, with their own responsibility and as a recognized part of a people or of a greater societal whole within a state" (p. 16).

This very brief survey of the conceptual foundations of the state- and life-mode theory would not be complete if I did not mention the concepts of structural dialectics (*strukturel dialektik*) and formation process (*dannelseprocess*) too. These are concepts that not only visualize the origin of the theory, in Hegelian thinking, but also illustrate how individual subjects are formed and constructed through processes of dialectical oppositions, through challenges, negations, resistance etc. (pp. 11, 21).

In the third part of the book we return to many of the concepts from the introduction, and learn even more about their meaning, background, context and potential. However, one concept that is not discussed in the introduction, but which now receives attention, is the concept of people (*folk*). In the interview chapter Højrup concludes that ethnology is scientific knowledge about people (*en logi om folk*) rather than about the human being (*mennesket*), which is the focus of anthropology. Having identified this as a starting-point, Danish ethnology gets an important task in opposing such types of essentialism that the xenophobic *Danskt Folkeparti* ("Danish People's Party") represents, and in arguing for a relational understanding of what a people is and how a community is shaped – an understanding that has as its point of departure that a people is always formed in a dialectical relationship with other peoples (p. 268).

I feel convinced that we ethnologists should always oppose all kinds of both political and cultural essentialisms. But I do not believe that this can be achieved through the identification of different peoples and, indirectly, the boundaries between these peoples. We should avoid discussing communities as some bounded entities of this or that people, and instead stress the porous and variable nature of the boundaries in question and, as a consequence, the negotiated and situational character of all societies with their both obvious and non-obvious members (and non-members). An exhortation to study people should therefore have a dimensional focus ("people-ish-ness" or *folkelighed*) rather than a substantial one (a people or *et folk*).

The anthology *Verden over* is interesting not only because of what it contains, but also as a symptom of our time (a Kuhnian point of view of course). Academia today is under pressure in a multitude of ways. Scientific departments are working under increasingly stressful and economically strained conditions. Academics are expected to be useful in society at large and, simultaneously, to maintain a high level of quality as regards their scientific and educational efforts – two aspirations that are not always so easy to integrate. In this regard, the book

in my hand has quite a competitive attitude. Besides being a theoretical introduction, its very purpose, it seems, is to be nothing less than a manifestation of the scientific strength of the Danish state- and life-mode ethnology in a more general context. Ethnologists in the other Nordic countries are in a way called upon (interpellated). The message is: This is nothing less than a very powerful contender regarding our common urge to understand the mechanisms of culture and society. Also social scientists in general should beware when this school of cultural theory distributes some very determined interpretations of the nature of subjectivity and community.

Time will show which of all the cultural theories and analytical stances that exist today – state- and life-mode theory, cultural analysis etc. – will eventually be the most positive ones for the promotion of Nordic ethnology. In the meantime, everybody is working hard.

Markus Idvall, Lund

Canon and Heritage

Kanon och Kulturarv. Historia och samtid i Danmark och Sverige. Lars-Eric Jönsson, Anna Wallette & Jes Wienberg (eds.). Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm 2008. 328 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 978-91-7061-050-9.

■ Is the emergence of the canon mentality in Denmark since 2004 a survival strategy for a kind of Danish identity? Is the gathering of heritage management, archives, and museums under the umbrella term "the cultural heritage sector" an attempt by the Swedish state to assemble forces and resources for easier management? Is there anything new under the sun in these efforts? Does it have anything to do with the EU and globalization?

These are the kind of questions asked by the articles in this edited volume. The articles are mostly papers presented at two conferences arranged by the Centre for the Study of Denmark at Lund University, supplemented with a couple of articles written as a reaction to the papers.

The idea of producing a standard account of what happened in the past – deciding what is the most essential history – is far from new. In a comparative description of three different memorial parks in Denmark, among many other things Inge Adriansen draws our attention to a "canon" in Jægerspris, now forgotten by most people. Here the royal family in the 1770s had memorial stones of an exquisite design erected with a deliberate relative placing, in a desire to create a monument to the royal dynasty as a family with the natural right to rule a kingdom comprising Danish, Norwegian, and German territories. This attempt at a "canon" is obviously out of step with later times, and it lost its function with the fall of absolutism and the unitary state. Yet this insight is important because it makes us aware of the transience of canons. What is essential today may not be tomorrow; it might even be counterproductive. Cultural heritage is a perishable commodity that becomes political, most obviously in the canon mentality.

Inge Adriansen, Anna Storm, Håkan Karlsson, Carl-Johan Svensson, Stefan Bohman, and Katarina Saltzman give numerous examples of the wide range of ways in which the transmission of something from a bygone reality has been used to achieve canon-like purposes.

Bohman shows in his article how several different levels can be clearly distinguished when music is to become canonical. Power stands opposed to counterculture, just as commercialism is opposed to elite culture, without these ambivalences otherwise needing to correspond. Bohman thus adds something essentially new to the canon discussion, namely, that the actual canonization – formalized as in Denmark (and e.g. in Britain and the Netherlands) or more informally as in many other countries – lends a symbolic value to the selected work or event, a value that one then has to live with. At any rate, one has to live with this symbolic value as long as the "power" that needs this value has any strength or exists at all.

Keld Grinder-Hansen, Carsten Tage Nielsen, and Per Eliasson give examples of the critique of the canon mentality in connection with the school subject of history. Grinder-Hansen is evidently a brave man, who dares here to go against the current. He took part in the work of compiling the history canon, and he explains (and defends) it chiefly by stating that the sitting government wants to strengthen the possibility of checking whether learning goals have been attained. This calls for a relatively fixed set of required knowledge. Nielsen argues that this fixity is achieved at the expense of the development of critical thinking in the pupils. Eliasson tries to show how the idea of cultural heritage in Swedish schools in many ways has the same effect as the concept of distinctive national characters that used to prevail in former times.

Here Eliasson touches on the problem that is the last general theme of the volume, where Lars Elenius, Niels Kayser Nielsen, Lars-Eric Jönsson, Helen Avery, and Carsten Paludan-Müller use their articles to try to put the canon mentality into a broader ideological and political historical framework.

The most thought-provoking articles, I find, are in this last part of the book. Jönsson traces important threads back and forth in time in the use of the term "cultural heritage" and its derivatives, based on the official goals of cultural policy formulated for Sweden since 1974. A crucial element of Swedish cultural policy since then has been a fairly explicit idea that everyone should be included, that cultural experiences are for everybody, and this has recently been implicit in contexts connected with the emphasis on work for diversity in cultural life. Everyone's cultural life and hence also cultural heritage has a right to exist solely on the assumption that if everyone is to be reached, then it is essential that everyone's culture and heritage should be accessible.

Jönsson shows how this instrumental approach to the idea of the cultural heritage has made it possible for the Swedish government and the Council of Europe to set up politically formulated goals concerning respect for all conceivable minorities, and involving marginalized groups in the development of society and the combating of intolerance.

The other article that deserves to be highlighted here is Paludan-Müller's text, where he tries to show the outlines of the economic and cultural eras in Europe that have called for canons specific to their own times. Paludan-Müller tries to demonstrate how the situation of European nation states today lies in the "natural" prolongation of earlier eras – otherwise defined in a way that is rather faithful to the periodization that Eric Hobsbawn, above all, introduced in his works.

When nation states like Denmark today produce cultural canons, it is as a defensive action. On the one hand there is the reaction to the way globalization has drawn the nation states into larger associations or supranational organizations with features resembling a nation state – for example the European Union – and on the other hand it is a reaction to another major ingredient of globalization, namely the multicultural society.

Paludan-Müller continues his reasoning by writing: "The most important thing of all is to consider that the distinctive thing about our European societies – what really makes them special – is the outlook on people as individuals and as citizens with rights and obligations in a free, democratic society. That is a product of a highly specific historical and cultural process in our little part of the world. That is what gets lost far too easily when we concentrate on holding up the national identity constructions as the most important. The challenge that follows from this must be to admit that our view of society and human rights is based on some very specific European circumstances, and that these are not automatically obvious to everyone else and cannot immediately function in other cultural contexts."

Without saying it outright, this author seems to be calling for a European canon! What makes this call especially interesting is that it does not really seem to be very far from the argumentation in the article by Jönsson. The instrumental use of heritage narratives by the Council of Europe to stimulate tolerance, human rights, respect for minority rights, and so on – which Jönsson shows to have been the guideline for the ideological development of Swedish cultural policy in the last forty years – is very close to what Paludan-Müller calls for from his Danish standpoint.

This is a highly readable collection of articles, which will no doubt serve as a frozen image of our relatively new understanding of how the subject of history, like the sister disciplines of ethnology, archaeology, history of ideas, art history, and so on, is well on the way to regaining its political position as essential, as a consequence of its (re)instrumentalization.

Henrik Zipsane, Östersund

Diary of a Danish Count

Jens Henrik Koudal, Greve Rabens dagbog – Hverdagsliv i et adeligt miljø i 1700-tallet. Syddansk Universitetsforlag, Odense 2007. 318 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-7674-173-0.

■ In Scandinavia it is relatively uncommon to find diaries from the early modern era recording the major part of an individual noble's life. it is therefore gratifying that Jens Henrik Koudal has now written, in dramatized form, a biographical narrative of the Danish Count Otto Ludvig Raben (1730–91), based on a diary kept in French (translated into Danish by Koudal), in which Raben wrote entries from 1749 until shortly before his death.

"Livsjournalen", as Raben himself called the diary, was completely unknown until 1990, when it was

found by a happy chance in the castle of Ålholm. It turned out to contain 42 years of events in Raben's life and accounts of what happened in his time. Raben's parents belonged to the inner circle around Frederik V, which meant that Raben was brought up in an aristocratic environment from an early age. He became a courtier and master of ceremonies at court; he went to Paris and hunted deer with Louis XV. Despite these elements of adventure, Raben did not belong to the absolute elite of celebrities in Denmark, and it is this circumstance that makes him so interesting. Raben's life took place more in the wings than at the centre of power, and his everyday life was mostly occupied with his role as estate owner. One could say that the snapshots and the parts of his life that he chose to record in his diary represent the reality for the majority of the nobility and aristocracy that did not belong to the top stratum in politics, the court, or the military. It is at this intersection that we should understand Raben. He was rather typical of his time, drab and mundane rather than unique. In Koudal's eyes it is this possibility of highlighting a relatively unknown but representative noble at the micro-level that justifies the book. It is not a classical biography. Koudal primarily wants to convey the self-portrait that Raben paints of his times and of himself in the diary. It is a great advantage that Koudal is profuse and skilful in his use of the empirical material; the quotations flow, and at times it feels as if one is reading directly from the diary.

At the age of 27 Raben got married and settled permanently in Ålholm castle. From this time on, his life centred around estate management, the family, and social life. In the winter months, part of the time was spent in Copenhagen. Raben's diary testifies to an everyday life consisting of the birth of children, of arranging peasant weddings, of party games, servants, and music. Count Raben was very musical, with the flute as one of his main interests.

From the time that Raben began to keep his diary, he made on average seven to fourteen entries per month. Diaries up to the start of the 19th century are usually divided by researchers into four types: (1) records of accounts, (2) religiously coloured confessions, (3) travel journals, (4) mixed diaries, which functioned as a kind of aide-memoire. Koudal places Raben's diary in the fourth of these categories. Raben listed events great and small that he found interesting or worth recalling. When Raben later in life instructed his son Frederik Christian in keeping a diary, he urged the young man to note down unusual events, oddities, meetings with people, and what was said about nature and the state. All this can be of use and pleasure later in life, according to Raben. In his instructions for his son's diary writing Raben reveals the reasons why he himself kept a diary. For him it was mainly a matter of something to help him remember, and as I read Koudal's book, I see no red thread running thorough Raben's diary writing, other than that he describes everyday life, both large and small. One thing that you might think should have been included, an event that spread terror through the royal houses of Europe, was the French Revolution, but Raben does not say a word about this in his diary. All in all, politically charged matters are scarcely mentioned. This may of course be due to Raben's knowledge that the diary could fall into the wrong hands, and if he wrote impertinently about political events in Denmark in the age of absolutism, it could be used against him. One can thus say that Raben, by all appearances, censured himself; at the same time, he stands out as a royalist and a loyal supporter of royal absolutism.

What picture do we get of Raben as a person in the diary? Koudal tries to get in under the skin of the count, but never really comes close to him. Although Raben records some embarrassing events, such as his infidelity to his own wife, it is very rarely that he discloses what he feels and thinks in various contexts. This was of course a deliberate stance on Raben's part. When the quill travelled over the sheets of the diary, all manner of events were written down, but Raben's personal opinions about things can only be detected between the lines. For the most part he ignores the conflicts and the difficult issues.

Raben's basic values naturally arose from the class into which he was born. He valued his kin very highly; a stain on any family member was also a collective dent in the armour of the Raben line. 18th-century Denmark, as we see it through Raben's eyes, was moreover a hierarchical world with enormous gulfs between the nobility and other groups in society. Raben was also inspired by the agrarian improvements of the Enlightenment period and introduced extensive reforms in his own domains. As a landed magnate he cultivated contacts with the bourgeoisie in the towns of Nysted and Nykøbing Falster, but he did not assimilate many of the bourgeois values; if anything, he opposed them. In later life he also seems to have been influenced by patriotic and philanthropic ideas.

What makes Raben's 604-page "life story" strikingly interesting is the aspects of cultural history. We obtain a relatively good picture of his aristocratic network, of life at court, the sometimes boring life in the country as a landowner, the games people played for company, the illnesses, the servants, the cuisine, the hunting, the significance of religion, how the children grew up and made their way out into the big wide world. Raben, of course, kept his diary in chronological form, and Koudal uses this model in the book, but he has also arranged some sections thematically, an approach that I like for its clarity. It is easy to choose if one wants to read about, say, servants or some other topic. Although is it not entirely clear, Raben's diary also seems to contain a lot of information about the weather, which says a great deal about its potential for people doing research on climate and the environment.

All in all, Koudal has written an interesting account of a life-world, as seen through aristocratic eyes but also describing the cultural history of many other parts of society. There are many pearls for those who wish to find out more about the world of the manor house and life in miniature. The small format, the snapshots of what people did, of how people thought, dressed, or dined, and the people they met – these are the best parts of the book. Occasionally one feels as if one has travelled back in time. Koudal guides the reader with a sure hand into the story of Count Otto Ludvig Raben's life in 18th-century Denmark.

Peter Ullgren, Lund

Materiality and Education

Materialitet og Dannelse. En studiebog. Minna Kragelund & Lene Otto (eds.). Danmarks Pædagogiske Universitets Forlag, Copenhagen 2006. 197 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-7684-022-0.

■ The book is a result of the work of the Interdisciplinary Network for Studies of Material Culture, with participants from the universities of Copenhagen and Lund, along with the University of Southern Denmark and the Danish School of Education at Aarhus University. The aim of the project is to establish a shared profile for research and education in the study of materiality, education, and learning. One result is this study book, which is a collection of articles written by eleven authors.

The introduction to the research field is by Lene Otto. It provides a clear survey of the basic terms and the perspectives on which the book is based. The principle by which materiality is perceived determines the theoretical approaches and focus of the book. She declares that the concept of materiality includes both physicality and practice. Physicality concerns aspects such as artefacts, handicraft, design, and technology, body, and space. The interest in practice, naturally, comprises objects as preconditions for and elements of actions. As part of the aim of the project, however, it is natural that the practice perspective emphasizes how people acquire the competence and skills in a material and sensory context. It is underlined that education, personality development, and learning should not only be understood as mental processes, but also presuppose practice involving the body and the use of objects and implements.

The articles move on several levels. Some are concrete and empirical, dealing especially with objects and practice, while others are closer to cultural analysis and discuss processes such as identity formation, memory, and cognition related to materiality.

Summing up, the approaches in the articles show a valuable interdisciplinary tendency. Considered as a whole, the book combines the artefact research of traditional cultural history, more modern culture-analytical approaches, and psychological and educational perspectives.

One ambition of the project is to help to bridge the gap between material and non-material culture, between thought and action, and between subject and object. Material culture is perceived not just as a system of signs. What people do with objects is regarded as an active part of the creation of culture.

In his article "When Things Become Tools" Jonas Frykman carries on the theoretical observations from the introduction to the book. Inspired by phenomenological philosophy, he discusses the possibilities of getting beyond things as text and instead tries to approach the concrete world and the users' own experience, people's everyday lives and practice with objects. The articles following this illuminate the theoretical themes nicely. It is not possible to review them individually but they are all relevant to the general aim of the book.

This is a highly inspiring book in several ways, and a contribution to the revitalization of the study of material culture, which is necessary since this research field has not been in focus in ethnology in

recent years. A truly positive feature is the desire to synthesize and integrate, in that we are presented with many approaches to the study of material culture, both traditional and more modern, and from different academic disciplines. Not the least valuable aspect is the attempt to break down traditional boundaries in the study of material culture by regarding objects as a complex cultural whole. Considering that this is a collection of articles with many different writers, the book shows a unity and a firm theoretical grasp, which means that it should be read in its entirety.
Ragnar Pedersen, Hamar

The Bicentennial of the Danish National Museum

Nationalmuseets arbejdsmark 1807–2007. Carsten U. Larsen & Bente Gammeltoft (eds.). Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen 2007. 400 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-7602-079-8.

■ To mark the bicentennial of the National Museum in Denmark, the institution's annual report, *Nationalmuseets arbejdsmark,* has been published in a much more lavish format than usual. The normally modest annual has appeared since 1928 and counts among its readership Her Majesty the Queen, who describes in the preface how, as a young girl, she made her first acquaintance with a volume in the series and was fascinated by the descriptions of archaeological finds and voyages of exploration in foreign parts.

The National Museum is the crown jewel among Denmark's museums, the treasure chamber and research centre for all the disciplines nourished by the source of knowledge that the museum's collections constitute. Its growth, development, and actors are presented in articles by prominent scholars, active museum workers, and authors, reflecting the museum's broad field of operation from every conceivable angle. There are articles about educational work, exhibitions, archaeological finds, costumes and textiles, church architecture, expeditions to Central Asia, and much besides.

We follow the museum from its foundation in 1807, when the Royal Commission for the Preservation of Antiquities was established. Management of the cultural heritage thus became a state concern in Denmark. Among the pioneering figures is the librarian and literary historian Rasmus Nyerup, said to be the first in a series of important men who argued in speech and writing that the heritage left by previous generations should be better preserved.

But the book is much more than the history of an institution. It also reflects the kingdom of Denmark during a dynamic and dramatic period in its history. The ethnographic collections, for example, are evidence of Denmark as a colonial power, with possessions in Africa, India, and the West Indies.

It is a highly vigorous 200-year-old that is portrayed in this beautiful and generously illustrated Festschrift.
Göran Hedlund, Lund

Masculinity and Modernity

Män i Norden. Manlighet och modernitet 1840–1940. Jørgen Lorentzen & Claes Ekenstam (eds.). Gidlunds, Hedemora 2006. 284 pp. Ill. ISBN 91-7844-376-8.

■ A new collection of articles about men and masculinities; how exciting, I thought – not. Unfortunately. Edited volumes, as many realize, are a problematic genre. Far too often they are forced attempts to tie a bunch of disparate articles together. It is an easy way to get published, I have heard people say more than once. And the subject of men and masculinities (in Scandinavia) has already been covered by a whole range of edited volumes. Do we really need one more? As the reader must realize, it was with mixed feelings and not a little scepticism that I accepted the commission to review this book.

The overall aim of the volume, as we read on the blurb, is "to understand the processes that have shaped the masculinities of the Nordic countries at the transition to modernity". The authors' point of departure is that "modernity entailed fundamental changes in the understanding of masculinity, and this is closely connected to basic changes in society such as industrialization, urbanization, and rationalization. New interpretations of masculinity were created, at the same time as older ideals were remoulded. New ideals of masculinity contributed to shaping the Nordic countries, and therefore to understand 'the Nordic' requires an understanding of masculinity." These formulations did nothing to increase my enthusiasm. Is it really wise to ascribe such significance to masculinity? My first thought was that the authors had looked too closely at Michael Kimmel's book (which is far from being the only one on the same theme) *Manhood in America* and now wanted to do the same

thing in a Nordic context, that is, to equate the histories of masculinity and society. When I moreover read in the introduction that the ambition of the book is to present a new model for understanding masculinity, and for this purpose to launch a new concept for understanding Nordic men – unmanliness – as an alternative to R. W. Connell's term hegemonic masculinity, then I must admit that my resistance to the book increased even more. What is this? Do the authors seriously want to use gender studies to measure their academic potency in a (masculine) struggle over who has the best theory?

The introduction did not contradict the first impression I had been given. But the picture is nuanced somewhat here, because there is a solid discussion in which the authors skilfully position themselves in relation to the now well-established field of men's studies. Here we get a balanced discussion about the merits and problems of men's studies, both international and Nordic. The focus in the discussion is on the arguments for the need for a new theory that better suits the masculinities that have emerged in the Nordic countries. With reference to the slogan "the personal is political", and after a discussion of the importance of considering the view of character in order to understand masculinity, the concept of Unmanliness is launched. The authors think that this is a good method for linking personal experiences with structural dimensions. And I must agree that this sounds like a laudable aim. Yet I still do not feel really convinced, because the discussion, in principle, concerns men and masculinity exclusively. Gender arises in relations, not solely in relations between men, but always within the framework of a context where both men and women act. This fact is undercommunicated in the introduction. But this is perhaps an unjustified criticism, I think to myself. This is after all a book about men and masculinities. And the express aim is to launch a new theory of masculinity. I therefore decided to relax my critical stance until I had examined the application of the theory.

The book is divided into eight chapters. The three chapters following the introduction deal with three of the most prominent male groups in the studied period: the bourgeois man, the farmer, and the worker. The remaining four chapters investigate how forms of masculinity and unmanliness have related to fatherhood, sexuality, violence, and equality. All the chapters are about masculinity at the breakthrough of modernity in Scandinavia, during the years 1840 to 1940.

The first man "up for shaving" is the Bourgeois. This masculinity is summed up with the aid of its very foundation: character. The concept of character, according to the author, is so fuzzy that throughout this period, although the meaning varied over time, it functioned as the formula that incorporated good bourgeois men in "the fraternity of Real Men". And all through the chapter it is this fraternity that is scrutinized. For just as bourgeois men did around the last turn of the century, this chapter excludes women. My initial scepticism therefore bubbles up again, and when I read the following lines, "many bourgeois men really viewed the home as a central place for the realization of their masculinity", which breathe hope that a discussion of the relationship between the sexes will follow, I immediately understand that this opportunity is ignored, and I am convinced that my review will be brutally critical. For I firmly maintain that the world does not deserve more studies of men alone. If we are to achieve equality, *relations* between the sexes must be considered. Men's studies was the subject on which I took my doctorate, and my ambition was initially to draw attention to the fact that even men are gender beings. It was naturally important at that time to focus on men. But once that point had been made, the important work then had to take over. And to do this, in my view, one must investigate how to work for equality and one must always concentrate on relations between men and women. So if this volume had ended after the discussion of the bourgeoisie, then I would have been merciless. I have worked with other things since writing my dissertation and have not kept myself well updated in the field of men's studies. I am therefore glad that I did not stop reading, even though I thought that my worst fears would come true. For the volume as a whole, I must admit, can be regarded as both a restoration of the edited volume as a genre and as an indication that men's studies can be just as important as the promotion of equality.

It is not at all true that the book consists of disparate articles bunched together without a common theme; on the contrary. This is a well-wrought and coherent discussion, a whole. One could possibly object to the mixture of languages (three of the articles are in Norwegian), but on second thoughts I would claim that this is a strength, a part of the work of increasing the critical mass in Nordic academia. In a time when English is taking over, it is important to defend our Nordic languages, and it is praiseworthy that this volume shows how natural it is to mix texts

in Swedish and Norwegian. The fact that the references do not follow a consistent format is more of a marginal note, I mention it here because the volume is otherwise very well edited.

The way the book promotes equality, challenging the male hegemony, is a theme that slowly creeps up on the reader, and this is something I have tried to reflect in this review, by letting it follow my thoughts about the book as they came to me while reading it. The article after the one about the bourgeoisie deals with farmers, and in this chapter it is not at all a gender-segregated environment that is analysed; on the contrary, the article demonstrates the role played by women in the creation of this masculinity. A picture emerges of a masculinity shaped in relation both to other masculinities and to women. Age, class, and working tasks are used here as analytical approaches to show that masculinity is not something in itself but is always created in relations. The same thing applies to the next chapter, which is devoted to working-class men, described with the aid of an interesting critical reading of earlier research. The gender aspect that is rarely considered in this research is used very well here. Having come this far in the reading of the book, my attitude to the content had changed significantly, in a positive direction. My only residual doubt was that this impression could possibly be due to the fact that the authors of these two chapters were women, which if so (terrible thought) could indicate that it takes a female gaze to see masculinity as something contextually created. But this last remaining doubt immediately gave way to enthusiasm when I read the next chapter, about fathers. It is written by a man. Here, via a study of literary descriptions of men as fathers, we are presented with a completely different picture from the normal one. The article describes a masculine presence in the home. Masculinity is even portrayed as something wholly dependent on the family, and this also applies to the function of men in public life, which according to the author cannot be separated from the family. Perhaps the most astounding and – from the equality point of view – most pleasing part of this volume is the discussion of home births in this chapter. Here the author highlights important material which shows that men in the Nordic countries during the period covered by the book were often present at births. I had no idea, that it was such a widespread phenomenon that Scandinavian women gave birth while sitting on the husband's thighs! This may be because the history of paternity in the time between 1840 and 1940, according to the author, until now has been "totally under-studied". And this naturally makes the volume even more readable.

The remaining three chapters, about sexuality, violence, and equality, further confirm the positive impression. The volume as a whole is thus well wrought, interesting, and above all important.

Although I am sceptical about all forms of academic battles as to who has the best analytical apparatus, and therefore am still critical about the emphasis placed in the introduction on arguing against other ways of doing research on men and masculinity in general and against Connell's hegemonic masculinity in particular, I must give the authors praise for their consistent use of the concept of Unmanliness. For the important thing is always how one *uses* one's scholarly instruments, and I hope it is clear from my review that the authors of this book do this in a highly commendable way. The volume is therefore essential reading, besides which it points the way forward. The authors show that men's studies have important insights to communicate and they also confirm that they have succeeded in taking the subject one step further. I look forward to following the continued development, and I also feel that there is a place for me in the field of men's studies. Super!

Eddy Nehls, Vänersborg/Lerum

Clothing Customs in a Norwegian Community

Aagot Noss, Jølster og den gamle klesskikken. Novus forlag, Oslo 2005. 205 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-7099-420-5.

■ This study is the result of a long process, beginning in 1963 when Aagot Noss began to document folk costumes, especially women costumes, in the Norwegian district of Jølster. She was not only interested in the actual objects, but rather in the way they were handled. How do people wear them? What do they do when they dress in their costumes in order to go to church or to get married?

The study starts with a very brief description of the small community of Jølster, on the north-west coast of Norway. Dress customs in this region are said to be very characteristic and traditional. The form of the bridal silver, for example, is rooted in the Middle Ages. The aim of the study is to survey women's folk dress and its tradition from the middle

of the 17th century into the 20th century.

Aagot Noss has been interested in the topic for a long time. Her first fieldwork in the region took place in 1963, followed by visits in 1967, 1973 and finally in 2004. She tells us something about the methods, the fieldwork containing interviews and observations, the filming and the searches in archives for visual and textual tracks. Three different films are important sources when it comes to following and describing the dressing procedure, when transforming a young girl into a beautifully decorated bride and an elderly woman into a proper church visitor. Other sources for the study are museum collections, a registration of the folk dresses of Jølster, paintings and photographs and estate inventories from 1685–1791 (with some gaps). These sources are more important since almost nothing has been written on the subject.

Most of the book concerns of presentations of different parts of the costumes, starting with pieces of silver jewellery belonging to the dresses. Each part is named and described as regards technique and material, and then represented by photographs. The description of the different parts contains a comparison with the information from the estate inventories. When it comes to the bridal silver it is also possible to follow the owners from past to present. It is easy for the reader to follow, and the many photographs are very instructive.

When describing headgear, skirts, vests, shirts etc., Noss also discusses how to wear each garment. This is an important contribution to the most common way of describing folk costumes, starting from each part or piece that is supposed to make up the whole. Museum objects or registrations promote the view of material objects as individual items separate from each other. The systems of describing them, taking care of them and creating knowledge from them do not imply a relational interpretation, where one object links to others. The films used here as sources help the author to catch sight of these relations between the different pieces of the women's folk dress. How are they supposed to be worn, and in what order should they be put on?

The procedure of dressing up a woman that is shown in the films demonstrates that some of the pieces cannot be put on by the woman herself without help from others. The most important field for assistance is the dressing of a bride, as a task for specialists. By using all the visual sources presented at the beginning, the author is able to discuss and describe details in both objects and processes. Some of these processes are shown in sequences of detailed photographs, for example how to put on the bridal silver, pp. 37–44. The hair is put together in a pony tail, except for the fringe and some curls on either side of the face. The head is covered by a red piece of cloth that is tied together at the back of the neck. Pins are placed at regular intervals on the piece of cloth. The fringe and the curls are wrapped around the pins to lock the piece. A lace is put around the forehead, and after some arrangements the silver is put in place. The result is astonishing, a silver belt wrapped around the waist, breast silver with a chain, silver buttons, and silver on the head etc. A similar description of how to put on church headgear is shown on pp. 67–71. This arrangement is not as complicated to do, but nevertheless interesting to follow in its exact process. By showing the dressing of a young bride's head and the dressing of an elderly woman's head for church, the author lets us come behind the image of a dressed-up woman for important occasions in life and in certain seasons. We can actually come close to the different details in the process, both visible and invisible to the viewer of the result, starting with arranging the hair and ending by putting on the visible headgear. In both cases the procedure and the result are important and significant for the people involved.

In the last chapters of the book, Noss discusses classical ethnological issues such as the transformation from wool to fabric during a year's work, the practice of wearing folk costumes or not when going to church, and finally in different feasts of the life cycle. The starting point of these discussions is the folk costumes and how they are made and used on different occasions.

The most important contribution to the folk costume field is when Aagot Noss presents the processes of dressing and the relations between the different parts of the dresses. Another contribution is the actual documentation of the different objects in a folk costume. Through this study we can experience the relations between the details, and how to wear them together. That kind of information is too often lost when it comes to folk costumes collected in a museum context. The questions of cultural importance and significance have been of less interest in this context.

In 2008 *Stakkeklede i Setesdal. Byklaren og valldølen, Setesdal and its traditional folk dress,* by Aagot Noss appeared.

Anneli Palmsköld, Halmstad

Ethnopolitics and the Roma from a Historical Perspective

Panu Pulma, Suljetut ovet. Pohjoismaiden romanipolitiikka 1500-luvulta EU-aikaan. (Closed doors. The Nordic Romani policy from the 16th century to the EU era.) Historiallisia tutkimuksia 230. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2006. 237 pp. ISBN 951-746-785-0.

■ What does the book title "closed doors" mean in terms of the Scandinavian and Finnish Romani policies? Social historian Panu Pulma has taken this expression as the focus of his study from a Finnish Romani song of the 1970s. As of the 1950s the ethnic awareness of Roma started to take shape internationally, and in the 1960s their status on the policy level became recognized. Thus this notion refers to a rather late period of "Romani policies". Intriguingly it symbolizes a distinct threshold but it also seems to imply the complex interactions between vagrant groups and majority peoples in the Nordic countries since the 16th century. Has there been a door that is locked, and how is it locked? Has there been anyone trying to find it? Through the centuries the officials in Scandinavia have had difficulties (and also less interest) in distinguishing the Roma from other vagrant groups. These designations of Roma form a central theme in this book. The research is based on extensive archival work (state, city, church), and that was complemented with interviews. At the same time as Pulma makes a considerable effort in describing the diverse background of the Nordic Roma, he also seeks to follow the development of minority policies. This fusion of ethnicity and politics unavoidably supports the nationalist-ethnic narrative of the Romani history, even if, apparently, this book seeks to avoid strong conclusions. In principle, the research material used here has the same bias as so many other publications about the Roma, that is, they are produced by the majority and thus reproduce the majority population's views of the Roma. However, in this case it is exactly what Pulma is after. He seems to recognize the problem and seeks to avoid it by emphasizing the socio-historical context. He also does not solely rely on materials produced by the "policy-makers", but takes, also ethnologically interesting citations from other contemporary sources, for example from 18th century "Gypsy research" (Kristfried Ganander citations take up to seven pages) and from a 19th century poem (Paavo Korhonen). Pulma shows that new understandings are available through policy research but that it also requires transnational comparisons, even before the EU era.

The concept "ethnopolitics" is central for the whole book. Pulma refers to Fredrik Barth, but does not include him in the bibliography, even though he recognizes Barth's role in defining this concept. Pulma uses it as a tool for describing and categorizing the state and local level "Romani policies". In this use the "ethnopolitical" is located on the macro level and to some extent also in the intermediating organizations of the society. Pulma recognizes his unconventional use of the "Barthian" concept. He strives to stretch the concept into the past as he uses "the verbal and written contributions of the local level actors to catch the interaction and contrasts related to the interface between the Roma and the mainstream population" (p. 216). Particularly interesting is that he uses this concept in historical analysis even if this seems to add an ethnic label where it has usually not been attached. However, Pulma states that he does not describe the relations within the group, but focuses strictly on what has happened on the policy level practices. Indeed, these practices are here nicely described and they show, not just how *lost* the officials have been with *different* groups, but also how bureaucratic practices easily wreck even "good" intentions. But of course, in many cases this has been only fortunate for the Roma.

Pulma thus discovers the ideas, interests and ideologies behind "Romani policies". The longer duration developments as well as the breaks and changes in these policies are described. He looks after the "ethnic" Roma of the past centuries (17th–19th centuries) even when he recognizes it "quite difficult" to distinguish them. Still in the 19th century the Roma were considered vagrants and were treated usually according to the vagrancy acts. In order to reach integration disciplinary actions were preferred but sporadically also other voices were raised, mainly in support of (Christian) education. The Roma were considered as a "tribe", but ethnicity had not yet importance to the policies. The contemporaries simply associated the vagrant lifestyle with immorality and criminality. Despite their moving way of life, Pulma sees that the Roma were also integrated with the social structures of the past centuries (various professions, military enlisting etc.). For example, in the 19th century Sweden the Roma were categorized using the "Tattare" designation, which shows that they had assimilated into other vagrants of the lower class. Also

in Norway all the travelling poor people, the "Fants", were "erroneously" considered as Roma.

In the 19th century "minority policies" became national issues due to the migration and now the focus was put on differentiating between "own" and "foreign" travellers. In the 19th century, when the new Roma came to Scandinavia from Central and Eastern Europe, in Finland the Roma remained the only vagrant group (family households). However, by the end of the 19th century, as Pulma sees it, a "European understanding of Romani ethnicity" became also part of the Finnish consciousness. In practice, the "Romani policy" remained divided: the clergy took care of civilizing the Roma, and the subordinates of the governor took care of preventing vagrancy. Disputes arose especially as the peasants saw that "Gypsy vagrancy" was overlooked in legislation. However, from the legal perspective of the time it was already important that all citizens were treated equal. In the whole Scandinavia the Romani immigration was restricted, and also some eugenics was applied as the Second World War became closer. From Denmark the Roma were deported by 1912 (they came back only in the 1960s). At the same time in Finland there seems to have not been time for the Romani question at all.

The Second World War marks a start for significant changes in the Romani policies. The Roma had suffered during the war: some took part in the fighting, the Norwegian Roma were persecuted by the Nazis, and after the war two thirds of the Finnish Roma became evacuees (from Karelia). It finally ignited the Romani question also in Finland. Their problems accumulated as they had to settle visibly in the urban areas. Pulma sees that Norway was ahead in the policy changes as they relied on their experiences of using Sámi language in education: the Romani language became seen as the primary teaching language for the Romani children. However in Sweden, ethnologist Carl-Herman Tillhagen's "ethnological assimilation thinking" still affected the policies. In Sweden the Roma became soon dependant on social benefits as they were settled in accordance with the welfare society ideology. According to this idea of "natural assimilation", integration was reached simply by improving the social and economical conditions of Roma. Pulma sees that Swedish minority policy got rid of its assimilative aims only in 1975.

In the 1960s the Romani politics became an issue of political importance in the Nordic countries due to the Nordic Passport exemption (1954). It caused the Swedish officials becoming worried about the increasing migration of Finnish Roma to Sweden. At first the Romani question in Finland was also seen in terms of creating individuals leading a "normal way of life". In the 1950s it was still common to take Romani children into public custody as a way of distancing them from the groups' "tribal customs". But, a change was coming as now in the 1960s, using Pulma's words, the "world entered" into the Finnish Romani policies, and the Roma received minority rights. The press had followed international example and saw the Roma question as an issue of possible racial discrimination. The decisive turn for the Roma took place in 1967 as the Finnish Romani Association was founded. The Roma started to be regarded as entitled to their "culturally and ethnically specific character". In terms of "Barthian" ethnopolitics this increasing ethnopolitical credibility meant that the Roma themselves became integrated in the policy-making. Pulma emphasizes that especially the Finnish Romani organizations became active in the Nordic and international Romani politics. In Finland this period of "positive discrimination" prevailed until the 1980s and 1990s, and finally the Roma were granted also an ethnic minority status.

The recommendations of the Nordic Council (1969) had been very influential and by the end of 1970s the "basic needs" of Roma in the Nordic countries were safeguarded in the legislation: the Roma were regarded no more as a "social problem" but as a "cultural minority" that has needs that are determined more or less internationally.

Pulma looks at the long term changes in the use of ethnic definitions as well as the policy aims derived from them, and eventually even their success. In Finland the Roma have "always been seen" as Finns, that is, as a group that does not endanger the national territory. In other Nordic countries, that have had a "Roma" population, the state had to rely on more decisive actions in order to constrain their mobility. Despite the difficulties in drawing a line between the Roma and other vagrants (especially in Scandinavia before the 20th century), Pulma locates a break in the Romani policies also in the 19th century, even if he sees that the language nationalism of the time did not have importance in the case of Roma. Thus he sees that social and vagrant policies dominated the Romani policy objectives well into the 1960s. Then, actually starting from the 1950s, the international system laid the foundation for the Roma to be defined as an

ethnic minority. As a whole Pulma sees that the Sámi in Finland had a parallel situation to Roma in the end of the 1960s (as in Norway). However, in Sweden the policy model was looked for in the refugee policies. Thus, by applying his wider definition of "ethnopolitics" Pulma shows that through the centuries (on the policy level) there seem to be always present two options: an attempt to keep the Roma outside state and social institutions, and an attempt to integrate them. In these policies the "assimilation goals" have been essential and they have disappeared as late as in the latter part of the 20th century.

This book offers in a very compact form a historical perspective on minority policy development. As it comes closer to the present, and the "period of shared policy foundations and objectives", its driving force is the international and comparative perspective. (Also something is left out, as for example, the most recent migrations of the Roma.) Pulma's point is that the policies have *not* changed on their own initiative but have had to respond to international influences, even imposition. It has been also significant that the international Romani movement created a historical-ethnical narrative for the Roma. Pulma sees that this ethnopolitical process has created an ethnic minority which defines its own nature and history for itself but also for the mainstream population. As this is said, one could perhaps ask, if this is not also a myth? It perhaps could be argued that the major "cultural" differences ceased to exist when the Roma adopted the politically useful culture concept, the ethnic culture. Thus the present emphasis on "cultural difference" might also be interpreted at least partly as a result of "successful" assimilative policies. In reviewing this book some difficulties derive from the fact that the writer leaves the conclusions to reader. It is seemingly impartial but also problematic as it perhaps too easily bypasses some problems of defining the Romani ethnic identity and policy issues. It seems that "ethnicity" or "ethnopolitics" as studied simply as a policy level issue seems to miss the point: the description of the "dynamic and flexible nature of ethnic identity" (p. 216) as a matter affecting individuals. In the end this ethnic identity (should) legitimate *all* minority politics. This book, with its long historical perspective on political minority issues, might also have commented on the issue of multiculturalism, as in some European countries there has recently been a move towards emphasis on monocultures.

From an ethnologists' perspective it is interesting that the ethnological research on Roma has had such a dubious role to play in the policy-making (usually contributed in exotic descriptions or propagated assimilative goals), even if it since the 1970s has also enforced the Romani cultural identity. A more positive role, especially starting from the 1960s, has been reserved for specialists having sociological-pedagogical perspectives. However, as we come closer to the present, it becomes more and more difficult to see who decides about minority policies in the changing world. For sure "ethnopolitically aware" ethnology has a role to play here. On the last pages of the book, also Pulma briefly implies that if minorities' social and political position (state support, social benefits, etc.) is too tightly connected with ethnicity, it may have also negative consequences. In a rather sinister way he reminds that the most "clean-cut example" of "state-lead ethnopolitics" was Hitler's Third Reich.

Karri Kiiskinen, Turku

Today's Folk Art in Denmark

Helle Ravn & Heinrich Mehl, Folkekunst ... kun fantasien sætter grænser. Langelands Museum, Rudkøbing 2006. 162 pp. Ill. Deutsche Zusammenfassung. ISBN 87-88509-09-0.

■ When the ethnologists Helle Ravn at Langeland Museum and Heinrich Mehl at Sønderborg Museum near the German border planned together to survey contemporary Danish folk art, they approached 24 neighbouring museums to ascertain to what extent they considered folk art in industrial society.

It turned out that no museum worked systematically with the theme. Most of them totally ignored it. They were all uncertain about what today's folk art was – if it existed at all... One museum officer believed that it was something that people (*folk*) do, but that there must be some creative and original element. Another person, an art historian, said he had no opinion on the matter because he worked with "art with a capital A". All in all there was great ambivalence about where to draw the line between art and folk art.

The authors themselves admit that it is difficult to arrive at an unambiguous definition of folk art as a phenomenon (the same can be said about the concept of art) and explain that they want instead to capture a number of characteristics of present-day folk art, by which they mean the period since 1950. They choose this time-frame because of the growth

of prosperity after the Second World War, which allowed people to buy semi-manufactured goods and machines. The authors admit, however, that it is tricky to decide whether a person is working with domestic handicraft, folk art, or art. Often there are overlaps, as people move from pole to pole, with folk art in the middle.

The handicraft movement with its norms and quality regulation is contrasted with the experimenting, individualistic folk artists who lack economic motives. In the comparison between folk art and established art (often called elite art or academic art) the authors refer to the folklorist Henry Glassie's description of folk art as collective and traditional, and his opinion that "in global terms, it is not Western folk art that is marginal, but Western academic art".

In a section on "The Road to Creativity" there is a discussion of the human desire and drive for aesthetic creation, along with the growing resistance to throwaway consumerism and the consequent ideal of reuse and innovation. "Compostmodernism" is Heinrich Mehl's name for this era characterized by scrap art and bricolage with beach finds. When it come to sales, folk artists are usually happy enough to be paid for the costs of their material – unless they take the step to become established commercial artists. The mechanisms of creativity (e.g., its therapeutic function) and the spatial exercise of creativity – with the man in his workshop, the woman in the home, and "fake work" at the workplace – are discussed, as is the garden as an exhibition for the public.

So what form do the products of this joyous creativity take? What phenomena have the authors rounded up to achieve an adequate presentation of contemporary folk art? For reasons of time they excluded photography, painting, and web design, but otherwise we find here most materials and techniques: Yard sculptures of scrap metal and hay bales (the latter distinctive for Schleswig-Holstein), textile embroidery, ceramics, graffiti, decorated milk cans, congratulatory sculptures of oil drums (a speciality for Denmark?) and personal gravestones in mosaic, to mention a few.

The book begins with a survey of research on folk art in the Scandinavian countries – Norway, Sweden, Denmark – and Germany. It observes that in Sweden alone, some major efforts have led to exhibitions and publications about contemporary folk art. It was in fact the exhibition *Folk Art – All Tradition is Change* at the Culture Centre in Stockholm in 1992 that inspired Helle Ravn to tackle Danish contemporary folk art after she had published a book about the Danish folk garden in 2000.

How was the study conducted that led to this book? In 2005 the authors did about sixty interviews with folk artists, Heinrich Mehl in Schleswig-Holstein and Helle Ravn in Denmark. They came into contact with the artists by visiting markets selling works of folk art and through tips from museum colleagues. Radio and newspapers helped to spread an appeal for folk artists to come forward.

An interesting question for the study, apart from the outreaching survey work, concerned whether the new national boundary drawn in 1920 between Denmark and Germany, which restored northern Holstein to Denmark, has left any trace in folk art. A difference is in fact pointed out in the introduction, namely, in the restraint in the German areas as regards expression and inventiveness. The authors explain this in terms of the Nazis' abuse of the concept of "folk" and the repercussions this had in the post-war years, when people in Germany were cautious about anything designated as *Volk*. This is said to have impeded individual creativity from being exposed in public, according to the authors.

The book has numerous photographs nicely illustrating the diversity of folk creativity. The ambitious work of giving an assembled picture of a nation's contemporary folk art with comparative glances across the border is a pioneering effort which ought to urge people in the neighbouring countries to do something similar. After reading and studying the objects one has enough arguments to show that folk art did not die out with the industrial revolution. Folk art not only exists but is an unusually vigorous plant with a good future ahead of it, albeit in other materials and forms such as modded computers, web design, and customized vehicles. Consequently, the book is an incentive to continued exploration and discovery.

The book has a summary in German and has lengthy captions in both German and Danish.

Eva Londos, Jönköping

Open Air Museums

Sten Rentzhog, Friluftsmuseerna. En skandinavisk idé erövrar världen. 528 pp. Ill. ISBN 978:91-7331-071-0. Open Air Museums. The History and Future of a Visionary Idea. 532 pp. Ill. ISBN 978: 91-7948-208-4. Jamtli Förlag and Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2007.

■ Open air museums constitute a special category in the international museum organization ICOM and are also in reality a special field in museum work. In a completely different way from traditional museums, their management, research, preservation, collecting, and mediation are an inextricable part of the whole that most open air museums try to achieve. In financial terms they are demanding institutions, and they would have been inconceivable without private funds, visionary founders, and later wide-ranging leaders. They are places that you have to be fond of if you want to work there. They are also places that have large visitor figures and can communicate history in a much more effective way than most other museums can manage, with historical flair and knowledge and with an artistic gaze that ranks sensory perception as high as intellectual explanation, to paraphrase the founder of the Danish Folk Museum and Open air Museum, Bernhard Olsen.

At the same time, open air museums are Scandinavia's greatest contribution to the evolution of museums. The idea, as readers of *Ethnologia Scandinavica* will be aware, began in the last quarter of the 19th century in Stockholm with Artur Hazelius's Skansen, in Oslo with Hans Aals's collections on Bygdø, based on the buildings of the union king Oscar II, in Lillehammer with the Sandvig Collections, in Lund with Georg Karlin's Kulturen, and in Copenhagen with Bernhard Olsen's Open Air Museum (Frilandsmuseet) and, a little later, Peter Holm's Old Town (Den gamle By) in Aarhus. Skansen, Bygdø, and Frilandsmuseet are often regarded as the three main models for an open air museum, and the majority of national open air museums subsequently founded in the world copied one of the three. Den gamle By occupies a place of its own as an early town museum, which is its own role model and has been imitated many times. Over the years there have been differences as regards when and where an individual museum has served as a model, but they have all taken it in turns and come back again. And so it will probably continue. They also all feel a special duty to evolve and at the same time continue to uphold the heritage.

With this book *Open Air Museums*, Sten Rentzhog, the former director of Skansen and Jamtli Historieland – both Swedish institutions –has undertaken to examine open air museums in the whole world, throughout their history, and with a look into the future. He uses over five hundred pages to do so, with a large number of well-chosen illustrations, and not one too many. Rentzhog has spent most of his professional life in the world of open air museums and it is obvious that he has his models, the heroes and villains, the ideals and the things he rejects. The hero above all is Artur Hazelius, to a certain extent Peter Holm, not so much Bernhard Olsen, and Hans Aal not at all, and his more modern ideals are to be found in the interpretative open air museums in the USA, for example, Colonial Williamsburg and Old Sturbridge Village. In many ways *Open Air Museums* is as much a personal plea as a study. This is both a strength and a weakness of the book.

Rentzhog says himself that the book is built up around visionary leaders and persons, and this also applies to the detailed survey of the Nordic and American museums, some of the German and Dutch ones, less so and in some cases not at all the museums in the other European countries. This reviewer agrees with Rentzhog that it makes good sense to focus on these leaders in their own times. An open air museum is also a dream come true, a romantic creation speaking to both the past and the present, and as such always dependent on a strong leader with a clear idea of what the museum should be. This is true not only of open air museums but also of most operations, whether museums or businesses. But occasionally Rentzhog resorts to somewhat strange, almost psychologizing explanations for the acts of these leaders. Let me give just one example, namely his treatment of the relationship between Artur Hazelius and Bernhard Olsen. It is characterized as being initially close, later distanced, and there is nothing surprising or new about that description. But the account goes on to suggest that Olsen was forced to oppose Hazelius, and we are led to understand that it was against his own will, since Olsen lived in a closer academic relationship to the Danish National Museum and its director Sophus Müller than the – according to Rentzhog – in every way successful and independent Artur Hazelius. Alas, that is what can happen, is the implication.

But one can also perhaps imagine that, when Olsen criticized Hazelius for being too concerned with folk

customs and popular approaches at Skansen, he meant it seriously, just as Hans Aal no doubt thought that his version of an open air museum was preferable to the Stockholm type – which is a view that does not occur to Rentzhog. Olsen had, as Rentzhog notes, a background in the Tivoli fairground in Copenhagen and also founded the Copenhagen waxworks, Panoptikon. He was thus no stranger to popularizing and "theatre", but he drew the line between this and historical research and mediation in a different way from Hazelius. Rentzhog wonders why Olsen's theatrical background did not have a greater effect on his museum operations, as his model Hazelius displayed in his triangulation of buildings, zoological gardens, and entertainment and festivities at Skansen. Olsen is portrayed as a divided person under pressure. But again: it could be that he meant it! It could be that there was a thought behind the fact that Olsen himself always called his museum a buildings museum, and viewed it in connection with the rest of the Danish Folk Museum. It was Olsen's own desire that both his "children" should belong to the National Museum and its academic circle. As a reader one cannot free oneself from the notion that Rentzhog's (deserved) fascination with Hazelius has taken over, here at the expense of Olsen, and this occurs several other times with other persons in the less flattering role.

Other examples of this almost grovelling admiration for Hazelius may be mentioned, but that would be going too far in this review. However, the other great heroic story in the book is the influence of the American museums with their interpretation and role-play from the 1970s onwards – during Rentzhog's own professional career. He makes a dutiful tribute to Peter Michelsen in Copenhagen for having introduced some of these approaches to Europe, but we get a clear hint that Michelsen's version of this inspiration is not entirely good, that the real thing would have been preferable; Rentzhog does not hesitate to give a long – and in my eyes not very becoming – chapter about his own Jamtli as a model. Things get just as bad in his presentation of a number of Eastern and Central European open air museums which still have an antiquarian orientation to buildings; an understanding for the difficult conditions of the Eastern European museums under communist dictatorship is, however, mentioned several times. Is this a repetition of the old museum director's many discussions through his own times in the international field? It seems like it.

In large measure the first half of *Open Air Museums* consists of, on the one hand, a necessarily rather rapid survey of the open air museums of the world and the main ideas behind them, interspersed with more detailed treatment of selected places. An example is the landscape museum as it developed between the two world wars and in the 1960s, with particular inspiration from Holland, Denmark, and occasional German museums. On the other hand, this half of the book is influenced by undertones concerning what a *real* open air museum should be in keeping with Rentzhog's ideals. At the same time, this part of the book is full of repetitions and the slightly psychologizing or hasty explanations hinted at above. A good editor could have worked wonders, and the book could have been made considerably shorter without losing anything.

In the second half of the book, chapters 11–17, however, the author's stance in favour of one thing and against another is a strength, for here Rentzhog speaks out frankly with his plea for an interpretative understanding of history, a reflection on the American inspiration and its link to Hazelius and other founders, some musing about the challenges of the future and the place of open air museums in the museum field and in what is often called the experience economy, pointing out the great strength of open air museums in these contexts. One may agree or disagree with Rentzhog, but it is good reading. In many ways the chapters bear the stamp of what he has been trying to achieve in his own time as a museum director, and they can be read as a retiring manager's testament to his successors. The explicit message in these chapters makes the reader reflect and wonder whether or not to agree. The interviews with the present leaders of what Rentzhog considers to be the trend-setting open air museums are a real boost for the chapters.

One could wish that in these reflections the author had brought in more modern museological studies, which could have given further quality to the pages, but they are conspicuous by their absence. The place could have been in the first half of the book, as mentioned earlier. The quality would have been that the book would not have been addressed so exclusively to the open air museums' own self-understanding and their own circle, but could have spoken out to the world. On the other hand, if this is the experienced museum man's speech to his younger successors in the form that he now prefers, then I have nothing against it.

Open Air Museums is a thick book which could well have been shortened. It is as if the author wants too much, and the book could have been divided into

(at least) two parts: an empirically based survey of the stock of open air museums, their genesis and evolution – a *Stand der Freilichtmuseen,* as emphasized in the foreword, written by Dr. Cseri, the President of the Association of European Open Air Museums, and Dr. Hawes from the Association for Living History Farm and Agricultural Museums; and a debate book about open air museums and the present, understandings of history, the experiences, strengths, and weaknesses of this special category of museums, which Rentzhog himself seems to find most important – in his own preface he apologizes for his bias, which would have been quite unnecessary in a debate book. If one could choose, this reviewer would prefer the latter, which in *Open Air Museums* is so much stronger than the former. It alone means that the book can be recommended to anyone in professional contact with museums.

Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, Copenhagen

Visby as Cultural Heritage

Owe Ronström, Kulturarvspolitik. Visby, från sliten småstad till medeltidsikon. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2008. 317 pp. ISBN 978-91-7331-112-0.

■ This is a wonderful book. The title means "Cultural Heritage Policy: Visby, from a Shabby Small Town to a Medieval Icon"), and in it Owe Ronström, guides the reader, firstly, on concrete level through Visby from one district to another. He brings to the reader's eyes its renovated medieval quarters with idyllic views and roses, with handicraft shops and cafés, with restrictions on cars, and with nearly 200 protected buildings owned by private persons living in the town. He shows the city wall and its blooming ivy around the medieval quarter. And he leads the reader to the extramural parts of the town, where you can find big car parks, big cars, markets, beaches and party places showing nonchalance for the status of Unesco World Heritage site, which Visby attained in 1995.

Secondly, Ronström guides the reader through the whole story about how Visby was inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List. He devotes a great deal of space to central actors in the development and tells with their words how this very successful process happened. He presents them with respect and describes their expertise, engagement and enthusiasm with an understanding tone.

Thirdly, Ronström leads the reader on an abstract level through phenomenological descriptions of the town, different stories about the town, and analytical concepts of cultural heritage in our globalized age. He binds these all together to the final points of his theoretical analysis of Visby as a heritage site. He does not forget to present the historical roots of the concept of cultural heritage as one explanation for the situation in our time. The central question in his analysis is: how could the whole process from a dilapidated small town to a World Heritage site happen so easily at the end of the 20th century?

As a real folklorist, Ronström presents different points of view, and when presenting their supporters he does so with such an understanding grasp that you can feel how he walks along with them through the town, always following their rhythm of steps and the rhythm of life in Visby. After presenting one angle, he changes the rhythm and describes another. He has the ability to ask simple basic questions, and to expose and explain different episodes and places with their help. The phenomenological descriptive analysis of the town, and the description of the path Visby took from an ordinary small town to a world heritage site, are decidedly strong sides of the book.

In the theoretical analysis Ronström presents Unesco as an actor in our globalized era. Unesco gives a global structure for local actors. According to this structure they can renovate their local places into sites that reach the level required for the status of World Heritage site. In this way, all world heritage sites take on glocal, uni34form traits. They become more homogeneous than before, when all the small details are taken to serve the global structure given by Unesco. This also happened in Visby inside its city wall.

Ronström points out that the use of world heritage sites is nevertheless local and benefits local welfare and economy. The global structure of Unesco does not dictate the local use of cultural heritage. In Visby, local actors could also utilize world heritage status for their own purposes, such as the conservation of buildings, strengthening the international image of the town, and improving tourism. As Ronström briefly describes, they also received some financial support for their local activities in this context from the European Union, when this became possible after Sweden became a member in 1995.

Ronström's main aim is to analyse cultural heritage as a global, local and glocal cultural phenomenon. In

this effort a deeper analysis of the European Union as an actor in the whole story would also have been necessary. If Unesco doesn't guide the use of cultural heritage, the EU does. In the EU, local development and cultural policies are closely intertwined. The EU does not have any cultural politics without ambitions to strengthen local welfare. In order to achieve this political goal, the EU gives financial support for local activities, such as the use of heritage for local development. This supports was used by the local actors in Visby. In this way the use of cultural heritage is also a part of an international structure, and thus not only local.

In his analysis Ronström uses the concept of tradition. He sees it, firstly, as something opposite to the cultural heritage. While cultural heritage represents medieval times and urban culture with local, but non-native, actors as its supporters, tradition represents a more real Gotland, highlighting rural communities with their common pre-industrial traditions and local native people living in the countryside outside the town of Visby. Secondly, Ronström shows how tradition is a phenomenon of the modernization process, and thus the opposite of the modern. In this context tradition is a political concept of the national movement, and created to support it. Likewise, cultural heritage is a product of late modernity, created to support the glocal attention economy. It operates with a homogeneous image of an obscure past which is contrasted to late-modern heterogeneity.

Tradition here has two different kinds of meanings. Firstly, it is the common tradition of local communities in rural Gotland. Secondly, it is a political concept used for the support of nationalism. It would have been beneficial if the author had elaborated on the relationship between these two domains of tradition. Also, the local use of preindustrial tradition in rural Gotland as a positive value is, in my mind, a product of the national movement, but this aspect is not clearly pointed out in Ronström's analysis.

Tradition in the sense of changing and varying material and non-material cultural items in past, current and future everyday life, is not present as a definition in Ronström's book. With the aid of this concept it might have been possible to analyse the heterogeneous relationships of current local people both to the crystallized preindustrial tradition and to the cultural heritage. This kind of voices of local, ordinary people are mostly absent from the book, unfortunately. It presents different ideas concerning cultural heritage using the voices of local political actors and the voice of the researcher himself.

However, the strength of the book is its central perspective on the cultural heritage: it is seen as a part of cultural and political processes and structures, and analysed as such. Without this kind of analysis it is not possible to reflect all the different sides of cultural heritage in different local and glocal contexts.

Katriina Siivonen, Turku

Humanities in Professional Life

Humaniora i yrkeslivet. Fredrik Schoug (ed.). Lund, Utbildningsenheten Lunds universitet 2008, Rapport 2008:249. 151 pp. ISSN 1401-775X.

■ The discussion in recent years about the usefulness of the humanities, about the employability of students, and the requirement that education in the humanities should be related to working life, is the starting point for this report, "The Humanities in Professional Life". The empirical inquiry is based on students in the Faculty of Humanities and Theology at Lund University. Although Fredrik Schoug, the editor and author of the majority of the texts in the report, begins by mentioning the drastic decrease in applicants in the last few years, when many subjects in the humanities have gone from over- to underproduction, that decline is not specifically studied. Instead the group of researchers has chosen to examine how people with degrees from Lund University view the relevance of their studies and their chances of becoming established on the labour market.

The study was conducted in three phases. First there was a survey of the way courses and programmes were combined by students who graduated in 2006; this was done by examining the university's statistics in the Ladok register. (Note that this investigation is focused on studies before the Bologna implementation and the credits are expressed in the old manner.) The selection principle was that at least one course comprising 20 credits should have been completed in the humanities or theology. Phase two involved interviewing 31 people who had graduated from another faculty in the years 2000–2006 and had also taken at least one 20-credit course in humanities-theology. The third phase consisted of a questionnaire aimed at three selected groups who graduated in 2002 and 2004. One group had graduated from a different faculty and had taken at least 40 credits in

humanities-theology. The second group had studied only humanistic subjects, and the third, besides a degree in humanities-theology, had taken at least 40 credits in another faculty.

An interesting observation is that the informants in the interview study did not have any great expectations that the education in the humanities would be adjusted to the labour market. They took their degree in a different faculty and regarded studies of languages of historical/philosophical subjects as a form of cultural improvement. Not even those who studied English and now use English at work think that language teaching has to be adapted to professional life.

Many of those who started their university studies in the field of humanities-theology have had a searching attitude; they had not decided on any specific orientation at the beginning. Some started reading modern languages because it can be useful. Others began their studies in the history or philosophy disciplines because they were interested, studying for pleasure. The report shows, however, that students who read historical and philosophical subjects get quite a lot of training in practical skills, especially in written language. During their studies they get practice in organizing their writing and expressing themselves, by means of home examinations and essays. Training in oral presentation is not as widespread as practice in writing, while the development of the capacity for critical thinking and reflection is crucial. In the humanities there is special emphasis on how historical awareness, the ability to understand social situations, to interpret cultural expressions and cultural diversity are competencies that humanists master thoroughly and insightfully.

One article by Charlotta Zettervall is about how she examined a number of statistical studies which show unambiguously that it pays to go to university. People with lower educational levels are unemployed to a greater extent than those with tertiary education. In addition, the interview study in the Lund report shows that many informants do not have an education tailor-made to suit their working tasks. Recruitment to the labour market is also a matter of employers wanting personnel groups whose qualities complement each other. It is more noticeable in the private than the public sector that employers hire people because they have certain skills and competencies, not for their education as a whole. Social competence and flexibility are held up as significant. Yet international comparisons show that Swedish employers recruit more narrowly than their counterparts in many other European countries where it is more common that people with a university degree in a historical or philosophical subject have leading posts in companies. A representative of the Swedish employers nevertheless stresses the important of having employees with "composite competence"; beside having the relevant expert knowledge they should be well-oriented intellectually, with an obvious capacity for individual thought. A social scientist who was part of the Lund researchers' interview study emphasizes that she has benefited considerably from having studied ethnology and archaeology, as the methodology is useful for the investigations she has to do in a municipal administration. It is thus not the empirical knowledge itself that comes in useful but the ability to see problems and perspectives. These skills, together with a good mastery of language, are increasingly in demand in today's working life.

The report "The Humanities in Professional Life" shows that people with a degree in the humanities have an ability to establish themselves on the labour market. Moreover, those who have a combination of purely humanistic subject combinations succeed somewhat better than those who have studied in some other faculty. A class analysis shows that those who take their degree in long, prestigious university programmes and solely in historical-philosophical subjects come to a large extent from families in the upper strata of society. Language studies attract more young people from lower social positions, since the utility and applicability of modern languages seems more obvious than that of the historical and philosophical disciplines. Although the majority of students in the humanities have the same searching attitude at the beginning, regardless of class background, those who come from higher classes have greater persistence. They gradually develop a sense of purpose and complete their degree within a reasonable time, which is also essential for being considered for an adequate position. Fredrik Schoug interprets students who supplement their humanistic studies with courses in other faculties as being more uncertain, but the result gives them slightly better chances on the labour market.

The report underlines that the study is based on students who take a degree. The researchers are aware that there are many students in humanities and theology who do not complete a degree. Schoug

thinks that the talk of a crisis for the humanities, when it comes from university teachers, is destructive. It has not led to higher budgetary allocations to the humanities, but only to consensus among teachers and researchers in faculties of humanities. This talk of inadequate funding is counterproductive. Instead the representatives of the humanities should place more emphasis on what humanists are good at: critical thinking, problematization, seeing things in perspective, methodology, linguistic formulation, powers of argumentation, and so on.

Fredrik Schoug is presented in the report as project leader at the Office of Evaluation, Lund University, and I wonder why readers are not informed that he is a humanist and an associate professor of ethnology. The report, in my opinion, is a good example of an evaluation that is presented and problematized in a way that is familiar in ethnology. The report presents hard data in the form of tables and diagrams in the appendices. This arrangement allows the main text to take the form of a discussion with quotations from interviews which reflect subjective opinions, and it illuminates the complexity in a way that arouses interest. What I lack, however, is a reflexive discussion based on the main author Fredrik Schoug's position as a researcher and ethnologist in the research field of higher education. For I think that this report is both thought-provoking and a good basis for discussion, besides being a good model for how ethnologists can conduct and present evaluation assignments. I therefore recommend this as seminar literature in ethnological education. In addition, the report is easily accessible. It can be downloaded from www.evaluat.lu.se.

Kerstin Gunnemark, Gothenburg

The Danish Flint Industry

Gunnar Solvang, Dansk Flinteindustri. En kulturhistorisk skildring af en glemt landindustri. Køge Museum, Køge 2006. 352 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-90299-17-5.

■ Gunnar Solvang's study of the Danish flint industry is a solid piece of work based on long-term museum documentation of limestone quarrying and stone working, a project that started in 2002 in the area around Køge on eastern Sjælland. The project was conducted as part of the museum's research programme, and in 2004 the museum had the opportunity to extend the work with an orientation towards ethnological methodology, besides which there was wide-ranging collecting of historical source material from archives of local history, private individuals, and companies. In subsequent years the findings were compiled and the project completed in book form.

Dansk Flinteindustri is a well-written book that captures the reader's interest through glimpses into people's lives and the processes of change that took place in the latter part of the 19th century and the 20th century as the countryside was industrialized. It is richly illustrated with good maps, drawings, and photographs.

The work of documentation and research can also be set in a broader framework, as people in Denmark during this period took the initiative to ask how the industrial society of the 19th and 20th centuries influenced the Danish cultural landscape, social structure, and patterns of thought. In the period 2003–2007 the Danish Heritage Agency had an energetic drive to study "the cultural heritage of industrial society" through many different local and regional efforts, to focus on questions of preservation and to communicate the new knowledge back to society. This book about the Danish flint industry is an extremely interesting example of how a local project initiative can be developed into a good knowledge base concerning the entire development of an industry that has left its traces and patterns of material and non-material culture.

In his presentation of the material Solvang chooses to start from the local micro-level and then structures the book from three angles. He starts by elucidating the relationship between the local environment and the general level represented by the development of industrialism. There is then a description of the growth of the flint industry as a vigorous export trade, although less has been said and written about it than about the food or textile industries. Solvang ends by describing the changes that have taken place in the landscape since the closure of the industry. The coasts of Denmark have been under heavy pressure of development, with the building of holiday cottages and permanent homes.

The book concentrates on the industrial era of the 20th century, with a brief retrospective look at the use of flint in earlier times. What makes the book especially interesting is that Solvang has detailed descriptions of entrepreneurship and the social situations that enabled enterprise and development. The capital investments required for the stone industry are relatively low, since the structures are initially of a mobile character. On the other hand, this sector with its focus on exports

is dependent on international tariffs, transport costs, and long-term contracts.

Solvang highlights the local entrepreneurs who started by searching for flint in coastal areas and gradually developed the operations during the pioneer years in the latter part of the 19th century. With the rapid expansion and mechanization of the cement industry in the 1890s, new grinding methods were developed, and this led to increased demand and exports to other countries. There is an in-depth study of two of the main figures in the industry (F. L. Smidth and C. F. Christiansson), with everything from family life to considerations of strategies for the development of their businesses.

In the long section about the industry at Strøby Strand we follow a number of people from the start of the 20th century to the 1960s. The combination of human destinies, where the focus is not just on local working life but also on the broader framework of processes of expansion and decline, creates a picture of changes in local society over time.

Through a rich collection of source material and interviews, Solvang is able to highlight certain individuals and families. For example, we see the smallholder and stoneworker Axel Fredrik Nielsen, who worked at Højstrup in the years 1950–1965. During a period when small farms were disappearing in Denmark, he and his family acquired extra income in a rural industry where no special training was required.

Using local examples, the author describes in one section the long lines of development in the flint industry. At an early stage this rural industry had an elaborate network of actors leading from the local place of production to export countries all over the world. The demand for material followed development in the manufacturing industry, starting on a modest scale in the 1880s. A crucial factor for expansion was the invention of the tube mill, patented in 1894 by F. L. Smidth & Co. Flint digging was increasingly mechanized between 1934 and 1945. The closing-down period, according to Solvang, was between 1967 and 1987, when the demand for flint for the cement industry gradually ceased. In 1988 so little flint was extracted that it was no longer categorized as a separate industrial branch.

In the closing chapter Solvang applies an interesting societal perspective to his findings, considering the conditions for preserving the remains of the industry. Here he provides a very good foundation for cooperation between historical/ethnological research and physical community planning. It would have been good if the author had elaborated more on this and also amplified concrete elements of the description through suggestions as to preservation measures which are important if we are to be able to read and interpret landscape and settlement in the future.

Solvang's account is both broad and deep, making it a credible basis for describing and explaining the content of one sector of rural industrial development. It emphasizes the partly anonymous remains and narratives, giving them a meaning and qualities that are at least as interesting as the large, well-known monuments of the urban landscape. Solvang's way of working with the history and heritage of industrial society should inspire others to use the method for similar studies of, for example, how the granite and limestone industry have affected the landscape and settlement structure in Western Sweden.

Rolf Danielsson, Vänersborg

Witchcraft and Love Magic

Ebbe Schön, Häxkonster och kärleksknep. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2008. 333 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-116-8.

■ Ebbe Schön has been head of the folklore collection of the Nordiska Museet for over 20 years, and therefore has a broad knowledge of oral tradition, both folk belief and folk poetry. He has published some thirty popular books for children and adults, based on the folklore in the archive. He writes with commitment in an interesting form geared to a large audience.

According to the preface, this book is based on two previous works by the same author, *Häxor och trolldom* (Witches and Magic) and *Älskogens magi* (Love Magic), but now expanded here. The combination of these two topics is not entirely successful. Love magic has some connection to the witch tradition, but there are many other topics in the field of folk belief that could just as well have been included.

The first and largest part of the book deals with witches and witchcraft. It opens with a chapter about witch trials and the background in theology and folk belief. This chapter would have benefited from more detail. As it is, it just paints a rather vague backdrop. The strongest chapters in the book are those dealing with the three central elements in the witch trials: the apostasy (the pact with Satan), the witches' sabbath, and malicious magic. In these chapters Schön retells and cites both court records and material in

the folklore archive. This evidence has a wide span, from the start of the trials at the end of the 16th century to the records of tradition from the early 20th century. It comprises transcripts of trials, orally transmitted legends, statements about folk belief, and even folktales. The picture of the witches' sabbath, for instance, is therefore rich in detail, but with so many different sources it becomes hard to see how representative it is. Here he could well have given us a little more background in the form of context and explanations. When the wealth of detail is so great and the material so diverse, there is a risk that it can give the impression of a cabinet of curiosities.

In popular books it is not normal to provide references, but in a book like this, which has its strength in the amount of source material, I would have appreciated being able to track down the sources.

Velle Espeland, Oslo

Hobbyhorses, Leisure Activities and the Welfare State

Jochum Stattin, Hobbyentusiaster och folkhemsbyggare. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2007. 154 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-060-4.

■ The subject of the book is the rise of leisure society in Sweden during the 20th century. The focus is on the strong expansion of (new) time-consuming, non-profit activities – grouped together under the concept of "hobbies" – and on how they fill the increasing spare time, due to shorter working hours and a more affluent society. The perspective is both emic and etic, and Stattin wants to combine a cultural analysis with a historical study. The author wants to highlight people's personal motives and the longing for creative activities through an insider perspective. And he aims at describing the structural and ideological social forces behind the development. Or in his own words: "In the societal perspective I focus especially on the ideological background for the rise of 'hobbyism'. In the individual perspective I aim at those questions that concern the personal experience." In the discussion he seeks support in earlier research – very eclectically, though – on leisure and he claims to draw upon research on creativity, aesthetics, modernity, narrativity and performance.

The topic of the book is obviously worthy of an ethnological investigation, or of a cultural-analysis approach. I do applaud Stattin's effort to understand important changes in society at large through the study of everyday life and practices. Also, it should be added that the author has collected an impressive amount of source material of various kinds; archive material and questionnaires, a long series of journals, newspapers and (hand)books, catalogues and publicity texts, (auto)biographical material, as well as a series of interviews.

In spite of the attractiveness of the topic, the interesting approach, the fairly easy flow of the text and the many amusing illustrations, this study has some shortcomings. I will focus on three interrelated points: the genre problem and the definition of the target group, the lack of thematic and structural coherence, and the rather shallow analysis in relation to the richness of the material.

The first point is a crucial one, because there is always a risk that a reviewer criticizes a book because he misinterprets the intentions of the author and defines a different target group than the author and the publisher have done. *Hobbyentusiaster och folkhemsbyggare* is not a scientific study in a traditional sense. There are no footnotes and hardly any theoretical discussions in the text, no references to scientific literature, and the source references are often imprecise as to page, edition, etc. Instead, the author has chosen to give, in a short appendix, a brief survey of "Research and sources of inspiration", including a listing of the source material. This is certainly an acceptable solution for a book intended for a broad, popular public, who will read the main text but rarely the appendix, the latter being intended for specialists.

However, a couple of critical remarks on the appendix would be that Stattin refers to several central international theorists in the social sciences and the humanities whom it is hard to find traces of in the main text. Furthermore, I miss important empirical and theoretical studies in several fields. As collecting (one of my own "hobbyhorses" within research!) is one of the most central sub-themes of the book, I wonder why the most important and internationally acknowledged works within this research field are lacking, such as Russ Belk's book (*Collecting in a Consumer Society*, 1995, new ed. 2001) as well as Susan Pearce's later books (*On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition*, 1995, and *Collecting in Contemporary Practice*, 1998). The use of Belk's by now well acknowledged definition of collecting might have led to amendments of the text. Several other strange lacunae might have been mentioned, both

in specialized fields and within more general leisure studies. And where are Veblen, Bourdieu, Campbell ... and others, who have had something to say on the topic of leisure? When Stattin states that hobby and leisure studies are sparse, I cannot quite agree. A quick glance at his literature list shows that there are very few references to literature published after 1994–96, the years when Stattin held a scholarship from HSFR to study this topic. For a book published in 2007, this is a severe shortcoming.

As stated above, it is absolutely legitimate, not to say praiseworthy, to write a book for a broader public, and the book should be judged as such. Then how about my two latter points, that is, thematic coherence and a reasonable balance between empirical presentations and analysis?

The book is divided into three main sections. Section one (pp. 12–52) is a historical overview (1920s to 1950s) of the rise of the "hobby society", organized around sub-themes such as the (public) propaganda for hobbies, the personal motives, the emergence of clubs and societies, exhibitions and contests. Section two (pp. 53–109) consists of three long and detailed interviews (1960s to 1990s); one with a natural history collector and nature enthusiast who ended up as a university researcher in the field, another with a furniture collector and a third with a collector and repairer of Citroën cars. Section three (pp. 110–135) brings in more material from a recent period, and attempts a more analytical approach, focusing on societal change and "the social and economic consequences of the hobby 'fever'".

Section two, the interviews, represents – in the eyes of this reviewer – a rupture. For one thing, they bring a nearly total break with the preceding text, and also with the following. Second, the transcriptions of the interviews are annoyingly detailed. Third, the short comparison paragraph – on similarities and dissimilarities – of the three interviewed "hobbyists" is not convincing: some of the affirmations are commonplace, others should be better argued.

Section one, although crammed with details, gives an interesting glimpse of a broad sphere of leisure activities, their organization and the ideological driving forces from the 1920s onwards. A possible objection is that the reader may easily feel that she or he is *told* things about society and its development, *exemplified* by leisure activities, but there is no convincing analysis. I could not keep myself from asking repeatedly what fishing, hunting and open-air life have in common with stamp collecting, family and genealogical research and model car building – except for the time consumption. They may certainly have more in common than just the time spent, but it needs to be better argued, just as certain sub-themes should be, like gender questions and social class differences (both themes very superficially treated!), the question of alienating work and compensatory leisure activities, changes and development over time, the understanding of aesthetics in the context of practical activities such as collecting, fishing, etc. The feeling of a lack of analysis and of only *being told* things through examples, continues through part three. As Stattin states himself a couple of times: the subject is "complex and contradictory (*sammansatt och motsägelsesfull*)". Indeed it is, but so is also his text sometimes.

I cannot refrain from thinking that the book would have been much more interesting, for a broader public as well as for specialists, if the author had focused on fewer case studies of leisure activities and leisure consumption and analysed them with societal changes as the backdrop. I am left with a feeling that the author has had too much material to digest, covering too vast a field and too long a time span. And also – perhaps – that taking up again material collected some ten years ago has been a burdensome task. I sympathize with him, because I know that feeling too well myself ...

Bjarne Rogan, Oslo

Farewell to the Common People

Niels Grue Sørensen, Farvel til Almuen – Om den menige landbefolknings overgang fra en traditionel til operationel tænkemåde omkring 1800. Forlaget Vinduet, Copenhagen. 2006. 164 pp. Ill. ISBN 87-91844-35-5.

■ The topic that the author analyses here is an important theme in cultural history. The problem concerns the radical changes in thinking that took place from the end of the 18th century in Denmark, a transition from habitual to more reflective and operational thinking. The main aim of the dissertation is to discuss the background for this change. The author presents two main hypotheses that he sets up against each other.

Agriculture in Denmark in this period was affected by several reforms, including the abolition of adscription, the law that tied people to the land. Inspired by physiocracy, which emphasized the significance of

agriculture for the welfare of a country, the authorities and leading farmers wanted the peasantry to start using new farming methods. But the elite ran into powerful opposition, which the reformers thought was due to ignorance. At the same time the Danish school system was professionalized. The new pedagogical ideas meant an emphasis on the individual, which led to a liberation from collective norms.

The theoretical foundation for the author's further analysis comes from cognitive psychology. This claims that the reasons for different forms of logical thought can be found in the dialectic between the subject and his/her environment and not in the individual's internal psychological traits. Another theoretical premise for the study is the view that there is a close connection between thought and language. According to this perception, it is relevant to view changes in thought against the background of sociocultural circumstances, far-reaching agrarian reforms, and school education.

The author begins by describing the way peasants thought in the 18th century. The main sources are reports by public officials. People at that time described the peasants' actions as routine, more or less unconscious, following strict norms and rooted in tradition. Thinking, the author points out, was concrete and based on action. yet this description is rather schematic, not sufficiently analytical, and there is no attempt to view matters from inside, that is, on the peasants' own cultural and social terms.

After this account of the peasants' traditional way of thinking, the author brings in psychological theories, especially Jean Piaget's theory of children's cognitive development. Using Piaget's terms, the author claims that the peasants' cognitive development stopped at the operational stage. He tries to substantiate this hypothesis empirically through textual analysis. Behind the analysis lies a perception that language and thought develop parallel to changes in society. The key indicator is the occurrence of coordinating and subordination conjunctions. The texts analysed include some written by members of the 18th-century elite, folktales, and a narrative from 1956. The results of the analysis are presented in tables. This method is original and exciting. The weakness is the lack of clear conclusions and explicit argumentation.

The next chapter is about school and the communication of knowledge. The conclusion of this survey is that schooling was of minor significance for changes in the way people thought. Reading instruction gave pupils a passive kind of literacy based on mechanical learning by rote, without them having to relate to the content.

The conclusion of the discussions is that the reason for the change in thinking among Danish peasants around 1800 was not the work of schools and the educational efforts of the elite, but the dissolution of the village community and the redistribution of land by the enclosure reforms. This led to a situation of choice, which meant that the peasants had to find new solutions which had no basis in the knowledge of experience and tradition.

Finally the author considers his results in comparative perspective and brings in research findings obtained by Russian experimental psychologists among an illiterate population in a part of Uzbekistan in Central Asia. People here had a pre-operational way of thinking, drawing conclusions on a palpable and concrete basis.

The topic of the dissertation is interesting and necessary for understanding Danish agrarian society around 1800. It is an original analytical device to combine action, thought, and texts. This approach is the strength of the dissertation, but it is highly demanding in terms of cultural analysis. As a whole the dissertation is not as stringent as might be desired, since the conclusions are not fully developed and the internal cohesion is not so clear.

Ragnar Pedersen, Hamar

Primeval Forms in Folk Art

Mikkel B. Tin, *De første formene. Folkekunstens abstrakte formspråk.* Novus forlag, Oslo 2007. 325 pp. Ill. English summary. ISBN 978-82-7099-453-3

■ A book about folk art? Yes, perhaps. The empirical material, and what is depicted, comes from the world of folk art, its domestic textiles, carved decoration, and so on. But it is really about something quite different – about the great issues of theory of art and philosophy of science. It is cultural history, aesthetics, art history, and philosophy, all at the same time.

Can the language of art be translated into verbal language? Can they be equated or even compared? It is often claimed that these two languages – word and image – are of totally different kinds, and that it is the task of the curator, museum teacher, or art reviewer to convey the message in verbal form. Musicians or dancers choose a medium because they think they

can express themselves best through it, while artists communicate through pictures and poets through words. Few have tried to analyse what we actually mean by this. Mikkel Tin makes a serious attempt to tackle the problem in this book, "The First Forms: Abstraction in Folk Art".

The title alludes to the forms that Tin considers the most original: the circle, the square and the cross. They are particularly well suited to an analysis of what pictorial language is since they are abstract – and thus not representational. The reason why Tin has seized on folk art is that he finds in it a pictorial language that, well into the 19th century, still had not become subject to the coercion of academic representation and thus offers material that is especially suitable for a study of this kind.

Tin assumes that the abstract forms, no matter where they appear, have been used to reveal the invisible, the hidden forces in nature, to express an experience of a fundamental world order. But the meaning of the abstract forms is not always unambiguous. They cannot be read as a text. Traditional textual interpretation fails here. This has been an impediment, cutting us off from deeper meanings since "in our modern culture, which is based on the word, and especially the written word, we have accustomed ourselves to regarding as the only true reality what we can express in words".

What is a symbol with an intentional message and what is pure decoration and convention? In the world of folk art there is no ready key as in the iconological handbooks of the academic world. Here we have to confine ourselves to more or less qualified guesses.

Many – like the 19th-century architect and teacher Gottfried Semper – have asserted the dependence of all applied art on material, technique, and function, and thus rejected other ways to explain the appearance of folk art which mainly occur in the field of applied art. Tin poses the rhetorical question whether it may be that, because of difficulties in translating abstract forms into words, we shy away from ascribing any meaning to them. Our resistance to seeing the meaning in these forms can be due partly to the fact that we in our rational times do not set so much store by non-rational symbolism, and partly that we constantly try to squeeze pictorial language into verbal language when there is in fact no symmetrical relationship between the two.

The use of traditional patterns and motifs is usually cited as a characteristic feature of folk art. Tin's explanation why forms can survive for so long and relatively unchanged in folk art is that they are associated with symbolic ideas. As an example he cites a specific type of four-poster bed, common in Telemark, Setesdal, and Numedal from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Why were the carved roses and stylized horses' heads repeated on these beds for four or five hundred years? For Tin the answer is given: the symbolic meanings, the rose as the symbol of the life-giving sun and the horse's head as a symbol of fertility, are the reason for the long-lasting tradition. What do we really know about what went on in the heads of the people in those days when they saw the rose on the bed? That is the question the author wants to raise, or the question that inevitably rises in the mind of the reader. The decoration that we often dismiss as pure decoration perhaps has a meaning after all.

Tin shows how certain abstract forms and symbolic charges can be shared in different areas and different times without the necessity for any mutual connection. The symbols in Norwegian folk art have previously been studied from a global perspective by Åsta Østmoe Kostveit. The universality of forms has been stressed by, among others, the American folklorist Henry Glassie. Tin has consistently woven these two aspects together: the global expression in both form and content. And this is a natural consequence of the method he has chosen: not to content himself with the Norwegian material but to bring in material from the rest of Scandinavia and above all Eastern Europe as well, with which he became familiar through a long period of research in Prague. He compares the shape of bed-horses in the Norwegian Viking Age with those in rural Russia in the 19th century and observes "how stable a figurative language can be when it is rooted in a mythical idea". He thus refers to similarities in form and meaning over time and place – not as diffusionist cultural geographers do, in order to demonstrate cultural contacts between people – but to find the answer to questions about a general human attitude to the forms and their meanings. The account thereby becomes something of a tribute to the images and symbols of folk art as a boundary-crossing figurative language – universal, timeless and ignoring the barriers of spoken and written language.

A small body of material can be handled from many different angles. And a large corpus of material can be handled from a small number of aspects. Tin has chosen the latter. The depicted objects, especially the textiles, are certainly described in detailed captions

with information about materials and techniques, but not much is said about the practical circumstances in which all this came about. This is not a book about the makers and the conditions in which they worked, about organization, economy, distribution, or the acquisition of material. The setting that is described is the spiritual one, the mental landscape, and the thoughts and traditions that served as a foundation. One example is the special baskets with basket-cloths that had a specific ceremonial significance until relatively recently in parts of Europe. In the basket, under the cloth, people brought bread to church to be blessed, then home again where it gathered further power, and only after that was the bread broken in a ritual meal out in the field. It is against that background that the author analyses the patterns of the cloth.

The fact that so little is said about the making and the makers does not weaken the story, especially since the notes are so full of hints as to where to read more. The point of dealing with a broad complex of objects from a single angle, a selected priority, by one author, is given. Tin has been able to focus. A study like this *must* be written by a single person, not by a collective of experts. And it *should* include many different categories of material if it is to be convincing. It is not the objects of folk art themselves that the book is about, but what they may have to tell about human creativity and the perception of form as a whole. If one wants a new outlook one must widen the horizon, which sometimes has to be done at the expense of detailed knowledge.

The book is convincingly and admirably well written and richly illustrated. And the further one penetrates into the author's outlook, the more captivated one becomes. There is also something insidious about this. Gone was the initial scepticism that I felt when I started reading. From the way Tin describes folk art one can easily get the impression that virtually everything has a symbolic meaning, whereas my own view has been – and still is – that folk art looks as it does for quite different reasons: the need to purify, simplify, and adapt to suit the material and the technique. I also think that people adopted forms and made something of them simply because they found them beautiful. People chose from among available models, chiefly in the parish church, and then went home to make something "nice". Furthermore, there may have been certain motifs and patterns that were felt intuitively or through force of habit to be restricted to a specific context.

Tin's argumentation technique and rhetoric are effective, however, and it is easy to be captivated. When he emphasizes how people in the whole world "resorted to abstraction to perceive what was hidden" and that "the objects that they adorned with abstract forms were a part of ceremonies which were supposed to establish contact with the powers in the same magical way", I politely agree at first, but soon realize that I also ignore in my haste everything that I am so familiar with: that most folk art was generated by the celebration of traditions, by the red-letter days in the year and the stages of life, and the fact that there is nothing odd about that. And I must remind myself that, although there is much in the world of folk art that is conditioned by symbolic meanings, there can also be abstract patterns on everyday objects which are difficult to connect to rites and magic.

The book contains formulations that I do not understand, for example, that the forms that Tin calls "resting", or horizontally extended, are constant and present in our world from the beginning, whereas it requires a creative will to raise these forms up, to make them "standing forms". To be honest, I find it difficult to keep up here. But I still accept it. And above all, I accept the whole.

De første formene is a book that requires concentration and attention of the reader, and active questioning. But if you can manage that, the book has a great deal to give. It can be recommended to anyone with an interest in folk art and in art and creative processes in general. Not least of all, as I see it, it would be good as course literature, or rather seminar literature, because it invites a theoretical and interdisciplinary discussion about a field – folk art and craft – where this is badly needed, and because it does not actually concern objects so much as what they can say about human thought and creativity in general.

Johan Knutsson, Stockholm

Instructions for submission of manuscripts to *Ethnologia Scandinavica*

Articles should if possible be sent by e-mail or on diskette. 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. Articles will undergo peer review. We reserve the right to revise and cut the texts, and to ask authors to make revisions.

Articles should not be longer than max. 30,000 characters. 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. Figures should be submitted along with the manuscript.

Notes should be avoided as far as possible. References to authors or book titles should be included in parentheses at the relevant point in the text. Notes should only be used for clarification or discussion.

The list of *References* should include only books referred to in the text. Details should be presented as follows:

Balle-Pedersen, Margaretha 1981: The Holy Danes. *Ethnologia Scandinavica* 11.

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 pages long with 1.5 line spacing, 8,000 characters. 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.

Reviews of other ethnological and closely related works should present the content and method and a personal appraisal. The length should be 1–2 A4 pages with 1.5 line spacing, approx. 5,000 characters.

Reviews written in English or German should be submitted by e-mail or on diskette.

When in doubt, check the format of previous issues of *Ethnologia Scandinavica.*

The author will have an opportunity to check the translation and make any necessary changes. When the manuscript has been approved, no changes in proof will be tolerated unless there is an obvious risk of misunderstanding.

Translations and proofs should be returned to the editor as quickly as possible. The deadline for manuscripts, at present 1 September, must be observed so that publication is not delayed.

Authors of articles receive two copies of the journal.

Communicating in cyberspace has become an everyday reality for most people. The world's biggest arena for dialogue is now the Internet, where people have the opportunity to establish new interpersonal relations. But the information communicated via the new technology does not automatically become knowledge. It must be interpreted and placed in a context if it is to be used, and it is these processes that are the subject of lively discussion in the scientific community today. How they affect a researcher's theoretical and methodological approach to them is the focus of this year's issue of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. Apart from this, the articles also discuss politics and populism, and what urban social movements mean in global processes of democracy and for citizenship in civilized societies.

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