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Contents

Papers

- 3 Editorial. By *Birgitta Svensson*
- 5 De/stabilising Otherness. Acts of Subversion, Transgression and Appropriation in Live Ethnographic Exhibitions. By *Anne Folke Henningsen*
- 16 Defending the Body. By *Karine Aasgaard Jansen*
- 27 Elderly Sami – Symbols of Sami Identity? The Role of the Elderly in the Sami Community. By *Marianne Liliequist*
- 43 The Practice of Ageing. The Experience of Being Old and the Significance of Bodies, Things and Places. By *Åsa Alfberg*
- 52 Looking at Houses, Searching for Homes. An Anthropological Analysis of the Relationship between Danish Homeowners and Their Houses. By *Mark Vacher*
- 68 Diversity and the Concept of Place. Inclusion and Exclusion Mechanisms among Norwegian City-dwelling Parents. By *Hilde Danielsen*
- 82 Standardisation and Consumer Responsibility. By *Ingun Grimstad Klepp* and *Kirsi Laitala*
- 94 The Conception of the Swedish National Day Meal. Building a National Identity on a Blend of Existing Festive Food Elements. By *Richard Tellström*

Biographical Notes

- 106 Holger Rasmussen 1915–2009. *Bjarne Stoklund*

Reviews

New Dissertations

- 107 The Rockefeller Foundation and the Danish Welfare State. – Henriette Buus, Indretning og efterretning. Rev. By *Kristofer Hansson*
- 109 Encounters with Resistance. – Ingrid Fioretos, Møten med motstånd. Kultur, klass, kropp på vårdcentralen. Rev. by *Tove Fjell*
- 110 Sisterhood and Fanzines. – Jenny Gunnarsson Payne, Systerskapets logiker. Rev. by *Ann-Charlotte Palmgren*
- 112 Living with Burnout. – Mia-Marie Hammarlin, Att leva som utbränd. Rev. by *Kyrre Kverndokk*

- 113 Snake Charms as Secret Female Knowledge. – Ritwa Herjulfsdotter, Jungfru Maria möter ormen – om formers tolkningar. Rev. by *Camilla Asplund Ingemark*
- 115 Checking Up On Children. – Helena Hörnfeldt, Prima barn, helt u.a. Rev. by *Lena Marander-Eklund*
- 117 What Couples Are Like. – Sarah Holst Kjaer, Sådan er det at elske. Rev. By *Ulrika Wolf-Knuts*
- 118 Negotiating Urban Spatiality. – Tiina-Riitta Lappi, Neuvottelu tilan tulkinnoista. Rev. by *Kirsi Saarikangas*
- 120 Stories Told by Museum Objects. – Camilla Mordhorst, Genstandsfortællinger. Rev. by *Birgitta Svensson*
- 122 When Older Workers Stay On. – Björn Ohlsson, Vi som stannade på Volvo. Rev. by *Niels Jul Nielsen*
- 123 Ethnologists in the Wartime Occupation of East Karelia. – Tenho Pimiä, Tähtäin idässä. Rev. by *Pertti Anttonen*
- 125 Between Art and Handicraft. – Johanna Rosenqvist, Könskillnadens estetik? Om konst & konstskapande i svensk hemslöjd på 1920- och 1990-talen. Rev. by *Maria Ekqvist*
- 127 Lifestyle Hotels. – Maria Strannegård, Hotell Speciell. Livsstilskonsumtion på känslornas marknad. Rev. by *Per Strömberg*
- 130 The Gendered Forest. – Tiina Suopajarvi, Sukupuoli mien metsään. Rev. by *Anja Nygren*
- 133 Who(se) Is the Corpse in the Coffin? – Ingeborg Svensson, Liket i garderoben. Rev. by *Jan Wickman*

Book Reviews

- 136 Magic and Witchcraft. – Bente Gullveig Alver, Mellem mennesker og magter. Rev. by *Marie Lindstedt Cronberg*
- 138 Ethnographic Observations. – Gösta Arvastson & Billy Ehn (eds.), Etnologiska observationer. Rev. by *Helena Larsson*
- 139 Music and Politics. – Alf Arvidsson, Musik och politik hör ihop. Rev. by *Niels Kayser Nielsen*
- 141 A Taste of Skåne. – Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Den skånska smaken. Rev. by *Else-Marie Boyhus*
- 142 The Spirit of the Works. – Kirsten H. Clausen & Torben A. Vestergaard, Ånden på værket. Rev. by *Göran Sjögård*
- 144 Habits, Waiting, and Fantasy. – Billy Ehn & Orvar Löfgren, När ingenting särskilt händer. Rev. by *Niels Kayser Nielsen*

- 146 Honour Killings and Words. – Simon Ekström, Hedersmorden och orden. Rev. by *Magnus Berg*
- 148 A Cultural History of Museums. – Anne Eriksen, Museum. Rev. by *Göran Hedlund*
- 149 Voices from the Archive. – Outi Fingerroos & Tuulikki Kurki (eds.), Ääniä arkistosta. Rev. by *Carola Ekrem*
- 151 Analysis of a Childfree Life. – Tove Fjell, Å si nei til meningen med livet? Rev. by *Kristofer Hansson*
- 152 Local Cultural Patterns of Ill Health. – Jonas Frykman & Kjell Hansen, I ohälsans tid. Rev. by *Anne Leonora Blaakilde*
- 154 Humans and Animals in History. – Anne Katrine Gjerløff, Jette Møllerhøj & Bo Poulsen (eds.), Folk og fæ. Rev. by *Nils-Erik Landell*
- 156 History and Nationalism a Century Ago. – Harald Gustafsson et al. (eds.), Den dubbla blicken. Rev. by *Barbro Blehr*
- 157 Food in Nineteenth-Century Denmark. – Ole Hyldtoft (ed.), Kost og spisevaner i 1800-tallet. Rev. by *Håkan Jönsson*
- 160 Labour Movement and Workers' Culture. – Lena Johannesson, Ulrika Kjellman & Birgitta Skarin Frykman, Arbetarrörelse och arbetarkultur. Rev. by *Niels Jul Nielsen*
- 162 Concert Arrangers in Sweden. – Lars Kaijser, Musikens ögonblick. Rev. by *Johannes Brusila*
- 163 Reading Public Sculpture: Contextualizing and Recontextualizing Art in Profane and Sacred Space. – Harri Kalha, Tapaus Havis Amanda. Liisa Lindgren, Memoria. Rev. by *Tuuli Lähdesmäki*
- 166 Two Centuries of Danish Traditions. – Else Marie Kofod, Traditionen tro? Hverdag og fest igennem 200 år. Rev. by *Carola Ekrem*
- 167 Reindeer Fences in Focus. – Teppo Korhonen, Poroerotus. Rev. by *Helena Ruotsala*
- 168 Touching Things. – Pirjo Korkiakangas, Tiina-Riitta Lappi & Heli Niskanen (eds.), Ethnological Aspects of Modern Material Culture. Rev. by *Sanna Lillbroända-Annala*
- 169 Identity of Orcadians. – Michael A. Lange, The Norwegian Scots. Rev. by *Terry Gunnell*
- 171 Tradition and Tourism in Åland. – Yrsa Lindqvist (ed.), Tradition och turism på Åland. Rev. by *Agneta Lilja*
- 173 Pre-modern Attitudes. – Marie Lindstedt Cronberg & Catharina Stenqvist (eds.), Förmoderna livshållningar. Rev. by *Nils G. Holm*
- 174 Contemporary Folk Art. – Eva Londos (ed.), Rondellhundar och schablonspindlar. Rev. by *Helle Ravn*
- 176 Tracing Jewish Immigration History. – Karin Lützen, Mors hemmelighed. Rev. by *Tone Hellesund*
- 177 Power Play in Dress. – Bo Lönnqvist, Maktspel i kläder. Rev. by *Marie Riegels Melchior*
- 178 The History of a Noble Family. – Bo Lönnqvist, En finsk adelssläkts öden. Rev. by *Mats Hellspong*
- 180 Rituals. – Lina Midholm & Annika Nordström (eds.), The Ritual Year and Ritual Diversity. Rev. by *Camilla Asplund Ingemark*
- 183 Contacts over Öresund in the Twentieth Century. – Kjell Å. Modéer (ed.), Grændse som skiller ej! Kontakter över Öresund under 1900-talet. Rev. by *Helena Ruotsala*
- 184 A Century of the Hedmark Museum. – Ragnar Pedersen, Hedmarksmuseet. Rev. by *Göran Hedlund*
- 185 In the Arms of Morpheus. – Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, I søvnens favn. Om søvn og sovevaner på landet ca 1600–1850. Rev. by *Birgitta Svensson*
- 185 Living in a House That is Mine, and Yet not Mine. – Outi Tuomi-Nikula & Eeva Karhunen (eds.) Kotina suojeltu talo. Arkea, elämää ja rakennussuojelua Suomessa ja Saksassa. Rev. by *Petja Aarnipuu*

Editorial

By Birgitta Svensson

This year's *Ethnologia Scandinavica* reflects a renewed interest in materiality among ethnologists, no longer primarily an interest in artefacts as such but in processes of materialization, concerning both things and living bodies. Several articles also consider the significance of place. Most things that happen literally take place and thus materialize themselves somewhere. The research front in Scandinavian ethnology today has adopted gender-specific analyses and is often phenomenologically inspired.

One remarkable place is the zoo, and even more remarkable is that it was once a source of amusement to go there to see exotic people. Anne Folke Henningsen examines how Copenhagen Zoo and the Tivoli amusement park from the 1880s to 1905 hosted exhibitions of "exotic" peoples, such as Chinese, Indian, Kirgiz and "Negro". These ethnographic exhibitions were an important part of life in major European cities. One of the most important figures in this was the showman Carl Hagenbeck from Hamburg, who through his worldwide network of people involved in trading the "exotic", supplied zoos and amusement parks with a wide range of animals and people. By playing with notions of in/appropriate, Henningsen discusses how sights of perceived otherness and sameness could assume different meanings and affect spectators differently according to context. Otherness could both be stabilized and destabilized through the agency of the people on display; the participants in the live ethnographic exhibitions in Copenhagen were all in their own way engaged in de/stabilizing the otherness the exhibitions cast them in.

Otherness can also be in focus when it comes to illness, as Karine Aasgaard Jansen shows in her article defending the corporeality of bodies. She argues that the material body related to illness and sexual difference

can incorporate and integrate the sexed, *biological* body in the social and cultural sciences without necessarily into the "essentialism trap". Running throughout her argumentation is the conviction that feminist phenomenology and ontology, as propounded by philosophers like Simone de Beauvoir and Lucy Irigaray, provide new tools for comparative and intersectional inquiries that include sexed/gendered experience of illness. This refiguring attends to the body's corporeality and its social, cultural and political situation without essentializing. Moving the sexually specific body and its materiality from the periphery to the centre of analysis, she reveals not just new ways to study illness but also how difference might be a fact, though it should not be conceived as a norm.

Marianne Liliequist introduces us to the role of the elderly in the Swedish Sami community. They use different strategies to achieve and maintain quality of life. Common to all elderly Sami is that family belonging means always being included. Liliequist notes that the elderly have a firm identity and are always welcome at family events and in different Sami settings. She finds two dominant strategies among elderly Sami. One is practised by those who still live among their relatives in the Sami village and means being active as long as possible in the reindeer herding. Another strategy available to the elderly living in a larger village or in the city is to take on the role of creator of Sami identity for the younger generation. She has found a duality in the status of the elderly women: a formally subordinate position in the Sami village and in society at large, but informal power within the family and in the Sami community. They now have a more ideological role in keeping the Sami group together as a culturally specific entity.

In Åsa Alftberg's article the focus is like-

wise on women's bodies. She argues that age is a mental construction which positions people in a cultural category. It is not the body that reveals to us that we are old, but other people. In contrast to prevailing opinions that growing old leads to loneliness and isolation as well as illness and dependence on others, she shows that people's experiences and thoughts about ageing concern something very material and situation-bound. Her respondents speak of everyday situations and depict the different ways ageing is "done", based on places or objects.

Mark Vacher asks how the modern Danish home can be studied not only in terms of the objects contained in it but also through social relations. By contrasting the terms *housing* and *home* he seeks to show how the home is both a practice and a purely material manifestation. As such it must be studied as also belonging to other ongoing processes in society.

It has become popular to live in the inner city with children among groups of people with resources to choose where to live. In Hilde Danielsen's article, city life is presented as a normative ideal because of its association with diversity. The analysis is based on an interview study of parents with children aged 6–10 living in the centre of Bergen in Norway. They feel that they can offer their children many choices, and thus freedom and security to develop their own personality, while choosing to live in the city centre.

A new interest in the study of material culture appeared in the 1980s. Anthropologists such as Tim Ingold, Igor Kopytoff and Arjun Appadurai contributed by understanding artefacts from their biographies but also

the product aspects of things. Ingun Grimstad Klepp and Kirsi Laitala claim that the new interest in materiality had a fertile ground in consumer research. In their article on the benefits of standardization, they connect consumers' experiences, knowledge and practices with technical studies of clothes. From two examples in the form of flammability properties and sizes, they show that cooperation with other disciplines makes the most out of the study of the artefacts of industrial society. They combine methods from international standards for the testing of textiles and from ethnology, which gives a voice to the use of and attitudes to products.

Consumption and consumers' choice also play an important part in Richard Tellström's article on the conception of the Swedish National Day meal. Food culture is a result of the individual selection of food and drink, which are products that best carry desired values to be used in a collective context for the expression of self-identity and a sense of belonging to a society, but also to establish boundaries with respect to "the others". Taking his starting point in the celebration of the Swedish National Day, Tellström discusses how the selection of food and the organization of festive activities indicate an increase in the use of the meal as a platform for the expression of national identity.

The only biographical note this year is in memory of the first Danish editor of *Ethnologia Scandinavica*. The many different directions in ethnological research are reflected in the 45 reviews of new ethnological monographs and edited volumes from the Nordic countries.

De/stabilising Otherness

Acts of Subversion, Transgression and Appropriation in Live Ethnographic Exhibitions

By Anne Folke Henningsen

“To be an object of exhibition for the amusement of others made me bashful but also furious inside”
(Victor Cornelins 1977:26)

From the 1880s to 1905 the Copenhagen Zoo and the Tivoli amusement park hosted a series of rivalling, if similar, exhibitions of different ‘exotic’ peoples, such as Chinese, Indian, Kirgiz and ‘Negro’. Many of the troupes exhibited in Copenhagen were imported to and distributed within Europe by one of the most important figures in the ethnographic business, the German showman, animal trader and Zoo director Carl Hagenbeck from Hamburg, who through his world wide network of people involved in trading the ‘exotic’ supplied European and North American zoos and amusement parks with a wide range of animals and people to be exhibited in the larger cities of the western world (Rothfels 2002; Ames 2008; Blanchard et al. 2008). These live ethnographic exhibitions were an important part of the life in the larger European cities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and served to portray the inherent difference and inferiority of the strange people on display:

The aim of these [human] zoos, exhibitions and parks was, essentially, to display the rare, the curious and the strange as expressions of the unusual and the different, set in opposition to a rational construction of the world that operated along European standards (Blanchard et al. 2008:110).

By being part of this larger European trend of exhibiting the foreign, inhabitants of semi-peripheral Denmark could feel affiliated with the practices of the ‘civilised’ world. And the exhibitions were very popular with the citizens of Copenhagen, as can be seen from the fact that more than 18 000 people visited the Zoo in one single day in 1901 to see the Indian people on display in the staged village there. The Indians performed ‘traditional’ dances and were engaged in artistic routines

but equally if not more important and interesting to the crowd were the different daily tasks they were to perform to give the Danes a peek into the everyday life of these people from foreign lands.

The mixture of educational and entertainment shows in so-called edutainment is a well known phenomenon in 21st century societies but it is by no means new. With Zoo director Julius Schjøtt’s engagement and dedication to increase popular education and the diversity of shows and exhibitions in the Zoo, he can be said to be an exponent for this powerful mix of genres, which, as Aileen Fyfe and Bernard Lightman have shown, grew increasingly strong in Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries (Fyfe & Lightman 2007). The live ethnographic exhibitions fit nicely into this hybrid: “The spectacle of ‘racial’ diversity in the form of ethnographic scenes was constructed around three distinct functions: to amuse, to inform and to educate, appearing in different configurations in the various types of exhibition” (Blanchard et al. 2008:24). This form of edutainment is linked with the convergence of scientific and popular racism and evolutionism in the exhibitions:

Visitors to the exhibitions had little sophistication. [...] They were encouraged to interpret what they saw as a demonstration of the progress of humanity from savagery to civilization. [...] The entertainment value of the ‘savage’ was increased by activities considered to be primitive in nature, such as dance, music, games and traditional physical pursuits, in which the body of the ‘savage’ was the key element. This body was represented as the reflection of a universe far removed from the technological progress of the West and close to nature, where man’s survival depended on his physical prowess (Blanchard et al. 2008:24f.).

So, in many different guises, ‘exotic’ people were put on display to the amusement and instruction of the European audiences, and or-

ganisers and press alike praised the educational qualities of such shows, that were able to give the audience “living impressions” (*Politiken* July 22, 1902) of the ways and lives of foreign people. The key word here besides ‘living’ is, of course, ‘foreign’: the logic behind the ethnographic exhibitions was to show the difference, the foreignness, the otherness of the people on display vis-à-vis the European public. In his book *Africans on Stage* Bernth Lindfors takes this logic to its extreme when he ends the introduction to the study with these words: “Ethnological show business thus promoted and perpetuated racism, pushing whites and blacks further apart by placing them in closer proximity. Africans were put on stage in order to distance them from the rest of humanity” (Lindfors 1999:xii).

Much as in the well-established genre of freak shows, the people on display in ethnographic exhibitions were put on stage to emphasise their difference. But there is a rather important divergence in the aim of the two types of exhibition: while the so-called freaks were put on display to represent difference in the shape of a more or less incidental *deviance* from the norm, the people in live ethnographic exhibitions were displayed in order to embody the inherent difference from the spectators that was thought *typical* of their ‘race’ (cf. Ames 2008:70f.). And this supposed and staged typicality of the ethnographic exhibitions is important for the understanding of the phenomenon. Carl Hagenbeck, the leading supplier of live ethnographic troupes in Europe including Denmark, branded himself as supplier of authenticity and his success in the business of ethnographic shows rested on the fact that people believed in the typicality of the people he displayed, they believed that they left his exhibitions with an increased knowledge of a cer-

tain, interesting people or ‘race’ (Rothfels 2002; Ames 2008). I have studied the staged character of the ethnographic exhibitions in Denmark and the obsession with racial authenticity on the part of both organisers and spectators elsewhere (Henningsen 2009), but in this article I aim to move beyond the staged typicality of the people on display to paint a picture in which the exhibited people emerge as acting subjects with agendas, feelings and desires rather than mere objects of exhibition.

At the core of the analysis lie the many ways in which the people on display in Tivoli and the Zoo are engaged in practices of stabilising and destabilising the otherness they were cast in through their participation in the live ethnographic exhibitions. In the article “Difference. A special third world women’s issue” from 1987 the Vietnamese-American filmmaker and postcolonial theorist Trinh Minh-ha introduced the concept of inappropriate/d otherness as a way of analysing difference and differentiation as a power tool. Her focus in the article lies on the ways in which differentiation is often used as a political weapon when someone is sought positioned or cast as Other, and the ways in which it can become possible to reject this invitation onto the scene of authentic difference, of absolute otherness (Minh-ha 1986–87). I will argue that the staging of live ethnographic shows is exactly such an invitation for the participating ‘exotic’ subject-objects of exhibition to express their authentic difference to the amusement and education of the European spectators. Throughout the exhibitions the exhibited people, through their acts, aspirations and desires, were accepting or rejecting the invitation to express otherness. This complicated dynamics of unstable yet sometimes stabilised positions of otherness and sameness will be guiding the following analyses.

The article falls in two parts: the first is focused on how the logics of the live ethnographic exhibitions are challenged and disrupted by the different desires, agendas and transgressing practices of the people on display, all of which are contributing to the stabilising or destabilising of their staged otherness; and the second part contains analyses of situations in which the ‘appropriate’ otherness of some of the exhibited people and in turn the ‘inappropriate’ sameness of others, each in their own way is causing discomfort and even conflict in the Danish press and public.

Through the diverse case studies of the article, tales of agency of the objectified will be told by examples of subversion, of transgressions and of appropriation; the objects of exhibition will emerge as subjects.

Destabilising the Logics of the Exhibitions

Eric Ames makes the case that the possible interaction between exhibited people and the public potentially lessened the divide and made the exhibited people more familiar, more *human*, and such cases were also reported in the Danish press, for instance when Waldemar Dreyer – who, incidentally, became director of the Zoo in 1910 – gave a vivid account in the daily newspaper *Politiken* of his conversation at a dinner party with one of the exhibited Kirgiz people (Ames 2008; *Politiken* August 25, 1900). But the interactions between ‘starrer’ and ‘staree’, as Rosemarie Garland-Thomson has put it (Garland-Thomson 2009:3), were not always benevolent and friendly and the actions of the people on display were not always within the bounds of what the organisers of the exhibitions had imagined. Even so, the people on display were at times engaged in practices that were very familiar to the Danish public

and thus – at least potentially – could destabilise their otherness, while at times the actions of the exhibited people were seen instead to enhance, emphasise and stabilise their otherness in the eyes and minds of the spectators and the press. A series of different situations and occurrences at the live ethnographic exhibitions in Tivoli and the Zoo will serve to illustrate this dynamics of othering and/or familiarising agency on the part of the exhibited people.

Rejecting ‘Friendly’ Interaction

The West Indian Victor Cornelins, who was exhibited in the colonial exhibition in Tivoli in 1905, when he was only seven years old, with another West Indian child, Alberta, described the experience of the invasion of the ‘starees’ in his memoirs. Generally speaking his experience of being in Copenhagen when he first arrived was one of discomfort, and in the memoirs he described how the people of Copenhagen would follow him and Alberta on their way to Tivoli and would touch their hair and faces to see if they were “real negroes”. He writes that in Copenhagen they were “almost looked upon as strange animals that had eloped from the Zoological Garden. This feeling made us frightened and we were afraid to go into the streets were we would be seen [...]” (Cornelins 1977:24). But obviously the interest for the black children was not only strong outside of Tivoli. Inside at the colonial exhibition, the marvelling spectators would grab the children in order to get the fullest experience of the encounter with the foreign: “[...] all day we had to let ourselves be glared at by the interested audience. The interest with some was so strong, that they would fondle us and turn and twist us to make us photogenic before taking the pic-

tures” (ibid.:25). One instance in particular is strongly present in his memory, and will serve to illustrate my point of Cornelins’s rejection of ‘friendly’ interaction with the crowd: a man came to the exhibition area with a little girl and wished for her and Cornelins to hold hands while he took a photograph of this scene in “black and white”. Cornelins was unwilling to do as they suggested and when the girl nonetheless reached out for Cornelins’s hand, he reacted by spitting at her beautiful white dress” (ibid.:25). In the vulnerable situation of Cornelins – a child of seven separated from his family and brought to a strange land to be exhibited – this apparently innocent gesture from the man and the girl was felt like an invasion to Cornelins, and he tried to protect himself from the unwanted attention as best he could. His hostile respond to the staging of a ‘Kodak moment’ with the girl obviously only increased his ‘savage’ otherness to the spectators.

But this was not the only way or the last time he would displease the organisers of the colonial exhibition. To their great dismay, Cornelins did not always stay in the exhibition area designated for the West Indies, but ran around and was particularly interested in – and thus often to be found in – the Greenlandic exhibition area. To keep him in the appropriate surroundings the organisers turned to a drastic solution: “They procured a cage!!! In this Alberta and I were placed, and the influx of spectators to the West Indian section increased, perhaps because of the rumours circulating, that we were cannibalistic children, who were dangerous and could not be let loose.” In the memoirs, Cornelins described how the caged exhibition made him even more desperate and how he as a consequence “rewarded all advances with a clot of spittle” (ibid.:27). In retrospect he suggested

that this behaviour perhaps was not appropriate but that he lacked the means to act in any other way: “[The spitting] was not very nice, but I had at the time no other means to assert my human dignity” (ibid.:27). Again, Cornelins – contrary to Alberta, who negotiated the situation by acting in a very well-behaved manner – acted in a way, which enhanced the thrilling sense of savagery, that the organisers – knowingly or unwittingly – had already increased by placing the children in a cage. In retrospect, Cornelins regretted his hostile behaviour, but in the memoirs he explained it with the fact that he had felt his humanity undermined by the forced participation in the exhibition.

Cornelins further described how he throughout his life felt vulnerable to being visibly different in large crowds (ibid.:49, 87, 104), and in his memoirs he related how he, later in life, as a teacher, often took the children to the Zoo but always remained affected by the children’s obvious enjoyment at laughing at the monkeys in the cages: “I remembered all too vividly my own experiences behind the bars!!!” (ibid.:27). In the case of Cornelins, the child on display at the colonial exhibition in Tivoli 1905, his interactions with the audience destabilised the logics of the exhibition in as much as they went beyond the bounds set by the organisers, but they did so in a way that stabilised his ‘savage’ otherness rather than humanising him – even if he, in retrospect, frames his actions as trying to preserve his human worth.

Drinking

Widespread use of alcohol among the exhibited people was another disturbing phenomenon in the shows. When, for instance, in 1902 a troupe of Japanese people was ex-

hibited in Copenhagen Zoo an unfortunate incident was reported in the newspaper *Politiken*. The Sumo wrestler was apparently unable to perform as expected due to a large intake of alcohol just before the show: he was reported to appear at the stage screaming and gesticulating and obviously drunk in his traditional wrestling suit “which as is well known consists of practically nothing”. He then tried to make a few wrestling moves but fell over repeatedly and became very upset and “a moment appeared in which the audience was unsure whether to be amused or frightened” (*Politiken* July 30, 1902). The drunkenness of the Sumo wrestler thus unsettled the crowd and occasioned a man to suggest to Mr. Wilgaard, the Danish agent who had collected the Japanese troupe, that they should try to sober him up by giving him a pickled cucumber, which curiously was assumed to have a sobering effect on Japanese people. In the meantime a couple of geishas made their performance and two swordsmen fenced while Mr. Wilgaard, according to the reporter, was wondering whether to stop the show as he could “risk that the combination of the momentary condition [of the wrestler] and his sparse attire could foster consequences best avoided” (*Politiken* July 30, 1902). Unfortunately, the cucumber did not have the desired effect and the wrestler returned in a very bad mood and the performance eventually ended in a huge fight in which both Mr. Wilgaard and some of the other Japanese people participated in order to pacify the angry and drunk wrestler. He was then put to bed in the house in which the troupe was living during their stay in Copenhagen (*Politiken* July 30, 1902).

Drinking was of course not an unknown phenomenon in Denmark at the time. But beside the obvious fact, that the drunkenness of

the Japanese wrestler was disrupting the show and that being senselessly drunk at a major performance would not be considered appropriate whether the artist was Japanese or Dane, there are two interesting points of othering going on in the situation or at least in the report of it in the newspaper. The first has to do with a widespread idea in the Danish public about the existence of what could be called ‘racial anatomy’ (cf. Henningsen 2009). When the Japanese wrestler showed up drunk, the organisers procured what was supposedly a racially attuned remedy: the pickled cucumber. In the article it was contrasted with the suitable remedy for a drunken Dane, which was described to be a pickled herring (*Politiken* July 30, 1902). And so, what could have been an everyday occurrence – a drunken man – was here turned into something in between familiar and foreign through the introduction of a ‘racially’ determined anatomy supposedly affecting the sobering processes. Similarly with the second othering feature of the article. Again, the point of departure is the potentially very ordinary scenario of a drunken man, but in this case he was wearing foreign ‘traditional’ clothing, which in combination with his drunkenness became – or could be considered – a threat to the common decency. The familiar behaviour of drinking, albeit in excess, became somewhat foreign in the guise of the Japanese wrestler, whose drunkenness was framed by the practice of othering.

Eloping

To pass the time – and possibly to escape the boredom of the exhibition venues – some of the exhibited people also eloped from time to time. They always returned to the exhibitions but even so, the organisers thought it a major

problem and possibly also a security risk. Often in the contracts it was stated that they would look after the people on display while they were in Denmark and in the paternalistic frame of the time, they were perceived as in need of control and looking after if they were to be safe from harm. It is of course important to remember that this fear for their safety not necessarily was an expression of paternalist control: the exhibited people were visibly foreign and in a completely unfamiliar city, which could have led to problems. But still, the obsession with control over the members of the ethnographic exhibitions is at least partly connected to a paternalistic sense of having to protect them – often from themselves.

When, for instance, the Kirgiz who was exhibited in the Zoo in 1900 snuck out of the Garden at night, they had a very specific purpose, which was to entertain themselves with games at the nearby amusement site Alleenberg:

[The Kirgiz] have become difficult to look after. Every night they climb over the walls to the Garden and go to Alleenberg only to return late at night. [...] It is the different throwing games and ring games with prizes that are the main attraction for these sons of the Asian Steppe. For the owners, however, their frequent visits are no source of income[,] for they are born champions in all forms of throwing games, and it is not often that one of them misses a throw (*Nationaltidende* August 12, 1900).

What is interesting in this newspaper article, besides the frustration of the organisers created by the eloping of the Kirgiz, is the way the familiar practice of playing games in the amusement park is turned into something somewhat foreign. Again, it has to do with biology. When, namely, the Kirgiz played games at Alleenberg they very seldom lost because they were, as the article states, naturals who were born to throw things with pre-

cision. One could then easily make the connection to the life on the Steppe of this ‘natural people’ dependent on their close contact with nature (cf. above). And so, again the familiar behaviour is turned into the – biologically determined – foreign natural skills.

Striking

The last disruptive practice I will point to is an extraordinary one. When in 1902 the Chinese on display in Tivoli took to striking in order to get the financial settlement they desired it was breaking news in Copenhagen. The strike was reported in the newspapers and the satirical magazine *Klods-Hans*, which had always shown a great interest in the different ethnographic exhibitions, made its own mock report in which fun was made of both the striking Chinese, the sensation hungry press and, to a lesser extent, the organisers of the exhibition and the leaders of Tivoli. In the daily newspaper *Politiken* the strike was covered extensively and from this coverage one can get an idea of the problems causing the conflict. As mentioned it had to do with financial issues but it was the date of payment rather than the amount itself that caused dissatisfaction among the exhibited Chinese. According to *Politiken*'s journalist they did not trust the organisers of the show to pay them their full amount at the end of the engagement and consequently they wanted the full amount paid to them beforehand. The organisers were not interested in this solution, as they feared that the Chinese, upon reception of their entire salary, would neglect to fulfil their obligations to the amusement park. This refusal to pay them in advance caused the Chinese to go on strike. The strike lasted for one evening only and the following day

a parade of rickshaws through Copenhagen could bring the happy news that the strike was ended. The agreement had been reached that the organisers deposited the remaining salary in a bank account in the name of four of the Chinese people, but with the condition that they could only be withdrawn on the day the exhibition ended (*Politiken* August 5, and 6, 1902).

The satirical report in *Klods-Hans* had a somewhat different take on the strike. Instead of the serious – if somewhat sceptical – approach of *Politiken* of the trust issues between the Chinese and the organisers of the exhibition, the satirical magazine turned the matter in to the, to their mind, laughable and ridiculous romantic relations between Chinese men and Danish women to which more attention will be directed later in the article. For now it will suffice with a few quotations to illustrate this mocking view of the conflict. Under the heading “The Chinese Riot” the pseudonym ‘Lup’ writes:

As far as I have been informed, there was much unrest in the Chinese village [the exhibition area] last night. The reason is dissatisfaction with the economic position. The Chinese wishes to have money to be able to treat the ladies coming to visit them with Swedish soda water. [...] Mr. Thomas Lorenzen [a Tivoli director] has succeeded in procuring peace on the following conditions: that the Chinese from now on will be paid fifteen Øre [Danish currency] a day to meet the expenses of their lady visits (*Klods-Hans* no. 46, August 17, 1902).

As with the other disruptive practices of the people on display, the Chinese strike also ended somewhere between the foreign and the familiar. Obviously, the weapon of strike itself was not unfamiliar in Danish society of the time, but the press put a particular spin on the Chinese strike, which served to de-legitimize it. In the serious part of the press, the anxiety of the Chinese over their payment remained inexplicable, but it was reported

more or less in a sober – if somewhat overbearing – tone, albeit with the clear sentiment that the organisers rather than the Chinese had the right on their side, and that the Chinese were engaged in practices, that did not really belong to them and their culture (*Politiken* August 5, and 6, 1902). In the satirical magazine *Klods-Hans* on the other hand, the strike was turned into a question of the Chinese interaction with Danish women, and so the familiar practice of striking for your right or for better conditions was turned into if not something other, then at least something ridiculous *qua* other.

The disruptive practices of the exhibited people described above in the different cases are on the one hand affirming their otherness while on the other providing a sense of their common humanity with the spectators when they employ the familiar strategy of striking, engage in romantic relationships, and when they indulge in familiar vices such as drinking and visiting the tombola and other forms of entertainment that were very popular with the Danish public. And this double move of sameness and otherness, of familiarity and foreignness, in line with the situation Trinh Minh-ha pointed to when explaining the notion of inappropriate/d otherness (cf. above). One could argue that the disruptive practices of the exhibited people can be likened with Minh-ha’s (1986–87) and Haraway’s (1992) inappropriate/d others in their unsettling and subversive potential – a potential that goes beyond the mere destabilising of the logics of the exhibitions and enters the realm of perceptions of ‘us’ and ‘them’ in an unsettling manner.

Conflicts of In/appropriation

The figure of the inappropriate/d other was used above to capture the meaning of the agency of the exhibited people when they

engaged in practices not sanctioned by the organisers of the shows. In this section I wish to play a little more with the pair appropriate and inappropriate – both as verbs and as adjectives. I will present two cases or phenomena, each of which it is possible to grasp analytically by different usages of in/appropriate(ing). Thus, I will show how on the one hand the Japanese exhibited in the Zoo are considered a dangerous threat because of their ‘inappropriate’ sameness with the Danish audience, while on the other hand many of the exhibited men are considered threatening because of the ‘inappropriate’ use of their otherwise ‘appropriate’ otherness in their love relations with Danish women.

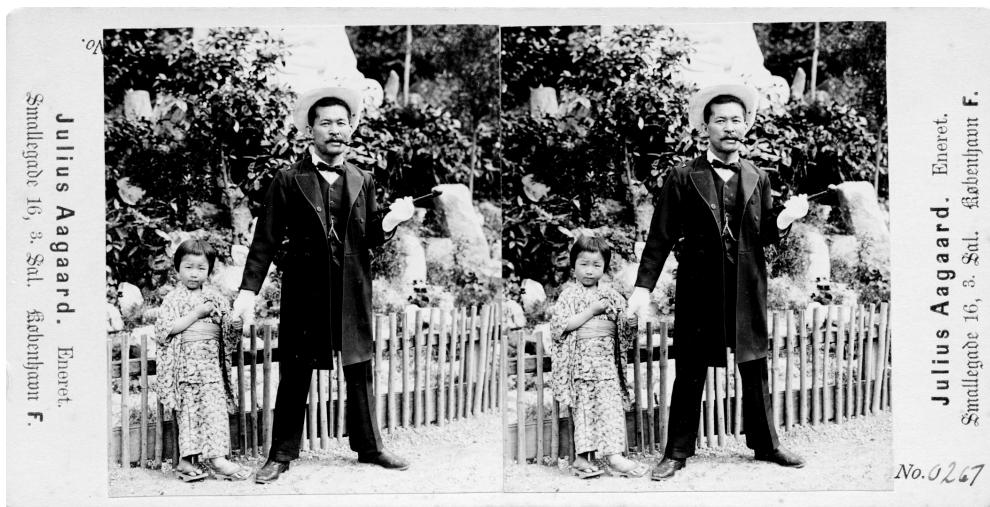
Appropriating Inappropriate Sameness: the Japanese

In 1902 the journalist and historian C.C. Clausen published an article in *Hver 8. Dag*, under the headline “The Yellow Peril”.¹ The

article was a report from his visit to the Japanese village in Copenhagen Zoo, and reflects on the educational and political significance of the exhibition of Japanese people. As Clausen explains, the headline refers to Kaiser Wilhelm’s assertion that the peril for Europe comes from the east, from Japan, a sentiment that he apparently seconds. He writes:

The danger, that he [Wilhelm] warned against, is there, and never have I felt it more acutely, more vividly, more personally, than the other day when I saw the Comoran Fisherman from the Japanese troupe in the Zoological Gardens sitting hour after hour teaching himself English from a learner’s book. [...] Before me I saw in that moment the entire young, knowledge-hungry, progress-crazed Japan (*Hver 8. Dag* August 10, 1902).

The terrible peril lies in the young Japanese man trying to learn English; to appropriate a Western language for ill-willed purposes, one supposes, after reading Clausen’s article. But an even more frightening thing is the appearance of the Japanese fencer who – after



Japanese man in Western dress. Zoologisk Haves Arkiv, Copenhagen.

having performed dressed in a coat of mail with a bamboo stick:

[He is seen] strolling in a European outfit. If you saw him in the streets you would mistake him for a Copenhagen worker in his best Sunday suit. He carries the clothing with ease, as if he and his fathers had been dressed after European fashion for centuries. All the agility of the Japanese people, its ability to appropriate a foreign culture, come to life in this fencer with his black coat, black trousers, walking cane and the English shag pipe in his mouth (*Hver 8. Dag* August 10, 1902).

Thus, it was not merely the appropriation of the language, but also the dressing style that caused the reporter to take fright. One can sense his anxiety over the chameleon-like way in which these Japanese people can hardly be discerned from the Danish working class. But why was the appropriation of Western language and style such a threat? The answer follows in the next segment of Clausen's article:

[The Japanese are] a danger, a serious danger to Europe. Everywhere else that the Europeans arrived they met uncultivated people, who stood aside, and were exterminated, or let themselves be suppressed; made into underlings or slaves for the strong Arians. For the first time the Arians have encountered a people, as intelligent as themselves, with flexibility, susceptibility, which far surpasses that of the Europeans. They learn our weapons-skills, they copy our machines, with their minimal requirements they are able to produce them far cheaper than us, they meet us on all the markets in the East, and then send their own goods into the European markets (*Hver 8. Dag* August 10, 1902).

So we see the reason why Clausen perceived the Japanese as posing such a threat to Danish and European societies: chameleon-like he thought them able to observe, learn and copy our languages, our ways, culture and technologies, and turn it all against us, and in so doing they were, to the mind of Clausen and the Danish public, appropriating an inappropriate sameness.



Japanese wrestlers. Zoologisk Haves Arkiv, Copenhagen.

Inappropriating Appropriate Otherness: the Improper Love Relations

When live ethnographic exhibitions entered Europe there was often quite a large interest in the exhibited men from the European women, which did not go unnoticed in the press or in the public. Copenhagen was no different in this respect than the other European cities. The women of Copenhagen freely engaged in romantic relations with the exhibited men, who in their turn often were just as willing to engage in such relations.² When for instance the Central Asian Circassian troupe came to Tivoli in 1900 an article in *Politiken* described how groups of Danish women always lacked proper resistance when it came to these foreign troupes – re-

ardless of the state of their cleanliness (*Politiken* July 15, 1900). And so, the men on display in the ethnographic exhibitions were almost always very popular with the women. But none more than the Chinese in Tivoli in 1902, whom some Danish women actually ended up marrying and settle down with. This was not looked upon benevolently by society or the women's families, as the next example from *Politiken* will illustrate. The article describes the usual fascination with the foreign men among the Danish women, but the reporter notes that there is a difference with the Chinese. It seems that even "ladies of good families have lost their minds along with their hearts" and have courted the Chinese. As an illustration of this the reporter gives a recollection of a letter he has read from a concerned father to one of these 'good girls' who had been engaged in improper relations with a Chinese man. The gist of the letter is that it has come to the attention of the father that his daughter has been in a relationship with the Chinese recipient of the letter and that she has asked this Chinese man to come and visit them. The father then begs him not to do so, as that would only cause grief to all parties involved. And so, the father made it very clear to the Chinese man that he had no intention of allowing their relationship to go on. But the girl thought otherwise: Inside the letter she had put a tiny note, saying: "Dear ...! I am writing this without Father seeing it. But I wish to let you know that I love you and will never forget you!" (*Politiken* July 31, 1902).

The reporter sums up the morale of the story in the following terms: "We have told this story [...] to give the young girls a good fright, who might consider increasing the gallery of beauties possessed by the Chinese but who rather ought not to do so" (*Politiken* July 31, 1902). No one could be left in

doubt that these relationships were seen as illegitimate and immoral. This also explains why the organisers of the shows actually tried to intercept the letters before they reached their proper recipient, as a report from the newspaper *Provinsen* will show. It is the earlier mentioned Johannes Madsen, who was in charge of the Chinese exhibition in Tivoli, who tells the inquisitive journalist directly that he intercepts as many letters as possible and explains that "he not only would have lost the entire troupe, but further that scores of families here and beyond the sea would have been unhappy had he not withheld scores of letters and destroyed romantic attempts of eloping" (*Provinsen* August 15, 1902).

Unlike with the Japanese in the Zoo, who showed inappropriate amounts of sameness, the inappropriateness of these exhibited men lies in the romantic allure of their otherwise appropriate otherness.

Concluding Reflections: De/stabilising Otherness in (Re)strained Situations

By playing with the notions of in/appropriate and in/appropriating in different settings, I have shown how sights of perceived otherness and sameness could assume different meanings and affect the spectators differently according to context, and how the otherness staged in the restrained conditions of live ethnographic exhibitions could both be stabilised and destabilised through the agency of the people on display: by their acceptance or rejection of the invitation to express the otherness expected in the exhibitions. First, the subversive practices of the exhibited people were active in de/stabilising the otherness staged in the shows themselves, by engaging in practices at once familiar and foreign. Then, the otherness of the Japanese was destabilised by their unsettling

sameness, while the romantic relations between Danish women and exhibited men reinforced the otherness of the men on display, as they were romantically attractive *qua* other. In short, the different participants in the live ethnographic exhibitions in Copenhagen were all in their own way engaged in de/stabilising the otherness the exhibitions cast them in.

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Notes

- 1 Clausen was not the only one in Denmark who was interested in 'the yellow peril'. The before mentioned W. Dreyer, who later was to become director of the Zoo, wrote of the great danger facing Europe from the far East in both the preface and the postscript of his book *Den Hvide Races Sejrsang* (Dreyer 1910).
- 2 Interestingly, I know of no examples of the reverse situation in which European men were engaged romantically with exhibited women. The women on display were almost always exhibited in a highly sexualised manner but this, apparently, did not lead to any romantic relationships, at least none that are reported (cf. Andreassen under publication). I will contend that the forward and explicit behaviour of the European women was facilitated by their privileged whiteness, which would enable them to be able to approach the non-white men in a manner not possible with white men.

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Defending the Body

By Karine Aasgaard Jansen

A Discussion of de Beauvoir, Irigaray and the Relevance of “Sexual Difference” for Empirical (Medical Anthropological) Research

The problem of the sexed and/or gendered body is an essential(ist) one within various feminist theories. In order to avoid falling prey to essentialism and its unspeakable cognates biologism, naturalism, reductionism and universalism many feminists have avoided discussing the corporeally and sexually specific body and rather relied upon the socially constructed *gender*. The material body has thus remained a convenient conceptual blind spot (Grosz 1994:3), and ‘politically incorrect’ questions of bodies, sexed specificities and sexual difference have been largely disregarded. Then again, the trouble(d) body seems to persistently reappear as it refuses to evaporate or be ignored, but rather continues to haunt social constructionism with its very real and material presence (Alaimo & Hekman 2008).

The body’s incessant physical re-emergence becomes perhaps particularly apparent within my own empirically dominated field of medical anthropology. After all, sick bodies and their narratives comprise the very fundamental focus of my research.¹ But mind you; there is nothing pretty about illness. Ill bodies are weak; they leak and they ache. No wonder then, that through illness the body tends to become the focus for our orientations in the world as various diseases reminds us that the bodies we live in are very real, corporeal and sexual indeed.

The following article has its origin in a desire to think through and find potential touching points between biological and feminist accounts of sexed body materiality, e.g., theories that acknowledge the material, sexed body, but does not reduce it to a pure anatomical biomedical object or symptom

stripped of subjectivity and meaning. Body matter can be a historical and cultural creation, e.g., a *living body*.² In addition sexual difference might be a fact, but should not be conceived as a norm (Grosz lecture held in Paris 19.10.2006). While moving the corporeal, sexed and living body from periphery into the centre of analysis (Grosz 1994), the aim of the following hypothetical pondering is to discover possible new approaches to study illness within medical anthropology and other related empirical fields by drawing upon knowledge from feminist theories of sexual difference based in phenomenology (e.g. Merleau-Ponty 2002 [1945]; de Beauvoir 2000 [1949]; Moi 1998; Heinämaa 2003; Young 1980) and ontology (Irigaray 1991 & 2004; Grosz 1994 & 1995).

A Medical Anthropological Perspective on Bodies and Illness

The traditional role of anthropological research within the medical field has been validation and translation of ethnographic aetiologies. The body was therefore up until the beginning of the 1990s hidden within empirical descriptions of rituals and analyses of social organisations as a symbolic marker/maker. The body was acknowledged as more than nature, but also as a largely passive slate for inscriptions of cultural values much in line with Foucault’s understanding of bio-power (Foucault (1999 [1971]; 2001 [1977]; 2003 [1973] & 2004 [1976]), and social constructionism. With the phenomenological entry the focus of inquiry and analysis shifted. Ethnographic accounts within medical anthropology should no longer be sole representations or only about the body, but rather originate from the very body itself (see for instance Scarry 1985; Morris 1991; Kleinman 1988

& 1995; Good 1994; Csordas 1994). The body became an experiencing agent articulated through *embodiment* as the existential condition of expressions of subjectivity and cultural life (Csordas 1994); a view which is largely maintained today with ethnographic narrative accounts of experiences of various illnesses, pain etc. Being ill is thus considered to be differently experienced, articulated and 'performed' by various sick individuals. The illness is given meaning through people's social and cultural repertoire, for instance particular personal – and family stories, categories of social differentiation such as ethnicity, class, gender, age, religious and/or traditional aetiologies – and folk beliefs, and discursive encounters or bio/body politics. Medical anthropology is thus generally concerned with *both* the phenomenological and social, cultural and political aspects of illness, and tries to understand the contextual situatedness of the sickness' occurrence on a holistic level.

Phenomenology, Sexual Difference and Illness

Despite the empirical and analytical focus on the living body, embodiment, life worlds etc. within medical anthropology, I have yet had the pleasure to find ethnographic accounts of sexual difference, or even comparisons of illness and gender. It might seem that many analyses are either *gender-neutral*, e.g., gender is not part of the inquiry, or rather somewhat *gender-specific*, e.g., for instance men and health-reducing behaviour, women and reproductive issues etc.³

According to feminist theories concerned with sexual difference the phenomenology of the female and male body differs radically, and not only due to social ascriptions, but also because living (in) a female or a male body are two entirely different ex-

periences and situations (Grosz 1994).⁴ In such a perspective being ill, no matter what the illness and its symptoms might be, would thus constitute distinctly dissimilar realisations for the two sexes (Moi 1998). Medical anthropological research concerned with gender aspects could therefore in addition to cross-cultural and/or intersectional comparisons of diseases look for variations in experiences and expressions of the *same (diagnosed) illness* between the sexes. Physical symptoms and experience have their locus within the body, and neither can be separated from the other. Both are also necessarily sexed or gendered. Do for instance varying gendered experiences of illness create various physical symptoms, or at least different physical behavioural expressions of symptoms? As well as looking for social and cultural evidence for potential differences or similarities between genders, one should also take account of the sexually specific body *materiality* and its morphology in order to include and acknowledge gendered *experience* as a fertile variable (Young 1980).

Corporeal Experience and Feminist Phenomenology

Phenomenology is largely about the ways in which we relate to the world and its beings (Heinämaa 2003), e.g. through experiences situated in the body according to Merleau-Ponty (2002 [1945]).⁵ In addition Merleau-Ponty sets off his "Phenomenology of Perception" with a fundamental presumption of the interrelatedness of mind and body; *res extensa*, in opposition to Descartes' *res cogito*. He continues his explorative thinking by claiming that the body is not an object, but rather the condition and context for subjectivity, and our orientations in the world. Then again, as others'

bodies are similarly situated, my body will become an object to others' perceptions. Hence Merleau-Ponty argues that the body is both object and subject, depending on whether it is perceived by others or experienced by the self. The world and bodies come into existence together, and remain interconnected as living bodies.

According to newer critical readings of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (2000 [1949]) as represented by for instance Heinämaa (2003), de Beauvoir's reflections on female bodies should be understood as a phenomenological philosophical endeavour rather than only a socio-historic and empirically based description of women and their limits for transcendence as has traditionally been the case (Sampson 2008). By following in Merleau-Ponty's corporeal footsteps de Beauvoir utilises women's concrete, lived experiences to ask how one sexually specific body *becomes* female. In order to discuss this de Beauvoir famously claims that the body is "not an object, but rather a *situation*", in addition to "our grasp of the world and draft for our projects" (de Beauvoir 2000 [1949]:77/78). According to de Beauvoir women and men have different *experiences of being* in the world due to the various values and practises placed upon our sexually specific bodies within a patriarchal society. Women have for instance throughout history commonly been forced to experience their own bodies as more subdued by biology than men (Moi 1998). Women have thus come to consider their bodies as more based in immanence than transcendence according to de Beauvoir. Then again, as my (female) body can not be reduced to sole object, e.g., a social inscription, I continually (and until death) interact with my surrounding world and society's limitations on my freedom/projects to be-

come the woman/subject that I am capable of becoming (Moi 1998:109). The phenomenological (and existential) body is intentional, and the possibility for transcendence will be played out in the interaction between the body's desire for freedom and society's restrictions on its factuality.

Embodiment and Gendered Morphology

If the sexually specific female body truly is more subdued to immanence than the male body due to various experiences of being in the world, how might such diverse corporeal experiences play out? According to Young (1980) (contemporary, western and particularly bourgeois) women do not utilise their body's full, physical capacity for instance within sports, or in everyday movements, bodily comportment and relations to space. Women and men sit, stand, walk and even throw balls differently. Whereas a man often sits with his legs wide apart, strides and swings his arms when he walks, and twists his entire body backwards and then leans forward to release the ball to reach its farthest possible goal, women tend to sit with their legs close together, take smaller steps and remain immobile except for the arm when they throw that very same ball (Young 1980:142). Such variations can no longer be explained away by for instance dress codes, e.g., 'women only wear skirts or dresses', social codes for gendered behaviour or varying muscular strengths according to Young. Then again, it can neither be clarified by biology inasmuch as both female and male bodies are, at least for the most part, capable of a wide variety of physical activities and movements. Young (1980) therefore rather takes these differences to be examples of variations of how each sex *uses* their bodies, and that women

tend to be less free and open in their bodily compartments and motions than men, *as women are*, according to Young, *generally less comfortable with their own bodies*. As women repetitively experience that their bodies are encapsulated as immanence, the female body-subject's intentionality and reach towards transcendence is ultimately inhibited (Sampson 2008). In short: Female and male bodies constitute dissimilar situations. According to Merleau-Ponty and his notion of "corporeal schema" or body image our bodies somehow 'know' what to do and how to move (Grosz 1994; Merleau-Ponty 2002 [1945]). Apparently female bodies 'know' how *not* to move. According to Young (1980) feminine bodily existence is thus somewhat ambiguous as women live their bodies as object as well as subject, whereas a male body, at least from a man's own experience of him(self), only constitute subject.

Then again, from a social and cultural science perspective there are some obvious problems associated with Young's analysis that makes it rather difficult to defend. Although Young, at least in a footnote (1980: 143, footnote), acknowledges that women who do heavy physical work, whether in western or non-western contexts, might not fit this particular observation and description, Young does not discuss and distinguish between *various* female bodies' corporealities and morphologies according to age, ethnicity, class, context etc. The female body within Young's analysis might therefore seem to be a universal rather than a cultural and contextual-specific category *despite* the phenomenological focus upon the body as a "situation". There are of course different ways of being (male, female and everything else) bodies in the world.

De Beauvoir's Phenomenology and Sexual Difference

Young's (1980) analysis of female morphology remains true to de Beauvoir's phenomenological project. Then again, de Beauvoir's acknowledgement of the historical and cultural situations within which sexually specific bodies are part, does not necessarily legitimise the common placement of de Beauvoir within the sex/gender divide, but rather verifies her strong connections to Merleau-Ponty (Moi 1998; Heinämaa 2003). Within Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology *becoming* would not refer to becoming a social, cultural and historical *gender* as this necessarily entails a dichotomous understanding of the world. Heinämaa (2003) thus claims that de Beauvoir rather discusses different meanings accorded to and experienced by our living, (sexually different) bodies as illustrated by Young (1980). Being a man or being a woman is not a question of possessing some fixed property or essence, but expresses basic variations in our ways of relating to the world and its objects. Maleness and femaleness should not be confused with any so-called inherent physical or psychological traits, but are open to individual interpretation and modification (Heinämaa 2003: 68).

Still, sexual identity is not a question of performance or choice within a phenomenological framework, but rather the result of repetitive perceptions, motilities and experiences (Heinämaa 2003). The relative stability of the gendered hierarchy is understood to be the result of *repetitions of practices* rather than causal explanations based for instance in biology (Sampson 2008). It is thus us, as men and women that maintain the hierarchy (Heinämaa 2003). Many of de Beauvoir's critics would probably disagree with such a reading of de Beauvoir as it has been com-

monly claimed that de Beauvoir perceives the female, reproductive body as oppressive in itself. On the other hand, although de Beauvoir might be quite ambiguous and negative in her writings on pregnancy and motherhood, she would contradict herself if she (so famously) claimed on the one hand that: “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (de Beauvoir 2000 [1949]: 329), and on the other hand that: “the female is victim to the species”. If read through a phenomenological lens though, neither the subject nor the object, or nature and culture can be separated from each other. De Beauvoir’s acknowledgement and focus on the importance of the non-essentialist, but still sexually specific, corporeal and living body is thus still highly relevant within current discussions of sexual difference as articulated by for instance Luce Irigaray.

The Problem of the One-Sex-Model

To Luce Irigaray it would come as no surprise that the female body is perceived to lack a reach for transcendence. After all, the woman does not have a penis; the only sexual organ worth representation according to the one-sex-/one-flesh-model which has been dominant within the tradition of western medical and philosophical thought (Sampson 2008; Irigaray 1985; Laqueur 1992). Women and their bodies have thus been considered to be literally *inverted* and hence incomplete copies of male bodies. The anatomical morphology of the penis and the vagina was thought to be basically the same except that women carried their penises on the inside, e.g., in the wrong place (Laqueur 1992). As bodies and the placement of their organs were regarded as epiphenomenon of a greater world order, the one-sex-model legitimised and displayed the already evident subjugation of women within contemporary society.

Both the standard of the human body and its representations was the male body. Man was the measure for all things, and woman did not exist as an ontologically distinct category (Laqueur 1992:63).

The one-sex-model also rings quite loud resonances within Freud’s psychoanalytical model. The little boy suffers a severe shock when he discovers his mother’s lack of a penis, and to avoid his deepest fears, e.g., castration, he comes to identify with his non-castrated father to develop a masculine identity. The little girl on the other hand, is forced to accept her destiny as a castrated boy and overcome her penis envy in order to become a healthy (non-hysterical or frigid) woman. According to Freud there is only one libido, and that is the masculine one (Mortensen 2008).

Lacan takes psychoanalysis a bit further and introduces the idea that it is through the acquisition of *language* that humans become (gendered) subjects. In short Lacan claims that in order to become represented and heard within the cultural or *symbolic order*, the child needs to *overcome* the *imaginary*, or the unconscious, pre-oedipal phase represented by the child’s non-linguistic relation with its mother. Then again, because girls finally identify with their castrated mothers, they never really enter the symbolic. The symbolic is thus only represented by the phallus, something which made Lacan conclude that women do not really exist (Mortensen 2008). As a linguist and psychoanalyst trained (and later cast out) by Lacan, Irigaray responds to Lacan’s one-sex-model by developing a feminist philosophy which claims that if the woman does not exist, it is because she is not represented within the symbolic as anything other than an imperfect copy, negation or a reflected male image. Even the very language itself is formed

within a phallic morphological image. The one-sex-model does thus not only legitimise women's subjugation to men on a sexual level, but is also textually articulated, and inscribed in language.

Feminist Ontology and Sexual Difference

As mentioned above, the female subject does not exist according to Lacan and Irigaray. Whereas this is hardly a problem for Lacan, Irigaray actually perceives this as an opportunity for an ontological inquiry of what the female sex might potentially *become*, and not necessarily what she already is. The question of femininity can not be reduced to a comparison with masculinity, e.g., what the female is not or rather lacks. According to Irigaray the central focus for query is *sexual difference* which she also claims to be "one of the major philosophical issues, if not the issue, of our age" (Irigaray 1991:165).⁶ Irigaray shares de Beauvoir's phenomenological approach to the body as our way of being in the world, and the question of sexual difference should therefore be considered a very real one indeed within her philosophy. Whereas for de Beauvoir sexual difference is only one amongst many markers of/on our bodies, for Irigaray sexual difference is the fundamental basis for all other differences. Sexual difference is the origin of life itself, and we will therefore never be able to rid us of it (Irigaray lecture held in Paris, 19.10.2006).

The problem according to Irigaray though, is that despite sexual difference's very real existence it lacks equivalent representation within the symbolic, e.g., as a genuine, irreducible distinction between the two sexually specific bodies. To be able to avoid reductionist analyses of male and female identities, we need to radically re-think our western conceptions of gender and rather im-

agine that male and female are incommensurably *different*. The female will then finally become a subject and de Beauvoir's second sex will no longer need to be considered the *other* in its static and negative relation to the One male. As the possibility of a common, single denominator vanishes, equality between the genders will be based in true respect of each other as complete and ultimate different beings. Meetings between the two (sexes) will be based in difference, and not in either sameness or contrast (Irigaray lecture held in Paris, 19.10.2006). According to Irigaray (2000) "Democracy begins between two". Irigaray argues for instance that with the creation and birth of the female subject the woman is *not* to constitute a new One. The solution to the dissolving of the one-sex-model and its potential for emancipation of the currently repressive gender pattern is not a reversion of positions as this will only represent a continuance of the hierarchical structure between the two (Sampson 2008). The other would still remain an object. Irigaray thus focuses upon the space *between* the two sexes as a potential point of reference for future constitutions of sexual identity. Subjectivity is constructed in relation with others,⁷ e.g., *inter-subjectively*, and is therefore in a continuous process or flow, from birth until death. Irigaray thus acknowledges the corporeal, fleshy and sexual specificity of bodies, but also the fact that bodies function as beings in an ever-changing world. In order to avoid falling back into the snares of the One and truly engage in a politics of difference, questions of sexual difference will need to be asked over and again at all times according to both time and space, e.g., history and context. Both the phenomenological and the ontological interrogation of what it means to be a woman (or a man), and how the world appears to such a being,

will therefore always be inconclusive (Jegerstedt & Mortsensen 2008).

Feminism of Difference, Feminism of Equality and the In-Between

The female subject's *naissance* and the meetings between the two are still to happen, and even remains to be thought according to Irigaray. This part of Irigaray's philosophy is therefore commonly considered to be utopian. Still, her focus on (sexual) difference as a necessary prerequisite for equality between the genders is quite dissimilar to perspectives offered by egalitarian feminism. Due to the influential impact of the one-sex-model, the right to equality today entails the right to be the same as men according to feminism of difference (Grosz 1995). To argue that only sameness can ensure equal rights is to give up on the idea of a female subject that is capable of a true autonomy defined by her own needs and desires. Women should not need to become men in order to achieve equality, and neither should men become women. Equality should rather concern questions of particularity, and thus articulate specific rights to specific bodies (Fermon lecture held in Paris, 19.10.2006).

On the other hand, egalitarian feminism has charged feminism of difference with accusations of both essentialism and universalism. After all, feminism of difference shares its insistence of women's dissimilarities with men with patriarchy. According to for instance Moi (in Grosz 1995:55)

...any attempt to formulate a general theory of femininity will be metaphysical. This is precisely Irigaray's dilemma: Having shown that so far femininity has been produced exclusively in relation to the logic of the same, she falls for the temptation to produce her own positive theory of femininity. But, as we have seen, to define "woman" is necessarily to essentialise her.

In addition, and probably due to the acknowledgement of biology or nature as an ingredient of sexual difference, the focus on difference is often thought to represent and even glorify pregnancy, motherhood etc. Difference within feminism of difference though, is a difference with neither value nor identity. It is rather pure and does to reflect any of our existing ideas of sexual difference. Is the sex oppressive in itself, or do women's differences from men necessarily need to be categorised and defined according to reproductive capacities? To accuse feminism of difference of biologism or even essentialism will hence only reflect the one-sex-model within current history. The future of sexual difference is still unknown according to Irigaray.

On the other hand, de Beauvoir who has traditionally been considered the Mother of egalitarian feminism has herself been criticised for essentialism. Instead of praising motherhood and pregnancy though, de Beauvoir has been accused of a devalorisation and repression of any form of biological femininity, including women's capacity to become mothers. De Beauvoir has for instance been accused of reproducing phallocracy due to her 'hostile' accounts of the pregnant woman and her "womb as a tomb", and pregnancy as an "ensnarement by nature" (in Kaufman 1986:125). Egalitarian feminists sympathetic to de Beauvoir has commonly excused these unfavourable descriptions to the time of her writings. They have also claimed that to de Beauvoir pregnancy might have symbolised all impositions on the female sex from patriarchy as pregnancy and motherhood could, at that particular time in history, be considered responsible for hindering a woman's reach for transcendence and self-fulfilment. Then again, if de Beauvoir's text is *not* to be taken as a socio-historical account of women's op-

pressed positions, but rather as a philosophical phenomenological inquiry as argued by Heinämaa (2003), these descriptions might actually be reports of de Beauvoir's *critique* of the male myths surrounding the female body and her reproductive capacities. Within phenomenology the body and its biological functions is not something which can be overcome as it is our bodies that constitute us as subjects (Merleau-Ponty 2002 [1945]). These accounts do thus not verify de Beauvoir's accounts of female biology as essentialist or biological determinist, but are rather an attack and correction of misogynist conceptions of female sexuality and identity. Even Irigaray seems to acknowledge Beauvoir's role in the deconstruction of the sex/gender, nature/culture divide by conceiving the body as a situation:

It's not as Simone de Beauvoir said: One is not born, but rather, becomes a woman (through culture), but rather: I am born a woman, but I must still become this woman that I am by nature (Irigaray in Heinämaa 2003:xvii).

Whereas Merleau-Ponty (2002 [1945]) overlooked or did not find sexual difference relevant for human experience (Grosz 1994), de Beauvoir problematises this assumption and makes sexual difference the central point for her philosophical inquiries (Heinämaa 2003).

Irigaray's and de Beauvoir's various takes on sexual difference might be quite dissimilar, but due to their common roots within phenomenology the differences between their philosophies might be of a different kind than commonly discussed. Heinämaa (2003: xvii) states that:

Until now, Irigaray's relation to Beauvoir has been considered as merely negative. Commentators have claimed that Irigaray overcomes Beauvoir's "equalitarian" feminism or simply rejects it. This is a misconception based on a superficial reading of Beauvoir's work and Irigaray's comments on it.

Heinämaa (2003) rather claims that the most important dissimilarities between de Beauvoir and Irigaray are their different relations to psychoanalysis. Whereas de Beauvoir rejects Freud's theories on sexual identity as one of the already mentioned misogynist myths on female sexuality, Irigaray takes psychoanalytical insights, and especially as articulated by Lacan's linguistic turn, to be indispensable in order to raise consciousness related to the becoming of female within history. *If one is to become two*, women need to search for their genealogies in order to develop a language and a culture that is suitable to the women that we are by nature. Irigaray adds the necessity of a politics based on sexual difference to de Beauvoir's philosophy, and claims that women will never be able to become autonomous subjects if we are not capable of creating a new, feminine language and an accordant female culture for and by ourselves. De Beauvoir on the other hand, does not articulate or develop a theory of the becoming of a female subjectivity outside of patriarchy. In contrast to Irigaray, de Beauvoir does therefore not 'offer' a methodological or political 'solution' to the problem of female repression. Then again, both Irigaray and de Beauvoir have managed to develop philosophies that acknowledge the sexually distinct body and its impacts on our experiences of being male or female in the world, *without* reducing these experiences to be mere results of inescapable, non-contextual and non-historical biology.

Concluding Remarks

In much the same way as illness tends to situate the body at the centre of focus; this article has aimed at doing the same. As a medical anthropologist I take on the empirical reality of ill bodies face-on, in all their

glory and gory. In addition I find the tendency to gender-neutral and in some cases even gender-specific analyses of illness within the phenomenological inspired medical anthropology somewhat peculiar, inasmuch as there exists at least two living bodies in this world.

With this article I have therefore tried to utilise insights and thoughts about bodies and sexual difference as articulated and discussed by feminist philosophy based in phenomenology (de Beauvoir) and ontology (Irigaray), and suggest them as methodological models for further empirical inquiries within medical anthropology. From a feminist metaphysical perspective *sexual difference* has become a theoretical concept that relates to the sexually specific body and its cultural identity as an inseparable entity (Irigaray lecture held in Paris, 19.10.2006). Such a re-figuring of the body thus attends to the body's corporeality and its social, cultural and political situation without essentialising what being male or female might entail (Grosz 1995). The focus of inquiry is rather upon how we *become* sexed beings in various societies (Moore 2007), a necessity within my empirical field of anthropology and its somewhat malicious appreciation of ethnographic deconstructions of western epistemology. In addition the feminist focus on sexual difference is not fixed in neither time nor space, and is therefore not only open to the possibility of cultural variances of gender constellations, but also changes regarding what might compose or become male and female in the future (Jegerstedt & Mortensen 2008). I therefore believe that a focus on sexual difference might be able to incorporate and integrate the sexed, *biological* body within the social and cultural sciences without necessarily falling prey to the 'essentialism-trap'. In addition, feminist phenomenol-

ogy and ontology as discussed throughout this article might also be able to provide new tools for comparative and intersectional inquiries that include and acknowledge sexed/gendered experience (of illness) as a valuable scientific variable.

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Notes

- 1 My PhD project 'Colonised Bodies and Gendered Illness: An Ethnographic Study of the 2005–2007 Chikungunya Epidemic in French Réunion' (2008–2011) focuses on the recent and only outbreak of chikungunya, a vector spread virus, in the French overseas department and Indian Ocean island Réunion. The disease gives painful rheumatic symptoms and infected almost one third of Réunion's population between 2005 and 2007. There is no known vaccine against the disease and over 200 people died.
- 2 Although it has been common to utilise the term *the lived body*, I follow Heinämaa (2003:xxi) and discuss *the living body* throughout this article, as the living body never can be reduced to mere matter in the same manner as a body that is potentially "lived by" someone or something.
- 3 Moi (1998) has for instance claimed that feminist oriented scholars interested in women's health tend to overemphasize reproductive issues and overlook other local and gendered medical concerns.
- 4 A methodological problem within phenomenologically inspired research and its focus on experience is of course that experience is personal, non-linguistic and therefore not immediately accessible or scientifically measurable. The field of phenomenology therefore continually and thoroughly discusses whether access to information on people's experiences is even achievable, e.g., how is it possible to know or verify whether living (in) female or male bodies comprise different experiences? The typical focus of empirical inquiry within phenomenology has therefore

- been so-called social expressions of experience such as for instance narratives.
- 5 The difference between Husserl and Heidegger is first and foremost based in their various takes on the so called phenomenological reduction or *époché*. Heidegger refused to accept Husserl's insistence on the existence of a human consciousness capable of freeing itself from all social and cultural preconceptions, and perceive a world devoid of human interference, as he claimed that we will always be part of our surrounding world. Based on this Heidegger included ontology within phenomenology, and laid the foundation for future existentially oriented phenomenology as articulated by for instance Sartre, de Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty (Sampson 2008). Due to the gender-specific focus of this article only Merleau-Ponty and de Beauvoir will be presented and discussed.
 - 6 As ontology has its origin in Heidegger's criticism of Husserl's phenomenological *époché* (see note 5), Irigaray's understanding of sexual difference is also always *both* nature and culture.
 - 7 In many non-western societies it is rather common to conceive of the self as the sum of the subject's social relations. The idea of a 'pure' individual or identity as represented by western epistemology is non-existent. See for instance various writings by the anthropologist Marilyn Strathern on Melanesia. It is perhaps also for this very same reason. e.g., Irigaray's explicit criticism of western epistemology, that I find Irigaray to be quite suitable for anthropological contemplation.
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Elderly Sami – Symbols of Sami Identity?

The Role of the Elderly in the Sami Community

By Marianne Liliequist

In my first meeting with Ella, a 30-year-old Sami woman, she challenged some of the well-known understandings of elderly people's position in the Sami society. She wouldn't really agree when, at the end of the interview, I tried to get her into my working hypothesis about the high status and central position of the elderly in the Sami family network, the elderly as precursors and examples, their importance as transmitters of knowledge of the complicated family relations and as preservers of old traditions. Kindly but firmly, she pushed me off my hobbyhorse. To my question whether grandmother Inga told her grandchildren about the old nomad life and in that way functioned as a transmitter and preserver of traditions, Ella replied that her grandmother wasn't stuck in ancient times, she usually spoke of the most topical affairs to her grandchildren. "She was in the middle of life!" Even after she retired she took in new things. Sure, she had her Sami dress, but not to keep everything as it was before, just because "it was *there*". "Yes but," I tried, "she must have had a lot of knowledge about the complicated kinship connections which are so central in the Sami community?" "I don't know, I think almost everyone carries on with that, who is related to who, it's not something specific for the elderly", Ella thought. "The Swedes, they only count their first cousins, but we have cousins in all directions, to both the fourth and the fifth degree!" "But your grandmother must have been a role model for you, when she was so independent and strong?" I tried again. "No, it's my mother who has been my role model, she is also a strong woman, I guess she inherited it," Ella said. The last question I tried was whether grandmother Inga had a high status in the family and among the relatives. To this Ella replied that *this* wasn't anything that *she* had thought

about. "She was so *old*, maybe it would have been different if I had met her in her forties or fifties!"

This article is about the role of the elderly Sami in the Swedish Sami community. In what way are the elderly resources for the community? What creative strategies of actions are possible for the elderly in order to achieve quality of life?¹ In order to avoid idealistic and excessively harmonious analyses, I have begun this article with Ella questioning the somewhat stereotypes picture that is often put forward concerning elderly Sami, and I also end the article with a discussion of these questions. The aim is to make the research process more visible in a reflexive way.

My questions about elderly Sami were aroused by a study of elderly women of non-Sami origin in sparsely populated areas in the countryside (Liliequist 2009). In the community of Frostviken, a mountain region in the north of Sweden, one cannot find the degradation of elderly women which exists on a larger scale elsewhere in society. On the contrary, they have a high status since they symbolize the values that are highly appreciated by the people in general in Frostviken. The elderly women's role as managers of the homestead and transmitters of the oral history of the family and the region means that they are in the centre of a large social network which – because of the migration from the countryside – reaches far away from the district. They are co-creators of regional identity and come across as symbols of "the spirit of Frostviken".

Does the Sami identity have a similar role for the elderly Sami's status and quality of life as the regional identity has for the non-Sami people of Frostviken? Oral narrative has by tradition been central to the Sami community (Cocque 2008), the family network is even more important than among

non-Sami people in sparsely populated areas (Åhrén 2008) and the traditional knowledge is more appreciated than ever owing to the strong political identity movement (Balto 1997). The elderly people of Frostviken are important connections for those who have moved to other parts of the country. Are the elderly Sami a similar connection to the traditional Sami way of life for the Sami who have moved to the cities and are living “like Swedes”? Are the elderly important co-creators of ethnic identity?

This study follows a constructivistic research perspective, where instead of describing cultures as organic wholes, the aim is to observe the changing and sometimes contradictory things in culture. I am inspired by the “new” ethnography and the reflexive way of writing ethnography (McGrath 2005:57). I have performed eight in-depth interviews, but I have chosen to focus on two persons’ cohesive stories and used the rest of the interviews as background material. There are certain negative consequences which arise from taking themes from the interview narratives and life stories out of their context. The processual and contextual in each individual’s story or narrative can to a certain extent be lost (Lilliequist 1996). Through the personal portraits you get a picture of the complex and individual nature of the subject. Another risk which comes with making themes out of narratives is that you clear out the overgrowth, those things that stand out in different directions and don’t make a nice and orderly pattern (Clifford 1988:146f.). The trick is to describe the dominant themes, but at the same time let things stand out and give room for the individual factors.

I have interviewed Sami of South Sami origin, most of them connected to reindeer-herding families, but also Sami who are outside the reindeer-herding activity. To obtain

different perspectives on the role of the elderly I have interviewed persons of different ages. In the interview group there are people representing mountain Sami, forest Sami and Sami with “regular” jobs living both in sparsely populated areas and in the cities. In order to limit the study, I have not included those who live entirely outside Sami connections. The informants primarily talk about present-day conditions, but also about how things used to be. The interviews took place in 2008 in the homes of the informants, except for one person, who were interviewed at the workplace.

The personal portraits consist of a young woman, Ella, who describes the everyday life of her elderly mountain Sami relatives, and an elderly woman, Edit, who grew up in a reindeer-herding forest Sami family, but who has lived the major part of her adult life “like a Swede” and Edit describes her old age and compares it to that of her parents and grandparents.

These women have been chosen because they very clearly describe two separate creative strategies which are available for elderly Sami in achieving quality of life. One strategy is practised by many of the elderly who still live among their relatives who are reindeer herders, and another strategy available to the elderly living in a larger village or in the city.

Changing Conditions in Sápmi

The indigenous Sami people are today a minority people mainly living in the circumpolar region of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Russia. The transformation of the twentieth century meant changed conditions for the Swedish Sami and thereby changed living conditions for the elderly. At the beginning of the twentieth century many Sami made a living out of reindeer herding, they were no-

mads and lived in a self-subsistent household. The mountain Sami have kept a larger number of reindeer than the forest Sami and their movements have covered a larger area. The Sami who did not own reindeer made their living from fishing and hunting, and some of them became settlers. Through time the reindeer herding has been pushed back – the herding grounds have been limited by wood cutting, water regulations, ore mining, national parks, tourism and so on – and the Sami have become dependent on the greater Swedish community. The law of reindeer grazing regulates the Sami people's rights and decides who is allowed to belong to the herding district (*Sameby*). A herding district can be described as an economic collective where the members have the right to reindeer herding, fishing and hunting. During the latter half of the twentieth century the reindeer husbandry developed into a mechanized small-scale industry with room for only a small part of the Sami population (Nordin 2007; Olofsson 2004; Åhrén 2008). According to official statistics there are 20,000 Sami in Sweden today, but only 2,000 of them are connected to reindeer husbandry. According to calculations from the Sami Parliament there are 60,000 who consider themselves Sami and the largest group is in Stockholm, where 1,200 Sami live. This means that the great majority of Sami in Sweden are not members of any herding district.

The Sami have suffered discrimination by the majority community in many different ways through history and they have been looked upon as a lower race. At the beginning of the century the Sami children were not allowed to speak their own language in school, and a long period of forced assimilation has for many Sami meant that their language and identity have been lost (Olofsson 2004). Because of the racism in the surround-

ing community, many Sami who in the 1950s were excluded from the Sami villages chose to play down or even hide their Sami origin. The 1970s meant an upswing for a political movement for Sami identity, with the young Sami in the forefront. The issue of who has the right to call themselves Sami and have the rights of the members of the Sami villages has been of growing interest in the discussions of the Sami Parliament (Åhrén 2008).

Contextual Ageing

The view of ageing and the role of the elderly in society must be understood in its context. Elderly Sami's role as transmitters of traditions and co-creators of ethnic identity varies depending on social context and time period. Christina Åhrén (2008), in her dissertation about Sami working on their identity, has written about a young woman who found out by chance that her grandmother was of Sami origin. The grandmother and the rest of the family had always tried to tone down or conceal their Sami heritage, in an effort to escape the racism of the surrounding community. Another example is a grandmother in a tightly knit reindeer herding family, who rules out her granddaughter's spouse-to-be with the argument that "we have to keep the blood pure!" The conditions are different depending on whether you belong to a well-to-do and influential reindeer-owning family or if you have a "regular" job, whether you live in the countryside close to your relatives or in Stockholm without the company of other Sami. Reindeer herders in South Sami territory feel a greater impact from their non-Sami neighbours than the Sami in the northern territories, and this can also affect their living conditions. Forest Sami have lived closer to their non-Sami neighbours than the Sami in the mountains, which has resulted in racism

and demands of assimilation, but also co-operation and a sense of fellowship.

I have used an intersectional research perspective where the emphasis is on the interaction of different power conditions (Krekula, Närvänen & Näsman 2005). Time, place, social belonging, ethnicity, gender – all of these factors combined give a picture of complicated connections, which creates a space for individual variations within the group. Ethnicity implies the social fellowship that is distinguished by an imagined kinship. Ethnicity is created through contact between people who see themselves as a special group (Eriksen 1993). Ethnicity, age and social belonging are the most prominent factors in my study, but gender is also important. I assume a gender perspective which implies that there is a gender order in society with a male dominance, but gender is at the same time changeable and varied depending on social, political and cultural circumstances. There are two opposing standpoints in research on Sami woman; one claims that the Sami woman – especially the older woman – has had a stronger position in society than in other cultures (Haetta 1996; Kvenangen 1996), while other researchers have described the Sami woman as subordinate and dually oppressed through her sex and her ethnicity (Amft 2000; Beach 1993; Olofsson 2004). Lena Aléx (2007, 2008b) with her intersectional front, assumes a position in the middle in the academic discussion about the status of the Sami woman. Aléx claims that the older Sami women balance between different discourses. They see themselves as equal to the men *and* as living in the shadow of the male reindeer herders.

Research about elderly Sami is a neglected field. There is a lack of knowledge about elderly Sami's living conditions and their experience of ageing, both in the traditional no-

mad culture and in the modern Swedish society (Olofsson 2004). You can find occasional fragments of knowledge about elderly Sami in the academic literature (e.g. Amft 2000; Balto 1997; Campbell 1982:225–240; Cocq 2008; Beach 1988; Kjellström 2003: 270; Åhrén 2008:116ff.), but the only academic study that specifically deals with the elderly Sami in Sweden is Lena Aléx's (2007, 2008) research on current elderly Sami women. Her study has an ethnic and gender perspective and is based on qualitative in-depth interviews. In folklife literature (e.g. Johansson 1968:126–133; *Sameland i förändring* 1986) and in autobiographies (Thomasson 1994) you can also get insight into the living conditions of elderly Sami during the nomad period.

My study applies the “resource perspective” within the ageing research, which considers the elders as active subjects and a resource for the community (Tornstam 1982; Torres & Hammarström 2007). In ageing research there is often talk about “successful ageing”, a term that has been criticized because the researchers' definition of quality of life in old age doesn't necessarily correspond to what the elderly themselves think. I have used a definition of “successful ageing” taken from “Umeå 85+studien”, a project where elderly people from Västerbotten are interviewed about their view of ageing, and where elderly Sami also are included (von Heideken Wägert et al. 2005). This project approaches a number of criteria for the meaning of successful ageing formulated by the elderly themselves. Above all, there are three factors which are of major importance: feeling that you are involved in a social network, experiencing connection and meaning (Aléx 2008; von Heideken Wägert 2006); being substantiated, feeling valuable (Santamäki Fischer 2007); and being able to be as inde-

pendent as possible within one's bounds and limitations (Nilsson 2006). I have also used the term "creative strategy of action" (Häggblom Kronlöf 2007) to focus on the power of invention that the elderly develop to achieve quality of life. What strategies are used to achieve independence, be substantiated and to feel included?

"If They Couldn't Keep on Herding the Reindeer They Would Probably Drop Dead!"

Ella, whom I mentioned at the beginning of the article, grew up in a reindeer-herding family in a southern mountain Sami area. Ella has moved to and from her home and her place of study for a few years. "I can't really tell when I moved away from home!" she says with a laugh. She is now employed in a cultural project in a town in the north of Sweden. Ella still has close connections with her family and relatives but at the same time she feels at home in the "Swedish" city environment.

In the heading above I have quoted Ella, when she comments, with some humour, on how the elderly Sami stubbornly hold on to the work of herding the reindeer. She tells me about her parents and relatives who are still tending the reindeer in their seventies and eighties, even though they have cut down a bit. Ella says that many of the elderly never retire. Instead they keep on "as long as their legs are working... They don't exactly go on golf trips, at 65!" Some of the younger reindeer herders may think that it is unnecessary that the old people insist on participating in the hardest work, but Ella thinks that it is better to let them carry on. If they had to stop she is afraid that they would give up totally. Herding the reindeer is their life, not just an occupation but a way of life. Working in the reindeer forest gives quality of life, a sense of

participation, community and meaning. The elderly don't have as large herds and they get a little help from younger people. It seems as if the elderly don't need as many technical gadgets in the herding, and this means that they don't have to invest any money, says Ella. They take pride in managing as much as possible "in the old way". The men talk proudly about the time when they used to ski all night to guard the reindeer herd, and the women talk about how in the winter they took lodgings in the farmer's draughty baking cottages – in those days people weren't so demanding. For Ella's parents and other elderly relatives, participating in the reindeer herding means quality of life. The reindeer herding is a way of life and through it the elderly feel like a part of the community.

Both her grandfathers died before Ella was born, so it is her grandmothers who have been present during her childhood. Ella talks most about her maternal grandmother Inga, who died five years ago. "She has been there all along. I have a lot of memories of her." Inga was a strong and temperamental woman who wasn't afraid to assert her will or her opinions: "She was on fire," says Ella. "Grandma was a pretty tough person; she could get so angry and tell people off and things like that." Ella thinks that her grandmother's independence came from the fact that her father died early, and thus she had to learn to manage on her own from an early age. Her first husband also died early and left the reindeer herd to Inga. She remarried a man who didn't have any reindeer of his own, a man "of simpler origin" who married up: "Like all men, he must have thought that he would be in charge, but he was the one who came into *her* life, so he was almost like a farmhand, you could say," according to Ella.

Ella's parents and grandmother were in separate places with their reindeer in the

summer, so it was mostly in the winter time that her grandmother came to visit and to help her mother in the household, baking bread and watching the children. “She was an active person,” she fished and helped out with the summer moves until her knees no longer worked and her eyesight got weak. When Inga could no longer manage the reindeer herding, she moved to a retirement flat in the central village. The youngest son lived there – “he was her baby, she used to favour her sons!” says Ella. Her family often visited her, so she didn’t have to feel lonely. But in the summer she longed for the mountains. “She longed for it, of course, because it was her life – to live in a cot and to bake bread and go fishing.” She was alert until her last day and she was deeply committed to Sami issues. Ella visited her grandmother often: “Just because she talked and discussed a lot, that made it fun to visit her. She was always heated, her heart was in issues of reindeer herding and the political issues involved.” “Even though she had problems she still had strong opinions on everything. The last time I and my sister visited her she was discussing something and got all het up and didn’t relent until the staff came and tried to calm her down!”

Ella doesn’t tell me so much about her father’s mother Kajsa. She died when Ella was eleven years old and she was a modest woman. “I don’t think she was ever angry, she was like my father, a very easy-going person!” Just like Ella’s other grandmother, she had bad eyes and knees and lived in a house in the central village together with her daughter and her granddaughter.

Edit – Transmitter of Sami Traditions in the City

When I called Edit, 78 years of age, on the phone to ask her if I could interview her

about the situation of the elderly in the Sami community, she said that it was all right, but: “I am just afraid that I will disappoint you. I have lived in the city and been a teacher my whole life.” She thought that it was only the situation of the elderly among reindeer herders that I was interested in, so I explained that I wanted to interview Sami people with different backgrounds. She then told me that she had grown up in a multi-generation home with her parents, two uncles with their families and a grandfather, all of them reindeer-herding forest Sami. Her husband Ingvar had furthermore been a reindeer herder before they moved to Skellefteå. The family still owns reindeer that are herded by herders in the Sami village and they have a holiday home in the region, where they spend as much time as possible. Edit has a double cultural view; she can look at society with both “Swedish” and Sami eyes, but it is the Sami identity that she is passionate about. She lives and works for a restoration of the Sami self-esteem and a transmission of the Sami culture to the younger generation.

Urbanization as an Explanation for the Isolation of the Elderly

Edit and Ingvar receive me in their bright and homey flat in a block of high-rise buildings. Ingvar, who used to be involved in reindeer herding – both practically and administratively – and in Sami political issues, is nowadays rather sickly and Edit cares for him in their home. Edit turns out to be a very committed, well-informed and witty person with a lot of things going on.

I started the interview by trying to find out if she, like Ella, experienced that there is a difference between “the Swedish” and the Sami way of socializing, a difference which affects the elderly’s sense of community and

belonging. Ella thought that there is a very strong Sami family unit with a lot of socializing between the different generations, and because of that the elderly were not left out as they often are in the city or among non-Sami people. But Edith said that this is more a difference between life in sparsely populated areas and life in the city; it is urbanization that has isolated the elderly from socializing with children and grandchildren and has separated the generations from each other. The elderly – both Sami and non-Sami – inhabitants in sparsely populated areas live close to their children and grandchildren and participate in social life. But when the children move to the city, the elderly have to choose whether to stay and lose the daily contact with their family or to follow their children to the city. This also goes for the reindeer herders who marry someone with a different occupation; they have to move to where the jobs are. The elderly who relocate often become isolated, Edith said, because in this modern society their children are busy with work, housework and the children's leisure activities.

To give an example of the increasing division of the generations, she tells the story of her own family. Edith's grandfather, who was a forest Sami and had a settlement by a lake at the beginning of the twentieth century, lived on the same farm as his three sons and their families until his death. When he got older he contributed to the management of the farm as much as he could, made sure that all the households had wood for the fire, swept the snow from the front porches and attended to all the little things that needed to be done. In the summer he went fishing with nets and took the children along with him. He was always there and had close contact with the children. The first thing the men used to do when they came home from the reindeer

herding was to tell grandpa how the day had been. "He was included," Edith says.

When Edith's parents quit the reindeer herding and retired, they moved to a retirement flat in the nearest village. Edith and Ingvar also lived there in those days and they used to spend a lot of time with Edith's parents. Her parents were always included when they went to see their friends, regardless of whether the friends were Sami or not. When Edith and Ingvar had moved into the city and the parents came to visit, they were invited to see the Sami friends they had in town, but not the "Swedish" friends. Edith and Ingvar are in their turn never invited to either their daughter's Sami or her "Swedish" friends. So in Edith's opinion there is no difference between Sami and non-Sami in that case. In both cases the socialization across generation boundaries and the natural inclusion of the elderly has been somewhat dissolved with urbanization.

Stigmatizing of the Sami

To understand the importance of the Sami struggle for identity for Edith in old age, you have to know about her experiences growing up. Her involvement comes from the stigma that was attached to everything connected to Sami culture when she was growing up. The term stigmatization is taken from Erving Goffman (1972) and describes the branding that Sami experience. The degrading attitudes of "the real Swedes" shape their whole lives and threaten their self-esteem. That the sense of exclusion in society has strengthened the need for ethnic belonging among the Sami is clearly visible in life stories of the elderly Sami.

Throughout their lives Edith and Ingvar have expended a lot of energy trying to abolish this stigmatization. The political and cultural struggle has aimed to get rid of the

branding, which for Sami children began when they started school, and to re-establish the Sami identity. Edit's parents never spoke Sami to their children. Sami was for the children "the secret language", which the adults used when speaking of matters that the children were not supposed to hear. Through school and through the attitudes of the surrounding "Swedish" society, Edit's parents had learnt that the best thing was to be as Swedish as possible, and they wanted to give the children a good start in life. Edit's mother went to a municipal school and lived in a so-called working cottage (a boarding home where the children were taught to work). Edit's father went to missionary school together with non-Sami children and he boarded on a farm in the village where the school was. Speaking the Sami language was not allowed in school and the Sami children were often teased by the non-Sami children. Both her mother and her father had been teased during their school years and in every way experienced that the Sami were considered to be of less value. Even when Edit went to school, speaking Sami was not allowed. Edit was not teased herself in school, but her brother was: "Oh, how he fought at school!"

Certain events where the stigmatization of the Sami was especially apparent have stayed in the mind forever. These episodes turn into stories which are passed on to the next generation. Edit's father described what it was like when he was about twelve years old and his mother had died. The funeral was to take place during the Mikaeli holiday. There was no other means of transportation than to walk the forty to fifty kilometres to the church village, and because of the special occasion he was dressed in the Sami dress. A lot of horse carriages went by since it was a big holiday and everyone was going to church, but not a single one stopped to offer

him a ride or even to ask where he was going. "Nobody cared about where the little Lapp kid was going. Can you believe that grown men... and he was on his way to his mother's funeral and that was what he thought was the worst, that nobody cared. Yes, it was a long time before he wore Lapp clothes, even though he was a reindeer herder all his life." Accordingly this event had far-reaching consequences; he rejected the Sami dress and language, and it wasn't until he retired that he had an opportunity to be proud of his culture.

The only Sami words that were used in the family were *akka*, which means grandmother, and *ajja*, which means grandfather (in both cases paternal or maternal), and the only one who spoke the Sami language to the children was the paternal grandfather. He never translated the words; instead he insisted that they should understand what he said. "It was too bad that he didn't make the children speak themselves too!" Edit exclaims. The grandfather tried to pass on the Sami language at a time when the Sami culture was not highly valued by the surrounding society. "Oh, I have thought a lot about how he would have felt! We never talked about it, but how would he feel about the fact that everything he thought was good was bad? What he thought was important we then thought was meaningless. I have thought so much about it... I will be faced with that on judgement day!" she says half joking but still upset. In later years Edit has experienced a turn-around in the way that the Sami language is now highly valued. "Now all the children want to know Sami. Young families say 'dinner is ready' and other everyday phrases in Sami."

Edit's paternal grandparents spoke only Sami to each other. The grandmother suffered from the complications of a stroke. "I remember her as old even from the begin-

ning, but she was actually only 67 when she died. I only remember how she was sitting or lying in her bed. Oh, you can imagine – the medical care of that time!” That means that she didn’t receive much care. In the end she was so sick that she had to be moved to the old people’s home in the central village. The grandfather took the bus regularly to visit her and the children always came along. “He wasn’t good at being on time; I remember that we always had to go very early when we had to catch the bus!” Edit tells me that later in life when she went to a school in the central village and was seeing an old Sami man wearing a Sami dress and a leather rucksack walking in the street, she thought: “that is how it must have looked when we were in the village with grandpa.” The grandfather was always dressed in an everyday frock made of homespun (*vadmal*), he had a rucksack full of food for grandma and he had one child in each hand. There is a reflection built into this clear memory, which shows Edit’s position in between the two cultures. Through her higher education she really belongs to a different time and culture; she has in part been transformed into a “Swede”. But at the same time as she regards the old Sami at a bit of a distance and from the outside – with a modern “Swedish” urban point of view – she also evokes an intense memory of her childhood inside of her, which brings feelings of identification and closeness. This split in the outlook on the Sami, which she has obtained through education, is something that she has processed as an adult through the struggle to re-establish the Sami identity.

Feeling guilty about denying the Sami identity in her youth – even if it was only mentally – is a theme that Edit returns to. Edit was a good student and her parents paid so that she could have a higher education, which was uncommon in those days for “or-

dinary” people. There was a cultural clash inside Edit between the “Swedish” perception of normality in school and her Sami home environment. In school she had been taught that at Christmas the house should be properly cleaned and decorated. But in her home this was not so easy. Christmas was the time when the reindeer herd passed by and her father together with all the herders had to take lodging in the three houses of the farm. This made it very crowded “with men and dogs and kids” in the little cabin, which only consisted of one room and a kitchen. “There were rucksacks with food to be cooked on the wooden stove and there were dogs to be fed and there was hay to be dried and we only had one room and a kitchen and we children had to sleep on the floor, we enjoyed that a lot!” One Christmas, however, Edit happened to say to her mother: “‘I hope the reindeer herders don’t come this Christmas!’ But then I was told: ‘They are welcome whenever they come!’ ... When I got older I almost had a bad conscience for *thinking* like that!”

Rehabilitating the Sami

The political movement for identity in the 1970s opened up for a process of rehabilitating Sami identity and culture. Edit’s parents got to be a part of this. When retired they worked as guides at the church Lapp cot in the central village during the summers. It was Ingvar who initiated this activity through the Tourist Association. Edit’s father told stories to the visitors about the life of the forest Sami, and her mother served food in the cot. They liked it so much that they kept on until her father’s death. “They didn’t want to stop, it was their life!”

Ingvar quit reindeer herding when he was given a position in the regional administration, where he was able to work with issues of reindeer herding in a more general way.

Edit did not really want to move to the city, but “when I had to I thought that I could make something out of it,” so she started to take classes at the university alongside her job as a teacher. Edit and Ingvar were very active in a party within the Sami Parliament. Nowadays Edit is much sought-after as a lecturer and storyteller about forest Sami culture in museums, at district celebrations and other similar occasions.

But the most important task that Edit has taken on in old age is to teach children and grandchildren not to forget their Sami heritage, even if they live in the city. Edit often helps her grandchildren with their homework. One of her grandchildren, Maja, was very upset that children could not read anything in the school books about Sami until the eighth grade, and then there was only a short statement about the existence of a Sami language. Edit says that it is a shame that, despite many years of demands from the Sami Parliament that education about Sami culture and history should be mandatory in teacher training: “We have only come this far!”

Edit has compiled a paper where she has gathered information about their family background and some more general information about the forest Sami. She wants her grandchildren to have the feeling of a Sami identity: “Oh, and I must say that I have succeeded!” she says proudly smiling. As an example she mentions Maja’s attempt at discussing the Sami history in school. In a review of “The Little House on the Prairie”, which Maja had as a home assignment in the subject of Swedish, she compared the North American Indians with the Swedish Sami. “The Sami have also had their land taken!” Edit was somewhat hesitant: “But should you really write like that?” She wanted to hear how the teacher had reacted to it. “Well, what did she say?” ‘Nothing!’ It was like

with my father, nobody cares!” Edit exclaims. Edit connects the silence of the school with the indifference that her father encountered as a twelve-year-old Lap child, when he had to walk forty kilometres to his mother’s funeral, without being asked where he was headed by any grown-up person. Still today, Edit claims, society is permeated with an indifferent silence when it comes to Sami history.

The Elderly Reindeer Herder – Central Figure or One amongst the Others?

I was a little confused after the first interview with Ella. Would I have to reconsider my working hypothesis concerning the elderly as central figures in the Sami community? I had an idea of the elderly as symbols in the Sami community because of their accumulated knowledge with memories of the traditional Sami life, especially important for the Sami youth connected to the reindeer-herding life. Or was it that Ella was in a particular situation since her parents were in their forties when she was born and none of the elderly participated in the reindeer herding when she was growing up?

Next time I saw Ella I tried to get some answers to my questions. She told me that when it came to the oral transmission of the old nomad life, it was her mother who told the children, but she didn’t tell the stories on special occasions; saying that they were about to hear about the old times. Instead the stories came spontaneously now and then, in the middle of ordinary household duties. When Ella’s father was in his forties he taught a 20-year-old male relative all he knew of reindeer herding, at full pace. It is in middle age, when the men are active and in full force, that they teach the young people who will take over, Ella claims. The elderly are too old, they can’t manage. Even if they

participate to some extent in the reindeer herding, though with smaller herds, they don't participate, for example, in the long summer move up into the mountains.

So, in Ella's opinion, the elderly are not the most important transmitters of knowledge for the younger generation of reindeer herders. On the other hand, they can be of great use if there are problems with the reindeer herding where one can learn from what has happened earlier on and get a broader perspective on life. For example, Ella mentions that when the reindeer pasture went bad for a while, the younger herders went to the eldest and asked if they had experienced this before. The eldest were then able to calm them down and tell them that the same thing had happened earlier, for example in the 1960s: "It can be like that some winters."

The motorization of reindeer herding – the use of trucks, cross-country vehicles, snowmobiles and helicopters – means that the knowledge of the elderly is not as relevant anymore and the younger generations take the lead. In the nomad society knowledge about reindeer herding, hunting, fishing, preparation of food, handicraft, child care and everything that was needed to survive in the age of self-subsistence was transmitted through the generations. The older people's experience-based knowledge was valuable for the survival of the Sami village. In the area of reindeer herding this knowledge consisted, for example, of reindeer pasture, moving the reindeer, weather impact and the occurrence of predatory animals (Balto 1997; Haetta 1996; Hoem 1987). The purely practical education of the younger Sami as herders was often supplied by their parents, but the elderly brought the knowledge accumulated by centuries of experiences of managing the land. Edit describes how the reindeer herders continually con-

ferred with her grandfather on issues of reindeer herding. Ella's grandmother was deeply involved and had a lot of inside knowledge of these issues even when she was disabled, half-blind and living in an old people's home. The elderly are still asked for advice in critical situations, since they have knowledge that goes way back (see also Beach 1988:103).

To my repeated question whether the elderly stood out as symbols for the traditional Sami way, Ella replied that she would never call them symbols. "Yes, but maybe central figures?" I persisted. "No," Ella objected patiently but stubbornly. "They are not central figures; they are just like other people." They participate on equal terms in everyday work and socializing. In Sami contexts, Ella told me, there is not the same division between generations as among "the Swedes". "A 15-year-old can spend time with a fifty-plus, it's not uncommon". Since family is so important and you also count distant relatives, the elderly are not forgotten even if they are unmarried and have no children of their own. They belong to the family and you look after each other. Even if you don't like everyone, you are still expected to socialize with them because they are related to you. The elderly belong to the community through the close-knit family bonds.

For Ella, her parents together with her aunts and uncles are and will always be her milieu, where she is firmly rooted and to which she always returns. They are the transmitters of tradition, the central figures and the role models, while at the same time she has her academic training, works in a typical middle-class profession and lives a modern, "Swedish", city life. She feels secure in the large family network: "You never have to be alone; you're always related to someone!" Her grandmother has made a strong impression, but not because she was the eldest and

preserved the traditions, but because of her fiery temper and strong personality and her never-ending commitment and insight into issues of reindeer herding. Ella, who is active in a feminist association, thinks that she has inherited her grandmother's, but also her mother's, strong will and independence. Her father and his mother are described as soft and calm personalities.

The young person's view of the elderly, however, are dependent on their own life context. Kajsa, a Sami woman of the same age as Ella and also living in the city and working in a middle-class profession, has a somewhat different opinion on the elderly's role. Her parents are no longer alive but instead she has intensive contact with her elderly reindeer-herding relatives in the mountain village where she was brought up. To her the elderly are in the centre as transmitters of traditions and as role models. In Kajsa's opinion the elderly are not afraid to tell the young what is suitable – they are not afraid to come across as authorities – and this also applies to the parental generation. The young respect the elderly and try to follow their directions:

Because I'm used to those small remarks: "You shouldn't speak like that because you're younger than me" or "You should wear your shoes over your trousers, otherwise you'll end up like that." "In the cot you should sit on the right side otherwise *skrömta* [supernatural creatures] will come along. And then you could get a little nervous about that ... but that also goes for the parental generation. They are quick to give advice.

The anecdotes and the storytelling of the elderly are intended mainly for entertainment, but often there is a built-in message about central cultural values. The storytelling has traditionally been the main means for passing on moral conduct to the younger generation (Balto 1996).

Besides, the elderly stand for a narrative which transmits the unwritten oral history about events and places, a person-centred geographically based narrative which passes on the Sami identity. Kajsa grew up with the storytelling of the elderly, stories that above all are about persons and often about events at special places; an oral tradition which fills the geographical places with substance and meaning. Nevertheless, she fears that the younger generation of Sami, and especially those who have moved to the city, will not pass on this oral narrative tradition. It will pass away with the elderly.

While the inhabitants of Frostviken consider the family farm as the most important place for regional identity, it is the land itself, the places where reindeer herding is done, that are associated with the history and identity of the Sami. Especially the summer dwelling is connected with strong emotions (Åhrén 2008). The summer dwelling of the mountain Sami is situated up in the mountains, and for the forest Sami the cots of the Sami village are often placed beside a lake. The elderly are constantly longing for these places, and they like to tell stories about the life they used to lead there when they were younger.

All the persons I have interviewed talk about the elderly's natural presence in the reindeer herding. The wish to remain active in the reindeer herding for as long as possible is a strong imperative for elderly Sami. Either they have a small herd of their own or they own a few reindeer that are cared for by others and they participate – or are at least present – at the work with the reindeer. Kajsa says that in her mountain Sami home village the elderly are included in a natural way:

The elderly are such a natural part of the society, they are *there*. They don't disappear in isolation. They go

along on trips to the mountains. It's not an issue that you discuss, it's a matter of course.

You always meet the elderly in the reindeer fields, even the "really old ones", says Kajsa.

They are always there. Even if they can hardly walk, they will be there. There's never a problem. If somebody says that they want to go to the branding of the calves – then you take care of it. It doesn't feel like a big, complicated business.

There is a general understanding that the elderly want to take part, she says. They always participate in butchering since there is a passable road to the place of butchering and they also participate a little in the branding of calves. In everyday life, too, it is natural to stop by with the elders of the village for a cup of coffee and a talk, says Kajsa. Motorization has meant greater possibilities for the elderly to get to different places. Both men and women participate in the reindeer herding. The elderly try to manage the reindeer herding in the "old" way as much as possible and to do without modern equipment. The elderly women are very familiar with the traditional herding of the reindeer, seeing that before motorization they participated a lot more in the herding than today (Amft 2000; Nordin 2007). Reindeer herding is more than a profession, it is a way of life where the financial enterprise has an indissoluble bond to the family community. This strengthens the solidarity between the generations and the elderly are a natural part of the community. Co-workers are often either relatives or friends, working life blends with family life, leisure time and social life. Your life is reindeer herding (Nordin 2007; Åhrén 2008). The younger often help the elderly with the heavier work. If an old person can't manage working with the reindeer at all but still wants to keep a few animals and thereby have a sense of still being included in the

work, he or she can pay a younger herder to stay in the business (see also Beach 1988: 74). The reindeer herding is a strong unifying symbol for Sami identity and in that way it corresponds to the significance of the family farm for the settler identity. The farm with its assets – for example holiday homes, rights to fish and hunt and the symbolic importance for continuity back in history to the settler culture and for the feeling of roots and belonging – is central to the ideal of a good life in Frostviken. The elderly inhabitants of Frostviken stick to the home farm as long as possible and the elderly Sami participate in the reindeer herding as long as they can manage.

The natural participation of the elderly in the life of Samebyn, the Sami village, does not necessarily mean high status, however. They are a natural part of everyday life and people scarcely reflect on them. They are certainly respected, but they are viewed as equals rather than central figures. Some of the younger herders, according to Ella, can even let themselves become a little irritated with their presence in the most intensive spells of the work. As Ella says: "But they [the elderly reindeer herders] are actually an important team which is needed – people sometimes forget that!"

Elderly Sami in the City – Creators of Sami Identity

Common to all elderly Sami is that family belonging means that you are always included: you are always *somebody* – you have a firm identity and you are always welcome at family events and in different Sami settings. Even distant relatives are included in the community; for example, cousins to the third and fourth degree: "The Swedes are surprised when they find out how many cousins you have!" says Ella. "No matter how bad

you think a person is, you always stand up for him, because you're family!" The family belonging is unconditional and no one can be left out, unless the person has resigned their Sami identity. Åhrén (2008) writes that the first question you ask an unfamiliar Sami is what family he or she comes from and how that family is related to your own. "*Everyone* talks about who's related to whom – *all the time!*" Ella says. But it is the elderly who can bring order to the very complicated family relations that go back in time. The family narratives along with the person-centred and geographically based narratives form an oral history, and the elderly are the experts. In Frostviken the farm or the village is often used to assign an identity to an older person; for the Sami it is the kinship relations. The system of family belonging puts every age group into a given pattern, and you are always *someone* who belongs to other people.

However, as Edit points out, urbanization has meant a split between the generations both inside and outside the Sami community. In former days the older generation lived close to the younger generation and the elderly were important in bringing up their grandchildren. Edit's grandfather stayed on the homestead together with his children and grandchildren until his death, and the grandchildren had their Sami up-bringing through him. Today, when the reindeer-herding profession is mostly a male duty and the women are learning other professions, the reindeer-herding families often settle where the women can get work. If the women find work in a larger village or in a city, the elderly can choose whether to stay in the countryside or move with them. If they also move they sometimes discover that they become rather isolated. Perhaps they don't know anybody in the new place and their children and grandchildren are occupied with work,

school and leisure activities. In the city it is mostly at different Sami events – for example concerts, during Sami week and in the Sami association – that people socialize over the generation barrier.

However, there are ways out of the isolation. For the elderly Sami who have children who are not reindeer herders, the wish to be a transmitter of tradition is a possible creative strategy of action. They struggle to preserve the Sami identity and to make it survive even when they are gone. There is a strong need among the younger generation to receive knowledge from the elderly, since they are the last link to the old Sami way of life. Like older non-Sami inhabitants in sparsely populated areas, the elderly are often points of connection for the younger who are outside the reindeer-herding life. This is especially important for younger people who do not have any older relatives who can pass on the traditional knowledge. Kajsa thinks that the elderly should take more responsibility for teaching traditional knowledge to younger people who have no older relative or parent to learn from. She is very upset about the fact that the Sami handicraft may vanish with the older generation. But she has noticed that it is sometimes difficult to get the elderly to teach the courses. "No, I can't", they say, but if you talk to them in private they *surely* can do it, they know *everything!*"

Åhrén (2008) has described how important working with the identity is for Sami youth in the post-modern society. A part of working with one's identity is to learn Sami cooking and Sami handicraft, for example preparing reindeer skin and sewing a Sami dress. For the Sami who have relocated, the transmission of traditions is especially important since they don't live the everyday Sami life; the Sami identity has to be actively and constantly re-established. The elderly

who, like Edit, take on this challenge, feel that they are valuable for the younger generation's Sami identity building. In this way the elderly in this group are in a more conscious way role models and co-creators of a Sami identity than those who live in the Sami village and have their hands full with living as a Sami in their everyday work.

Creative Strategies for Successful Ageing

To sum up, one can find two dominant creative strategies among the elderly Sami of today in my material, strategies which intended to achieve feelings of inclusion and coherence in life, to feel substantiated and valuable and to be as independent as possible. One strategy, which is practised by the elderly who still live among their relatives in the Sami village, is to be as active as possible and as long as possible in the reindeer herding. The reindeer herding is a way of life which symbolizes the good life. Another strategy, which is available to the elderly living in a larger village or in the city, is to take on the role as creator of Sami identity for the younger generation. The re-establishment of the Sami gives a sense of meaning and continuity and creates a common bond to the younger Sami who are searching for their roots.

Just like Aléx (2007, 2008) I have found in my material a dual position concerning the status of the elderly women. In formal terms the Sami woman has had a subordinate position in the Sameby and in society at large, but her informal power within the family and in the Sami community has been considerable. The older woman's status has often been strengthened in older days. In the reindeer herding which the elderly manage for as long as possible, the man and the woman participate side by side. The ownership of reindeer

and the right to take part in resolutions are not as much in focus when people get old, which means that the woman comes on a more equal footing with the man through her role as creator of identity. For the elderly living in the city, the women have an important role as creators of Sami identity. Today the knowledge passed on by the elderly is no longer important for physical survival, but it is still crucial. The elderly as transmitters of tradition now have a more ideological meaning for keeping the Sami group together as a culturally specific entity.

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Note

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The Practice of Ageing

The Experience of Being Old and the Significance of Bodies, Things and Places

By Åsa Alftberg

People in welfare society tend to live longer than ever and life after retirement is commonly referred to as the third age. Still, ageing and old age are predominantly regarded in a negative perspective; growing old is considered to lead to loneliness and isolation as well as illness and dependence on others (Blaakilde 1999; Hepworth 2000; Cruikshank 2003; Jönson 2002). The physical changes in old age are generally described as decay and deterioration, in comparison with the “normal” young and healthy body, although ageing is a continuous process throughout life.

The field of elderly research is established within a range of scientific disciplines in which medical, psychological and social meanings and experiences of ageing are examined. To use an ethnological perspective is to emphasize the individual's everyday practice and the way ageing is “done”, that is how ageing is formed in actions and habits, and to explore the practical implications of ageing. People's experiences and thoughts about ageing contain a wealth of material things as well as situations in which things and places are of major importance (cf. Mol, 2002:15). I therefore want to show that the cultural construction of ageing and old age is also about the concrete and factual; i.e. actions and situations in daily life which emanate from the material. The aim is to demonstrate the practice of ageing by highlighting older people's accounts of everyday life. Which are the situations when ageing becomes something tangible and concrete? What significance do bodies, objects and environment have for how ageing is “done”, by others and by the individuals themselves? Focusing on the material aspect and the practice of ageing will contribute to explore how elderly handle the consequences of growing old in everyday praxis. This study will em-

ploy the ageing body as an analytical angle of approach, emphasizing the relation between the ageing body, the surrounding world and its objects, and the cultural concept of ageing.

The study is part of a research program concerning elderly and elderly health care, conducted by Vårdalinstitutet.¹ In creating my empirical material, I followed the selection criteria of the research program: the interviewees should be living in the same district in Gothenburg, be eighty years or older, and not dependent on help in everyday life. Research concerning this age group has often studied levels of dependence and the need of care. Therefore, it is important to look at individuals of this age who is living in their ordinary homes, coping in everyday life without support, just as the majority of Swedish elderly actually is doing.

During autumn 2008, interviews were carried out in the respondents' homes. They were six women and four men, born between 1919 and 1928.² All women except one were widows, while only one of the men was widowed. The others were still married, and their spouses sometimes participated spontaneously in parts of the conversation. I used a semi-structured interview method, where my questions started a discussion of experiences and perceptions of ageing and health, and descriptions of everyday activities.

It's just Old Age

Ageing significantly alters the body in different ways, especially our perception and experience of it. Lilly, one of the interviewees in my study, says:

I said when I was seventy I knew that I would be like that – I was pretty strong – I would be like that all my life. Then I became seventy-five ... there was little difference so it was nothing to bother about. Then I turned eighty, then eighty-five, and I'll be

darned if I'm the person I was when I was seventy, that's quite clear. I usually say: one is no exception, but hopefully one may grow old in a healthy way, so to speak. Some ailments might come of course. So far, I'm not taking any medicine or anything like that.

In Lilly's words, to age in a healthy manner appears not to be expected; the image of old age is clearly associated with illness (cf. Blaakilde 1999). A subject throughout the interviews is that ailments and illness are something which is assumed when growing old. The belief is that something eventually will happen, and it seems quite natural to regard old age as a condition of illness and disease. When Karin tells me about her eye disease, she says that "something's got to come when you get old, you can always count on that." Ingmar is on the other hand completely healthy, but he has fear for the future: "Obviously you are thinking, you might have a stroke or something, anything could happen, it's just... And now, living on my own, I feel very vulnerable."

Ageing is often associated with the body's health and ability. Doris explains that she only feels old at times when her back hurts or does not "keep up". Ruth remarks that on a bad day, she feels like one hundred years old. Age is thus a metaphor for the state of health, where poor health is described in terms of advanced age. Disease and illness can lead to an identification of being old, which was not considered until the appearance of symptoms. Anthropologist Andrea Sankar discusses the use of the phrase "it's just old age" in medical diagnosis and in colloquial expressions. Symptoms and ailments are interpreted as something that belongs to old age, and thus something that is not possible to treat or cure (Sankar 1984). On the other hand, Harald says that it is not his advanced age that makes him tired sometimes,

but the fatigue is due to the diabetes he suffers from. Occasionally he may feel affected of the disease, but generally everything is normal or "as usual". Harald regards himself neither sick nor old.

If illness makes the body – and age – emerge, good health may be defined as not to be aware of the body. This is pointed out by Axel in one of the interviews: "Yes, it is when you are not aware of your body really, but one lives day after day without something unpleasant happening. That's how I think about health."

According to the philosopher Hans Georg Gadamer (2003), health is a state of internal balance and consistency between body and mind. To be healthy is not about feeling a certain way; it is a basic manner of living in the world. At times when something feels wrong or when we feel ill, we become aware of ourselves and our bodies, as opposed to good health when the body is not made conscious. Gadamer belongs to the phenomenological tradition just as the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1997), who claims that mind and body are intertwined in what he calls the lived body. We do not think of our body as body, not until the relationship between the lived body and the outside world for some reason becomes problematic. In case of illness, the body is made conscious through discomfort or pain. It is not simply illness that makes the body appear to us; other situations, for example linked to emotions, make the body emerge (cf. Alftberg 2004). Ageing is yet another circumstance when the body is seen from an outside perspective.

The Ageless Self and the Body

Ageing may cause a feeling of alienation from the body, a description that is sometimes used in experiences of illness or disability (cf. Svenaeus 2003; Jeppsson Grass-

man 2005). The body emerges as an object, in contrast to the lived body that is perceived as a part of the individual. When the body is perceived as an object, it appears with its own agency, distinct from the subject or core that is “me”. Karin talks about this:

You don't think of yourself as that old. If you hear about other people who are eighty-five years old, I think they're old, but when it comes to me, I don't bear my age in mind. Obviously one is not what one has been, one can tell very well: my head is not working as it should and one is not as keen on doing things and stuff. But still, I never think of myself as eighty-five, no. (pause) I don't think of you being old either (laughs and turns to her husband).

Previous research describes this experience of an ageless self. The body is perceived as old, but not the self (Kaufman 1986; Aléx 2007; Ehn 2007). Ageing affects the body, but the self is experienced as younger or simply without age. Being old can be an identity that is alienating, something that is attributed to the individual by others. This is exemplified in an article about elderly persons awaiting a kidney transplant. They, or rather their bodies, are labeled as old by the medical clinic, which has consequences for the transplant options available to them. Ageing receives a negative meaning which old people are forced to deal with and internalize (Idvall 2007). Axel protests mildly against the general negative image of ageing by telling me about an elderly relative he spent much time with as a child:

You could see very little of it (the ageing), really. He was the same when he was eighty as he was when he was ninety, and because of this, it has probably influenced my view of old people as well, I don't think that it is something strange (laughs), or what to say. I believe that a person can be himself right into old age.

Axel states that one continues to be oneself, despite the fact that ageing involves different transitions. Nevertheless, altering due to old

age, such as the appearance, possibly will be experienced as problematic. The importance of looks is mentioned in the interview with Harald when he takes up an ID card with his photograph on, used at the office he retired from fifteen years ago:

Harald: No, but I've changed a lot, if you're thinking ... let's see here. Of course, there's a big difference (holds up the card for display).

Åsa: Yes ... although I can see it's you.

Harald: Really?

Åsa: I think so.

Harald: Yes, but it's understandable, I don't know if I was grey-haired then? Was I?

Åsa: Yes, yes.

Harald: This was before I quit (work). It's amazing how things can change, it has changed so much.

While I only see a slight difference, Harald seems almost amazed and fascinated by his changed appearances and seems to doubt that I can actually recognize him on the photograph. What looks like an ordinary photograph to me, appears to remind Harald of who he was at the time and the life he lived then. The picture also brings notice to the alteration that has happened since then. Photographs, as well as mirrors, are two things that “do” our ageing because they show us the picture of ourselves from the outside; that is literally from another point of view. It can be difficult to recognize and grasp oneself when looks have changed. The significance of appearances is connected with modernity and the increased importance of reflexive identity formation in the modern society (Giddens 1997). Looks and exterior are expected to reflect an inner, authentic – and possibly ageless – self. This may be difficult when the body alters in different ways. Ethnologist Beatriz Lindqvist examines older women and how they experience their bodies as a shell the self is forced into, rather than being a part of the ego. Ageing means that the body no longer corresponds to the inner self. Time

is an enemy that deprives women the opportunity to express themselves and their identity. It is a struggle to maintain and take responsibility for appearances and looks, without seeming desperate and ridiculous. Ageing should be done with dignity (Lindqvist 1996).

Harald continues his thoughts and declares that it is a good thing if you do not look all too old. He also claims that his one year younger brother seems much older than he, partly because his brother has impaired hearing. Comparing with others, particularly health status and thus implicit the ageing, emerge frequently in the interview material. Context, situations and other people are important in how aging is “done”, which will be discussed further below.

The Telephone Book which Shrank

The interviewees have all experiences of spouses, siblings or friends who have suffered from illness or have had an accident, often by falling, which of course leads to reflections. Repeatedly, they make comparisons with any relatives, friends or acquaintances whose situation is “worse” in contrast to the respondents. Lilly describes and compares her situation:

I can't cope with the light from above, you see. I see nothing then. And then you get a bit, then I get slow when I'm going to cross the street, and I have to watch the traffic very carefully. So it's quite hard. But I have three friends who can't do anything, for their yellow spot (in the eye) is completely destroyed. I'm not in their situation anyway.

Ageing is measured by comparison with others in terms of health, appearance and ability. The surroundings and specific situations are of great significance in experience (any) age, and of being old. I ask Anna if she feels like eighty-nine years old, and she answers:

Nah, I can't say, when I sit and talk like this I don't feel old at all, but to go out and stumble around; I'm certainly not running for the tram any longer.

Age arises as a meaningful categorization in different situations, and therefore can be said to have significance only in relation to something; other people, things or places. The relevance of surroundings for the defining of ageing and old age is pointed out by Simone de Beauvoir (1976) in her book about old age. Our age is revealed to us by other people; it is in meeting with others that age may be important. We become self-conscious and objectified by other people's looks and comments. Old age is outspoken by others and selves, we speak of symptoms, appearance, fatigue, etc., and have less to do with chronological age. Beauvoir argues that it is not the body that reveals to us that we are old, but other people. With the aid of Merleau-Ponty (1997), I would rather say that it is the body's relationship to its surroundings, as well as other people and objects, which reveals or rather highlights the ageing. Margit provides a good example:

As long as you have your health, all is well ... you don't think of being old. It is just when I'm getting up on a chair – then I notice that I'm old (laughs).

The habit of using the chair as stairs to reach the top shelf in the kitchen cupboard is not running as smoothly as before, and Margit is reminded that something has changed. The surrounding world, filled with objects, is the foundation of our actions, thoughts and emotions. Equally, we affect things and objects in our turn, through the interpretation and the significance we give them. The perception of things – as a limitation or extension of the individual – depends on the meaning human beings will connect to them. For example, a walker can be experienced as a limitation by reminding of the

body's reduced ability, but it can also be seen as a help and a chance to actually move around, and even be experienced as an unreflecting extension or part of the body. Merleau-Ponty exemplifies this with the blind person's walking stick; the stick is perceived not as an object or device, but implemented as part of the body to explore the world (1997:107).

The significance of things is illustrated by Lilly. Her impaired vision makes it difficult to read the telephone directory. She claims however, that it is the telephone book and not her sight that is the problem:

Lilly: Telephone books are useless nowadays! The words and numbers are so small and tiny...

Åsa: You must use a magnifying glass?

Lilly: Yes, because the printing is so small and they use such thin paper. Because it's cheaper of course... and may contain more.

One way to deal with the changing body – but still remain in the lived body and the expression “I can” (Merleau-Ponty 1997:100), namely the immediate way we are in the world through our body – is to see the world as changing instead of the individual: it is the telephone book which has obtained smaller text, the keep-fit exercises suddenly have got too many difficult movements and rotations, etc. In a phenomenological perspective, the human being is intertwined with the environment; consequently an altered body will affect the experience of both self and the world. This is confirmed directly and indirectly during the interviews; the participants emphasize the changing significance of the surroundings. External factors such as weather or season appear to be increasingly important to take into account, and slopes and stairways are seen as obstacles rather than means of transportation. The outside world has become full of risks to be calculated and managed. Lilly, who went to aquarobics for

twenty-five years, chose to quit when the pathway to the tram stop was not gritted in the winter. Anna avoids entirely using the tram:

I must say, I don't dare go by tram now. I have a walker when I go out, you know, but it's very difficult to take it along the tram. I feel it's too high. You have to lift the walker up on the tram; I can manage that, though. Nevertheless... Then I'm afraid the tram will jerk when it sets off. Nah... I don't care anymore.

Anna concludes by saying that she is no longer able to go to the center of town by tram, but it is not something she longs for either. The alteration of the body leads to a different perception of well-known places, and sites previously visited lose their allure.

New Times, New Things

Ageing is generated not only through the changes of the body, but also through new things that are introduced in everyday life. The modern pop music on the radio, TV commercials, computers and mobile phones may seem alien or uninteresting for those who have lived most of their adult life without these things, but new objects may also create a feeling that you are not up to date (which certainly can happen no matter what age you have). Ingmar says:

Nothing is the same, you know, as it was before. And I would like to live in the past. Many times I find it much better before. I believe all my grandchildren, they've no fun now as we had, so much fun we had then, you know. But they've nothing. They sit in front of this computer, well it's theirs... They come home from school and sit down in front of the computer.

Direct or indirect criticism of contemporary time by comparison with another time is a way to preserve dignity and status, claims ethnologist Anne Leonora Blaakilde. “Before”, or times long past, may be used as a strategy against the devaluation of old age

(Blaakilde 1999). This devaluation includes a time dimension; older people are denied the values associated to modern, contemporary time. Ethnologist Sverker Hyltén-Cavallius (2005) means that older persons are considered living “*in a different time of life, with a different time, and from another time*” (p. 218, my translation). Old people are supposed to be different because they supposedly belong to another time and another generation. For Ingmar though, it seems to be the grandchildren who are the Other; they are the ones living in another time, a time which also appears to be quite incomprehensible and boring. Ingmar is ambivalent to the computer as a phenomenon. When we meet he makes questions about how the Internet works and says he plans to enroll at the library to get an introduction to how a computer works and its uses. Like most of the interviewees, Ingmar has had a cell phone for some time, and like the others he mentions that it is a safety if something would happen. In many cases, it is the children of the interviewees who have acquired the mobile phone. The feeling of safety thus created is probably as much important for the children as their parents. The relatives “do” the ageing by stressing that it is time to start thinking about security; something could happen that requires an urgent phone call. But new technology also leads to new values and attitudes (see Shove 2003), which will take longer to conquer or accept. Harald does not like to talk in his mobile phone on the tram, in contrast to all the young people, he points out. Nils talks about how surprised he was when the phone rang in the shop, and how it took some time to realize that it was his phone that was ringing. Margit, however, often drives her grandchildren to various activities and says that she has a mobile phone for her children being able to reach her if they need help, not vice versa.

The mobile phone is an example of how new habits are established, but might as well be replaced by other things such as Harald’s blood glucose meter, Axel’s hearing aid, or Anna’s walker. These things are also examples of new objects that must be incorporated into everyday activities. Habits and routines are keys to how we perceive ourselves and our lives. Merleau-Ponty defines habits as our ability to expand our physical space and implement an object (or be incorporated into the object; the interconnectedness between human beings and the world makes both perspectives possible). The habit is not a conscious knowledge, nor is it an automatism; it is a knowledge that is in our hands and present in our body movements (Merleau-Ponty 1997:107 f.). The habit is the immediate and unreflecting way we do things. If the ability of the body is changing, and a habit may no longer be performed as usual, we are forced to think about new solutions. These reflections contain a creativity that is essential for the design of the respondents’ everyday life, which will be discussed below.

To Ward Off Evil – Risks and Strategies

If the body – or the world – is perceived as an obstacle or everyday situations no longer function as usual, the result may be a sense of powerlessness and lack of control. It is therefore necessary to form strategies to cope with the impact of ageing, which at least generates a feeling of control. One way to respond to and cope with ageing would be to strive for good health, keeping your body in good condition. During the interviews, my questions about the things supposed to be good to your health are politely answered: be active, take walks and eat nutritiously. But on a practical level, it is more about averting “bad” than to promote “good”. Thoughts and stories are

not so much about prevention and health promotion but rather on how to draw up strategies and adapt, both for what has happened and what could happen. Anna reveals: “I always keep a label with my name and address in my pocket, you know, so they’ll know who I am. In case something should happen... You never know.”

Lilly and a neighbor of the same age are calling each other every morning just to make sure they have gotten out of bed. Anna stays in the kitchen until dinner is ready-prepared in order not to forget and risk burning the food. For safety reasons, she checks both hot plates and taps every night. Ingmar says: “The stove and the lights, I’m terrified I’ll forget, I must make sure they’re off. I always check before I go out. One has to check, but I never used to before.”

The home setting with the kitchen range and lights fills with different and more threatening meaning because of Ingmar’s old age. At the same time the quotation shows Ingmar’s strategy to deal with the situation; he simply creates new habits. Lilly too has changed some of her cleaning habits; in order to polish the windows without having to stand on chairs or tables, and accordingly run the risk of falling – which unfortunately happened to a friend of hers – Lilly has acquired a window scraper with long handle. She also describes how she goes shopping and how she plans for the future:

When I go to the shop I’ve nothing to carry and it’s only downhill. When I go home I’ve to carry and it’s just uphill slopes. But then I say to myself: go twice, then it won’t be so heavy. When that day comes when I won’t be able to do that anymore, I’ll take a taxi to the shop. I’ll buy everything I need and I’ll tell the taxi driver: wait, I’m going back home again; and then I’ll ask him to take my carrier bags inside.

Additionally, there is what might be called external threats. It is not just the body and the

surroundings that change meaning; other people are perceived as more threatening than before. Doris tells me she has bought a small handbag that she can carry underneath her coat to avoid being robbed, and Lilly describes the same fear:

Now, I always put my keys in my pocket when I go out, and I remove all my cards. I just make sure I have money for a taxi, nothing else. If you lose money, you can put up with it, but think of all the work if you lose your cards. The police said something I found very wise: if they want to snatch your bag, drop it right away. It’s better to lose your bag than to fall and break arms and legs. But you know, older people, they don’t want to let go of their bags and all the things they carry around. But now I’ve started to, I hold the handbag on the slant, like this (showing with a gesture how the bag hangs diagonally across one shoulder). Then I have the handbag and a shopping bag there, and I put my hand here (pretending to hold a bag of groceries in one hand and the handbag pressed against the body with the other hand). You won’t get me, you won’t get me! (laughs)

An image or concept that often appears in media is the weakened old man or woman who is defenseless against the criminal elements of society. This picture is a risk factor to take into account and is sometimes confirmed by own experiences or friends who have had something stolen or felt threatened in other ways.

The anthropologist Michael Jackson (2005) argues that human beings are always striving to control and create meaning of the conditions given them. Ageing accounts as such a circumstance, and a very powerful one since ageing sooner or later leads to our death, or nonexistence. Ageing can be regarded as a force we cannot master, but yet struggle against in order to maintain our dignity and sense of control. This struggle contains the creation of strategies, which implies a responsibility for the individual’s life and actions; a responsibility that is produced and

perceived as normality. In the work *Risk Society (Risksamhället 1998)*, the sociologist Ulrich Beck explains how modern society demands the individual to be reflexive and planning. A modern citizen needs to formulate a specific position in society, utilizing what can be called creative measures. This involves a constant preparedness for the risks in everyday life, and the opportunity to respond to the circumstances that arise.

When ageing alters the body, the relation between body and world is made aware in different situations. Infirmary, illness or simply changed appearances may lead to different perceptions and meanings of everyday routines and habits. Objects and locations will be interpreted with new eyes: they can, for example, be perceived as uninteresting, unfamiliar or full of risks. Suddenly, ordinary everyday situations require planning and strategies. Other people, especially other people's health, are something to measure the ageing against. Ageing is above all associated with the body, while the sense of self is seen as constant and without age.

Simone de Beauvoir (1976) argues that age is something abstract; it is a mental construction that positions people in cultural categories such as old age. Undoubtedly age operates as a classification tool in various ways, but in relation to everyday praxis, bodies, objects and places. My investigation shows how old age concerns something very material and situation-bound. The respondents speak of everyday situations and depict the different ways ageing is "done" with places or objects as starting point. Ageing is about practical things: telephone books, bags, trams, stoves and winter slippers; phenomena that due to body changes have been given different meanings. Culture is utilized in the concrete everyday life with all its habits and routines.

Older people's accounts of everyday life are filled with things, places and bodies – their own and others – that shape their ageing in action and practice.

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Notes

- 1 Vårdalinstitutet, The Swedish Institute for Health Sciences, is a national environment for research and development in the field of health care and social service in close cooperation with the universities and the health care principals. This particular study is part of my current dissertation project, which is also connected to Vårdalinstitutet.
- 2 Thanks to all involved in the project "Livslots" – part of the Vårdalinstitutet's intervention project "Äldre i riskzon" – who made it possible for me to make contact with the interviewees very easily. The respondents were asked to take part in my interviews during their participation in the intervention study. Those who were regarded as reluctant or having difficulties to take part in the intervention, were not asked to do interviews. The interviews may have been influenced by the fact that health and ageing were already discussed and mentioned in the intervention project – the project aims to improve the health of elderly by preventive measures. Since my study focus on people's perceptions and experiences, discussions part of the intervention project may have facilitated my interviews by increasing the participants' reflections on the topic. The interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and three hours, and were digitally recorded. Afterward they were transcribed verbatim. Files and transcriptions are at present kept by the writer.

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Looking at Houses, Searching for Homes

An Anthropological Analysis of the Relationship between Danish Homeowners and Their Houses

By Mark Vacher

In this article, I will present an analysis of the concept of *home* as a common way of articulating the house as a valuable aspect of life in Denmark.

When asked why their house is important to them, a frequent answer among Danish homeowners is: "Because it is my home". Even though the terms *house* and *home* are frequently used about the same place, they do not have an identical meaning. A home is not necessarily a house and a house is not necessarily a home.

The difference between house and home is articulated when homeowners are asked to define the concept of home.¹ Apart from answers like "Home is my house, my apartment, the place I live...", one can come across definitions like "Home is where you can take off your shoes," "Home is lighting candles," "Home is the smell of cookies and fresh baked bread," "Home is my family."

The definition of home in these latter examples includes activities (taking off shoes/lighting candles), perceptions (smelling cookies/bread) and social relations (family), but also material objects which are not normally thought of as things to inhabit. This raises the paradox that houses can be valued as homes, but that homes also can be, and often are, defined by referring to activities related to uninhabitable objects.

What is it about home that makes it refer not only to things we inhabit but also to activities, perceptions and social relations?

Based on fieldwork and empirical findings from two different Danish neighbourhoods, the following pages are an attempt to answer this question.

Looking for Homes in Broken Houses and an Architectural Utopia

When searching for empirical examples of houses being valued as homes, some of the

strongest articulations come from people who have been involved in disasters or accidents that left them homeless.

One such accident happened in the Danish suburb Seest, near the small city of Kolding, in Jutland, in 2004. Here, 2 000 persons were forced to evacuate from their homes when a fireworks warehouse exploded. One study of the evacuee's condition, performed by two psychologists immediately after the accident, found the following:

"Many have expressed how surprised they were over how difficult it was to be evacuated for an unknown period of time, and be without the secure base of the home. Even more have expressed that they were heavily burdened by ignorance of the condition of their house. The residents were nearly unanimous in expressing how much it meant to them to come home and determine the condition of their house" (Elklit & Molin 2006:2).

Not only does the accident in Seest illustrate the importance of the home for residents in a Danish suburb, but it was also an event through which that importance can be discussed. Therefore, Seest is an ideal location to look for empirical examples of the relationship between houses and homes.

The central theme of the empirical data from Seest is, as will become clear, the residents' experience of being cut off from, and, in some instances, losing, their home. These conditions cannot be described as being representative of Danes' perception of and relationship to their home because the home, as will become evident, is very much associated with the unchangeable, the stable and the secure.² Therefore, the analysis also uses empirical examples from another field location, the suburb Tarup which is located on the outskirts of Denmark's third largest city, Odense. In contrast to Seest, this location is

characterized by a high level of continuity and stable physical structures.³

Before comparing and analysing the two locations further let me first present a brief introduction to the chosen sites.

The Accident in Seest

Early in the afternoon of 3 November 2004, a fire broke out in a fireworks factory in Seest, a suburb of Kolding. After four hours, the fire culminated in three explosions that followed one another, where a total of 800 tons of fireworks exploded. Evacuation of the factory workers and persons residing in houses within a radius of one kilometre of the site began just a few minutes after the fire broke out. The location of the factory close to a residential area meant that the evacuation affected approximately 2,000 people from 740 households.

Because of the quick evacuation, there were few human injuries. One fire-fighter died and two were seriously injured. However, there was damage to 355 houses, of which 176 were so heavily damaged that the residents could not immediately move back after the evacuation.⁴

After the accident, there was a considerable amount of work concerning insurance questions and repair of damage. Insurance statistics (Insurance companies' common information service) maintain in a statement from 2 November 2005 that the total number of buildings damaged as a result of the explosions was 2,107. In 87 cases, it was necessary to rebuild the house, and the other cases varied from replacing roofs, masonry, and structural damage to replacing windows.⁵

In what way can an extraordinary event like a local fireworks accident contribute to generating general knowledge about the relationship between house and home in Denmark?

As previously mentioned, the evacuation of residents began immediately after the fire started. A large area was blocked off and people were denied access. As the fire broke out in the afternoon, the consequence was that people at work, in school and in daycare were cut off from their homes without warning. Many of the affected residents report that the uncertainty of not knowing what was happening with their house, whether it was burning or collapsing, was especially worrisome. As will be shown in this article, being conscious of losing one's home means that the relationship to the home that normally is a given, becomes an object of attention. It was with this attention that people returned to their houses after the evacuation, and regardless of whether the sight that awaited them was an intact house or a crater filled with bricks, having experienced the possibility of losing everything had marked their consciousness, making the residents of Seest particularly well-reflected informants regarding the meaning of home.

Another aspect of the fireworks accident, which tragically qualifies the residents of Seest for a study of the meaning of the home, is a number of unresolved issues that continued to bring the houses into focus in the time preceding the accident. According to the city of Kolding's measurements, the explosions caused earthquakes with a magnitude of 2.2 on the Richter scale (www.kolding.dk/brand/0032151.asp?sid=32151). The ground under the houses consequently shifted, causing ongoing cracking in plinths, floors, and walls more than a year after the accident. This has meant that even newly built houses must constantly be repaired, and that the houses are far from being perceived as substantial and stable. More than a year and a half after the accident, damage occurred in Seest as a consequence of the acci-

dent, which is why home owners in Seest regularly carry out a detailed inspection of their housing.⁶ Residents have gone from being typical home owners in a residential area, where many of the houses had stood solidly for 30–40 years, to being careful observers of minute changes.

Tarup's Townhouses

While Seest experienced an abrupt break that condensed conditions for analysis, Tarup is an interesting location for the study of changes through time, not least for the massive production of townhouses, 1,356 in number, of which the vast majority were designed by the same architect and built during the 1960s.

The townhouses are not merely standard houses in three variations. They are the manifestation of a concept of the good modern life. The advantages of Koch townhouses were expressed in the following way in a sales brochure by the architect and politician Jens Preben Koch:⁷ “You are relieved of the COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY and have no financial obligations in partnership with others when you live in your OWN HOUSE” (Frandsen & Bertelsen 2002:34).

That the residents lived in their own house did not mean that the architect had nothing to say about the life that should be lived in them. Thus, an illustrated poster was hung in the built-in closets with directions regarding cleaning, caring and maintenance, which, if followed, ensured “a good house worth owning”. Finally, a special notebook lay in a drawer in the kitchen of the new houses to record heat, electricity and water usage so that the new owner could keep track of his or her consumption. In this way, though not a collective responsibility, home ownership implied a moral responsibility. The clever home owner followed the direc-

tions, was vigilant, thrifty and protected his or her investment.

The purchasers of the new Koch townhouses were typically young people, who either had just started a family or were about to. The houses were inexpensive, 138,000 Danish kroner in 1964, and could be purchased for a down payment of 5,000 kroner (3% of the total price).

The result was a homogeneous population. Several interviews show that it was people with small children and steady jobs (for the man at least) that moved to Tarup-Paarup. Furthermore, the low house prices made it possible to own a car and travel during holidays (*ibid.*:6).

In other words, it was the working middle class, and the district is a historic example of when this class became wealthy and how and with which habitus their capital was invested.

Koch townhouses were generally built with an area of less than 100 m² (between 77 and 99, depending on the type, with end houses larger than the houses in the middle of the row). For people moving out of the city centres in the 1960s, this was seen as an appropriate size for a family with two children (in several of the interviews, it was revealed that the family decided to move into the townhouse when they had their second child).

Today, the demographic is still homogeneous. As a 60-year-old woman expressed it, it has been important to ensure that the area “did not become a ‘rhubarb’ (Arabic) district.” A similar view was expressed by a couple in their thirties with children when they were asked to explain the area’s advantage: “There are no immigrants here.”

The townhouse district in Tarup is still Danish middle class, but today, on top of young couples with children, there are also

elderly (among them some who moved in as young people in the 1960s) and middle-aged. There are also some single parents, as the townhouse prices are such that it is possible to afford one with a single income. Finally, the young people who live in the area are in many cases the children of those who moved in in the 1960s, and in the cases where the former have children, there is now a third generation of Koch townhouse residents.⁸

Another important reason the townhouses in Tarup are used as an analytical example in a study of the meaning of the home for Danes is their potential for comparison. They were built as identical houses and conceived as a frame for the good modern life (cf. J. P. Koch). Their present form and appearance can, in other words, be analysed as variations of the same theme – the architectonic basis of the 1960s.

The Home as a Unique Place

After this introductory presentation of the empirical foundation for the analysis, let me now direct the focus to the article's primary problem formulation, namely, a more general analysis of the phenomenon of "home".

The average or typical Danish home is found neither in the disaster area of Seest nor in Tarup's townhouses, but as I shall attempt to show in this article, these localities reveal, through their unique characters, conditions that are found in and affect most Danish houses valued as homes. One of these conditions is the perception of the home as unique place in the world.

According to the Norwegian anthropologist Marianne Gullestad, the home in Scandinavia both refers to and is a place. As a place, she maintains, it is so characteristic that it is perceived as the antithesis of all other localities. This makes the home one of two defined

parts in a dichotomy between *home* and *outside*, and all other fixtures in modern life are included in the category *outside* (Gullestad 1993:135). *Home*, she says, "stands for warmth, security, cosiness (and perhaps a little boredom)," while *outside* "stands for excitement but also some danger" (ibid.).

In other words, one goes *home* after one has been *outside*, and that, according to Gullestad, means an expectation of homey cosiness, warmth and security.⁹ In this way home is extremely value-laden, at the same time as being a destination and a location.

The values given a home, according to the Swedish ethnologist Orvar Löfgren, are also associated with movement and relationship to other localities. It is by going out that one meets new people, shows one's skills and collects wages for them, but, simultaneously, the status of labour as a commodity means that the individual risks being reduced to a quantifiable unit, for example as an employee who can be fired, or as unemployed person who cannot sell his or her labour. Therefore, Löfgren asserts, the home has become "an antipole to the growing anonymity, rationality and effectivity of the outside world" (Löfgren 2003:144). Besides the relational, the dichotomy of *home/outside* in this way also indicates localized and strong intrinsic qualities of the home. As Löfgren implies, these are, among other things, a shelter from the foreign, cynical and, according to Gullestad, sometimes dangerous, *outside*. In this way, the home represents a fortress, the purpose of which is to hold *outside* outside through the owner's control over who and what comes in.¹⁰

The importance of the element of control was clearly expressed in Seest, where the accident, for a time, upset the established owner relationship. As the owner of one newly built house in Seest said, after the ac-

cident, one suddenly doubted whose house it really was. After his house was assessed as being so badly damaged that a new one had to be built instead, the ownership of the ruins and the contents that were not removed by the inhabitants was handed over to the insurance company, which put it up for sale.

Then people with trailers came and stripped the house of everything. They also took the planters in the outbuilding that I had put there because I wanted to keep them. In fact, they also took the outbuilding and left only the planters that were damaged. But the worst of all was that they took my neighbour's broom and shovel. Right after the accident, I went over and borrowed them to remove the worst of the glass shards. They were expensive ergonomic tools, and I had put them beside the back door of the house, but they were taken anyway. That made me angry, so I went outside and complained to some people who were filling up a trailer. When I came back the next day, there was an old shovel and worn-out broom standing there, but it was too embarrassing to return them.

The matter of the substituted tools had become a matter of principle to this mentioned resident. He reported the case to the insurance company, which agreed to replace the neighbour's shovel and broom. He stated that it was with great satisfaction that he was not only able to return what he had borrowed, but also could show who it was that ultimately had control over his property.

As is evident, ownership and control were challenged after the fireworks accident, and what had previously been a family's property and private domain was trampled and changed by strangers. The result for the owner was a degrading feeling of being administered. This was partly because it was degrading not to have control over his property and partly because the theft of the tools undermined his credibility in relation to his neighbour. His response was to fight for the right to define the boundary between *home*

and *outside* through explicit action. That was possible because there had been a theft and therefore someone or something to blame and direct his anger towards. Others were more powerless.

This was related by one woman:

It only took one afternoon to remove all the bricks so that only the cement frame was left. I didn't think that was very nice. We had lived there since 1964. It was like being stripped naked.

When the family returned after the evacuation, they were, at first, relieved to find their house almost intact, but the subsequent inspection for damage revealed that the roof had been lifted in the explosion, after which it had fallen down again and crushed central elements of the cement frame hidden in the walls. Furthermore, a gable wall had been shifted half a metre. The insurance company assessed that the house could be saved, but the consequence was that all bricks on the outer walls, and all tiling, panelling and wallpaper on the inner walls had to be removed.

At the time of the interview, the family lived in a camper in the back yard, and the house I was shown around in was completely empty except for a couple of plant pots. "Where do you find this kind of tiles nowadays? You can't get them any more," asked the wife when she showed me the kitchen. "I hope they are careful when they take them down, but they probably can't be saved."

Not only was the house changed beyond recognition and irreplaceable objects ruined. It was also invaded by workmen who had been hired by a strange employer (the insurance company) to repair damage that, in this case, was invisible to the residents. There was no doubt that the family appreciated both the workmen's and the insurance company's efforts, but regardless, the threshold between

public and private life (*outside* and *home* according to Gullestad) had been violated in ways that made the inhabitants feel powerless and insecure – and naked.

What the previous example shows is the importance of the home as a spatially demarcated and controlled domain. At first glance this confirms Gullestad's statements regarding the home as a dichotomous opposite to the foreign *outside*, but, as the stories from Seest show, the home can, in part, be invaded, ruined or lost, and, just as importantly, it appears that the home is more than a relational opposite to the foreign *outside*. It is apparently linked to its inhabitants. Thus, seeing one's house stripped of its bricks gives one the feeling of being stripped naked. In other words, when something happens to my home, something happens to me!

It seems that a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of the home must reach further than an explanation of taxonomies and opposites.

The Home as Property

What is the connection between home and inhabitant?

According to Karl Marx, it's all about property. Thus, a burned-down house valued as home is tantamount to burned property, which is why something is lost (Marx [1867] 1970, vol. 1:109). This makes immediate sense, and in fact it seems that the home is more strongly connected to the owner than many types of property. For example, bicycles, bags and even houses can be outside the category of property and exist without an owner, while a home without an owner simply cannot be imagined.¹¹

This is because the home is not a thing, but rather transcends material commodities. Things, says Marx, belong to humans' external reality and therefore can be sold (Marx,

Das Kapital 1, vol. 1: 190). It is clear from the study in Seest that this is not the case with a home. The reaction to a burned home was much greater than regret over a lost investment. For example, many of the residents of Seest escaped with only broken windows, cracked tiling and loose shingles, but, despite this, many were active in self-help groups and continued to be concerned with the accident long after the fact.¹² Figuring in the additional condition that those affected by the accident were insured and in some instances actually increased the value of their property, it becomes clear that the meaning of the home cannot be reduced to a matter of "humans' external reality".

If the home is not a thing and cannot exist without an owner, what sort of property is it? In a way, it has much in common with Marx's understanding of labour. Labour, he states, cannot be separated from the work carried out (*ibid.*:286). Nevertheless, it requires a material to be carried out in. In this way, Marx claims, labour is realized only through its results: "it shows itself only in work carried out" (*ibid.*). The same, I argue, can be said about home. As learned from Seest, homes on the one hand are not separable from their owner but on the other a home must be anchored in a thing (e.g., a cardboard box, a tent, a house or a geographical area), to function as a home.

The question then is: does it make sense to state about home as Marx did when he wrote of labour that it "shows itself only in work carried out"?

That is precisely the point made by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger when he claims, in the lecture "Bauen Wohnen Denken" that "bauen" (building) and "wohnen" (dwelling) originate from the same reason and same action. To create a residence, Heidegger maintains, is to collect

adjust, transform and assemble materials and thus make oneself at home (Heidegger 2000: 52f.).

Following Heidegger, this means that a home always comprises a practical element, a doing/creating, in that things such as apartments or houses must be involved before a home can emerge. Just as labour becomes visible in the appearance of the finished product or the completed task, so the home emerges as a result of the house's involvement. In this way, home and work belong in the same category, because the home, just as work, is expressed through its product.

This is evident in the following interview with a carpenter who was working on remodelling his Koch townhouse:

Interviewer: How do you think it will be when the job is finished? I mean, completely finished.

Carpenter: Then I will just find something new to work on. That's just how it is.

Interviewer: So you will never be completely finished?

Carpenter: There is always something to be done – you know what they say about craftsmen – no, that's not true, I haven't compromised with anything, materials or anything, windows or anything, you know. One can buy windows that cost half of what these do, but these are super-low energy, soundproofed and so on.

Interviewer: It is important to you to use good materials?

Carpenter: Yes, it's important to me. If they're not good, it can cause a lot of extra work.

Interviewer: So you have some professional pride in this house? Is your house such that you can say to your co-workers, "Look what I've done"?

Carpenter: I don't know. It's just incredibly important to me, that the work I do as a craftsman, that I can vouch for my work a hundred per cent, both at home and at work.

The carpenter uses his time, his energy and his skills and knowledge of materials in the remodelling of his townhouse. The home is created when the carpenter builds, and in

this case, it is impossible to separate work, craftsmanship, house and home. All the activities constitute a relationship between human and material which invests the one in the other.

This convergence is, though, an extraordinary exception. This is partly because one does not need to be a professional carpenter to build a house or to create a home, and partly because carpenters build many houses that they never come to consider their own home.

From Exchange Value to Use Value

But if home originates from an investment of activity in material, why then do some things become a home while others do not?

In a modern society such as Denmark, labour is mainly a commodity that, for most people, can be sold. Here, the investment of activity in material is working for others. In other words, when one is a labourer, one gives up the rights to the use of the product one produces or the service one provides in return for monetary wages. The things the worker produces must be distanced from the worker because it is only through this process of alienation between the human and the materiality that labour and its products can obtain and attain an exchange value and thereby become a commodity. Alienation does not change the circumstances of the commodity being or being produced by labour, but in the market the quality alone of the commodity and not the circumstances of its creation form the foundation for its value.¹³ According to Marx, the commodity's acquisition of value and its appearance of having no creator give it the character of a fetish, "full of metaphysical subtleties and theological caprice" (Marx 1970, vol. 1:170), in the sense that it has a life of its own, while the human producer is relegated to the background, an-

onymous and undefined.¹⁴ Materiality as commodity is, in other words, torn from its producer by breaking the relationship between human and material and placing it outside of the realm of production. It is transferred into the market's display room, where, in the words of the literary theoretician Roland Barthes, it is at a distance, detached from history, and promises change and possibility in wondering silence. Materiality as commodity is, in this way, "bien plus magique que la vie" (Barthes 1957:150).

As a commodity, the house fits easily into Marx's lens. It is often produced by specialized labourers (masons, carpenters, plumbers and electricians), is bought and sold in a specific market by a specialized middle-man (real estate agent) and, as shelter and protection, represents a concrete and fundamental utility product for its inhabitants.

A Marxist analysis of the house as commodity reveals how the house, through typologies such as "Skagen house" (Skagen is a small town on the northern tip of Jutland, known for its distinctive yellow houses), "Eurodan house" or "master-builder house," is alienated from the labour that produced it, freed from the seller/user by the real estate agent, and takes on the character of a fetish through advertising. Thus, housing advertisements celebrate the house's exchangeable qualities, without reference to the subjects that live there.

However, commodities are only commodities because their exchange value is expected to be, at some time, removed from the market and purchased for use value. This means that, in a modern capitalistic society, the process of alienation must have a counterpart, that being the assimilation of objects that are produced by others' labour. "That triviality (truism) is naturally correct" (ibid., vol. 2:271), Marx concedes, but seen in rela-

tion to commoditization, a product's transformation to utility product is presented as quite simple in *Das Kapital* (ibid.). One purchases a commodity and uses it.

While Marx's analysis of commoditization is both nuanced and detailed, the empirical data from Seest and Tarup show that the transformation from exchange value to use value is much more complex than that presented in *Das Kapital*.

How complex it can be can be learned from Family N's experience. The family's house had been so damaged by the explosion in Seest that the insurance company evaluated that a new one must be built to replace it. Before the accident, the family had lived in the house for five years and had no plans to move. After the accident, the house had been torn down to make room for a new one, which was to be built from the ground up. The family had become very involved in the building of the new house. They had held meetings with the architect and had, as the wife put it, "got just what they wanted." In contrast to their old house, the new one, from the first brick laid to the number of bathrooms, the children's bedrooms, and the shape of the garage, was tailored to suit their family's needs.¹⁵ They said that they found it difficult to adjust to the new house anyway. "We feel like foreigners, and it's difficult to fall asleep at night," Mrs. N said when she showed me their new home.

As stated, Mr. and Mrs. N. have been part of the process of designing their new house and have been able to ensure that it was exactly as they wanted. They have had an architect and interior designer paid by the insurance company, and therefore have had no limitations as to professional expertise or their own input in the planning.¹⁶ Why, then, is it so difficult to begin using a new house; why does one feel like a foreigner in foreign

surroundings when the residence one has moved into is one's dream house?

De-fetishizing Commodities

The answer is to be found in the relationship between human and materiality – or, more precisely, in the relation-making activity.

If an object must be alienated to become a commodity, it must, on the other hand, before it can be put into use, be adapted by its consumer who in that process must become acquainted with its qualities as a consumable object. This re-establishment takes time and includes a mutual adaptation of both human and materiality. One could in fact say that the process is a reversion of the labour process,¹⁷ in that the purpose is not alienation but, rather, assimilation.

According to the British anthropologist Daniel Miller failing to acknowledge the importance of this process constitutes a problematic lack in Karl Marx's analysis of the consequences of the capitalist system (Miller 1987:42). The result in Marxist-inspired writings, he argues, is a conjuring up of "a kind of 'modern human condition' characterized by a sense of loss of authentic or proper identity" (ibid.:44). In order to avoid such alienating consequences of a theory of alienation, Miller sees studies of consumption as a necessary supplement to Marxist theory.

If we are to understand how a house is (or is prevented from) being transformed from a commodity into a home, following Miller, we have to include consumption in our analysis as the opposite process of alienation.

In Miller's approach consumption is defined as "that which translates the object from an alienable to an inalienable condition" (ibid.:190). In this way consumption is not seen as an ultimate state or condition but rather, as he states, a process of "translation".

Making this distinction is crucial for two

reasons. First, it shifts the ethnographic attention from Marx's understanding of consumption as a realization of use value to examining consumption as a process *towards* this realization. Secondly, it indicates a *gradual* transformation from alienated object to inalienable condition, which in this case can be phrased as a transformation from house to home.

To most Danes the house is a commodity before it is a home, which means it is the product of alienated labour, and lives its "own life," according to Marx, as a fetish. Herein lies the difference between a typical process of appropriation of a house (e.g. in Tarup) and the challenges faced by people in Seest like family N.

Appropriating a Townhouse

Being a commodity the purchase of the house ensures the rights to the commodity's use value, but that is not the same as its realization. A purchased house requires a translation (cf. Miller), that *de-fetishizes* it, and "prepares" it for its consumer.

The practice of de-fetishizing differs from case to case, both individually from buyer to buyer, but also dependent on what commodity is being de-fetishized (Pantzar 1997; Löfgren & Wikdahl 1999).¹⁸ Nonetheless, the interviews with owners of townhouses in Tarup showed that there were a number of common de-fetishizing practices involved in the process of setting up a household in one of the townhouses. It is normal practice to clean, and often paint and wallpaper, a newly purchased or rented residence before moving in. All traces of the former inhabitant are removed in this way, and the first, and often encompassing and lasting, personalizing touches are made by the new owner.¹⁹ This purification process was fresh in the memories of most of the

residents of Tarup, regardless of whether they had owned their house for a few years or since the end of the 1960s. For example, one father, who had lived in the house for 14 years, said the following:

It was dark here and the entrance was a path in the front yard between some high trees that looked like they belonged in a cemetery. That took one morning with a chainsaw, ha ha.

A single mother who had lived in her house for eight years related the following:

Interviewer: Do you know who lived here before?

Woman: Yes, there was a family. They had, what was it? They had many children – many children. There was only 80 square metres. They lived here with four or five children. Then they tried to sell the place, but couldn't get rid of it. It wasn't very well maintained. There were a little, well, they were slob.

Interviewer: What does it mean to be a slob?

Woman: The kitchen stove is a good example; if you take the bottom drawer out, there where there are baking trays and stuff, there was a couple centimetres of sauce that had dripped down there. They had a kitchen carpet that I thought was black – when we got the moulding off, it was light grey. We thought the windows were broken, but they just needed to be cleaned. Everything had to be cleaned. It was very filthy.

Interviewer: Was it anyone you knew?

Woman: No, it wasn't. They were so filthy that all the neighbours said, "How did that mother with two little girls dare to move in there?" When I was out looking at the house, I was told that I should look under the dirt.

One thing that all the households in the study in Tarup had in common was that no one had anything positive to say about the former residents. Either they were mentioned as anonymous entities that had done nothing with the house, with disgust and aversion as in the previous example, or as downright unpleasant.

One father, who had lived in his house for 29 years, had the following description of the former owner:

"They had two Alsations out in the front yard. He was a strange one. He was so damned male chauvinistic, no doubt about it! I can still remember that, even after so many years. He was not at all well liked here. He was a member of one of those motorist associations, and he raced up and down all the little streets here at about fifty or sixty [km/h]. No one liked him."

"Us, on the other hand," added his wife, "we fitted in right away."

Phasing out the former owners is an important practice in the process of establishing a new home, whether it involves chainsawing, cleaning, or the way one drives one's car. Moving in, de-fetishizing the house, and fitting in are all associated with removing traces.

Facing a New Order

In the case of the residents of Seest, many of these de-fetishizing translation practices were not available. There were no former owners to remove, no dark trees to cut down, and, thanks to cooperation with the architect, no walls to move or rooms to redefine. Colour consultants had been provided by the insurance companies, professionals had painted, installed lighting and shelving, cupboards, mirrors, carpeting etc.

Furthermore, a great deal of the furnishing in some of the rebuilt houses was also new. The furniture, dishes and decorations of many families (including family N) had been destroyed²⁰ and the replacements that were purchased were often matched sets. A woman in one new house related the following:

One could say that the accident gave us the chance to clean out our things, and now everything matches, as you can see. For instance, we have bought these new knives because the old ones didn't match and made it look messy.

In contrast to the majority of household effects in their house, the knives were not paid for by the insurance, but this underscores

how the house had become a strict taxonomy after the accident, that not only was in opposition to and rejected elements from the old house, but also dictated new purchases. The new taxonomy originates not from use nor as a contrast to something previous, but from a foreign aesthetic order. This was expressed in several interviews, where home owners confirmed that television programmes, home centres, and furniture stores' advertisements and showrooms had been the major inspiration.²¹ The fact that the majority of household effects were purchased at once, often the same place and as a set, means a massive number of commodities being taken into use at once, on such a scale that a context is thus created for the individual items. Thus, the knives were traded in for new ones not because they were dull and useless, but because they did not match the rest of the household. In other words, the new knives were not acquired solely as tools, but as part of a simulacrum – a system that has neither place in nor reference to reality.²²

The objects in the new houses in Seest have, of course, been purchased for the purpose of being used, the knives must cut, food must be prepared on the island in the kitchen, and even the most expensive quarry tiles in the shower must be used for bathing. The problem is that use makes a mess, wears things out and undermines systems of organization. In this type of aesthetic context, use therefore actually harms the system. A massive acquisition of commodities, then, entails a risk of a conflict between the residence and residing in the house because the house has become an object of contemplation. The new houses in Seest are in limbo between, on the one hand, the commodity, with its aura of alienation and allure, and, on the other hand, the home's realized use value. They are neither commodity nor article for everyday use;

neither coveted nor comforting. Instead they are a source of frustration and a burden to maintain.

An example of this is the coat rack in the entrance hall to the house of the same woman who had purchased new knives for the kitchen. The coat rack was lying on the floor and had been there for more than two months. She explained that this was because, in contrast to the lighting and curtains, they had to hang the coat rack themselves. There were four screws to be screwed into the wall, but neither the woman nor her husband dared do it. "Just think if we drilled wrong, or if it ended up being crooked." In their previous house, they had installed shelving and lighting and hung pictures.

As a guest, there were two options: either lay one's coat on the floor in the entryway or take it into the kitchen/living room area, where it could be draped over the back of a chair or laid on the sofa. In either case, the result was a conspicuous reminder that one was a guest disturbing a foreign aesthetic system.²³

Home—Producing Relationships by Consuming the World

Now we approach finding an answer not only to the question of why one can feel like a stranger in a house that one has actively participated in designing and decorating, but also why home can refer not only to something we inhabit but also to activities, perceptions and social relations.

The home is a place where use value is brought within reach by the removing its exchange value by pulling, washing, cutting, boiling or screwing it off, etc. (in Tarup, as we have seen, this process may even include chainsawing). This reversed and assimilating movement from alienated to useful, which happens to all commodities whose use value

is to be realized, can appropriately be described as leading to internalization. This is because the ultimate step in the process of de-fetishization (or consumption in Miller's terms) is, in contrast to alienation, a fusion of commodity and human.

This applies to both things from humans "external reality" (cf. Marx) and labour. At home, the result of the cutting of knives, heat from the stove and the labour and cooking talents of the inhabitants is consumable. The commodity, from being a generalized phenomenon, for instance in the form of potatoes, becomes a concrete feeling of fullness in the stomach of a specific subject.

Internalization is, thus, the opposite of alienation; it builds relationships instead of breaking them. This is not only the case for the relationship between commodity and the individual subject (Miller 2005:44). In the process, values and social relationships to one's fellow humans, animals and things are articulated, maintained, and developed. This is the case, for instance, with preparing food for the family, which then gathers for the meal. The meal, through its status as a well-prepared everyday meal, favourite dish, or holiday feast, materializes taxonomies, aesthetics and values. In other words, along the way from alienated commodity to internal condition (e.g., fullness), a series of fellowships and domains unfold, that, with internalization, end in a fusion of very specific objects and subjects. In this way, one could say, it is not only potatoes that are consumed when a meal is ingested, but also markets, communities, relationships, work practices, tastes, values, etc.

This situation not only applies to meals, but also to other aspects of adaptation, adjustment and consumption. It is true for gardening and yard work, cleaning up, laundry, and a variety of do-it-yourself projects,

which practices not only articulate, reflect and develop, but actually make up the relationships to the other inhabitants of the house (Douglas 1991:303f.),²⁴ and the house as materiality.

The home grows from these processes, and without examples of these, no home will emerge. The empirical data from Seest illustrate this very clearly.

While others are able to make de-fetishizing and socially establishing manifestations by lighting candles, de-fetishizing flour, eggs and sugar by merging it into the smell of cookies and fresh-baked bread, or taking off the shoes that carry them to market spheres, people in Seest are busy maintaining a fetishized order.

This order derives neither from de-fetishizing activities nor close social relations, nor does it entail any significant perceptions other than experiences of professionally defined (fetishized) aesthetics. In this sense the houses in Seest lack essential home-making qualities.

The modern home can, when it occurs, be described as an internalized platform for internalization, because it has emerged, in part, from a de-fetishized and internalized commodity (the house), and also, in part, is a place where a constant stream of commodities are prepared and consumed.

This means that the home is, in most regards, the opposite of the commodity and commoditization. In and of itself, this point has become nearly trivial and has been formulated in many studies of home and hominess (Gullestad 1993; Stjernfelt 1996; Löfgren 2003), but by including de-fetishization and internalization as established practices for the home, the contrast is moved beyond being just a stable dichotomy. This is due to the focus on the practical, which articulates the intensity as well as the magnitude and

possible nuances of scale. The home is, in other words, the result of a series of processes, which according to the preceding paragraph, constitutes and establishes intense relationships to other people, pets and objects (Douglas 1991; Miller 1987, 2001, 2005).

A home is what is created when consumption as translation (de-fetishization) reaches its most intense form, internalization, where it reaches its culmination as a state of being.²⁵ When this happens differs, however, from one individual to another, and the process can be displaced or endangered. Some can assume ownership of even filthy and run-down townhouses and, through cleaning and decorating, transform them into an internalized home in a relatively short period of time, while others, despite having dictated even the smallest details and having been deeply involved in the process of creation, find it difficult to overcome the distance to the acquired materiality.

Conclusion

This article does not portray an ordinary or average Danish home. Even if one was to attempt this, it would be hardly possible to present such a home, as it is a question of qualitative relationships rather than quantifiable units. If one were to try anyway, such a portrayal would most likely differ from most Danes' experience of a unique connection between themselves and the materiality they refer to as their home.

What the examples from Seest and Tarup have been useful for is, as the sociologist Max Weber states, to "point in the direction of a hypothesis" (Weber 2000:199), by providing some clear empirical examples that indicate a general and versatile frame of explanation.

The empirical data suggest that the mod-

ern Danish home is a practice. Therefore, when one visits houses and apartments in Denmark, it is not the homes that can be seen but only the materiality in which they unfold.

Understanding home as practice, however, does not mean that it can be reduced to mere activity. One can say that home, as referred to above, is an articulation/representation of activities and actions made possible *through* engagement with the house (as material manifestation). In other words, the home as a practice occurs in a relationship between a human being and the material making the latter a constitutive part of the home-making process.

The house is valued and, thus, an object of attention and activities manifesting it as a home. Valued as a home, it drags and transforms external (alienated) relations and objects *inside* its physical boundaries. As such, the house is interconnected to modern Danish society, not only in opposition to and as a refuge from its alienating processes and practices (cf. Gullestad 1993; Löfgren 2003), it is also, at the same time, the manifestation of an outreaching and internalizing practice producing – not alienable objects – but the home owner him/herself as a moral and social being capable of engagement in relationship making activities.

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Notes

- 1 The project *Housing in Time and Space* was carried out from 2005 to 2006 by the anthropologists Kirsten Marie Raahauge, Inger Sjørsløv and Mark Vacher from the Department of Anthropology at Copenhagen University under the Centre for Housing and Welfare and financed by

- the Realdania Foundation. As a result of the project's focus on home ownership, the data collection took place in privately owned single family houses, but, in principle, the analysis of home and materiality is valid also for apartments, rented housing or any other physical entity inhabitants would refer to as their home.
- 2 That the home is perceived as secure and stable is evident in everyday language, expressions and metaphors. This is the case not only in Denmark but generally also in Scandinavia (see e.g. Gullestad 1993; Löfgren 2003; Winther 2006).
 - 3 As part of the project *Housing in Time and Space*, fieldwork and interviews were carried out in six different locations in Denmark. In addition to Seest and Tarup, also Sønderborg, Frederikssund, Breddal and Copenhagen (Sjørsløv 2007, 2009). While the empirical examples in this article are taken exclusively from the locations visited by the author, the analysis is also based on data from the other field locations.
 - 4 www.kolding.dk/brand/0032151.asp?sid=32151
 - 5 www.forsikringsoplysningen.dk/Gode%20raad/Kolding/Skadetal_nov_05.aspx
 - 6 At www.seestnet.dk, which is a website created by a self-help group, the following can be read under the heading "Keep an eye on the underground!": "Advice for everyone who IN ANY WAY experiences shifting in the ground causing damage to foundations, broken bricks, etc.: Report immediately to your insurance company and discuss the case here" (capitalization in original text).
 - 7 Jens Preben Koch (1917–1996) was a conservative member of Dalum city council from 1958–1962, but in 1970 founded the Capitalist People's Party, one goal of which was that "Everyone should be able to own their residence. Taxes should be reduced. We must simplify administration" (Frandsen & Bertelsen 2002:34).
 - 8 It must be stressed that the houses are not handed down, but that the children have moved to other Koch houses. (In interviews with the elder generation, the possibility of taking over the house is never mentioned. On the contrary, it is assumed that the children will sell it when the parents pass away.)
 - 9 The magnitude and meaning of the cultural taxonomy that accentuates the home is exemplified in the strict taboo surrounding domestic violence, incest and other abuse of children in the home. Thus, the thought of the home as the opposite of cosy, secure and warm is irreconcilable with conceptions of the phenomenon.
 - 10 In this context, owner and renter are not distinguished, as the renter, through his or her rent payment, buys the right to lock the door and control access to the home. Nonetheless, ownership signals greater control over the home. Thus it was precisely freedom from the collective that, according to J. P. Koch, distinguished the townhouses in Tarup.
 - 11 It is striking, for example, that the home cannot be turned into a commodity. It is not the home that changes hands in a housing transaction, but precisely that – the housing.
 - 12 According to the psychologists Ask Elklit and Keld Molin (2006:3), 40% of the residents in the area suffered from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) or subclinical PTSD.
 - 13 The exception is if the creation process is in itself considered a quality, and thereby increases the value of the commodity. Examples of this are products produced with consideration for ecology, animal protection, fair trade etc., often labelled with information concerning the particulars.
 - 14 The analysis of this project of mystification is one of the returning problems considered in Marx's most important work, *Das Kapital* (Marx [1867–1894] 1970). The problems of exchange value, fetishism of commodities and alienation between humans and materiality are extensively discussed in this book.
 - 15 Other families had previously lived in their old house, which is why they had adjusted to an existing shape and layout.
 - 16 There has, of course, been a ceiling for the cost of the project, but the family feels that they have had a great deal of influence, both during the process and in the result, and have received a great deal of help from the consultants.
 - 17 Not in the sense of destruction, but in the sense of the opposite of alienation.
 - 18 As argued by the Finnish researcher Mika Pantzar, new objects entering the market sphere as commodities call for new kinds of engagement not only with consumers but also with other objects. Therefore, he argues, it makes sense to speak of social histories of artefacts since all artefacts gaining status as commodities enter pre-existing ecologies/regimes of goods and must be approached, related to and domesticated by their consumers (Pantzar 1997). An example of such a social history is given by the Swedish ethnologists Orvar Löfgren and Magnus Wikdahl. In their article, "Domesticating Cyberdreams – Technology and Everyday Life" (1999), they provide an interesting cultural analysis of the domestication of communication technology in Sweden. Although *domestication* seems like an obvious term to use when analysing houses and

homes, it refers to a “domus”, without defining the nature of this house/home. Therefore I prefer, in the present analysis, to use the term *de-fetishization* because it refers to Marx’s use of the term fetish.

- 19 In both Seest and Tarup, the overriding trend was that large renovations – such as layout, changing rooms with other inhabitants and altering the function of a room – generally happen in concert with major upheaval in the lives of the inhabitants (e.g. death, divorce and when children move out). Simultaneously, the statement, “when something happens to my home, it happens to me” can be turned around, becoming instead “when something happens to me, it happens to my home”. This emphasizes again the fundamental connection between inhabitants and residence – or, in other words, between human and materiality.
- 20 Even in the houses that had survived the accident, the pressure from the explosions had shattered the windows and destroyed household effects. Thus, there were 654 reported claims for personal property and household effects (www.forsikringsoplysningen.dk/upload/seest_nov05.gif).
- 21 This principle dominated not only interior design, but also the grounds. Several of the residents in Seest had spoken highly of a yard that appeared in the television programme *Hokus-krokus*. In this programme, a new garden is designed by gardeners while the owners are on vacation, without the owners’ knowledge. In the episode from Seest, a new yard was built on grounds that had been destroyed, first by fire and later by construction. The changes therefore were all-encompassing. An important part of the concept of the show is that the yard must be finished when the family returns home. Therefore, sodding and plants are used rather than seeds. Thus, the yard, like the houses, was not the product of a long process but rather a master plan that has its origins in aesthetics rather than use.
- 22 The philosopher Jean Baudrillard describes simulacra as follows: “It is no longer a question of imitation, nor of duplication, nor even of parody. It is a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself” (Baudrillard 1988:167).
- 23 This experience of disorganization was in stark contrast to the inhabitants’ hospitable attitude. Not only was I provided with refreshments, but I also received a gift “for luck” and was driven to Kolding after the interview.
- 24 Under the telling heading “Tyrannies of the Home” the British anthropologist Mary Douglas

analyses meals and other social activities related to consumption within the home as moments of potential domination and restrictive socialization. This aspect of home is rarely articulated during interviews or when referring to home as a value. Nevertheless, she states, “This is how the home works. Even its most altruistic and successful versions exert a tyrannous control over mind and body” (ibid.).

- 25 That it is actually an inalienable state of being is evident from the fact that home is something one can *be*, comparable to being full, sad, secure, etc.

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Diversity and the Concept of Place

Inclusion and Exclusion Mechanisms among Norwegian City-dwelling Parents

By Hilde Danielsen

Introduction

How do city-dwelling parents use different conceptions of diversity as a tool in their children's upbringing? Diversity is used as an expression of the city as a place by the interviewees constituting the empirical body for this article. Guided by analytical concepts of place, I focus on how the concept of diversity governs both inclusion and exclusion mechanisms in parents' organization of their children's everyday life.

The analysis is based upon a qualitative interview study among parents with children between six and ten years old. They are living in the city centre of Bergen, the next biggest city in Norway with its 250,000 inhabitants. During the last 20 years in Norway it has become more popular to live in the inner city with children among groups of people with resources to choose where to live (Danielsen 2006). This change can be understood as part of processes of gentrification where central working-class areas in cities are transformed by the middle class both in Norway and in the rest of the western world (Butler & Robson 2003; Hjorthol & Bjørn-skau 2005; Ley 1996).¹ This change is also part of a general urbanization tendency that more children grow up in cities and central areas.

Choosing the place to live when one has children means choosing their childhood. The parents I interviewed wanted their children to be affected by the place they live in. This couple explains why they moved from suburbia to the centre of Bergen.

Oda: It could be prejudices on my part, but I feel that if you grow up in a city, you get a much wider horizon.

Octavio: Yes, you are more open.

Oda: Regarding both culture and people, yes, everything, really. And I do want my boy to get that.

The parents say that their children are lucky to live in a socially, ethnically and culturally

mixed area. This quality, which can be labelled as diversity, is something they hold as a unique and positive benefit of living in the city. Like these parents, the other interviewees create bonds between place, childhood and identity. The city is seen as an actor in the upbringing of the children. They construct the city as open and inclusive towards strangers, built upon differences. The interviewees refer to an understanding of the city which resembles what has been labelled a global sense of place by Doreen Massey (1994) and others. The ideals the interviewees put forward are also close to the ones described in Iris Marion Young's (1990) classical essay on city life, where she puts forward the celebration of difference as a normative ideal both for cities and democracies.

The diversity framework has emerged in all the western countries as a new and positive buzz word, linked with progressive ideals (Ahmed 2007:238). The British social theorist Sarah Ahmed argues that the spirit of diversity in the western world switches between a concern with the formation of tolerant and democratic national citizens who can work with and through difference, and a more strategic use of diversity for competitive advantage in the global marketplace (Ahmed 2007). In Norway the diversity rhetoric has developed relatively late compared to other western countries. Although Norway contains a Sami population and some immigrants, the public image has been of ethnic Norwegians and unity through sameness (Gullestad 2006:41). The national self-reflection on matters of diversity, multiculturalism and equality hit Norway first in the 1990s and then to a larger extent in the 2000s. Norway has an image of passion for equality, with its romantic celebration of the free farmer as the builder of the nation and the social democratic welfare state as a sym-

bol and provider of equality and sameness. The Scandinavian countries characteristically lack a distinction between sameness and equality in their vocabulary and use the word “likhet” to stand for both these words (Gullestad 2006:170). In the past 20 years these ideals have been challenged by liberalism and individualism.

Diversity is now partly replacing equality as a value in Norwegian society, from different positions and within different fields of society (Danielsen 2006:175, 2009:47). The state is promoting diversity as a value through its celebration of the national “diversity year” in 2008, through the national pedagogic goals for the schools and diversity is promoted as a value by all the political parties in Norway (Danielsen 2009:47). Some parents, as shown in my qualitative material, understand diversity as an important value to introduce to and develop in their children. Individual differences are understood as resources for both individuals and society, and should be promoted for the common good. Ahmed suggests that the turn to diversity in western countries arrived partly as a result of the failure of other terms, especially equality (Ahmed 2007:237). When compared to diversity, equality becomes less attractive, associated with narrowness and force, and opposed to open-mindedness and freedom. Diversity is regarded as a more positive term than difference in describing cultural variation. The anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2006) describes the arguments in European minority debates where diversity is labelled as good and difference as bad, and argues that this rhetoric contributes to hiding differences regarding class and social inequality.

The language and ideology of diversity has been subject to extensive critique within a western and Scandinavian context, follow-

ing many of the same arguments as in debates over multiculturalism (Ahmed 2007; de los Reyes & Martinsson 2005; Hylland Eriksen 2006). The concepts of diversity and of multiculturalism resemble one another, although multiculturalism refers directly to ethnicity, while diversity refers to many differentiating dimensions such as age, generation, gender, sexuality and ethnicity. These two concepts imply many of the same logics, alluding to positive values of inclusion and at the same time involving processes of exclusion. Instead of solving issues of difference, the language of diversity offers a reorganization of sameness and difference, resulting in new hierarchies.

I will explore how the interviewees’ different conceptions of diversity create different mechanisms regarding inclusion and exclusion in their everyday life. What does diversity do when it is used in specific ways? How do parents create diversity connected to city life as a desired quality to introduce to their children? Who and what are the others their conceptions of diversity are constructed with and against? I argue that diversity is constructed in basically two different ways; “diversity as us”, and “diversity as them”. These two ways of understanding diversity are interconnected, but create different logics for inclusion and exclusion. The concept of place is a relevant tool to help understand how these mechanisms work when parents create their children’s childhood.

Methods, Presentation of Informants and Place of Study

The article is based upon qualitative theme interviews with 13 couples who have at least one child between six and ten years, living in the central and gentrified parts of Bergen. Bergen is often promoted as a gateway to the Norwegian fjords, the city of the seven

mountains with historical roots caused by its Hanseatic heritage. The centre of Bergen is very small, geographically speaking. Parts of Bergen are made of old wooden houses with small almost Italian style narrow streets with steps and corners. The gentrification process in Bergen, where middle-class people took over former working-class areas in central parts of the city happened first in the 1970s. Throughout the 1980s and especially the 1990s the central parts of the city were transformed through both private and public initiatives and are now regarded as popular areas for hipsters, families with children and older people.

I interviewed the couples together because I wanted to focus on the negotiations between them, and how they constructed their “us”. I wanted to study the views, categories, ideals and compromises the parents positioned themselves within and against in their daily work to create their children’s childhood in the city centre. Individuals are intertwined in societal discourses and the context they refer to points to something bigger than the individual level. Sometimes their way of speaking shows that the informants think that what they say is legitimate, other times it seems as if they think it is unusual or controversial. To look for such differences in ways of speaking is a tool to understand what the informants think are dominating ideals, what they see as typical or unusual. The British geographer Gill Valentine (1999:69) uses the concept of “imaginative generalizations” to describe the way informants often present an idealized or conventional version of their own or other’s behaviour. The informants have presented, discussed and challenged such imaginative generalizations during the interviews and thus placed themselves in relation to a perceived normality.

I got in touch with my informants by presenting the project at parents’ meetings at schools and by using the snowball method. The interviewed couples told me about other families, and were asked to tip me about families both similar to and different from themselves. All the informants are anonymous. I have given them new names and changed details which could have made them recognizable.

Within the framework of place of residence and the age of their children I also had some other criteria when I choose who to interview. The Danish psychologist Jette Fog (1996:195) says that diversity in the sample related to relevance for the problem formulation are important criteria for choosing sources within qualitative methods. Living near the city centre can mean quite different things in Bergen. The physical distances between people with large or small economic resources are very short; the socioeconomic segregation is low compared to what is common in other western cities (*Storbymeldingen 2002–2003*:58). Children from different backgrounds meet through the public schools, and the different families share the same area outdoors.

The final sample is a result of my wish to interview families who lived differently and had different backgrounds. The families had different economic positions and different degrees of choice regarding where and how they lived.² Some had themselves grown up in a village, others in bigger towns in Norway or cities in Europe. The interviewees belonged to the ethnic Norwegian majority, but three out of 26 came from other European countries. The couples revealed many different views and premises which had led them to live where they actually lived. Some were very satisfied with their apartment or house, others wanted to move. Many of the couples

had had long discussions about where they wanted to live with their children; mostly they had discussed many other solutions before they decided to live near the centre of the city. Parents with schoolchildren have often chosen actively where to live because they are concerned about what school their children are attending (Danielsen 2006). They often decide to move somewhere they think they can stay for a stable period of time before their children start in school, and those who were not satisfied may have moved from the city before their children reach the age of six.

The importance of the value of diversity for the interviewees is underlined by the fact that diversity was not something I asked them about directly, but it was a frequently upcoming topic in 11 of the 13 interviews. This value was particularly often put forward when they were asked open questions about what the interviewees liked or disliked in the city, what they wanted to protect or expose the children to, and how they experienced other people's reactions to their place of living.

Place, Inclusion and Exclusion

The concept of place holds many different meanings, both as a conception in everyday life and as a specialized analytical tool within different theoretical traditions. The last 20 years we have witnessed a growing interest in place and space and conceptions with spatial associations in both humanistic and social sciences. Since the mid 1990s Scandinavian ethnologists have also thrown themselves into this field (Frykman & Gilje 2003; Hjemdahl Mathiesen 2002, 2003; Reksten Kapstad 2002, 2009). The Swedish ethnologist Jonas Frykman discusses places as a material ingredient for dreams and fantasies and how to do research about places. He states

that ethnologists have had an unfortunate tendency to understand places as ideological concerns rather than questions of practices, and that places have been interpreted for what they stand for rather than what they are used as. He therefore suggests a new path of analysis:

ethnologists seem to be forced to turn their attention away from ideas, history, and cultural constructs towards action, material objects and practice. The question that remains is not what a region *is*, but how it *happens* (Frykman 2003:171).

While I agree with Frykman in his concern to develop methodologies to understand how places are used, I find that he constructs a problematic opposite between reflection and action when he describes how to analyse how places happen. He writes as if ideas, history and constructions are stable things which *are*, while action, material objects and practices represent the mobile, what *happens*. But this divide is not definite. Ideas can happen and practices may be stable. Frykman hierarchizes this false opposition and places action over reflection before he describes this as a necessary turn in ethnology (Frykman 2003:188). I do not think that ethnologist should neglect ideas, history or social constructs in favour of action, material objects and practices. These elements are tied together and give each other meaning. Places and the concept of places include materiality, practices and experiences (Berg & Dale 2004:45). When we ask how places happen, how they are made, I think we should be interested in the contexts, premises and ideals that contribute to the specific use, interpretation and reflection connected to concrete places.

The cultural geographer Tim Cresswell argues that "Place, at a basic level, is space invested with meaning in the context of power" (Cresswell 2004:12). This is a good

definition of place because it couples the production of meaning and power, and focuses on the different structures – material, social and cultural – that are relevant in the making of places. Places are used to define who and what belongs where and when, and they define who is deviant and outside “the normal” community (Cresswell 2004:13, 1996:9). This understanding opens for an investigation of how ideas of what is good, fair or appropriate are mediated through places. Just as places are used to structure the normative worlds, they are also used to question that normative world (Cresswell 1996:9).

Within postcolonial and feministic writing many researchers have been interested in how place and space are used to construct differences. The works of bell hooks (1984), Tim Cresswell (1996, 2004), Zygmunt Bauman (1993), David Harvey (1996), Doreen Massey (1994) and Edward Said (1978) show in different ways how spatial concepts such as centre and periphery, limits and margins, understood as both symbolic and material entities, can give insight into processes where difference is made. Words like inclusion and exclusion give associations to place and space. Ghassan Hage highlights some important dynamics regarding place, inclusion and exclusion when describing the relationship between the tolerant and the tolerated.

this power to tolerate is then the same imagined power we are now familiar with: the power to position the other as an object within a space that one considers one’s own, within limits one feels legitimately capable of setting (Hage 1998:90).

Hage here points to the power the tolerant has in defining what rules should apply and who belongs by being capable of drawing and executing boundaries within a specific space. Such drawings of limits happen in neighbourhoods, in cities and nations.

The geographer Jon May shows through an empirical study of Londoners how conceptions of place can be both inclusive and exclusive at once.

Whilst the neighbourhood’s historical associations can support an image of place built around the iconography of a mythical village England, those same residents demonstrate a desire for difference that draws them towards a more obviously global sense of place (May 1996:210).

May states that it is important to recognize the multiple place identities people draw upon and to consider more carefully the ways in which such identities are constructed. Like May, I think that we need to pay attention to the way in which such connections are imagined, and by whom, before automatically assuming that a global sense of place describes a more progressive identity politics (May 1996:210). When doing empirically based analyses, it is important to find concepts that are able to grasp both inclusion and exclusion mechanisms. While places and identities are fluid and created by bonds and connections to other places and identities, they are also about drawing boundaries and made by shifting contrasts to what they are not. Whether places are dominated by inclusion or exclusion is an issue which has to be investigated both empirically and analytically.

Different Diversities

The city-dwelling parents’ ideals for a good place to live in can be expressed through the notion they often put forward – of the village in the city. As typical as the praise of the cosmopolitan feel, was the value of city life as a safe village. The interviewees said that “Everything is so small and close” and “It has a village feeling where everybody knows everybody”. This is a way of having it all; both the closeness and safety of the social re-

lations associated with the countryside and the hustle and bustle, the social and cultural diversity of the city. The cultural infrastructure is seen as exciting and the social life as safe. These two different views of the city, as a village with close-knit safe social networks and as a cosmopolitan open place, also resonates with different perspectives of places, as either permanent, bounded and excluding or as including, open and flowing. These two views of place and of the city are combined through the concept of “the village in the city”. Maybe it is this dual sense of identity, both the country and the city in one, which makes the central city areas attractive to certain kinds of people. The metaphors of country and city are produced and then adapted and put to use in the service of gentrification. It is this dual sense of place that gives gentrification its significance as an element in hegemonic practice (Redfern 2003:2362).

The country is associated with security and bounded identities; the city is associated with adventure, emancipation, insecurity and floating identities. This special combination of place as both international and local can, as we will see, be achieved through an aesthetic gaze on a fantasy level. The city is used as a moral showcase for the children, a place which makes many choices possible and legitimate, expanding the children’s view of the world, as a tool for creating tolerant and competent children. Place is used to connect the child to a wider world, but it is also used for making boundaries.

Some of the parents reflected on their preference for “people like us” in their close relations, even though they valued differences as an important aspect of their neighbourhood. “We are very similar, though”, “we dance around in the same workout”. This inherently contradictory rhetoric of diversity as pointing to being different but not

too different is visible also in next quotation. I received this reply after asking a couple why they held up diversity as a positive value in their neighbourhood:

Hege: Both for myself and my children I think it is good that they see that people are different, we are different. If all our friends and neighbours had been academics, they would have been a bit too similar to us, they would have a bit too similar norms and rules regarding a couple of things. So I think it is only positive that my son is friends with the son of the handyman in the building, because he is such a pleasant man, so nice. [...] So regarding different norms, rules, activities that different families have, because we are not able to give them all the diversity. They have to meet it other places as well.

The quotation both refers to the idea that “we are different”, including *us* in the conception of diversity, and at the same time reveals that those being labelled as different are *them*. The differences the interviewees appreciate are not very wide, all being nice people, with different education and slightly different organization of their family life. The idea of “we are different” refers to a collective of different people, different within certain boundaries (Danielsen 2006:225).

Diversity is not a fixed concept, which allows the word to signify different values. I found two basically different ways of constructing diversity when I analysed the interviews. When diversity is understood as *them*, it is talked of as a skill, a competence in handling the others. When diversity is understood as *us*, it is constructed as a part of the individual, as in “We are united through our uniqueness”. Diversity in this sense is used as a tool to create open individuals searching for authenticity. The two versions are interconnected, and some interviewees used both of these understandings, as we saw in the quotation above. For the purpose of analytical clarity and to highlight the different premises for inclusion and exclusion mecha-

nisms, I think it is fruitful to distinguish these two versions of diversity and how they work.

When Diversity Is Us: A Tool for Individuality

When diversity was constructed as a community of *us* by the interviewees, it was made as a community of people appreciating individuality and differences as a resource for themselves and their children. One mother said: “Here we have so many individualists that you can become yourself. So I think the children become safe.” Safe in this sense refers to being ontologically safe and free, being able to choose who you want to be. As Thomas Hylland Eriksen points out, there is a turn from safety to freedom as dominant values in neo-liberal societies (Hylland Eriksen 2006). The “we are diversity” position the interviewees are talking from is not a dangerous, stigmatized or sore one. Speaking from the position of being black, Sarah Ahmed points out that “Being diversity feels like one big scream” (Ahmed 2009:47). Writing about young homosexuals, Tone Hellesund (2007:38, 43) describes their experienced identity as different as painful, resulting in a fear of being extraordinary and a wish for normality.

The interviewees used comparison as their strategy when they told about the “diversity advantages” their children had growing up in the city centre. They usually compared with their own childhood in a village, a former family life in suburbia or their images of life in these places.

Ivar: The reason why we live here has a lot to do with what I do not want my children to experience. Where I grew up (in a village), only a few things were too much before it was said that people were different in one way or other. And here I find a totally different openness towards diverse ways of living, which attracts me. [...]. No matter what we as grown-ups do,

it’s not a problem for the children. If I wear purple trousers or don’t go to work in the middle of the day, it is quite normal for the children.

The message is that being different is normal where they live, and the ability to be different gives the children a safe environment for making many different choices. When making their present home a place of many options, the interviewees make other places less attractive, suggesting polarized versions of different places (Danielsen 2009:45). Vera and Viggo used to live in suburbia outside the centre of Bergen, and draw on this experience as an identity contrast when they talk about their present life in the city centre.

Vera: It is more colourful here, there is more acceptance for things...

Viggo: Cosmopolitan people, a bit more different culture in the city, like the cultural centre where the children can learn to dance and play African drums.

This picture of the city as a more open-minded and cosmopolitan place than suburbia builds upon the connection they imagine between place and identity. When comparing their present and former neighbours, this contrasting view of place is expanded to give meaning to how they view people dwelling in these places.

Vera: They were very narrow-minded in relation to what we experience with people today, those we hang around with now. And they were outside the city, a bit prejudiced, other conceptions. Here you have a wider aspect, more tension, and excitement.

Viggo: than out in the suburbia, blocks and so on.

Vera: They went to the Mediterranean countries, same place.

Viggo: Same resort, same place, together, it’s not far from Norway. [...].

Vera: Another type of communication develops here, than we had there.

Viggo: Yes.

Vera: There everything is much more finished, here it’s active, it’s more ongoing, they are more interesting, they are more observant, more open to new things, and then we have a lot of different offers here.

We have so many exciting elements here, so it becomes very different.

These parents create an opposition between being finished, prejudiced and boring as a person, and being active, open, exciting. As an example of how the old neighbours were, Vera says that they bought the same stuff to the house; their children went to the same activities; you had to do the same thing as your neighbour to be included.

Vera: It is not like that here, I feel I can stand for who I am. I am appreciated for who I am, but not for what I wear, or buy, or what education and background either, you are openly accepted. It is totally different from what we experienced in the suburbia.

The similar is talked of as disgusting. The old neighbours were seen as inauthentic, more interested in fitting into the community than in trusting themselves and developing their own taste. While promoting the fact that in the centre people are recognized for who they are, not what they wear or buy, it is exactly what the neighbours bought for their children, where they travelled that is used to show how narrow-minded, boring and far from curious they were. Aesthetic expression and consumer choices were coupled to morals, the choice of holiday expressing who you are, and for instance how interested you are in transgressing a Norwegian community.

These problems were mainly related to the grown-ups, so I asked if they thought that this also affected the children. As when talking about the grown-ups, they differentiated between focusing on inner and outer qualities. They felt that their old neighbours prioritized buying very expensive and trendy clothes for their children, whereas this is not considered important for children at all in the city centre. In the centre inner qualities, such as psychological development and the

well-being of the child, were promoted, according to these parents. Comparing their children's experiences in schools and kindergarten with the former suburban environment they lived in, some parents also said that their "children were more seen, and it was okay to be different, and everybody did not have to agree, or do the same, but it was all right" (Danielsen 2006:207) and "I feel that here [in the centre] they see the children in another way, the individual, every single one" (ibid.).

These city dwellers seek a safe diversity, based upon considerations of what is important and what is not, and the centre represents a place they can call home ontologically, a secure place where they can receive confirmation of their norms as to how people should behave. Some of the interviewees talked about difference as a premise for communication: "Here everybody has a different background and different ambitions, but we still meet in a common arena, everybody can talk together." Diversity is primarily connected to how individuals are shaped, less concerned with the influence by social and ethnic variation in the city.

The "we" created is a collection of people who are open, exciting, reflexive and able to change. Boundaries are made against those who do not appreciate difference and individuality, those who are fixed, too busy copying their neighbours, those – in short – who are not authentic enough. The meaning of diversity in this sense is close to the concept of sameness: "We are part of a diversity of different people morally united through a passion for difference and tolerance." This is a safe and homogeneous diversity. The differences created by *us* represent examples of the choices children have, the positive possibilities in life. Within this thinking, people should be different in specific ways, playing

the rules of difference correctly. The others against whom they mark a distance are not dangerous, but boring and narrow-minded; homophobic, racist, prejudiced. Suburbia becomes a symbol of narrowness, similarity and inauthenticity.

The British sociologist Tim Butler concludes that his interviewees in London form a metropolitan habitus where diversity, social inclusion and integration are important elements in the narrative about the place, but where social exclusivity is the practice (Butler 2003:2471). Respondents associated almost exclusively with “people like us” and their children associated almost exclusively with other middle-class children (Butler 2003:2483). This metropolitan habitus

values the presence of others – that much has been seen from the quotations from the respondents – but chooses not to interact with them. They are, as it were, much valued as a kind of social wallpaper, but no more (Butler 2003:2484).

To construct acceptance of differences as a premise for a community does not necessarily promote the intended or idealized inclusion, but it can also promote the acceptance of different norms of a good life. The praise of diversity can be a way to question and expand the borders for what is considered normality (Danielsen 2006:217). To feel that one is part of a positive diversity, it seems that the interviewees needed to experience that there was someone they felt similar with, who could value their individuality. They wanted to share their individuality with others, resembling themselves, but if the community became too similar, it became threatening. This version of diversity is created along egalitarian lines, but carries a paradoxical hierarchy. The interviewees value the cosmopolitan air of the city, marking boundaries against those who do not fit into the language of individuality.

When Diversity Is Them: A Tool for Competence

The diversity of city life was created as a stage-set by some parents, where specific groups of others constituted a diversity against which they measured their own normality. Mona and Mads live very close to a park where the drug dealing in Bergen takes place, and their children see drug addicts walking by their home on a daily basis. Mads commented: “There is nothing dangerous about them. Some you recognize and say hello to. They behave in a really exemplary way towards us.” While friends and relatives living in other places have commented that this experience must be horrible for the children, the couple thinks that it has a preventive effect on them.

Mona: Our daughter once said: “I do not want to become like that. Why don’t they work? Where do they get money?” So they get a world of thoughts. Other children coming from outside the centre, their parents are very anxious for them, thinking they will be afraid. Our children are not afraid, they just walk on the other sidewalk, and it’s everyday life.

The children benefit by handling the situations and learning something as well. Many interviewees thought it was important to let the children get used to drug addicts, alcoholics and coloured people. Gunnar underlined that “In suburbia you can probably live a long without seeing drug addicts, drunken people, retired people, and gay people and there probably aren’t any Negroes either.”³ The suburbia they distance themselves from, is the successful middle-class conformist A4-spaces where they imagine people to be very similar, in the same phase of life, and with the same socio-economic status. The perceived risk such an environment poses to the children is to create an artificial safe bubble. Gunnar preferred “to introduce the children not only to the dangers of the city,

but the dangers of society". He claimed that his children were safe because of their knowledge of city life: "Safe in the sense of naturally sceptical; knowing what is allowed and what is not. I think that is important, to get it with the mother's milk, instead of falling into it." Possible dangers are portrayed as inevitable by using metaphors related to nature. Many of the parents also talked of drug addicts as a natural part of life which the children ought to handle. The metaphors related to nature also point to an unavoidable diversity the parents want to show their children and learn to handle. But this is a diversity they want their children to observe, not really interact with.

Gunnar: It is natural that parents want to govern their children's social life, if it is small millimetres or vast cleavages. If we had enormous problems with children of drug addicts or prostitutes, we would have to avoid that, by all means. Then we would be concerned with that. And even though we only have small nuances, we are concerned with it anyhow.

Boundaries are drawn against those who are made as others, others against whom normality is constructed, as explained by Edward Said (1978). This is a possible unsafe diversity, which has to be held at a certain distance from the children, in the background of their lives. The others constituting diversity are frequently used as a pedagogical project to teach the children how they should not become, not behave. The others are possibly dangerous or unwanted, but are tolerated as long as they keep themselves at a distance or do not pose a threat to the ontological safety of us. "We" are constructed as the normal and dominant. The future citizens are taught how to handle the world. This is a less safe form of diversity than the version where diversity represents the "we", allowing more possible challenging dimensions. That is possible because the diversity is understood

as being distant from the families and it is to a much lesser degree created as a morally committed community. Diversity in this sense is aesthetically exciting, and at the same time does not threaten the inhabitants' feeling of security. This conception posits difference as something the others bring to the community, and as something the community can have through the way it accepts, welcomes and integrates such others (Ahmed 2007:235).

The city-dwelling parents can be accused of using others as social wallpaper, as Butler (2003) puts it, and living in a bubble. Jon May, who investigated Londoners, emphasizes that one should differentiate between a desire for difference and a progressive identity politics. He draws attention to the reflexive feel that characterizes his informants' narratives, which points to progressive ideals, but he observes that the interest in differences often represents an instrumental cultural capital, construed through a traditional set of hierarchical dualisms. Such dualisms are a product of an objectified aesthetic gaze and characterize the gaze of a new urban flaneur. Life in the city centre is part of a lifestyle aesthetic that makes it possible to unite different understandings of place at the fantasy level. These fantasies should be analysed to understand "the parameters of a more developed politics of space" (May 1996:211).

The parents want their children to be tolerant and open-minded. At the same time, they expose clear-cut borders against what is not a positive diversity for the children. When it comes to close social relations, they want themselves and their children to spend time with people who are like themselves. However, the city-dwellers' rhetoric of diversity and tolerance is not empty rhetoric; the naming of the ideal of diversity does

something. It produces the ideal of street-wise and competent children. The passion for difference can have consequences in the daily life of families. When possible dangers to children are understood as natural, they can be accepted as a part of life that has to be dealt with rather than just ignored. The language of diversity can make people aware of their own shortcomings, and many parents said that they wished their children to overcome their own narrowness. When claiming the right to individuality through the language of diversity, this claim can indicate a lack of sense of equality.

Place, Diversity and Borders

The most important premises I draw upon through this article are that both places and identities are fluid and that they are constructed by identifications and connections to other places and identities as well as against contrasts to what they are not. So, to say that places are in principle open constructions is not the same as saying they are inclusive. Both places and identities are about marking boundaries, even when they are defined as open, anti-essential and with no quest for authenticity. The concept of place, understood as a relational concept, is thus a good tool to analyse categorizations and boundaries between people.

Diversity in city life is held up by city-dwelling parents as an important ingredient in order to create tolerant children with the confidence and competence to meet the world. Insisting on the diversity of city life is a way of making the city a morally good place for children, in contrast to what the parents see as a commonly held view of the city as a bad place for children. The city dwellers feel that diversity adds something extra, which secures the community from becoming too similar and unifying when com-

pared with their former place of living in suburban and rural areas.

Diversity is given both a beneficial and an ethical value and works to create the city centre as a more suitable and better arena for a good childhood than other places. Handling diversity can thus be seen as a necessary skill for citizens in the late-modern society, and developing dynamic and open personalities can be viewed as a goal. Although many studies of Norwegian society claim the strength of strong egalitarian values, I argue that this conception is reshaped by the value of diversity. The good place to live in is framed as a place with a healthy tension between diversity and safety, securing the inhabitants the opportunity and right to choose their social belonging. The affinity of the rationality of diversity with the values of late-modern capitalism and liberalism has also contributed to the popularity of the concept.

Diversity has many meanings, and some of the success of the concept may be due to the different meanings it holds. Diversity can be seen as safe, exciting, dangerous, constituting a community or contrasting a community. As Ahmed has shown, quite contradictory logics are used simultaneously connected to the word diversity; the business model and the social justice model are used together, or there is a strategic switching between them (Ahmed 2007:242). This switching involves attaching the word diversity to other terms that are valued by the interviewees, such as forms of safety, competence, skill and open-mindedness. On a rhetorical level the concept of diversity is hard to criticize or position oneself against because of its positive connotations.

Place and the conceptualization of place as diversity are used both to include and exclude. The interviewees promote a mobile

understanding of the individual and at the same time create borders against those who are not mobile enough. Identity is more and more associated with mobility, so strong that mobility defines identity (Cresswell 2004; Pratt 1999:153). Mobility is associated with a non-essential identity made through identification with different others, in principle open to change. But metaphors of mobility regarding identity should be informed by the knowledge that identities always stabilize (Pratt 1999:153). Some identities are more mobile and inclusive than others, but all involve exclusion (*ibid.*).

Massey's concept of a global sense of place – a conceptualization very close to my interviewees' characterization of the city as diverse, open to differences and with the possibility of developing diverse identities – does not necessarily produce a hybrid sense of place among those living there. One cannot avoid mechanisms of exclusion even though one avoids essential and unifying identities based upon roots. Floating, anti-essential and inauthentic identities are based upon borders. The limits surrounding hybrid identities may be constructed along different borders than those based upon essence, but as the French philosopher Chantal Mouffe puts it:

Every definition of a "we" implies the delimitation of a "frontier" and the designation of a "them". That definition of a "we" always takes place, then, in a context of diversity and conflict (Mouffe 1995:326).

Building a "we" will always also include a process of constituting others as "them". Identities are given meaning in contrast to something else, white compared to black, man in relation to woman, and such identities are a part of bigger hierarchies.

My aim has been to shed light on reflections and debates on both the concept of place and ideals for the formation of new

citizens. The links between childhood and place can be understood as a spatialization of more general norms about how families with children should live. Applying the concept of diversity to childhood in the city is a way for parents to create the centre of the city as a legitimate and superior place to live. The interviews show how inclusion and exclusion happen. Issues of boundaries and connections are used in complicated ways by parents discussing their children's place of living. City life is presented as a normative ideal because of its association with diversity. The parents feel that they can offer their children many choices, and thus freedom and security to develop their own open and mobile personality. As I have shown, however, this identity of the city is constructed against certain limits. Cresswell (2004:39) points out that "place is constantly struggled over and reimagined in practical ways". This is true for the use and understanding of place at an empirical level, but there is also a struggle over the meaning of place as an analytical tool. I think it is important to keep this struggle open, and to use concepts that allow for the complexity of how place is made visible.

Diversity is about a variety among people that takes some forms and not others. Diversity as an expression of place is used for inclusion and exclusion in complex ways, both as intended purposes and as unintended consequences. It is used for reinventing both sameness and difference. We imagine similarities with others and we imagine differences. This can happen in progressive and open ways or with prejudice and in cannibalistic ways (Valentine 1999:58). It may therefore be a goal to keep conflicts over limits open to discussion (Pratt 1999:156). The researcher's job is to make trouble, make visible how bonds and limits are constructed,

how sameness and difference are made and to investigate who and what is excluded in specific identity constructions.

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Notes

- 1 The goal of my PhD *With Children in the City: Parenthood, Place and Identity*, on which this article is partly based, was to analyse how the city was shaped and mobilized as a place for childhood and family life by parents living in the inner city of Bergen. The themes of the PhD are more broadly how the parents organize their children's childhood in time and space, regarding social relations in home and neighbourhood and how they protect and expose their children to different aspects of city life.
- 2 Six of the couples lived in a house (old wooden houses in a row), seven lived in flats of different sizes from about 50 m² to 200 m², most of them had round 100 m². Only one of the couples rented their flat. Some of them had a long education; others had almost no education at all except for elementary school. Most of them had some education, between three and six years of education after high school. Only two of the families had a garden, seven of them had a public area outdoors, a park or a public space they could use together with their neighbours. Nine of the families had a car, none had two cars and four families did not have a car.
- 3 The paradoxical use of the word Negro in a context where the informant posits himself as tolerant is probably the result of an insistence on the right to use this word related to the broad public debate about this word at that period of time.

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Standardisation and Consumer Responsibility

By Ingun Grimstad Klepp and Kirsi Laitala

Studies of material culture, the trump card in the discipline of ethnology, became problematic when the perspective was moved towards the contemporary.¹ According to Knut Kolsrud's (1973) pointed statement, the discipline would end up being about pure consumer surveys. But perhaps consumer research offers the opportunity to bring the most important objective of the Norwegian Ethnology research program (Reme 1994) into the current times? Namely: "The materials as an integral and functional part of the cultural system" (Kolsrud 1963).

A new interest in these perspectives raised in 1980s from other disciplines and traditions. Anthropologists such as Tim Ingold, Igor Kopytoff and Arjun Appadurai contributed by understanding biographies and the product aspects of things. The new interest for the materiality had an important fertile ground in consumer research. Books like Campbell 1987, Isherwood and Douglas 1979, Miller 1987, and Slater in 1997 gave important rudiments for understanding the relationship between the social and material sides of consumption. Not least, this applies within clothing research with concepts like *lived garments* (Miller and Küchler 2005; Andrews 2005; Klepp 2009). Consumer researchers Elizabeth Shove and Mika Pantzar are among the researchers that point out that all practices have a material side, but this is still an underdeveloped field (2005). Some of the problems lie in the fact that the theoretical development has not been followed up by similar methodological progress. The result is thus that the material is studied through how the things are spoken of. We will here show how methods based on natural sciences can be used in projects that seek to understand such material practices.

Consumers are increasingly given a

larger and more complex ethical and moral responsibility, partially as a result of the political power shift from the classical political institutions to new arenas (Asdal and Jacobsen 2009). We will approach one such arena: the international standardisation. In this article we will discuss the relationship between standardisation and the consumer's ability to influence and to make choices, and thus the ability to take responsibility. Do consumers have a real opportunity to influence the design of goods through the standardisation process? To what extent should considerations of security be prioritised ahead of freedom of choice? What happens when standards are not good enough, or not considered? The examples are from standardisation in the textile-sector. Both examples show that the mass-produced goods can be used as sources of knowledge. This knowledge gives a picture of consumption in several dimensions and makes it possible to relate the linguistic descriptions such as used in regulatory legislation or qualitative interviews to the material objects they discuss.

The article is based on two research projects that both connect consumers' experiences, knowledge and practices together with technical studies of clothes.² The goal was to get information of how standards could contribute to products that are beneficial for the consumers. Therefore it was necessary to gain knowledge of practices and attitudes, as well as the products. Respectively ethnologist and textile engineering, we have combined methods that cover this broad field. The projects can be characterized as truly interdisciplinary. Is it possible that ethnology tradition of seeing the material culture as an integral and valuable part of the culture makes us better able to cooperate with engineers?

Open, Bureaucratic and Time-consuming

By moving from raw materials through processing and then to the finished article, products cross a number of countries, legislations and different ways to use and understand goods. Standardisation is one of the most important instruments that enable the involved parties within the global environment to arrive at an agreement. Standardisation contributes so that bank cards work in remote corners of the world, and makes sure light bulbs fit in lamps, even though they were not produced in the same place of the world. The annoyance that all mobiles have different chargers will soon be history. A new standard is on its way. Standardisation helps to make it easier to find safe products which suit their purposes. But in order to achieve this goal, some things must be discarded. There is great disagreement about what constitutes good and safe products, as well as how important information should be communicated across language and cultural boundaries.

According to The Norwegian Standardisation Agency (Standards Norway 2009; Throne-Holst 2008), standards are public resources which contribute to the systematisation. They will increase efficiency and simplify. Standards provide guidelines for which requirements will be set for goods and services, and how the testing or certification will be implemented. Most standards are voluntary, but some form the basis of EU-directives or national laws and regulations.

In Norway, the standardisation work is organised by Standard Norway, Norwegian Electro Technical Committee, and the Norwegian Post- and Telecommunications Authority. National organisations are also members of international standardisation bodies both at the European and global level. The

largest is the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) with 162 countries represented (ISO 2009). Standardisation projects are either working towards a new standard based on a new idea or a proposal, or to revise an existing standard. These projects are governed by technical committees (TC) at a national, European and global level. The standards are developed in working groups (WG). The technical committees and working groups may consist of participants from business, government, research, NGOs, consumers and labour organizations.

Standardisation work is based on the following three main principles: *Transparency*, *consensus* and *being voluntary*. Some of the EU-directives are based on what is called "The New Approach". These will form the basis for the framework-directives in selected product areas. The Commission of the EU gives a mandate that includes guidelines for the standard to be made, and the directives will then be incorporated into each country's national legislation.

The standards are determined in the committees and not through the political process. On one hand, the work is open to participation. But on the other hand, it is closed. Both because it is surrounded by a vast bureaucracy that requires time to penetrate, but also because what goes on is only to a small degree a subject of public debate. Considering how influential the standardisation work has been, it gets remarkably little attention in the media.

Standardisation work is done mainly in committees that are trying to reach a consensus, avoiding persistent disagreement on important points. The proposal is sent to all Member States for comment, and at this point the document is available to the public. Then the changes are incorporated, before the proposal is sent to member nations for

voting. National votes are weighted based on size of population. According to the European voting system, the four largest countries together can have a veto, even if all the other 25 member states are in favour.

Participation is voluntary and open to all, but at their own expense. Practically, this means that participants must have a strong self-interest. Participants are often there to ensure that their business fulfils the latest requirements for the product or service they provide. However, participants may also wish to influence the standards for the benefit of their own business, or to prevent the development of new standards. In principle, consumers have the right to have their views put forward and participate during the work process towards standardisation, but most consumers lack the knowledge, interest and finance to do so.

ANEC is the interest group for consumers regarding European standardisation. The ANEC coordinates consumer representation, and pays travel expenses for consumer representatives when certain priority standardisation issues are up for debate. One problem is that few have the technical expertise, and at the same time hold a position where they represent consumer interests. Another problem is that consumers do not necessarily have common interests. According to the ISO, consumer representatives should ensure that consumer-related issues such as health, safety, construction, ergonomics, quality, reliability, comfort, safety aspects, usability, compatibility and interoperability are considered. ISO also points out that the national delegates should represent the entire nation's interests, including consumers. To push consumer interests further forward on the agenda, more knowledge about what consumers think, how they use the products, how they perceive the information etc. is needed.

National Institute for Consumer Research (SIFO) has been actively involved in standardization work since 1960s within the field of white goods, kitchen equipments, detergents and textiles. We will now look at two examples of standardisation processes within textiles, to highlight the relationship between the standardisation work, consumer interests and representation. Both processes have been going on for years without coming up with a definitive result. Kirsi Laitala (SIFO) was active participant in these groups and initiated two research projects in order to get new knowledge on the areas where the information was not available.

When Cotton Nightwear was Nearly Prohibited

A new standard for flammability of children's nightwear came into force in 2007 (EN 14878 2007). Behind the standard was almost ten years of work that was started when the Dutch authorities suggested a new, harmonized standard in the field. The European countries had very different regulations for how flammable clothing is allowed in the market. Most countries did not have any specific requirements and the variations between the countries that had regulations were great, both when it comes to the types of clothing, test method and limit values. In Norway it was prohibited to sell clothing for children that ignited very easily and burned fast. In the UK the prohibition applied for nightwear for both children and adults, and the requirements were one the strictest in Europe. At first, it sounds positive to have a bit stronger requirements and not least a common legislation. Reduction in burn injuries, less national requirements and freer flow of products between national borders are regarded as advantages. But when the standardisation group started its work it became

obvious that it would be hard to reach a consensus. Some participants thought that requirements were unnecessary, whereas others wanted them very stringent. Several were questioning whether the number of accidents could justify such strict requirements, and what the consequences of these restrictions would be.

In order to get more knowledge of the theme SIFO initiated a project "Fire Hazards of Clothing Related to Accidents and Consumer Habits". In this project clothing related fire accidents were studied in three European countries, combined with representative consumer survey and flammability testing of garments (Laitala et al. 2004). Garments for flammability testing were purchased in six European countries and tested according to standard EN 1103 (1995). The results were compared with the suggested limits, and showed that the requirements would prohibit among other things most cotton nightwear sold in Nordic Countries. The survey results showed that the knowledge the consumers had concerning flammability of textiles was particularly low, and often what they thought they knew was directly wrong. The most common incorrect comprehension was that natural materials such as cotton were the safest ones and synthetics most dangerous, when in fact cotton ignites and burns easily, and there is a great variation in the flammability of different synthetic materials.

The risk evaluations that the standardisation group had access to in the beginning were mainly based on British data, because the Great Britain is one of the countries with most comprehensive registrations system for accidents. A review of accidents related to fire showed great differences between Norway, Great Britain and Spain. Surprisingly, Great Britain with its stringent regulations

had most accidents caused by night wear catching fire. An explanation to this was a combination of clothing habits and use of gas kitchen stoves with exposed flame. In the UK it is more common to wear dressing gowns and other night wear as leisure clothing at home compared to the Nordic countries. In Norway and the other Nordic countries there are only few accidents caused by clothing catching fire. When it happens, it is often combined with outdoor activities. The ignition source is then barbecues, fireworks or bonfire and is often combined with use of flammable liquids. Therefore, more stringent requirements for nightwear would not have effect on the types of accidents we have.

Smoking is another common cause of fire accidents around the whole Europe. For the nightwear to be especially exposed, the fact of whether it is common to smoke in bed or not is decisive. There is no reason to believe that these types of accidents will increase in the Nordic countries where the regulations for smoking indoors are constantly getting stricter.

A European standard draft with similar limits as the British standard was submitted to comments in 2004. It gave limits for how fast the nightwear could burn. However, only people with knowledge of textiles' flammability properties could interpret that the limits would in reality prohibit untreated cotton nightwear. In Scandinavia it is widespread way of thinking that natural materials are good and safe choices. We don't know how the consumers would have reacted to the limited clothing selection. One option would be to increase the use of synthetic nightwear; another is to use wool, which is a less flammable natural material. But because wool is often thought to be itchy and too warm for this purpose, it would probably not have become a success. The third and most probable

alternative is the use of flame retarded cotton. It would satisfy the regulations, as well as consumer's expectations for nightwear. The problem is that this solution implies use of heavily degradable chemicals, which is negative both for the health and the environment. Consumers may also have selected to use other day-wear such as t-shirts instead of the nightwear available at the market, thus circumventing the regulations.

The suggestion was voted down, and a new draft was written, which was based among other things to the SIFO report. The new limits were on lower level, so that only the most flammable nightwear for children was prohibited. The EU countries have a right to keep their own legislation in case it is more stringent than the new EU regulations. Therefore, in the UK and Norway the old flammability regulations still apply in addition to the new ones. Some countries, such as Sweden, have drawn back their old own regulations and follow only the EU criteria.

This is an example of failed standardisation work, if the goal is considered to be common European legislation. Very few are satisfied with the new standard, and it did not receive status as harmonised regulation. At present it is uncertain of what will happen to it in the future, but most likely is that it will be revised (EN 14878 2007). At the same time this was a success for the Nordic consumers' interests. Our right to select nightwear would have been essentially worse if only flame retarded cotton was allowed to be sold. The freedom of choice is more important in this case, as the number of accidents is as low as it is in this case. It cannot be considered that the goal itself is to have safest possible products, but to have products that are safe enough. In the next example, we shall look into a case where the standardisa-

tion work is insufficient and is not followed, and what the consequences of this are for the consumers.

New Standard for Clothes Size Labelling

The next example is from ongoing standardisation work where the goal is to reach a common European size labelling system for clothing. Today, several different size designation systems are used in parallel, and the grading systems are based on size tables that are not representative for bodies of today (Schofield and LaBat 2005).

Size labelling is a voluntary system that is used to make it easier for the customers to find clothing that fits. As size labelling is not obligatory, there are no regulations connected to it. Size designations systems are the solution to the challenge of mass produced ready-to-wear (RTW) clothing. Before the industrial revolution and mass production of RTW garments the clothes were made to fit each individual, as it still is done with tailored clothing. The need for mass produced clothing came with the great wars of the eighteenth century and a lot of the history of clothing is closely associated with military history. The first large-scale scientific studies of women's body measurements were conducted in Australia 1926 (Kennedy 2009) and in the US between 1939 and 1940 (O'Brien and Sheldon 1941). Men's measurements were already available from the military (Aldrich 2007). Development of an international sizing system for clothing started in 1969 and the first international standard ISO 3635 for clothes size designations was finally published in 1977, but it was never taken widely in use. The European committee for standardization has adopted a modified version of this standard in to their work (EN 13402-1 2001), and is now working on

further to develop a new size designation system (prEN 13402-4).

Today, there are many different ways to label sizes, and there is great variation between the different countries. Chun-Yoon and Jasper (1993) and Ujevic et al. (2005) compared size tables from several countries and found that there were significant differences, even though the clothing would have the same size designation.

There is also a notion of two contradictory forms for deliberate size labelling disparities. One is that the fashion industry marks the clothes with a little too large size while they only make clothes in small sizes. The clothes are small compared to what they are labelled with and suitable only for thin “trendy” bodies.³ The other, opposite myth is called “vanity labelling”, which means that the garments are labelled smaller than they actually are in order to flatter the customers as they fit into a smaller size than their “real” size (Kinley 2003; Ennis 2006; Kennedy 2009). This incorrect labelling will make it possible to continue to use the size the customers are used to, even if the weight increases, or even “go down” a few sizes in some stores. In both of these myths there is embedded an idea that the symbols used in the labelling have a meaning in itself and thus may have an effect in influencing consumers.

A labelling system can be made as series of fixed sizes, where correlation between the various body measurements is given. But many people have different combinations of measures. A system based on for example *small*, *medium* and *large* is simple, but insufficient for labelling clothes for people with body measurements beyond the most common. The standardisation work has faced problems with integrating the need for a flexible and accurate system that

opens up to label the clothes with various combinations of body measurements, and the need for an easily understandable and simple system.

To contribute knowledge in this work, SIFO initiated a Nordic research project on clothes sizes, financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers. It provides knowledge about the relationship between the size designations and clothes’ actual sizes, as well as how consumers perceive this relationship. The project is based on in-store measurements of trousers in Norway, Sweden and Finland as well as quantitative and qualitative data on consumers’ experiences of labelling and clothing sizes (Laitala et al. 2009, 2010). Also in this project, we used clothes as sources in combination with other approaches. In total 152 different trouser models were measured in two sizes, S and L, giving a total of 304 trousers that were measured in 59 stores.

Measurement results showed surprisingly large differences in the use of the size labels. One pair of trousers labelled L could be smaller than another labelled S. The variations are greater in clothing for women than for men. Supply of clothing in various sizes also varies between stores and it is more difficult to find large clothes for women and small clothes for men. Consumer survey showed that there are great problems with the existing size designation systems. Over 98 % of respondents said that they experience variations. Less than one percent said that they can always use the same sizes. These numbers can be interpreted as a clear criticism of the way existing labelling systems are used today.

There is a clear correlation between what consumers say and what measurements of trousers showed. Women were less satisfied than men and large women were more dis-

content than small women. The overweight respondents had the greatest difficulties in finding clothes and the clothes that were available for them had most disparities in size labelling. Women with normal weight or weight below normal were more satisfied, had greater range of clothes and these clothes were labelled more correctly.

Consumers were discontent with the way the labels were used and the absence of large clothes, but not the labelling system itself. Many felt that it did not matter which labelling system was used as long as it was used consistently. The majority (83 %) agreed that it would be positive to have a common labelling system in all European countries, while below 10 % preferred the existing systems. The study revealed also that clothing sizes are not used only as a system to find clothes that fit. The different size codes refer to the clothes that fit bodies with different measures. The codes are thus associated with body types more or less in accordance with current ideals of beauty.

Contrary to the myths, we did not find intended systematic inaccurate labelling. There was no clear connection between clothing chains, or stores that market themselves for different customer groups, besides slightly smaller clothing at youth stores. The lack of systematic inaccuracy was the only area where the measurements showed different results from what the consumers told about.

The labelling system is a method of communication between the producers and the consumers. The goal is to find clothes that fit. This presupposes that the system is based on knowledge of consumers' bodies, and that the consumers trust the system. The research shows that none of these conditions exist. In addition to that, the symbols are connected with other values than finding clothes that fit

the body, that is to say a label as a connection between the body and the body ideals. In order to for the new labelling system to work better, it has to take into account these challenges.

The point of departure for the standardisation work was the industry's need for a common labelling system, but the research showed that this was not that important for the Nordic consumers. It was considered to be a greater problem that the clothes were not produced in sizes that fit, and that the existing sizing systems were not followed. The research also showed that changing the labelling system itself can have positive effect, because the symbols that are used today are connected to associations beyond the communication of clothes' actual sizes. A new, common European system was welcomed, but the reasons for the great discontent with the existing system were other than the priority the industry had.

The work with the new standard started in 1996 was divided in four parts. The three first parts were about definitions, body measurements and measuring methods, and they were finished between 2001 and 2004 (EN 13402-1 2001; EN 13402-2 2002; EN 13402-3 2004). The fourth part is going to be about the actual sizes and the labelling of them (prEN 13402-4). It was sent to hearing in 2005, but was not accepted as it was considered to be too difficult for the consumers to understand. The work is still ongoing, and the anthropometric studies that are undertaken in several countries are important input. Results from SIFO research were delivered to the working group in the beginning of 2009.

Consumer Representation

The two examples have shown that bringing consumer interests into process of standard-

isation can be problematic. The first problem is that consumers do not necessarily have congruent interests. This was most clearly reflected in the example with flammable fabrics. Relatively similar countries like UK and Norway had major differences in how products are used. What is seen as an important provision to prevent serious accidents in one country, is seen a meaningless limitation to the freedom of choice in another. Only in Europe there are 731 million consumers. The dividing line is not only between countries but also between age, gender, class, religion, cultural orientation, etc. In addition there are challenges that different kinds of disability create. When voicing consumer interests, knowledge of such lines is important. ANEC finances between 2 and 6 investigation projects per year, a small amount considering the scope of standardisation.

The next issue is who should represent consumer interests. In addition to organizing and funding, one challenge is that those who represent consumers not necessarily have sufficient knowledge required for the job. Only people with good knowledge of the flammability properties of textiles would pick up that the proposed standard would practically lead to a cotton nightwear becoming prohibited. Technical knowledge alone is obviously not enough, and must be combined with an understanding of the consumer perspectives that different technologies bring.

Consumers' interests do not always coincide with the interests of other key stakeholders. The industry, government and consumers all want a new standard for size labelling, but the motives for this were different. The challenges that the new standard was trying to find solutions for, were only partially in accordance with the actual problems con-

sumers had. A common system for labelling would facilitate trade across national borders, but to the consumers, this wasn't seen as very important. They were more concerned about the clothes being made in sizes that fit their bodies and that the clothes are properly tagged regardless of the system used. Ensuring that new standards are not only more uniform, but are also actually followed, is not within the mandate of the standardisation group's work. The example of clothing flammability showed that a new common European standard would result in substantial inconvenience to consumers, either in the form of more fire accidents in England, or unnecessary use of hazardous chemicals in a number of other countries. The desire for a common European standard, put forward by the Governments and businesses, was thus in conflict with the interests of consumers.

A final concern regarding consumer representation is that it raises very complicated and complex issues. In both examples, we saw that the purely technical problems were the easiest and quickest to solve. When the consumer's interests and ability to understand and interpret information was brought into the equation that complicated matters. Here the level of knowledge was basically lower than in the standardisation group. Working on the flammability issue had showed that when the knowledge about consumers' various practices were considered, it was impossible to achieve consensus. The problems relating to size marking are not problems developing a new system, but to develop a system that will be both flexible and accurate, while at the same time easy for consumers to use.

In many fields the lack of standards can be a hindrance to consumer interests. In other fields, new requirements, or too strict re-

quirements, could limit the freedom of choice unnecessary. The standards will not only ensure safe products, but to a large extent also the ways manufacturers can communicate with consumers. A broader discussion and understanding of the meaning of the work with standardisation would ensure that different consumer interests got more attention and that the consumers got increased knowledge about the products and the processes behind their design.

Knowledge and Responsibility

Consumers should not be imposed with the responsibility of ethics and environmental issues without at the same time being given information that enable them to take this responsibility. The knowledge levels about apparel and textiles are generally poor among consumers. The information they are entitled to is limited to fibre-content and washing instructions. Which chemicals the textiles contain, what they are made of (apart from fibre) and which measures they have, does not fall into the categories of information that the manufacturers have to provide. The example about size labelling shows that voluntary labelling schemes may perform poorly and in many cases mislead as much as to guide consumers. Both the cotton itself,⁴ and flame retardants are products which cause a high degree of environmental strain. As long as the knowledge about their environmental impact is low, and the clothes do not have a content declaration, it is very difficult for consumers to opt out of environmentally harmful products.

The risk of clothes taking fire is not only dependent on how easily the fabric catches fire, but to an even greater extent relies on how careful those who use them are. It is common among Norwegian consumers to

believe that natural materials are “good” and harmless, while synthetic fabrics are unfortunate and “dangerous”. This fits poorly with reality. Among the substances that can easily catch fire are both natural materials like cotton, and the synthetic material acrylic, while fibers such as wool and polyester are more fire-resistant⁵ (Laitala 2005). Preventing accidents will thus be as much dependent on raising the awareness as stricter rules of sale. The example concerning the flammability of nightwear showed how big consequences standardisation can have for consumer choice.

There is a widespread notion that consumers have power through their wallets. This implies that consumers influence the market through what they choose to buy. In such an argument, it is easily forgotten that the consumer only choose between what is already on the market. They may not choose to buy something that is not offered up for sale. One characteristic of our current production system is precisely the strong emphasis on ready-made goods, goods that are not adapted to the individual user's needs and desires. This system has made goods cheap and readily available, but it has also weakened the consumer's knowledge, influence and association with the products. The example about clothes' sizes showed that there are great differences between different consumer groups regarding the supply of goods, and thus the freedom of choice. Standardisation work is one of the few arenas where industry and consumer interests have the opportunity to meet. A strengthening of the consumer interests in relation to this work – and commitment to developing other venues of interaction and contact will be important to provide consumers with genuine freedom of choice – and thus the ability to take responsibility.

The two examples show that the cooperation with other disciplines makes it possible to study the artefacts of the industrial society, both as “Result of a stage and in action” (Kolsrud 1963), and that industrial products may also be important sources in themselves, if we have the methodologies to interpret them. The methods are picked up from international standards for the testing of textiles. Cooperation between an ethnologist and a textile engineer opens up various perspectives where the material aspects themselves are given more attention. Compared to pure ethnological study, the strength here is that the clothes are actively taking part as source, here in form of flammability properties and sizes. On the other side, ethnology has contributed with methods and perspectives where the users’ utilisation and attitudes towards the products are given a voice. Regardless of many big words, practical interdisciplinary research is not a solved problem. However, our experiences are very positive. One possible reason for this is that the ethnology’s tradition of incorporating the material gives an opening towards the technological disciplines.

Ethnology has gained much by drawing inspiration from subjects with a greater knowledge about the intangible. Perhaps we have unexplored opportunities for collaboration with those who can truly measure and weigh? This is a research strategy which is not only relevant for gaining more knowledge of consumers in standardisation process or how the results of standardisation are met by the society, but particularly relevant to the environmental impacts which today’s material culture entails. In a world flowing over with goods and the consequences of producing them, all the knowledge and experience that has been gathered about the material and

its place in the cultural is well worth developing.

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Notes

- 1 Klepp 1991; Reme 1994; *Nord-Nytt* 1973:1/2.
- 2 The first project was “Fire hazards of Clothing Related to Accidents and Consumer Habits” financed by EU Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection (Laitala et al. 2004), and the second project “Large? Clothing sizes and size labelling” financed by Nordic Council of Ministers (Laitala et al. 2009).
- 3 See discussion of thin, trendy bodies in Neumann (2010) and Rysst (2010).
- 4 We refer to conventionally grown cotton, since organic cotton constitutes only about 1 % of world cotton production.
- 5 Polyester and polyamide (nylon) have low melting temperature compared with the ignition temperature, which means that they often melt and shrink away from the ignition source without catching fire. On the negative side, the temperature of the molten material is usually over 250 °C which can cause deep burns.

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The Conception of the Swedish National Day Meal

Building a National Identity on a Blend of Existing Festive Food Elements

By Richard Tellström

Introduction and Background

The Swedish National Day (6th June) was officially adopted in 1983. However, the day plays a significant role in Sweden's history. In 1523, King Gustav I was elected king on this day, and the date marks a starting point in the process of creating a free and modern Swedish state. In 1809, the new constitution was signed on this day, and a revised constitution was adopted by Parliament in 1973, again on this very day. Earlier in the 20th century, the sixth of June had a function as an official flag day, but it was also an ordinary working day. The celebrations have been rather introverted in recent decades, but in 2004 the Social Democratic government proposed that the National Day should be made a public holiday (Government Bill 2004). The purpose of making it a non-working day was to make Sweden more like other European states where the national day is a public holiday, and also to create a day on which people can celebrate being (a citizen of) a free nation.

The official flag day was originally celebrated by many local councils. However, around the turn of the millennium the day became an opportunity to hold official welcoming ceremonies for new Swedes (immigrants and refugees) who had acquired Swedish citizenship during the previous year. The political debate about making the National Day into a non-working day mostly revolved around economic considerations, due to the excessive costs that would be incurred by Swedish businesses. It was decided that Whit Monday should no longer be a public holiday. The transition in 2005 proceeded smoothly, as the first non-working National Day was on the same day as Whit Monday.

Aim and Theoretical Approach

The purpose of this study is to explore how food elements are chosen by ordinary

Swedes for use as national symbols in order to celebrate the recently adopted National Day, and how a sense of national belonging is expressed through food at home or out.

Food is a tool for individuals to create an identity and a relationship to other people, which makes it, as Claude Lévi-Strauss put it, not only something to eat but also something good to think with, and importantly: food can be used as a mediator for meanings (Lévi-Strauss 1966). The accessible values concerning food expressions to use in this process are acquired from a social context, e.g. family, friends, work colleagues, society, and so on, but they can also be introduced from a power level, e.g. government, media, public persons, and so on (see Bourdieu 1986; Tellström 2006). Recipe books have been used in this process (Appadurai 1988; Gold 2007), emphasizing that certain adjusted dishes reflect a particular country's national identity very well (Bishop 1991; Pilcher 1996; Higman 1998).

The decision to study food choices, instead of simply asking people "Do you celebrate National Day?", was aimed at avoiding the political implications of the question. In Sweden, admitting in front of other people that you celebrate your nation is a complicated matter (see Billig 1995:8). You are supposed to be proud of being a Swede, but you should not mention the nation. As Giddens (1991) has discussed, the post-modern identity construction is in constant need of new expressions, and food can be the answer to this constant search. Food choices are therefore a way of revealing how we define an aspect, because different food items and drinks are valued differently, as many researchers have concluded (e.g. Bourdieu 1986; Wilk 1995; Douglas 1997). Investigating food served on the National Day in the context of the family is also one way of studying a familial nationalistic

identity or what Billig (1995:6–8) calls “banal nationalism”, and a national unity often grows from daily practice, discourse and the story about the national identity (Ehn et al. 1993). It is often the food, rather than the calendar, that defines whether, for example, a day is an ordinary working Wednesday or a non-working festive Wednesday. The food choices indicate whether festivities are focused inwards (e.g. towards family or friends) or outwards (e.g. on neighbours or, as in this case, on the nation and the state). Food choices are filled with national values as Bell & Valentine have concluded: “The history of any nation’s diet is the history of the nation itself” (1997:168). Anderson (2006 [1991]) has also discussed nationality as a cultural artefact of an imaginary political community, and food and meals can be understood as cultural artefacts that carry certain values (Tellström 2006). After Andersson, Lien has developed the concept of *imagined cuisines*, with the aim of describing how closely nationality and food are linked to each other (Lien 2000). The beatification of the National Day, from flag day to public holiday, transfers all behaviour during the day to a new reference point in a more important category (Oliven 1996:15), and in order to relate to the day, behaviours and expressions taken from other contexts are reused and reshaped as a creative invention, which after some years have passed can be called “a tradition” (Hobsbawm 1983).

Empirical Study: Method and Material

A three-year exploratory study has been carried out using a questionnaire distributed by e-mail amongst people in the author’s own network (e-mail sample group, 2005–2007) and amongst listeners to the Swedish Radio Broadcasting Corporation’s food programme “Menu” (radio sample group,

2005 and 2007).¹ The e-mail sample group was chosen with the initial aim of carrying out a fast exploratory study simply for the author’s own private interest, as the government’s decision to make the National Day a public holiday was taken just six months before the day actually became a public holiday. However, the e-mail sample group expressed such a strong interest in the questions that the author decided to follow up the group by expanding the study, and looking further at how celebratory behaviour on National Day has developed.

The author’s own network consists of research colleagues, students and friends in the age group 25–65. The group of respondents can be generally characterized as a well-educated and relatively affluent group with urban academic bourgeoisie meal ideals (cf. Bourdieu 1986). In this group, food and drink play an important role in the individual’s own identity, and the respondents are used to reflecting on the taste of food and restaurant meals and their value in terms of distinction (Finkelstein 1989; Warde & Martens 2000). Using a separate network of respondents familiar with the researchers’ academic work stimulated the respondents into being (over-)precise in their reports and this group therefore worked as *partners of an extensive research team* to some extent.

The radio sample group is a more diverse group, being selected from amongst listeners to a food radio programme broadcast on Swedish Radio’s Channel 1, which mostly broadcasts speech programmes. On average, Channel 1 is listened to by 11% (approximately 873,000 people) of Swedish radio listeners, mostly aged over 40 (SIFO 2007). An invitation to participate in the study was broadcast both before and after the National Days in 2005 and 2007, but listeners were asked to reveal what they actually ate on Na-

tional Day, rather than what they would like to have eaten or planned to eat.

To ensure that the respondents remembered what they actually ate, rather than just summarizing what they usually eat (Kjærnes et al. 2001), the questionnaire was sent out to the e-mail sample group at eight o'clock the morning after the National Day (7th June). The first responses were received after a few hours, and the rest within one to three days. The questionnaire consisted of eight questions concerning what meals the respondents had eaten on the previous day, e.g. what dishes and other foods did you eat and was the food specially prepared or chosen in relation to the National Day? Many of the e-mail answers contained precise information about what they had eaten, but respondents also described in varying detail aspects such as situations that arose during the day, how the table was laid, discussions amongst the guests concerning how to relate to the National Day, and so on. The questions put to the radio sample group were shorter: what did you eat on the National Day and did it relate to the values of National Day in any way?

A total of 262 Swedes answered the questionnaire and the respondents were distributed throughout Sweden, but mostly concentrated in urban areas. The respondents consisted of a varied group of people who have cooked for themselves or others and/or been guests at meals or dinner parties. The respondents defined the concept of *celebrating National Day* in a wide variety of ways, ranging from the organization of a major festive meal with many guests for no reason other than to meet friends that they haven't seen in a long time, to a small family dinner with carefully selected food products and table decorations which emphasize what, in their opinion, the nation stands for. The concept of

“festive” is a fluid one, and relates to the respondents' definitions.

The respondents' answers are presented statistically in the tables below. However, percentages are not statistically significant, as the response group is not a random sample and no research has been conducted amongst those who did not answer concerning their reasons for not participating in the study. The percentages should therefore be understood as indicative, not absolute.

Long Weekend or a Single Day Off Results in Different Celebrations

The National Day's position in the week changed during the research period (Table 1). The first National Day fell on a Monday and was therefore attached to the weekend. Relatively few respondents made any effort to celebrate at all. During the second year (2006), most respondents had the day before National Day off, as a day before a public holiday is usually a half-working day, or for many people, a full holiday that is regulated in union agreements. The first occasion on which the National Day was not actually part of a long weekend was in 2007, when it fell on a Wednesday. The answers indicate an increase in celebrations over time, albeit partly linked to the position of the National Day in the week. The weather conditions also seem to affect the type of festivities (e.g. outdoor picnic or indoor restaurant) and the dishes that people eat (more cold food on hot days and more hot food on cold days).

Table 1 shows a group which in marketing literature is usually referred to as “early adopters”. In 2005, this group was the first to express a new behaviour. However some of the respondents said that they refused to celebrate the day as a National Day, but saw it as a good excuse to organize some festivities with family and friends. In 2007 one re-

Table 1: The National Day's weekday and celebrants

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|---|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Weekday on which National Day fell | Monday (a three-day weekend) | Tuesday (a long four-day weekend for most people) | Wednesday (just a single day off) |
| Percentage who say they celebrated the National Day in any way (all respondents) | 14% | 30% | 36% |

spontent commented on the celebrations that she attended as follows:

I was invited to dinner by some friends, "as it's National Day," they said. A Chinese guest researcher was therefore invited and had cooked an excellent Chinese meal together with the hostess. We were all joking about Swedish traditions and this peculiar new National Day (2007).

Another respondent tells a similar story:

I was at home. Everyone I know sent sarcastic text messages saying how "intensely they had celebrated the day". My younger sister saw the day as a good excuse to eat marinated herring. It was rather chaotic in the centre of Stockholm, with many different events that you could go to. Many people were waving small paper flags, which were probably being handed out somewhere (2007).

Celebrating the National Day in Public

When National Day falls on a day that is close to a weekend, it is more likely that the celebrations will take place at home. A National Day in the middle of the week leads to a tendency for people to go to a public park or visit a restaurant (see table 2).

A majority of National Day celebrants hold their festivities at home. This is an interesting mix of people bringing the official National Day indoors to a private setting and then expressing their citizenship and what the nation stands for in front of their friends and family. "Nation" is a collectively expressed concept.

Table 2: Celebrating at home or at a restaurant?

| | 2005 * | 2006 ** | 2007 *** |
|---|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Celebrating the nation with a meal in a private setting, e.g. at home (National Day celebrants) | 100% | 55% | 75% |
| Celebrating the nation with a meal in a public setting at a restaurant (National Day celebrants) | 0% | 10% | 20% |
| Visiting a restaurant (all respondents) | 5% | 11% | 20% |
| Holding festivities in a public setting, e.g. a picnic, neighbourhood party, etc. (not restaurant) (all respondents) | 2% | 8% | 57% |

* Monday. ** Tuesday. *** Wednesday.

Some municipalities organize official welcoming ceremonies on National Day for new citizens (e.g. refugees and immigrants) who have acquired Swedish citizenship during the year. These ceremonies include festive elements (e.g. speeches and music), and international-style buffets are often served with types of dishes that can be found throughout Sweden all year around in any context. A person attending a ceremony reports:

In the City Hall, I ate the food that was served to the new citizens. There were three menu alternatives: "regular", vegetarian and a children's menu. The menus were written in English. On my plate were various things such as cheesecake with smoked salmon, baked sweet red pepper with Chèvre cheese,

fillet of lamb and salad, blue cheese on dark bread with pear chutney, Swedish light bread stuffed with mousse of chick pea, as well as another type of bread. The children's menu was meatballs, chicken shish kebab, spaghetti and rice (2007).

For some respondents, the National Day celebrations have taken place on so many occasions (over a period of three years) that they now consider them to be a tradition, and in some neighbourhoods residents gather for some sort of semi-official celebrations. This indicates that National Day traditions can develop faster in private circles than official public celebrations. One respondent describes the celebrations in her own local community, celebrations that have been organized in the same way three years in a row, as follows:

We had a special 6th June gathering, which consisted of newly baked sponge cake, chocolate squares [a cake], raspberry grottos [a cake], strawberries with whipped cream and coffee. We also had a picnic in the backyard which we shared with other houses, and we flew the flag on the new flagpole which we erected in 2005, the first year that the National Day was a public holiday (2007).

However, celebrating a new public holiday in public amongst people you perhaps only know as neighbours can create a feeling of uncertainty. From 2006, one respondent told us that she spent the day at a boatyard repairing the family's private boat. She had brought some sandwiches with her to have for lunch, when another boat owner went shopping for some biscuits and coffee for everyone "because it was National Day". She continues her story:

On an old shed, a Swedish flag from someone's boat was raised and we sang the national anthem, but only a few lines because we became too embarrassed in front of each other (2006).

Many of the restaurant visitors were at the same time involved in recreational activities

with friends or family on this day, making it convenient to eat at a restaurant. However, eating food at a restaurant also adds value to the meal and gives the day an emphasized or festive value. When National Day falls in the middle of the week, going to a restaurant can also be a suitable form of entertainment, especially if you do not have much else to do.

However, not everyone has the day off. People who are on holiday need services and food, so this is a business day for many shop-owners and restaurants. One respondent working as a fisherwoman in central Sweden explains:

Sad to say, I didn't have time to celebrate National Day. On the day, we were busy serving our guests smoked fish and other dishes. I ate a microwaved ham-and-cheese pie. I didn't expect to have so many guests on this day; it will probably be one of our "big days" during the year. It was almost as good as Midsummer's Day (2007).

The new National Day is of considerable interest for both the mass media and supermarkets. The media publish articles on how the National Day can be celebrated as well as recipes for suitable National Day dishes, while supermarkets publish advertisements for suitable food products and beverages for consumption during the festivities. The products and beverages promoted are the same as for other feasts and holidays, e.g. beef, ham, beer, marinated herring, strawberries, etc. There is particular interest in food and beverages that can be used for social gatherings with friends and family, e.g. picnics or barbecue food in the backyard.

Meals and Dishes on a National Day

The food products and dishes chosen by the respondents had a celebratory function, but were seldom linked to a marked national theme. Instead, the food had a festive value as such through its rarity compared with

everyday food (e.g. grilled beef instead of minced meat, grilled chicken instead of chicken pieces or whole salmon instead of fish-fingers), or through its being expensive (more expensive meat instead of cheaper sausages), or festive food products that can be found throughout the Western world (e.g. Italian antipasto dishes, international wines and Norwegian salmon). The choice of dish indicates that the respondents emphasize the National Day by selecting food from any Western international festive context, not by selecting domestic, regional or local food products, or festive food that was eaten during their own childhood or by their own class thirty, forty or fifty years ago.

The style of cooking is contemporary Scandinavian, based on a French-German tradition and presented in the form of “a proper meal” (Douglas 1997), usually meat, potatoes, at least one additional vegetable, and gravy. The entire meal is served in French-style courses with a starter, main course and dessert. This festive form is one of two common festive forms in Sweden. Three-course dinners are served at dinner parties, e.g. New Year’s Eve, Weddings, etc. Otherwise, the buffet-style meal, or a variant of the smorgasbord, is more common and served at the religious holidays during Christmas, Easter, Midsummer (St John’s) or at larger family parties celebrating birthdays, christenings, and so on.

There are three commonly selected festive food products that occur more frequently in the menus: Baltic herring (marinated, or occasionally fermented), new potatoes and strawberries. In 2007, the new potato harvest was early due to a warm spring, so several respondents said that they ate a lot of the first new potatoes because they were rather cheap. Amongst those who went to a restaurant, other dishes such as global ethnic fast-food

were not unusual (i.e., pizza, kebab or hamburgers).

Baltic herring is a highly valued festive food. It is not particularly expensive and it can be eaten all year around, but served as a starter at a meal and accompanied by aquavit it has been a festive signal since the seventeenth century and still plays a central role in Swedish festivities.

Even though some of the respondents decided not to celebrate the nation specifically, they used some festive elements that are defined as nationally festive food (e.g. herring, whole meat and strawberries). A day off work is transformed into a festive day with the help of festive food, and the festive food is chosen on the basis of a national scale of festive definitions.

The beverages drunk on National Day are the same as on other festive days. Respondents say they drink water, soda, beer, wine or aquavit. The drinking of aquavit has increased and follows the trend to eat more Baltic herring when the National Day falls in the middle of the week (see table 3). Non-celebrants drink the same beverages as celebrants, but largely tend to avoid wine and aquavit.

Table 3: The increased popularity of Baltic herring and its companion aquavit as a National Day festive element

| | 2005 * | 2006 ** | 2007 *** |
|---|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Eating Baltic herring , marinated or fermented, as a starter or main dish (all respondents) | 9% | 9% | 17% |
| Drinking aquavit (all respondents) | 2% | 2% | 9% |

* Monday. ** Tuesday. *** Wednesday.

As the celebrations amongst all respondents tend to have increased during the period under study (see Table 1 above), the respondents

have also made use of more distinctive and visible emphasizing festive markers. The eating of Baltic herring, along with aquavit, was more popular when National Day fell in the middle of the week. The drinking of aquavit is associated with a more formal etiquette than other beverages, as regards both *when* and *how* to drink it. The etiquette is that a toast must usually be proposed before the aquavit can be drunk, and sometimes a drinking song is sung by all the guests. The increased consumption of aquavit is in itself an indication of a more formal celebratory pattern on National Day, emphasizing the day as a festive day.

The most frequently served dessert on National Day was strawberries (Table 4). Strawberries are valued as a festive summer berry but are more closely linked to Midsummer (St John's) parties in late June. They have now been transferred to the early June celebrations, even though the Swedish season for strawberries has not really started yet, and imported berries (usually Belgian) dominate the market. Rhubarb is another popular dessert, usually served as a pie with custard or ice cream. Swedish cheesecake has historically been a popular festive dessert, but is now regarded as an everyday dessert or snack. A Member of Parliament has put forward the case for making Swedish cheesecake into a national dish (Andersson 2004). However, the Parliament rejected the argument, as there are no laws governing how diverse national symbols should be expressed (Parliament 2006).

Making a rhubarb dessert is more labour-intensive and requires more culinary skill than strawberries, which are ready to eat and may only need rinsing in water. Of those who went to a restaurant, none ate a rhubarb dessert, indicating that it is a dish served at home. One respondent describes their family dinner on National Day:

Table 4: Desserts that hold national values

| | 2005 * | 2006 ** | 2007 *** |
|--|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Eating fresh strawberries with whipped cream or ice cream (all respondents) | 7% | 13% | 19% |
| Eating rhubarb, e.g. as rhubarb pie with whipped cream or ice cream (all respondents) | 5% | 9% | 7% |

* Monday. ** Tuesday. *** Wednesday.

We had one guest and served barbecue food, new potatoes and strawberries. We wanted to have something with a summer style (it was really hot, so the weather was very important) and a festive profile. The strawberries were really hard to get in the shops – everyone wanted them (2007).

It is also possible to buy readymade National Day pastries. A special *National Day pastry* was created in 1994 by a commercial promotion organization in an attempt to get Swedes to eat more fruit. This pastry contains strawberries and oranges, usually decorated with a small Swedish paper flag. A few of the respondents said that they ate this pastry, but all bought it readymade from a bakery.

Festive dinners at home often lead to left-over food. Making use of leftovers is one way of managing the household's resources economically, but it is also a way of making cooking easier in order to focus on other things with more value. The use of leftovers on a celebratory day gives an indication of how individuals value the day as a normal or festive day. And this pattern can be followed in Sweden, for example, in 2005 (when National Day fell on a Monday), one in five served leftovers; the following year when it fell on a Tuesday, the figure was one in ten and the same proportion did so in 2007 when National Day fell on a Wednesday. The study's results can be

interpreted in two ways: firstly, as the day on which National Day falls gets further away from a weekend, the use of leftovers decreases, and secondly leftovers have too low a festive value to fit in with the increased celebrations. You cannot serve leftovers to guests you have invited for a celebratory meal, as the value of leftovers is too low for such an occasion. One respondent told us about her day (the National Day concerned fell on a Tuesday):

We [the family] had food left over from the weekend, as we had spent the weekend at our summer house. As we had to travel home on National Day, we spent half the day cleaning the house and the other half driving the 400 km back to town. In between, we ate leftovers, which consisted of cold smoked salmon, hamburgers, vegetables and pasta (a horrible mixture but it tasted unbelievably good). We drank milk and finished off the meal with what was left of the rubarb pie (2006).

The respondents also stated that, although the meal was simple and perhaps not as unusual as that served on other weekends, they laid the table with china that has a slightly higher value. They also used crystal glassware, and for several meals the tables were decorated with a small wooden Swedish flag or napkins printed with the Swedish flag. One respondent told us about her table-setting when she invited her parents to coffee:

With the finest coffee service bought in St Petersburg, a flower pot and a little Swedish flag which my parents had brought with them, plus an inherited coffee-table cloth with embroidery which one of my aunts made at least fifty years ago and which is used only on special occasions (2007).

However, some respondents said that they only laid the table with their ordinary everyday plates and glasses. Some even ate their evening tea or dinner as a TV dinner, after the official National Day celebrations that were broadcast on television.

A group of thirteen respondents responded to the questionnaire in all three years in which the study was carried out. This group shows much the same festive pattern as the rest of the group, but perhaps has a stronger interest in celebrating the day, suggesting that the study itself might have encouraged the respondents to celebrate the day.

Pre-celebrations

The evening before a public holiday (e.g. Midsummer (St John's) Eve, Christmas Eve) is important in Swedish festive patterns and is often more festive than the public holiday (e.g. Midsummer (St John's) Day, Christmas Day) itself. The respondents were therefore asked whether they celebrated at all on the day/evening before the National Day. Several of the respondents said that, when National Day fell in the middle of the week, they organize the same festive celebrations on the day before as they do on a Friday night before the weekend (with some snacks, drinks and more festive food). The festivities were therefore intended as a celebration of the impending public holiday or weekend, rather than as pre-National Day celebrations.

Discussion

Food culture can be understood as the result of the individual selection of food and drink products that best carry desired values which are to be used in a collective context for the expression of a self-identity and a sense of belonging to a society (in a broad sense), but also to establish boundaries with respect to "the others" (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1966, and Giddens 1991).

Making the National Day an official public holiday forces most Swedes to take the day off and makes them part of a national "we" (Frykman & Löfgren 1991:30). As a

consequence, they must relate to the National Day and act in some way (i.e. celebrate it, ignore it or do something else), but they might also have to answer simple everyday questions from colleagues such as: “What are you going to do/what did you do on National Day, when we have/had the day off?” The answer is not straightforward. All actions and opinions can be considered as a statement of the individual’s attitude and political ideas concerning the state, the nation or his or her own individual national identity, but by referring to food products, dishes or meals, the individual can avoid an outright political statement, and instead the colleagues can interpret the values behind the meals that the individual eats and through them reflect on whether or not the person has manifested the day off. Food choices reveal how we define an event or an activity, as different food products, dishes and drinks are valued differently, as many researchers have concluded. The choice between a festive meal and an ordinary meal is a signal from the individual as to what he or she wishes to communicate to others (Douglas 1997; Bourdieu 1986) and as a research method, studying the individuals’ practices on a certain day can uncover attitudes towards national unity (Ehn et al. 1993). Food dishes and drinks are often valued from a national perspective and are well-used expressions of national identity (Appadurai 1988; Pilcher 1996; Higman 1998), and the national values they carry can therefore be interpreted.

More and more respondents are arranging and participating in festive meals on National Day, from one in ten in 2005 to one in three in 2007. It is important to realize that food and drink that are defined by the respondents as festive signs on National Day should not be over-interpreted as also being national celebratory signs in a nationalistic context.

The respondents may have answered that they ate certain dishes on National Day to emphasize that they had the day off, but they did not highlight the day’s political meaning. A marinated herring was perhaps just a symbol for the day off rather than a national celebratory act, as a marinated herring is sometimes just a marinated herring – a festive sign that can be moved from one festival meal setting to another with no underlying political national subtext.

In 2005, the first year of the National Day as an official public holiday, the respondents began to take various highly festive valued food and drink expressions from their existing contexts and use them in the newly invented festive context of the National Day. The government did not give any instructions on how to celebrate the National Day, so the food and drink that the respondents had transferred were re-used in order to resolve the private festive situation at home as regards how this new social gathering should be culturally expressed and understood amongst the celebrative participants. From an individual’s perspective, the celebratory discourse of the National Day was resolved through a form of everyday practice (Ehn et al. 1993), and the food and drink that were consumed became “national dishes”, “national festive food” or “nationally associated food and drinks” when the people participating in the National Day meals wanted this particular meal to express their common definition of the new public and official holiday. This indicates that the process of creating the actual National Day festivities is the result of activities in an imaginary framework (Anderson 2006), as well as the result of a dialogue and an agreement. It is essential that the celebrating participants in a food culture setting are of the same opinion as regards which side of the dichotomy the meal falls

on, for example, whether it is a festive or an everyday meal, whether it is a celebration and a formal event or not, and so on (Douglas 1997). If the participants do not agree, the intention behind the meal cannot be performed. By acting with certain food and drinks on the National Day, the respondents associate themselves with a place and with a legal, social and emotional context. Collectively, all these relations express a national identity (Billig 1995). The use of traditional national symbols during the meal is otherwise understated in the private circles amongst family and friends, perhaps being expressed through the use of napkins printed with the Swedish flag or a small Swedish wooden flag placed on the table. National identity is expressed along with what Billig (1995) has called “banal nationalism”.

The respondents stated that their festivities had been organized collectively, which makes the celebrations a point of discussion as regards how they should relate to the day and guests, friends, family, neighbours, working colleagues or simply the individual’s relationship to society. However, individuals do not have to say: “I want to celebrate the nation.” Instead, they can simply say: “It’s National Day and we have the day off, let’s go and have a picnic.” The National Day as a public holiday therefore supports an identity of doing things together with family and friends in public in a social setting rather than supporting the expression of individual values in a closed setting. People are making the National Day into a celebration where the value of bringing together family and friends is both supported and emphasized by the government. In this social gathering, the individual borrows nationally associated expressions and objects, adjusts them to fit the occasion in which they are to be used, presents them to family, friends and guests,

and uses the flexibility of the “chameleonic nature of the national” (Ehn et al. 1993:271).

Three varieties of National Day food could be identified; food served at official welcoming ceremonies organized by local councils for new Swedes (official National Day food), food served at a restaurant (semi-official National Day food) and private National Day food, dishes served in a private context. The official National Day food consists of dishes served at international buffets, and some common, traditional festive dishes (e.g. marinated herring, steak and strawberries). The semi-official National Day food consists of restaurant dishes, i.e. more elaborate servings which signal festivity in themselves or restaurant-style dishes. The private National Day food consisted of the same types of dishes served at annual family festivities or on religious or public holidays. The difference between the food served at official welcoming ceremonies organized by councils (international buffet style) and the more common festive food served at home can be understood as indicating that the councils are as cautious about communicating nationalistic food values as they are about what they do with taxpayers’ money; international buffets are cheaper than common festive food and yet still carry festive values appropriate for the National Day.

National Day is to a greater extent a reason to go to a restaurant. The increase in popularity can be interpreted in two ways: celebrating National Day in public has become popular when the National Day falls in the middle of the week, people have little else to do and going to a restaurant makes the day more interesting.

Many of the respondents served leftovers to their family on National Day, but no one served them as a festive dish, to either family

or friends. The reduced use of leftovers between 2005 and 2007 can be interpreted as the development of a more festive and socializing food pattern and a sign of higher celebratory ideals on National Day amongst Swedes.

The study has not clearly demonstrated whether an individual's non-celebratory behaviour could also be an expression of a national and collective standpoint, accepted and sometimes promoted by society at large, but the ironic tone of some of the respondents' answers implies that a national trait could actually be that an individual can openly reject the nation without being treated as a sort of "national traitor" yet at the same time attend a National Day party. An individual can therefore express both a private relationship towards society (family, friends, colleagues) and a public relationship as a citizen towards the state (nation). These two can be very different, sometimes even contradictory, from an outside perspective, but they are not different from an individual's point of view or in a societal context.

A post-modern self-reflexive identity perspective is apparent when the individual has to choose how the identity of the day should be expressed; at home or amongst friends in public (see Giddens 1991). The food and drink that are chosen indicate that societal and friendship relations are emphasized in a more public-oriented perspective, but performed in a family context rather than in an official form. These celebratory expressions are an example of a post-modern idiom where the public and official are privatized, and the use of history is made into a practice at home.

The celebratory patterns are still emerging, and Swedes are exploring what to put into the National Day framework and on the National Day festive table. The selection of

food and the organization of festive activities indicate an increase in the use of the meal as a platform for the expression of national identity, and here an invention, or the conception of a tradition, must sometimes take place (Hobsbawm 1983). Through the political decision to make the National Day a public official holiday, the respondents have been incorporated into a contemporary global context, and in this context expressed their individuality (Ehn et al. 1993). They have in many respects acted in the way the government wanted them to when the National Day was made an official and public holiday in 2005, tending towards activities that Swedes express when they are not working, in order to identify themselves with objects closer than the distant outside world or Europe (Oliven 1996:116), for example, through festive patterns, festive dishes and drinks associated with Swedish festivals and food that the respondents define as "proper" National Day food.

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Note

- 1 The e-mail sample group consists of 229 people and the radio sample group of 33 people. In 2005, 58 people participated in the study, 53 people in 2006 and 151 people in 2007. In total, 262 people participated. A small number (13) of the initial group of 58 people answered the questionnaire in all three years.

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Biographical Notes

Holger Rasmussen 1915–2009



Holger Rasmussen, Ph.D., former chief curator, died on 6 January 2009 at the age of 93, after a long and active life in the service of ethnology and museums. Holger Rasmussen took his first degree in 1942 and in the same year joined the Third Department of the National Museum, the former Danish Folk Museum, now the National Museum's Department of Modern Danish History. The National Museum remained his workplace for the rest of his life, apart from a break in 1957 when he was curator of Odense City Museums, but he returned two years later as head of the Third Department, when Axel Steensberg became professor at Copenhagen University.

"Ras", as he was always known among Danish colleagues and friends, belonged to the generation of ethnologists who came to the subject from a rural background. He was born on the small peninsula of Reersø in western Sjælland in 1915, growing up among farmers and fishermen. The cultural history of the rural

population, especially fishery, became his favourite research field.

For his doctorate he studied the rich and varied fishery of Limfjorden, the fiord that cuts through northern Jutland. In the 1940s he travelled around the fiord and acquired first-hand knowledge of the fishermen. Yet it was their predecessors in the time up to 1825 – the year when the fiord was opened towards the North Sea, that was the main topic of the dissertation, as there proved to be a veritable gold mine of information in the archives. It was characteristic of "Ras" that he was equally at home in the archives as out in the field, emphasizing the combination of the two methods.

Holger Rasmussen's studies of peasant society were not confined to Denmark. In 1947 and 1949 he did pioneering ethnological fieldwork in the Faroes. In 1953 and 1955 he was in southern Italy, studying old-fashioned farming methods in Calabria. He had personal experience of peasant culture in Eastern Europe and the Balkans from countless study trips with local colleagues.

His broad interests, however, led him to write on many different topics. His list of publications was long and his productivity was undiminished after he retired in 1985. His great interest in museum history grew naturally out of his practical and administrative museum work. "Ras" participated actively in the nationwide cooperation between museums of cultural history, so it was natural for him to undertake to write *Dansk Museumshistorie*, the history with which the museum association marked its 50th anniversary in 1979. In the same year he published a large monograph about the founder of the Danish Folk Museum, Bernhard Olsen, who was very close to his heart, and he returned to him in two small books for the centennial of the Open Air Museum in 1997. Bernhard Olsen and Holger Rasmussen were similar in many respects. They were exuberant and cheerful people with profound knowledge, and both men found museum work and the study of cultural history a fascinating and enjoyable pursuit.

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New Dissertations

The Rockefeller Foundation and the Danish Welfare State

Henriette Buus, Indretning og efterretning. Rockefeller Foundations indflydelse på den danske velfærdsstat 1920–1970. Museum Tusulanum Press, Copenhagen 2008. 384 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-635-0582-6.

■ The ethnologist Henriette Buus focuses in this book on the influence that the Rockefeller Foundation had on the Danish welfare state. The welfare society began to take shape in the inter-war period around the Western world, and the Rockefeller Foundation, based in the USA, was central for this formation. From the beginning of the 1920s the Foundation supported many different activities in Denmark that later became crucial for how the welfare society developed. More specifically, Buus is interested in how the Rockefeller Foundation influenced the expansion of the welfare society in Denmark, with a focus on preventive health care and social research. She does this by analysing both the establishment of the Health Visitor Institution (Sundhedsplejerskeinstitutionen) and the establishment of empirical inductive sociology at the Institute of History and Socio-Economics (Institutet for Historie og Samfundsøkonomi) in Copenhagen. These two institutions are analysed with material that stretches from the 1920s to the 1970s.

The book is a result of the Danish project “Livsformer og velfærdsstat ved en korsvej? En kulturteoretisk og kulturhistorisk bidrag” (Life-mode and welfare state at a crossroads? A culture-theoretical and culture-historical contribution), which ran 1999–2002 and is summarized in a book by Thomas Højrup (2003). Central for Buus, and for the whole project, is the state- and life-mode analysis. In the book Buus points out that the ethnological state- and life-mode analysis has developed from the 1970s in opposition to the empirical inductive sociology that is a part of the social sciences in Denmark. The book could in this way be read as a contrary discussion in relation to the dominant perspective represented then, and now, by social science.

The book has five chapters, in the first of which Buus presents the aim of the book and its structure.

She writes: “The aim of this book is to examine, in a comprehensive way, the implications the Rockefeller Foundation’s activities had in Denmark from ca. 1920 to ca. 1970 and how this led to the development of the Danish welfare state and the Danish understanding of the Danish welfare states principles” (p. 16). It is an aim that takes its starting point in state- and life-mode analysis, focusing on how the social problems in the inter-war period were acknowledged as important parameters for the states in the Western world. In this perspective the Rockefeller Foundation is analysed as a way for the American state to try to secure the population in Denmark for a liberal democracy, at a time when Nazism and communism were a real threat in Europe. Buus raises three important issues for this aim: (1) How was the Rockefeller Foundation’s involvement included in Denmark in the USA and the Danish government’s foreign policy in the period from 1920 to 1970? (2) What welfare strategies and concepts were built into the Rockefeller Foundations activities? (3) What significance did these welfare strategies have for the development of the Danish welfare state?

The Rockefeller Foundation had a great many different activities in Denmark, from the beginning of the 1920s to the 1960s and overall Denmark had twenty-five fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation. From these different activities Buus has chosen the Institute of History and Socio-Economics because this institution had an important role in introducing empirical inductive sociology in Denmark. This was a science that was promoted by the Rockefeller Foundation as a realistic anchor in the political process for planning and forecasting. The Health Visitor Institution was promoted by the Rockefeller Foundation to establish principles for prevention in public health in Denmark. The two cases are presented and analysed in chapters 3 and 4.

In chapter 2 – “From Breeding of Bees to the Administration of an Empire” – Buus gives a brief history of the Rockefeller Foundation and its role in American foreign policy. In the chapter the foundation’s different activities in Denmark and the organization and strategies of the foundation are analysed. The Rockefeller Foundation was a part of the American philanthropic idea to help other countries, as expressed in their motto: “The Promotion of the Well-being of Mankind throughout the World, the

Advancement of Knowledge and Science of Man". The Foundation became a silent, but important, partner in American foreign policy and came to exert an influence on the development of the European countries. In this way it was not a neutral philanthropy the Rockefeller Foundation was promoting, but a way to influence the European countries to move in a more liberal direction.

Chapter 3 – "Social Science in Denmark" – is the first empirical chapter in the book, and here Buus studies the Rockefeller Foundation's support to the Institute of History and Socio-Economics in Copenhagen, a support that started in 1928 and ended around the 1950s. There were two main goals, according to Buus, for the Foundation's support of the institute. First, the Foundation wanted to establish and broaden standardized science in Denmark as regards how social problems should be investigated. Second, the Foundation also wanted a partner that could deliver objective and standardized knowledge about social conditions in Europe to America, data that could be used for international comparative studies.

The historian P. Munch founded the Institute of History and Socio-Economics in the 1920s. For Munch it was important that the institution should perform studies that could match those in science and that the studies should also have a direct relevance for the political process. The institution also trained scientists, managers and politicians who later came to have an influence on the progress of welfare in Denmark. The institute's results were also distributed in society through publications, radio programmes and so forth, and Buus points out that the many different activities were an important part in the establishment of social science in Denmark.

In chapter 4 – "Public Health in Denmark" – Buus describes how the Rockefeller Foundation supported the establishment of public health in Denmark between the 1920s and the 1950s, and how public health became institutionalized in Denmark as a part of the Danish welfare state. But what was the reason, Buus asks, for supporting the welfare system of another state? The answer we find in the Foundation's motto, to establish public health as a form of prevention for deadly diseases. People around the world should have tools so that they could prevent or resolve diseases that debilitated them. In this way the views on social prob-

lems went from a collective responsibility to a mandate for the individual family to take care of themselves and those closest to them. This was a part of the modernization of Denmark but also, Buus points out, an American way of dealing with health problems. The people were to establish themselves as healthy, useful in their working life and responsible citizens. It was also central that the state should gather information about people's lives so that the information provided to them could be developed and improved. This was a system using intervention and control of the population, but at the same time the principle of the Rockefeller Foundation was not to provoke the ideal of personal freedom and the privacy of people. It was science that was supposed to legitimize this public health. In this way the principles of the Rockefeller Foundation were about equality and every individual having the opportunity to attain good health. At the same time, Buus points out, it was a principle that said nothing about economic equalization, central for the Nordic welfare model.

In chapter 5 – "Alignment and Enlightenment" – Buus has a discussion about the welfare-state model that the Rockefeller Foundation promoted and Buus points out that this model had the constituent features of alignment and enlightenment. Empirical inductive science was central to the enlightenment of those conditions that the state needed to develop knowledge about and change through an alignment of information to the population. The social problems were translated into a question of public health. The Rockefeller Foundation's project introduced a new principle for the Danish welfare state, a liberalistic alternative that dominates the world today. Buus points out how this principle was introduced in the inter-war period and how it was able to develop into the Danish welfare state after the Second World War. Positivistic social science thus replaced the experience of generations with science performed by professionals. However, there is a difference, and that is that the Danish welfare system came to be controlled and financed by the public. The Rockefeller Foundation's idea was that the welfare system would be controlled by the state but funded on a more private level. This is an important point in Buus's argument that the Rockefeller Foundation project did not claim public financing, but the historic situation created this financial form. Today many Western countries are decreasing the public

financing to the welfare state, and the question is raised whether the welfare state is shrinking. Buus's answer to this is no. The public financing is perhaps shrinking, but instead the liberalistic welfare state is expanding. In this change there has been a change from the concept of equality that focuses on leveling differences between different groups in society – rich/poor, ill/healthy, young/old – to an equality concept that ideologically accepts differences in society, but focuses on everyone having the same possibilities to exceed their social heritage.

It is refreshing to read a book about the welfare society without having to go through the collected works of Michel Foucault. State- and life-mode analysis is a strong theory that manages to stand on its own. But at the same time, one cannot help wondering what interesting analysis Buus could perform with, say, Foucault's term *governmentality* and how different techniques are used to govern subjects in the welfare model that was promoted by the Rockefeller Foundation. There are also some discussions that are repeated in the book and that could be removed, especially since the book is already very long. This is also a book with many photographs but with captions that more or less repeat what is in the text. I would appreciate an ethnology that dared to write a more independent text to the photographs, which can stand on their own and in this way be a complement to the main text.

Buus's book gives us an important and autonomous analysis of the emergence of the welfare society in Denmark and the changes it has undergone. In this way it is also a book that gives new perspectives on how we can analyse and understand today's welfare societies in the Nordic countries. Buus's book is an important step for an ethnology that needs to be more concerned with political processes over time.

Kristofer Hansson, Lund

Encounters with Resistance

Ingrid Fioretos, Möten med motstånd. Kultur, klass, kropp på vårdcentralen. Institutionen för kulturvetenskaper/Etnologi, Lund 2009. 200 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-6287-901-3.

■ Ingrid Fioretos' doctoral thesis in ethnology from Lund University is based on an extended period of

field work at the "Lyran" health care centre in Malmö. The health care centre is understood to embody values innate in Swedish culture and ideals. It is located in a residential area which is described by the author as neither resourceful nor deprived, but more of a peripheral, grey area. The suburb served by Lyran is undergoing a process of change: those who can, are moving away while lower income groups are moving in.

The patients who make use of Lyran's medical services range from the wealthy to the less resourceful, and their diagnoses range from clear unambiguous ailments such as ear-ache or fractured limbs to less distinct complaints such as stress, tiredness, fear and anxiety. The thesis focuses on the staff at Lyran and their encounters with patients in the latter category. Through the author's field work notes of observations made at the health care centre, we are given an insight into the varying degrees of awkwardness experienced during encounters between returning patients and the health service. Interviews with a number of health workers form part of the research material on which the thesis is based, as do media cuttings.

The research for the thesis was conducted within the framework of a liberal society's emphasis on individualism, the individual's responsibility for his/her own situation, and current demands on individuals to be mobile, reflective, flexible, and capable of exerting self control: How do people fare if they are unable to live up to these expectations? The thesis seeks to investigate the ways in which staff at Lyran negotiate and understand the bodily consequences of what sociologist Manuel Castells refer to as the new geography of social exclusion. One of the principal problems is: what strategies are drawn up to handle encounters with complex patients, the frequently callers, the "household patients"? The burdensome patients, those who the medical profession fails to help, are not defined on the basis of ethnicity or culture, but rather based on the various ways in which they challenge the services provided at the health care centre and the medical staff's self-understanding. Complex patients are those who fail to live up to the health workers' perception of the good life.

The field work was conducted over two periods of time, the first in 2001, the last in 2006; the author compares her findings from the two periods. The chapter entitled "Mellan kaos och kontroll" (Eng.: Between Chaos and Control), focuses on the general

practice. In 2001, Lyran was a chaotic place, with staff describing their work situation as disorganised and frustrating, particularly with regard to complex patients. Five years later Lyran has become a much calmer place to work, with staff having learnt how to distinguish between the help they are able to give and the assistance they cannot provide. They can encourage the complex patients to go for walks, take exercise, have a healthier diet – but they cannot help them with their financial problems or their unemployment, which may well be at the root of their fear and anxieties. In 2006 the complex patients are no longer clogging up the waiting room, they are more often found engaged in so-called “talk-walks” accompanied by a health worker. This means that they have become invisible as a group and that their situation has also been obscured. In the course of the five years, Lyran has become a better place to work, but hardly a better place for the patients. The chapter entitled “Synen på kroppen” (Eng. Views of the Body) gives us, not unexpectedly, an insight into the health workers’ categorisation of patients based on the various parts of the body, and we see that medical examination is only afforded the parts of complex patients in which they report to be feeling pain. At the same time, the health workers’ job includes giving patients a set of “tools” to enable them to become well enough to look for work, thereby breaking the vicious circle. The chapter entitled “Ansvar genom upplysning” (Eng. Responsibility through Education) gives us a closer look at how responsibility for patient’s health is shifted away from the medical profession and onto the patients themselves, in keeping with liberal ideas about health. Through education and information the patients should be given an opportunity to educate themselves into healthy, competent people. However, the problem is that these “tools”, e.g. advice about a healthier diet, are rarely able to connect with the patients’ everyday reality and challenges, double work or financial problems. An individualistic society excludes individuals who are not attractive to the labour market, and Lyran’s medical personnel make an attempt to teach the complex patients how to become well-informed, rational, flexible people who are able to exert self control – i.e. everything a neo-liberal society wants. The staff clearly fails in their mission, as evidenced by the fact that the complex patients keep returning to the health care centre. The question is whether Lyran’s medical personnel could have done

anything else. A holistic view on disease and symptoms is hardly an alternative, unless the medical staff is in a position to find jobs for their complex patients and to write off their debt. Ingrid Fioretos’ doctoral thesis raises an important social issue and should be read by anyone working in the health service, particularly bureaucrats and medical personnel.

Tove Ingebjörg Fjell, Bergen

Sisterhood and Fanzines

Jenny Gunnarsson Payne, Systerskapets logiker. En etnologisk studie av feministiska fanzines. Institutionen för kultur och media, Umeå Universitet 2006. 200 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 91-7264-120-7.

■ How is sisterhood defined? How can the perception of sisterhood be understood in relation to a wider feminist movement? How does one deal with multitude in a movement where one emphasizes a collective political mobilization? Who is included in this sisterhood, as articulated within the fanzine community, and who is excluded? How is “the subject of feminism” defined within fanzines? Is this subject represented by a woman, or are there additional identities that represent this sisterhood? How is sex and gender defined in these fanzines? How is the emancipated subject articulated?

These are some of the questions that ethnologist Jenny Gunnarsson Payne asks in her doctoral dissertation *Systerskapets logiker. En etnologisk studie av feministiska fanzines* (title in English: The logics of sisterhood: an ethnological study of feminist fanzines). In her doctoral dissertation she studies Swedish fanzines. A fanzine is a smaller non-commercial publication, which is generally spread through other distribution channels than mainstream media. The fanzines that are included in Gunnarsson Payne’s study are all defining themselves as feminist and are produced in Sweden with a strong ideal of “do it yourself”. To complement and contextualize the fanzines Gunnarsson Payne has interviewed some creators of fanzine.

The first two chapters of the dissertation lay the foundation for the study in terms of purpose, problems, historical background, research context, theoretical starting points, strategies for analysis and a

presentation of the empirical material. In the following chapters different particular problems and theoretical concepts in connection to the material is discussed and analyzed. These consist of discussions about creating a room of one's own, objectification, oppression, feministic strategies for resistance, reflexivity and the feministic research position, all of them in relation to the concept sisterhood. Central in the whole book is feminism, theories about gender and reflexivity. Theoretically, Jenny Gunnarsson Payne leans heavily towards the post-Marxist discourse theory of Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau. On the basis of post-Marxist discourse theory have the other perspectives been integrated and adjusted to the dissertation's problem formulation and empirical material. Gunnarsson Payne writes: the study is fundamentally an experiment in the application of discourse theory. And it really is. The author does not merely present the fanzines as numerous interlocking discourses, but try to reveal the more general. Most central in the doctoral dissertation is 'sisterhood', which is both used by the creators of fanzines in the interviews and used by Gunnarsson Payne as an analytical instrument. Connected to the theoretical concept 'sisterhood' she uses the concept 'communitas', to illustrate a sense of community that the feminist fanzines make. Within the process of constituting communitas, Gunnarsson Payne identifies three different feminist logics that are articulated in the fanzines: the radical feminist, the liberal feminist, and the post-feminist logic.

In her doctoral dissertation Gunnarsson Payne demonstrates that the feminist fanzines, although they differ on significant issues, manage to hold together through a common understanding of the importance of 'sisterhood'. This idea serves as one kind of cohesive putty for the fanzine, although opinions about what this sisterhood is or should be, paradoxically, often differ. Fanzines together form a common political platform where an assortment of feminist issues is discussed. Despite the various fanzines share some basic feminist views, this platform works at least as often as a place where radically opposing views can come together. That 'sisterhood' is necessary for a feminist politics is, according to the vast majority of the fanzines studied, obvious. Nevertheless the issue of what sisterhood 'is' or what it 'ought to be' is constantly under negotiation. In this thesis the author studies how the name sisterhood works to create a collective feminist identity –

even if this very name comes to be articulated in, sometimes radically, different forms.

The book *Systerskapets logiker. En etnologisk studie av feministiska fanzines* is interesting in several ways. During the 1990s and 2000s feminist fanzines in Sweden have undergone a substantial upswing. The material and research topic is contemporary and it keeps being of current interest several years after the doctoral dissertation was completed and published. The dissertation can also be seen as an interdisciplinary study and interesting for ethnologists, gender researchers and sociologists, to name a few. The dissertation is particularly of interest because of Gunnarsson Payne's reflexive perspective throughout the dissertation. The dissertation is a meta-analysis of the conduct of one's own research process. A feminist researcher studies a feminist movement that the researcher has been or is a part of, for example several informants address the researcher as 'Sister'. Gunnarsson Payne discusses how the feminist researcher cannot stay away from being a part of the same hegemonic struggle she or he studies. In regard of the discussion about reflexivity the author suggests two conceptual definitions. She contend that representation is commonly understood as a matter of *Vertretung* (German for 'acting on behalf of somebody') and *Darstellung* (German for 'putting on show an object or a symbol' or producing, constructing, depicting something). As a conclusion Gunnarsson Payne suggests that reflexivity in feminist research should be guided by the philosophical ethos of what Michel Foucault calls a "limit-attitude", of interrogating what Foucault was to call the "contemporary limits of necessity".

The book has numerous pictures of the fanzines in the study, quotes from interviews and excerpts from texts in the fanzines. Jenny Gunnarsson Payne's doctoral dissertation is an ambitious work. The dissertation is both broad and deep, much because of the discussion about reflexivity. At the same time the study is highly demanding in terms of theoretical discussion on sisterhood. That said I would highly recommend the book to ethnologists, researchers in the field of history of ideas and gender researchers, but not as course literature for an under-graduate.

Ann-Charlotte Palmgren, Turku

Living with Burnout

Mia-Marie Hammarlin, *Att leva som utbränd*. En etnologisk studie av långtidssjukskrivna. Symposium, Stockholm/Stehag 2008. 255 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-7139-809-3.

■ Mia-Maria Hammarlin has written her dissertation on the phenomenon of burnout. Research on this topic is dominated today by questions concerning the causes of the high rate of long-term sick leave and how to deal with these high rates. Hammarlin's ethnological study is thus a welcome humanistic counter-voice to the dominating quantitative and economic research on the topic. In contrast to causal approaches to the phenomenon, Hammarlin's dissertation focuses on how the burnout sufferers themselves experience and organize their lives on sick leave.

Like many other young ethnologists during the last decade, Hammarlin has chosen a phenomenological approach. Her dissertation examines how everyday life as a burnout sufferer is formed, how the life of the sufferers is shaped and given meaning. Instead of asking how the syndrome limits the individuals, she asks what kind of possibilities the diagnosis opens for the burnout sufferer. Hammarlin has based her analysis on a wide range of material, mainly newspaper articles, interviews and field notes, but she also uses autobiographical books, poems and even watercolours produced by her informants.

The book contains an introduction followed by five numbered chapters. In her analysis Hammarlin guides the reader into different rooms where the experience of being burned-out takes place. The first room she introduces to the reader is the press room. This first analytic chapter investigates the media representations of burnout experiences. By analysing a number of Swedish newspaper articles Hammarlin shows how the media language for describing the experience of being burned-out is gendered. The mass media representations of the illness are dominated by the female experience. The newspaper articles describe the femininity of the burnout experience in depreciatory terms, and the female burnout sufferers are framed as victims. In contrast, the masculinity of the male experience is expressed by an extensive use of machine-related metaphors.

In the second chapter Hammarlin takes the reader into the group therapy room. The chapter is based

on ethnographic fieldwork in three different networks for burnout sufferers and persons on long-term sick leave. The ways in which these networks approach the burnout syndrome corresponds to the media representations – these networks likewise understand burnout as a female syndrome. The network meetings are arenas where the burnout sufferers themselves can raise questions about their rights and about social respect for their situation. Various political and therapeutic aspects of being burned-out are thus discussed at the meetings. By analysing these network meetings Hammarlin shows how the burnout syndrome is filled with rather different kinds of meaning. She argues that the burnout syndrome today works as a key symbol for a number of structural and social problems in late modern society.

After discussing the networks Hammarlin leads us to the hobby rooms of her informants. She shows how everyday life with burnout also can turn out to be a situation that allows possibilities for creative work. Some of her informants find contemplative and therapeutic meaning in painting pictures, while others write poems.

The idea of the healing potential of nature is both a significant part of the networks' understandings of therapy and a central motif in the artistic works of Hammarlin's informants. In chapter four the author focuses on how the informants use nature as a contemplative arena. Hammarlin uses the term *nature* to describe rather different sorts of landscapes, and the term includes both the garden and the woods. The ethnographic descriptions illustrate how work in the garden or just sitting and listening to the silence of the woods has a contemplative effect on the informants. She discusses the informants' use of nature in relation to the cultural history of the idea of the healing power of nature and also analyses it in a more phenomenological way, drawing on Martin Heidegger's philosophical works.

I consider Hammarlin's dissertation to be more like a collection of essays than a traditional monograph. The last chapter is thus not a traditional conclusion. It is instead split into two different discussions. The first part of the chapter is a metareflection where the author discusses how she experienced the difficulties doing fieldwork. In the second part of the chapter she discusses whether burnout as a gendered syndrome may obstruct the possibilities for realization of the female self or whether it can

work instead as a transcendental tool for the female individual.

In my opinion the reflexive text on fieldwork in the last chapter is the best part of the book. Most discussions of this kind focus on the ethics of doing fieldwork. This is also the case here, but Hammarlin's starting point for the discussion is new. She discusses the parts of the fieldwork that failed, when she felt that she was an intruder into other people's lives, when she said the wrong words, asked the wrong questions and deeply insulted her informants. Her reflections on fieldwork are truly honest and personal. She describes experiences that probably every fieldworker has had, but not everybody has the nerve to discuss this in a dissertation. Hammarlin's reflexive discussion is exemplary.

The book is well written. The literary qualities make this academic dissertation on illness into a page-turner. But still, one major problem of the study is that Hammarlin formulates her research questions vaguely. The chapters are organized around a number of well-written ethnographic descriptions. The accounts of how, for instance, her informant Olov uses the woods as a contemplative place and the portrayal of the meeting in "Långtids-sjukskrivnas förening" (an association of people on long-term sick-listing) in Visby are written with presence and in emotional language, and have undoubted literary qualities. The descriptions bring the reader close to the everyday life of the people with burnout. But I miss distinctly formulated analytical questions explicitly asked about these excellent ethnographic descriptions.

The analysis is rooted in the philosophical tradition of phenomenology, and the works of Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are the main theoretical references. As a cultural analyst in the Swedish ethnological tradition, Hammarlin, in addition to the philosophical literature, draws on cultural theory in an impressionistic way. The use of Sherry Ortner's concept of *key symbols* to analyse the symbolism of burnout both as a concept and as a phenomenon is for instance creative and thought-provoking. The question then is whether this study might perhaps have been just as interesting as a cultural analysis of the burnout syndrome without the references to phenomenological philosophy. If we look beyond the references to phenomenological literature, I am not quite convinced that Hammarlin's perspective and analytic approach are radically dif-

ferent from more traditional empirical ethnological studies. After reading Mia-Marie Hammarlin's dissertation I still wonder how phenomenology used as an ethnological analytic strategy differs from the emic perspective that dominated Nordic ethnology and folkloristics in the 1980s and 1990s.

Kyrre Kverndokk, Oslo

Snake Charms as Secret Female Knowledge

Ritwa Herjulfsson, Jungfru Maria möter ormen – om formlers tolkningar. Ask & Embla hb, Göteborg 2008. 292 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-974191-3-0.

■ The covert functions of Swedish snake charms, particularly those featuring the Virgin Mary, constitutes the fascinating topic of Ritwa Herjulfsson's dissertation. In chapter one, the introduction, she stresses the multifunctionality of charms, and accounts for her choice to examine the contents of these snake charms and the contexts in which they were used. The aim is to uncover the associative links between these charms and a female reproductive sphere. In reading the records of snake charms from the Swedish tradition archives, Herjulfsson noted the recurrence of certain words and expressions across genres, often in the form of sexual double-entendres. Within the corpus of snake charms itself, she also noticed that some locutions occurred more often than others and in specific combinations, and drew the conclusion that their meanings could therefore have been different. The purpose of the dissertation is thus to attempt to understand how and why snake charms containing the figure of the Virgin Mary were formulated and used, and to view them as part of an overarching cultural system of thought. The author poses a series of interrelated questions: whose metaphors and symbolic language do we encounter in the charms? By whom were they employed, for whose benefit and why?

The second chapter, "Formler som utgångspunkt" (Charms as a Point of Departure) presents basic definitions, trends in prior research on charms, source-critical problems, and the methods utilised. It also outlines the author's work on cataloguing snake charms relating to the Virgin Mary, the result of which is added to the dissertation in the form of an

appendix. Herjulfsdotter gives a thoughtful and thorough account of her procedures. Her description of a threefold methodology consisting of a source-pluralist method, a search for circumstantial evidence and clues in other types of traditional material, and hunting for scattered evidence in large bodies of material (what she calls “the requirements of rare evidence”) seems to be especially rewarding, and is quite akin in spirit to work done by representatives of the Finnish “school” of cultural thought such as Satu Apo and Laura Stark. This affinity is explicitly acknowledged elsewhere in Herjulfsdotter’s text.

The third chapter, “Föreställningar om ormar och ormbett” (Conceptions of Snakes and Snakebite) gives a general overview of popular conceptions of snakes, their role in traditional medicine and in ideas of fertility and luck, as well as of the traditionally recognised symptoms of snakebite. Chapter four, “Ledtrådar till ett sammanhang” (Clues to a Context), begins by discussing the means and methods utilised in connection with snake charms, and Herjulfsdotter demonstrates that the majority of these are associated with the female sphere, in the form of textiles, foodstuff, items used in cattle-tending and substances deriving from the female body. An examination of the known users of the charms and of transmission patterns ensues, and here the author notes that both men and women employed the charms, but women did so both within the family circle and as healers, whereas men used them within the family only. When handing over this knowledge to others, women transmitted the charms to both men and women, but men usually restricted themselves to instructing other men.

Chapter four, “Formlernas jungfru Maria” (The Virgin Mary of the Charms) focuses on the Virgin Mary’s role in popular religion, where she was chiefly perceived as a birthgiver and the helper of women in labour rather than immaculate, and on the motifs, expressions and attributes associated with her in the snake charms. Phrases such as “walking in the green grove”, “picking roses” and “going to a garden to enjoy herself” point towards sensuality, sexuality and fertility, as they have been used as euphemisms for sexual activity. Conversely, the motifs of the Virgin Mary being bloody and being stung by a snake might have functioned as metaphorical ways of speaking of unpleasant events and sexually charged relations. Many of the charms exhibit strong identification with the Virgin Mary on

the part of the healer, and sometimes it is difficult to determine whether the healer or the Virgin Mary is the one uttering the healing words of the charm. The image of the Virgin Mary in the charms is thus a malleable one, and she can be replaced by other Biblical characters, such as Eve, Mary Magdalene and St. Peter. The image of the snake in the charms is similarly explored, and Herjulfsdotter emphasises that the use of the snake in medicines and in the performance of fertility rites for domestic animals paved the way for a multifarious popular conception of it not limited to its Biblical role as a symbol of pure evil.

A study of the symbolic language of the charms constitutes chapter five, “Formlernas symbolspråk”, which comprises roughly a third of the book, excluding the catalogue. The fact that binding magic was primarily linked to Virgin Mary snake charms warrants a discussion of its use in this context. The author proposes that the binding of the “snake” performed by the Virgin Mary could have referred to magical methods of abortion, since an unwanted foetus was sometimes called a “snake”, or to a temporary reduction of male fertility in order to avoid pregnancy, as the “snake” could be magically bound and released. Why anyone would want to release a snake in order to allow it to “sting” is, as Herjulfsdotter observes, inexplicable considering how feared the snake was, if the words of the charm are taken literally.

A number of motifs, terms and expressions appearing in the charms are then scrutinised. Many of them turn out to be euphemisms for the male and female genitalia, as well as pregnancy, childbirth and fertility control. In addition to this, some of these same terms have been used as plant names, rendering the wording of the charms fundamentally polysemic. Other motifs can be linked to the female work sphere, such as spinning and cattle-tending. On a more general level, Herjulfsdotter remarks, the charms often contain binary oppositions related to male and female.

Chapter six, “På jakt efter ett sammanhang” (Hunting for a Context), summarises and discusses the findings of the previous chapters. The author posits the existence of a certain gender-based division of labour in the sphere of magic, verbal magic being a speciality of women. Women’s magic also tended to concern existential situations in life: birth, sickness, death, and the care and protection of cattle.

By combining information and clues from many different types of sources, Herjulfsdotter argues, it is possible to produce new insights into potential secret women's knowledge of matters of reproduction in preindustrial Swedish society. In line with recent developments in folkloristic scholarship, she also stresses the necessity of studying religion and folk belief as a composite whole, and deplores the tendency in prior research to strip the snake charms of their religious character. She characterises the charms as a form of popular religion practised for healing purposes.

The final chapter, "Fortsatt fokus på formler" (A Continued Focus on Charms), is a kind of epilogue to the dissertation, but it also constitutes a promise of renewed scholarly efforts. Here the author analyses four snake charms not containing the figure of the Virgin Mary, but exhibiting a similar thrust as many of those which do, i.e., the implicit link to methods of contraception and abortion. Then follows an English summary, and a catalogue of 246 Virgin Mary snake charms, sorted thematically, geographically and chronologically.

Herjulfsdotter has applied herself to a material that is notoriously difficult to interpret, and she succeeds in imbuing it with rich meanings. The covert associations with a female sphere of sexuality and reproduction seem perfectly plausible once they have been pointed out to you. It is easy to follow the stages of her argument, and the presentation is generally clear, reasoned and well-structured. The sole exceptions can be found in chapter five, where some arguments – expressed in virtually identical terms – tend to recur somewhat too often within the space of a few pages. At times I also felt that the author refrained from stating her conclusions as fully and strongly as she might have done; on a few occasions she presents the elements of a conclusion without actually arriving at one. While this might be an entirely legitimate effect of scholarly prudence, I nevertheless felt defrauded of a denouement; it's like reading a mystery novel and never quite getting to know who the culprit was. These minor remarks aside, I am impressed with the ingenuity of Herjulfsdotter's analysis and the diligence with which she has tracked relevant clues in a wide-ranging body of material. Her dissertation is a valuable contribution to the understanding of charms, and deserves recognition as such.

Camilla Asplund Ingemark, Lund/Åbo

Checking Up On Children

Helena Hörnfeldt, Prima barn, helt u.a. Normalisering och utvecklingstänkande i svensk barnhälsovård 1923–2007. Makadam förlag, Göteborg/Stockholm 2009. 293 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-7061-067-7.

■ This book, the title of which means "First-class child: No abnormality detected. Normalization and developmental thinking in Swedish child health care 1923–2007", is Helena Hörnfeldt's doctoral dissertation in ethnology at Stockholm University. In it she focuses on the view of normality as regards children's physical and mental development based on the four-year check-up. Her aim is to show how these check-ups constitute children as normal or abnormal, and the cognitive and societal grounds on which they are categorized. The dissertation applies both a contemporary perspective, with the focus on participant observation at child health care centres, and a historical perspective in order to understand the conditions in the past which laid the foundation for the way in which children's development is assessed today. Her study covers the period from 1923 to the present day, during which time the child health care centre became a familiar concept and a central institution. The material for the study consists of documents on child health care, medical records, interviews, and observations. Hörnfeldt also reflects on the ethical issues raised by material of this kind.

Hörnfeldt's aim is thus extremely ambitious: to show, within the framework of a dissertation, the societal project that led to the emergence of child health care centres, and to study how the normality discourse as regards children's development is presented today. I may begin by saying that Hörnfeldt has succeeded in her ambition, since the dissertation is well-wrought and coherent. The topic is an important one which has not previously been researched from an ethnological point of view. It is rather a pity that the author almost exclusively uses Swedish and Anglo-American research findings. Here the outlook could have been broadened by drawing on works such as Sirpa Wrede's *Decentering Care for Mothers: The Politics of Midwifery and the Design of Finnish Maternity Services* (2001) or other Nordic research.

A crucial point of departure for the dissertation is the concept of normality in everyday practice, as de-

fined by the check-ups on children's development at child health care centres. By normality the author, following Ian Hacking, means the statistically normal distribution, the absence of abnormality, and the ideal. Applying this rational outlook has the effect that a relatively large group of children find themselves outside normality. Hörnfeldt's ambition is to focus on the norms that produce the abnormal child. Another central concept is governmentality, an analytical term used in order to understand the development of forms for the exercise of power since the 1940s. The method of government, according to Nikolas Rose, is advanced liberal power, which means a reluctance to govern through society, with a focus instead on the choices of the individual citizen. The exercise of power thus becomes more complex. Other central concepts considered by the author are materialization as well as differences and cultural dominance.

A third aim of the dissertation is to study what is taken for granted in the present by making comparisons with points in history, rather like Michel Foucault's archaeological and genealogical methods. This means that the author starts in the present and works backwards in time. She implements this approach in such a way that it shapes the outline of the dissertation, a device that feels both fascinating and innovative. She begins with a relatively detailed account of what a four-year check-up is like today. Here she has used participant observation as her method, bringing the reader into the child health care centre through thick description. The visit to the health centre is viewed in relation to the "method book" which states the official medical guidelines for assessing the child's development. This participant observation is supplemented video recordings of the four-year check-up, with transcriptions of these to show how the normal child is materialized and constituted in the situation. The child, by cooperating and behaving in the expected way, embodies the norm for what a normal four-year-old is expected to be.

In the next chapter Hörnfeldt moves back in time to try to understand the society that produced the four-year check-up, where medical knowledge is linked to social issues. The emergence of today's child health care centres is considered in relation to falling birth rates, high infant mortality, and the view of public health and hygiene. We see here how the twentieth century came to be regarded as the

century of the child (Ellen Key, 1849–1926, Swedish feminist writer on family life, ethics and education) after the discovery of the intrinsic value of the child. This was made concrete with the establishment of *Mjölkdroppeverksamheten* at the start of the twentieth century, the aim of which was to help mothers in need to provide milk for their children. This can be viewed as a predecessor of the child health care centres which started to appear in the 1920s, with the focus on observations of the child's physical health. Ill health was to be combated through public control of families' private lives. The four-year check-up was introduced in the 1960s as a way to monitor the health of slightly older children as well. This chapter is interesting as cultural history, and in my opinion the questions asked here could have been enough for a dissertation.

Chapter four is about the different epistemological regimes concerning the normal child that can be traced in the material. At the same time, the author moves from the emergence of the child health care centres to the 1950s, when normality was no longer considered to be solely a matter of the child's physical health. One reason why mental health became interesting as well is that the physical health of children and families improved considerably. Now mental hygiene and later psychopathology became part of the social-policy programme. This was also the time when intelligence was measured. Children simultaneously became a more distinct category in relation to adults. The presentation of epistemological regimes and ideas about normality includes a consideration of Michel Foucault's view of the status of medicine and the understanding of medical knowledge concerning the conceptual pairs of healthy/sick and normal/pathological. The four-year check-up can thus be regarded as a tool used by society to satisfy its need for control and categorization.

In the last chapter before the concluding discussion, the author is once again in the present, with some retrospective looks at the 1960s and 1970s. Now the focus is on the examinations that generate the assessment of a child as "no abnormality detected". The material for this long chapter consists of interviews with nurses, concentrating on questions of deviations from the norm and how they are assessed. The life situation of the family and the child is central here, along with questions about whether the mothers are nervous and the parents competent.

A discourse on risk also emerges, with a specific focus on mothers' abuse of intoxicants, premature children, children with an immigrant background, and children with disabilities. From physical and later mental control, attention is now switched to social control. Normality is shaped according to categories such as gender, class, and ethnicity. In the search for normality, Swedishness becomes a symbol of the ordinary and the normal, while immigrants are associated with problems. One of her most crucial findings is that normality is produced on the basis of a national project in which a Swedish middle class has generated the leading cultural models.

The dissertation feels important, which perhaps explains why I have presented so much of the content in this review. It is important as a study of cultural history, but also because it seizes on things that might seem self-evident. It is interesting to focus on a concept like normality and how it has been understood and legitimized at different times. The dissertation is a solid piece of work, but it could have benefited from a sharper demarcation. Yet I cannot say what ought to have been omitted, since everything is worth considering and is needed for an understanding of the topic. The dissertation is somewhat chatty in character, but the text is accessible.

Lena Marander-Eklund, Åbo

What Couples Are Like

Sarah Holst Kjær, Sådan er det at elske. En kultur-analyse af parforhold. Museum Tusulanums Forlag, København 2009. 187 pp. Diss. ISBN 978-87-635-1092-9.

■ How does an ideal couple function? How do the partners cooperate, balance as individuals? How do they dream and realize their everyday relationship in a modern urban culture? These questions are in the background of Sarah Holst Kjær's dissertation on love. Her theoretical inspiration stems from Beverly Skeggs and Judith Butler. Her main empirical material consists of interviews with five couples aged 23–50. She took the recordings in 2005 in Copenhagen, Denmark. She also used other relevant material, such as her personal field notes, different kinds of documents from popular culture, and films. The book comprises only some 180 pages, but it is still

very informative. A complex relationship, i.e., the one between men and women actively leading their lives in an even more complex and complicated environment, the metropolis, lies before the reader of Holst Kjær's book for consideration and recognition.

Holst Kjær uses the theoretical concepts that she picked in a consistent way, but not at all *ad nauseam*. She is skilful in choosing the situations in which a reference to Butler or Skeggs is fruitful and necessary. She merely takes these two scholars as her starting point in searching for relevant concepts with the aid of which she analyses her interviews and other material. In this way she is able to combine several other theories with each other, which to my mind is much more rewarding than testing the thoughts of Skeggs and Butler only.

The author explains her method very clearly. Consequently she makes a distinction between the facts that her interviewees presented to her and the general category that they were speaking about. So, man and woman is something other than Man and Woman, everyday life is something other than Everyday Life, the categories written with capitals being the general conception of each phenomenon. In each section she describes how she is going to conduct her analysis and what concepts she will concentrate on when considering the messages in her interviews. Her choice of those concepts is based upon cultural-historical description of those concepts. In this way, Holst Kjær contextualizes her research not only in the contemporary way of living as a couple, but also in a much broader, historically anchored world of thoughts that without doubt, although not necessarily deliberately, was and is a kind of cultural heritage in our minds. For instance, in her chapter on Home as a metaphor for a common goal of efforts in the everyday life of a Couple, the sofa turns out to be central. That chapters start with a short but thorough introduction about the way taken by the sofa from the Orient to Denmark, the different functions and meanings connected with the sofa in different eras and the symbolic value of the sofa in today's Danish homes. That piece of furniture turns out to be a many-faceted metaphor for the living room as the peaceful heart of family life, the place of negotiation, sorting out, planning and being together, ideally being a place for personal relaxation. Holst Kjær is able to demonstrate how her interviewees are able to regard and speak about all

these processes in different ways depending on who is speaking: the male or the female partner in the couples. This is just one example, but all chapters of the book are well written and informative. A reader just wonders how people really get on together, for man and woman mostly regard their relationship from completely different perspectives. Things that he regards as positive very often annoy her. Things that he blames are desirable to her. It remains an enigma how a couple can survive on these terms!

However, and this is one of the merits of this book, the divergent perspectives of the partners do not match the different sexes. It turns out that the cultural patterns and cultural expectations of life as a couple do not necessarily have the stereotypical form one generally expects from books about gender relationships, i.e., the Man is a scoundrel, and the Woman is suppressed. This might be one of the reasons, apart from the clarity and the beautiful Danish language, why I find the book so refreshing.

In her vivid and exact formulations Holst Kjær presents the interviews together with her explanations of what was said during them. This is important as a contrast to many other folklorists' analyses that tend to be reproductions of the content of an interview instead of an explanation of what was said. However, she also takes her reader to high levels of abstraction without really making any fuss about it. A trivial passage in an interview makes her connect to most complex theoretical reasoning which I would never have thought of. This is also one of the characteristics of this book that makes it worth reading. It thrills my intellectual capacity. An example of this is her chapter about the Life of a Couple as an alchemistic process of experiments.

Generally, I have the feeling that Holst Kjær was very exact in her choice of terminology. This comes to the fore because she does not force her analytical tools into any specific or expected frame. For instance, when she analyses what meanings their homes have for the interviewees, she concentrates on perspectives that arise with the aid of the concepts of power, nostalgia, and emotions which are fine analytical tools, but she takes the sofa and the bed, which are nicely concrete objects, as her starting points. It is worth mentioning that the sofa is far more important than the bed in what the couples say about their homes. Yet another example of Holst Kjær's polished formulations is her dating of the

couples' relevant opinions. She is always very well aware that their formulations are situated in time and place. Where many other investigations promptly generalize their findings, Holst Kjær is very careful.

One question arose from the reading: How did Holst Kjær succeed in creating such a feeling of trust that the interviewees really did tell her about their internal problems? I think that we would have gained even more from the book had there been a more detailed description of the fieldwork and its components of planning, accomplishment, and ethical problems.

This book demonstrates what it is like to live as a couple. It shows us how difficult it is both to have power and to be equal. This puzzle is Reality for any couple living together. I suppose that people who have stayed together for many years smile in recognition at all those frank and sometimes even completely illogical and inconsistent utterances that Holst Kjær nevertheless analyses seriously. I hope that a young person who thinks that his or her partner is careless, or the most domineering or untidy person in the world, will realize that this is not so. Love is an ongoing negotiation. The difficult thing seems to be to keep the negotiation going and to do it in a form that both partners can accept.

Ulrika Wolf-Knuts, Åbo (Turku)

Negotiating Urban Spatiality

Tiina-Riitta Lappi, Neuvottelu tilan tulkinnoista. Etnologinen tutkimus sosiaalisen ja materiaalisen ympäristön vuorovaikutuksesta jyvaskyläläisissä kaupunkipuhunnoissa. (Negotiating urban spatiality. An Ethnological study on the interplay of social and material environment in urban narrations on Jyväskylä.) Jyväskylän yliopisto, Jyväskylä 2007. Studies in Humanities no. 80. 231 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-951-39-3017-2.

■ The subject of Tiina-Riitta Lappi's topical dissertation is the city of Jyväskylä as a built, lived and social space. Lappi analyses spatial meanings and practices in the context of Jyväskylä, a middle-sized Finnish city. She asks how writing about a city, speaking about it, or using it produce the city's meanings and spatiality. Furthermore, she explores how urban areas can be approached from an ethno-

logical point of view and investigates what kind of knowledge of cities ethnological research uses and produces. As Lappi argues, Finnish ethnological research has usually concentrated on rural areas and traditions, while urban areas have not been a key interest in Finnish research.

Although centred on Jyväskylä, Lappi's research does not primarily focus on the material and physical environment of Jyväskylä but explores a discursive level: the conceptions and interpretations of Jyväskylä created in the public media and in the interviews of city residents. Lappi approaches the city as a multilayered and multidimensional space. She aims to go beyond the dichotomy between physical or visual and social or mental space, which has governed the research on built environment. In her ambitious approach Lappi moves across disciplines in the broad area of urban and spatial studies. In addition to an ethnological toolbox and the current spatial approaches, she employs the approaches and questions of human geography, art history and urban studies.

Lappi's research is deeply indebted to the so-called spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences. Instead of understanding built environments as static, physical and visual wholes created by planners, cities and buildings are increasingly approached as dynamic, multilayered and multi-sensory spaces. They are processes instead of completed structures. The analysis of the social formation of space and spatial meanings (Henri Lefebvre), the poetics of space (Gaston Bachelard), spatial practices and ways of using space (Michel de Certeau), spatial order as a network of power (Michel Foucault) as well as spatiality and corporeality as a human mode of being (Maurice Merleau-Ponty) have been crucial to a more nuanced understanding of buildings and built environment in spatial terms.

In her research, Lappi makes use of Lefebvre's and de Certeau's ideas in particular. Built space is not a static backdrop or an image spread before the users as spectators. Instead, the relationship between buildings and those who use them is reciprocal: users shape space by their actions, movements and gestures while spatial arrangements shape the possibilities for action. The built environment, such as a city, thus appears in a continuous process of the emergence of meanings. The formation of space continues after its planning and construction; the process is open-ended. By paying attention to the in-

teraction and negotiations between built space and users, Lappi shows that this open-endedness is evident in city space. Her research is based on vast newspaper discussions, the various written documents of town planning, and interviews of the residents of Jyväskylä made in 1994 and 1995 (20 interviews) and between 1999 and 2001 (21 interviews).

In the first chapter of her book "Kaupunki ja tilallisuuden tulkinnat" (City and the Interpretations of Spatiality) Lappi offers a detailed introduction of her research topic and key concepts. Lappi discusses thoroughly about ethnological research on cities in the second chapter of her book "Etnologiaa kaupungissa, kaupunki etnologiassa" (Ethnology in City, City in Ethnology). The central chapters of her study "Julkisten puhuntojen kaupunkikertomus" (The Public Narrations of City) and "Elettyjä ja esitettyjä tilallisuksia" (Lived and Represented Spatialities) analyse the interaction between material and social environments. The first of these chapters concentrates on the public city spaces and public narrations analysing the image of the city constructed in these discussions. The following chapter is based on the interviews of inhabitants and analysis of the lived space in Jyväskylä. The image of Jyväskylä in public discourses seems to be coherent and homogenous, while the urban space experienced and lived by inhabitants is fragmented and stratified with multiple meanings. According to Lappi the public discourse creates a coherent narrative oriented to the questions of town planning. In this discourse the city is approached as something to be seen from above and always from the same distance. Meanwhile, the lived space of inhabitants is multilayered and heterogeneous and includes contradictory meanings. The lived space is located in the personal housing histories of the residents and spreads into a wider area of Jyväskylä than the public discussions, which concentrate mainly on the public spaces of the city centre.

In her analysis of the public and private narrations and negotiations about the city, Lappi relies on Lefebvre's tripartite distinction between the perceived, conceived and lived dimensions of social space – one of his most well-known and influential ideas (*La production de l'espace* 1974; translated into English in 1991, *The Production of Space*). Lefebvre connects these dimensions further with spatial practices (perceived spaces), representations of space (conceived or represented spaces) and

spaces of representation (lived spaces). According to Lefebvre, social space is constantly produced and re-produced and three dimensions of space constantly interact and intermingle with each other. Following Lefebvre, Lappi connects conceived spaces with public discussions and lived spaces with the interviews of the inhabitants. Although she leaves perceived spaces and spatial practices mainly outside her exploration, the application of Lefebvre's ideas helps to examine and describe the multiple dimensions of city space. Lappi claims that in the public discourses visual and physical features of Jyväskylä were crucial, while in the interviews of the inhabitants other dimensions of city space are also important. For me, the chapter analysing the point of view of the inhabitants and the lived and represented dimensions of urban space is the most interesting and successful in the book.

One of the crucial meanings of lived urban spaces is the relation and interaction of built environment and nature instead of their separation, Lappi says. She explores the importance of woods areas in the narratives of inhabitants, as well as the new suburban space, which is neither traditional city space nor countryside but something else and beyond this distinction. Lappi explores different urban spaces from the city centre and public buildings to forests, suburbs and areas in the fringes of the city. Her study offers numerous possibilities for the further exploration of the urban space of Jyväskylä, for example from the point of view of spatial practices of residents. Her point of departure is both innovative and challenging. Roughly speaking, until the 1990s research on cities put more emphasis on the visual features of environment, such as buildings and their use, while less attention was paid to experiences and meaning production of city space. These different aspects have been rarely analysed in one study, as Lappi does. Moreover, Lappi offers a fascinating story of the transformations of Jyväskylä. Her research challenges readers to ask where town planning takes place and who is allowed to participate in town planning and related discussions.

Lappi's research is a kind of mosaic or a patchwork where different pieces are joined together. This quality is both the book's strength and its weakness. I would have liked to be able to distinguish more clearly between the voices of different agents, including the writer's own voice, and to read more about the actual processes of analysis. What

become visible now are more the end results of research, while the path to them remains invisible.

The multiplicity of spatial meanings is often dealt with within the context of exceptional or at least seemingly heterogeneous spaces, such as borderlands or historically stratified cities. Even though Lappi's research deals with the historically stratified centre of Jyväskylä, it doesn't limit itself to the city centre but deals also with the more mundane spaces of everyday urban life. In addition to the city centre, Lappi discusses the multiple meanings of a city particularly within the context of ordinary spaces, such as suburbs. As a whole the study is rich and cannot be grasped fully in one reading. Lappi offers plenty of ideas for further discussions and future research on cities.

Kirsi Saarikangas, Helsinki

Stories Told by Museum Objects

Camilla Mordhorst, *Genstandsfortællinger. Fra Museum Wormianum til de moderne museer*. Museum Tusulanum Forlag, Københavns universitet 2009. 312 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-635-0454-6.

■ It was in the 1620s that the learned physician Ole Worm began collecting objects for what was to be one of Europe's first and most famous museums, the Museum Wormianum in Copenhagen. About forty of these objects still survive, mainly in the collections of the National Museum. The collection is a motley group of items. It includes magnificent artefacts such as a reliquary of rock crystal, alongside more ordinary museum pieces such as a small Bronze Age knife, or things that we today would regard as curiosities, such as the little shoe carved from a cherry pip, or a horse's jaw around which a tree root has grown. Camilla Mordhorst's focus in this study is on how views and interpretations of museum objects have changed over the years. The book is a reworking of the doctoral dissertation that she defended in 2004. She is now at the Museum of Copenhagen, where she is in charge of exhibitions and communication. Mordhorst's research has concerned the exhibition medium as representation, the history of museums, and the interpretation of objects.

Unlike a common genre of museum literature, dealing with a particular historical period or one

type of museum institution, Mordhorst provides us with a long historical exposé from the seventeenth century and Denmark's first museum institution, the Museum Wormianum, down to the present day. She is thereby able to see and show how basic changes have taken place in the museum system and how interpretations of objects have changed over time.

She follows a group of objects which are known to come from Ole Worm's collection, and she shows how they have travelled through the Danish museum world. Mordhorst tells three stories about the objects and the varying interpretations they have undergone, depending on where they have been, from the 1620s in Worm's museum, then in the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities (the *Kunstammer*), or in the modern museums founded at the start of the twentieth century. But she is not interested in presenting the "right" interpretation of the objects – as if there ever was one; her idea is to follow the objects and see how they have been interpreted and reinterpreted within the framework of the museum institutions. It is interesting here to see what has been added, but just as interesting to see what has disappeared, that is, what was no longer found interesting in interpretations and descriptions, or what has lost in scientific value.

The three stories can be read in several ways, as a number of historical narratives about changed interpretations of some selected museum objects, but they also indicate fundamental changes in the outlook on museum artefacts, revealing that what we take for granted today has not always been viewed the same way. For Worm and his contemporaries, the objects were not called artefacts but curiosities.

One of Mordhorst's stories is called "The Transformation of Curiosity", where she discusses how and why the term curiosity (*raretet*) has changed through time into something that is considered unscientific and unsuitable for a professional museum.

"Material Disintegration" is the title she gives to another one of her stories. Whereas the material of the objects was very important to Worm and his manner of categorizing, ordering, and interpreting, the significance of the material for the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities lay in its economic value, how precious it was, and how it displayed the power of the king. The rock crystal mentioned above was material both for Worm and for the Royal Cabinet of Curiosities, but whereas in the seventeenth century it was an object for scientific study, in the Cabinet

of Curiosities it became a prestigious *objet d'art*. When it comes to the modern museums, the material of the objects ended up more in the background. Here it was regarded instead as an aid to the great project of charting the history of civilization, and as that view gained ground, the significance of material vanished from the descriptions.

In a third story, "The Fall of the Hybrids", Mordhorst shows how the world of nature and the world of art are separated. In Worm's time nature was regarded as autonomous and capable of creating great art by itself; this is clear from many of the collected objects that reflect his interest in exploring the power and limits of nature. There was thus a fluid boundary between nature and art. When the collection later ended up in the Cabinet of Curiosities, although there was still an interest in the power of nature, a distinction was made (one which did not exist in the Wormianum) between the kingdom of nature and art, which were exhibited in different rooms. This meant that there was no longer a spatial possibility to explore the encounter between nature and art in the same way as before. When the Cabinet of Curiosities was broken up at the start of the twentieth century, the difference between nature and art was further accentuated in that the collections were divided among separate institutions; on the one hand the museums of natural history and on the other hand the museums of art, cultural history, and technology. The view of nature at the start of the twentieth century had changed, and the links that had formerly been seen were now regarded as random and unscientific. Where there had once been an encounter between nature and art, a vacuum now arose in which the "hybrid objects" disappeared.

The three narratives are the core of the book, but Mordhorst emphasizes that there is no hierarchy or movement between them. The idea is that they can be read separately, that they occur simultaneously and in parallel. Each narrative is also its own universe with its own course of events and changes. Despite all the dissimilarities, there are also similarities in the narratives, and if one thinks of them together one can discover points of intersection, and, as the author says, when combined they can add nuance to our understanding of the change in the view of museum objects that can be noted from the seventeenth century to the present day.

The outlook on museum objects at the start of the eighteenth century was completely different from

what we know today. Back then the focus was on the object itself, and many of the questions that were asked could be answered by examining the specific item. Later on, the provenance of the object became more important than the object itself, and research was concentrated on its context.

Another interesting shared feature that can be read from the stories about the history of the interpretation of the objects is that they seem to be narratives of decay. From having been significant material for scientific investigation, they have become mere curiosities, unimportant for research except perhaps as museum history. Moreover, one can detect another change, namely, that the older principle of different complementary categories in the first half of the twentieth century was replaced with a more unambiguous perception and categorization of artefacts.

Mordhorst reminds us that, despite the great changes that occurred in the museum system in the early twentieth century, the descriptions of the objects were already there, and the twentieth-century curators thus did not have to start from scratch. They did not create a museum system; they took over one and reshaped it from the old one. Throughout this process, the interpretation of objects underwent mutations. The three stories also show that there was no fixed core in the interpretation; it changed according to the prevailing circumstances. Views are created by a specific practice, and it is the development or change of this practice that affects how the objects are viewed.

Mordhorst's book is full of thought-provoking ideas and discussions. Besides being a history of the interpretation of museum objects, the book takes us on a wonderful journey through history. It is an insightful, exciting, and informative account of Danish museum history, but it is also a fascinating description of the development of society. By following the little collection from Worm's seventeenth-century museum through four hundred years, Mordhorst is able to show how the museum system arose, grew, and changed, and how the objects in its care were transformed from valuable material to historical sources, from remarkable hybrids to uninteresting curiosities, and from rare objects to common representations.

The fantastic illustrations also deserve special mention.

Camilla Mordhorst's way of writing and telling

stories creates a new form of history of museums and ideas which ramifies in a network of narratives about the view of artefacts and museum culture over a long period, as she demonstrates how traditions are created and live on, and also how they change, decay, and mutate. The book is an important starting point for a discussion of the potential of museums.

Birgitta Svensson, Stockholm

When Older Workers Stay On

Björn Ohlsson, Vi som stannade på Volvo – en etnologisk studie om äldre bilindustriarbetares arbetsliv och framtidsplaner. Arkipelag, Göteborg 2008. 352 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-85838-75-2.

■ *Vi som stannade på Volvo* is an ethnological study of one of the large corporations in Sweden: the Volvo automobile factory. The investigation is thorough and sensitive, but not in the way that has been common through the 1990s where the reader – in the wake of the debate on reflection and representation – hears more about the emotions, considerations and troubles of the researcher than about the issues being studied. We get some interesting insights into the world of labourers at Volvo based primarily on interview material. Sixteen workers have been interviewed in depth together with people from the trade union and white-collar employees.

Ohlsson's main interest originates from the debate well-known in most Western countries on how to keep the elderly part of the population on the labour market as long as possible due to the declining birth rates. Ohlsson wants to get into the implications in relation to the managerial and political efforts to confront the situation. How do these fit into the labour situation in contemporary society where production is under severe pressure from competition and constantly faced with the possibility to move to low-wage countries?

By choosing Volvo as research field there is a possibility to investigate the way of handling the employees – and especially the senior part of them – in a large market-dependent industrial unit through shifting economic cycles. Hereby senior policy can be investigated in different contexts connected to different periods.

The main focus is on the period of the project –

2005 – but especially the years around 1990 are given a thorough examination of the production unit and its employee policy. In the first half of the 1990s Volvo – just like a large proportion of Western industry – introduced the Japanese-inspired lean principle. This did not necessarily mark a turnover of the formerly Tayloristically based production processes but it implied an increased employee involvement in the work. Other features of lean production are more emphasis on teamwork and a constant effort to minimize the workforce, buffers and stocks. One fine thing about the study is that it takes specific work tasks into consideration and makes a general division into three main production areas: bodywork (*karrosseri*), painting and assembling – with different demands and possibilities for the workforce. The introduction of the lean system meant a diminishing of tasks suited for the elderly due to production changes and outsourcing. However, since the altering of processes were done partly with contributions from the Swedish state, Volvo were obliged to take care of the more fragile share of the labourers as well, and a new service unit with tasks specially fitted for this segment was established. In the same period a venture was introduced at the assembly plant where elderly workers were accepted as long that they performed at 75% of the normal rate.

Since 1999, when the Ford company took over the car division of Volvo as a part of the general development within the industrial world, conditions for the elderly staff have worsened – without it being quite clear from the study whether this is part of a common pattern or rather a result of new personalities in the management. On this point it does not seem sufficient to have only the interview-based information basically stemming from one prominent older manager who has been the head of senior policy for a long period of time.

Along with the focus on senior questions, the book contains an insight into what it is like to be a labourer in a place like this, and the different ways of seeing one's work, and relating to the colleagues and managers etc. Many features can be recognized from other industrial settings, such as the close connection to the workplace (which is not that surprising considering the selection criteria for the informants), and a sense that the last 30 years have meant huge alterations: work has become physically less heavy but at the same time the work-

ing day has become more demanding and stressful.

Ohlsson here makes a reference to the vision from 1985 of the Swedish Metal Workers' Union of "the good work" as a way of relating to the huge challenges faced by workers and unions in this period. It is peculiar that Ohlsson does not have a more analytical – or even critical – approach to this vision. As an ethnologist he has pointed out a great diversity in opinions and attitudes towards work and a statement of "good" – designated in singular definite form – does not seem to be adequate to grasp this cultural heterogeneity. It is not seldom that people pursuing a career within the union have another picture of what good work is compared to people on the shop floor. At least a discussion of this would have been appropriate for a study that otherwise aims to go deep in its analyses.

Niels Jul Nielsen, Copenhagen

Ethnologists in the Wartime Occupation of East Karelia

Tenho Pimiä, Tähtäin idässä. Suomalainen sukukansojen tutkimus toisessa maailmansodassa (The Target in the East: Finnish Research into Kinfolks during the Second World War). Jyväskylän yliopisto, Jyväskylä 2009. Jyväskylä Studies in Humanities 124. 275 pp. Ill. Diss. ISBN 978-951-39-3670-9.

■ In the summer of 1941, a war broke out between Finland and the Soviet Union, and together with Nazi German troops, the Finnish army soon re-occupied the territories that had been ceded over to the Soviet Union as a result of the 1939–40 Winter War. Instead of stopping at the old border, however, the Finnish troops continued their move forward and, for three years (1941–44), they occupied large areas of East Karelia, also known as Russian Karelia. The motivations for this military operation were many. One of them was regarded as a defensive one, aiming at extending the Finnish *Lebensraum* and the new state border to particular natural environments in which it would be easier to defend Finland against the Eastern Empire. Another one had to do with the linking of history, language and ethnic relations, aiming at establishing a Greater Finland that would encompass large groups of linguistically related populations that were regarded as historically and culturally belonging together. Underneath these

explicated and propagated motivations lay the commercial and industrial interests in East Karelian natural resources.

Tenho Pimiä of the Department of History and Ethnology at the University of Jyväskylä has written his doctoral dissertation on the occupation of East Karelia by Finnish troops, focusing on the question of how Finnish scholars in the humanities participated in the military venture through their professional activities in the documentation of folk culture. The title of the book is in English translation “The Target in the East: Finnish Research into Kinfolks during the Second World War”. The major part of Pimiä’s work concerns ethnological research and collecting expeditions in East Karelia during the occupation period as well as the selection, removal, confiscation and even plundering of material objects for both private and museum purposes. The objects included both household gear and religious items, such as Eastern Orthodox church art and icons. In addition to the collecting activities in East Karelia, Pimiä’s work also covers the wartime interviewing and interrogation of those refugees and prisoners of war who were members of the ethnic minorities that were linguistically and/or culturally kin-related to the Finnish speakers of Finland, and were therefore of ethnographic interest to the Finnish ethnologists and linguists.

Pimiä aligns his work with international research on Second World War scholarly activity, which according to him has not been established in Finland as a research tradition. Accordingly, ethnological research and collecting in East Karelia during the wartime is contextualized with nationalistically oriented scholarly activism in other Western European countries in the same time period. Pimiä sees parallels between Finnish scholars and the practices adopted by the German scholarly community in their National Socialism, but he refrains from calling the Finnish scholars Nazis.

The main research questions are as follows: What did the researchers and collectors of folk culture do in East Karelia? What were the circumstances in which they studied and collected folk culture? What was the military administration’s attitude towards their activities? Pimiä especially asks how the ethnologists and other scholars of folk culture, collaborating with the military administration, attempted at “proving” that East Karelia belonged to Finland for so-called cultural reasons. In other words, his major interest lies in

the accessing of ethnographic data that would legitimate the national and historical kinship of the occupied areas with the rest of Finland.

When answering his research questions, Pimiä mainly depicts the activities and experiences of selected individual researchers and collectors. These are Helmi Helminen, Hilikka Vilppula, and Sirkka Valjakka, and to some extent also Tyyni Vahter, Toini-Inkeri Kaukonen and Sylvi Sääski. In addition to drawing on public and personal archival materials, he contextualizes their activities and interests with research history in both ethnology and folklore studies. This has not, however, been a major focus in the study. The main target of Pimiä’s research is to shed light on the relationship between the individual experiences, political kin-folk activity, and the military operations that aimed at extending the borders of Finland. He has therefore placed the personal experiences of and the subjective narration by the aforementioned individual scholars in direct relationship with the circumstances created by certain state institutions that had been established for the cultural and scholarly administration of the occupied Eastern Karelia. The main institution for this purpose was the Scientific State Committee on East Karelia, founded by the Ministry of Education in 1941.

Pimiä is very thorough in his use of archival materials and he demonstrates good skills in organizing them into thematic entities. His work has obvious narrative merits, as it can be regarded as a series of stories dealing with a variety of actors on a variety of stages within the occupation framework. It is not, however, a mere story collection without analytical substance. On the contrary, the close relationship between warfare and the ethnological collecting of objects and information is well presented. The argumentative goal of ethnological research in battles over time and space, the past and cross-border territories, is dealt with carefully, and the politics of ethnographic cartography are also discussed. In an interesting detail, a military leader produces a village description not unlike those made by professional ethnologists. They do not only share the manners of description but also their politico-military meanings. War and kin-folk cultural heritage legitimate each other. On the other hand, for the local informants of the ethnologists and folklorists, the scholars and the occupational forces were one and the same army.

When discussing the character of ethnological activity during the East Karelian occupation, Pimiä is

not very systematic in his approach or conclusions. He does, however, emphasize the ethnologists' ideological orientation as well as the tendency to authenticate a given historical period in the often unspecified past as an embodiment of "true" elements of Finnish and kin-folk culture. It is the presence of these cultural traits that are employed by the studied ethnological agents and the relevant state institutions to legitimate the linking of occupied territories with Finnish administration and the rest of Finland. At the same time, the search for authentic origins entailed the drawing of clear distinctions between the categories of Finnish, Karelian and Russian, ethnically and politically. When all Russian influences in East Karelian culture were from the Finnish perspective seen as signs of degeneration and destruction, Finnish ethnographic activity in East Karelia was regarded as a project of salvation. In practice, however, salvation was not always easily distinguishable from plundering.

Pimiä's work has both merits and demerits. The main demerit is the lack of a systematic analysis of what ethnological research was like during the occupation years. Pimiä aligns his work with international research on Second World War scholarly activity, but he does not link his own work with recent study into the politics of scholarship in ethnology and folklore in Finland. Yet, his work can be lauded for dealing with a topic that has been mostly silenced in research history, and for drawing on archival materials that have not been employed, at least to this extent, before. The relationship between war and scholarship is truly important, and by focusing on relevant aspects in Finnish research history, Tenho Pimiä has made an important contribution to the scrutinization of this relationship. This path must be followed.

Pertti Anttonen, Helsinki

Between Art and Handicraft

Johanna Rosenqvist, Könnskillnadens estetik? Om konst och konstskapande i svensk hemslöjd på 1920- och 1990-talen. Nordiska museets förlag, Stockholm 2007. 268 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-7108-516-0.

■ In recent years there has been a great deal of research and writing about the Swedish handicraft

movement. A new addition to this series of studies examining handicraft from different angles of culture theory and gender theory is Johanna Rosenqvist's dissertation, the title of which means "The Aesthetic of Gender Difference? On Art and Artistic Creativity in Swedish Handicraft in the 1920s and 1990s".

Rosenqvist has previously contributed to *Den feminina textilen: Makt och mönster* (Stockholm, 2005), a collection of articles edited by Birgitta Svensson and Louise Waldén, where the question of textiles as both a reserve and an arena for women is discussed from a variety of angles. Under the heading "Handicraft as a Feminist Strategy" Rosenqvist writes there about how the role of artist in the handicraft movement in the 1990s is presented in the association's journal *Hemslöjden*.

The many research projects that have dealt with the handicraft movement show that crafts, in different ways, played a part in the construction of modern Sweden. And all these studies, moreover, consider not only the past but also often the place of handicraft in today's society.

Earlier research, such as Anna-Maja Nylén's *Hemslöjd* (Lund, 1969, in English as *Swedish Handicraft*, 1976) have concentrated on manufacturing techniques and materials, and on the role of handicraft products in peasant society. In the twentieth century, however, handicraft came to be increasingly associated with the many craft associations that were founded with the aim of preserving and promoting traditional peasant craft. These institutions, with their own ideology, aesthetic, and educational ambitions, were dominated by women, and textile crafts in particular occupied a leading position. The furtherance of handicraft became a kind of feminist strategy and a part of a female bourgeois public sphere. Sofia Danielsson, with her dissertation *Den goda smaken och samhällsnyttan* (Stockholm, 1991), was one of the first to study handicraft with the focus on this development. She also established the now widespread practice among researchers of making a conceptual distinction between the two dimensions of handicraft: handicraft as the products and their manufacture, and Handicraft (Hemslöjden, literally "home craft") as an organization, by writing about handicraft in the first sense with a small *h* and in the latter sense with a capital *H*.

As a continuation of this process of establishing scholarly ways to discuss handicraft, I find that

Rosenqvist now wishes to start building up something new, a terminology for discussing “handicraft artworks” from an art historian’s point of view. In the past handicraft has often been studied within the subject of ethnology, and often by women linked to the organized handicraft movement, and Rosenqvist’s dissertation combines, in a new way, an interest in textile art and women’s history with an art-history perspective.

Rosenqvist calls her dissertation “The Aesthetic of Gender Difference” and follows that title with a question mark, to stress that she considers it important to question and discuss the concepts of *aesthetic* and *gender difference*. She states as her aim to study how handicraft in the twentieth century was created in relation to art and how views of the concepts of art and handicraft changed during the century. To ask a seemingly simple question, she writes, one can wonder when textile works are craft and when they are art, and what it is that makes the difference. That difference, she points out, is not self-evident or unchanging.

How one perceives a product, in Rosenqvist’s opinion, has to do with who made it and in what context. Handicraft, according to her, is interesting to examine in relation to the male-dominated art world because the handicraft movement has close links to textile production and to women as active association members, and the actual manufacture has had the character of an amateur domestic pursuit. The art world, on the other hand, has had a more professional character. Rosenqvist believes that, on both the individual level and the organizational level, one can see a gender system through which these activities have been kept apart and men’s activity has been superior and has set the norm.

Moreover, Rosenqvist points out, our perceptions of handicraft are affected by the names that are applied to it. She discusses, for example, how one could view products such as rag rugs, *rya* rugs, wall hangings, or even handicraft patterns in general, from the perspective of art history and talk about them in the terms that are customary in the art world. Talking about handicraft objects as *works*, not products as they are often called, or stressing the process of *composition* or *creation* that leads to new craft objects, can serve as a way to make the observer regard them in a completely new way. Not all craft objects are art, but there are objects that are

ambiguously located between handicraft and art, which could (almost, at least) be either – or both.

In her dissertation Rosenqvist wants to study both the handicraft producers themselves and the activities of the handicraft organizations as institutions in relation to the surrounding society. In addition to that she wants to try to focus on the craft-making individual in a new way. She has examined two periods, the 1920s and the 1990s, and conducted case studies of two local associations in Sweden, in the first case *Malmöhus läns hemslöjdsförening* and in the latter *Hemslöjden i Östergötland*. The archives of these associations provide the main source material, and Rosenqvist has selected textiles and other objects, sketches, photographs, catalogues, annual reports, inventories, and sales lists to study. Besides this she has used newspaper articles and interviews with some key people. In her dissertation she then tries to show how Handicraft positioned itself, partly by studying how it was presented at the exhibitions that played an important part in both the 1920s and the 1990s. She also observes how handicraft is exhibited and what people have tried to communicate through the fixed institutions of the handicraft shops and through other club activities and courses.

Rosenqvist sees her two selected decades as dynamic and interesting periods. The 1920s was a time of change when handicraft played a part as the functionalist style was emerging against the background of regional and local traditions. And in the 1990s, according to Rosenqvist, there were similar innovative mergers. Artists, both inside and outside Handicraft, then approached what had been perceived as traditional handicraft techniques and materials in new ways.

To be better able to interpret what happens in Handicraft, Rosenqvist seeks to relate, in a new way, what happens within the movement to other adjacent phenomena and to the aesthetic debate of the time. The *categorizations* that handicraft and textile art at different times have been expected to satisfy, she thinks, develop parallel to the transformation of gender roles that has constantly taken place in society. And the different *circumstances* of the actors have also been dependent on factors such as concrete laws, habits, and conventions in society.

In the 1920s, in the case of the Malmöhus association, the path from the traditional models to the finished craft products was through the “pattern drawers”, women at the test-weaving institutions.

Those who designed craft products then had artistic training, yet it was still common that their names were not mentioned at all in connection with exhibitions. They were viewed more as representatives of a collective tradition and therefore their craft products were not automatically signed in the same way as artists sign their works. Later, however, it became less controversial to conceive of a craft product as having a creator. When the Handicraft movement embarked on product improvement in the 1990s, by commissioning outside designers, Rosenqvist finds several examples of increasing attention being paid to naming the people who contributed in different ways to producing the objects that were to be included.

Several artists and critics in the 1990s worked both inside and outside Handicraft, and in both the art world and Handicraft people challenged the boundaries for the kind of products or works that “could” be made. Apart from that, Rosenqvist draws attention to a tendency in the 1990s to a change in the use of terms. The element *hem* meaning “home” in *hemslöjd* was dropped, and there was more talk of just *slöjd* meaning “craft”, with both a small and a big *S*. In Rosenqvist’s opinion, this has to do both with the fact that “male” craft, which was beginning to come in more, was felt to be better suited to a concept that was less focused on the home, and more on the *doing* than on the finished products. Rosenqvist draws attention to phenomena such as the reorganization of textile education and the new focus on terms such as workshops and showing off the creative process in the making of art. She also considers examples of how more room was made for a playful relation to tradition in Handicraft, and she shows how people started to emphasize craft teaching and self-fulfilment through craft, along with reuse and stewardship of resources. Recycling craft could now use things like discarded plastic products, not just more traditional natural materials.

Handicraft, as Rosenqvist observes, has not been isolated during the century or more when it has been active. Artists have used similar traditional techniques, materials, and processes as if they had been working within Handicraft. Yet although the handicraft aesthetic can justifiably be said to have been in harmony with the aesthetic of the art world in both the 1990s and the 1920s, art historians have generally ignored it. The great difference that is perceived

between art and handicraft, Rosenqvist says, has been maintained or strengthened by the failure to discuss and write about artistically produced handicraft products as individually created works (of art).

Rosenqvist joins those who claim that handicraft and art have a shared history and that they should not be separated as much as has been done. She argues that Handicraft has played a much greater part in Swedish design than has hitherto been acknowledged and therefore deserves to be put in its context in the history of art. With her dissertation, Johanna Rosenqvist seek to contribute both to our knowledge of handicraft as such and to a discussion of the questions and phenomena – besides those which have been established and taken for granted – which should be considered relevant to art historians with an interest in the twentieth century.

Maria Ekqvist, Åbo

Lifestyle Hotels

Maria Strannegård, Hotell Speciell: livsstilskonsumtion på känslornas marknad. Liber, Malmö 2009. 263 pp. Ill. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-47-08836-2.

■ What does the cultural economy smell like? How is it materialized, narrated, and marketed? And what does it look like? These are some of the questions posed by Maria Strannegård when she considers the cultural economy in its most concrete forms. Strannegård’s dissertation *Hotell Speciell* proceeds from the emergence of a new type of hotel in the last twenty years, a genre that has many names, but the author calls it a lifestyle hotel.

An important part of the cultural economy is the economic potential and the interests to be found in emotions, what Strannegård calls *the emotional economy*. The dissertation sheds light on the significance of feelings for the economy, with the lifestyle hotels as an example. Strannegård sets the emotional experiences in an economic context in which ephemeral qualities such as atmosphere, aura, sensuality, and emotions are important parts of today’s management strategies and production cycles. In the age of the emotional economy, emotional values are hard currency, an infinite resource which can give added energy to the hotel business. The author believes that lifestyle hotels can be a key to under-

standing some of the economic and cultural processes affecting our society.

Strannegård describes the dissertation as a cultural-historical study of a *formation process* – how the ideals of the emotional economy entered the hotel and started to dictate the tone for the way hotels are designed and communicate. Her intention has been to study the conceptions, ideals, values, and norms that surround the lifestyle hotels, using cultural analysis as a methodological tool. In that respect the dissertation is placed in the research tradition in ethnology that investigates meaning-making cultural processes.

Objects play a central part in the analysis, that is to say, the way things speak and the way people talk through things. The materiality of the lifestyle hotels is analysed in the light of a theoretical foursome, consisting of picture semiotics, identity theory, phenomenology, and discourse theory; of these it is the latter that is given most place and perhaps also functions best. Strannegård has thus chosen to work with different theoretical approaches in order to obtain a “kaleidoscopic perspective” on her material, rather than allowing a single theoretical angle to dominate the dissertation.

The arrangement of the dissertation follows a straight and consistent narrative form, as Strannegård invites the reader on a walk through the different parts of the hotel, from the lobby to the bedroom via the corridor and the bar. Each category of space is the theme of a chapter. On this walk we are shown all sides of the hotel, front and back – both metaphorically and literally.

In the second chapter the author paints a backdrop to the rise of the hotel genre in its time. She analyses the cultural construction and self-representations of the lifestyle hotel, and also of the pioneers and the hotel rebels’ struggle against the establishment of chain hotels. This chapter describes not just how the seasoned nightclub entrepreneurs Ian Schrager and Steve Rubell transferred ideas from club culture to the hotel business by inventing a new hotel genre closely linked to urban lifestyle – the *boutique hotel* – but also how they fondly emphasized their own success story. All through the dissertation there are frequent references to Schrager. This bias towards Schrager could have been problematic for the dissertation if Strannegård had not also examined Schrager’s self-representation and hotel concept, which she explicitly does.

One of the most important elements in the flourishing hotel genre has been the stress on novelty and innovation in the concept with the aid of strategies for renewal, constant transformations, and quick changes of scenery. Another feature in the rhetoric of the hotel genre that Strannegård emphasizes is the cult of individualism and anti-conformism. The author introduces us to a number of operators on the market and guests who regularly visit these lifestyle-oriented and studiously designed hotels. The guests use their hotel visit to express their personality and to signal their intentions and preferences, so that they can differentiate themselves as persons and consumers. Like Scott Lash and John Urry, Strannegård calls this expressive hotel consumption “aesthetic reflexivity”, a way for individuals to mirror themselves both externally and internally.

The author also describes how the characteristics of the hotel genre were soon adopted by the big chains and adapted to large-scale operations. In this process, the definitions became an important tool for the hotel actors to position themselves in the segment, which in itself can be described as a discursive field. Strannegård shows how the talk about the hotels – *who* defines a hotel as “lifestyle” and *how* it is said – decides who qualifies. She also observes that many of the properties and strategies that occur in the hotel segment are not new but, as she writes, old wine in new bottles.

One quality of the dissertation is the rich descriptions of milieus. These are relevant for understanding the hotel settings with their overload of signs. Evocative sound and lighting, extravagant and unusual interior design meet visitors as soon as they step inside. The hotels in the lifestyle segment make great efforts to communicate with visitors. Strannegård points out that the scenographic hotel milieus often signal collisions of taste and conflicting combinations of signs in order to create a semiotic friction between the hotel and its guests, for instance, the surrealistically disproportionate pots that adorn the entrance to the St Martin’s Lane Hotel in London, together with garden gnomes and gigantic gold teeth that function as seats.

Strannegård states at the same time that the hotels convey a promise of belonging. Staying here is an expression of affinity that simultaneously creates associations and expressive effects. The design embodies the “subculture” to which the guests wish to belong. The hotels thus have a great identification

potential, according to the author. The trends help the consumer to make choices, and through the choice the individual can be incorporated in different communities. Their hotel consumption functions not only as a status marker but also as an object of identification; the attributes that an individual adds to his or her person are regarded as being important not just for self-profiling but also for self-perception. The aesthetic reflection is, so to speak, directed both outwards and inwards in the wordless communication.

Many hotel operators compare the hotel settings to dream worlds that encourage people to escape from reality. Provoking emotions is as important a strategy for the hotel concept as arousing attention and communicating a message. A tactic commonly used by the lifestyle hotels, according to the author, is to *anthropomorphize*, to animate the hotels. The aesthetic arrangements have no value if they do not have a soul, that is, a sense of care and a distinct idea that pervades the composition. Both the visitors and the staff are a part of this work of art, Strannegård notes. The people are regarded as things and the hotels as living beings. Strannegård also describes how the hotel companies work with carefully balanced emotionalization tools – formulae, design programmes, models, and measurement instruments – in order to master and articulate the elusive values that lie behind the visitors' emotional register.

But the further into the dissertation one comes, the more the paint on the walls of the hotel rooms starts to flake, and the more pubic hairs we find in the bathroom drain. In short, the reader becomes increasingly attentive to the negative sides of the lifestyle hotels. This is a deliberate stylistic device on the part of the author, creating effective narration in the text.

There is, however, a general risk in dissertations with such a pronounced style that they arouse suspicion, as if the author overlooks problems in the study behind a stylish varnish. On the one hand, style, well-found thematization, elegant wordplay, peripeteias and crescendos get the reader involved and make the content accessible. On the other hand, the stylistic devices can reduce the friction between the reader and the content so much that they risk reducing the sense of scholarship, which means that the content loses credibility. This is a recurrent problem when authors try to take liberties within the

dissertation genre or are in a zone bordering on other literary genres.

I personally see the narrative style – the walk through the hotel that becomes increasingly depressing the deeper into the labyrinth one progresses – as a good rhetorical device for revealing the other side of the coin. However, some chapter themes feel more justified than others. In chapter six – “The Corridor: Hotel Emotional” – the author highlights the corridor and its labyrinthine structure as an example of one of several spatialities that stimulate the imagination and arouse emotions. The question is what part the corridor plays in the endeavour to create emotional experiences in lifestyle hotels. The link between “hotel corridor” and “emotional” in this chapter, unfortunately, feels somewhat forced.

In my view, perhaps the strongest chapter in the dissertation is chapter eight, where Strannegård seeks out the back yards of the emotional economy: “Behind The Scenes: The Hotel as Theatre”. Here the author plays out the theatre metaphor to the full by talking about a *front stage* and a *back stage*. With great social passion, Strannegård describes the machinery of the lifestyle hotels, the everyday life of the emotion workers, and what *impression management* can contribute in practice if it is taken to its extreme.

In a room at the Hudson Hotel we witness a conflict between the reality and the ideal state. The hotel must get rid of all signs of age – not just erase the traces of earlier hotel residents and other uninvited guests such as bedbugs and cockroaches, so that new arrivals have the sense of being the first. Furthermore, the hotel has to maintain the magic and constantly reappear as new. But this takes place through systematic and rational measures. The rationality is essential for the magic rather than in opposition to it, Strannegård claims. The whole of this hotel machinery also requires an army of underpaid supply troops in the form of cleaners, janitors, restaurant staff, and masseurs acting in the wings. They have to deliver without being seen.

One strength of the dissertation is that the author has not only had the ambition to regard the lifestyle hotels as a cultural phenomenon but has also tried to scrutinize, demystify, and problematize them without ending up categorically condemning them. The verbal paradox in this context is that Strannegård, on the one hand, uses the terms *power* (5 times), *power holder* (2 times) and *ideology* (4 times) very seldom

in the dissertation (compared with *Schrager*, who is mentioned 180 times). On the other hand, she manages to problematize the ideology of the lifestyle hotels and to describe the pronounced power relations that operate there.

However, when I read about Hotel W's phrasebook for its employees (an employee has to be called a *talent*; an employment interview is an *audition*) and about the lifestyle hotels' fetish hunt for emotional atmospheres and personality, about the unequal gender distribution and the ethnic homogeneity among the lowest-paid service staff, about the distance between the actors in the production chain, from the manager down to those who clean the rooms, about the watertight divisions between the guest areas and the maintenance machinery, and about the deliberate filtering of customers – what the author calls *the aesthetic imperative* – I get associations with concepts such as *alienation* and *commodity fetishism*. These classical concepts were introduced by Karl Marx in the 1860s and have wandered around in academic dissertations ever since. Yet I think they are still valid today. Above all, they are useful concepts for describing social and cultural power relations in the consumer society. The concepts are in the subtext of the dissertation, not explicitly formulated.

One point that I think Strannegård could have made more of is to discuss the emotional commodification process on a general and theoretical level. The author could have shed new light on concepts such as alienation and commodity fetishism in relation to today's emotional economy. What happens to human value when feelings, "EQ", and distinctive personality features become fetishes with an economic value? What happens when the human register of emotions is boiled down to the idea of experiences in the conceptualization processes of the lifestyle hotels? Where do we find the power and the counter-power in the emotional economy? I think that these terms from the research tradition of historical materialism, from which both Bourdieu and Baudrillard proceed, could have given the work an extra dimension without seeming antiquated.

In the final chapter, "Hotel Special", Strannegård sums up some of the most important points and conclusions in the dissertation. She introduces a new concept – *speciellisering* (a new variant of the Swedish word *specialisering*, based on the adjective *speciell* in its sense of "distinctive") – to capture the

ambitions and processes that drive the lifestyle hotel and its guests, namely, the will to seem as select and unique as possible. The hotels stick out on the market, and the guests stick out with the aid of the hotels. The "special-ization" is based in large measure on the production of emotion, on conjuring up the sense of being special, through the materiality of the hotels and evocative images of them as emotional experiences.

My overall impression of *Hotell Speciell* is positive. Maria Strannegård manages to discuss elusive concepts on a concrete level and to give *the new economy* a more balanced meaning by pointing out the conditions on which it is based. At the same time, she reveals the significance of emotions in today's consumer society. By demystifying and scrutinizing the hotel concept, she shows how the emotional economy operates symmetrically and asymmetrically between hotel operators, guests, and employees. Finally, without irony and with social commitment, the author contributes to a deeper understanding of humans as consuming beings, and of our longing to feel – special.

Per Strömberg, BI Kristiansand

The Gendered Forest

Tiina Suopajarvi, Sukupuoli meni metsään: Luonnon ja sukupuolen polkuja metsäammattilaisuudessa [Gendered forest: The paths of nature and gender in Finnish forestry professionalism]. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2009. 387 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-951-22-2159-9.

■ Tiina Suopajarvi's doctoral dissertation offers an insightful and thorough analysis of gendered and professionalized environmental conceptions and forest relationships among Finnish forestry engineers. The topic of Suopajarvi's dissertation does not belong to the conventional research themes within anthropology. As Suopajarvi herself also notes, gendered forest relationships among Finnish forestry professionals is a relatively scarcely investigated research field. In this respect, Suopajarvi's work has ambitious and challenging research aims.

Suopajarvi defines her research objectives carefully and the research questions are relevant for both academic research and public policy. The main concepts related to gender issues are clearly defined, but

the concepts concerning forest perceptions and nature relationships receive annoyingly scarce attention. It would have been highly recommendable to better consider how nature and the environment have been conceptualized in recent years' anthropology. A rich body of literature has been published on socially constructed and institutionally established environmental knowledge and forest relationships among different kinds of nature conservationists, environmental activists and forestry professionals in contemporary environmental anthropology and political ecology. The same concerns certain fields of the sociology of science, where the construction of scientific knowledge and professional expertise among forestry experts and environmental activists has been widely discussed. Better consideration of these studies could have perhaps enriched Suopajärvi's analysis, especially concerning the ambiguity of the gendered and institutionalized forest perceptions among Finnish forestry professionals.

The theoretical framework presented in Suopajärvi's work is highly ambitious, although a little undifferentiated. In the Introduction, Suopajärvi states that her study draws especially upon the theoretical approaches of ecofeminism and anthropologically-oriented political ecology. In some parts of the dissertation, the theoretical discussion, however, goes fairly close to the 1970s structuralism and functionalism. What I consider problematic is that there is relatively scant discussion of how these theoretically diverse, and in many senses contradictory, frameworks can be linked together. Even between ecofeminism and (feminist) political ecology, many theoretical formulations concerning the interplay of gendered knowledge, cultural practices, and struggles over control and authority are so different from each other that it may be difficult to sophistically link these in themselves heterogeneous theoretical frameworks together, without a careful consideration of the difficulties and challenges involved.

I would have highly appreciated it if Suopajärvi had somehow revised the conventional ecofeministic theoretical approaches on the basis of recent theoretical formulations within the poststructuralist political ecology and postcolonialist environmental anthropology. Vandana Shiva's (1989) and Carolyn Merchant's (1992) ecofeministic and deep-ecological concepts of patriarchal Western nature relationships seem, in fact, to have limited connections to theoretical visions within the 21st-century poststruc-

turalist political ecology or feminist anthropology (Garrier 2005, Mohanty 2003, Paulson and Gezon 2005, Peet and Watts 2004). The conventional ecofeministic arguments, according to which nature is intrinsically subordinate to culture and women to men in Western ideologies, have been widely questioned, especially in poststructuralist political ecology (Sletto 2002, Zimmerer and Bassett 2003). Correspondingly, essentialist ecofeministic arguments about the harmonious relationship with nature and sustainable resource use among traditional indigenous societies have received considerable criticism. Instead political ecologists have emphasized how concepts such as nature, culture, femininity, masculinity, and globality and locality receive highly diverse and in themselves hybrid meanings in every society and culture.

Concerning the Finnish forestry engineers' forest-related professional knowledge and the social meanings they give to forest environments and to their own forestry expertise, Suopajärvi's work provides highly inspiring and sophisticated analyses. The exploration of the collective meanings the forestry professionals give to Finnish forests are convincing, and the analysis of the structural conditions and symbolic discourses prevalent in the Finnish forestry sector are insightful. We are given thought-provoking perspectives in the analyses of the forestry professionals' spirit of wood-mankind and the lumberjack culture, of their cyclic time-conceptions and their overemphasis of the physical demands of their work, of the forestry-related discourses of symbolic female quotas and gender neutralization, and of the forestry professionals' conceptions of forest resources as material and mental backbones of Finnish culture and society. The deconstruction of forestry professionals' institutional authority and privileged expertise as a result of the emergence of new forms of counter-expertise and alternative schemes of lay knowledge has also been analysed in a highly interesting way.

Suopajärvi's arguments about nature as an actor among the other stakeholders are challenging. According to Suopajärvi, statements about nature as an actor are characteristic especially of political ecology. In this respect, it seems that Suopajärvi has somehow misinterpreted the political-ecological discussions on actors. Although nature is considered an active force or an active process in much of the political-ecological literature, for a non-human organism to behave as an actor would require a certain

kind of consciousness of one's own actions and ability to reflect upon the social representations made by other stakeholders on one's actions. In this sense, it seems difficult to consider that a stone or a light would be capable of reflecting on circumstances and consciously changing its behaviour according to the social rules in a way similar to what human beings do (e.g. Nygren and Rikoon 2008, Walker 2005, Zimmerer and Bassett 2003). In environmental social sciences, the argument that nature has some intrinsic values has also been widely questioned. Values and rights are always socially constructed and thus nature in itself is unable to formulate them.

Suopajärvi's research material is extensive and highly qualified. The majority of the primary data was gathered within the wider oral history data collection project organized by the Society for Forest History, University of Helsinki, and the Finnish Forest Museum Lusto, in 1999–2002. Suopajärvi herself conducted only a small part of the interviews. What I consider laudable is that Suopajärvi shows clear awareness of the risks and challenges included in such kinds of data collection projects, and she admirably takes these constraints into account in the data analysis.

Suopajärvi's data analysis is solid and well-grounded. Qualitative data analysis is a highly suitable method for analysing such kinds of interview data. Suopajärvi has carefully demonstrated when the argumentation is based on the informants' own conceptions and when on the researchers' interpretations and reflections upon the data. Authentic quotations of informants' speeches give the work ethnographic richness and social credibility. In certain places, Suopajärvi's data analysis may perhaps focus too categorically on the biographical analysis due to the fact that the original interviews in the wider collection project were based on a biographical scheme. Biographical analysis may be too wide for the research objectives of Suopajärvi's work, where the idea is to understand the Finnish forestry experts' *professional* knowledge and gendered relationships to forests and forestry.

Suopajärvi's research results are logically presented and well-grounded, with convincing examples which clearly indicate that the author has aimed to analyse the research data sincerely and fairly. Suopajärvi provides profound analysis of the historical changes in the Finnish forestry sector and institutional structures, especially concerning the

conflicts over forest protection and forest management. Arguments concerning the forestry professionals' views of forests as valuable resources to be wisely managed are also insightful and well-grounded. An issue that may have been important to consider more carefully is the fact that most of the forestry professionals' work largely concentrates on productive forests. In all probability the informants thus speak of their relationships to productive forests and private forests in the interviews, which do not necessarily coincide with their views of protected forests or state-owned forests. Concerning the analysis of forest certification, Suopajärvi's conception that the certification has increased the authority of governmental forestry officials is a little confusing. Taking into account that certification schemes are based on market-based mechanisms of forest governance, where non-governmental actors have a crucial role, forest certifications have most probably rather decreased the authority of the governmental forest officials. Concerning the political-economic context, it would have been interesting if Suopajärvi had analysed the research material from the perspective of recent years' globalization as well, since this process has considerably changed the Finnish forestry sector and the Finnish forestry professionals' views of forest management.

Interestingly, significant theoretical widening can be noted in the last part of Suopajärvi's dissertation. In the Conclusions, Suopajärvi even presents many fairly post-structuralist arguments, pointing out the complexity and situational heterogeneity of the Finnish forestry professionals' environmental perceptions. This is a laudable indicator, as it clearly shows a remarkable theoretical sharpening in Suopajärvi's thinking and argumentation during the research and writing process.

Altogether, Tiina Suopajärvi's work offers a highly sophisticated picture of the Finnish forestry professionals' gendered environmental conceptions and institutionalized forest relationships. The research questions and the research methods utilized are relevant and well grounded. The theoretical arguments and the empirical research results have been laudably integrated. Suopajärvi's work will certainly attract much attention among different scholars within many disciplines. Especially concerning the analysis of the meanings attached by forestry professionals' to their forestry expertise and to their gendered nature relationships, Suopajärvi's

work provides highly interesting and challenging horizons.

Anja Nygren, Helsinki

Who(se) Is the Corpse in the Coffin?

Ingeborg Svensson, Liket i garderoben: En studie av sexualitet, livsstil och begravning. Normal förlag, Stockholm 2007. 262 pp. English summary. Diss. ISBN 978-91-85505-28-9.

■ The hiv/AIDS crisis devastated communities of gay men particularly in the 1980s. Even though prospects of individuals infected with the virus have changed for the better in rich countries where effective treatments are available, thus calming the public alarm considerably and while AIDS is no longer so obviously considered a gay curse, the stigma of the disease has still not vanished and the harsh social situation that it created in the 1980s has ever since put its mark on gay (and lesbian) politics, queer scholarship and public perceptions of this demographic group. Ingeborg Svensson's dissertation study on funerals of urban, white middle class gay-identified men deceased in aids, in Sweden, deals with this legacy. In principle, her study spans a quarter of a century from the outbreak of the epidemic in the early 1980s to the 2000s, but she focuses on the 1980s and early 1990s when the deaths were many and the public attitudes most unforgiving along with (active) ignorance about the disease. Logically, Svensson frames her topic by using theory and scholarship pertaining ritual, death and sexuality, and she weaves these threads skilfully into a tight and coherent narrative. She investigates the funerals comprehensively as a process from planning, preparations and the customary announcement of death in a paper, through the actual memorial services to burial of the body and (often lack of) memorial monuments. Using accounts of the funerals acquired in interviews with participants, officiating clergy and funeral home staff as her main material the author is able to include the meanings attached to the different features of the funerals in her analysis. The interview material is complemented with an array of pertinent documents, publications, ethnographic observation of a few funerals and even a contemporary play that deals with the topic.

The poststructuralist queer theory that first emerged in the U.S. as the academic branch of the

radicalisation of the lesbian and gay movement, which grew out of the frustration with the indifferent, even hostile, public response to the AIDS crisis, seems to have become the almost inevitable approach in humanities and social sciences to the study of issues pertaining same sex desire and sexuality. In this study, it provides a critical perspective to the social maintenance of the heteronormative order. While Svensson refrains from the usual queer renunciation of gay identity politics, she utilizes constructionist elements of the queer-theoretical perspective and discusses the roles of a) sexuality (following Michel Foucault), b) loss, grief and melancholy that arises from unacknowledged loss that cannot be grieved (in accordance with queer-theoretical readings of psychoanalysis) and c) performativity (as theorised by Judith Butler) in the processes through which a subject/subjectivity or identities are constituted. The concept of performativity puts *performance* in the centre of these processes of socio-cultural construction and production by merging the two colloquial meanings of the word as both stage performance and deed or achievement.

Svensson then easily links performativity to the study of rituals as particular kinds of performances that have certain social functions and define people in relation to each other and (as different kinds of) members of society. Funerals have traditionally been analysed as *rites de passage*, in which the individuals new status among the dead is confirmed. However, Svensson also takes up the discussion of their social functions in dealing with the challenge to the cohesion of society posed by the knowledge of the unavoidable annihilation of the individual in death and to making the thought of mortality bearable. This is achieved by creating and upholding discourses of religious, spiritual or social transcendence, which grant each individual life meaning beyond its own limits but they also come to define the individual in different ways.

Svensson's theoretical frame of reference thus allows her to ask who the gay corps in the coffin is and she demonstrates how that question often poignantly becomes an issue of whom the corps belongs to as present manifestations of all three forms of transcendence may become problematic from a gay perspective. The traditional Christian doctrine, the dominant religious framework in Sweden where a large majority of the population are members of the Lutheran church, which would grant transcendence

through the belief in resurrection on judgement day, is in many interpretations tainted by condemnation of homosexuality. The popular spiritual idea of the continuation of the existence of a person's spirit as part of some relatively undefined divinity or universal life force has few institutionalised ritual manifestations of its own in present-day Sweden but often takes place as a (sometimes merely implicit) reinterpretation of religious ceremonies instead. The social transcendence that relies on the continuation of a human community, then, has generally been constructed with reference to blood relations and heterosexual reproduction. Discourses of religious and social transcendence are expressed, and the spiritual ones are often in participant's minds as traditional religious doctrine plays a decreasingly important role in the lives of the general public, in the standard Swedish majority funeral, which is relatively uniformed because of the Lutheran dominance.

Consequently, acknowledging a person's homosexuality in a funeral may pose problems beyond concerns with stigma and breach of traditional conventions as the available institutionalised discourses of transcendence may either not support or even exclude homosexuality. The author describes various approaches to this dilemma in the AIDS-related funerals of gay men, ranging from denial to celebration of gay lifestyles. The funerals could be squeezed into the standard formula by emphasising the role of the deceased as a member of the family of origin, as the son, and concealing the stigmatising cause of death, toning down the homosexuality of the deceased and negating personal and social relations that had been created in a life as a gay man. Alternatively, they could become "gay funerals", lifestyle funerals celebrating the life passed. In funerals of activists, gay identity could be manifested through symbols used by the political gay and lesbian movement. Otherwise, there were cultural signs associated more loosely with homosexuality such as a camp aesthetics, which involves a defiant adoption of devalued stereotypes as a form of cultural resistance. In addition to such collective gay symbols the funerals could also involve more personalised imagery derived from either particular gay subcultures such as leather fetishism or the individual hobbies and interests of the deceased. The individuality of the funerals was heightened by the fact that they had often been planned and designed in ad-

vance by the deceased themselves. A particular culture of funeral planning emerged as those who developed AIDS during the most devastating phase of the epidemic were well aware of approaching death and may have also had plenty of experience of gay funerals in their social circle.

Nonetheless, Svensson shows that the characteristics of gay funerals actually were more like intensified manifestations of new trends in contemporary Swedish funeral practice in general rather than definite deviations from it. Indeed, undertakers could sometimes see gay funerals even as forerunners that introduced innovations, which could put in broader use. At the time, a critique of the alienation from death, which was considered characteristic of modernity, was often expressed in public discourse. This alienation was manifested in the way the corporeal reality of death was concealed and detached from the everyday lives of ordinary people and in the anonymity of the standard funeral. Increasing expressions of individualism and intimacy in funerals could be welcomed as something that re-naturalised death as a part of everyday life. Still, focus on aesthetics and the individual's life, when deemed excessive, could also be criticised as a distraction from the existential reality of death. However, Svensson counters this routine association of the aesthetic with the shallow by bringing forth the Foucauldian concept of an aesthetic ethics of existence (life lead and regarded through aesthetically defined principles). Furthermore, Svensson describes how transcendence is constructed in the gay funerals through a discourse of love that confirms relations of the deceased to lovers and others in the gay community, and represents homosexuality as something productive and the death of a gay man as a loss to be grieved. The meaning of life becomes life itself, enjoyment of it and contributing to the life of others.

The author rounds her thesis up by demonstrating one of the strengths of queer theory. It is about revealing the naturalised norms of gender and sexuality and their effects, not only in the lives of those who break them. She uses her observations to argue against the thesis of atomising individualisation in contemporary society, stating that if one looks at the standard funerals, it is obvious that the individual is still generally ultimately defined as a member of his or her nuclear family. This is easily neglected in research that overlooks heteronormativity as it is

taken for granted to the point of naturalisation. In general, Svensson's study must be seen as a valuable contribution to the body of scholarship that

demonstrates the significance of sexuality in contexts where it is not commonly expected.

Jan Wickman, Turku

Book Reviews

Magic and Witchcraft

Bente Gullveig Alver, *Mellem mennesker og magter*. Magi i heksefølgelsernes tid. Scandinavian Academic Press/Spartacus Forlag AS, Oslo 2008. 305 pp. ISBN 978-82-304-0030-2.

■ Bente Gullveig Alver is professor of folklore studies at the University of Bergen. Her research focuses on magic and witchcraft, folk religiosity, and cultural perspectives on illness and health. In the book *Mellem mennesker og magter* ("Between People and Powers") Alver provides an in-depth account of the magical world of early modern times, and the tension that arose between traditional folk ideas about magic and the Reformation with its demonization of folk magic and its practitioners.

The subject of the book is thus the conceptual world of magic and the place of magic in early modern society. Alver believes that magic was not reserved for marginal groups; the ideas were generally embraced and familiar to everyone. The tension between the elite culture's interpretations of magic and the folk comprehension and evaluation of magic led to extensive persecution – but not to the destruction of magic. Alver points out that the witch craze did not cause magic to disappear from the world-view of the broad masses. On the contrary, ideas about the efficacy of magic lived on into modern times.

Alver begins by pointing out that witch trials and accusations of magic were not residual phenomena from the dark, unlightened Middle Ages, but that the witch persecutions gained momentum and attained a new level of attention and a wider spread with the Renaissance world-view. They culminated in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Western Europe, in what historians call the early modern period. In Norway the witch craze started *after* the Reformation, and the towns of Stavanger and Bergen, the cradle of the Norwegian Reformation, imposed Europe's most stringent legislation against witchcraft in 1584. Norway experienced peaks in the witch hunts in the 1620s and 1660s. Around 1700 the witchcraft trials became less frequent in Scandinavia, although they continued to occur until

the mid-eighteenth century. After 1700 there were only 18 witchcraft trials in Norway, the last in 1754. During the eighteenth century the belief in witches and their ability to cause harm through magic was gradually redefined as superstitions, the form of belief that people never ascribe to themselves, according to Alver.

The witchcraft trials analysed in the book were held in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Norway. The bulk of the book, however, is not occupied by the court cases themselves but by the chapters that paint a broader background, with detailed presentations of research. The world of folk magic is described on the basis of ideas about white magic and malicious magic, the mind, folk understandings of sickness, rumour and gossip as the voice of the collective, and the attitude of the church and the clergy to magic. The focus is thus on folk magic, and the author's main task is to convey the early modern magical world-view to the reader. Magic occupied a central place in ordinary people's minds, influencing the way they interpreted the world, according to Alver. Magic concerned general, everyday aspects of life such as the perception of happiness and success or misfortune and illness.

Alver highlights a distinct gender aspect in the witchcraft trials. Two thirds of the accused in Norway were women. Alver asks whether there were words of power to which women had easier access than men, for example, healing spells, since the field of care in particular was the woman's sphere of competence. Alver finds that spells of this kind were of great significance in the Norwegian trials. In the cases she has studied, moreover, the women revealed that they had learned their spells from other women. The magical world that Alver exposes thus seems to have been female-dominated. At any rate, women occupied an important place in this arena, and magical knowledge gave status and power to the women who practised it. Alver also shows how poor women could use magic to earn a living and gain respect. Women who lived by begging could profit from their supposed magical knowledge and obtain gifts by threats. The women sometimes seemed challenging and dangerous in other people's eyes when they asked for gifts from those who could ill afford it. Anyone who refused to give and was later afflicted by misfortune or disease could easily see a link between the events. At several places in the

Rogaland trials, Alver also finds a pattern of female networks whose members exchanged magical knowledge with each other.

Alver's interest as a folklorist is in the world of popular beliefs, a world that she delineates with acuity and detail. The world-view embraced by the broad masses in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was magical, Alver says. A power existed in specific places, which people could use in specific situations and actions. Whether this use was regarded as evil or good depended on the situation and the observer. Alver adopts Nils Gilje's opinion that the folk interpretations were neither private nor subjective – the same interpretative keys can be found all over Europe at this time. Magical thinking included the idea that a person could incur injury through his or her *hug*, that is, through the mind. If the mind was strong, it could cause illness and even death. The mind of a person who knew magic was particularly dangerous, because it was so strong that it could be deliberately used for evil purposes. A great deal of space in the book is occupied by the folk understanding of sickness, which could be perceived as having been sent by God just as easily as it could have been caused by witchcraft. If the illness came unexpectedly, if the symptoms were unusual or unpleasant, it was taken as a sign that the illness was caused by magic. Blessing and reading were believed to be efficacious cures against illness, so it was a logical move to turn to "wise" (magically skilled) people to cure sickness. A special tension developed between the clergy and the "wise" people.

At the same time, Alver cites examples showing that even local priests could turn to "wise" people for help and treatment for illness. There were no guarantees that individual priests distanced themselves from magic. And it was not because magic was considered ineffective that it was persecuted by the church and the courts, but because people believed in its power. Through the witchcraft trials, the authorities actually confirmed the existence and efficacy of magic.

Magic is often divided into three categories: first there is harmful magic/black magic (*maleficium*), secondly there is magic intended to heal and benefit (blessing, reading, or white magic), and thirdly there are pacts with the devil and journeys to the witches' sabbath (diabolism). According to Alver, the folk view of magic was more nuanced than that

of the church and the courts. The majority of the people made a distinction between magic intended to harm and magic intended to do good. When misfortune in the form of illness or other accident afflicted the household, people could pin their hopes on someone who knew magic, who had the right spells and rituals. Ordinary people felt no qualms about warding off illness and misfortune with white magic, even if the actual magical knowledge was not something that everyone possessed. On the other hand, the majority of the people wanted black magic to be combated. Magic that caused misfortune, sickness, and destruction was perceived as a real threat. And most people found it morally acceptable to use magic to counter black magic. People did not think that magic in general was witchcraft or unchristian, but this became the standpoint of the church, according to Alver. The ideas that nourished the witch hunts were magic and magical acts. And this was where the church derived inspiration for the formation of a new concept of witch. It was popular magical practice that was the springboard for new ordinances against witchcraft, Alver writes, and the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw stricter legislation in the field. Both the Catholic and the Protestant church should be regarded as creators of the witch ideology. The church was obsessed with the religious aspect of magic, the nature of evil and the apostasy from God, which the church saw as a growing problem in the early modern period. Magical activities were regarded as the proof of deviation from the proper belief in God, of the suspect's relationship with the devil and contempt for participation in the Christian community. The witch became the negation of the good person. The new church's construction of the concept of witch that took shape in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries equated magical knowledge and practice with black magic and diabolism. This view was opposed to the more nuanced folk perception of magic and its main actors. But the persecution should not be regarded solely as the result of power exercised from above; it was also a result of the people's fear of black magic and the power of gossip. Neighbours, close friends and the local collective became important actors in the witch hunts.

In the book *Mellem mennesker og magter* the conceptual world of magic is vividly and plausibly depicted, and the phenomenon of witchcraft trials

and witch burning is made comprehensible within a specific context. Through Alver's account of the strong position of magic (as belief) in folk culture and the reaction the magic provoked from the thinkers and religious innovators of the Reformation, the witch trials became more than mere curiosities. With this book, Alver shows herself to be not only a proficient scholar but also a skilled communicator and narrator.

Marie Lindstedt Cronberg, Lund

Ethnographic Observations

Etnografiska observationer. Gösta Arvastson & Billy Ehn (eds.). Studentlitteratur, Lund 2009. 227 pp. ISBN 978-91-44-05748-4.

■ What is an ethnographical observation and what makes an observation ethnographic? These questions are activated in these "Ethnographic Observations", a volume of texts written by some Swedish researchers and doctoral students based on experiences from a field trip to London in 2008. As the editors Gösta Arvastson and Billy Ehn state in their introduction, observations can be considered somewhat laboratory-like. On the other hand, as a place for practising fieldwork methods such as observation, testing hypotheses and raising questions about the human ability to perceive and describe the world, a public space can in fact also be regarded as a kind of cultural laboratory.

The point of departure for the examinations is reflexivity. Everyone observes and takes notice of the world around them, but as a scientific method the ethnographic observation goes beyond mere looking and experiencing. The will and ability to question and critically analyse the circumstances of one's own view as a researcher are central in finding out how the world is constituted. Observations are always subjective and influenced by memories, emotions, previous experiences and our own cultural vision. These issues, along with the chosen theories and educational targets, make it possible for two individuals to perceive a specific situation in totally different ways. Can the personal view or outlook be considered as a problem, and how does it affect the results? What is, in fact, possible to see and how do we arrive at conclusions by making observations in different environments? Furthermore, what kind of

knowledge do observations provide and how does it collaborate with other methods and materials? How important is basic understanding, the choice of issues, positions and perspectives? These are some of the issues raised and discussed in this book along with questions regarding how the process of transforming observations from scribbles and notes to scientific descriptions and knowledge is carried out.

One of the stated purposes of this volume is to clarify that our seeing and perceiving are moulded by cultural circumstances. Another is to develop the observation methods in more pensive and effective ways. In other words, this is a book concerning ethnological observations as a set of methods and approaches in the process of gathering empirical material in the field. The testing of these techniques has been practised in the same locality – London – but from different angles, themes, procedures and perspectives. Through a glorious mix of methods and perspectives such as walk-a-longs inspired by Margarethe Kusenbach (2003) (Bäckman), the systematic check-list method proposed by Patty Sotirin (1999) and a theory of materialized discourse (Lundgren), mental maps (Lundstedt), materiality (Johansson), neutrality and valuation (Högdahl), social categories (Jönsson), rhythm and flow (Arvastson), waiting (Ehn) and the odd practice of simply getting lost (Ottoson), we get to know London from several perspectives. As the examples from these exercises show, observation tools such as theory and methodological perspective produce different results and conclusions along with the personal and cultural preconceived assumptions of the observer. So, is it possible to go beyond the limits and presumed assumptions? This is at any rate what the article writers try to do when they examine observations as a source of cultural knowledge.

They also take the tricky question about the possibility to make genuine and correct observations into consideration, though correct and flawless are perhaps somehow irrelevant values and principles to strive for because of the subjectivity that characterizes ethnographic observations. They are always made from someone's point of view. It is more relevant to discuss the distinguishing traits of well-performed ethnographical observation. In my opinion this takes us back to the intriguing question of reflexivity. As the editors emphasize here – well-performed observations are based on experience, self-knowledge and critical awareness. These con-

ceptions are brought to the fore along with the important question of ethics. When do we become too intrusive as observers and how do we handle a situation if someone gets offended? When we are making observations in public spaces there is always a risk involved, our behaviour might be regarded as if we were doing something suspect, perhaps even criminal. I don't think there is any need for exaggerations in this matter, but some kind of advanced planning for handling crisis could be considered. That is not an issue discussed in this volume, however.

Another issue that needs to be discussed from an ethical perspective is the "ethnological gaze", often presented as an art form and a special competence within cultural research. Would it be reasonable to consider ethnographic observations as a discriminating research method because of its dense focus on eyes, sight and vision? Billy Ehn tells us that it would not. On some occasions visually handicapped students have participated in observation exercises, and what they lacked in ability to see, they gained in perception through other senses such as hearing, feeling and smelling. Sometimes they also paid attention to things that totally passed their seeing classmates' notice, according to Ehn. With this in mind, it is important to underline that ethnographic observation contains something more than visual impressions; it is a motley combination of eyesight and auditory impressions, smells and sensations, thoughts, interpretations, summarized generalizations and the first attempts at theorizing.

From my personal point of view, *Etnografiska observationer* is an excellent guide and source of inspiration for students in ethnology, anthropology, sociology and other cultural studies. As a Ph.D. student in ethnology I consider this experimental approach appealing in relation to the subject, and I also find it applicable to my own research even though it does not encounter the same circumstances. It provides general insights about observation as a research method – seeing, understanding and describing – and the suggestions concerning techniques and possible perspectives are substantial. There is also a consistent discussion about what kind of knowledge ethnological observations provide and why it is beneficial as a fieldwork method. At the end of the book there are some suggestions for different exercises, useful for teachers and students out in the field. I recommend a trial.

Helena Larsson, Lund

Music and Politics

Alf Arvidsson, Musik och politik hör ihop. Diskussioner, ställningstaganden och musikskapande 1965–1980. Gidlunds förlag, Hedemora 2008. 436 pp. ISBN 91-7844-732-2.

■ This book is about the drastic politicization of Swedish youth which took place – with the music movement as an important fulcrum – in the 1970s, especially the first half. The basic thesis of the book is that this politicization was not due to any overall master plan, but rather that it “just happened” and developed organically, step by step, as one song led to another, and the actual activity – in today's ethnology-speak we would say performativity – created the politicization, without the word “politics” necessarily having been inscribed above the doorway. The study thus joins the long series of Swedish monographs, edited volumes, and doctoral dissertations that examine the significance of activity itself in furthering politicization and history-making. In this light, there is a straight line from Arvidsson's book back to works like those of Jonas Frykman, Billy Ehn, and Orvar Löfgren from the early 1990s, such as the classic *Försvenskningen av Sverige*, and right up to the present-day interest in material-semiotic, performative actor-network theories (ANT), represented by people like John Law and Annemarie Mol.

For those of us who had our politically formative years in Sweden in the first half of the 1970s, this book is a gold mine. It is rare to read a scholarly book that functions to such an extent as a mirror and as a piece of memory politics, that offers so many possibilities for identification. It deals with all the dear old groups and artistes I listened to alone or with pals and girlfriends, in the hall of residence, at the student union, or in the basements of the Vietnam movement. They are all here: *Träd, Gräs och Stenar* from the more psychedelic wing, the folk music group *Skäggmanslaget* from Hälsingland, *Nynningen* who put Mayakovsky to music, *Hoola Bandoola Band* from Skåne, and *Knutna Nävar* from what was the most serious and fundamentalist part of the left-wing politicization of the young, KFLM (r), with its romantic view of revolution and with its twin bastions among the students of Umeå and the dockers of Gothenburg. And then there were the older performers such as the jazz singer Monica Zetterlund and her involvement in the social democratic movement, which was in power. We did not think much of the party then, but we loved Monica Zetterlund. And as

an artiste she was – as we must admit today – much greater than most of those on the left wing.

The pleasure of this book, however, will not be restricted to this circle, for anyone who appreciates solid scholarly work that combines careful empirical detail with theoretical and methodological breadth will enjoy this magnificent work, which tells the story of how music and politics established a powerful interface in Sweden in the 1970s.

The book has a wide span, and this is one of its strengths, that it considers not only the popular genres, with the politicization of pop, beat, and folk-rock especially, but that it also deals with jazz, traditional accordion music, the development of modern classical music, and the music policy of the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation and the Swedish government in the service of public education. Just from this very brief list of topics in the book one can gain the impression that this is the most detailed work yet about Swedish music in 1970s. This is the ultimate monograph about the progressive and political Swedish music movement in this period that was so important for Swedish popular music. The book will undoubtedly remain a central work in Swedish musical history as a whole.

The first chapter gives an account of the state of research, sources, theoretical and methodological problems, and the disposition of the book. This is supplemented in chapter 2 with a portrait of the general social and political background to the study, where one of the essential points is that the music brought young people, the working class, and collectives together in a self-run activity and a bottom-up organization that is connected to the interest in the history of the people, oral history, the “dig where you are” movement in Sweden in those years. In chapter 3 the author looks at the debates about the politics of music and technological advances of the time, in both cases imbued with optimism and visions of a better future society. We see that the expansion of the record market gave young people an opportunity to have the music scene as a context for self-understanding and a forum for expressing identity. Chapter 4 provides a survey of the music that dominated in the different movements and parties. This leads to chapters 5 and 6, which are the core of the book. They examine the growing political awareness, and the author demonstrates with solid argumentation how what appeared in the 1960s to be an alternative to both commercial pop music and

elitist art music now found its way to the centre of power in music and set the agenda for most of a decade. There are some interesting points, for example, that folk music, from having been a national symbol, was now viewed as a socially and emotionally authentic expression of the people. Chapter 7 is devoted to a thematic analysis of lyrics, while chapter 8 is about the special positions of women, ethnic groups, and the like. Chapter 9 has a discourse-oriented discussion of what the political aspect actually consisted in: the content, the function, the origin, or the intention. The book is summed up with crystal clarity and precision in chapter 10. The main conclusion is that the political wave in Swedish music was not unique, but the scope and influence of the politicization was far greater in Sweden than in other countries in Western Europe.

Musical history, however, is one thing. Ethnology is something quite different. One of the merits of the book is that it shows how music was not just one impression made by the ideological convictions and political stances of certain groups. We are very far here from a materialistic-idealistic reflection theory, in which one first, *ante rem*, conceives a strategy and then goes out into the world to implement it. But we are also far from an excessively “culturalist” approach, where it is intention and meaning and everything that happens in people’s heads that is crucial. What was crucial was the deeds, the action, the performativity, as Arvidsson shows. Many young people in Sweden at the time were extremely political and politicized without realizing that they were. They just tagged along. One of the strengths of Arvidsson’s book is that he is so observant when it comes to this problem. It is wise of the author to stress the performative element, precisely because we are dealing with music. Whether it is as a listener or a performer, it is always an inclusive movement, whereby one is drawn into a community of action, and although it can be said to have meaning, it is primarily something that happens and takes place. To put it differently, there is a fine interaction in the book between the nature of the analysed objects and the chosen theoretical-methodological approach. It is right of the author to maintain that the politicization was in constant movement and took place through the practitioners’ performative interaction with it. The main idea is that politics is not something that *is* in an absolute and essentialist sense, but something that *is* practised. The interaction with

politics – under the auspices of music – took place as part of a general cultural process, a pattern that people exercised performatively. In other words, it took place as part of an ongoing process with a character of multiplicity, in which people moved out and in with differing degrees of attention and indifference. In plain terms this means that people in certain situations are seriously concerned with politicization while in other situations they ignore it. This could be called a “negotiation situation”. The multiplicity of the politicization of music consists of a continuous “flow” of stabilization and destabilization performed by fluid, heterogeneous networks of connection between coexisting socio-material groups and movements.

In a more concrete sense this means, according to Arvidsson, that one must operate with the politicization of music as “situations”, which are performed with other people in different ways, with different kinds of aims. It is also important to view the boundary “relationally” because the practice always has social considerations and stagings as fellow players. The performative aspect of the politicization of music is never practised in a social and cultural vacuum by solitary individuals.

It should be clear by now that Alf Arvidsson has written an exceedingly good book. The general strength is that it combines a refined ethnological approach with a broad picture of a period’s social and cultural history. It is a huge project to complete successfully, but the author manages it in the best possible way. The conclusion is that the book will occupy a powerful position in future studies, not only in ethnology but also in the study of political movements and politicization movements. On the basis of my own life history and love of music, I warmly recommend this book.

Niels Kayser Nielsen, Aarhus

A Taste of Skåne

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, Den skånska smaken. En bok om gångna tiders matvanor i Skåne. Skåneländska Gastronomiska Akademiens Skriftserie 4, Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2009. 247 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-73331-213-4.

■ It is with great expectations that one picks up a new book by the grand old man of Swedish ethno-

logical food research, Nils-Arvid Bringéus. This book is published in the series of the Scanian Gastronomical Academy, and the title does not mean “Food Culture in Skåne” (he published a book with that title in 1981), but “Scanian Taste”, *Den skånska smaken*. Does it happen now? Is this the superstructure erected on top of all the studies of detail? Does he reach what it is all about: taste and the culinary art? Unfortunately not. But less than that can be good enough.

One half of the book consists of articles that have previously been published elsewhere; these are about fat eels, broad beans, stewed kale, pancakes (*stenkakor* or “stone cakes”), doughnuts (*munkar*), preserved sheep’s milk (*syltemjolk*), small beer mixed with milk, and feast food. These are solid and well-documented texts which show the weight of Swedish ethnology. While it is an advantage to have all these scattered texts assembled in one book, it is a shame that sources and references have been omitted in this edition, which means that researchers have to go back to the original editions in any case. If this omission is out of consideration for “a general audience with an interest in food”, which the preface mentions as one target group, then it fails the other group, “ethno-gastronomic tuition” and research.

The book begins with an account of the province of Skåne (Scania) as a food producer through the ages, and it is based on a rich corpus of source material, with Carl Linnaeus’s *Skånska Resa* as the high point; imagine having at our disposal such thorough and precise fieldwork from the 1740s! Bringéus also draws on the rich collections of the Folklife Archive in Lund, and there is great wealth of detail. It is therefore regrettable that the book does not have an index. Some of the articles are exhaustive while others are more reminiscent of a printed card index; the chapters about vegetables and fruit are particularly spare. Here the author could have used *Flora Danica* from 1648 for the early period, rather than the oldest Danish cook book from 1616, which is a translation of a German book published in Kuml/Colmar in 1597.

The author has chosen not to use cook books as a source, a decision that is understandable when it comes to the older material, but it is problematic when the studies reach the second half of the nineteenth century and the whole of the subsequent century. A considerable proportion of the source material was collected through questionnaires and cam-

paigns in newspapers and radio programmes as late as the 1970s, that is, at a time when cook books had become so widespread that their effect on oral tradition cannot be ruled out. When it comes to the history of individual dishes, it could have been useful to bring in the cook book material too, as in the section on pp. 39 ff. about porridge cooked in a bag (*posegrød*). This is found in Danish cook books from the start of the eighteenth century in the form of *budding*, a direct translation of the English *pudding*. Or the question of when stewed kale is done in a cream sauce, which can be followed in Danish cook books – and probably in Swedish ones as well – from the mid-nineteenth century, and it caught on at the end of the century as milk became basic food.

It is a bad habit to review the book that one would have liked to see rather than the actual book as published. Let me therefore sum up: *Den skånska smaken* is a very uneven book, but it has some thorough and solid chapters which show the ethnological method at its best, and readers who know no Swedish are referred to Nils-Arvid Bringéus: *Man, Food and Milieu: A Swedish Approach to Food Ethnology*, Tuckwell Press, 2001.

Else-Marie Boyhus, Maribo

The Spirit of the Works

Kirsten H. Clausen & Torben A. Vestergaard, Ånden på værket. Virksomheds kultur på Jes Christiansens sønderjyske højspændingsværk. Museum Sønderjylland, Cathrinesminde Teglværk, Broager. 2009. 100 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-89984-26-1.

■ This book, whose title means roughly “The Spirit of the Works”, is about the workplace culture of a power station in Southern Jutland during the years 1924–61 when Jes Christiansen was director. A group of retired employees often talked about their old workplace, lamenting the fact that their stories would disappear with them. They therefore contacted Museum Sønderjylland to suggest an interview project with people who had worked at the power station in the 1950s. The present owner of the power station supported the project, which resulted in in-depth interviews with twelve former employees.

Around 1920 the only large power stations for alternating current were in Sjælland and eastern Jutland. In the rest of Denmark there were only small

local plants producing direct current. In 1922 a co-operative company was founded, “Andelsselskabet Sønderjyllands Højspændingsværk”, jointly owned by the small cooperative societies. They would buy their electricity from the jointly owned power station that was planned in Åbenrå. In October 1924 the power station started delivering electricity. In the following twenty years Southern Jutland acquired a wider electricity network, consumption increased, and prices were lower than in the rest of Denmark.

Memorial publications to leading businessmen used to emphasize the man’s personality and qualities, and how he set his stamp on the business. This is the case here too, but the praise comes in a more nuanced form. Some of the director’s leadership qualities were typical of the time in which he worked.

An important factor for the development of the electricity company was the political situation in Southern Jutland, which was reunited with Denmark after the First World War. The owners and management of the power company wanted to give the underdeveloped Southern Jutland a leading position in the modern Danish industrial society. The power station was not the end but the means in this modernization process. Jes Christiansen claimed that the best thing for the nation was flourishing business and good economic conditions for the whole population.

When the threat of another adjustment of the border between Germany and Denmark arose after Hitler came to power in 1933, Jes Christiansen once again became involved in the pro-Danish struggle. When peace came it was important again not to make any distinction between pro-Danish and pro-German entrepreneurs.

Jes Christiansen was a director who had control over matters large and small. His management style was like that of the master of a household in the patriarchal rural community where he had grown up, as for example when he happened to see from the window of his office how an employee was driving away a stock of surplus iron sections; he pointed out that they should be kept because they might come in handy some time in the future. Until 1951 he himself and the managing engineer each had an apartment in the office house at the power station, so that they were always available. As master it was his duty to organize a summer excursion every year for

the employees and their wives who were invited to dance with the director. To avoid accidents he ruled that the staff canteen should not serve beer, although this was regarded as a national drink.

Wages were a private matter that could not be discussed. The employees would never ask for a raise; pay was decided unilaterally by the director. Jes Christiansen's patriarchal management style made itself felt when he raised the pay of one employee who had got married and another who had bought a house. The electricity company ran its own bank where employees received help in planning their economy, paying bills, and saving money. Although the data were confidential, the director was informed when any employee ran into financial trouble. He then made personal contact with the person in question and ensured with his paternal concern that the problems were dealt with.

The temperamental director easily became agitated when it came to expenses. It is said that the hairs on his neck stood on end. It is almost to be expected that directors of the time should have been choleric, like Dithers in the American comic strip *Blondie*. The whole time that Jes Christiansen was director was characterized by periods of economic crisis which required thrift, creativity, and inventiveness. These qualities were also developed into a virtue by most of the employees. It was always difficult to get good fuel, difficult or impossible to buy machines and spare parts. The director and his staff always found it best to think up a solution of their own or to produce a design that the business's own workshop could implement. The workshop was a sore point for the ambition to develop local industry, since external suppliers complained that they could not compete with the same low prices.

The director Jes Christiansen enjoyed great trust, but he was not the only one who had the *Zeitgeist* on his side. There was an almost magical faith in the role of the various engineers, who were expected to be able to solve all kinds of problems with machinery, electricity, and buildings.

Electricity was important for the whole of society. In the event of a power cut, the repair men had to step in at short notice any time of day. The work made strict demands of loyalty and a sense of duty. The same has been reported from other electricity companies. "It was the famous Sydkraft spirit," as an employee of the southern Swedish company once said.

Today's environmental considerations were unknown in Jes Christiansen's time, but the inhabitants of Åbenrå complained about the smoke and the coal dust that enveloped the town. One of the engineers at the power station says that he found it difficult to understand the director's indifference to the problems. It was unpleasant for him to meet people in the town because everyone knew that he worked at the power station. Low operating expenses were more important than clean air, and the power station was often run on bad fuel.

The time after Jes Christiansen witnessed major changes. He died before the critique of authority and of modern technology began in the 1960s. A new power station was opened in 1973; it was planned to run on oil, but the oil crisis in the same year revealed the weaknesses in energy supply and had the result that the power station was built for both oil and coal. Environmental interests had grown stronger, leading to mistrust in both coal power and the nuclear power that had also been suggested. The electricity company later became involved in projects for environment-friendly technology and became part-owner of a wind turbine factory. One power station was rebuilt so that it could be fired with straw.

The trend in business nowadays is to merge in order to form larger units. "Andelselskabet Sønderjyllands Højspændingsværk" has been owned since 2006 by "DONG Energy", a large Danish international company with operations in several fields of energy. The cooperative society was a cross between a traditional form of business with social obligations and a modern, market-controlled enterprise. The power station served its part-owners, and they were in turn loyal customers. Now government policy and the power station's aims have been combined in an uncompromising demand for free competition.

It is easy for the description of the director Jes Christiansen to become too favourable, since the electricity company was successful in many respects despite the difficulties. The people who shared their memories of the director tended to tell a positive story. This may be because certain events, in retrospect, are transformed into entertaining stories of a bygone time. When the employees were in the midst of these events, however, they could probably find his attitudes and actions troublesome. The book has many good quotations from the interviews, which

also reveal that the employees sometimes found his management style pushy and domineering. His habit of trying to control everything, whether large or small, and even private matters, could be irritating and sometimes downright humiliating.

For a reader interested in technology, the authors have a long chapter about how the engineers solved problems and devised their own solutions when building steam boiler number 9 in 1946–49. The quotations and pictures in this account are a good illustration of “The Spirit of the Works”.

Göran Sjögård, Lund

Habits, Waiting, and Fantasy

Billy Ehn & Orvar Löfgren, När ingenting särskilt händer. Nya kulturanalyser. Brutus Östling Bokförlag Symposion, Stockholm/Stehag 2007. 265 pp. ISBN 978-91-7139-797-3.

■ This is a highly relevant and very brave book. It ought to have been written many years ago because it fills a huge gap in cultural studies. It deals with what most of our lives are filled with, namely, humdrum daily routines. These are dominated by habits without which we could hardly control our lives. It is one of the mantras of modernism to criticize everyday life for being far too banal, with too much of the character of a Thursday evening. It has been particularly difficult for modernist critics of culture to accept that everything does not need to be transformed all the time. The frenzy for permanent renewal and variation has left deep tracks. In today’s world of medialized clichés we are told that we have to “move on in life”.

This is not the case with Ehn and Löfgren. They take everyday life seriously and do not condemn it. This takes courage and simultaneously calls for ethnology’s twin tools of empathy and distance. Their approach is a combination of refined analyses and worldly-wise observations of life, which only researchers with experience, a broad outlook, and an ability to see through things can permit themselves. This is not done by blasé or grumpy old men, but by two frisky youths eager to be amazed, to analyse, and put things in perspective. It is a challenge for them to maintain the inquisitive and alert gaze when they direct it at mundane, repetitive things. One should not be misled by the low-key, laid-back

style. Reading along and between the lines reveals a sober-minded approach to and respect for materiality that is seldom seen. At the same time, the authors do not make the mistake, so common otherwise in recent years, of throwing out the concept of meaning with the bathwater. They make no bones about the fact that the world has to go through a feeling and thinking subject in order to be perceived and acknowledged. The tone is set on the very first pages of the book, with the analysis of what can happen when you stand in a supermarket queue and start fighting off the boredom. Throughout the book there is a fine balance between the trivial and the unique, which in turn raises the question whether it is in fact banality that stimulates the extraordinary and imaginative, resulting in what could be called a “differentiated hybrid”. That is one side of the matter.

The other side of the matter is that the book can also be said to contribute a memento to the all-pervasive “event culture” – and the often uncritical research about it. In all the Nordic countries there has recently been a great interest in the phenomenon of the experience economy. The time is past when the wine in the supermarket was described as being “easy to drink”, and was moreover easy to get hold of; there was a wealth of choice on the supermarket shelves. This has been superseded today by other ways to launch products: they are now supposed to put up a challenge. Pure consumption alone means getting away too easily. Now there are demands for something more than immediacy and ease. Consuming is supposed to require an effort, either an economic investment, or an investment of care, or doing something special in order to consume. The experience economy aims at committed involvement well above the level of merely receiving culture, and it asks for so much participation by the recipient that the result is active joint creation of culture – if only for a moment or a few hours. When the involvement has to be longer than that, the experience economy runs into difficulty.

At the same time, this must not be too radical or too strenuous. The aim is a balance between comfort and challenge, and between interaction, consumer participation, and accessibility. Being constantly challenged would be too much bother, which is why the challenge is usually left to a weekend or some other free day. Otherwise the experience would become habitual, and habit and experience are like water and fire, according to the “experience entrepre-

neurs". Ehn and Löfgren do not agree. The point of their book is to problematize this opposition. Once again they claim that habit and routine stimulate people to fantasy and creativity; pre-arranged fantasy is an impossibility.

But wine and supermarkets are not enough. All over Europe nowadays, people go on pilgrimage to medieval festivals and tourist sites to enjoy experiences. But only for a while, never permanently – and as a rule also forgettably. The experience should preferably be unique. If one looks at experiences from the perspective of the experience economy, one could say that people are not willing to pay for repetition and triviality. Against this Ehn and Löfgren point out the cultural dynamism of habits, which can be an unpredictable undercurrent that can turn life in different directions.

In the light of this, the book provokes the question of what happens when inflation hits the many experiences, when one tires of living like a viking on the west coast of Norway, like a medieval monk in Horsens on the east coast of Jutland, like a lumberjack in a log cabin in the north of Finland, like a tourist pilgrim on the road to the cathedral of Nidaros, or wandering around for the umpteenth time on the trail of Inspector Wallander in Ystad or a whore in St. Pauli. One begins to feel bored and reaches that stage where nothing special happens. And there's nothing wrong with that, the authors seem to think. This means that we ourselves start to fantasize, instead of letting our dreams be domesticated. Very few of us make pilgrimages around the world on well-travelled routes, as global nomads – both at work and in leisure time – reflecting ourselves in each other and casting scornful looks on the poor souls who never get out on adventures, and who are forced to ride on the metro instead of flying.

Ehn and Löfgren's book can thus be read as a silent problematization of the mainstreamed modernist and utterly conformist economy of experiences and pilgrimages, in that they show how triviality gives occasions for unique fantasies and daydreams, how the imagination of the "event menageries" – quite opposite to the creative class's and the cultural entrepreneurs' ideas of constantly delivering the latest innovation – in the long run can easily give rise to banality and boredom. It is here that the book displays its silent solidarity with average Swedes and their lives on an ordinary Thursday.

In terms of content, the book has a strict and clear

structure. It consists of four major chapters, each on a separate theme. Chapter 1 is devoted to waiting. A crucial point here is that waiting is an acquired behaviour that varies in time and place and in different cultural settings. A central question here is to examine who has the right to decide what is the right way of waiting. Chapter 2 is about routines, emphasizing that routines are also effective, time-saving, and bring the joy of recognition. Conversely, they can also function as straitjackets that choke improvisation, creativity, and inventiveness. In chapter 3 the authors deal with our daydreams in certain places – railway stations and window seats. This chapter is more theoretical than the preceding ones, and here people like Gaston Bachelard and Walter Benjamin are put into new and surprising contexts. Chapter 4 analyses what happens when something disappears. A central point is that the disciplines of history and cultural studies have always been more interested in origins, breakthroughs, and innovations than in cultural wear-and-tear, outmodedness, and extinction. Modernity and modernism feed on the new – only rarely on the old.

There is no reason to believe that this book will reach the same classic status as the author's book on cultural analysis, *Kulturanalys*, which, since it appeared in 1981, has been used as a textbook in ethnology, cultural studies, anthropology, and cultural history. But less can still be good enough. This book will no doubt prove to be as durable. Behind the elegant style there is a veritable bombardment of analyses that take the reader by surprise and force a re-think. Could one ask for more? As a researcher and teacher I know that one of the hardest things is to teach students to become aware of problems. This book, precisely because it superficially seems so easy and innocent, will help them on the way. It belongs to that rare category of books where the reader says, "more, more, more, don't let it end." In short: you will not be bored by it.

This review has been written with the experience of having used the book frequently in both research and teaching, for instance in the subject of Historical Consciousness in the education of historians at Aarhus University. It has proved highly useful and a great stimulus for discussions. For that reason too, it deserves top marks. At the same time, it is a good example of how porous the boundary is between history and ethnology.

Niels Kayser Nielsen, Aarhus

Honour Killings and Words

Simon Ekström, Hedersmorden och orden. Berättelser om kultur, kritik och skillnad. Makadam, Göteborg/Stockholm 2009. 251 pp. ISBN 978-91-7061-069-1.

■ The issue of honour-related violence has scarcely lost its relevance. It was in connection with the murder of the fifteen-year-old “Sara” in 1997 that it began to be discussed in earnest. When Pela Atoshi was shot dead two years later, the debate intensified, reaching its peak when Fadime Sahindal died in 2002 as a result of a pistol bullet fired by her father. The discussion may not be as intense now as it was immediately after the murder of Fadime, but it has developed through new ways of approaching the issue – for example, the attempts to understand the killers in the book *Varför mördar man sin dotter?* (Why Murder One’s Daughter?) by Emre Güngör and Nima Dervish (2009), and through the efforts to establish institutional forms of support for the victims.

On one fundamental and general human level, it is very easy to take a stance on the issue: events like those which lay behind the three murders are profoundly tragic. There can be no disagreement about that. On another level the matter is far more complicated. The three murders are an expression of something, they symbolize something, but the question is what. There are quite a lot of suggestions about this. Their very number ought to be a hint that the issue is hard to grasp in the current state of knowledge and discussion. This should urge us to humility, yet the suggestions have often been put forward with exaggerated certainty. The diversity and disagreement are surely also a reflection of this simple fact: the problem is historically *new* in Sweden, having arrived here as an effect of globalization and modern migration.

But there is not even agreement about that. On the contrary, many debaters, presumably the majority of them, have claimed that the mechanisms leading to the murders are here in this country, irrespective of the victims and the perpetrators. To put it differently: the murders have nothing, or very little, to do with these people’s culture. The background to the murders should be sought elsewhere.

Those who assert this are the main subject of Simon Ekström’s book, the title of which means “Honour Killings and Words: Narratives of Culture,

Critique, and Difference”. He calls these people “culture critics”. Ekström does not count himself among them. His view is that culture, defined in a special way, definitely has something to do with it. He himself did not take part in the debate, but his views coincide on the most significant points with those of another person who did participate: the anthropologist Mikael Kurkiala (whose book *I varje trumslag jordens puls* (2005) presumably – it is never stated explicitly – plays a very important part for Ekström’s understanding of the problem). In their attitude Ekström and Kurkiala find themselves in the company of a number of female debaters with an ethnic background similar to that of Sara, Pela Atoshi, and Fadime Sahindal. Their message, based on experience from within, was clear: culture is the most important explanatory context for anyone seeking to understand the violence that some young immigrant women are exposed to.

Yet such explanations were dismissed in the opening phase of the discussion. It was started by Jan Guillou in 1997. His stance presumably did not reject culture *per se*. On the other hand, he sought to prevent generalizations about honour culture and linkages between this and specific ethnic groups, such as Kurds or Muslims.

The dismissal of culture as an explanatory variable, however, was quickly taken to radical extremes, especially when debaters like Kurkiala asserted what others rejected. Stieg Larsson, the journalist and thriller writer, went further than anyone else. In an article that Ekström cites several times, Larsson claimed that anyone who would associate honour killings with, say, Kurdish culture also wished, “in the name of logic”, to combat this culture and was therefore in the same camp as advocates of fascism, war criminals, and organizers of ethnic cleansing.

The argument is a textbook example of the guilt-by-association type, but it also has distinct elements of desperation. What was the cause of this? It was presumably something that was actually respectable. There was a fear that cultural explanatory models would encourage cultural racism. That had to be avoided at any price. In a political struggle the strategy is comprehensible, but it presupposes that the culture that some people want to use as an explanation has a specific appearance. Otherwise it cannot become cultural racism. It must be understood as static, determinative, and well-demarcated.

The problem was that no one advocated any such view of culture. Perspectives like that are stone-dead in cultural studies today. The culture that ethnologists, anthropologists, and the like find it meaningful to work with is diametrically opposed to the idea of culture that gives rise to cultural racism. Culture is viewed as dynamic, composite, subject to influence from different quarters, and the people who “belong” to a culture are perfectly capable of reflecting on it. This means, among other things, that thinking in terms of honour, even within an “honour culture”, can be highly controversial.

The enemy that the culture critics denigrated was thus a chimera. A debating technique like this – and it was practised by many more people than just Stieg Larsson – offers great freedom; it gives impact to the messages you want to put forward yourself. These consisted of other explanations for the (non-)honour-related violence, seeking a reason for the murders in factors existing here in Sweden, independent of the presence of people with their roots in cultural contexts where honour violence is incorporated in a cultural logic that is controversial, challenged, ambivalent, changing.

Among these explanations, two were more common than the others: the murders were regarded as expressions of a universal and aggressive patriarchy or a racifying and segregating social structure. These factors undoubtedly had something to do with the matter, but they were put forward by people who rejected the cultural component. It was with the aid of this antagonism that these debaters were able to pave the way for their understandings of the fundamental defects in society. But these messages were only geared fictitiously to the opponent that was constructed for the purpose. The real addressee, as Ekström shows, was the general public, who had to be won over to the perspective espoused by the spokesman himself, and sometimes also had to be rescued from cultural racism. When this ambition was accentuated, the murders that had provoked the debate ended up in the background. So too did the serious discussion of the concept of culture.

Simon Ekström devotes much attention to the techniques that are used to construct the holder of a contrary opinion. This makes for reading that is at once enjoyable and painful. It is enjoyable because of the triumphs the author celebrates by pursuing good old honest source criticism in an alert and objective manner. But this is also when the reader feels

pain. For the analysis exposes an undergrowth of refusal to understand what the opponent is really trying to say, a desire to put ideological passion before objectivity, and quotation techniques that are often dubious and sometimes downright fraudulent. Of those who are guilty of this there are several scholars who ought to know better, but still do it.

It is also painful to read Ekström’s analysis of the methods used to knock opponents out of the debate by challenging their competence. One person claims that anyone who is not a woman with a Kurdish, or at least an immigrant, background is scarcely worth listening to. Another declares that this is the kind of person – and not, say, an academic – that ought not to be taken seriously. Some people are disqualified because they lack expertise in research on violence or on ethnicity. When all these limitations are placed side by side, it becomes uncertain whether anyone at all is entitled to say anything.

The body of material that Ekström tries to grasp is large and diverse. It is also full of strong emotions and wills, which hardly makes it easier to arrange it according to sober principles. But as far as is possible to judge, Ekström sorts it with a sure hand and creates categories and demarcations that seem reasonable. And what is more: he retains his calm as he does so. His tone is matter-of-fact throughout, testing, thoughtful. He passes in silence over the simple, populist points. He has the language it takes to do this: he has a well-developed arsenal that enables him to keep his cool and carry on his argument in detail, without the reader’s commitment flagging or longing for a simpler and more pleasurable world. On the contrary, the reader’s involvement is gradually heightened.

But this is not only to do with the language. This calm must also derive from a mentality for which it is more important to look for clarity than to adopt a pose and win political triumphs at any price in the currency of intellectual decency. In the minds of many of the debaters, the balance seems to be the reverse. In those cases people are often quick to seek respect by announcing their thorough familiarity with advanced theoretical worlds. This is almost always done in an empty and mechanical way, as if the very invocation were a crucial argument that one is right.

But Ekström, who relates to these worlds – they are prestigious entities such as gender theory,

post-structuralism, post-colonialism, and critique of orientalism – with approval, sound familiarity, respect and criticism in a good sense, shows that they can never take the place of the basic requirements of scholarly work: meticulous source criticism, the ability to understand and do justice to other researchers' findings, absence of friction between empirical facts and theoretical conclusions, the unglamorous stubbornness of sticking to the matter in hand. Simon Ekström is not in such a hurry, showing that in these respects he is a highly skilful researcher.

But it is on this point that one of my two criticisms against the book can be put forward. (The other is quickly dealt with: I cannot remember ever missing an index of persons as intensively as in reading this book.) Ekström never expresses any explicit understanding for the rules of debate. In the name of fairness it should be said that participation in a debate requires putting across a clear opinion quickly, in a limited space, and in an eye-catching way. Those are the terms of the genre. Writing a debate article is therefore not the same thing as authoring a book like this. This, of course, is no excuse for defective source criticism, for vague chains of argumentation and insinuations, or for the ill-concealed delight in abusing one's opponent, all of which Simon Ekström's analysis exposes.

I cannot claim, of course, to know all the ethnological works that are written in Sweden, but from what I do know I can say that Ekström's study seems to be the most important and most skilfully executed for many years. It demonstrates with perfect acuity what is involved in scholarly thinking and acting. It is not wholly a pleasure to read – for that it is far too merciless in revealing the weaknesses and abuses in the public debate that also involves scholars. But some of it is encouraging, as for example when Simon Ekström convinces us of the usefulness and development potential of the concept of culture, even though it has been declared dead. And we realize – having considered how some debaters relate to each other and to themselves – that the Swedish intelligentsia who do not believe in cultures of honour are sunk deep in their own, not very honourable, honour problems.

Magnus Berg, Gothenburg/Norrköping

A Cultural History of Museums

Anne Eriksen, Museum. En kulturhistorie. Pax forlag, Oslo 2009. 251 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-530-3225-2.

■ A museum is a concept that can be defined in different ways, and there are museums for almost everything from milk cartons to objects of art and from Viking ships to toys. New museums are introduced almost every day.

The "certified" definition has been produced by ICOM (the International Council of Museums). According to that definition, a museum is a non-commercial, permanent institution serving the civic society. It is open to the public and it should provide opportunities for study, education and enjoyment. Its task is to acquire, conserve, research and exhibit material testimony about people and their environment.

The definition thus underlines the fact that the museum is a public institution and a part of the civic society for the benefit and pleasure of the citizens. The museum shares these tasks with other, closely related social institutions such as schools, universities, archives and libraries. But a museum solves its tasks in its own way through the four activities of collecting, conserving, research and communication. This combination of tasks is crucial for museums. It is precisely the totality of activities that distinguishes the museum field from its related institutions. The activities of the museums are also connected to what the ICOM definition describes as "material evidence of people and their environment", that is, to objects, artefacts, things. There are also other parts of the ICOM definition such as the historical dimension, a museum is an ongoing project. A museum should also, for instance, have trained staff.

This is the starting point for Anne Eriksen, professor of cultural history at the University of Oslo, in her exciting and fascinating description of the museum as a cultural-historical phenomenon. This is a modern follow-up to Haakon Shetelig's survey of the history of Norwegian museums, *Norske museers historie*, from 1944.

The book consists of three parts: the history of museums, activities in museums and a final part including an interesting discussion of museums, the nation and the public sphere.

Part one starts with knowledge from all over the world, a journey to different museums of Europe,

also including a visit to Tycho Brahe's place on the little island of Ven in Öresund.

The history of museums is very much a history of nationalistic movements in Norway and elsewhere. Eriksen discusses patriotic museums, national museums of cultural history and also the landscape of Norwegian museums as a whole.

In the second part the author discusses and problematizes the main activities of museums: collecting, preserving, research and communication.

Eriksen makes us aware of a process from the early days when museums told simple, collected stories about the nation, the people and the course of history, to the present day, when the museum is a part of a comprehensive cultural industry, with the media and many actors competing for attention. She addresses crucial questions such as what it is important to collect and preserve. Why? And for whom? What kind of stories do today's museums tell?

Anne Eriksen shows that museums do not only reflect on their own history; in a wider perspective the museums want to be a part of a larger history of knowledge. They mirror society's values and modes of thought, and also how ideals for knowledge and the organization of knowledge have changed over time.

Göran Hedlund, Lund

Voices from the Archive

Ääniä arkistosta. Haastattelut ja tulkinta. Outi Finngerroos & Tuulikki Kurki (eds.) Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia 1194. Helsinki 2008. 297 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-222-028-8.

■ The collection of articles, "Voices from the Archive – Interviews and Interpretation", examines the creation of ethnographic interview material and studies questions connected to the use and interpretation of field material. The articles reflect the multiplicity of voices connected with the field of culture and the study of tradition: the concrete voices in the field, the voices in recordings and transcribed texts in the archives and, finally, the researcher's own voice interpreting the material. Another perspective is the voice in a metaphorical sense, the unheard or only partly perceived voice that affects the audibility of other voices in the research, and even that of the researcher.

The book has four sections. In the first part the interview and the voice are studied mainly within the context of fieldwork and the research field; in the second as part of the creation and interpretation of material; in the third as a unit in the research process; and in the fourth as archival material.

The classification of significant and insignificant voices has varied through time. Sometimes what the original fieldworkers in their time dismissed as "noise" can later obtain the status of what seems to be the most interesting part of traditional material.

In the older traditional material, a rural population's collective voice is heard. Individual narrators appear with new field ideologies in the 1960s. Only then do urban narrators representing different social groups become objects of interest. In the 1970s discussion about ethnographic field methods intensified.

Varying technical equipment naturally influenced the structure of the material. Today, digitizing the archival materials has raised an intensified discussion about copyright law and personal data secrecy.

The first part of the book, "The interview and the voices in the field", begins with Helena Saarikoski's article, which focuses on the interview method and the danger of voices disappearing during the research process. She has previously noted the importance of the voice and sounds both in her study of the noisy school feast culture and in her interviews with Spice Girls fans.

Saarikoski discusses what is lost when a recorded interview is transcribed. As a field researcher one is familiar with the dilemma: a successful interview can lose all its radiance when transformed into written text. The written language never reflects speech automatically and transcribing must be considered a research method unto itself, one that should by no means be dismissed as an unproblematic task.

Karina Lukin examines the conceptions of successful and unsuccessful interviews, telling about her own field experiences among the Nenets people in Northern Russia. She describes how her own inexperience, linguistic problems and ignorance in considering codes of cultural communication contributed to creating an interview result that did not correspond to the real situation in the field. The so-called "good informant" that minimizes the cultural differences between himself or herself and the interviewer can in reality be doing the researcher a

disservice. Lukin concludes that both successful and unsuccessful interviews and the informant's meta-communication all combine to function as important keys of interpretation for the researcher.

Airi Markkanen examines her own voice as a long-time researcher of the Romany culture. She stresses the importance of ethnographic description and notes the importance of establishing contact by also introducing the interviewer's own life experience into the field situation.

The other part of the book, "To reach the voices", begins with Kaisu Kortelainen's article about using photographs as inspiration when raising memories in an interview situation. By looking at the pictures she found that her informants were transferred from present to past. But the picture collection, compiled by the researcher, could also be provoking when some picture that one of the informants had preserved in their heads seemed to be missing from the photo collection.

Kortelainen also stresses that a recording featuring significant pauses and silences important to the researcher can be difficult to preserve as archival material. The researcher's comments about the interview are crucial for future understanding and interpretation of the material.

Johanna Uotinen describes analysing a large tradition material with the data program Atlas/ti compared to traditional ethnographic analysis. She writes in detail about difficulties coding the material and about the consequences of incorrect choices during the work process.

In Uotinen's experience, the data program's mechanical treatment of the material smoothed out nuances and differences in the material. The data program made the systematic survey more effective, but in this process the individual voices were dissolved, thus making a deeper analysis difficult.

The third section, "Voices in the process", begins with Elina Makkonen's description of the project for writing the oral history of Joensuu University to mark the university's 30th anniversary.

Oral history is fragmentary and kaleidoscopic. Makkonen describes her task like this: in order to create a commonly approved history you have to negotiate the interpretations and try to create a picture of the past that is both diversified, but at the same time at some level mutual (p. 153).

Sari Tuuva-Hongisto studies how a key-informant can change the direction of a research project. In

her study, the same woman was repeatedly interviewed in a project studying the information society, a topic otherwise often described in rhetorical or statistical terms. The stories told by the informant Oilu reflected experience and an ability to interpret things. But a long-standing relater also learns the role of being an informant and adjusts her statements to her role as a representative for the project that is being researched.

In the section "Voices in the archive", Päivi Rantala studies material about a local character called "the preacher of Kalkkima", collected by two different researchers. Rantala raises the question of who finally decides what stories will be the ones that make up history. Every researcher creates her or his historical picture based on her or his own material. Rantala describes the interviewers and narrators as gatekeepers to the past.

Kati Heinonen has studied recorded laments. She finds that a researcher when listening to recordings is confronted with a sound landscape where the reactions and emotions of both singer and interviewer are registered. The most accurate interpretation of the interview is made when the person is present at the session and the transcribed version only transmits a shallow picture of the performance.

Lauri Harvilahti concludes the book with an article looking at the sound and voice material in the archives in a historic perspective. He describes how changing technical innovations and varying field strategies have resulted in today's archive material, defined by functional analysis, traditional ecology and concentration on the context.

Harvilahti relates discussions in the 1980s about worthless archive material that lacked any context, and mentions many new studies in which the researcher has been able to give the old material a context by using new methodological tools.

Finally, Harvilahti mentions a crucial problem today's archives have to face: the challenge of preserving the recorded traditional material in a world of constantly changing technology. The threatening picture of losing it all continuously requires new solutions and strategies in the field of long-term preservation.

"Voices from the Archive" is fascinating reading. The writers are experienced field workers, basing their articles on numerous materials collected in challenging circumstances. The book gives many personal and detailed insights into how strategies in

the field affect shaping the voices that will eventually form “the archived truth”. It strikes you what a complex arena creating ethnographic-folkloristic source material is. There are no shortcuts to be taken on this meandering path!

For an archivist like myself the anthology provided many insights and it will certainly serve as a helpful and inspiring textbook for students attempting to use the “voices from the archive” as research material – or indeed create new archive material themselves.

Carola Ekrem, Helsinki

Analysis of a Childfree Life

Tove Ingebjørg Fjell, Å si nei til meningen med livet? En kulturvitenskapelig analyse av barnfrihet. Tapir Akademisk Forlag, Trondheim 2008. 110 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-519-2352-1.

■ In the preface to the book “Saying No to the Meaning of Life? A Culture Analysis of Childfree Life”, Tove Ingebjørg Fjell points out why she became interested in studying women who had decided not to become mothers. In her previous work she had studied reproduction and interviewed women who were involuntarily childless. Many of them told her that they did not understand why other women could choose not to have children of their own. This made Fjell interested in women who had decided not to have children. In her new book she has now focused on the childfree life in general and, more specifically, Norwegian women’s experience of choosing a childfree life. This very interesting topic can say something about contemporary views of both heteronormativity and the cultural meaning of having children.

In the first chapter the issue of the study is presented and discussed. What ideas of childfree life are presented among ordinary people and in the media? What reasons are given for choosing a life that is childfree? How are the childfree women perceived by other people? Does a childfree life challenge the conventional understanding of gender? A childfree life is then taken as an empirical ground for studying questions about gender and the cultural meaning of the nuclear family. The questions of the study are discussed in relation to the situation that fertility in Norway and Europe is de-

creasing. Tove Fjell has conducted interviews with younger women and with women who became adults when free birth control became available in the 1960s and 1970s. A questionnaire on the theme of “voluntarily infertility” has also been distributed in Norway. As a final category of material, Fjell has used the Internet and studied how international organizations for childfree people present themselves and discuss this theme.

In the second chapter the analysis focuses on how the discussion about childfree life is also a discussion about what the normal family is and what it is not. Fjell points out that new reproduction technology creates possibilities for more couples to have children but, at the same time, put more pressure on couples who have decided to live a childfree life. Having two to four children is something that is seen as something normal and natural, and something that all couples should strive for, with or without reproduction technology. At the same time there are groups that the society accepts choosing a childfree life. In the third chapter the discussion of a childfree life is given a new perspective through media and how books and forums on the Internet bring together people who are interested in topics concerning a childfree life. Here Fjell looks at both a European and an American context. This international perspective is fruitful and gives the analysis new insights on childfree life. It also puts the Nordic context in perspective.

After the third chapter we meet the older women who obtained free birth control in the sixties and seventies and could control their reproduction on their own with legal contraceptives. This gave the opportunity to choose not to have children. The women’s different reasons for making this choice and deciding not to get pregnant are discussed. One reason was the debate about overpopulation, which was a hot issue at that time. One woman thought that one should help the children in the world instead of having children of one’s own. Another reason was that the woman felt that she did not have the capacity to become a mother. The women felt some pressure from people around them when they announced that they had decided to live a life without children.

In the fifth chapter the focus is on women who have taken the decision not to have children in the twenty-first century. Having children today, Tove Fjell points out, is more of a project through which

the family can constitute itself. In this way the children have a new status in the family, where they are an emotional resource and not so much an economic resource. The chapter begins with a discussion of how the women reason about why they don't want to have children. The reasons are that the women want to have their individual freedom or that they have not found the right man. The author also discusses the comments these women get from other people when they say that they have chosen a child-free life. One of the women has noticed that her male colleagues who have also decided not to have children do not get comments about their choice. The chapter also examines how the women create different techniques to disguise their decision for other people. The chapter ends with a discussion about the difference between the two generations, focusing on how the women of the younger generation experience greater pressure from other people. Tove Fjell's conclusion is: "It seems that the new reproductive technologies and the child's new status in the last few decades have pushed the childfree women further to the margin of the nuclear family ideal, and further out into the periphery of heteronormativity" (p. 84).

In the last empirical chapter the focus changes and Fjell discusses how the childfree women hit back and respond to the ideal of the nuclear family. The interviewed women discuss pregnancy as something normal and natural but, at the same time, they think that they have the possibility to let culture overcome nature. In this perspective the women see the childfree life as something positive; they can focus on work and a good relationship to a man. Instead the women talk about mothers and think that these women are worn out and stressed from having both a career and children to take care of. At the same time, Fjell points out that the childfree women include themselves in normality and identify themselves out of the role of deviant. In this way they use the culture of heteronormativity to categorize the childfree life as something positive for the women. In the last chapter this perspective is very precisely summed up: "The childfree women have risked their femininity, but have managed to create new forms of femininity by being aware of a core femininity and also being a part of traditional heterosexual relationships" (p. 101).

This is a book that succeeds very well in capturing a contemporary cultural phenomenon. It is

also positive that the book is short, well written and quickly comes to the point of the study. The material that Tove Fjell uses gives new and interesting perspectives on heteronormativity. What is heteronormativity in our society today? How do people relate to heteronormativity? And how do they use heteronormativity to define themselves as "normal"? These are important questions that are discussed in a clear and instructive way in the book.

Kristofer Hansson, Lund

Local Cultural Patterns of Ill Health

Jonas Frykman & Kjell Hansen, I ohälsans tid. Sjukskrivningar och kulturmönster i det samtida Sverige. Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2009. 235 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-217-2.

■ At the beginning of the second millennium, Sweden had the highest rate of ill health in Europe in the age group 15–65. Thanks to their welfare state, Swedes are entitled to sickness benefit when they are too ill to work, but this national insurance can be very costly when the nation is Number 1 in ill health.

The health insurance is nationwide, but the practice of granting sickness benefit is determined locally by doctors and social secretaries, a fact which seemed to have a certain impact on the number of sick-listed people, since the rates of sickness absence were very different in different parts of Sweden. In order to study local variation and the meaning attached to the impact of being too ill to work, ethnologists went out into the field. Their aim was to find the *ethos* of the local communities, which – inspired by Gregory Bateson – connotes the *perceived and practised community*.

The two authors chose five different localities in Sweden, three of them with a lower percentage of sick persons than the Swedish average, the other two with a very high percentage.

The methodology and interpretations in this study are impressive, inspiring, and creative. The collected material consists of field notes from observations, photographs, interviews, policy statements and local area presentations, tourist brochures, sculptures, architecture and town plans. According to the presentation of the methodology, the people

interviewed are what I would term *superinformants*, people in central positions related to the topic, i.e. general practitioners, heads of social security and social services, or local politicians. The ill persons themselves comprise a very large group who have nothing much but their absence from the labour market in common; for this reason the authors find it useless to focus on their perspective in this study. Copious fieldwork notes, interview extracts and photographs serve as documentation and illustration in the interesting analyses, which also interpret buildings, marketplaces, church-bell melodies, bodies and their postures in the streets, conversation standards, industrial artefacts on display, and so on. The creativity invested in these analyses gives the texts a poetic touch.

The analyses are informed by theories of governmentality (self-control), social trust and hope, medicalization and everyday life in a phenomenological perspective.

In the three communities with lower disease rates than average, the cultural patterns value inhabitants who want to work and to find paid work, even in tough times of industrial crisis. Another shared feature of these three communities is a high rate of participation in local communal life in various organizations, whether social, cultural or sports activities. These communities are reported to represent *hope* and *trust*.

Nässjö is presented as an old social democratic base where people are willing to work, ensuring the ideals of the welfare state and its rights and duties. *Gislaved* is presented in positive terms as the authors' favourite place, where the local culture is dynamic and shows a high degree of involvement, besides being a multicultural area with migrants from many countries. The idea of being *different* as a positive experience is mentioned here as a possible explanation for the dynamism. The third locality with the lowest illness frequency of them all, *Mullsjö*, is a fairly standardized community consisting of many commuters. However, *worry* is reported to dominate the local culture in contrast to *trust*, and *care* combined with *control* is an important local phenomenon as well, performed in an effective care-control service for inhabitants with long periods of illness. The impact of the *worrying* is not further explored in the analysis.

In the diagnoses of *Östersund* and *Strömsund*, with high rates of ill health, the ethnological analy-

sis reveals a local ethos with a keen interest in freedom and independence connected to hunting, fishing, agriculture and so on, and a high dependency on economic support both from the state to the community as a peripheral area, and to individuals who often need to supplement their incomes with social security due to either unemployment or illness. The rough life in the countryside seems to provide for a "naturalization" of bodily decay. This local culture leads the ethnologists to draw conclusions about life in the natural environment, which does not sustain itself, leading to medicalization and dependency on support. It is reported to be a paradoxical culture, valuing independence but practising dependence.

In studies like this, ethnologists can encounter angry responses, as happened to the authors of this book, because people in the northern region felt misrepresented. In this case, some of the problems could derive from the fact that the five communities are intentionally presented as homogeneous entities in order to reveal their *societal ethos*. This might cause a levelling of local varieties and disputes, for example, in the case of *Östersund*, where the key issue is that the community is divided into two groups, the heritage people and the newcomers, and the latter have higher education and hence occupy the chief positions. Since the reported methodology of the research is to interview primarily superinformants, newcomers probably had a great say in this local study. This could easily have biased the interpretation of the negative influences of the old-fashioned hereditary culture.

From a general point of view, the study finds that ill health seems to be produced under circumstances involving other kinds of problems, such as the difficulty of sustaining a society on the periphery, or the women's role in society as double workers. Hence the illness is not so much a phenomenon in the population as in the cultural and political patterns of the society at large. This is a good point. However, these issues are not elaborated further in the book. The subject involves politically determined strategies for managing health problems in a social context, but outright political comment is absent in the book. In an indirect way, however, the authors present a modernist, liberal stance, praising the local governmentality and standardization of modern living, especially in *Gislaved* and *Mullsjö*. The problems of peripheral living in areas where nature is

more prevalent than industry, especially in nations valuing modernity and industriousness, is not taken into consideration from a more general perspective. *Anne Leonora Blaakilde, Copenhagen*

Humans and Animals in History

Anne Katrine Gjerløff, Jette Møllerhøj & Bo Poulsen (eds.). "Folk og fæ – mennesker og dyr i historien", *Den jyske Historiker* 123, Århus 2009. 136 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-91261-21-3.

■ The Danish journal *Den jyske Historiker* has presented a highly interesting theme issue on the history of animals. The racy introduction by Anne Katrine Gjerløff and Jette Møllerhøj stimulates the reader's appetite. Gjerløff and Møllerhøj combine surveys of international literature with breakneck associations. They show that the history of animals includes Swedish sodomites, Alsatian breeders in Japan, German butchers, American nature writers, and English suffragettes alongside the animals. We find here technology and theology, sentimentality and sickness, philosophy and sodomy.

In one chapter Peter Sandøe and Stine B. Christiansen serve us facts about the growth of the movement to prevent cruelty to animals in the last 200 years. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) are the pioneer philosophers of animal welfare. A person who is thoughtless and cruel towards animals destroys his morals, Kant declared. Bentham wrote that, just as we should not discriminate against people because of the colour of their skin, we should not discriminate against animals because they have four legs and fur. Bentham argued that the important questions about animals is not whether they can think and talk but whether they can feel pain.

The world's first animal welfare act, from 1822, ruled that animals must be protected against wanton cruelty. Richard Martin M.P. (1754–1834) and Lord Erskine (1750–1823) cunningly steered the bill through the British parliament, giving animal owners the right to be masters of their animals, but meaningless cruelty was to be prosecuted. The important thing was to pass a law preventing wanton cruelty, an idea that was pervade all subsequent North European legislation.

Increased welfare after the Second World War

brought scope for animal welfare too. The English upper-class fox hunt, with packs of frenzied hounds, was not banned until 2004. Ethics committees were set up to minimize the suffering of laboratory animals. The number of laboratory animals in the EU's pharmaceutical industry has increased significantly and has now reached 10 million animals per year.

When hens were packed into cramped cages to lay eggs on conveyor belts, and when pigs were tied so that they could be force-fed, ecological labels were put on food that came from farms where the animals still live a free life, which is supposed to give better-quality food – at a slightly higher price. It would have been interesting to find out to what extent this eco-labelling gives the desired result.

The authors point out that certain vermin, when driven to the point of extinction, became an object of fascination and concern. A Danish pamphlet from the 1940s, with a call to "Had Rotterne" (hate rats) and a portrait of a fierce rat, gives the reader pause for thought. No one in Scandinavia cares about the extremely rare black rat. The widespread hatred of wolves in Sweden at the start of the nineteenth century was replaced later in the next century by a desire to protect wolves, which were now threatened with extinction. When the small inbred stock of wolves had recovered somewhat, however, regulated wolf hunting was permitted.

Liv Emma Thorsen, in her chapter, tells of how the 1700s were the century of the pug dog for the upper classes. She writes that the author Ludvig Holberg (1684–1754) was fond of cats but detested dogs. Wild dogs roved around in the eighteenth century in such quantities that they even entered the churches, to the horror of the congregation. Associating with animals could also be intimate. As an example Thorsen mentions that the Swedish warrior king, Karl XII, had a tame alcoholic bear running around loose. The hunting dogs Snushane and Pompe slept in the king's bed, where Pompe died in the early hours of 3 November 1703. Small dogs were used as bed warmers.

Anecdotal narratives from questionnaire surveys are interleaved with theoretical references and internationally current technical terms. Dog urine which ends up on pillows hung out to air, and plastic bags of dog excrement thrown into other people's hedges, is referred to as "matter out of place", using the English expression. Some dog owners let their dogs lick the plates before they are put in the dishwasher,

while other dog owners find this way of using resources disgusting. Candidly expressed opinions are described by Thorsen as “foregrounding”, while more implicit views are called “backgrounding”.

In *Folk og fæ* there is a chapter entitled “Ordinary Animals and Ordinary People, 1860–1980”, where Niklas Cserhalmi refutes widely disseminated Anglo-Saxon research findings about the treatment of animals in the past. In Anglo-Saxon literature it has been claimed that people in bygone times had their animals so close to them that they wanted to mark their distinctiveness and superiority over the animals through cruelty. Cserhalmi overturns this stereotyped view by studying judgement books from the time when the Swedish Cruelty to Animals Act was passed in 1857 and subsequently. The court records show, in complete contrast to Anglo-Saxon findings, that people in the old days had a more humane view of animals, since living so close to them led to greater concern for the animals’ needs. If the animals were happy, they were better able to serve humans. In the past there was greater empathy for animals’ suffering. The slightest sore left by the harness was tended to. Most of the convictions for cruelty to animals were for offences that were much milder than the cruelty to animals that is permitted today. Cserhalmi convinces the reader through his solid empirical evidence and logical reasoning. He also gives an account of the emergence of the animal rights movement.

The year 1990 saw the start of the modern animal rights movement on a broad front, with the publication of *Animal Liberation*, the book in which the Australian-American philosopher Peter Singer describes the horrors of the animal factories, with details such as that hens’ beaks are cut off to prevent cannibalism! There have been attempts, as we have seen, to curb the worst abuses through eco-labelling.

The way in which economics governs animal husbandry is shown by Anne Katrine Gjerløff in the chapter “The Battle of the Red Cow”. In bygone days heifers could be regarded as a necessary evil for transforming hay into manure, to be used for the widespread barley cultivation. In the 1870s Denmark abandoned its crop-based farming to concentrate on animal production, with beef cattle and fatted pigs, heifers and dairy cows. Denmark thereby became world-famous for its exports of meat and butter. At the end of the nineteenth century agriculture in Jutland was diversified, while the rest of

Denmark concentrated more exclusively on high-productive dairy farming.

Gjerløff describes the development through old periodicals where farmers expressed themselves. They regarded heifers, cows and pigs as production machines which needed a heavy input if there was to be a good output. Hay as fodder was replaced with root crops, barley, and concentrated fodder, which resulted in good meat and dairy products. The well-being of the cows was an important production factor, and was perhaps the reason why the Danish animal protection movement in the 1870s confined itself to monitoring the slaughter and the animal transports. The high-yield breeds of cow took on a special appearance. They had large udders and were so lean that every vertebra in the spine was visible, since all the energy went to milk production. These cows were considered beautiful, since they gave a lot of milk and were thus unusually profitable. Sometimes their supposed beauty was more important than the amount of milk they produced. These dedicated dairy cows were specially bred, in contrast to the now extinct aurochs, which evolved at the same pace as nature. The old native breeds were an intermediate form which adapted relatively freely to the surrounding nature and culture.

In agricultural journals there were discussions of whether artificial breeds should be crossed with old native breeds or whether they should be kept pure. The red Danish dairy cow was preferably not supposed to have any white markings. Indigenous breeds were given priority. After initial resistance, the Jersey cow was nevertheless imported, producing fat milk, especially suitable for making butter.

Darwin’s theory of evolution from 1859 extended the debate about breeds, when natural selection among wild animals was contrasted to the artificial products of human breeders.

Anders Lundt Hansen shows in his chapter how zoological gardens have been adapted to changing eras in human culture. Cabinets of curiosities and princely menageries were favoured in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The menageries disappeared with the concentration of power under absolutism. It became impossible to give food to exotic animals while the people were starving. The animals from the Versailles menagerie were turned into fur and the buildings were demolished. Europe’s first zoological gardens were opened in London in 1828. Rules for the visitors and cages for

the animals have subsequently been regarded as symbols of the dominance of the bourgeoisie and the colonization of distant continents. In Vienna the emperor's menagerie did not disappear until he abdicated after the First World War. The menagerie was closed, replaced by the zoos of democracy.

The animal importer Carl Hagenbeck in Hamburg provided zoological gardens and circuses with exotic animals. For Hagenbeck the world was a stage. In 1896 he patented the "scientific panorama", in which living animals appeared against a backdrop resembling their natural environment. He established a zoo just outside Hamburg, with mountains designed by landscape architects and cast in cement. Hagenbeck's zoo gave the illusion of arctic expanses and African savannas. Visitors were enthralled, and Hagenbeck's zoological gardens attracted millions of visitors, at the expense of the animals. Many animals died when being captured and in transport. The animals that did reach the zoos often died after just a few days. The first gorilla to arrive at Copenhagen zoo, in 1907, died after a week and a half. Apes were especially sensitive to tuberculosis bacteria and viruses that brought cold symptoms and bronchitis. A pack of apes that came to the zoo in 1916 from South-East Asia caught dysentery and infected an orang-utan and all the chimpanzees, causing their death. The zookeeper was also infected; although he survived, his wife caught the germs and died.

In 1975 the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) came into force, and virtually every government in the world has pledged to stop all trade in more than 30,000 endangered animal and plant species. Zoos now have fewer animal species and more space for each animal.

Now that the polar ice is melting and the rain forest is being turned into patio furniture, zoos are booming as never before, as Hansen accurately and drastically sums up the situation.

The final chapter in this thought-provoking theme issue, by Stine B. Christiansen, Vagn Greve, and Peter Sandøe, is entitled "Should It Be Punishable to Have Sex with Animals?" In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bestiality was forbidden in many countries, carrying a death sentence. Since the twentieth century sex with animals has been legal in Sweden and Denmark! If sexual intercourse with animals causes suffering or injury, it can be prosecuted pursuant to the Animal Welfare Act. The

authors can find no arguments for criminalizing bestiality once again. Many people have a contrary opinion, however.

Folk og få calls for an attentive reader. The chapters are studded with valuable facts and provided with detailed bibliographies. The reader can put the pearls together in personally chosen patterns on a base of solid data, hundreds of facts that provoke thousands of questions; a fireworks of facts, exploding in associations that go in all directions.

Nils-Erik Landell, Årsta

History and Nationalism a Century Ago

Den dubbla blicken: Historia i de nordiska samhällena kring sekelskiftet 1900. Harald Gustafsson, Fredrik Persson, Charlotte Tornbjørn & Anna Wallette (eds). Sekel Bokförlag, Lund 2007. 196 pp. ISBN 978-91-85767-00-7.

■ In 1905 the historians in Lund arranged the first Nordic Historians' Congress. The event was boycotted by the invited Norwegian delegates, and a large share of their Danish colleagues stayed away out of sympathy. This was undoubtedly a fragile start to the series of Nordic conferences; fifteen years were to pass before the next one was held, and a few more decades before stability was achieved.

The volume *Den dubbla blicken* (The Double Gaze) is a report from a Nordic historians' conference in Lund 2005, to mark the hundredth anniversary of the first congress. It contains ten articles, all based on lectures delivered to the centennial congress. The discussions at the conference, according to the introduction, centred around "the place and role that history had in the Nordic societies around the last turn of the century" (p. 9). The ten published papers, according to the same introduction, have "a pronounced focus on concrete expressions of different uses of history in different contexts" (p. 12). What is a pronounced focus? And what does it mean that the word "different" is repeated in the second half of the sentence? For me the wording gives an unmistakable sense of underlining the differences – or, in other words, stressing the dissimilarities between the things being discussed, rather than their potential common denominators. Against that background, it is tempting to understand the formulation as suggesting that each phenomenon discussed in

the book is examined on its own terms, within its own framework, with a minimal amount of sideward glances or comparisons.

That is how one can actually describe the overall impression of the ten articles. They deal in turn with: Scandinavianism, nationalism and the historian's congress in Lund in 1905 (Ulf Zander); the development of Norwegian historiography before and after the dissolution of the union with Sweden in 1905 (Narve Fulsås); the German school of *Kulturgeschichte* as it was adopted in historiography in Finland (Pertti Haapala); the discovery and construction of the local district (*hembygd*) in relation to the understanding of history and the teaching of history in Sweden (Bosse Sundin); history in Greenland at the start of the twentieth century (Daniel Thorleifsen); the significance of gender in relation to ideas about freedom in Norwegian historical research around the last turn of the century (Ida Blom); gender, nationalism, and the issue of female emancipation in Iceland at the same time (Sigríður Matthíasdóttir); gender analysis of royals and nationalism in Sweden, also at the same time (Charlotte Tornbjer); the use of history in architecture (Eva Eriksson); and the consequences of the break-up of the unions for Swedish national revitalization (Niels Kayser Nielsen).

How much the papers will appeal to different readers depends, of course, on the readers' interests and prior knowledge. For my part I would single out, for example, the articles by Blom, Matthíasdóttir, and Tornbjer, which together provide valuable perspectives on the relations between gender, nationalism, and history, Sundin's highlighting of the concept of *hembygd* as a pedagogical instrument in the service of nationalization, and Haapala's analysis of why German cultural history became so influential in Finland a hundred years ago. I was particularly impressed by Eriksson's article about the reuse of architectural ideals and expressions from different eras, both for its insightful analyses of varying relations between form and meanings, and for its comparative ambitions. The concluding article by Kayser Nielsen also presents very insightful and readable results, in this case concerning the transformation of the national in Sweden after the loss of Norway.

What this collection of articles can be criticized for is the lack of cohesion. I find it hard to see that the papers deal with the use of history in different

contexts, as the introduction promises. On the contrary, the use of history seems to be a rather peripheral model in most of the articles, and it is very seldom that the concept is mentioned or discussed explicitly in the texts (Eriksson's article is a positive exception to this). Far more prominent as a common denominator is the nationalistic complex of ideas, in different aspects and with changing relations to historical references and resources. The editors are evidently aware of this, but in the introduction (pp. 12–15) they treat the different variants of nationalistic ideology and practised nationalism in the Nordic countries as a context for the reasoning rather than as an object of study in itself. I think this was a mistaken approach, and that the book would have appeared far more focused and integrated if its explicit theme had been "nationalism and history". Another factor contributing to the lack of coordination is the fact that the articles lack any references to each other, even though there are obvious parallels and intellectual overlaps between them.

Barbro Blehr, Stockholm

Food in Nineteenth-Century Denmark

Kost og spisevaner i 1800-tallet. Ole Hyldtoft (ed.). Museum Tusulanum Forlag, Copenhagen 2009. 403 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-635-1098-1.

■ Food is a basic feature of all cultural communities. From the beginnings of humanity, food has defined who belongs to a cultural community and who is outside it. With food we start and finish social relations, and as individuals it lets us say who we are, where we come from, and who we want to be.

Despite this, food has not been at the centre of research in cultural history. On the contrary; in food and meals have had a minor role in Scandinavian research compared to matters such as cultural heritage, buildings, narrative, and in recent years issues such as class, gender, ethnicity, consumption, and health. It is true that pioneering work has been carried out, some of it by established researchers, but it is striking how often this research has been done as sideline projects, pursued in a scholar's spare time. Major research grants to study the cultural significance of food have been rare. It is therefore gratifying to note the investment in the project "Food, Drink, and Tobacco in the Nineteenth Century: Con-

sumption Patterns, Culture, and Discourses”, led by Ole Hyldtoft and Arne Astrup at Copenhagen University. This volume on “Diet and Eating Habits in the Nineteenth Century” is the first of four planned publications from the project.

Bodil Møller Knudsen opens with an article about food purchases at the Russian court in Horsens 1780–1807. Based on the extant accounts, Møller Knudsen shows how the established notions about short Nordic seasons is partly a late phenomenon. Eggs were available the whole year round, although the supply was lower in the winter months. Asparagus could be bought as early as February, sorrel, leek, and spinach in March, and parsley and cress were available the whole year round. Although these plants had to be grown in special conditions and also cost more than an ordinary household could afford when they were out of season, it shows how cultivation techniques and the range of varieties on offer were well developed for the climate. Exotic fruits such as figs and melons were bought from a market gardener in Horsens, while pineapple was imported from Hamburg.

From the wealthy Russian court we then go to the opposite extreme: the common people and their staple food, the potato. In a long article by Christina Folke Ax we learn how the potato became a basic foodstuff. A little way into the nineteenth century it was still mostly priests who grew potatoes, a crop that was viewed with great scepticism by the peasantry. Then things happened quickly, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, potatoes could be found on every man’s table. And every woman’s too, for the introduction of the potato was in no small measure due to women, and the potato became a part of the female domain in rural households, often coming via women who had learned about potatoes while serving in bourgeois homes. The connotations of the potato were soon changed when it became poor people’s food. Although it was common in all classes of society, it was only poor people who had potatoes for breakfast, spuds for dinner, and taters for supper. From having been praised by nutrition experts, the downwardly mobile potato was increasingly questioned as it became more and more common. It is not just the opinion of the nutritional value that has changed through history. Perceptions of its taste have also changed. In an early note about the use of the potato we read that new potatoes are watery and tasteless and hazardous to health. It was

best to avoid eating potatoes before September, and they tasted best at Christmas.

Traditional and local food are more popular today than ever. A closer look reveals that food which is now presented as local and traditional has very rarely ever been eaten locally to any great extent. This was noted by Erving Goffman; it was the discrepancy between the food that was served as local at a Shetland hotel and the food actually eaten by the local people that was the foundation for his epoch-making work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Bjarne Stoklund notes comparable differences in his article about food habits on the island of Læsø in the nineteenth century. Chanterelles and lobster, present-day “traditional” Læsø specialities, were not eaten at all, since these “toadstools” and nasty crustaceans were not considered edible. The same aversion to mushrooms and shellfish is also noted among the peasantry in other Nordic countries. And fresh food was avoided if possible. As in all storage economies, people ate backwards; the oldest food always had to be eaten first. Through time, strong preferences arose for preserved food: salted, smoked, and soured.

So what did people really eat on Læsø? Above all, rye bread and dried fish. Cabbage, peas, gruel, and porridge, made with milk in the summer, otherwise with water. And to drink there was beer or small beer, and spirits for the men. Most food was eaten cold, even on festive occasions; serving hot food did not become common until the twentieth century. Another myth debunked by empirical studies is that of local self-sufficiency, that all food came from nearby. The people of Læsø were dependent on deliveries from outside from an early stage. They bought barley and used it to make bread which was exported to Bohuslän and Norway. This happened back in the seventeenth century, when the diet on Læsø was part of an international flow of food. Christina Folke Ax focuses on coastal societies and observes a higher element of fresh fish than among the people of Læsø. This, however, was chiefly due to the poverty of the fishermen. Fishing communities have not always been the picturesque sites they are today with their exorbitant house prices. Most things were in short supply, including grain and milk. Sometimes dried fish had to take the place of bread.

There were plenty of poor people in the towns as well. Lykke L. Pedersen writes about philanthropy

and paupers' food in nineteenth-century Copenhagen. Philanthropy was based on an ideology of helping people to help themselves, bringing paupers out of the dirt so that they could contribute to progress in society. Given housing with strict rules for order and hygiene, soup kitchens, community associations, and day nurseries, poor people were to be afforded the chance of a bearable life. But they were expected to do something in return; even the poorest people had to pay a small sum for child care. On special occasions, however, this principle was waived, and upper-class ladies appeared in public to serve food to the poor, as on Shrove Monday in 1866, when the Dowager Queen Caroline Amalie distributed buns to the children from her splendid carriage with its red-liveried coachman.

It was very different at Admiral Holsteen's dinner on 8 February 1840, where the courses included asparagus soup and fish balls, oysters, sweetbreads, brill with caper sauce and potatoes, wild boar head with truffles and a cold port sauce, roast partridge, etc., all washed down with Cantenac, Sauternes, and Château Margaux, besides the champagne that was served throughout the meal. And of course there was old Madeira and Tokay with the desserts. Eighteen guests dined on eighteen courses, not counting the fruit and sweets. It was served *à la française*, with several dishes on the table, so that the guests could choose what they wished to eat. We learn all this from Else-Marie Boyhus, who also includes recipes for the majority of the dishes, taken from contemporary cookery books. Admiral Holsteen's dinner has its roots in the medieval feasts of the nobility, but is also clearly influenced by the French cuisine of the *nouveau riche* bourgeoisie, as it was served at the French-style restaurants that conquered the world in the nineteenth century.

Food is not only eaten; it has to be cooked too. This needs utensils, vessels, and things to serve food and drink in. As Martin Bork points out in his article about food-related artefacts among the peasantry 1750–1850, the objects with which we surround ourselves not only have a practical function; they also carry symbols and mark social status. This is true of today's induction cookers and carbon steel knives, just as it applies to what prosperous peasants could show off in the nineteenth century: porcelain, copper dishes, coffee pots, jugs, and candlesticks.

The most important change to food in the nineteenth century can be ascribed to the consequences

of the introduction of the stove. This revolutionized cooking in that it enabled frying in a pan instead of boiling over an open fire. From the 1870s stoves also generally had ovens, now making it possible to bake bread and cakes in small quantities. As Benno Blæsild points out, these stoves allowed Danish coffee-party culture to arise, with currant buns and Danish pastry.

No book about Danish food culture would be complete without beer. Bettina Buhl takes care of this with an article about rural brewing in the nineteenth century. As she rightly points out, beer was not primarily a drink; it was food, providing a large share of the daily calories. It was also a way to preserve grain, and it played an important part in cookery, often replacing both milk and water. Everyday dishes included porridge with warm beer and bread soaked in beer, and a festive dish was "egg soup": boiled beer with eggs and sugar.

Beer belonged to the female domain, at least as regards the brewing. It was surrounded by an almost magical aura. A housewife who made good beer ensured that that her husband came home instead of going to the tavern. And when a daughter was born, a barrel of beer had to be put away, not to be drunk until her confirmation. It was not until after industrialization that brewing became man's work. It was a process that required know-how, as many things could go wrong. If the beer turned out sour they had to grind salt and lime, boil it and pour it into the beer, which could then be strained the next day; potash could also be used. Beer was not a health problem. On the contrary, it was thought to be highly nutritional, and children and adults alike could consume large quantities. Experts found this good, since it meant that people drank less milk, which could be used for better things than quenching thirst. Yet everything comes to an end. Towards the end of the nineteenth century most home brewing stopped. Commercial breweries took over, and the products of the cooperative dairies won the battle as regards which drink was considered healthier.

The volume is rounded off by Maria Thode Jensen, who writes about how chocolate entered Danish food culture. For a long time it was something that people drank, but it later came to be used in baking. This is yet another example of the early internationalization of food habits, and of how food tends to move from one class to another. From having been an aristocratic delicacy, it was sold in phar-

macies and later became a drink and a sweetmeat for special occasions among the working people. In our days it has risen again, as 87% cocoa from Madagascar beans takes pride of place in the designer kitchens of the gastronomically interested upper class. But that is a later story.

If we call to mind what the research project was supposed to be about, we see that it is the first third, consumption patterns, that is at the centre in this book. Analyses of culture and discourses, on the other hand, are not so well developed. This is a pity, because there is so much in the material that invites deeper discussions of the way different foods affect patterns of socializing, social stratification, and – not least of all – the constant struggle to define what a healthy meal should consist of. But we may hope that this will come in future publications. Until then, I shall often return to this book, as the fullest analysis hitherto of a large number of central elements in the Danish diet. And I hope that Swedish research councils will also grant funding for a similar systematic and ambitious study of the history of Swedish food culture.

Håkan Jönsson, Lund

Labour Movement and Workers' Culture

Lena Johannesson, Ulrika Kjellman, Birgitta Skarin Frykman, Arbetarrörelse och arbetarkultur. Bild och självbild [Labour movement and workers' culture. Image and self-image], Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm 2007. 422 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-098-7.

■ It is a somewhat unusual approach to workers' culture that we meet in this book. After many years of declining interest in workers, this extensive volume brings new insights, but neither about structural or large-scale development, nor about everyday practices as became common from 1980 onwards. Instead, the focus of the book is on symbols, signs and images, a rather neglected theme as a separate field of study.

The internal relationship between the five articles which make up this book is not as consistent as the title might indicate. The art historian Lena Johannesson has written three of the articles and the introduction in addition, while art historian Ulrika Kjellman and the ethnologist Birgitta Skarin Frykman are the authors of one article each. The topics are all

linked to symbols and images in one way or the other but are otherwise rather diverse. Johannesson's contributions are on the graphical language in the functionalistic approach primarily in the 1930s and 1940s, on the formula of the "big figure" (*Den store gestalt*) in sculpture and illustrations, and finally on the cartoons in the labour union press. Kjellman's contribution is about the portraying and imaging of two former heads of the Social Democratic party in the right-wing Swedish weekly press in the period 1910–1946 and Frykman's is on changing traditions in burials.

Since I am rooted in the ethnological tradition I will mainly concentrate on Frykman's contribution in this review. The article "Sista ordet" ("The last word") offers interesting insight into funeral traditions over a couple of centuries. Frykman's findings bear on archive studies together with other dissertations (such as those by Bringéus) on the topic. Interviews are used in relation to the period after the Second World War.

Since the article covers such a long time span it not only relates to workers but generally takes up funerals of ordinary people in contrast to upper social levels. Frykman argues that there have been huge changes in the way of burying people from pre-industrial times till today, but perhaps the largest shift has been apparent in the last five decades. In this period funerals have become intimate, personal and private, in contrast to hundreds of years with public funerals including a clear marking of the position on the social scale. However, one feature has been connected to the burial traditions irrespective of the period: a distinction between an honourable and a dishonourable funeral.

In pre-industrial society social segregation became apparent partly through the necessity to buy certain services from the church (such as coffins of oak and funeral sermons) partly because of a specification about certain rituals for certain groups (such as differences in bell ringing depending on social status of the deceased). In addition to the socially segregated traditions – which were all considered honourable – there were the funerals for groups without any right to an honourable funeral. These included executioners, thieves, murderers, suicides, just as certain sections of the population such as gypsies were disqualified from having an honourable funeral.

With the Enlightenment certain characteristics

changed – the groups excluded from ordinary funerals were more or less the same but the corpses now in large numbers were used for science in anatomical institutions. In the course of the nineteenth century the status of pauper as poor became an important criterion for exclusion from an ordinary funeral, a change connected to liberalism's view of poverty as something self-imposed.

In this period, workers began to gain a foothold in society, and in line with this they also created new ways of having members of the labour community buried. Sickness benefit associations and burial clubs were among the first labour institutions to be established, more or less as a continuation (and replacement) of the guild institutions. Workers took over the tradition of a publicly held honourable funeral (published through a death notice in the paper), not only, Frykman argues, as a way of paralleling the bourgeoisie but also as a way of marking a limit to people – often labourers of some kind – not wealthy enough to get a decent burial.

Generally speaking, workers came to copy features of the burials in upper middle class and the bourgeoisie, a development more or less fulfilled in the 1930s. Frykman argues that this democratization, for the two latter groups, threatened the status codes connected to funerals. Hence these groups begin to introduce funerals “in silence” – which had previously been related to the dishonourable funeral of excluded groups!

After the Second World War this funeral in silence has become the overall norm. Funerals are held on working days, there is no funeral march in the streets, special clothes are not mandatory. Funerals have become institutionalized and professionalized within institutions of the welfare society (for instance, most people die in hospitals today). An important outcome of this development is that funerals today are not marked by expressions of social segregation; they are more or less a private matter. An interesting discussion in relation to this could have been whether it is to be understood as a specific feature of the Social Democratic ideal of equality, which Sweden and other Scandinavian countries have been strongly influenced by, or if it is a commonly shared development in the (Western?) world.

Of the other articles in this collection I will highlight Johannesson's contribution about the formula of the so-called “big figure” and of the clenched fist

in the history of sculpture and art. Since the 1920s we are mostly familiar with this image in large communist and fascist sculptures of the human body as a symbol of the ideology of the state. However, Johannesson shows how basic elements in this formula can be traced back in art history at least to ancient times. Of course, continuity in elements is something other than an unchanged content, and Johannesson shows how new historical contexts use the elements in different ways and with an altered meaning; for instance, in the revolutionary years at the end of the eighteenth century when the figure came to represent both ideological unification and political struggle. Throughout the nineteenth century the figure – male as well as female – was used in the still more labour-related political struggles and campaigns. By the start of the twentieth century the clenched fist – in an altered, more “labour-like” form has become an icon of freedom and a representation of labour power. Johannesson also illustrates how the changes are related to technical development, not least to the expanding mass production. Most important, though, is how the different historical contexts are included in the analysis – such as the more aggressive imagery in the 1920s related to the increasingly vigorous attempts by right-wing politicians to fight the political labour movement (and the potential revolutionary threat it represented). In line with this, it would have been interesting if the split of workers into social democrats and communists were paralleled by differences in the way of using the big figure in the Swedish context. However, the most important change came when the figure was taken over by the Fascist and Nazi regimes and the clenched fist was replaced by the outstretched (arm and) hand. It was in the thirties and during the war years that the figure was most extensively spread. During the war it was furthermore constructed by the different regimes to recruit soldiers.

Through Johannesson's article we become familiar with an image that most people have probably experienced in a rather alienated way. And that goes for the other articles, too.

So, although this reviewer is sorry that the articles do not make up a more internally coherent collection of contributions within an overall historical framework, it is commendable that the volume sheds new light on images and self-imaging in different parts of the labour movement (as well as in la-

bour culture in general), for which reason I can only recommend the book to everyone interested in the topic.

Niels Jul Nielsen, Copenhagen

Concert Arrangers in Sweden

Lars Kaijser, Musikens ögonblick. En studie av konsertarrangörer. Gidlunds förlag, Hedemora 2007. 157 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7844-746-6.

■ This book, about concert arrangements in Gävleborg County in Sweden, is small but nevertheless in many ways informative. The instructiveness is a result of the aim, method and general approach chosen by the author Lars Kaijser. Traditionally most studies on music mediation have focused on the large-scale music industry, in practice equating music industry with the functions of the major international record companies. A second research tradition has focused, with similar narrowness, on the consumption of the products disseminated by the transnational industry. What usually falls outside these studies is the large grey area where different small-scale entrepreneurial activities, public funding, the third sector and fandom meet, not least in musical sectors outside the recording industry. It is within these under-researched areas of interest that Kaijser operates, thus making his study valuable not only for ethnology but for music research and cultural studies altogether.

The book is based on a research project commissioned by the County Music Organization of Gävleborg County. The study aims at describing the work of the concert arrangers and in particular how the arrangers' work is constituted in a social context, where ideas of right and wrong or good and bad create a space where the arrangers carry out their daily activities. Attendant questions include: What motivates the arrangers? How is quality defined by the arrangers? What is a successful arrangement from a social point of view? What kind of connections can be found between local and outside cultural influences? How do the arrangers comprehend their audiences?

Kaijser has used his substantial knowledge in and experience of ethnological fieldwork to answer the questions he poses. For 18 months he observed the practicalities of concert arrangements within three

organizations: a chamber music association, a music café and a rock club for young people. The focus on only three case studies can, of course, be criticized for giving a narrow or distorted picture of the totality, especially as none of the chosen organizations is a commercial entrepreneur. Moreover, both the national policies and the local phenomena observed are inevitably outdated by the time the fieldwork is brought to a close, as Kaijser also mentions in his final text. However, following the qualitative analysis tradition, he also emphasizes that these case studies are not all-embracing, but rather offer a keyhole through which it is possible to study trends in the general cultural policy in Sweden. Thus, by studying the norms and practices of these three organizations and how they negotiate questions of, for example, idealism and professionalism, commercialism and institutionalization, or the value of musical aims "as such" and wider sociopolitical aims, he describes the consequences the national and regional policies have, or do not have, in a local context.

The book is divided into three main chapters. The first describes the case studies and the motives for arranging concerts. The different backgrounds of the organizations inevitably also mean that they have different ideals and definitions of quality in their work. Kaijser introduces the concept of *modus* to describe these variations, which not only comprise organizational structure, but also the mode, sound or feeling that characterizes the work of the arrangers and their comprehension of success.

The second main chapter describes the political and institutional configurations that frame the functions of the concert arrangers. Cultural policies form a more or less self-evident part of the daily activities of each of the organizations, but it would be erroneous to believe that formal principles unambiguously lead to clear-cut implementation, or rejection for that matter, of general cultural politics. Instead Kaijser emphasizes the negotiations that the organizers carry out in their daily activities. On a general level, a certain strategy, which is based on municipal and national rules, cultural policies, distribution of financial support etc., forms an institutional framework for the actions of the individual organization. The rules and routines of this strategy are then carried out in various ways, depending on the tactics chosen by the organization in its daily work.

The specific characters of the case studies lead Kaijser to ponder on the importance of musical gen-

re in the third main chapter of the book. Following Franco Fabbri's (misspelled Fabri in the book) categorization, the author describes the differences between the genres as socially and historically sanctioned conventions. These conventions are made up of formal, semiotic, performance-related, ideological and commercial principles that structure the expectations of those involved. Successful concerts – whether in classical, jazz or rock music – imply a certain congruence between the execution of the arrangements and the conventions of the genre.

One of the outcomes of the study is that the genre conventions and modus descriptive of each organizer seem to guide the activities and, consequently, also the social life in a far-reaching way. The organizations (and the larger networks each organization belongs to) are held apart from each other by differences in ideas of music and cultural competence, and the arrangements do not give opportunities for meetings between different attitudes and approaches. In this way, the national ambitions of the state policy contribute to diversifying local concert life and supplementing the media output, but also to a continuing social stratification on a regional level.

Musikens ögonblick, meaning “Moments of Music”, is in many ways a fascinating description of the ideologies and grassroots activities within the live scene, but in some respects it leaves the reader slightly puzzled. The book is easily accessible. The text has been tidied of references and many theoretical details, which are briefly described in the footnotes, and many photographs visualize the differences between the case studies in a telling way. However, at times, the research report would probably have gained from a stricter academic approach. For example, important background information about the relationship between the commissioner of the study and the researcher is “hidden” in an appendix. Following the general trends of cultural studies, a recurring self-reflexive discussion on the position of the researcher throughout the text would have felt more natural, not least as the commissioner, the County Music Organization of Gävleborg County, is also a key research object in the study. On the whole, the solid ethnography would maybe have gained from a more thorough theoretical discussion, which not only would have given the text more academic depth, but also universal applicability.

Despite the criticism, this clearly is an enlighten-

ing book. The general approach alone makes it interesting. Questions of cultural activities and administration are far too important to be left solely to economic or administrative sciences. Instead we need more researchers who aim at “giving a cultural comprehension of culture”, as Kaijser describes his approach. Music is, after all, not only art or business, but also culture in the broad sense of the word.

Johannes Brusila, Åbo

Reading Public Sculpture: Contextualizing and Recontextualizing Art in Profane and Sacred Space

Harri Kalha, *Tapaus Havis Amanda*. Siveellisyys ja sukupuoli vuoden 1908 suihkulähdekiistassa. Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki 2008. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 238. 246 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-222-045-5.

Liisa Lindgren, *Memoria*. Hautakuvanveisto ja muistojen kulttuuri. Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki 2009. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia 1211, Tiede. 312 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-222-068-4.

■ During last year, two profoundly different books about public sculpture were published in Finland. In both books, the research interest was focused on the various meanings of public sculpture in their cultural and social surroundings and in the context of the sculptures' erection period. However, the theoretical and methodological approaches in the books vary greatly from one another and, consequently, the books indicate how the same object – a sculpture in a public space – can, in contemporary research, be analysed from profoundly different viewpoints and theoretical orientations.

In contemporary art research, language is often a research object in itself and is intertwined with the meaning-making processes of visibility. Language plays this kind of fundamental role in Harri Kalha's book *Tapaus Havis Amanda*. *Siveellisyys ja sukupuoli vuoden 1908 suihkulähdekiistassa* (Case Havis Amanda. Chastity and Gender in a Fountain Debate in 1908), which focuses on the various meanings of the famous sculpture, erected in Helsinki in 1908. The Finnish artist Ville Vallgren sculpted the work in Paris using local models and following the Parisian ideals of modern fountain sculp-

tures. The sculpture, called *Havis Amanda*, depicts a nude female figure placed on a high pedestal in the middle of a fountain pool, in which water spurts out from the mouths of fishes and sea lions. The sculpture immediately caused an intensive public discussion in Helsinki-centred newspapers and periodicals, in which it was either defended or objected, depending on the writer's standpoint. Kalha's aim is to analyse the discussion and illustrate the ideological aspects regarding the questions of chastity, morality, virtue and gender, which collided in the debate. The nude female figure, located in the lively public space on Helsinki's Market Square, brought up such then-current topics as womanhood, female body, sexuality, moral codes and related notions. Consequently, the sculpture offered a public forum for the "hot" topics of the day, channelled through the nude body of *Havis Amanda*.

Kalha approaches his topic through discourse analytic reading. He dissects interestingly various kinds of texts – art criticism, opinion writings, letters to editors, articles, causeries, caricatures – in which *Havis Amanda* (or opinions of other writers) were criticised, supported or analysed. In the texts, various ideological approaches criss-cross and collide. Even though the debate at first seems to show a division between male writers defending the aesthetic modernism of the sculpture and female suffragettes objecting to the obscene nudity of the female figure, a deeper analysis uncovers more diverse and heterogeneous approaches to the issues of chastity, sexuality and gender. Some writers stressed nationalistic standpoints, according to which the aim of art was to foster national imageries and communality. The nationalistic ideology of art clashed with the ideology of aesthetic modernism and, in a broader sense, with the rising social and cultural modernity and its new moral codes. In addition, the debate reflected the current discussions of daily politics, such as the aims of the women's movement. However, the views of the female writers taking part in the debate did not form a unified front – female views were also expressed in various discourses. Consequently, the debate provided a forum for several colliding standpoints: Finnishness vs. internationality (or otherness), tradition vs. modernity, social morality vs. aesthetics, private sphere vs. public sphere etc.

The examined texts were first published in several newspapers and periodicals, including newspa-

pers of different political parties, newspapers published in Finnish and Swedish, cultural periodicals, women's movement periodicals as well as humour magazines of the day. Because of this, the texts cover a wide range of genres and the status and role of the writers vary greatly. In addition, the texts were published in forums which had very different publishing policies and aims. However, Kalha does not analyse how the writer's status and role or genre conventions and publishing policies influenced the texts or the rhetoric and meaning-making in them. Discourse theorist Norman Fairclough calls this dimension of discourse a discourse practice. The writer's status and role, the genre conventions and publishing policies set boundaries to how and what kind of views are suitable to be expressed in different literary forums. Furthermore, these factors have an effect on how the texts were supposed to be received.

Kalha explores his data by setting the topics in a broader literary climate of the period. He illustrates the image of Paris, which was discursively produced in literature at the time of *Havis Amanda*'s erection. Furthermore, Kalha connects the sculpture to various literary debates and texts on chastity, nudity and sexual morals, which were current at the end of the first decade of the 20th century. In his analysis, Kalha uses some contemporary concepts of gender studies in order to illuminate the problematics of the debate. The choice is rewarding. By presenting what kind of concepts were not possible to use in the discussion, Kalha indicates the focal points of the debate. The writers at the time could not use the concepts of sexism, chauvinism, masculinism, phallus, objectifying, gendering, hegemony or patriarchy to analyse and justify their opinions. Neither could they conceptualise the sculpture, which was objectifying, erotically charged, hierarchical, normative and satiated by heterosexual male gaze. Towards the end of the book, Kalha frees himself from the strict text analysis and ponders more intuitively on the psycho-sexual motives of some female writers. Kalha ends his book with a meta-level discussion on the research process. In particular, the discussion on the documentation of the debate in the Central Art Archives of the Finnish National Gallery is interesting and indicates how the history of documentation has been (and, inevitably, still is) profoundly selective and interlocked with the discursive meaning-making of cultural phenomena.

Kalha's book on *Havis Amanda* is, in a sense, a companion to his previous book, which discussed the Finnish artist Magnus Enckell – both are “cases”. This series of case studies focused on gender and sexuality will be continued in his next book.

Havis Amanda and the debate it caused have previously been studied by Marja Jalava and Liisa Lindgren. Lindgren's latest book *Memoria. Hautakuvanveisto ja muistojen kulttuuri* (Memoria. Sepulchral Sculpture and the Culture of Memories) introduces and analyses sculptures in Finnish Lutheran cemeteries from the second half of the 19th century to the first decades of the 20th century. Sepulchral sculpture has not been in the focus of art historical research for decades. Art historians have often been more interested in public memorials and non-commissioned productions by sculptors and, consequently, focusing on this area is very welcome in Finnish art history. Lindgren's book indicates how vast and manifold a phenomenon sepulchral sculpture is: cemetery sculptures do not only express the changes of styles and notions in art, but also changes of practices in communal and collective mourning and memorial. Besides the notions of religion, cemetery sculpture manifests profoundly secular values and hierarchies as well as the cultural and social power relations both among the deceased and the mourners. The visibility of cemetery sculpture manifests family background and prosperity, social group and cultural ties. The form and symbols of the sculptures vary according to profession and the social position of the deceased.

In her book, Lindgren explores how the mourning tradition has changed and how the imageries in the cemetery sculptures have reflected these changes. Besides the visibility of sculpture, Lindgren also discusses books about cemetery sculpture, purchase processes of sculptures as well as memorial events organised on graves and the social positions of the deceased. In the end of the book, Lindgren discusses more in detail the iconography of the common figures used in cemetery sculpture. She describes interestingly how these figures have their origins in both Christian imageries (various types of angels), in classicist motives (e.g. Thanatos) and in non-religious themes (different types of mourner figures). The sepulchral figures may also refer to a broader understanding of spirituality. For example, the theme of *semper excelsior*, in which a figure is de-

picted being in communion with higher powers, became popular due to the influence of the Theosophic movement at the end of the 19th century.

The book broadens Lindgren's vast work on Finnish monument sculpture. As in her previous books, the approach is in a historical perspective. The contents of the book are based on extensive archive work and the conclusions are drawn from historical, iconographic and iconological analyses. The illustrations show a great number of well-known but also more rarely seen cemetery sculptures. The research is focused on the period when monument sculpture, including sepulchral sculpture, was closely connected with the heroic nationalistic ethos. The cemetery sculptures portraying the cultic Great Men are analysed in detail. In addition, the author focuses her interest on the sculptures made by the established and well-known sculptors of the Golden Age of Finnish art. The modernist upheavals in the memorial culture and the tradition of monument sculpture, which inevitably had an effect on sepulchral sculpture, are left outside from the focus of the book. The analysis of these changes would form an interesting and natural continuation to the topic of the book.

Because of the different functions of the sculptures explored in these books, the conceptual frames of the studies differ from one another. Sepulchral sculptures are intertwined with contexts of grief, mourning, memorial, piety and religion. Unlike sepulchral sculptures, *Havis Amanda* was erected for the purpose of modernising the city and making public spaces more aesthetic. At the turn of the century, the intent of the capital city was to lift the image of Helsinki to the ‘European level’, and erecting public sculptures was one way of promoting the aim. In spite of the differing functions of the sculptures, both books analyse and explain the change in the meanings of the visibility of sculpture along the passage of time. They illustrate how the interpretation of sculpture is context-based, depending on cultural, social and political dialogue of the community. Both books indicate how visibility is related with identity processing – either on national, communal or individual levels. The books contribute to the research of Finnish public sculpture and provide welcome perspectives on the research of meanings and meaning-making processes of sculptures in public spaces.

Tuuli Lähdesmäki, Jyväskylä

Two Centuries of Danish Traditions

Else Marie Kofod, *Traditionen tro? Hverdag og fest igjennem 200 år*. Folkemindesamlingens kulturstudier 9. Syddansk universitetsforlag, Odense 2008. 492 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-7674-291-1.

■ Else Marie Kofod begins her huge book about Danish traditions, manners and customs by stating that we tend to ignore and not notice rituals and traditions encapsulated in our own everyday life. The study of rituals can even be considered a useless task. As Kofod claims and proves, analysing human behaviour in its ritual form is by no means meaningless work.

The aim of Else Marie Kofod's book is to study changes in the Danish life cycle rituals during two hundred years, focusing on the time of revitalized rituals during the last few decades. Kofod originally planned to use archive material in her study and also to do new fieldwork. However, the archive material proved to give information only about the old rural society. Material about the bourgeois classes and urban society was scarce. This was a problem, as precisely these social classes are crucial when describing the processes of change in ritual life.

With the help of contacts in the field (priests, personnel at bridal fairs, local museums) Kofod managed to compile interview material that formed a complement to the archive sources in *Dansk Folkemindesamling*. Her material includes web questionnaires, an opinion poll conducted by telephone covering the whole country, and material collected from the media: newspaper clippings and television programmes dealing with traditions and feasts. Kofod states that all her different types of material are mediators and creators of social experience. All available field methods have been used when putting together a solid base for research.

The analyses of this rich material are systematically presented. Kofod has chosen to arrange each chapter chronologically, dealing first with the rural and the bourgeois societies in the nineteenth century, moving on to different social groups in the period 1870–1970 and finally describing the period 1970–2000. This arrangement seems a bit mechanical, but I can see the need of some sort of structure when describing such a diversity of themes in chronological order.

Kofod starts by defining the necessary terminology, feasts, rituals and traditions versus everyday life.

A study of traditions must start by examining the rituals that are the very core of traditions. Rituals are delimited in time and space and create a connection between the individual and the collective. Basic values can be expressed in a ritual; a ritual creates order and can disguise cultural disorder. It can also be regarded as a practice that sets boundaries when announcing social positions or strategies. Social class and living circumstances influence the festivities, and so do other factors such as leisure time, space, distance, communications, the media and working life.

In the first chapter Kofod discusses the manifestations of “prestige and status symbols”, for example in meal habits in the old peasant society, how self-control and good taste were the slogans in bourgeois circles in the nineteenth century and how polishing one's manners and renewing entertainments marked the lifestyle in rural circles during the period 1870–1970. The lifestyle milieus of the period 1970–2000 finally threw away many status symbols older generations had painstakingly acquired, and in the late twentieth century the urge to create visibility and uniqueness set the tone.

The chapter dealing with “family and home” examines the importance of family authority and the significance of home. A whole chapter is dedicated to the communication system of giving gifts. Three large chapters of the book deal with wedding traditions, texts containing an enormous amount of information. In most societies the wedding has been considered the most important feast in the life cycle.

We learn about the history of the bridal waltz, kissing rituals, and other superstitious practices intended to give the bridal couple luck. Many of these “traditions” are not as old as is generally thought. When speaking of traditions we tend to construct continuity with the old “genuine” customs, a continuity that often has no historic foundation. Kofod also devotes a chapter to the mass media as a distributor of traditions.

Throughout the book I marvelled at the quantity of information and wondered about its origin. The source material is presented in the last part of the book, under the heading “Appendix”. This exciting chapter that describes the laborious work of compiling the source material also gives a background to many of Kofod's editorial decisions. It could well have been placed at the beginning of the book.

An index would have been useful – but I can see that making one would have been a challenging

task. Finally, I have to praise the excellent illustrations. The informative and detailed texts gave every picture an added value.

Else Marie Kofod concludes her book by stating that rituals and customs are both meaningful and useful. The same adjectives can be used when describing her solid study of everyday life and festivities through 200 years.

Carola Ekrem, Helsingfors

Reindeer Fences in Focus

Teppo Korhonen, Poroerotus. Historia, toiminta ja tekniset ratkaisut. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2008. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia 1165. 309 pp. Ill. Maps. ISBN 978-951-746-989-0.

■ Reindeer herding is undoubtedly one of the most classical themes in ethnological studies. In the last few years several studies have been published on reindeer herding, but from different perspectives and areas. Teppo Korhonen's book *Poroerotus* focuses on one important theme in reindeer herding, namely the history and functions of reindeer separation. Reindeer separation is an important part of the working year in reindeer herding, because it can be regarded as a harvest of sorts. Today's reindeer herding – or reindeer management – is concentrated on meat production and, during reindeer separations, the animals to be sold and slaughtered are separated from the other reindeer.

The book contains two parts: the first part concentrates on reindeer herding and the reindeer separations, the second part on the project for repairing reindeer fences financed and organised by the National Board of Antiquities. The fences discussed by Korhonen in this book represent different ecological and ethnic reindeer herding areas. One of them is the stone fence of Erttegvärrin in Utsjoki (Ohjecohka). The fences of Sammalsekä in Kittilä and Sallivaara in Inari are situated near each other. The fourth fence is Saarivaara in Savukoski in eastern Lapland. The fences are important in terms of their culture or in terms of their cultural environment (landscape). All the fences are important from local cultural or local landscape perspectives.

Korhonen uses a cultural historical perspective in order to describe the history, work, and meaning of

reindeer fences and separations. In addition to separation, the marking of reindeer calves is also done within these – often the same – fences. This stage of reindeer herding has been discussed in other publications.

Before Korhonen focuses on how the reindeer herder transports the reindeer to the fence, he introduces the history of reindeer herding and the stage before separations. The author describes thoroughly the history and structure of the fences as well as the important activity, reindeer separation, as it has passed through several stages from the beginning of the reindeer herders' association at the end of 19th century through the present. He also takes into account the latest changes caused by membership in the European Union. Korhonen also takes advantage of the extensive publications that have been done on reindeer herding from other parts of Finland.

It is pleasing that the author also describes the living conditions and social activities during separations, i.e. where and how reindeer herders and other participants spend their nights, because the separations could last several days. Reindeer separations have been important social events for the local inhabitants. The vivid descriptions from the different participants discuss different aspects of human life, for example romances and having fun during reindeer separations.

The last chapter, which is long and well illustrated with photos and different drawings, concentrates on the repair project financed and organised by the National Board of Antiquities. The author of the book has been the person in charge of this project since 1987. All the phases of the repair work are well documented and described. Also, Korhonen discusses some principles for the repair work. A short list with explanations of the special words regarding the environment and reindeer herding used in this book, is included.

There are a couple of remarks that I have to make on this publication. The author uses both the forms Saami (*saamelainen*) and Lapp (*lappalainen*), although the correct way today is to use the form Saami. Although the term used in the sources is *lappalainen*, it must not be used anymore in publications. There was also some confusion with the places. There have earlier been two different reindeer owners' association called Kyrö, namely Kyrö in Inari and Kyrö in Kittilä. The author has occasionally confused these two associations.

The multiple voices of the local people, including reindeer herders, reindeer buyers and members of reindeer herding families, are included in this publication. The book contains many good and lengthy citations from the narrators. This surely makes for interesting reading and will serve as a valuable memory for the children and grandchildren of the narrators.

Although so many studies have been done and books have been published on reindeer herding, this publication has its own value. The knowledge and information which have been collected from the reindeer herders and other local interviewees has now been repatriated to them, although here only in Finnish, not yet in Saami. Reindeer herding is an important part of the cultural heritage of Northern Finland and thus this book is also a valuable contribution to it. Personally, I also feel it honours the descendants of the people who are the actors and principle narrators in this publication

Helena Ruotsala, Turku

Touching Things

Ethnological Aspects of Modern Material Culture. Pirjo Korhakangas, Tiina-Riitta Lappi & Heli Niskanen (eds.). Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki 2008. 277 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-952-222-091-2.

■ *Touching Things. Ethnological Aspects of Modern Material Culture* explores material culture from an ethnological and anthropological point of view in mainly Finnish and Hungarian contexts. The book is the result of the ninth Finnish-Hungarian symposium, which was held in Jyväskylä in the summer of 2006. The book consists of 21 articles written by the participants of the symposium. In these articles, the writers describe, conceptualize, contextualize, and analyze material culture with references to different eras, places and social contexts.

The articles are divided into four different chapters according to themes; the themes are “objects and time”, “objects, museums, authenticity”, “objects, identity, consumption” and “objects and everyday life”. All of the articles are written in English, seven of them by Finns and 14 by Hungarians. The first two are written by Hungarians Attila Paládi-Kovács and Tamás Mohay, both of whom continue the discussion initiated in the introduction

of the book and deal with how material culture has been studied over time in European Ethnology, both as a concept and as an object of study. The more ethnographically influenced study of material culture, which was more common during the first half of the 19th century, has been replaced, over the last decades, by a new ethnological viewpoint that takes into consideration the social and cultural contexts in which the material culture is situated. Focus has also been placed on material culture as a way of generating and strengthening personal and / or group identity.

In the other two articles concerned with this theme of “objects and time”, Mária Flórián and Tímea Bata examine history and tradition in contrast to modernity and changes. The very different contexts in these two articles give the reader an insight into the variety of ethnological research being conducted on material culture. From one point of view, a special Hungarian garment, the fur cloak, represents a significant historical influence on research as the garment can be traced back to the 16th century. While from another perspective, as in Bata’s article, the focus can lie on present day life and souvenirs or keepsakes from honeymoons with their suggested special role and meaning in contemporary society.

How the importance and role of material culture has shifted in museums is the topic of interest in the articles written by Zoltán Fejős, László Mód, Hanneleena Hieta and Péter Illés. These articles were all selected as concerning the theme “objects, museums, authenticity”. Most of the examples presented in these articles are from Hungary and only one article has a Finnish connection. The writers critically analyze the process of musealization and how objects, especially contemporary objects, find their way into museums. What happens when private objects become museum objects or are given over into the hands of a researcher? The articles show that the problems that, in general, are faced by all museums are both international and typical of our time.

The majority of the articles are concerned with the two remaining themes “objects, identity, consumption” and “objects and everyday life”. In many of these articles the writers examine the consumption of objects, which impels the discussion forward towards a more modern ethnology. The writers Ildikó Sz. Kristóf, Anna-Maria Åström, Pirjo Korhakangas and Zsuzsa Szarvas discuss how material

culture has been given a different meaning, significance and value in our time due to fabrication and mass production. The writers also discuss methodological questions, categorizations, the role of advertisements and the relationship between objects and identity. The last three articles concerned with this theme are written by Arja Turunen, Kata Jávör and Marketta Luutonen, and focus on clothing and how clothing can symbolize different things in different contexts and time periods, and thus reflect change in society.

In the last chapter “objects and everyday life” the discussion focusses on the relationship between material culture and people. In articles by Gábor Wilhelm, János Bali and Jussi Lehtonen examples are taken from mobile service forms in the countryside, as well as from how a certain type of object can reflect the changes in gender roles. Iina Wahlström’s and Zsuzsanna Batári’s articles discuss the meanings of and the future demand for a second home in Finland, as well the aspiration to have a summer kitchen in Hungary. In these two cases, they are both faced with the dilemma of something traditional having to meet the needs of modern life. In the last article Erika Vass describes and analyzes how a special type of Hungarian house decoration has had different meanings during the past decades.

Touching Things is a welcomed addition to the flow of ethnological publications and shows that material culture can be studied from various angles with new methods and research questions. Therefore proving that research into material culture is by no means passé, but revitalizing and innovative.

A book concerning material culture could have consisted of more photographs and illustrations than the rather limited number found in *Touching Things*. The language use in the book is good but sometimes shifts between British English and American English. The articles are generally of a suitable length but differ considerably, in length, when compared to each other. The thematical division of the articles into the different chapters is very pleasing as a dialog almost seems to be created between the articles, even if they are not written in relation to each other. The contributors and editors have therefore successfully managed to bring together separate articles into an interesting whole that inspires the reader from the beginning to the end. This is definitely something that gives this particular congress publication an extra value.

The book also gives an excellent insight into, and an update of, both a more traditional ethnology as well as a more postmodern ethnology. *Touching Things* is therefore a successful example of a well-structured and interesting congress publication, which gives a diverse picture of material culture and its complexity, as well as the possibilities and methods for contemporary ethnological studies on material culture.

Sanna Lillbroända-Annala, Åbo

Identity of Orcadians

Michael A. Lange, *The Norwegian Scots: An Anthropological Interpretation of Viking-Scottish Identity in the Orkney Islands*. The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter 2007. 311 pp. Ill. 3 maps, 10 photographs. ISBN-13: 979-0-7734-53262-3; ISBN-10: 0-7734-5362-8.

■ The central aim of this enlightening book, based on 11 months fieldwork in Stromness, Orkney, is how “the people of Orkney discursively construct and negotiate their cultural identity as Orcadians” (1) through informal narrative. As Lange underlines at the start, his (healthy) aim is to avoid the common approach whereby scholars work at “establishing their credibility in the field” by “girding themselves with the latest theory and marching off toward some slightly out-of-date theorist whom they have designated as their patsy”, waving “new titles and freshly coined terms at their enemy, dropping big names in the field to act as their reinforcements” (1). Instead he proposes “use various theories and theorists ... to help find my ways toward some understanding of how people in Orkney think of themselves and their island home” (1), concentrating first and foremost on the voices of the people themselves and the ways in which they view – and express – their identity/ies. This is an approach that many others worshipping at the altar of theory would do well to learn from.

Another refreshing feature of Lange’s approach is his aim to cross disciplinary borders, and “combine the folkloric and the anthropological, to use folklore as an ethnographic window into interpreting culture” (8), working on bridging “the gap between the disciplines of folklore and anthropology, more broadly between the humanities and the social sciences” (14) and demonstrating “the usefulness of

folkloric methodologies and ideas to anthropology and vice versa" (15). We thus find a broad range of approaches being effectively applied here, ranging from those of Richard Bauman (on performance), and Jack Niles (on narrative), to the work of Roger Abrahams (on nature of identity), Anthony P. Cohen (on semiotic anthropology), and Victor Turner (on the idea of *communitas*). This book thus effectively stands alongside some of Lange's models, such as those of Henry Glassie (on Ballymenone, Ireland: 1982 and 2006); Anthony Cohen (on Whalsay, Shetland: 1982 and 1987); Jane Nadel-Klein (on Fer-ryden, Scotland: 2003), and Sharon Macdonald (on Carnan, Scotland: 1997).

The book is divided into five key chapters. Chapter 1, "Background: Setting the Scene" (21–59), which starts with a description of daily life and "blether" (chat) in Stromness, provides a useful introduction to the area, and the history of Orkney, concentrating particularly on those aspects that are deemed important by those living in it. Emphasis is naturally placed on the early period of archaeological remains from the Neolithic to Viking Ages (like Skara Brae, the Ring of Brodgar and Maes Howe), but note is also paid to Orkney's changing status as it came under the cultural dominance of Scotland (after 1468), and later under further foreign influence via the Hudson's Bay Company, its key strategic role in the two world wars, and most recently, its connection to North Sea Oil. Attention is also paid to the role played by emigration and immigration, to inner class differences and hierarchies, and the influence wielded by not only ancient place names, and medieval saga literature but also the modern development of tourism and Orkney brand-names.

Chapter 2, "Being Important, Being 'Biggy'" (62–110), on self image and self presentation in Orkney, starts by dealing with a phenomenon well known in other island communities in the North Atlantic (Iceland being a perfect example), in other words, a certain sense of self-pride and self assurance as a community (often based on history and the sometimes exaggerated achievements of local figures), which clashes with an inner feeling of international inferiority. As Lange underlines, this latter feature is particularly strong in Orkney where is complicated by a further sense that personal boasting (being "biggy") within the community is something that is frowned on. The chapter examines these feelings in some detail, noting among other things

the effect that the fear of being "biggy" has, not only on getting the ever stoic Orcadians to express feelings and opinions in the media and in committee work, but also on the wary Orcadian view of outsiders who often find it easier to take an active role in such matters.

Chapter 3, "Orcadian Accent and Dialect" (111–151) is particularly valuable for those interested in the connections between language, dialect and regional identity, and the importance this has for a sense of individual identity and difference and a sense of "authentic" belonging (especially relevant in Norway, Iceland and the Faroes, as well as in Ireland, Wales and Scotland). With effective application to the ideas of thinkers like Bendix, Coupland and Ricoeur on the ideas of "authenticity" and the complex relationship between language and identity, Lange underlines how such questions are very much a matter of negotiation between speaker and (local) listener. He also underlines the degree to which the fragile survival and persistence of the Orcadian dialect in today's global society is seen by many Orcadians as a feature that connects them not only to their Scandinavian "heritage", but also a golden "Viking" past, and thus a sense historical and international importance. It also helps them differentiate themselves from mainland Scotland.

Chapter 4 on "Heritage" (153–211) is also essential reading for anyone interested in the question of the nature and role of heritage and its relationship to local identity. Drawing on the work of earlier scholars like McCrone, Morris and Kieley, Macdonald, and Hewison (interestingly enough no mention is made of the work of David Lowenthal), Lange examines the way intangible and tangible heritage have become closely intertwined for many Orcadians. Indeed, as he demonstrates, their sense of identity is closely related to the aforementioned idea of a romantic "golden" Nordic past, something objectified by the archaeological remains on the island which have attained particular symbolic value for both the people of Orkney and their visitors. At the same time, as Lange points out, heritage always involves a degree of choice and often construction, and often ignores other less glorious features of a society and its past: as one informant says, heritage is what people "want to keep" (194). As Lange shows, this can be seen as both a strength and a weakness, but nonetheless helps to underline the close connections between the Orkney people and

the landscape they live in. It also gives them a sense of worth and responsibility, and once again allows them to see themselves as being different from the rest of Scotland.

Chapter 5 on “Belonging: Orkney Identity, Orkney Voices” builds on the above discussion, now focusing on how the Orcadians themselves explain their modern sense of identity in their conversations with Lange and each other. As Lange effectively demonstrates here, identity is as much about underlining boundaries and borderlines as it is about creating a sense of belonging. It has multiple layers (ranging from the international to degrees of “importance” within a classroom or group of friends), and is not only a matter of personal feeling but a sense of how one is received by others. It is thus a matter of negotiation. Through analysis of various kinds of discourse, ranging from informal conversation to literary, tourist and commercial images, and even the influential appearance of an Orcadian on reality television, Lange shows how the Orkney sense of identity is both shared and individual, and connected to different things in different contexts: the landscape, the language, the history, and, as always, difference from Scotland. Like heritage, in each case it involves a degree of construction and choice, but is nonetheless daily legitimised by living facts which range from Old Norse manuscripts to archaeological remains or the family names on the gravestones in the local graveyards.

The book ends with a brief conclusion which returns to the questions raised at the start, underlining the complexity, importance and role of the concept of identity for any group of people.

In general, I have very few criticisms about the material contained within the book itself, apart from its mistaken assertion that the “Vikings” (if that is what they really were) “left Norway in the 10th and 11th centuries” (34), and the fact that in spite of its title, it actually has less to do with connections with the modern Norwegians than the Old Norse world. I would also question whether the Orcadians can be called “the” Norwegian-Scots” (something that seems to ignore the equally Nordic Shetlanders, with whom a little more useful comparison could have been made, to outline yet another level of identity).

More disturbing is the work of the publishers, who could have shown more care and respect with their work. One notes, for example, a strange lack of

standardisation with regard to the positioning of footnote markers (before and after punctuation: see 27, 119–120, 141, 154, 169, 201 and 242 cf. 55, 96, 108 and 118); the positioning of footnotes (see 118–119, where the footnote appears on the wrong page); and the division of footnote material across pages (see, for example, 31–32, 119–120, and 169–170, cf. 231). One also notes an odd imbalance between the print setting of facing pages, and worst of all (at least in the example I received), the fact that page 310 of the index was missing. In its place were two (differing) versions of page 311.

In spite of the above, this well-researched and sensibly discussed book, which shows respect for the individual voices of the people of Orkney, makes for a valuable and welcome addition to earlier studies on local identity, heritage, and the intimate connections between personal narrative and landscape. It should gain a central place among other works dealing with the unique culture and character of the Scottish and North Atlantic Islands.
Terry Gunnell, Reykjavík

Tradition and Tourism in Åland

Tradition och turism på Åland. Att använda kulturarvet. Yrsa Lindqvist (ed.). Meddelanden från Folkkultursarkivet 21. Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland 711. Helsingfors 2008. 240 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-951-583-167-5.

■ During the summer of 2005, a group of researchers in the humanities studied the extent to which symbols of tradition and local history – or to use a more up-to-date expression, cultural heritage – are used in the image of Åland, the popular holiday destination, as it is presented to tourists. The researchers, who all work in the archive world, most of them at the Folk Culture Archives in Helsinki, sought to find out how producers, entrepreneurs, and guides present the islands and their history. The documentation project was based on the classical ethnological methods of fieldwork, participant observation, and interviews. The research group also benefited from marketing material, such as tourist brochures and presentation folders of various kinds. The participants in the project each selected a field in which to collect material, for example, churches, local museums, handicraft, or historic monuments, the aim

being to investigate what the cultural heritage consists of and how it is used by the tourist industry in Åland.

Issues of cultural heritage and heritage tourism inevitably concern questions of history and the use of history, the revival or revitalization of cultural expressions, and the politics of memory. These are questions about active processes concerning what is selected as heritage, who makes the selection, how it is presented and used, and what the consequences of the selection and use may be. What happens to places and things when they are elevated into local/regional or national heritage? How are ideas, objects, and places recoded and reinterpreted when they become symbols of something beyond themselves and are presented in terms of new contexts? Cultural heritage also tends to be linked to questions of authenticity and associated ideas of nostalgia. Re-using history, according to many researchers, means using nostalgia as a strategy and claiming the primacy of authenticity in an artificial and inauthentic present which people find uncomfortable and problematic. As tourists we are therefore expected – when we distance ourselves geographically from our familiar everyday world – to need to get away to other worlds and times, where we can find the balance, continuity, and security that our own fragmented post-modern world seems to be unable to offer. Based on this interpretation, heritage tourism functions as a healing plaster.

As a tourist resort, Åland has made the transition from a bathing place for the cream of society in the late nineteenth century to the promised land of mass tourism with the coming of the ferry traffic started by Vikinglinjen in 1959 and followed by Silja Line in 1961. Ever since then the traffic has been busy, making it easy for all kinds of travellers to get to the islands easily, comfortably, quickly, and above all affordably. The flow of visitors has increased dramatically, from a modest 7,000 in 1948 to 180,000 in 1963 and 2.1 million in 2006!

So what does Åland have to offer tourists, and how is the range on offer linked to the archipelago's own cultural heritage? These are the questions discussed in a number of articles in this volume, the title of which means "Tradition and Tourism in Åland". The authors take the reader to different places where the cultural heritage is staged in various ways. As is fairly natural when it comes to a place like Åland, these include maritime settings,

but we also visit craft shops, churches, and local heritage museums, as well as the Åland countryside.

Meta Sahlström, assistant at the Ostrobothnian Archives of Traditional Culture in Vasa, writes in her interesting paper about Kobbaklintar, a pilot station at the entrance to Mariehamn. It was manned between 1861 and 1971, after which it was transformed into a tourist attraction. The dilapidated buildings were refurbished, a sculptor made a statue of a pilot, 2.15 metres tall, which was erected at the lookout point, and a friends' association was formed to preserve and look after the buildings. Kobbaklintar is now marketed as Mariehamn's and Åland's face towards the sea. The maritime theme is also reinforced by the fact that you can buy Åland roe here under the witty name *Kobba Libre*. Since the Swedish word *rom* means both "roe" and "rum", the name evokes Cuba Libre, as well as sailors, harbour pubs, adventure, and freedom, according to Sahlström. She also claims that people mostly come here in search of authenticity, which should be understood as a desire to get away from today's fragmentation and instability.

In a couple of articles the chief archivist at the Archives of Folk Culture, Carola Ekrem, writes about the churches of Åland. There are sixteen old churches on the island, many of which are popular tourist attractions. They can be perceived as experiences, as religious places, as stages on pilgrimages, and as unique works of art. Ekrem gives examples of the kind of symbols churches are, but she also points out – perhaps too prosaically – how problematic it can be to leave them open; thieves can be attracted to the many valuable objects, cultural heritage in the most literal sense of the term. These valuables are inseparable parts of the church as both an artistic and a spiritual building, but they are unguarded and accessible to all visitors. Making the cultural heritage accessible entails the risk that it will be lost and therefore can no longer be offered. The heritage thus bears the seeds of its own destruction.

Yrsa Lindqvist, editor of the book and also archivist at the Archives of Folk Culture, writes about Åland craft as a symbol of tradition and continuity. She has interviewed craftsmen – two potters, two goldsmiths, four working with textiles, one with wood, and one with wrought iron – who all pursue "traditional" Åland crafts. She finds that the craftsmen are highly visible and have good networks in

Åland, partly through the “Archipelago Taste” (*Skärgårdssmak*) project from 1996. This started with support from the EU and is now run as a joint-stock company with a sphere of operations that comprises both Sweden and Finland. The basic idea of the project is to use local raw materials in order to preserve and increase the number of workplaces in the archipelago. High demands are made of the participants in the project. They are trained through seminars on topics such as marketing and service, and their products have to satisfy certain criteria before they can be given the *Skärgårdssmak* trademark, a white wave on a blue ground. The products are therefore perceived as being typical of Åland, Lindqvist says, not just by tourists but also by residents. Apart from their high craft quality, the products also carry symbolic meanings in the form of small scale, nearness to nature, sustainable development, and a more “genuine” way of living in our mass-production society.

The volume ends with a long article by Anne Bergman, archivist at the Archives of Folk Culture. She takes the reader on a guided tour through the Åland landscape. Bergman accompanied three guided groups in May and July 2005. She begins by highlighting the important role of the guide, whose qualities must include being empathetic, well-informed, extravert, friendly, adaptable, and interested in people, besides having a sense of humour, knowledge, detachment, and knowing not to talk about religion or politics. The guide’s task is to be a kind of ambassador for the place, attracting both locals and tourists. In this work the guide conveys, creates, and strengthens the cultural heritage, partly by putting across an idealized image of the culture.

Bergman also points out that the role of the guide varies according to the place that is being shown. In an authentic setting, she writes, the guide can talk with greater freedom than in a museum, where the tour often follows the thoughts of the exhibition curator. She does not problematize the meaning of an “authentic setting” here, but I guess that she means places like a church, a ruined castle, or an ancient monument where the narrative is not clearly structured as in a museum, where the exhibition is built around a chronology or a theme. But it is of course true that every time an authentic setting is presented by a guide, its authenticity is rewritten and it becomes partly new. The authenticity is fragile and elusive, and mostly just a temporary construction,

and the history of the place is renewed every time it is retold. The authentic, traditional Åland is thus created in a context of active memory politics and is constantly being recreated.

Tradition och turism på Åland is a well-made and aesthetically attractive product. It is accessible in the best sense of the word, with its well-written and profusely illustrated articles. It will no doubt be appreciated as a gift in the region. It should also serve the purpose of marketing the tourist sites that are discussed in it, and as such it will become a part of the cultural heritage it describes. I would not be surprised if it joins the “authentic” crafts and goes on show like other objects at tourist destinations such as local heritage museums, churches, and museums. For that alone it will have fulfilled an important purpose. Yet the volume has more dimensions than that. It is also an important scholarly contribution to the discussion of cultural heritage, perhaps not primarily for its theoretical sophistication, although several of the authors use theoretical approaches in their studies. No, the strength of the book is the many well thought-out empirical examples which can now serve as material for new and deeper studies. I am grateful to the industrious collectors for the rich database they have achieved with their studies and documentation. I presume that their results are now stored in the Archives of Folk Culture, where they will be able to generate many more studies.

Agneta Lilja, Huddinge

Pre-modern Attitudes

Förmoderna livshållningar. Dygder, värden och kunskapsvägar från antiken till upplysningen. Marie Lindstedt Cronberg & Catharina Stenqvist (eds.). Nordic Academic Press, Lund 2008. 329 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-85509-06-5.

■ The hallmark of every advanced culture is a perception of certain historical events that have been significant for that particular culture. This may be a matter of idealizing certain times and phenomena, but it may also lead to the devaluation, or even demonization, of other things in the past. All this is done so that the present and its cultural expressions will seem excellent and praiseworthy for ordinary people. It has often been said that modern culture – not least the school system – neglects to provide a

proper historical background to things in our time. A lack of history, with devastating consequences for judgements and actions in the present can therefore be the result.

It is one matter to retell history so that certain events – often military ones – are fixed in time and allow us to state a date when something happened. This is important, giving the kind of things that can be used in local histories and in tourist contexts. It is much more difficult to try to capture the lifestyle and patterns of action of bygone generations. Yet this is what is so important if we are to understand why people in the past acted as they did, and also to understand modern phenomena and why there can be such inertia in their implementation in our times. I am thinking of issues such as equality for women, the development of morals, and general matters to do with the world of religion. In discussions and in letters to the newspapers today we often hear people wondering why questions of morality and religion cannot be organized in a more rational and consistent manner. What is often forgotten is the inertia that ideas and myths have in our culture and the fact that new attitudes do not develop very quickly. Also, our time is characterized by a conglomerate of philosophies, beliefs, and moral judgements that struggle with each other for supremacy and dominance.

This book, with a title meaning “Pre-modern Attitudes to Life: Virtues, Values, and Paths to Knowledge from Antiquity to the Enlightenment”, sets itself the task of acquainting us with the concept of “pre-modern”. This is actually a task that is far too big for a single book. The solution is to look at different periods in history through articles dealing with matters of knowledge, values, and religion. The book is a result of a network known as *Life Attitudes: Ideas, Virtues, and Values in Pre-modern and Early-modern Times*, led by Marie Lindstedt Cronberg and Catharina Stenqvist, mainly funded by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation.

The book contains fourteen articles by different authors with an introductory description by the editors where the project is presented and the different contributions are summarized. The articles cover a long time span, from classical antiquity via the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. It goes without saying that it would not be possible in a single long article to outline the whole development that took place over such a long time, and therefore it was sensible to include articles that deepen our knowl-

edge in particular fields. We learn about what friendship and love meant in the past, what patience and honour have meant, how political wisdom and acts of war have been interpreted, about the transition from philosophy with its roots in antiquity to the ethical and moral views of Christianity, all in contrast to folk traditions, especially concerning marriage and the outlook on women in society. It is thus a broad spectrum of extremely interesting issues that are highlighted here, making it impossible to review each article separately. I shall content myself with saying that the authors present highly valuable knowledge, which ought to be a part of general public awareness and school education, although that is probably hoping too much.

In reading this book I have above all been struck by the pervasive part played by Christian beliefs in the interpretation of so-called scientific data, and by how the moral values of the church have been interpreted in relation to folk customs with a long tradition, and by how symbols such as heaven and hell have been able to make such a big impact on folk beliefs. The book is in fact a rich source for an understanding of how previous generations have argued and acted in various situations. We find parallels to this in many parts of the world today, where the modern way of thinking has not yet caught on – to say nothing of the late-modern mentality. And one is struck by how close the pre-modern attitude to life really is to us in historical terms. One may wonder whether all the things in our late-modern society can be regarded as positive. The reading of this valuable book should at least help us to better understand cultures in our world that resemble the pre-modern attitudes described here. In an intercultural dialogue, for example, with some of our immigrant cultures, the knowledge conveyed by this book is essential.

Nils G. Holm, Åbo

Contemporary Folk Art

Rondellhundar och schablonspindlar. Folkkonst i tiden. Eva Londos (ed.). Carlsson Bokförlag, Stockholm i samarbete med Jönköpings läns museum 2009. 192 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7331-222-6.

■ The title arouses one’s curiosity, and the picture on the front cover showing a policewoman and a

roundabout dog no less so, particularly when it is a report from a scholarly seminar, the eighth seminar on folk art. Folk art is an old ethnological topic, and it is interesting that it is subjected to discussion and problematization here in both contemporary and historical dimensions. The seminar had three main themes: narrative in folk art, illegal creativity in the public space, and established artists drawing inspiration from folk art.

The publication begins with theoretical papers in which the term itself and its present-day use are discussed. Barbro Klein regards “folk art” as a heuristic term, not least in relation to handicraft and art. The discussion is then carried on to illegal folk art in the urban space, and with reference to American graffiti. Here one may wonder that no parallels are drawn to Torkild Hinrichsen’s fieldwork and museum exhibition about graffiti in Hamburg, where the graffiti is more comparable to a Nordic situation than the American graffiti is.

There are countless definitions of folk art, and Bo Lönnqvist makes an interesting systematization and categorization of older ethnological definitions: (1) rural handicraft or peasant art; (2) hierarchically subordinate, for example, an occupational category; (3) undatable and styleless folk art; and (4) folk art defined by cartographic method. Another form of analysis is anthropological, in which the study of “ethno-art” is central, and folk art is interpreted as non-material culture or as a communication process. Bo Lönnqvist shows how different and often contradictory the many definitions have been. In short: the term folk art is anything but unambiguous, and it is used in historical and contemporary studies and in exhibitions.

Sonja Berlin tells us that the term “traditional art” is used in Norway out of a desire to assemble forms of art that are handed down, both music and folk art, in a single concept. “Traditional art” is also preferred because the word *folk* can have negative connotations. It would have been interesting if parallels had been drawn to other countries; in Hungary, for example, music, dance, and material culture are analysed in a similar way. On the other hand, it would be much more difficult to do this in Denmark, where we do not have the same musical traditions.

Nils-Arvid Bringéus analyses southern Swedish wall hangings and hand-coloured woodcuts from a narrative point of view. The pre-industrial pictorial world was made for a population of non-readers,

and here biblical stories from the Old and the New Testament were translated into pictorial language.

The next four papers are studies of examples of narrative folk art, dealing with paintings of scenes from folklife, wood carving, the large patchwork rug made by the people of Botkyrka, and newly-made historical costumes.

The next papers deal with modern-day illegal creativity, and a Danish reader feels envious of the Swedish creativity and the folk protest with the home-made dog sculptures placed in Swedish roundabouts, and Lars Vilks’s garden shed in Jönköping. Then there is an article about unauthorized graffiti. All three are temporary phenomena that change quickly over time, which is totally in keeping with the *Zeitgeist*. At least as exciting is the artist Peter Johansson, whose work is often based on modern, everyday folk art! If only we had such artists in Denmark!

Johan Knutsson shows that, while traditional folk art disappeared at the end of the nineteenth century, it was a source of inspiration for artists at the time. This was especially true for textile art, and Berit Eldvik tells of four such textile artists.

Johanna Rosenqvist discusses the differences between folk artists and practitioners of handicraft and arrives at the conclusion that folk artists are to a high degree eccentric men, whereas handicraft practitioners are mostly women working with textiles. The same could be said, by and large, about Denmark.

Borghild Håkansson uses the term “other art”, but could in my opinion just as well have spoken about folk art. She says that “other art” is especially created in the countryside depending on factors such as a good place, the availability of material, and craft skill – the same applies in Denmark.

Finally, the last two papers show that such different things as gardens and PC cabinets are also places where folk art is practised.

Generally speaking, the most interesting papers are the discussions of the usefulness of the term “folk art” in the present day and those dealing with contemporary phenomena, not least because pre-industrial folk art has been the subject of so many analyses in the past. One may wonder, however, why not one of the authors seems to know of the discussions in Germany about the present-day use of the term, for instance in the publications of Heinrich Mehl.

All in all, the papers show a very wide spread, with theoretical discussions, ethnological studies of folk art, and descriptions of the work of present-day folk artists. This makes the book uneven, but it also shows that the term is operational for both historical and contemporary material and simultaneously that it is impossible to provide an unambiguous definition of folk art. And it shows that folk art is alive and well!

Helle Ravn, Rudkøbing

Tracing Jewish Immigration History

Karin Lützen, Mors hemmelighed. På sporet af en jødisk indvandrerhistorie. Gyldendal, Copenhagen 2009. 421 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-02-07476-5.

■ “My Mother’s Secret” is a documentary story about the discovery that the author’s own family history has been based on concealment. The Danish folklorist and historian Karin Lützen grew up with a Danish father and a French mother. Her parents fell in love in Paris in 1946 and her mother came to Denmark in 1947 to get married at the age of 23. Married to director and consul Lützen, she became a proud ambassador of French culture. The elegant and foreign director’s wife stood out somewhat in the provincial town of Fredericia. Karin Lützen grew up to share her mother’s affinity for everything French, and she had strong bonds to her French heritage. However, she knew about no family members apart from her maternal grandfather, who was still alive when she grew up. Lützen’s mother had created her own family of French friends in addition to her parents. It was only in 2003, several years after her mother’s death, that Lützen received information about her French family possibly being Jewish. Lützen, at first a bit hesitant, but soon very enthusiastic, took on the task of not only tracing her own genealogy, but also tracing the intricate history of some of the Jewish migration in Europe during the last 150 years.

Thus the book ends up telling many different stories. It tells the story of Lützen’s own family, about her immediate family and her newfound extended family. Apart from discovering a different truth about her heritage, the main questions behind the book are the ones she asks about her now deceased mother: Why did she never tell her children (or her

husband) about her background? What could her reasons have been? How did this concealment influence her and what did it cost her? Or perhaps it was only a relief to get rid of the past? The story of Karin Lützen’s mother is also a story about the possibility of breaking loose, of creating yourself in your own image, of the possibilities that geographical and social mobility creates for individual re-creation.

“My Mother’s Secret” is also the story of Jewish history in Europe, about the economic, political and religious framework that made Jews migrate to different regions of Europe, and the means by which they created new lives for themselves where they settled. More generally it also becomes the history of migration and immigrants. What is it like to migrate, how do you cope with new language and new customs, how do you create social bonds and belongings? How do the immigrant parents relate to their children? How does the second generation differ from the first generation, and what does the third generation look like? Lützen devotes quite a lot of space to the hometown benefit organizations for immigrants, the organizations called *landsmanshaftn* in Yiddish. After reading this book I share Lützen’s fascination for these organizations. The organizations were intended as a mutual safety net for immigrants. All members paid a small amount to the organization every month and could expect help in return in the event of sickness and death and possibly also unemployment. Social gatherings and balls were places to socialize and celebrate their community, and also places to find future spouses for the children of the members. Arranged marriages were common practice at least until the inter-war era. In many cases these organizations came to play the role of an extended family, and it is fascinating to read about these intricate networks of social and economic bonds, of dependency and support. Towards the end of the book Lützen also lets us take part in the still existing annual ceremony of remembering the dead members. Although in many ways anachronistic and dying organizations, we can feel Lützen’s reverence and excitement about being allowed to take part in this long tradition and being allowed to read some of the names during the ceremonial walk through several of Paris’s cemeteries.

The story of the *landsmanshaftn* and general migration history revealed through Lützen’s book also seems useful as a backdrop to studies of current immigrant life. To me the book is helpful in the study

of how migration changes human conditions and relationships and how it creates both losses and new opportunities.

“My Mother’s Secret” is also a story about the Holocaust, the Shoah, and the results of this for the generations that experienced it, and for later generations. Some 76,000 French Jews were deported, and only 2,500 of them came back. Several of Lützen’s relatives were among the deported. How did this unspeakable tragedy mark the days to come? How did the survivors handle the pain, the guilt, the love, the deceit? Lützen also briefly explores the role the story of the Shoah plays today, and how the narrative and the role of the narrative have changed over time. An upsetting part of the French relationship to their Jews was the reconsiderations of citizenship status after the Vichy regime came to power in 1940. In 1927 a liberal law on citizenship came into force and immigrants who had lived in the country for three years could gain citizenship. The secular French state wanted as many citizens as possible, regardless of religion and background. During the Vichy regime these new citizenships could be reconsidered, and Jews who had gained French citizenship could now risk having it rescinded, and thereby risk deportation.

Not surprisingly, the construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of identities are important issues for Karin Lützen in this book. These are issues that have been a concern through many of her works, and here she discusses it from a new angle. As a researcher who has been particularly clear on the social construction of identities, it is interesting to follow her on this personal quest for “the truth” about her “real family”, and her emotions, experiences and self-analysis throughout this quest.

Being moved is an important element in this book, and an important effect of it. Lützen writes about how she in many ways sees “shared roots” and the value of biological kinship as sentimental constructions. Despite her intellectual thoughts on the issue, through this process she experienced that she was finding someone to whom she belonged and whom she curiously felt instantly connected to. Despite Lützen’s unsentimental language and approach, there are many moving moments as the narrative unfolds, particularly in the letters and meetings between her and older relatives. As Lützen analyses her own often surprising reactions during this quest for family, some of the same questions are

raised for this reader. What is it about these stories that moves me and bring tears to my eyes? What affects and emotions are ingrained in stories about family, and about reestablishment of long-lost connections?

Karin Lützen is one of those researchers who have used herself and her own experiences as enlightening analytical tools throughout her works. Although I could have done without some of the names and the details of the genealogical process, taking part in Lützen’s private search for her heritage has certainly been a journey of interest on so many different levels. To me Karin Lützen will always be an example of a researcher who manages to let her own presence in the story open up for new emotional as well as intellectual revelations for the reader. Her new book again proves that she is truly a master of making the personal academically relevant.

Tone Hellesund, Bergen

Power Play in Dress

Bo Lönnqvist, Maktspel i kläder. Om det (o)synligas kulturella anatomi. Schildts Förlag, Helsinki 2008. 252 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-951-50-1798-7.

■ That clothing has a powerful potential is unquestionable. For centuries clothing has been one of the more visual materializations and manifestations of identity, gender, difference, status and economy – in essence the power play of everyday life. This may be more or less common knowledge to the cultural historic scholar; nevertheless, it is still worthwhile to read the recent book on the topic by Finnish ethnologist Bo Lönnqvist. Why? I find at least three reasons. 1. Lönnqvist is knowledgeable in the field and can demonstrate his points through a vast number of examples, highlighting both the usually visible power play in dress and at the same time the seemingly invisible. 2. Lönnqvist has a welcoming and nuanced understanding of fashion. Fashion is considered a powerful force in clothing defining when clothes are “in” or “out”. 3. Lönnqvist performs complex analysis of culture, demonstrating his theoretical awareness, without having to justify his perspective through more or less repetitive theoretical reviews. It makes his books worthwhile reading and an introduction to the field.

What characterizes the book is its fragmentary character. Each chapter presents separate examples and analysis, but Lönnqvist recommends that readers identify the hidden connections for themselves. The peculiar parrot on each opening page of a new chapter is not, I presume, the focus, but rather the theme of power and men's underwear. From chapter to chapter the reader is presented with several studies and examples of men's underwear that collectively demonstrate and argue for the changing role of men's underwear, from garments of pure utility to high fashion, making the book a cultural history of men's underwear as well. I can only wonder: why did Lönnqvist not dare to publish a book on men's underwear?

The book is divided into three sections, which are further subdivided into numerous chapters. The first section is concerned with power and powerlessness in dress. The second section is concerned with magic, politics, and marks of civilization in dress. Finally, the third section is concerned with the exhibition of dress, fashion, eroticism and fetish in dress.

The examples are so numerous that it would not make sense to try to list them here. Rather, I want to draw attention to some of the main points Lönnqvist makes that, in my understanding, represent refreshing perspectives invoked by cultural analysis on the field of dress and fashion studies. For one thing it is fundamental to Lönnqvist to perceive the human being as a construct between nature and culture. Dress materializes this, as it is both a physical need and a visual media for the manifestation of power, and subsequently gender, social status, ideology, fashion, etc.

Another key point made by Lönnqvist is his dualistic analytical perspective. If analyzing power, powerlessness must be included too. If analyzing the visible, the invisible is included as well. If analyzing women's wear as fashion, which dominates fashion studies with a starting point in the study of haute couture, men's wear is also included; and so on and so forth.

Further, it is also worthwhile to draw attention to the two recurrent metaphors in Lönnqvist's vocabulary and analysis: "Cultural anatomy" and "cultural topography". The first refers to human being as culturally loaded objects, or materializations of culture. Human beings are understood as formed, dressed and controlled by culture. The latter refers to the

point that the human being and its body can be perceived as a geographical area, a cultural map that can be read and has the potential to reveal a variety of analytical perspectives. The complexity of both metaphors supports the nuanced and reflective analysis, leading the reader to acknowledge power play in dress – not only with respect to what is immediately visual, but also what is invisible. One example of these hidden garments is men's underwear prior to the middle of the 20th century, when white cotton briefs turned into colorful, sexy and visible fashion items.

For the cultural historian, Bo Lönnqvist's book is thoughtful reading and a prime example of how empirical knowledge of the past and the present within a specific subject matter – dress and power – is fundamental to the development of good cultural analysis. For the specific fashion scholar the book demonstrates the strength of the ethnological version of cultural analysis, revealing the complexity, materiality and symbolism of dress and fashion.

Marie Riegels Melchior, Copenhagen

The History of a Noble Family

Bo Lönnqvist, En finsk adelssläkts öden. Standertskjöld – Standertskjöld-Nordenstam. Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, Helsinki 2007. 335 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-951-583-147-7.

■ When Gustav III in August 1772 staged his bloodless *coup d'état* in Stockholm, the idea was that a Finnish naval squadron would come from Sveaborg to support the king. A westerly wind, however, made the crossing impossible, and it took several days before the ships could sail to Stockholm, by which time the king had already accomplished the coup. In Stockholm they were welcomed by the king, who expressed his gratitude for the support by raising some of the ship commanders to the peerage. One of these was the Finnish ensign Henrik Johan Justander. On 13 September the same autumn he was ennobled under the name Standertskjöld. It may seem surprising that commanding a small ship could lead to the peerage, but the king evidently took the opportunity to show this recognition of the men who had sided with him, even though the coup never led to any serious hostilities.

Ensign Standertskjöld returned to Finland, where

he spent the rest of his life, becoming a successful farmer and creator of an entailed estate for his family, Wanantaka Gård. By the time of the Anjala League at the end of the 1780s, his feelings for Gustav III seem to have already cooled considerably. It is about this Standertskjöld family, rather unknown in Sweden but successful in several respects in Finland, that Bo Lönnqvist, former professor of ethnology in Jyväskylä, has written an interesting book, commissioned to do so by the Standertskjöld Family Association, founded in 1947.

I cannot imagine that the Association is anything but satisfied with Lönnqvist's book. It is a detailed history of all the branches of the family and the fate of various individuals over two centuries. It ought to be an inexhaustible gold mine for today's generation. A great deal of the material will be of interest to them especially: the history of the family association itself, the estate inventories with the carefully recorded details of the contents of the family's manor houses, the well-chosen excerpts from extant letter collections, especially the letters to and from female members of the family. But there is no doubt that the book is of more general interest to cultural historians in both Finland and Sweden, with a presentation and analysis of the lifestyle and situation of the Finland-Swedish upper class in the Russian era and after Finnish independence. Lönnqvist has had the ambition to say something general about the phenomena of manor-house culture and family culture. The confrontations of the Finland-Swedish nobility with modernity are also of general human relevance, reflecting the eternal wave movements of social classes, with rapid elevation, a few generations of imposing exercise of power, and then a decline into the broad middle class.

Trying to capture the characteristics of a whole dynasty is, of course, a difficult task. A complicating factor is that this family split into separate branches. A grandson of Ensign Justander, Carl August Standertskjöld, became a general in the Tsar's army and earned a fortune in the mid-nineteenth century at the rifle factories in Tula in Russia, money that was then used to purchase a significant number of estates, especially in Tavastland, the family's old native district. In 1874 the tsar made him a baron, as a result of which a baronial branch of the family was formed. In addition, an aunt of the general, one of Justander's daughters, married into the Nordenstam family, which later was at risk of

dying out. One of her sons therefore adopted the general's eldest son Herman, thus establishing a third branch of the family, the baronial line of Standertskjöld-Nordenstam.

Dealing with an entire family during two centuries is like doing a highly complicated jigsaw puzzle. Bo Lönnqvist manages the task elegantly. The book is lavishly illustrated for the benefit of the reader; it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that virtually every family member occurs in some photograph. Yet it can still be hard for the reader to keep track of how the different people are related. Luckily, Lönnqvist provides many family trees, which one has to consult often. These are exemplary. Readers from Sweden might feel the lack of a map of Finland, marking the different estates and residences. For members of the family association this might be unnecessary, but this book is of more general interest.

One chapter examines the old roots of the Standertskjöld's in Tavastland, especially in the landscape around Tavastehus. Here the reader becomes closely acquainted with a number of estates, such as Wanantaka, the entailed estate of the noble family, and Laukko, the entailed estate of the baronial branch, not to mention many smaller farms. A special case is Karlberg, an estate built up by the industrialist Hugo Standertskjöld with a huge fortune, likewise amassed through involvement in the Russian arms industry in Tula. At the end of the nineteenth century he seems to have been regarded as the richest man in Finland, leading an ostentatious and almost incomprehensibly hospitable life, which benefited his poorer relatives in particular. Exactly how it was possible to earn such a fortune in Russia, and in a relatively short time, is something that Lönnqvist never examines. It is interesting that tsarist Russia welcomed Finnish investment in Russia, whereas Russian economic interests in Finland seem to have been modest. The Standertskjöld family in the second half of the nineteenth century appears to have been a typical landowning family. In the twentieth century farming seems to have been largely abandoned, partly because of decreased profitability, partly because of traumatic experiences during the short but bloody Finnish Civil War or the War of Liberation in the spring of 1918. Laukko was burned down by the reds, and the owner of Lahdentaka, Edvard Standertskjöld, was murdered by red rebels.

One feature of the family chronicle that is of par-

ticular interest for a reader from Sweden is the Russian threads in the tapestry. In the nineteenth century the young men of the family tended to train as officers in the military academy in Fredrikshamn and then went on to pursue a career in the Russian army. Usually, however, they returned in the end to Finland to settle for good. Russian seems to have been the most common language in the family, alongside Swedish, in the nineteenth century. The richest of the Standertskjöldes, such as the general and his son Adi, founder of the later global pulp industry Enso, had palatial homes in Saint Petersburg, while others spent the winters in Helsinki and the summers on their country estates. The Russian Revolution, of course, was a dramatic upheaval with devastating economic losses. At the end of the nineteenth century the family had a rather cosmopolitan colour and many of the girls married Russians. The Russian influence had various cultural expressions; one was the custom of appointing a kind of Turkish smoking room in the manor houses, a fashion that can be probably be found on estates in Sweden too, but it seems to be particularly widespread in Finland.

The chapter "Women's Roles" gives interesting insight into the special tasks of women in the family, as a cohesive force, establishing contacts and sometimes also being controlling actors. Here we are also given a description of the life rituals, for example the elaborate funeral ceremonies during the Russian period and also later. The women's duties also have a central place in the chapter "Hospitable Houses", which uses guest books and other evidence to discuss social life on some of the family estates. Here we see the Finland-Swedish high bourgeoisie and the role of hunting as an identity marker which is underlined with many examples. In particular, the quiet life in small and later decaying manor houses offers the reader fascinating material, a kind of Chekhovian life in the birch woods of Finland.

To conclude, in "The Standertskjöld Tapestry", Bo Lönnqvist makes an attempt to sum up what he sees as the bearing elements of the noble family structure: the naming practices, characteristic expressions, attitudes to things and other people, a kind of disciplined self-awareness. He also touches on how this changed during the twentieth century, not least after women went out into working life and a partly new occupational structure arose. I do not know whether other researchers in the future will dare to undertake such a challenge as to paint the

fate of an entire family and try to describe the cultural capital that it jointly managed. If anyone does, however, this book by Bo Lönnqvist must be a source of inspiration.

Mats Hellspång, Stockholm

Rituals

The Ritual Year and Ritual Diversity. Proceedings of the Second International Conference of The SIEF Working Group on The Ritual Year, Gothenburg June 7–11 2006. Lina Midholm & Annika Nordström (eds.). Institutet för språk och folkminnen, Göteborg 2007. 377 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-91-7229-039-6.

■ *The Ritual Year and Ritual Diversity* contains forty-one speeches held at the Second International Conference of the SIEF Working Group on the Ritual Year in Gothenburg in 2006. The papers are sorted under a number of headings, such as midsummer festivities, ritual theory, the place of rituals in the life cycle, religious rituals and ritual change. This review will primarily focus on the Scandinavian contributions, and even these will be discussed rather selectively.

Ann Pettersson and Anna Ulfstrand present their research on what might be termed the invention of tradition in the case of the Swedish National Day, which received formal status very recently. It was proclaimed a holiday in 2004 as of 2005, and the authors conducted fieldwork during the celebrations in an amusement park in Botkyrka, Hågelby Park, the following year. They describe the thoughts and the ideology – if one is permitted to use such an old-fashioned word – of the organisers in constructing an entirely new kind of festival for which there was no template, and it is interesting to note that they decided to concentrate on the period of Gustav Vasa, which became the theme of the celebrations. For one thing, this period was viewed as "real history", and also, I believe, distant enough in time to be uncontroversial, even though it does represent the founding of the modern Swedish state. The aim of the Swedish parliament in finally introducing the National Day as a public holiday was to wrest nationalism away from right-wing ultranationalist groups, and to foster a positive form of nationalism which was inclusive rather than excluding. In many municipalities, a welcoming ceremony for new Swedish citizens has been incorporated into the fes-

tivities of the National Day, and so is also the case with Botkyrka. In this context, the importance of migration for the development of Sweden into a modern welfare state was emphasised in the official speeches held at the celebrations in Hågelby Park.

Ane Ohrvik presents her research on the ritualisation of Halloween in Norway, and on the impact a single devoted individual can make on festival customs. The speech is based on an interview with an American man living in Norway, who played a significant part in promoting Halloween as a festival worth celebrating. Initially this was done privately, but later as a professional event-maker. Ohrvik refers to it as ritual entrepreneurship, which is a fitting characterisation in many ways. The concept of ritualisation, the strategies employed for differentiating a ritual from ordinary humdrum life, serves as a tool in elucidating his methods in the promotion of Halloween. A concrete strategy of ritualisation was the use of specific artefacts, such as food and costumes, and these were included both in his own arrangements of Halloween celebrations and in his account of Halloween festivities on his website, which was a popular source of knowledge about Halloween. In this way his version of Halloween celebrations constituted a model for others. The difficult part was convincing critics that Halloween could be a meaningful element in the Norwegian repertoire of festivals. Personally he believed that the shy and conservative Norwegians needed a festival like Halloween, when it was possible to take it easy and become someone else for a while. Thus he defended Halloween in the media, emphasising its diversity. Ohrvik accordingly concludes that the ritual entrepreneurs have many opportunities to manipulate the process of ritualisation, but that their influence is nevertheless limited by the reactions of their audience. The notion of ritual entrepreneurship is apt in this context as it alludes to the efforts and talents of an individual in shaping a festival, and also hints at the commercial value of these efforts. I believe it might gain currency in studies of modern ritual at least.

Bengt af Klintberg studies a number of weather sayings associated with saints' days in spring and summer. These sayings take the form of "this or that saint throws cold/hot stones in the water", referring to the water temperature sinking or rising in the lakes, making walking on the ice hazardous and bathing possible respectively. The sayings about

cold stones have been linked to the days of St. Olof (July 29) and St. Jacob (July 25), and are attested in central Sweden. They seem to be a recent, nineteenth-century complement to the significantly older sayings concerning hot stones being thrown into the lake by Petter Katt (i.e. Petrus in Cathedra, February 22) or St. Matthew (February 24). These go back to the Middle Ages, and probably reached Sweden from the south. The sayings about the cold stones then received further elaboration: in northern Sweden, three saints were said to do this, St. Olof, St. Lawrence (August 10) and St. Bartholomew (August 24). In southern Sweden, the sayings about warm stones were jokingly extended by giving Petter Katt helpers, the farmhands Tertullianus (the following day in the old almanacs) and Matthew (February 24), as well as the maid Mary. Some scholars have interpreted the mention of Mary as a reference to the Annunciation (March 25), but af Klintberg thinks February 28 a likelier date, which is the name day of Maria in Swedish almanacs. In this case, the tradition cannot be older than the nineteenth century, since this name was introduced in the almanac in 1806 to honour a daughter of the then reigning king Gustav IV Adolf. It seems to me that the example of this group of weather sayings illustrates the generative power of folk tradition rather well, how established formulas and structures can be used to create new traditions.

Anders Gustavsson considers the politics of national holidays on the Swedish-Norwegian border in Bohuslän, mainly from the 1990s onward. The focus is principally on the Norwegian national holiday on May 17, and how it is celebrated by Norwegians living in Bohuslän, permanently or during the summer. The Norwegian flag is important in this context as an embodiment of national sentiment. Interestingly, Swedes in Bohuslän have also begun to attend as well as arrange festivities on this national holiday, the latter mostly on the official municipal level. Gustavsson asks why the Norwegian holiday attracts Swedes too, but does not have the space to discuss this intriguing question in depth. On May 17 and family birthdays Norwegians resident in Sweden fly the Norwegian flag, but on other days they tend to use both the Swedish and the Norwegian flags, in order to maintain good relations with their Swedish neighbours. Mixed Norwegian-Swedish families also fly both flags, unless they adopt the Union flag, which was reintroduced for the cen-

tenary celebration of the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway in 1905. For Swedes this flag represents solidarity with Norway, whereas Norwegians regard it as a reminder of political subordination to Sweden and resent its use. The regional Bohuslän flag, which was designed in 1996, represents Bohuslän's historical link to Norway as part of its territory until 1658. Two thirds of the flag resemble the Norwegian one, and one third the Swedish. The regional flag is also an expression of a negative attitude to the European Union. Finally, Gustavsson relates how people on the Norwegian side of the border attempted to help the Swedes in celebrating their new national holiday in 2005, and how Norwegian journalists wanted to cover the – non-existent – celebrations. One is left with the impression that the Norwegians were more intent on celebrating the Swedish national holiday than the Swedes were. They celebrate Midsummer instead, a festival the Norwegians in Bohuslän have also begun to participate in. Gustavsson's paper is an interesting example of how differently national sentiment can be constructed by citizens of two neighbouring countries, and how they adapt to new contexts.

Arne Bugge Amundsen contemplates some recent trends in the constitution of the ritual year in contemporary Norway. One of these is a rejection of the role of Christianity in shaping the festivals of modern Norway. The pre-Christian roots of Christmas, for example, are emphasised, and a continuity between the – very poorly documented – pagan celebrations of Yule and present-day celebrations is simply assumed. Christmas is regarded as the quintessentially Norwegian holiday, and is thus associated with a national ideology, which in turn is strongly related to a nostalgia for the lost agrarian society of the 19th century (with the Christian faith erased from this idealised image of the past). Another trend is the politically motivated stress on multiculturalism and integration, adopting the language of globalisation. In this context the national connotations of the ritual year are combatted. At the same time, the prevalent rhetoric of multiculturalism has also contributed to effecting a shift of focus from Christian holidays to national ones, most prominently May 17. However, recently the national aura of these festivities has been replaced by a new multicultural one. May 17 is no longer about being ethnically Norwegian, but an act of participation in a common celebration. The present multicultural

agenda has also facilitated the introduction of new rituals such as St. Valentine's Day and Halloween, a development otherwise primarily fuelled by our modern consumer society. Ritual entrepreneurs are mentioned as prominent agents of this change in ritual customs. Notwithstanding, neither the activities of ritual entrepreneurs nor the official multicultural ideology have escaped controversy, and in this respect Amundsen sees a move from the former conflict concerning the secularisation of Norwegian society to one regarding the impact of non-European cultures. The paper ends with a plea for the study of these ritual changes in terms of rhetoric and ideology, and for a historical awareness in these times when change has turned into a mantra – a form of scholarly resistance to being uncritically swallowed by the catchwords of the present and the views they represent. As such it is an important paper, reminding us of our duties as researchers.

Åsa Ljungström describes a ritual peculiar to Härnösand in the north of Sweden, which is performed on December 5 each year in memory of a young girl who was murdered by her boyfriend, a mentally ill African boy. While she lived she was active in an antiracist movement in this town, and the ritual is her father's way of continuing her work. In order to do this, however, some aspects of the drama had to be hushed up, such as jealousy as a possible motive for the deed. I found this very interesting, as it affords a rare glimpse at those elements of a situation that had been passed over in silence to endow a ritual with coherence and suit it to its express purpose. When Ljungström and her students did fieldwork on the ritual, eighteen years had passed since the girl's death. Then the ritual was almost exclusively attended by school children, who had been ordered to participate. An intriguing part of Ljungström's discussion is the change in perspectives on the ritual exhibited by those students who were natives of Härnösand, and thus had attended the ritual as children. The ritual itself comprises musical performances and the telling of life stories, a show by a professional entertainer, and an appeal for integration by the girl's father, and ends with a ceremonial hug. The native students remembered dreading this element as children, but now find it an agreeable way to express their solidarity with others.

The Ritual Year and Ritual Diversity as a whole covers a wide range of topics, from the initiation

rites in Icelandic *gymnasia* discussed by Terry Gunnell and the “Primal Scream” at Harvard researched by Stephen Mitchell to the workers’ pleasure trips in 19th-century Sweden presented by Håkan Berglund-Lake and the celebration of the popular Nobel Prize Award banquet in contemporary Sweden analysed by Marlene Hugoson. Neo-pagan rituals recur in a number of papers, and processes of ritualisation are examined in many contributions. Several papers are devoted to the origin and development of different ritual traditions, both in terms of long historical perspectives and highly contemporaneous ones. To summarise my impressions of this volume, it affords concise and sophisticated analyses of rituals with – more or less obvious – connections to the ritual year, and as such, I believe these papers will find an appreciative audience.

Camilla Asplund Ingemark, Lund

Contacts over Öresund in the Twentieth Century

Grændse som skiller ej! Kontakter över Öresund under 1900-talet. Kjell Å. Modéer (ed.). København: Museum Tusulanums Forlag 2007. 137 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-635-0481-2.

■ Einar Hansen (1902–1994) was a Danish-born entrepreneur, publisher, ship owner and patron, who did his life’s work in the Öresund region. Carrying a double identity, Danish and Swedish, he devoted his life to changing the region’s position on the political map. Through the foundations he started, Einar Hansen’s achievements have an impact on the border area of Öresund even today.

To honour Hansen’s career, a Swedish-Danish scholarly seminar was held in 2002 to mark the centenary of his birth. The papers of that seminar have now been published; some of them are in Danish, some in Swedish. The editor of this book, Kjell Å. Modéer, focuses on Hansen’s life and career, aptly describing him as a patriot of the border region. According to Modéer, Hansen devoted his life to keeping Öresund free and open, especially during the Nazi occupation of Denmark. For Hansen Öresund was both *mare liberum*, an open sea, and during the Nazi occupation *mare claustrum*, a closed sea. The article focuses on Hansen’s effort to help refugees in Sweden during the occupation.

Two articles, written by Hans Kirchhoff and Olaf Olsen, focus on the time of the Nazi occupation in Denmark. Kirchhoff discusses an important and human theme, the rescue of Danish Jews over Öresund in October 1943. Over 7000 people thereby found asylum in Sweden. Olaf Olsen, whose article concerns Danish refugees in Lund 1943–1945, was one of those who fled the Nazi occupation and thus the article is based on personal experiences from the time when he was only 15 years old. His contribution is a reminder of a period and of incidents that we so easily forget.

Per Erik Ljung’s article discusses literary contacts and the contacts of literary scholars over Öresund. Several Swedish authors have crossed the Sound and have also gained Danish and Scandinavian audiences for their works. Especially among the Danish modernist generation of the fifties and sixties, several authors had Swedish connections.

Ulf Zander looks at national and regional identities in the Öresund region at the start of the twentieth century. Labour migration over the straits to Denmark provoked discussion and heated debate. The same themes and questions, even images of the enemy, that were current a century ago are on the agenda even now and discussed by politicians. Zander argues in his article that, in spite of long and multifaceted contacts and relationships over Öresund it still takes a long time before deep and real integration over national boundaries takes place.

Contacts and traffic over the water has been a natural part of the life of local people in the Öresund region. Orvar Löfgren begins his article with personal memories of the now closed hydrofoil terminal in Malmö. He goes on to consider how people and ideas and as well as clichés, stereotypes, utopias and dystopias are constantly travelling over Öresund. The same stereotypes that are spread about Swedes and Danes can also be heard about several other nations. The stereotypes are powerful. The final article in the book is by Else Bojsen, who discusses the mutual intelligibility of the Danish and Swedish languages, with a focus on language barriers.

Altogether this publication shows how individuals can exert influence when they have the opportunity. Einar Hansen had both economic and social capital which he used for the benefit of the people on both sides of Öresund. Elsewhere, individuals like Einar Hansen have later been very important in

transnational activity. For example, the former provincial governor of Norrbotten, Ragnar Lassinantti, is regarded as having had a decisive role in the cross-border cooperation in the Tornio River Valley in the North.

The bridge over Öresund was opened in 2000. How borderless life has been since the coming of the bridge is an interesting question, and hopefully we can read more about the later contacts over Öresund in the near future. This book gives a fine advance picture of it.

Helena Ruotsala, Turku

A Century of the Hedmark Museum

Ragnar Pedersen, Hedmarksmuseet 100 år. 1906–2006. Stiftelsen Domkirkeodden, Hamar Historielag. Hamar 2008. 249 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-82-91326-24-5.

■ A museum's history can be written as a diary of events and exhibitions. Over a long period of time that can be interesting and fascinating. But a museum's history can also be described as part of a developing process for society and a struggle for fundamental values over time. That is what Ragnar Pedersen, the former director of conservation and editor of the yearbook, has tried to do in a book that celebrates the first hundred years of the Norwegian museum, Hedmarksmuseet in Hamar.

It was founded in the years around 1905 when the union of Norway and Sweden ended. After a long time of preparations, it was initiated in 1901, and formally founded in 1906. It was able to open the doors to the public in 1908. Over the years the name has been changed several times. It started as Hamar Folkemuseum, then it became Oplandenes Folkemuseum. In 1939 two institutions, Oplandenes Folkemuseum and Domkirkeodden were merged to become Hedmarksmuseet and Domkirkeodden. In 2005 the name was changed again in connection with the incorporation of Norsk Utvandramuseum (Norwegian Museum of Emigration). It was now called the Foundation Domkirkeodden, in which the former institution Hedmarksmuseet and Domkirkeodden became a separate department.

The implementation of folk museums in Norway in the years around 1900 was part of the building of a new nation. Folk museums became important tools for transmitting central values of the nation.

The history of Norwegian museums has many general features also evident in folk museums. The base is dependent on volunteers and the initiatives generally come from below. As in Sweden, visionary men often fought for ideals in opposition to authorities that looked upon them as backward-looking romantics.

At the beginning of the twentieth century many folk museums were established in Norway, for instance Hallingdal Folkemuseum (1899), Trysil Bygdetun (1901), Valdres Folkemuseum (1901) and so on. Norsk Folkemuseum was founded in 1894 at Bygdøy in Oslo. The first chairman of the Board, Moltke Moe, formulated in a policy speech in 1895 what would become fundamental characteristics of folk museums, or open-air museums as they are called today. He declared that museums should be "close to life and give as broad a picture as possible of the past. The artefacts should be shown in their own context and depict life as it was." This point of view was in contrast to the existing museums of that time, which were just collections of artefacts (*old-sakssamlinger*).

Norsk Folkemuseum was inspired by the open-air museum Skansen, in Stockholm, and the ideas of its founder, Artur Hazelius. Norsk Folkemuseum became the inspiration and template for all Norwegian folk museums including Hedmarksmuseet, one of the oldest in Norway.

In 1912 the Hedmark museum was moved to a new site, Domkirkeodden, where the ruin of the old Hamar cathedral is situated. On this site so dominated by its history the "new museum" was able to grow into an important and impressive institution. The ruin of the cathedral has played an important role and the story of its documentation and restoration is also the story of how the antiquarian profession has developed over the years. This is a fascinating part of the book. Today the ruin is covered and protected by a building of the highest architectural quality.

Under the guidance of Ragnar Pedersen we can follow the process of creating a museum from the first stumbling steps to a cultural site in today's Hamar. It is a beautiful book, richly illustrated with maps, drawings and pictures of artefacts and buildings, showing the potential of an open-air museum, with its skill to depict life in the past but also its role as a meeting place in the present.

Göran Hedlund, Lund

In the Arms of Morpheus

Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, I søvnens favn. Om søvn og sovevaner på landet 1600–1850. Museum Tusulanum Forlag, København 2009. 206 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-87-635-2599-2.

■ Museums collect and store objects and conduct research on the basis of them. The research of museums of cultural history, however, does not only consider the objects themselves, but points beyond them. What do objects tell us about the people who possessed and used them? About their attitudes, norms and also their changing natures?

Beds and sleeping places at the open-air museum Frilandsmuseet in Denmark have inspired the curator Mikkel Venborg Pedersen to a creative and fascinating study of sleep and sleeping habits in Denmark during the long period 1600–1850.

Sleep, according to the author, is a subject that simultaneously divides and unites human beings. It is also a subject which intimately connects artefacts with life: beds, eiderdowns, pillows, toilet furniture, chamber pots, watches, nightcaps, nightshirts and so forth.

Apart from museum objects, the study is based on written sources such as folklife studies and travel accounts.

The book deals with the cultural history of sleep as it pertains to earlier generations who lived in the countryside – whether they were peasants, servants, rural artisans or fishermen, people of means, paupers or beggars. The author introduces the former residents of three of the farmsteads in the museum: the farmsteads of Pebringe in Central Zealand, Lundager in West Funen and True near Aarhus in Jutland with their buildings, gardens, landscapes, household effects and possessions.

The author makes the basic assertion that sleep is as much a cultural phenomenon as it is a bodily need, so sleep also has to be understood, interpreted and placed within an intelligible framework. Although sleep is a basic and perennial human need, people have done it in different ways and have also had different conceptions of it.

The book is like an intricate fabric with patterns containing a mixture of exciting descriptions of museum objects and inspiring thoughts and reflections about some of them in a kind of borderland between cultural history, psychology and philosophy. According to science, he says, sleep consists of four

phases in which we accumulatively dream perhaps as much as a quarter of that time; in other words, if we sleep 25 years in a lifetime we spend six years dreaming. We have little recollection of this – in much the same way as it is difficult to know why we dream at all.

Another reflection is that a sleeping person is always a mystery to a person who is awake. The sleeping person is absent and present at the same time – to all appearances calm, but in reality engaged in the wildest adventure of the most private nature. Sleep is private, and many modern people become shy when they watch a person who is sleeping.

This book is a very good example of the new approach of cultural history which shows how sleeping habits have changed over time as conditions in society have changed, how changes in things such as the arrangement of rooms, furnishings, social patterns, and so on, have influenced people's views of sleeping habits.

The idea behind the book is brilliant and the result is excellent, in a field that is almost unexplored. Despite the subject matter, there is no risk of falling asleep while reading it.

Birgitta Svensson, Stockholm

Living in a House That is Mine, and Yet not Mine

Kotina suojeltu talo. Arkea, elämää ja rakennussuojelua Suomessa ja Saksassa. (A Preserved House as a Home. Everyday Life and Building Preservation in Finland and Germany.) Outi Tuomi-Nikula & Eeva Karhunen (eds.). School of Cultural Production and Landscape Studies Publications XIII. University of Turku, Pori 2007. 348 pp. Ill. ISBN 978-951-29-3361-7.

■ Outi Tuomi-Nikula, and Eeva Karhunen have edited a handsome book about everyday life in a preserved house. The book is the end result of the research project “A Preserved House as a Home”, led by Tuomi-Nikula and conducted jointly by a group of Cultural Heritage Studies graduate students and their consulting supervisors, whose range of expertise runs from city planning to architecture and museum work. The publication is both visually pleasing and very rich in content, and it has good potential to become a well read book among the

Finnish professionals who work within the wide area of heritage preservation.

At the core of the book *Kotina suojeltu talo* there are the case studies at four distinct locales. Two national cultures, Finnish and German are represented in this research. In Western Finland, the Old Rauma and the 5th district of the city of Pori are studied, and in Northern Germany, the prosperous farming region of Altes Land near Hamburg, and the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, which was governed by the DDR regulations for the decades it existed.

Roughly one half of the writers in the book *Kotina suojeltu talo* focus analytically in the contemporary living and preservation practices. To my eyes, these articles are the most up to date and intriguing both in an academic sense and in relation to the practical, everyday situations where the preservation or “developing” the old urban areas are debated. Outi Tuomi-Nikula and Eeva Karhunen open the book with theoretical overviews. In the following chapters, it is studied what it is like to live within a world heritage area or an area which is about to be preserved (Hannele Mäenpää and Samuli Saarinen, respectively); what the different preservation processes contain (Tanja Vahtikari, Liisa Nummelin); practical insights to a consulting architect’s working week and to preservation education (Kalle Saarinen and Tuulikki Kiilo); gentrification of a traditional physical and socio-cultural landscape (Mervi Tommila). Perhaps the most acutely, the attitudes and rhetorics of negotiation about the preservation of private dwellings are discussed by Outi Tuomi-Nikula, Heidi Latvala, and Jukka Vuorio.

The second half of writers reach towards the past of the areas in question, especially in Pori and Rauma. This set of articles is more descriptive and less analytic, giving accounts of different ways of socialising and using urban space in the past. In the Old Rauma section of the book, the writers look into e.g. the culture of hygiene related public buildings and places, social ways of spending free time, and the different uses of market squares (Helena Mäenpää, Jaakko Mäntylä & Henni Seppänen, and Katriina Lamberg & Eeva Mattila, respectively). The past in the 5th district in Pori is described from the point of view of certain specific houses or their yards (Marita Ruoho, Kati Kunnas-Holmström), children’s play (Laura Julin), sauna culture (Pia Vähämäki), and small businesses (Johanna Ojala & Katriina Välimäki, and Heidi Hietala).

These articles oriented towards the bygone times certainly give a historical context and feel to the accounts of (post)modern life in the same quarters. At the same time, however, they quite actively take part in the production of the heritage contents. More often than not, the past in these articles is coloured with nostalgia – very much according to the tradition of heritage accounts. Of course, certain nostalgia and appreciation of heritage is one of the attractions of these places nowadays. Even with all the modern amenities, life in those old houses is in continuum with the past lives without those amenities in the same houses, in the different times. Indeed one of the most appreciated features of living in an old house seems to be the sense of a localised place in that continuum of lives.

The idea of a continuum of past and present people, and the breaks in the continuum, are well represented in the two German cases that Outi Tuomi-Nikula compares in her articles of this volume. In the Altes Land area, it is still often the same families who have lived in those old houses for centuries. Older generations are even visible by their having inscribed their names or credos on the outer walls. The houses’ lives are long, an individual life a flicker in comparison. According to Tuomi-Nikula, to be forced to sell one’s house has been and still is a sign of bad management and failure as a farmer in Altes Land. In contrast, the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern area saw a severe break in the continuum of generations of private ownership of land and houses during the Communist regime of the DDR. At least inbetween the lines, there is also a break in nostalgia: not all of the farmers were reluctant to move into the concrete housing estates. The traditional farm houses, and old urban houses as well, were without modern plumbing and central heating. In that sense, those esthetically challenged DDR blocks of flats clearly provided an improvement. Due to the near impossibility of getting materials, keeping old houses from ruin was the work for the extraordinarily devoted.

The research conducted in all the four regions was aimed at understanding the thoughts and experiences of private dwellers who now live in old houses that are considered commonly valuable from the heritage point of view. According to David Harvey, turning to study “small heritage” is gaining popularity amongst the researchers of heritage who have previously concentrated on the bigger picture

of national narratives. In accordance to what Harvey (2008, 20) also points out, it becomes evident in the book *Kotina suojeltu talo* that studying closely the living experiences at the local and even private levels, also helps understanding the processes at the national and global levels of heritage politics.

Comparing the four cases in Finland and in Germany, it turns out that while the building preservation policies differ, the individual fear of losing control is the same in both countries (Tuomi-Nikula, p. 339). To succeed in the preservation of buildings and historical areas it is of utmost importance to understand that it is not only a question of who owns what, but about living, dwelling in a place. People

really have to want to preserve and repair with a gentle hand. That is equally a question of attitudes and of financial and material means. Judging from the articles of the book *Kotina suojeltu talo*, it helps if the dwellers of the houses are willing to see themselves in a continuum of people and culture attached to the building and urban landscape. As one proud and humble Altes Land farmer chose to inscribe on the wall of his house in 1822: "This house is mine and yet not mine, those who come after me do not call it theirs either. As long as my hand moves I want to plough for my *Heimat*" (p. 282, my translation from Finnish).

Petja Aarnipuu, Helsinki

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 about 20 pages of typewritten text with 1.5 line spacing, approx. 50,000 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 4–5 A4 pages long with 1.5 line spacing, 8,000–10,000 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.

This year's *Ethnologia Scandinavica* reflects a renewed interest in materiality among ethnologists, no longer primarily an interest in artefacts as such but in processes of materialization, concerning both things and living bodies. Several articles also consider the significance of place. Most things that happen literally take place and thus materialize themselves somewhere. The research front in Scandinavian ethnology today has adopted gender-specific analyses and is often phenomenologically inspired.